

# **International Weekly Miscellany - Volume 1, No. 8, August 19, 1850 eBook**

## **International Weekly Miscellany - Volume 1, No. 8, August 19, 1850**

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# Page 1

## THE THEATER IN RUSSIA AND POLAND.

The following interesting sketch of the Drama in the empire of the Czar is translated for the *International* from the Leipzig *Grenzboten*. The facts it states are not only new to most readers, but throw incidentally a good deal of light on the condition of that vast empire, and the state of its population in respect of literature and art in general:

\* \* \* \* \*

The dramatic taste of a people, the strength of its productive faculty, the gradual development of its most popular sphere of art, the theater, contain the key to phases of its character which cannot always be recognized with the same exactness from other parts of its history. The tendencies and disposition of the mass come out very plainly in their relations to dramatic art, and from the audience of an evening at a theater some inference may be drawn as to the whole political scope of the nation. In truth, however, this requires penetration as well as cautious judgment.

In the middle of the last century there were in the kingdom of Poland, beside the royal art institutions at Warsaw, four strong dramatic companies, of genuine Polish stamp, which gave performances in the most fashionable cities. Two of them were so excellent that they often had the honor to play before the court. The peculiarity of these companies was that they never performed foreign works, but literally only their own. The managers were either themselves poets, or had poets associated with them in business. Each was guided by his poet, as Wallenstein by his astrologer. The establishment depended on its dramatic ability, while its performances were limited almost exclusively to the productions of its poet. The better companies, however, were in the habit of making contracts with each other, by which they exchanged the plays of their dramatists. This limitation to native productions perhaps grew partly out of the want of familiarity with foreign literature, partly from national feeling, and partly from the fact that the Polish taste was as yet little affected by that of the Germans, French, or English. In these circumstances there sprung up a poetic creative faculty, which gave promise of a good and really national drama. And even now, after wars, revolutions, and the schemes of foreign rulers have alternately destroyed and degraded the stage, and after the Poles have become poetically as well as politically mere satellites of French ideas and culture, there still exist, as respectable remains of the good old time, a few companies of players, which, like their ancient predecessors, have their own poets, and perform only his pieces, or at least others of Polish origin that he has arranged and adapted. Such a company, whose principal personage is called Richlawski, is now in Little Poland, in the cities Radom, Kielce, Opatow, Sandomir, &c. A second, which generally remains in the Government of Kalisch, is under the direction of a certain Felinski, and through his excellent dramatic compositions has gained a reputation equal to that of the band of Strauss in music. Yet these companies are only relics. The Polish

drama in general has now a character and destiny which was not to be expected a hundred years since.

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The origin of the Russian theater is altogether more recent. It is true that Peter the Great meddled a good deal with the theater as well as with other things, but it was not till the Empress Catharine that dramatic literature was really emancipated by the court. Under Alexander and Nicholas the most magnificent arrangements have been made in every one of the cities that from time to time is honored by the residence of the Emperor, so that Russia boasts of possessing five theaters, two of which excel everything in Europe in respect to size and splendor, but yet possesses no sort of taste for dramatic art. The stage, in the empire of the Muscovites, is like a rose-bush grafted on a wild forest tree. It has not grown up naturally from a poetic want in the people, and finds in the country little or nothing in the way of a poetic basis. Accordingly, the theater in Russia is in every respect a foreign institution. Not national in its origin, it has not struck its roots into the heart of the people. Only here and there a feeble germ of theatrical literature has made its way through the obstinate barbarism of the Russian nature. The mass have no feeling for dramatic poetry, while the cultivated classes exhibit a most striking want of taste.

But in Russia everything is inverted. What in other nations is the final result of a long life, is there the beginning. A natural development of the people appears to its rulers too circuitous, and in fact would in many things require centuries of preparation. Accordingly, they seek to raise their subjects to the level of other races by forcing them outwardly to imitate their usages. Peter the Great says in his testament: "Let there be no intermission in teaching the Russian people European forms and customs." The theater in Russia is one of these forms, and from this it is easy to understand the condition it is in.

It is true there are in the country a few independent companies of players, but they are not Russian, or at least were formed as a speculation by some foreigner. For example, Odessa has often two such, and sometimes three. The Italian company is said to be good. The Russian, which has now become permanent, has hitherto been under the management of a German, and has been very poor. The company in Kiew consists mostly of Poles, from the old Polish provinces incorporated with Russia, and has a high reputation. In Poland it would be possible in every little nest of a city to get together a tolerable company for dramatic performance. In Russia it would be much easier to raise an army. The ultimate reason of this striking contrast is the immense dissimilarity in the character of the two nations. The Pole is remarkably sanguine, fiery, enthusiastic, full of ideality and inspiration; the Russian is through and through material, a lover of coarse physical pleasures, full of ability to fight and cut capers, but not endowed with a capacity quickly to receive impressions and mentally elaborate them.



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In this respect, the mass and the aristocracy, the serfs and their masters, are as alike as twins. The noble is quite as coarse as the peasant. In Poland this is quite otherwise. The peasant may be called a rough creature, but the noble is almost always a man of refinement, lacking indeed almost always in scientific information, but never in the culture of a man of the world. The reason of this is, that his active, impetuous soul finds constant occasion for maintaining familiarity with the world around him, and really needs to keep up a good understanding with it. The Russians know no such want.

Even in St. Petersburg the German was long much more successful than the native theater, though the number of Russians there is seventeen times larger than that of the Germans. The Russians who there visit the theater are the richest and most prominent members of the aristocracy. They however consider the drama as simply a thing of fashion. Hence results the curious fact that it is thought a matter of good taste to be present at the beginning but not to wait for the end of a piece. It has happened that long before the performance was over the house was perfectly empty, everyone following the fashion, in order not to seem deficient in public manners. If there is ever a great attraction at the theater, it is not the play, but some splendid show. The Russian lady, in studying the *coiffure* or the trailing-robe of an actress, forgets entirely her part in this piece, if indeed she has ever had an adequate conception of it. For this reason, at St. Petersburg and Moscow the ballet is esteemed infinitely higher than the best drama; and if the management should have the command of the Emperor to engage rope-dancers and athletes, circus-riders and men-apes, the majority of Russians would be of opinion that the theater had gained the last point of perfection. This was the case in Warsaw several years ago, when the circus company of Tourniare was there. The theaters gave their best and most popular pieces, in order to guard against too great a diminution of their receipts. The Poles patriotically gave the preference for the drama, but the Russians were steady adorers of Madame Tourniare and her horse. In truth, the lady enjoyed the favor of Prince Paskiewich. General O—— boasted that during the eleven months that the circus staid he was not absent from a single performance. The Polish Count Ledochowski, on the other hand, said that he had been there but once when he went with his children, and saw nothing of the performance, because he read Schiller's *William Tell* every moment. This was Polish opposition to Russian favoritism, but it also affords an indication of the national peculiarities of the two races.

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From deficiency in taste for dramatic art arises the circumstance that talent for acting is incomparably scarce among the Russians. Great as have been the efforts of the last emperors of Russia to add a new splendor to their capitals by means of the theater, they have not succeeded in forming from their vast nation artists above mediocrity, except in low comedy. At last it was determined to establish dramatic schools in connection with the theaters and educate players; but it appears that though talent can be developed, it cannot be created at the word of command. The Emperor Nicholas, or rather his wife, was, as is said, formerly so vexed at the incapacity of the Russians for dramatic art, that it was thought best to procure children in Germany for the schools. The Imperial will met with hindrance, and he contented himself with taking children of the German race from his own dominions. The pride of the Russians did not suffer in consequence.

While poetry naturally precedes dramatic art, the drama, on the other hand, cannot attain any degree of excellence where the theater is in such a miserable state. It is now scarcely half a century since the effort was begun to remove the total want of scientific culture in the Russian nation, but what are fifty years for such a purpose, in so enormous a country? The number of those who have received the scientific stimulus and been carried to a degree of intellectual refinement is very small, and the happy accident by which a man of genius appears among the small number must be very rare. And in this connection it is noteworthy, that the Russian who feels himself called to artistic production almost always shows a tendency to epic composition.

The difficulties of form appear terrible to the Russian. In romance-writing the form embarrasses him less, and accordingly they almost all throw themselves into the making of novels.

As is generally the case in the beginning of every nation's literature, any writer in Russia is taken for a miracle, and regarded with stupor. The dramatist Kukolnik is an example of this. He has written a great deal for the theater, but nothing in him is to be praised so much as his zeal in imitation. It must be admitted that in this he possesses a remarkable degree of dexterity. He soon turned to the favorite sphere of romance writing, but in this also he manifests the national weakness. In every one of his countless works the most striking feature is the lack of organization. They were begun and completed without their author's ever thinking out a plot, or its mode of treatment.



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Kukolnik's "Alf and Adona," in which at least one hundred and fifty characters are brought upon the stage, has not one whose appearance is designed to concentrate the interest of the audience. Each comes in to show himself, and goes out not to be in the way any longer. Everything is described and explained with equal minuteness, from the pile of cabbages by the wayside, to the murder of a prince; and instead of a historical action there is nothing but unconnected details. The same is the case with his "Eveline and Baillerole," in which Cardinal Richelieu is represented as a destroyer of the aristocracy, and which also is made up of countless unconnected scenes, that in part are certainly done with some neatness. These remarks apply to the works of Iwan Wanenko and I. Boriczewski, to I. Zchewen's "Sunshine", five volumes strong; to the compositions of Wolkow, Czerujawski, Ulitinins, Th. Van Dim, (a pseudonym,) in fact to everything that has yet appeared.

On the part of the Imperial family, as we have already said, everything has been done for the Russian stage that could possibly be done, and is done no where else. The extremest liberality favors the artists, schools are provided in order to raise them from the domain of gross buffoonery to that of true art, the most magnificent premiums are given to the best, actors are made equal in rank to officers of state, they are held only to twenty-five years' service, reckoning from their debut,—and finally, they receive for the rest of their lives a pension equal to their full salaries. High rewards are given to Russian star-actors, in order if possible to draw talent of every sort forth from the dry steppes of native art. The Russian actors are compelled on pain of punishment to go regularly to the German theater, with a view to their improvement, and in order to make this as effective as may be, enormous compensations attract the best German stars to St. Petersburg. And yet all this is useless, and the Russian theater is not raised above the dignity of a workshop. Only the comic side of the national character, a burlesque and droll simplicity, is admirably represented by actors whose skill and the scope of whose talents may be reckoned equal to the Germans in the same line. But in the higher walks of the drama they are worthless. The people have neither cultivation nor sentiment for serious works, while the poets to produce them, and the actors to represent them, are alike wanting.

Immediately after the submission of Poland in 1831, the theaters, permanent and itinerant, were closed. The plan was conceived of not allowing them to be reopened until they could be occupied by Russian performers. But as the Government recovered from its first rage, this was found to be impracticable. The officers of the garrisons in Poland, however numerous, could never support Russian theaters, and besides, where were the performers to come from? In Warsaw, however, it was determined to force a theater into existence, and a Russian newspaper was already established there. The power of the Muscovites has done great things, built vast fortresses and destroyed vaster, but it could not accomplish a Russian theater at Warsaw. Even the paper died before it had attained a regular life, although it cost a great deal of money.

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Finally came the permission to reopen the Polish theater, and indeed the caprice which was before violent against it, was now exceedingly favorable, but of course not without collateral purposes. The scanty theater on the Krasinski place, which was alone in Warsaw, except the remote circus and the little theater of King Stanislaus Augustus, was given up, and the sum of four millions of florins (\$1,600,000) devoted to the erection of two large and magnificent theaters. The superintendence of the work of building and the management of the performances was, according to the Russian system, intrusted to one General Rautenstrauch, a man seventy years old, and worn out both in mind and body. The two theaters were erected under one roof, and arranged on the grandest and most splendid scale. The edifice is opposite the City Hall, occupies a whole side of the main public place, and is above 750 feet in length. The pit in each is supported by a series of immense, stupid, square pilasters, such as architecture has seldom witnessed out of Russia. Over these pilasters stands the first row of boxes supported by beautifully wrought Corinthian columns, and above these rise three additional rows. The edifice is about 160 feet high and is the most colossal building in Warsaw. As it was designed to treat the actors in military fashion and according to Russian style, the building was laid out like barracks and about seven hundred persons live in it, most of them employed about the theater. The two stages were built by a German architect under the inspection of the General whose peremptory suggestions were frequent and injurious. Both the great theater as it is called, which has four rows of boxes, and can contain six thousand auditors, and the Variete theater which is very much smaller, are fitted out with all sorts of apparatus that ever belonged to a stage. In fact, new machinery has in many cases been invented for them and proved totally useless. The Russian often hits upon queer notions when he tries to show his gifts.

On one side a very large and strong bridge has been erected leading from the street to the stage, to be used whenever the piece requires large bodies of cavalry to make their appearance, and there are machines that can convey persons with the swiftness of lightning down from the sky above the stage, a distance of 56 feet. A machine for which a ballet has been composed surpasses everything I ever saw in its size; it serves to transport eighty persons together on a seeming cloud from the roof to the foot-lights. I was astonished by it when I first beheld it although I had seen the machines of the grand opera at Paris: the second time I reflected that it alone cost 40,000 florins [\$16,000].

Under the management of two Russian Generals, who have hitherto been at the head of the establishment, a vast deal has in this way been accomplished for mere external show.



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The great Russian theatre of St. Petersburg has served for a model, and accordingly nothing has really been improved except that part of the performance which is farthest removed from genuine art, namely the ballet. That fact is that out of Paris the ballet is nowhere so splendid as in the great theater at Warsaw, not even at St. Petersburg, for the reason that the Russian is inferior to the Pole in physical beauty and grace. Heretofore the corps of the St. Petersburg ballet has twice been composed of Poles, but this arrangement has been abandoned as derogatory to the national honor. The sensual attractions of the ballet render it the most important thing in the theater. A great school for dancers has been established, where pupils may be found from three to eighteen years old. It is painful to see the little creatures, hardly weaned from their mothers' breasts—twisted and tortured for the purposes of so doubtful an occupation as dancing. The school contains about two hundred pupils, all of whom occasionally appear together on the boards, in the ballet of Charis and Flora, for instance, when they receive a trifling compensation. For the rest the whole ballet corps are bound to daily practice.

The taste of the Russians has made prominent in the ballet exactly those peculiarities which are least to its credit. It must be pronounced exaggerated and lascivious. Aside from these faults, which may be overlooked as the custom of the country, we must admit that the dancing is uncommonly good.

The greater the care of the management for the ballet, the more injurious is its treatment of the drama. This is melancholy for the artists and especially those who have come to the imperial theater from the provinces, who are truly respectable and are equally good in comedy and tragedy. The former has been less shackled than the latter for the reason that it turns upon domestic life. But tragedy is most frightfully treated by the political censorship, so that a Polish poet can hardly expect to see his pieces performed on the stage of his native country. Hundreds of words and phrases such as freedom, avenging sword, slave, oppression, father-land, cannot be permitted and are stricken out. Accordingly nothing but the trumpery of mere penny-a-liners is brought forward, though this sometimes assumes an appearance of originality. These abortions remain on the stage only through the talent of the artists, the habit of the public to expect nothing beyond dullness and stupidity in the drama, and finally, the severe regulation which forbids any mark of disapprobation under pain of imprisonment. The best plays are translated from the French, but they are never the best of their kind. To please the Russians only those founded on civic life are chosen, and historical subjects are excluded. Princely personages are not allowed to be introduced on the stage, nor even high officers of state, such as ministers and generals. In former times the Emperor of China was once allowed to pass, but more recently the Bey of Tunis was struck out and converted into an African nobleman. A tragedy is inadmissible in any case, and should one be found with nothing objectionable but its name, it is called drama.



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In such circumstances we would suppose that the actors would lose all interest in their profession. But this is not the case. At least the cultivated portion of the public at Warsaw never go to the theater to see a poetic work of art, but only to see and enjoy the skill of the performers. Of course there is no such thing as theatrical criticism at Warsaw; but everybody rejoices when the actors succeed in causing the wretchedness of the piece to be forgotten. The universal regret for the wretched little theater on the Krasinski place, where Suczkowska, afterward Mad. Halpert, founded her reputation in the character of the Maid of Orleans, is the best criticism on the present state of the drama.

The Russians take great delight in the most trivial pieces. Even Prince Paskiewich sometimes stays till the close of the last act. To judge by the direction of his opera-glass, which is never out of his hand, he has the fortune to discover poetry elsewhere than on the stage. In truth the Warsaw boxes are adorned by beautiful faces. Even the young princess Jablonowska is not the most lovely.

The arrangements of the Warsaw theaters are exactly like those of the Russian theater at St. Petersburg, but almost without exception, the pupils of the dramatic school, of whom seventeen have come upon the boards, have proved mere journeymen, and have been crowded aside by performers from the provincial cities. None of the eminent artists of late years have enjoyed the advantages of the school. The position of the actors at Warsaw is just the same as at St. Petersburg. The day after their first appearance they are regularly taken into duty as imperial officials, take an oath never to meddle with political affairs, nor join in any secret society, nor ever to pronounce on the stage anything more or anything else than what is in the stamped parts given them by the imperial management.

Actors' salaries at Warsaw are small in comparison with those of other countries. Forty or fifty silver rubles a month (\$26 to \$33) pass for a very respectable compensation, and even the very best performers rarely get beyond a thousand rubles a year (\$650). Madame Halpert long had to put up with that salary till once Taglioni said to Prince Paskiewich that it was a shame for so magnificent an artist to be no better paid than a writer. Her salary was thereupon raised one-half, and subsequently by means of a similar mediation she succeeded in getting an addition of a thousand rubles yearly under the head of wardrobe expenses. This was a thing so extraordinary that the managing General declared that so enormous a compensation would never again be heard of in any imperial theatre. The pupils of the dramatic school receive eighteen rubles monthly, and, according to their performances, obtain permission every two years to ask an increase of salary. The period of service extends to twenty-five years, with the certainty of a yearly pension equal to the salary received at the close of the period.

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For the artist this is a very important arrangement, which enables him to endure a thousand inconveniences.

There is no prospect of a better state of the Polish drama. Count Fedro may, in his comedies, employ the finest satire with a view to its restoration, but he will accomplish nothing so long as the Generals ride the theater as they would a war horse. On the other hand, no Russian drama has been established, because the conditions are wanting among the people. That is a vast empire, but poor in beauty; mighty in many things, but weak in artistic talents; powerful and prompt in destruction, but incapable spontaneously and of itself to create anything.

\* \* \* \* \*

*“Death’s jest book, or the Fool’s tragedy.”*

The *Examiner*, for July 20, contains an elaborate review, with numerous extracts, of a play just published under this title in London. “It is radiant,” says the critic, “in almost every page with passion, fancy, or thought, set in the most apposite and exquisite language. We have but to discard, in reading it, the hope of any steady interest of story, or consistent development of character: and we shall find a most surprising succession of beautiful passages, unrivaled in sentiment and pathos, as well as in terseness, dignity, and picturesque vigor of language; in subtlety and power of passion, as well as in delicacy and strength of imagination; and as perfect and various, in modulation of verse, as the airy flights of Fletcher or Marlowe’s mighty line.

“The whole range of the Elizabethan drama has not finer expression, nor does any single work of the period, out of Shakspeare, exhibit so many rich and precious bars of golden verse, side by side with such poverty and misery of character and plot. Nothing can be meaner than the design, nothing grander than the execution.”

In conclusion, the *Examiner* observes—“We are not acquainted with any living author who could have written the Fool’s Tragedy; and, though the publication is unaccompanied by any hint of authorship, we believe that we are correct in stating it to be a posthumous production of the author of the Bride’s Tragedy; Mr. Thomas Lovell Beddoes. Speaking of the latter production, now more than a quarter of a century ago, (Mr. Beddoes was then, we believe, a student at Pembroke College, Oxford, and a minor,) the *Edinburgh Review* ventured upon a prediction of future fame and achievement for the writer, which an ill-chosen and ill-directed subsequent career unhappily intercepted and baffled. But in proof of the noble natural gifts which suggested such anticipation, the production before us remains: and we may judge to what extent a more steady course and regular cultivation would have fertilized a soil, which, neglected and uncared for, has thrown out such a glorious growth of foliage and fruit as this Fool’s Tragedy.”



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The following exquisite lyric is among the passages with which these judgments are sustained:

“If thou wilt ease thine heart  
Of love and all its smart,  
Then sleep, dear, sleep;  
And not a sorrow  
Hang any tear on your eyelashes;  
Lie still and deep  
Sad soul, until like sea-wave washes  
The rim o’ the sun to-morrow,  
In eastern sky.

But wilt thou cure thine heart  
Of love and all its smart,  
Then die, dear, die;  
'Tis deeper, sweeter,  
Than on a rose bank to lie dreaming  
With folded eye;  
And then alone, amid the beaming  
Of love’s stars, thou’lt meet her  
In eastern sky.”

\* \* \* \* \*

### WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED.

Praed, it has always seemed to us, was the cleverest writer in his way that has ever contributed to the English periodicals. His fugitive lyrics and arabesque romances, half sardonic and half sentimental, published with Hookham Frere’s “Whistlecraft” and Macaulay’s Roundhead Ballads, in *Knight’s Quarterly Magazine*, and after the suspension of that work, for the most part in the annual souvenirs, are altogether unequalled in the class of compositions described as *vers de societie*.—Who that has read “School and School Fellows”, “Palinodia”, “The Vicar”, “Josephine”, and a score of other pieces in the same vein, does not desire to possess all the author has left us, in a suitable edition? It has been frequently stated in the English journals that such a collection was to be published, under the direction of Praed’s widow, but we have yet only the volume prepared by a lover of the poet some years ago for the Langleys, in this city. In the “Memoirs of Eminent Etonians,” just printed by Mr. Edward Creasy, we have several waifs of Praed’s that we believe will be new to all our readers. Here is a characteristic political rhyme:



## VERSES

*On seeing the speaker asleep in his chair in one of the debates of the first reformed Parliament.*

Sleep, Mr. Speaker, 'tis surely fair  
If you mayn't in your bed, that you should in your chair.  
Louder and longer now they grow,  
Tory and Radical, Aye and Noe;  
Talking by night and talking by day.  
Sleep, Mr. Speaker, sleep while you may!

Sleep, Mr. Speaker; slumber lies  
Light and brief on a Speaker's eyes,  
Fielden or Finn in a minute or two  
Some disorderly thing will do;  
Riot will chase repose away  
Sleep, Mr. Speaker, sleep while you may!

Sleep, Mr. Speaker. Sweet to men  
Is the sleep that cometh but now and then,  
Sweet to the weary, sweet to the ill,  
Sweet to the children that work in the mill.  
You have more need of repose than they—  
Sleep, Mr. Speaker, sleep while you may!



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Sleep, Mr. Speaker, Harvey will soon  
Move to abolish the sun and the moon;  
Hume will no doubt be taking the sense  
Of the House on a question of sixteen pence.  
Statesmen will howl, and patriots bray—  
Sleep, Mr. Speaker, sleep while you may!

Sleep, Mr. Speaker, and dream of the time,  
When loyalty was not quite a crime,  
When Grant was a pupil in Canning's school,  
And Palmerston fancied Wood a fool.  
Lord, how principles pass away—  
Sleep, Mr. Speaker, sleep while you may.

The following is a spirited version of a dramatic scene in the second book of the Annals of Tacitus:

*Arminius.*

Back, Back;—he fears not foaming flood  
Who fears not steel-clad line:—  
No warrior thou of German blood,  
No brother thou of mine.  
Go earn Rome's chain to load thy neck,  
Her gems to deck thy hilt;  
And blazon honor's hapless wreck  
With all the gauds of guilt.

But wouldst thou have *me* share the prey?  
By all that I have done,  
The Varian bones that day by day  
Lie whitening in the sun;  
The legion's trampled panoply  
The eagle's shattered wing.  
I would not be for earth or sky  
So scorned and mean a thing,

Ho, call me here the wizard, boy,  
Of dark and subtle skill,  
To agonize but not destroy,  
To torture, not to kill.  
When swords are out, and shriek and shout  
Leave little room for prayer,



No fetter on man's arm or heart  
Hangs half so heavy there.

I curse him by the gifts the land  
Hath won from him and Rome.  
The riving axe, the wasting brand,  
Rent forest, blazing home.  
I curse him by our country's gods,  
The terrible, the dark,  
The breakers of the Roman rods,  
The smiters of the bark.

Oh, misery that such a ban  
On such a brow should be!  
Why comes he not in battle's van  
His country's chief to be?  
To stand a comrade by my side,  
The sharer of my fame,  
And worthy of a brother's pride,  
And of a brother's name?

But it is past!—where heroes press  
And cowards bend the knee,  
Arminius is not brotherless,  
His brethren are the free.  
They come around:—one hour, and light  
Will fade from turf and tide,  
Then onward, onward to the fight,  
With darkness for our guide.

To-night, to-night, when we shall meet  
In combat face to face,  
Then only would Arminius greet  
The renegade's embrace.  
The canker of Rome's guilt shall be  
Upon his dying name;  
And as he lived in slavery,  
So shall he fall in shame.

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*Campbell and Washington Irving.*

The Editor of *The Albion*, in noticing the republication by the Harpers of the very interesting Life and Letters of Thomas Campbell, by Dr. Beattie, has the following observations upon Mr. Irving's introductory letter:

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"*Washington Irving*, at the request of the publishers, contributed a very interesting letter to themselves, directing public notice to the value of this edition. He pays also a hearty and deserved tribute, not only to the genius of Campbell, but to his many excellencies and kindly specialities of character. The author of "Hohenlinden," and the "Battle of the Baltic" stands in need of no man's praise as a lyric poet—but this sort of testimony to his private worth is grateful and well-timed. Here is an interesting passage from Mr. Irving's introductory communication. He is alluding to Campbell's fame and position, when he himself first made Campbell's acquaintance in England.

"I had considered the early productions of Campbell as brilliant indications of a genius yet to be developed, and trusted that, during the long interval which had elapsed, he had been preparing something to fulfill the public expectation; I was greatly disappointed, therefore, to find that, as yet, he had contemplated no great and sustained effort. My disappointment in this respect was shared by others, who took the same interest in his fame, and entertained the same idea of his capacity. 'There he is cooped up in Sydenham,' said a great Edinburgh critic to me, 'simmering his brains to serve up a little dish of poetry, instead of pouring out a whole caldron.'" "Scott, too, who took a cordial delight in Campbell's poetry, expressed himself to the same effect. 'What a pity is it,' said he to me 'that Campbell does not give full sweep to his genius. He has wings that would bear him up to the skies, and he does now and then spread them grandly, but folds them up again and resumes his perch, as if afraid to launch away. The fact is, he is a bugbear to himself. The brightness of his early success is a detriment to all his future efforts. *He is afraid of the shadow that his own fame casts before him.*" "Little was Scott aware at the time that he, in truth, was a 'bugbear' to Campbell. This I infer from an observation of Mrs. Campbell's in reply to an expression of regret on my part that her husband did not attempt something on a grand Scale. 'It is unfortunate for Campbell,' said she, 'that he lives in the same age with Scott and Byron.' I asked why. 'Oh,' said she, 'they write so much and so rapidly. Now Campbell writes slowly, and it takes him some time to get under way; and just as he has fairly begun, out comes one of their poems, that sets the world agog and quite daunts him, so that he throws by his pen in despair.'" "I pointed out the essential difference in their kinds of poetry, and the qualities which insured perpetuity to that of her husband. 'You can't persuade Campbell of that,' said she. 'He is apt to undervalue his own works, and to consider his own lights put out, whenever they come blazing out with their great torches.'

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“I repeated the conversation to Scott sometime afterward, and it drew forth a characteristic comment. ‘Pooh!’ said he, good-humoredly, ‘how can Campbell mistake the matter so much. Poetry goes by quality, not by bulk. My poems are mere cairngorms, wrought up, perhaps, with a cunning hand, and may pass well in the market as long as cairngorms are the fashion; but they are mere Scotch pebbles after all; now Tom Campbell’s are real diamonds, and diamonds of the first water.’”

“The foregoing is new to us, and full of a double interest. It is followed, however, by a statement, that needs a word of explanation. Mr. Irving says:

“I have not time at present to furnish personal anecdotes of my intercourse with Campbell, neither does it afford any of a striking nature. Though extending over a number of years, it was never very intimate. His residence in the country, and my own long intervals of absence on the continent, rendered our meetings few and far between. To tell the truth, I was not much drawn to Campbell, having taken up a wrong notion concerning him, from seeing him at times when his mind was ill at ease, and preyed upon by secret griefs. I thought him disposed to be querulous and captious, and had heard his apparent discontent attributed to jealous repining at the success of his poetical contemporaries. In a word, I knew little of him but what might be learned in the casual intercourse of general society; whereas it required the close communion of confidential friendship, to sound the depth of his character and know the treasures of excellence hidden beneath its surface. Beside, he was dogged for years by certain malignant scribblers, who took a pleasure in misrepresenting all his actions, and holding him up in an absurd and disparaging point of view. In what hostility originated I do not know, but it must have given much annoyance to his sensitive mind, and may have affected his popularity. I know not to what else to attribute a circumstance to which I was a witness during my last visit to England. It was at an annual dinner of the Literary Fund, at which Prince Albert presided, and where was collected much of the prominent talent of the kingdom. In the course of the evening Campbell rose to make a speech. I had not seen him for years, and his appearance showed the effect of age and ill-health; *it was evident, also, that his mind was obfuscated by the wine he had been drinking.* He was confused and tedious in his remarks; still, there was nothing but what one would have thought would have been received with indulgence, if not deference, from a veteran of his fame and standing; a living classic. On the contrary, to my surprise, I soon observed signs of impatience in the company; the poet was repeatedly interrupted by coughs and discordant sounds, and as often endeavored to proceed; the noise at length became intolerable, and he was absolutely clamored down, sinking into

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his chair overwhelmed and disconcerted. I could not have thought such treatment possible to such a person at such a meeting. Hallam, author of the Literary History of the Middle Ages, who sat by me on this occasion, marked the mortification of the poet, and it excited his generous sympathy. Being shortly afterward on the floor to reply to a toast, he took occasion to advert to the recent remarks of Campbell, and in so doing called up in review all his eminent achievements in the world of letters, and drew such a picture of his claims upon popular gratitude and popular admiration, as to convict the assembly of the glaring impropriety they had been guilty of—to soothe the wounded sensibility of the poet, and send him home to, I trust, a quiet pillow.’

“Now, the very same facts are seen by different observers in a different point of view. It so happened that we ourselves were present at this dinner, which took place in 1842; and the painful circumstance alluded to by Mr. Irving did not produce the effect on us, that it appears to have produced on him. Without making a long story about a trifle, we can call to mind no appearance of hostility or ill-will manifested on that occasion; and on the contrary, recollect, in our immediate neighborhood, a mournful sense of distress at the scene exhibited, and sufficiently hinted in the few unpleasant words we have italicized. A muster of Englishmen preferred coughing down their favorite bard, to allowing him to mouth out maudlin twaddle, before the Prince, then first formally introduced to the public, and before a meeting whereat “was collected much of the prominent talent of the kingdom.” Mr. Irving, himself most deservedly a man of mark, looked on with much, surprise. Looking on ourselves then, and writing now, as one of the public, and as one of the many to whom Campbell’s name and fame are inexpressibly dear, we honestly think that of two evils the lesser was chosen. We think Mr. Hallam’s lecture must have been inaudible to the greater part of the company.”

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The Archbishop of Lembergh has prohibited his clergy from wearing long hair like the peasants, and from smoking in public, “like demagogues and sons of Baal.”

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The Persians have a saying, that “Ten measures of talk were sent down upon the earth, and the women took nine.”

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## AUTHORS AND BOOKS

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No man is more enshrined in the heart of the French people than the poet BERANGER. A few weeks since he went one evening with one of his nephews to the *Clos des Lilas*, a garden in the students' quarter devoted to dancing in the open air, intending to look for a few minutes upon a scene he had not visited since his youth, and then withdraw. But he found it impossible to remain unknown and unobserved.



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The announcement of his presence ran through the garden in a moment, the dances stopped, the music ceased, and the crowd thronged toward the point where the still genial and lovely old man was standing. At once there rose from all lips the cry of *Vive Beranger!* which was quickly followed by that of *Vive la Republique!* The poet whose diffidence is excessive, could not answer a word, but only smiled and blushed his thanks at this enthusiastic reception. The acclamations continuing, an agent of the police invited him to withdraw, lest his presence might occasion disorder. The illustrious songwriter at once obeyed; by a singular coincidence the door through which he went out opened upon the place where Marshal Ney was shot. If he were now in the vein of writing, what a stirring lyric all these circumstances might suggest.

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AUDUBON AND WASHINGTON IRVING—THE PLAGUE OF RAILROADS.—The voyager up the Hudson will involuntarily anathematize the invention of the rail, when he sees how much of the most romantic beauty has been defaced or destroyed by that tyranny which, disregarding all private desire and justice, has filled up bays, and cut off promontories, and leveled heights, to make way for the intrusive and noisy car. But the effects of these so-called “improvements,” upon the romantic in nature will be forgotten if he considers the injury and wrong they cause to persons, and particularly to those whose genius has contributed more to human happiness than all the inventions in oecconomical art.

The Nestor of our naturalists, and in his field, the greatest as well as the oldest of our artists, AUDUBON, with the comparatively slight gains of a long life of devotion to science, and of triumphs which had made him world-renowned, purchased on the banks of the river, not far from the city, a little estate which it was the joy as well as the care of his closing years to adorn with everything that a taste so peculiarly and variously schooled could suggest. He had made it a pleasing gate-way to the unknown world, with beautiful walks leading down to the river whose depth and calmness and solemn grandeur symbolized the waves through which he should pass to the reward of a life of such toil and enviable glory. He had promise of an evening worthy of his meridian—when the surveyors and engineers, with their charter-privileges, invaded his retreat, built a road through his garden, destroyed forever his repose, and—the melancholy truth is known—made of his mind a ruin.

WASHINGTON IRVING—now sixty-seven years of age—had found a resting-place at *Wolfert's Roost*, close by the scenes which lie in the immortal beauty that radiates from his pages, and when he thought that in this Tusculum he was safe from all annoying, free to enjoy the quietness and ease he had earned from the world, the same vandals laid the track through his grounds, not only destroying all their beauty



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and attraction, but leaving fens from which these summer heats distilled contagion. He has therefore been ill for some weeks, and as he had never a strong constitution, and has preserved his equable but not vigorous health only by the most constant carefulness, his physicians and friends begin to be alarmed for the result. Heaven avert the end they so fearfully anticipate. He cannot go alone: The honest Knickerbocker, the gentle Crayon, and the faithful brother Agapida, with Washington Irving will forever leave the world, which cannot yet resign itself to the loss of either.

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Mr. SEBA SMITH, so well known as the author of the "Letters of Major Jack Downing," and to a different sort of readers for his more serious contributions to our literature, has just completed the printing of an original and very remarkable work, upon which he has been engaged about two years, entitled "New Elements of Geometry," and it will soon be published in this city by Putnam, and in London by Bentley. It will probably produce a sensation in the world of science. Its design is the reconstruction of the entire methods of Geometry. All geometers, from the dawn of the science, have built their systems upon these definitions: *A line is length without breadth, and A surface is length and breadth, without thickness.* Mr. Smith asserts that these definitions are false, and sustains his position by numerous demonstrations in the pure Euclidean style. He declares that every mathematical line has a definite *breadth*, which is as measurable as its length, and that every mathematical surface has a *thickness*, as measurable as the contents of any solid. His demonstrations, on diagrams, seem to be eminently clear, simple, and conclusive. The effects of this discovery and these demonstrations are, to simplify very much the whole subject of Geometry and mathematics, and to clear it of many obscurities and difficulties. All geometers heretofore have claimed that there are *three kinds* of quantity in Geometry, different in their *natures*, and requiring units of different natures to measure them. Mr. Smith shows that there is but *one* kind of quantity in Geometry, and but one kind of unit; and that lines, surfaces, and solids are always measured by the same identical unit.

Besides the leading features of the work which we have thus briefly described, it contains many new and beautiful demonstrations of general principles in Geometry, to which the author was led by his new methods of investigation. Among these we may mention one, *viz.*, "The square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle equals four times the area of the triangle, plus the square of the difference of the other two sides." This principle has been known to mathematicians by means of arithmetic and algebra, but has never before, we believe, been reduced to a geometrical demonstration. The demonstration



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of this principle by Mr. Smith is one of the clearest, simplest, and most beautiful in Geometry. The work is divided into three parts, I. The Philosophy of Geometry, II. Demonstrations in Geometry, and III. Harmonies of Geometry. The demonstrative character of it is occasionally enlivened by philosophical and historical observations, which will add much to its interest with the general reader. We have too little skill in studies of this sort to be altogether confident in our opinion, but certainly it strikes us from an examination of the larger and more important portion of Mr. Smith's essay, that it is an admirable specimen of statement and demonstration, and that it must secure to its author immediately a very high rank in mathematical science. We shall await with much interest the judgments of the professors. It makes a handsome octavo of some 200 pages.

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M. FLANDIN, an eminent dilettante and designer attached to the French embassy in Persia, has published in the last number of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* an interesting memoir of the ruins of Persepolis, under the title of "An Archaiological Journey in Persia." On his route to the ruins he witnessed melancholy evidence, in the condition of the surface and population, of the improvidence and noxiousness of Oriental despotism. He tells us that the remains of the magnificent palace of Darius are dispersed over an immense *plateau*, which looks down on the plain of Merdacht. "Assuredly, they are not much, compared with what they must have been in the time of the last Prince who sheltered himself under the royal roof. Nevertheless, what is now found of them still excites astonishment, and inspires a sentiment of religious admiration for a civilization that could create monuments so stupendous; impress on them a character of so much grandeur; and give them a solidity which has prereserved the most important parts until our days, through twenty-two centuries, and all the revolutions by which Persia has been devastated. The pillars are covered with European names deeply cut in the stone. English are far the most numerous. Very few, however, are of celebrated travelers. We observed, with satisfaction, those of Sir John Malcolm and Mr. Morier, both of whom have so successfully treated Persian subjects."

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EMILE GIRARDIN states in his journal that he paid for the eleven volumes of Chateaubriand's Posthumous Memoirs as they appeared, piecemeal, in his *feuilleton*, the sum of ninety-seven thousand one hundred and eight francs. They occupied a hundred and ninety-two *feuilletons*, and cost him thus more than a franc a line. Alfred de Broglie has made these memoirs the test of a paper entitled "Memoirs de Chateaubriand, a Moral and Political Study," in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. It is a severe analysis of the book and the man. He concludes that Chateaubriand



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was one of the most vainglorious, selfish and malignant of his tribe. He, indeed, betrayed himself broadly, but surviving writers, who knew intimately his private life—such as St. Beuve—have disclosed more of his habitual libertinism. The Radical journals, and some of the Legitimists, turn to account the portraits left in these memoirs of Louis Philippe, Thiers, Guizot, and other statesmen of the Orleans monarchy. They are effusions of personal and political spite. Chateaubriand hated the whole Orleans dynasty, and has not spared the elder Bourbons.

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GUIZOT has been for thirty years in political life, many of them a minister, and was long at the head of the government of Louis Philippe, but is now a poor man. Recently, on the marriage of his two daughters with two brothers De Witt, the descendants of the great Hollander, he was unable to give them a cent in the way of marriage portions. This fact proves the personal integrity of the man more than a score of arguments. Not only has the native honesty of his character forbidden him to take advantage of his eminent position to gain a fortune, but the indomitable pride which is his leading characteristic, has never stooped to the attractions of public plunder or the fruits of official speculation. Guizot is not up to the times, and hence his downfall, but future historians will do justice alike to his great talents and the uprightness of his intentions.

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One of the best works yet produced on the History of Art, is by Schnaase, of Duesseldorf. The first three volumes have been published and translated into French and English, and have met with great success in both those languages. The fourth volume is just announced in Germany. Artists and other competent persons at Duesseldorf who have seen the proof-sheets, speak in the highest terms not only of its historical merits, but of the excellence of its criticisms.

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The fifth volume of the *History of Spain*, by Rousseau St. Hilaire, includes the period from 1336 to 1649. The professor has been employed ten years on his enterprise; he is lauded by all the critics for his research, method, and style. We have recently spoken of this work at some length in *The International*. The PARIS ACADEMY OF INSCRIPTIONS and Belles Lettres is constantly sending forth the most valuable contributions; to the history of the middle ages especially. It is now completing the publication of the sixth volume of the Charters, Diplomas, and other documents relating to French History. This volume, which was prepared by M. Pardessus, includes the period from the beginning of 1220 to the end of 1270, and comprehends the reign of St.

Louis. The seventh volume, coming down some fifty years later, is also nearly ready for the printer. Its editor is M. Laboulaye. The first volume of the Oriental

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Historians of the Crusaders, translated into French, is now going through the press, and the second is in course of preparation. The greater part of the first volume of the Greek Historians of the same chivalrous wars is also printed, and the work is going rapidly forward. The Academy is also preparing a collection of Occidental History on the same subject. When these three collections are published, all the documents of any value relating to the Crusades will be easily accessible, whether for the use of the historian or the romancer. The Academy is also now engaged in getting out the twenty-first volume of the History of the Gauls and of France, and the nineteenth of the Literary History of France, which brings the annals of French letters down to the thirteenth century. It is also publishing the sixteenth volume of its own memoirs, which contains the history of the Academy for the last four years, and the work of Freret on Geography, besides several other works of less interest. From all this some idea may be formed of the labors and usefulness of the institution.

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M. LEVERRIER, the astronomer, has published a long and able argument in support of the free and universal use of the electric telegraph. He has supplied a most instructive and interesting exposition of the employment and utility of the invention, in all the countries in which it has been established. The American and the several European tariffs of charge are appended. He explains the different systems, scientific and practical, in detail, and gives the process and proceeds. He observes that the practicability of laying the wires *under* ground along all the great roads of France, which will protect them from accidents and mischief, will yield immense advantage to the Government and to individuals. He appears to prefer Bain's Telegraph, for communication, to any other, and minutely traces and develops its mechanism. A bill before the French chambers, which he advocates, opens to the public the use of the telegraph, but with various restrictions calculated to prevent *revolutionary* or seditious abuses; to prevent illicit speculations in the public funds, and other bad purposes to which a free conveyance might be applied. The director of the telegraph is to be empowered to refuse to transmit what he shall deem repugnant to public order and good morals, and the government to suspend at will all private correspondence, on one or many lines.

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THE WORKS OF REV. LEONARD WOODS, D.D., lately Professor of Theology in the Congregational Seminary of Andover, are in course of publication, and the third and fourth volumes have just appeared, completing the theological lectures of the venerable Professor, making in all one hundred and twenty-eight. In these, the student is furnished with a complete body of divinity as generally received by the orthodox

denominations in New England, and has presented in a clear, condensed manner, the matured results of a long life of thought and study devoted to these subjects.



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The fourth volume is occupied with theological letters. The first 121 pages contain those to Unitarians; next follows the Reply to Dr. Ware's Letters to Unitarians and Calvinists, and Remarks on Dr. Ware's Answer, a series remarkable for courtesy and kindness toward opponents, and clearness and faithfulness in the expression of what was regarded as truth. Following these, are eight letters to Dr. Taylor of New Haven; An Examination of the Doctrine of Perfection, as held by Mr. Mahan and others, and a letter to Mr. Mahan; A Dissertation on Miracles, and the Course of Theological Study as pursued at the Seminary at Andover. One more volume will complete the works of this long active and eminent divine.

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THE REV. ORVILLE DEWEY, D.D., we learn from the correspondence of the *Christian Inquirer*, is living upon the farm where he was born, in Sheffield, Massachusetts, having, in the successive improvements of many years, converted the original house into an irregular but most comfortable and pleasant dwelling. The view from the back piazza is as fine as can be commanded anywhere in Berkshire, and should the shifting channel of the Housatonic only be accommodating enough to wind a little nearer the house, or even suffer some not impossible stoppage which would convert the marshy meadow in front into a lake, nothing can be conceived of which could then improve the situation. In this lovely retirement, Dr. Dewey endeavors to unite labor and study; working with his own hands, with hoe and rake, in a way to surprise those who only know how he can handle a pen. He is preparing, in a leisurely way, for a course of Lectures for the Lowell Institute, upon a theme admirably suited to his previous studies, and in which it is evident his whole mind and heart are bound up. We are glad to know that it is not until winter after next that this work must be taken from the anvil.

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DR. HOOKER, we learn, has again proceeded to a new and unexplored region in India, in the prosecution of his important botanical labors. THE AUTHOR OF THE AMBER WITCH, the Pomeranian pastor, Meinhold, has been condemned to three months' imprisonment, and a fine of one hundred thalers, besides costs, for slander against another clergyman named Stosch, in a communication published in the *New Prussian Zeitung*. The sentence was rendered more severe than usual in such cases by the fact that Meinhold, who appears to possess more talent than temper, had previously been condemned for the same offense against another party. The *Amber Witch* is one of the "curiosities of literature", for in the last German edition the author is obliged to prove that it is entirely a work of imagination, and not, as almost all the German critics believed it to be when it appeared, the reprint of an old chronicle. It was, in fact, written as a trap for the disciples of Strauss and his school, who had pronounced the Scriptures

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of the Old and New Testaments to be a collection, of legends, from historical research, assisted by “internal evidence”. Meinhold did not spare them when they fell into the snare, and made merry with the historical knowledge and critical acumen that could not detect the contemporary romancer under the mask of the chronicler of two centuries ago, while they decided so positively as to the authority of the most ancient writings in the world. He has been in prison before.

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“THE NIGHT SIDE OF NATURE[1]”, by Catharine Crowe, so well known as one of the cleverest of the younger set of literary women in England, we have already mentioned as in the press of Mr. Redfield; it is now published, and we commend it as one of the most entertaining and curious works that has ever appeared on the “wonders of the invisible world”. We quote from the judicious critic of the *Tribune* the following paragraphs in regard to it:

[Footnote 1: The Night side of Nature; or, Ghosts and Ghost Seers. By Catherine Crowe. New York. J.S. Redfield.]

“The author of this work is an accomplished German scholar. Without being a slave to the superstitious love of marvels and prodigies, her mind evidently leans toward the twilight sphere, which lies beyond the acknowledged boundaries of either faith or knowledge. She seems to be entirely free from the sectarian spirit; she can look at facts impartially, without reference to their bearing on favorite dogmas; nor does she claim such a full, precise and completely-rounded acquaintance with the mysteries of the spiritual world, whether from intuition or revelation, as not to believe that there may be more “things in heaven and earth than is dreamt of in our philosophy.” In this respect, it must be owned that she has not the advantage of certain religious journals in this city, like the *Christian Inquirer* and *The Independent*, for instance—which have been so fully initiated into the secrets of universal truth as to regard all inquiry into such subjects either as too vulgar for a Christian gentleman, *comme il faut*, or as giving a “sanction to the atheistic delusion that there may be a spiritual or supernatural agency” in manifestations which are not accounted for by the New-England Primer. Mrs. Crowe, on the contrary, supposes that there may be something worthy of philosophical investigation in those singular phenomena, which, surpassing the limits of usual experience, have not yet found any adequate explanation.

“The phrase ‘Night Side of Nature’ is borrowed from the Germans, who derive it from the language of astronomers, designating the side of a planet that is turned from the sun, as its night side. The Germans draw a parallel between our vague and misty perceptions, when deprived of the light of the sun, and the obscure and uncertain glimpses we obtain of the veiled department of nature, of which, though comprising the solution of the most



important questions, we are in a state of almost total ignorance. In writing a book on these subjects, the author disclaims the intention of enforcing any didactic opinions. She wishes only to suggest inquiry and stimulate observation, in order to gain all possible light on our spiritual nature, both as it now exists in the flesh and is to exist hereafter out of it.



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“It is but justice to say, that the present volume is a successful realization of the purpose thus announced. It presents as full a collection of facts on the subject as is probably to be found in any work in the English language, furnishing materials for the formation of theoretic views, and illustrating an obscure but most interesting chapter in the marvelous history of human nature. It is written with perfect modesty, and freedom from pretense, doing credit to the ability of the author as a narrator, as well as to her fairness and integrity as a reasoner.”

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MR. MILNE EDWARDS presented at a recent meeting of the *Academy of Sciences*, in the name of the Prince of Canino, (C. Bonaparte), the first part of the Prince's large work, *Conspectus Generum Avium*.

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M. GUIZOT has addressed a long letter to each of the five classes of the Institute of France, to declare that he cannot accept the candidateship offered him for a seat in the Superior Council of Public Instruction.

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SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON is to be a candidate for the House of Commons, with Col. Sibthorp, for Lincoln. He has a new play forthcoming for the Princess's Theatre.

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MISS STRICKLAND has in preparation a series of volumes on the Queens of Scotland, as a companion to her, interesting and successful work on the Queens of England.

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THE MARQUIS DE FOUDRAS has published *Un Caprice de Grande Dame*—clever, but as corrupt as her other works.

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MR. HERBERT'S NEW BOOKS.—The *Southern Quarterly Review* for July has the following notice of “Frank Forester's Fish and Fishing in the United States and British Provinces,” recently published by Stringer & Townsend:

“There are few of our writers so variously endowed and accomplished as Mr. Herbert; of a mind easily warmed and singularly enthusiastic, the natural bent of his talent inclines him to romance. He has accordingly given us several stories abounding in stately scenes, and most impressive portraiture. Well skilled in the use of the mother tongue,



as in the broad fields of classical literature, he has written essays of marked eloquence, and criticisms of excellent discrimination and a keen and thorough insight. His contributions to our periodicals have been even more happy than his fictions. With a fine imagination, he inherits a *penchant* and a capacity for poetry, which has enabled him to throw off, without an effort, some of the most graceful fugitive effusions which have been written in America. His accomplishments are as various as his talents. He can paint a landscape as sweetly as he can describe it in words. He is a sportsman of eager impulse, and relishes equally

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well the employments of the fisherman and hunter. He is a naturalist, as well as a sportsman, and brings, to aid his practice and experience, a large knowledge, from study, of the habits of birds, beasts and fishes. He roves land and sea in this pursuit, forest and river, and turns, with equal ease and readiness, from a close examination of Greek and Roman literature, to an emulous exercise of all the arts which have afforded renown to the aboriginal hunter. The volume before us—one of many which he has given to this subject—is one of singular interest to the lover of the rod and angle. It exhibits, on every page, a large personal knowledge of the finny tribes in all the northern portions of our country, and well deserves the examination of those who enjoy such pursuits and pastimes. The author's pencil has happily illustrated the labors of his pen. His portraits of the several fishes of the United States are exquisitely well done and truthful. It is our hope, in future pages, to furnish an ample review of this, and other interesting volumes, of similar character, from the hand of our author. We have drawn to them the attention of some rarely endowed persons of our own region, who, like our author, unite the qualities of the writer and the sportsman; from whom we look to learn in what respects the habits and characters of northern fish differ from our own, and thus supply the deficiency of the work before us. The title of this work is rather too general. The author's knowledge of the fish, and of fishing, in the United States, is almost wholly confined to the regions north of the Chesapeake, and he falls into the error, quite too common to the North, of supposing this region to be the whole country. Another each volume as that before us will be necessary to do justice to the Southern States, whose possessions, in the finny tribes of sea and river, are of a sort to shame into comparative insignificance all the boasted treasures of the North. It would need but few pages in our review, from the proper hands, to render this very apparent to the reader. Meanwhile, we exhort him to seek the book of Mr. Herbert, as a work of much interest and authority, so far as it goes."

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MR. PUTNAM is preparing some elegantly embellished works for the holiday season. Among others, an edition, in octavo, of Miss Fenimore Cooper's charming *Rural Hours*, embellished by twenty finely-colored drawings of birds and flowers; *The Picturesque Souvenir*, or Letters of a Traveler in Europe and America, by Bryant, embellished by a series of finely-executed engravings; and *The Alhambra*, by Washington Irving, with designs by Darley, uniform with the splendid series of Mr. Irving's Illustrated Works, some time in course of publication. We have also seen a specimen copy of a superbly illustrated edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, printed on cream-colored paper, as smooth as ivory; and the

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exquisite designs by Harvey, nearly three hundred in number, are among the most effective ever attempted for the elucidation of this first of all allegories. Professor Sweetser's new work, *Menial Hygiene*, or an Examination of the Intellect and Passions, designed to illustrate their Influence on Health and the Duration of Life, will be published in the course of the present month. Professor Church's *Treatise on Integral and Differential Calculus*, a revised edition; *The Companion*, or *After Dinner Table Talk*, by Chelwood Evelyn, with a fine portrait of Sydney Smith; *The History of Propellers, and Steam Navigation*, illustrated by engravings: a manual, said to combine much valuable information on the subjects, derived from the most authentic sources, by Mr. Robert MacFarlane, editor of the *Scientific American*; and Mr. Ridner's *Artist's Chromatic Hand-Book, or Manual of Colors*, will also be speedily issued by the same publisher. Mr. Putnam's own production, *The World's Progress, or Dictionary of Dates*, containing a comprehensive manual of reference in facts, or epitome of historical and general statistical knowledge, with a corrected chronology, &c., is expected to appear in a few weeks. Mr. Theodore Irving's *Conquest of Florida* is also in progress.

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It is said that Meyerbeer has already completed a grand opera with the title of *L'Africaine*, and is now engaged on a comic opera. This is probably nothing more than one of the trumpets which this composer knows so well how to blow beforehand. Meyerbeer is not greater in music than in the art of tickling public expectation and keeping the public aware of his existence.

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The *Lorgnette* has just appeared in a volume.

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## RECENT DEATHS.

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AUGUSTUS WILLIAM NEANDER.

OF this most eminent Christian scholar of the nineteenth century, *The Tribune* furnishes the following brief sketch. "The name of JOHANN AUGUST WILHELM NEANDER is familiar to a large number of our countrymen, both on account of his important contributions to the science of theology, and his personal intimacy with many of our eminent scholars, who have enjoyed the benefit of his instructions, or who have made his acquaintance while pursuing their travels in Germany. Although he had attained a



greater age than might have been anticipated from his habits as a confirmed invalid, being in his sixty-second year, his decease cannot be announced without causing an emotion of surprise and regret to a numerous circle who recognized in him one of the most faithful and conscientious Christian teachers of the present day.

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“NEANDER, as it is well known, was descended from Jewish parents, by whom he was instructed in the rudiments of religion, and at a subsequent period of life became a convert to the Christian faith, by personal inquiry and experience. He was born at Goettingen, in 1789, but passed a considerable portion of his youth at Hamburg, where he was initiated into the rudiments of a classical education. After he had made a profession of Christianity, he continued his studies for a short time at the Universities of Halle and Goettingen, returned to Hamburg, and finally completed his University career at Heidelberg. The following year he was called to the University of Berlin, as Professor of Theology, where he soon gave promise of the brilliant eminence which he has since attained. His first publications were on special topics of ecclesiastical history, including treatises on ‘The Emperor Julian and his Age,’ ‘St. Bernard and his Age,’ ‘The Development of the Principal Systems of the Gnostics,’ ‘St. Chrysostom and the Church in his Age,’ and ‘The Spirit of Tertullian,’ with an ‘Introduction to his Writings.’ These treatises are remarkable monuments of diligence, accuracy, profoundness of research and breadth of comprehension, showing the same intellectual qualities which were afterward signally exhibited in the composition of his masterly volumes on the history of the Christian Religion. His earliest production in this department had for its object to present the most important facts in Church history, in a form adapted to the great mass of readers, without aiming at scientific precision or completeness. This attempt was eminently successful. The first volume of his great work entitled ‘General History of the Church and the Christian Religion,’ was published in 1825, and it was not till twenty years afterward that the work was brought to a close. The appearance of this work formed a new epoch in ecclesiastical history. It at once betrayed the power of a bold and original mind. Instead of consisting of a meager and arid collection of facts, without scientific order, without any vital coherence or symmetry, and without reference to the cardinal elements of Christian experience, the whole work, though singularly chaste and subdued in its tone, throbs with the emotions of genuine life, depicting the influence of Christianity as a school for the soul, and showing its radiant signatures of Divinity in its moral triumphs through centuries.

“His smaller work on the first development of Christianity in the Apostolic Age is marked by the same spirited characteristics, while his ‘Life of Jesus’ is an able defense of the historical verity of the sacred narrative against the ingenious and subtle suggestions of Strauss.



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“The writings and theological position of NEANDER have been fully brought before the American public by Profs. ROBINSON, TORREY, McCLINTOCK, SEARS, and other celebrated scholars who have done much to diffuse a knowledge of the learned labors of Germany among intelligent thinkers in our own country. NEANDER was free from the reproach which attaches to so many of his fellow laborers, of covertly undermining the foundation of Christianity, under the pretense of placing it on a philosophical basis. His opinions are considered strictly evangelical, though doubtless embodied in a modified form. In regard to the extent and soundness of his learning, the clearness of his perceptions, and the purity and nobleness of his character, there can be but one feeling among those who are qualified to pronounce a judgment on the subject.

“NEANDER was never married. He was the victim of almost constant ill health. In many of his personal habits he was peculiar and eccentric. With the wisdom of a sage, he combined the simplicity of a child. Many amusing anecdotes are related of his oddities in the lecture-room, which will serve to enliven the biography that will doubtless be prepared at an early date. We have received no particulars concerning his death, which is said to have been announced by private letters to friends in Boston.”

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JACOB JONES, U.S.N.

COMMODORE JACOB JONES, of the United States Navy, died in Philadelphia on the 6th inst. He was born in Smyrna, Kent county, Delaware, in the year 1770, and was therefore, eighty years of age. He was of an eminently respectable family, and commenced life as a physician, having studied the profession at the University of Pennsylvania. He afterward became clerk of the Supreme Court of Delaware for his native county. When about twenty-nine years old he entered the navy, and made his first cruises under Commodore Barry. He was a midshipman on board the frigate United States, when she bore to France Chief Justice Ellsworth and General Davie, as envoys extraordinary to the French Republic. He was next appointed to the Ganges as midshipman. On the breaking out of the war with Tripoli, he was stationed on the frigate Philadelphia, under Commodore Bainbridge. The disaster which befell that ship and her crew before Tripoli, forms a solemn page in our naval history; atoned, however, by the brilliant achievements to which it gave rise. Twenty months of severe captivity among a barbarous people, and in a noxious climate, neither broke the spirit nor impaired the constitution of Jones. Blest by nature with vigorous health and an invincible resolution, when relieved from bondage by the bravery of his countrymen, he returned home full of life and ardor. He was soon after promoted to a lieutenancy. He was now for some time employed on the Orleans station, where he conducted himself with his usual judgment and propriety, and was a favorite



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in the polite circles of the Orleans and Mississippi territories. He was shortly after appointed to the command of the brig Argus, stationed for the protection of our commerce on the southern maritime frontier. In this situation he acted with vigilance and fidelity, and though there were at one time insidious suggestions to the contrary, it has appeared that he conformed to his instructions, promoted the public interest, and gave entire satisfaction to the government. In 1811, he was transferred to the command of the sloop-of-war Wasp, mounting eighteen twenty-four pound carronades, and dispatched, in the spring of 1812, with communications to the courts of St. Cloud and St. James. Before he returned, war had been declared against Great Britain. He refitted his ship with all possible dispatch, and repaired to sea, but met with no other good fortune than the capture of an inconsiderable prize. He next sailed from Philadelphia on the 13th of October, and on the 18th of the same month encountered a heavy gale, during which the Wasp lost her jibboom and two seamen. On the following night, the watch discovered five strange sail steering eastward. The Wasp hauled to the windward and closely watched their movements until daylight next morning, when it was found that they were six large merchant vessels under convoy of a sloop of war. The former were well manned, two of them mounting sixteen guns each. Notwithstanding the apparent disparity of force. Captain Jones determined to hazard an attack; and as the weather was boisterous, and the swell of the sea unusually high, he ordered down top-gallant yards, closely reefed the top-sails, and prepared for action. We cannot give a detail of this brilliant engagement, which resulted in the capture of the Frolic. It was one of the most daring and determined actions in our naval history. The force of the Frolic consisted of sixteen thirty-two pound carronades, four twelve-pounders on the maindeck, and two twelve-pound carronades. Both vessels had more men than was essential to their efficiency; but while there was an equality of strength in the crews, there was an inequality in the number of guns and weight of metal—the Frolic having four twelve-pounders more than the Wasp. The exact number of killed and wounded on board the Frolic could not be ascertained with any degree of precision; but, from the admissions of the British officers, it was supposed that their loss in killed was about thirty, including two officers, and in wounded, between forty and fifty. The captain and every other officer on board were more or less severely wounded. The Wasp sustained a loss of only five men killed, and five wounded.



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While erecting jurmasts on board the Frolic, soon after, a suspicious sail was seen to windward, upon which Captain Jones directed Lieutenant Biddle to shape her course for Charleston, or any other port of the United States, while the Wasp should continue upon her cruise. The sail coming down rapidly, both vessels prepared for action, but it was soon discovered, to the mortification of the victors in this well-fought action, that the new enemy was a seventy-four, which proved to be the Poitiers, commanded by Admiral Beresford. Firing a shot over the Frolic, she passed her, and soon overhauled the Wasp, which, in her crippled state, was unable to escape. Both vessels were thus captured, and carried into Bermuda. After a few weeks, a cartel was proposed by which the officers and crew of the Wasp were conveyed to New York. On the return of Captain Jones to the United States, he was everywhere received with demonstrations of respect for the skill and gallantry displayed in his combat with the enemy. The legislature of Delaware gave him a vote of thanks, and a piece of plate. On the motion of James A. Bayard, of Delaware, Congress appropriated twenty-five thousand dollars, as a compensation to the commander, his officers, and crew, for the loss they had sustained by the recapture of the Frolic. They also voted a gold medal to the Captain, and a silver medal to each of his commissioned officers. As a farther evidence of the confidence of government, Captain Jones was ordered to the command of the frigate Macedonian, recently captured from the British by Decatur. She was rapidly fitted out under his direction, in the harbor of New York, and proposed for one of Decatur's squadron, which was about to sail on another expedition. In May 1811, the squadron attempted to put to sea, but, in sailing up Long Island Sound, encountered a large British force, which compelled the United States vessels to retreat into New London. In this situation the enemy continued an uninterrupted blockade during the war. Finding it impossible to avoid the vigilance of Sir Thomas Hardy, who commanded the blockading fleet, the government ordered Captain Jones to proceed with his officers and crew to Sackett's Harbor, and report to Commodore Chauncey, as commander of the frigate Mohawk, on lake Ontario. There the Americans maintained an ascendancy, and continued to cruise until October, when the British squadron, under Sir James Yeo, left Kingston, with a greatly superior force, which caused the United States squadron to return to Sackett's Harbor. It seemed, indeed, that the contest now depended on the exertions of the ship carpenters. Two line of battle ships were placed on the stocks, and were advancing rapidly to completion, when, in February 1815, the news of peace arrived, with orders to suspend further operations on these vessels. A few weeks after the peace was announced, Captain Jones with his officers and crew was ordered to repair to the seaboard, and again

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to take command of the Macedonian, to form part of the force against the Algerines, then depredating on our commerce in the Mediterranean. As soon as the Algerian Regency was informed that war existed between the United States and Great Britain, the Dey dispatched his cruisers to capture all American merchant vessels. To punish these freebooters, nine or ten vessels were fitted out and placed under Decatur. This armament sailed from New York in May, 1815, and when off Cadiz was informed that the Algerines were along the southern coast of Spain. Two days after reaching the Mediterranean, the United States squadron fell in with and captured the Algerine frigate Messuado, mounting forty-six guns, and the next day captured a large brig of war, both of which were carried into the port of Carthagena, in Spain. The American squadron then proceeded to the bay of Algiers, where its sudden and unexpected appearance excited no slight surprise and alarm in the Regency. The Dey reluctantly yielded to every demand to him; he restored the value of the property belonging to American merchants which he had seized, released all the prisoners he had captured, and relinquished forever all claims on the annual tribute which he had received. After having thus terminated the war with Algiers, and formed an advantageous treaty, the squadron proceeded to other Barbary capitals, and adjusted some minor difficulties, which, however, were of importance to our merchants. After touching at several of the islands in the Mediterranean, at Naples, and at Malaga, the entire force came back to the United States early in December. From this period till his death, no event of much importance distinguished the career of Commodore Jones. He was, however, almost constantly employed in various responsible positions, his appointment to which evinced the confidence government placed in his talents and discretion. In 1821, he took the command of a squadron, for the protection of our trade in the Mediterranean, in which he continued for three years. On his return he was offered a seat in the Board of Navy Commissioners, but, finding bureau duties irksome, he accepted, in 1826, the command of our navy in the Pacific, where he also continued three years. Afterward he was placed in command of the Baltimore station, where he remained, with the exception of a short interval, until transferred to the harbor of New York. Since 1847, he had held the place of Governor of the United States Naval Asylum, on the Schuylkill, near Philadelphia.

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JULIA BETTERTON GLOVER.

An actress who has been admired and respected by three generations of play-goers has quitted the stage of life in the person of Mrs. Glover. The final exit was somewhat sudden, as it seemed to the general public; but it was anticipated by her friends. A friendly biographer in the *Morning Chronicle* explains the circumstances; first referring to the extraordinary manifestations of public feeling which attended Mrs. Glover's last farewell, at Drury-Lane Theater, on Friday, the 12th of July.



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“In our capacity of spectators we did not then see occasion to mention what had otherwise come to our knowledge—that the evidences of extreme suffering manifested by Mrs. Glover on that evening—her inability to go through her part, except as a mere shadow of her former self, and the substitution of an apologetic speech from Mr. Leigh Murray for the address which had been written for her by a well-known and talented amateur of the drama—arose not merely from the emotion natural on a farewell night, after more than half a century of active public service, but also from extreme physical debility, the result of an attack of illness of a wasting character, which had already confined that venerable lady to her bed for many days. In fact, it was only the determination of Mrs. Glover herself not to disappoint the audience, who had been invited and attracted for many weeks before, that overruled the remonstrances of her friends and family against her appearing at all. She was then utterly unfit to appear on the stage in her professional character, and the most serious alarm was felt lest there should be some sudden and fatal catastrophe. The result of the struggle of feeling she then underwent, superadded as it was to the physical causes which had undermined her strength, was, that Mrs. Glover sunk under the disease which had been consuming her, and quitted this life on Monday night.”

Mrs. Glover, born Julia Betterton, was daughter of an actor named Betterton, who held a good position on the London stage toward the close of the last century. She is said to have been a lineal descendant of the great actor of the same name. Her birthday was the 8th January, 1781. Brought up, as most of our great actors and actresses have been, “at the wings,” she was even in infancy sent on the stage in children’s parts. She became attached to the company of Tate Wilkinson, for whom she played, at York, the part of the *Page* in *The Orphan*; and she also exercised her juvenile talents in the part of *Tom Thumb*, for the benefit of George Frederick Cooke, who on the occasion doffed his tragic garb and appeared in the character of *Glumdalcar*. Another character which she played successfully with Cooke was that of the little *Duke of York* in *Richard the Third*; into which, it is recorded, she threw a degree of spirit and childish roguishness that acted as a spur on the great tragedian himself, who never performed better than when seconded by his childish associate. In 1796 she had attained such a position in the preparatory school of the provincial circuits, chiefly at Bath, that she was engaged at Covent Garden; in the first instance at L10 a week, and ultimately for five years at L15 a week, rising to L20; terms then thought “somewhat extraordinary and even exorbitant”. Miss Betterton first appeared in London in October 1797, fifty-three years ago, as *Elvira*, in Hannah More’s tragedy of *Percy*. Her success was great; and in



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a short time she had taken such a hold of popular favor, that when Mrs. Abington returned for a brief period to the stage, Miss Betterton held her ground against the rival attraction, and even secured the admiration of Mrs. Abington herself. Her subsequent engagements were at Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden alternately, till she made that long engagement at the Haymarket, during which she has become best known to the present generation of playgoers. Her more recent brief engagement with Mr. Anderson, at Drury-Lane, and her last one with Mr. W. Farren, at the Strand Theater, whither she contributed so much to attract choice audiences, are fresh in the memory of metropolitans. Looking back to Mrs. Glover's "long and brilliant career upon the stage, we may pronounce her one of the most extraordinary women and accomplished actresses that have ever graced the profession of the drama." Mrs. Glover had a daughter, Phillis, a very clever young actress, at the Haymarket Theater, who has been dead several years. Her two sons are distinguished, the one as a popular musical composer, and the other as a clever tragedian—the latter with considerable talent, also, as an amateur painter.

A London correspondent of the *Spirit of the Times* gives an interesting account of the Glover benefit, and the "last scenes."

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MADAME GAVAUDAN is dead. To many it will be necessary to explain that Madame Gavaudan was, in her time, one of the most favorite singing-actresses and acting songstresses belonging to the *Opera Comique* of Paris; and that, after many years of popularity, she retired from the stage in 1823.

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GENERAL BERTHAND, Baron de Sivray, died early in July at Luc, in France, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. He was an officer before the first revolution, and served through all the wars of the Republic and the Empire.

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ROBERT R. BAIRD, a son of the Rev. Dr. Baird, and a young man of amiable character and considerable literary abilities, which had been illustrated for the most part, we believe, in translation, was drowned in the North River at Yonkers on Tuesday evening, the 6th instant, about seven o'clock. The deceased had gone into the water to bathe in company with several others, and was carried by the rising tide into deep water, where, as he could swim but little, he sunk to rise no more, before help could reach him. This premature and sudden death has overwhelmed his parents and friends in the deepest distress. He was twenty-five years old.

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THE DEATH OF MR. S. JOSEPH, the sculptor, known by his statue of Wilberforce in Westminster Abbey and his statue of Wilkie in the National Gallery, is mentioned in the English papers. His busts exhibit a fine perception of character, and many a delicate grace in the modeling. Mr. Joseph was long a resident in Edinburgh. He modeled a bust of Sir Walter Scott about the same time that Chantrey modeled his—that bust which best preserves to us the features and character of the great novelist.



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JAMES WRIGHT, author of the *Philosophy of Elocution* and other works chiefly of a religious character, died at Brighton, England, on the 9th of July, aged 68.

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SIR THOMAS WILDE, who has just been promoted to the Woolsack, as Baron Truro, we learn from the *Illustrated News*, was born in 1782. After practicing as an attorney, he was called to the bar by the Honorable Society of the Inner Temple, the 7th February, 1817. He joined the Western Circuit, and soon rose into considerable practice. His knowledge of the law, combined with his great eloquence, made him one of the most successful advocates of his time. He was for many years the confidential and legal adviser of the late Alderman Sir Matthew Wood, and his connection with that gentleman caused him to be engaged as one of the senior counsel for the Queen on the celebrated trial of Queen Caroline. Though surrounded by rivals of the highest eminence and the brightest fame, Wilde always stood among the foremost, and obtained briefs in some of the greatest causes ever tried. For instance, he was engaged on the winning side in the famous action of *Small v. Atwood*, in which his fees are said to have amounted to something enormous. In 1824 he became a serjeant-at-law; and he was appointed King's Serjeant in 1827, and Solicitor-General in 1839, when he received the honor of knighthood. In 1841 he first became Attorney-General; and after a second time holding that office, he succeeded the late Sir Nicholas Conyngham Tindal, as Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. His recent appointment as Lord Chancellor places him at the very summit of his profession.

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[FROM THE *LONDON LADIES' COMPANION*.]

THE MORNING SONG.

BY BARRY CORNWALL.

A new "English Song," by Barry Cornwall, is now—more's the pity—a too rare event in the musical year. We are at once doing our readers a pleasure, and owing a welcome kindness, in publishing, by the author's permission, these words, set by M. Benedict, and sung by Madame Sontag.

The world is waking into light;  
The dark and sullen night hath flown:  
Life lives and re-assumes its might,  
And nature smiles upon her throne.  
And the Lark,



Hark!

*She* gives welcome to the day,  
In a merry, merry, lay,  
Tra la!—lira, lira, lira, la!

Soft sounds are sailing through the air;  
Sweet sounds are springing from the stream;  
And fairest things, where all is fair,  
Join gently in the grateful theme.  
And the Lark, &c., &c.

The morn, the morn is in the skies;  
The reaper singeth from the corn;  
The shepherd on the hills replies;  
And all things now salute the morn,  
Even the Lark, &c., &c.

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[FROM ELIZA COOK'S JOURNAL.]

A LESSON.

If society ever be wholly corrupted, it will be by the idea that it is already so. Some cynics believe in virtue, sincerity, and happiness, only as traditions of the past, and by ridicule seek to propagate the notion. This vain and pedantic philosophy would turn all hearts to stone, and arm every man with suspicion against all others, declaiming against the romance of life, as empty sentimentalism; against the belief in goodness, as youth's sanguine folly; and the hope of pure happiness, as a fanciful dream, created by a young imagination, to be dissipated by the teaching of a few years' struggle with the world.

If this be wisdom, I am no philosopher, and I never wish to be one; for sooner would I float upon the giddy current of fancy, to fall among quicksands at last, than travel through a dull and dreary world, without confidence in my companions. That we may be happy, that we may find sincere friends, that we may meet the good, and enjoy the beautiful on earth, is a creed that will find believers in all hearts unsoured by their own asceticism. Virtue will sanctify every fireside where we invite her to dwell, and if the clouds of misfortune darken and deform the whole period of our existence, it is a darkness that emanates from ourselves, and a deformity created by us to our own unhappiness.

Yet this is not relating the little story which is the object of my observations. The axiom which I wish to lay down, to maintain, and to prove correct, is, that married life may be with most people, should be with all, and is with many, a state of happiness. The reader may smile at my boldness, but the history of the personages I shall introduce to walk their hour on this my little stage, will justify my adopting the maxim.

M. Pierre Lavalles, owner of a vineyard, near a certain village in the south of France, wooed and wedded Mdlle. Julie Gouchard. Exactly where they dwelt, and all the precise circumstances of their position, I do not mean to indicate, and if I might offer a hint to my contemporaries, it would be a gentle suggestion that they occupy too much time, paper, and language in geographical and genealogical details, very wearisome, because very unnecessary. Monsieur Pierre Lavalles then lived in a pretty house, near a certain village in a vine-growing district of the south of France, and when he took his young wife home, he showed her great stores of excellent things, calculated well for the comfortable subsistence of a youthful and worthy couple. Flowers and blossoming trees shed odor near the lattice windows, verdure soft and green was spread over the garden, and the mantling vine "laid forth the purple grape," over a rich and sunny plantation near at hand. The house was small, but neat, and well furnished in the style of the province, and Monsieur and Madame Pierre Lavalles lived very happily in plenty and content.

Here I leave them, and introduce the reader to Monsieur Antoine Perron, notary in the neighboring village.



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Let me linger over a notice of this individual. He was a good man, and what is more curious an honest lawyer. Indeed, in spite of my happy theory, I may say that such a good man, and such a good lawyer you could seldom meet. All the village knew him; he mixed up in every one's quarrels; not, as is usually the case, to make confusion worse confounded by a double-tongued hypocrisy, but to produce conciliation; he mingled in every one's affairs, not to pick up profit for himself, but to prevent the villagers from running into losses and imprudent speculations; he talked much, yet, it was not slander, but advice; he thought more, yet it was not over mischief, but on schemes of good; he was known to everybody, yet none that knew him respected him the less on that account. He was a little, spare, merry-looking man, that sought to appear grave when he was most inclined to merriment, and if he considered himself a perfect genius in his plans for effecting good, his vanity may be pardoned, because of the food it fed on.

M. Antoine Perron considered himself very ingenious, and if he had a fault, it was his love of originality. He never liked to perform any action in a common way, and never chuckled so gaily to himself, as when he had achieved some charitable end by some extraordinary means.

It was seven months after the marriage of M. Pierre Lavalles, M. Antoine Perron sat in his little parlor, and gazed with a glad eye upon the cheerful fire, for the short winter was just terminating. Leaning forward in his chair, he shaded his face with his hands, and steadily perused the figures among the coals with a most pleasant countenance. The room was small, neat, and comfortable, for the notary prospered, in his humble way and seeking only comfort found it, and was content.

Suddenly a violent knocking at the door aroused him from his reverie, and he heard his old servant rushing to open it. In a moment, two persons were ushered into the room, and the notary leaped to his feet in astonishment at the extraordinary scene before him. Had a thunderbolt cloven the roof, and passed through his hearth to its grave in the center of the globe, or had the trees that nodded their naked branches without the window commenced a dance upon the snowy ground, he had not been more surprised.

Monsieur Pierre Lavalles, and Madame Pierre Lavalles stood just inside the doorway. Never had Monsieur Perron seen them before, as he saw them now. Like turtle-doves, with smiling eyes, and affectionate caress, they had lived in happy harmony during the seven months of their married life, and motherly dames, when they gave their daughters away, bade them prosper and be pleasant in their union, as they had been joyous in their love, pleasant and joyous, as neighbor Lavalles and his wife.

Now, Pierre stood red and angry, with his right arm extended, gesticulating toward his wife. Julie stood red and angry, with her left arm extended, gesticulating toward her husband. Eyes, that had only radiated smiles, flashed with fierce passion, as the turtle doves remained near the door, each endeavoring to anticipate the other in some address to the worthy notary. He, aghast and perplexed, waited for the *denouement*.



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“Madame,” said Monsieur Pierre Lavalles, “allow me to speak.”

“Monsieur,” said Madame Pierre Lavalles. “I insist—”

“But, Madame, it is my—”

“But, Monsieur, I say I will.”

“And yet I will.”

“But no—”

“Madame, I shall.”

“Then be careful what you do; M. Perron, M. Lavalles is mad.”

Then the lady, having thus emphatically declared herself, resigned the right of speech to her husband, who began to jerk out in disconnected phrases a statement of his case. Seven days ago he had annoyed his wife by some incautious word; she had annoyed him by an incautious answer; he had made matters worse by an aggravating retort; and she had widened the breach by a bitter reply. This little squall was succeeded by a cool calm, and that by a sullen silence, until some sudden friction kindled a new flame, and finally, after successive storms and lulls, there burst forth a furious conflagration, and in the violent collision of their anger, the seven-months' married pair vowed to separate, and with that resolve had visited M. Perron. Reconciliation they declared was beyond possibility, and they requested the notary at once to draw up the documents that should consign them to different homes, to subsist on a divided patrimony, in loveless and unhappy marriage. Each told a tale in turn, and the manner of relation added fuel to the anger of the other. The man and the woman seemed to have leaped out of their nature in the accession of their passion. Pity that a quarrel should ever dilate thus, from a cloud the size of a man's hand to a thunder-storm that covers heaven with its black and dismal canopy.

Neither would listen to reason. The duty of the notary was to prepare the process by which they were to be separated.

“Monsieur,” he said, “I will arrange the affair for you; but you are acquainted with the laws of France in this respect!”

“I know nothing of the law,” replied M. Pierre Lavalles.

“Madame,” said the notary, “your wish shall be complied with. But you know what the law says on this head?”

“I never read a law book,” sharply ejaculated Madame Pierre Lavalles.



“Then,” resumed the notary, “the case is this. You must return to your house, and I will proceed to settle the proceedings with the Judicatory Court at Paris. They are very strict. You must furnish me with all the documents relative to property.”

“I have them here,” put in the husband, by way of parenthesis.

“And the whole affair including correspondence, preparations of instruments, &c., will be settled in less than three months.”

“Three months?”

“Three months. Yes, in less than three months.”

“Then I will live with a friend at the village, until it is finished,” said Madame Lavalles, in a decided, peremptory tone, usual with ladies when they are a little ashamed of themselves, or any one else.



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“Oh, very well, Madame,—oh, very well.”

“Not at all well, Madame; not at all well, Monsieur,” said the notary, with a solid, immovable voice. “You must live as usual. If you doubt my knowledge of the law, you will, by reading through these seven books, find that this fact is specified.”

But the irritated couple were not disposed to undertake the somniferous task, and shortly left the house, as they had come, walking the same way, but at a distance of a yard or so one from another.

Two months and twenty-seven days had passed, when the notary issued from his house, and proceeded toward the house where Monsieur and Madame Lavalles dwelt. Since the fatal night I have described, he had not encountered them, and he now, with a bland face and confident head, approached the dwelling.

It was a pretty place. Passing through the sunny vineyards where the spring was just calling out the leaves, and the young shoots in their tints of tender green were sprouting in the warmth of a pleasant day; the notary entered a garden. Here the flowers, in infant bloom, had prepared the earth for the coming season, for summer in her gay attire was tripping from the south, and as she passed, nature wove garlands to adorn her head, and wreath about her arms. Early blossoms lent sweetness to the breath of the idle winds that loitered in this delightful spot, and the fair young primrose was sown over the parterres, with other flowers of spring, the most delicate and softly fragrant, that come out to live their hour in modesty and safety, while the earth affords them room, and before the bright and gaudy bloom of a riper season eclipses their beauty, bidding them, blushing, close their petals.

Early roses twined on either side the porch, and as the notary entered, nothing struck him more than the neat and cheerful appearance of the place. A demoiselle ushered him into a little parlor, where Monsieur Pierre Lavalles, and Madame Julie Lavalles, had just sat down to partake breakfast.

A small table was drawn up close to the open window, and vernal breezes found welcome in the chamber. A snowy cloth hung down to the well-polished floor, and tall white cups were placed upon it to rival it in purity and grace. Cakes of bread, such bread as is only had in France, with delicious butter, and rich brown foaming coffee frothed with cream, were spread before them, and a basket of fresh spring flowers, sparkling with dew and beautifully odorous, scented the whole chamber with a delicate perfume.

The husband and wife sat side by side, with pleasant looks, and so engaged in light and amiable conversation, that they hardly noticed the entrance of the notary. The storm had vanished and left no trace. Flushes of anger, flashes of spite, quick breathings, and disordered looks—all these had passed, and now smiles, and eyes lit only with

kindness, and bosoms beating with calm content, and looks all full of love, were alone to be observed.



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When M. Antoine Perron entered, they started; at length, and then recollecting his mission, blushed crimson, looked one at another, and then at the ground, awaiting his address.

“Monsieur, and Madame,” said the notary, “according to your desires I come with all the documents necessary for your separation, and the division of your property. They only want your signature, and we will call in your servant to be witness.”

“Stay,” exclaimed Madame Julie, laughing at her husband, “Pierre, explain to M. Perron.”

“Ah, Monsieur Perron,” said Monsieur Antoine Lavalles, “we had forgotten that, and hoped you had also. Say not a word of it to any one.”

“No, not a word,” said Madame Julie. “We never quarreled but once since we married, and we never mean to quarrel again.”

“Not unless you provoke it,” said Monsieur Lavalles, audaciously. “But M. Perron, you will take breakfast with us?”

“You’re a wicked wretch,” said Madame Julie, tapping him on the cheek. “After breakfast, M. Perron, we will sign the papers.”

“After breakfast,” said M. Pierre Lavalles, “we will burn them.”

“We shall see,” said the notary. “Sign them or burn them. Madame Julie Lavalles, your coffee is charming.”

\* \* \* \* \*

After seven months’ harmony, do not let seven days’ quarrel destroy the happiness of home. Do not follow the directions of a person in a passion. Allow him to cool and consider his purpose.

\* \* \* \* \*

[FROM DICKENS’S HOUSEHOLD WORDS.]

DUST;

OR UGLINESS REDEEMED.

On a murky morning in November, wind north-east, a poor old woman with a wooden leg was seen struggling against the fitful gusts of the bitter breeze, along a stony zigzag road, full of deep and irregular cart-ruts. Her ragged petticoat was blue, and so was her



wretched nose. A stick was in her left hand, which assisted her to dig and hobble her way along; and in her other hand, supported also beneath her withered arm, was a large rusty iron sieve. Dust and fine ashes filled up all the wrinkles in her face; and of these there were a prodigious number, for she was eighty-three years old. Her name was Peg Dotting.

About a quarter of a mile distant, having a long ditch and a broken-down fence as a foreground, there rose against the muddled-gray sky, a huge Dust-heap of a dirty black color, being, in fact, one of those immense mounds of cinders, ashes, and other emptyings from dust-holes and bins, which have conferred celebrity on certain suburban neighborhoods of a great city. Toward this dusky mountain old Peg Dotting was now making her way.



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Advancing toward the Dust-heap by an opposite path, very narrow, and just reclaimed from the mud by a thick layer of freshly-broken flints, there came at the same time Gaffer Doubleyear, with his bone-bag slung over his shoulder. The rags of his coat fluttered in the east-wind, which also whistled keenly round his almost rimless hat, and troubled his one eye. The other eye, having met with an accident last week, he had covered neatly with an oyster-shell, which was kept in its place by a string at each side, fastened through a hole. He used no staff to help him along, though his body was nearly bent double, so that his face was constantly turned to the earth, like that of a four-footed creature. He was ninety-seven years of age. As these two patriarchal laborers approached the great Dust-heap, a discordant voice hallooed to them from the top of a broken wall. It was meant as a greeting of the morning, and proceeded from little Jem Clinker, a poor deformed lad, whose back had been broken when a child. His nose and chin were much too large for the rest of his face, and he had lost nearly all his teeth from premature decay. But he had an eye gleaming with intelligence and life, and an expression at once patient and hopeful. He had balanced his misshapen frame on the top of the old wall, over which one shriveled leg dangled, as if by the weight of a hob-nailed boot that covered a foot large enough for a plowman.

In addition to his first morning's salutation of his two aged friends, he now shouted out in a tone of triumph and self-gratulation, in which he felt assured of their sympathy—

“Two white skins, and a tor'shell-un!”

It may be requisite to state that little Jem Clinker belonged to the dead-cat department of the Dust-heap, and now announced that a prize of three skins, in superior condition, had rewarded him for being first in the field.

He was enjoying a seat on the wall, in order to recover himself from the excitement of his good fortune.

At the base of the great Dust-heap the two old people now met their young friend—a sort of great-grandson by mutual adoption—and they at once joined the party who had by this time assembled as usual, and were already busy at their several occupations.

But besides all these, another individual, belonging to a very different class, formed a part of the scene, though appearing only on its outskirts. A canal ran along at the rear of the Dust-heap, and on the banks of its opposite side slowly wandered by—with hands clasped and hanging down in front of him, and eyes bent vacantly upon his hands—the forlorn figure of a man, in a very shabby great-coat, which had evidently once belonged to one in the position of a gentleman. And to a gentleman it still belonged—but in *what* a position! A scholar, a man of wit, of high sentiment, of refinement, and a good fortune withal—now by a sudden turn of law bereft of the last only, and finding that none of the rest,



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for which (having his fortune) he had been so much admired, enabled him to gain a livelihood. His title-deeds had been lost or stolen, and so he was bereft of everything he possessed. He had talents, and such as would have been profitably available had he known how to use them for his new purpose; but he did not; he was misdirected; he made fruitless efforts in his want of experience; and he was now starving. As he passed the great Dust-heap, he gave one vague, melancholy gaze that way, and then looked wistfully into the canal. And he continued to look into the canal as he slowly moved along, till he was out of sight.

A Dust-heap of this kind is often worth thousands of pounds. The present one was very large and very valuable. It was in fact a large hill, and being in the vicinity of small suburb cottages, it rose above them like a great black mountain. Thistles, groundsel, and rank grass grew in knots on small parts which had remained for a long time undisturbed; crows often alighted on its top, and seemed to put on their spectacles and become very busy and serious; flocks of sparrows often made predatory descents upon it; an old goose and gander might sometimes be seen following each other up its side, nearly midway; pigs rooted around its base,—and now and then, one bolder than the rest would venture some way up, attracted by the mixed odors of some hidden marrow-bone enveloped in a decayed cabbage-leaf—a rare event, both of these articles being unusual oversights of the Searchers below.

The principal ingredient of all these Dust-heaps is fine cinders and ashes; but as they are accumulated from the contents of all the dust-holes and bins of the vicinity, and as many more as possible, the fresh arrivals in their original state present very heterogeneous materials. We cannot better describe them than by presenting a brief sketch of the different departments of the Searchers and Sorters, who are assembled below to busy themselves upon the mass of original matters which are shot out from the carts of the dustmen.

The bits of coal, the pretty numerous results of accident and servants' carelessness, are picked out, to be sold forthwith; the largest and best of the cinders are also selected, by another party, who sell them to laundresses, or to braziers (for whose purposes coke would do as well;) and the next sort of cinders, called the *breeze*, because it is left after the wind has blown the finer cinders through an upright sieve, is sold to the brick-makers.

Two other departments, called the "soft-ware" and the "hard-ware," are very important. The former includes all vegetable and animal matters—everything that will decompose. These are selected and bagged at once, and carried off as soon as possible, to be sold as manure for plowed land, wheat, barley, &c. Under this head, also, the dead cats are comprised. They are generally the perquisites of the women searchers. Dealers come to the wharf, or dust-field, every evening; they give sixpence for a white cat, fourpence

for a colored cat, and for a black one according to her quality. The “hard-ware” includes all broken pottery pans, crockery, earthenware, oyster-shells, &c., which are sold to make new roads.



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The bones are selected with care, and sold to the soap-boiler. He boils out the fat and marrow first, for special use, and the bones are then crushed and sold for manure.

Of rags, the woollen rags are bagged and sent off for hop-manure; the white linen rags are washed, and sold to make paper, &c.

The “tin things” are collected and put into an oven with a grating at the bottom, so that the solder which unites the parts melts, and runs through into a receiver. This is sold separately; the detached pieces of tin are then sold to be melted up with old iron, &c.

Bits of old brass, lead, &c., are sold to be melted up separately, or in the mixture of ores.

All broken glass vessels, as cruets, mustard-pots, tumblers, wine-glasses, bottles, &c., are sold to the old-glass shops.

As for any articles of jewelry, silver spoons, forks, thimbles, or other plate and valuables, they are pocketed off-hand by the first finder. Coins of gold and silver are often found, and many “coppers.”

Meantime, everybody is hard at work near the base of the great Dust-heap. A certain number of cart-loads having been raked and searched for all the different things just described, the whole of it now undergoes the process of sifting. The men throw up the stuff, and the women sift it.

“When I was a young girl,” said Peg Dotting—

“That’s a long while ago, Peggy,” interrupted one of the sifters: but Peg did not hear her.

“When I was quite a young thing,” continued she, addressing old John Doubleyear, who threw up the dust into her sieve, “it was the fashion to wear pink roses in the shoes, as bright as that morsel of ribbon Sally has just picked out of the dust; yes, and sometimes in the hair, too, on one side of the head, to set off the white powder and salve-stuff. I never wore one of these head-dresses myself—don’t throw up the dust so high, John—but I lived only a few doors lower down from those as did. Don’t throw up the dust so high, I tell ’ee—the wind takes it into my face.”

“Ah! There! What’s that?” suddenly exclaimed little Jem, running as fast as his poor withered legs would allow him toward a fresh heap, which had just been shot down on the wharf from a dustman’s cart. He made a dive and a search—then another—then one deeper still. “I’m sure I saw it!” cried he, and again made a dash with both hands into a fresh place, and began to distribute the ashes and dust and rubbish on every side, to the great merriment of all the rest.

“What did you see, Jemmy?” asked old Doubleyear, in a compassionate tone.

“Oh, I don’t know,” said the boy, “only it was like a bit of something made of real gold!”

A fresh burst of laughter from the company assembled followed this somewhat vague declaration, to which the dustmen added one or two elegant epithets, expressive of their contempt of the notion that they could have overlooked a bit of anything valuable in the process of emptying sundry dust-holes, and carting them away.



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“Ah,” said one of the sifters, “poor Jem’s always a-fancying something or other good but it never comes.”

“Didn’t I find three cats this morning?” cried Jem, “two on ’em white ’uns! How you go on!”

“I meant something quite different from the like o’ that,” said the other; “I was a-thinking of the rare sights all you three there have had, one time and another.”

The wind having changed, and the day become bright, the party at work all seemed disposed to be more merry than usual. The foregoing remark excited the curiosity of several of the sifters, who had recently joined the “company”: the parties alluded to were requested to favor them with the recital; and though the request was made with only a half-concealed irony, still it was all in good-natured pleasantry, and was immediately complied with. Old Doubleyear spoke first:

“I had a bad night of it with the rats some years ago—they runn’d all over the floor, and over the bed, and one on ’em come’d and guv a squeak close into my ear—so I couldn’t sleep comfortable. I wouldn’t ha’ minded a trifle of it, but this was too much of a good thing. So I got up before sunrise, and went out for a walk; and thinking I might as well be near our work-place, I slowly come’d down this way! I worked in a brick-field at that time, near the canal yonder. The sun was just a rising up behind the Dust-heap as I got in sight of it, and soon it rose above, and was very bright; and though I had two eyes then, I was obligated to shut them both. When I opened them again, the sun was higher up; but in his haste to get over the Dust-heap, he had dropped something. You may laugh—I say he dropped something. Well I can’t say what it was, in course—a bit of his-self, I suppose. It was just like him—a bit on him, I mean—quite as bright—just the same—only not so big. And not up in the sky, but a-lying and sparkling all on fire upon the Dust-heap. Thinks I—I was a younger man then by some years than I am now—I’ll go and have a nearer look. Though you be a bit o’ the sun, maybe you won’t hurt a poor man. So I walked toward the Dust-heap, and up I went, keeping the piece of sparkling fire in sight all the while. But before I got up to it, the sun went behind a cloud—and as he went out—like, so the young ’un he had dropped, went out arter him. And I had to climb up the heap for nothing, though I had marked the place vere it lay very percizely. But there was no signs at all on him, and no morsel left of the light as had been there. I searched all about; but found nothing ’cept a bit ’o broken glass as had got stuck in the heel of an old shoe. And that’s my story. But if ever a man saw anything at all, I saw a bit o’ the sun; and I thank God for it. It was a blessed sight for a poor ragged old man of threescore and ten, which was my age at that time.”

“Now, Peggy!” cried several voices, “tell us what you saw. Peg saw a bit o’ the moon.”



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“No,” said Mrs. Dotting, rather indignantly; “I’m no moon-raker. Not a sign of the moon was there, nor a spark of a star the time I speak on.”

“Well—go on, Peggy—go on.”

“I don’t know as I will,” said Peggy.

But being pacified by a few good-tempered, though somewhat humorous, compliments, she thus favored them with her little adventure:

“There was no moon, or stars, or comet, in the ’versal heavens, nor lamp nor lantern along the road, when I walked home one winter’s night from the cottage of Widow Pin, where I had been to tea with her and Mrs. Dry, as lived in the almshouses. They wanted Davy, the son of Bill Davy the milkman, to see me home with the lantern, but I wouldn’t let him, ’cause of his sore throat. Throat!—no it wasn’t his throat as was rare sore—it was—no, it wasn’t—yes, it was—it was his toe as was sore. His big toe. A nail out of his boot had got into it. I *told* him he’d be sure to have a bad toe, if he didn’t go to church more regular, but he wouldn’t listen; and so my words come’d true. But, as I was a-saying, I wouldn’t let him by reason of his sore throat—*toe*, I mean—and as I went along, the night seemed to grow darker and darker. A straight road, though, and I was so used to it by day-time, it didn’t matter for the darkness. Hows’ever, when I come’d near the bottom of the Dust-heap as I had to pass, the great dark heap was so ’zackly the same as the night, you couldn’t tell one from t’other. So, thinks I to myself—*what* was I thinking of at this moment?—for the life o’ me I can’t call it to mind; but that’s neither here nor there, only for this—it was a something that led me to remember the story of how the devil goes about like a roaring lion. And while I was a-hoping he might not he out a-roaring that night, what should I see rise out of one side of the Dust-heap, but a beautiful shining star, of a violet color. I stood as still, as stock-still as any I don’t-know-what! There it lay, as beautiful as a new-born babe, all a-shining in the dust! By degrees I got courage to go a little nearer—and then a little nearer still—for, says I to myself, I’m a sinful woman, I know, but I have repented, and do repent constantly of all the sins of my youth and the backslidings of my age—which have been numerous; and once I had a very heavy backsliding—but that’s neither here nor there. So, as I was a-saying, having collected all my sinfulness of life, and humbleness before Heaven, into a goodish bit of courage, forward I steps—a little further—and a leetle further more—*un-til* I come’d just up to the beautiful shining star lying upon the dust. Well, it was a long time I stood a-looking down at it, before I ventured to do what I arterwards did. But at last I did stoop down with both hands slowly—in case it might burn, or bite—and gathering up a good scoop of ashes as my hands went along. I took it up, and began a-carrying it home, all shining before



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me, and with a soft blue mist rising up round about it. Heaven forgive me! I was punished for meddling with what Providence had sent for some better purpose than to be carried borne by an old woman like me, whom it had pleased Heaven to afflict with the loss of one leg, and the pain, ixpinse, and inconvenience of a wooden one. Well, I was punished; covetousness had its reward; for, presently, the violet light got very pale, and then went out; and when I reached home, still holding in both hands all I had gathered up, and when I took it to the candle, it had burned into the red shell of a lobsky's head, and its two black eyes poked up at me with a long stare—and I may say, a strong smell, too—enough to knock a poor body known.”

Great applause, and no little laughter, followed the conclusion of old Peggy's story, but she did not join in the merriment. She said it was all very well for young folks to laugh, but at her age she had enough to do to pray; and she had never said so many prayers, nor with so much fervency, as she had done since she received the blessed sight of the blue star on the Dust-heap, and the chastising rod of the lobster's head at home.

Little Jem's turn now came: the poor lad was, however, so excited by the recollection of what his companions called “Jem's Ghost,” that he was unable to describe it in any coherent language. To his imagination it had been a lovely vision,—the one “bright consummate flower” of his life, which he treasured up as the most sacred image in his heart. He endeavored, in wild and hasty words, to set forth, how that he had been bred a chimney-sweep; that one Sunday afternoon he had left a set of companions, most on 'em sweeps, who were all playing at marbles in the church-yard, and he had wandered to the Dust-heap, where he had fallen asleep; that he was awoke by a sweet voice in the air, which said something about some one having lost her way!—that he, being now wide awake, looked up, and saw with his own eyes a young Angel, with fair hair and rosy cheeks, and large white wings at her shoulders, floating about like bright clouds, rise out of the dust! She had on a garment of shining crimson, which changed as he looked upon her to shining gold. She then exclaimed, with a joyful smile, “I see the right way!” and the next moment the Angel was gone!

As the sun was just now very bright and warm for the time of year, and shining full upon the Dust-heap in its setting, one of the men endeavored to raise a laugh at the deformed lad, by asking him if he didn't expect to see just such another angel at this minute, who had lost her way in the field on the other side of the heap; but his jest failed. The earnestness and devout emotion of the boy to the vision of reality which his imagination, aided by the hues of sunset, had thus exalted, were too much for the gross spirit of banter, and the speaker shrunk back into his dust-shovel, and affected to be very assiduous in his work.

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Before the day's work was ended, however, little Jem again had a glimpse of the prize which had escaped him on the previous occasion. He instantly darted, hands and head foremost, into the mass of cinders and rubbish, and brought up a black mass of half-burnt parchment, entwined with vegetable refuse, from which he speedily disengaged an oval frame of gold, containing a miniature, still protected by its glass, but half covered with mildew from the damp. He was in ecstasies at the prize. Even the white catskins paled before it. In all probability some of the men would have taken it from him, "to try and find the owner," but for the presence and interference of his friends Peg Dotting and old Doubleyear, whose great age, even among the present company, gave them a certain position of respect and consideration. So all the rest now went their way, leaving the three to examine and speculate on the prize.

These Dust-heaps are a wonderful compound of things. A banker's cheque for a considerable sum was found in one of them. It was on Merries & Farquhar, in 1847. But bankers' cheques, or gold and silver articles, are the least valuable of their ingredients. Among other things, a variety of useful chemicals are extracted. Their chief value, however, is for the making of bricks. The fine cinder-dust and ashes are used in the clay of the bricks, both for the red and gray stacks. Ashes are also used as fuel between the layers of the clump of bricks, which could not be burned in that position without them. The ashes burn away, and keep the bricks open. Enormous quantities are used. In the brickfields at Uxbridge, near the Drayton Station, one of the brickmakers alone will frequently contract for fifteen or sixteen thousand chaldrons of this cinder-dust, in one order. Fine coke, or coke-dust, affects the market at times as a rival; but fine coal, or coal-dust, never, because it would spoil the bricks.

As one of the heroes of our tale had been originally—before his promotion—a chimney-sweeper, it may be only appropriate to offer a passing word on the genial subject of soot. Without speculating on its origin and parentage, whether derived from the cooking of a Christmas-dinner, or the production of the beautiful colors and odors of exotic plants in a conservatory, it can briefly be shown to possess many qualities both useful and ornamental.

When soot is first collected, it is called "rough soot", which, being sifted, is then called "fine soot", and is sold to farmers for manuring and preserving wheat and turnips. This is more especially used in Herefordshire, Bedfordshire, Essex, &c. It is rather a costly article, being fivepence per bushel. One contractor sells annually as much as three thousand bushels; and he gives it as his opinion, that there must be at least one hundred and fifty times this quantity (four hundred and fifty thousand bushels per annum) sold in London. Farmer Smutwise, of Bradford, distinctly asserts that the price of the



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soot he uses on his land is returned to him in the straw, with improvement also to the grain. And we believe him. Lime is used to dilute soot when employed as a manure. Using it pure will keep off snails, slugs, and caterpillars from peas and various other vegetables, as also from dahlias just shooting up, and other flowers; but we regret to add that we have sometimes known it kill or burn up the things it was intended to preserve from unlawful eating. In short, it is by no means so safe to use for any purpose of garden manure, as fine cinders and wood-ashes, which are good for almost any kind of produce, whether turnips or roses. Indeed, we should like to have one fourth or fifth part of our garden-beds composed of excellent stuff of this kind. From all that has been said, it will have become very intelligible why these Dust-heaps are so valuable. Their worth, however, varies not only with their magnitude, (the quality of all of them is much the same,) but with the demand. About the year 1820, the Marylebone Dust-heap produced between four thousand and five thousand pounds. In 1832, St. George's paid Mr. Stapleton five hundred pounds a year, not to leave the Heap standing, but to carry it away. Of course he was only too glad to be paid highly for selling his Dust.

But to return. The three friends having settled to their satisfaction the amount of money they should probably obtain by the sale of the golden miniature-frame, and finished the castles which they had built with it in the air, the frame was again infolded in the sound part of the parchment, the rags and rottenness of the law were cast away, and up they rose to bend their steps homeward to the little hovel where Peggy lived, she having invited the others to tea, that they might talk yet more fully over the wonderful good luck that had befallen them.

"Why, if there isn't a man's head in the canal!" suddenly cried little Jem. "Looky there! —isn't that a man's head?—Yes; it's a drowned man!"

"A drowned man, as I live!" ejaculated old Doubleyear.

"Let's get him out, and see!" cried Peggy. "Perhaps the poor soul's not quite gone."

Little Jem scuttled off to the edge of the canal, followed by the two old people. As soon as the body had floated nearer, Jem got down into the water, and stood breast-high, vainly measuring his distance, with one arm out, to see if he could reach some part of the body as it was passing. As the attempt was evidently without a chance, old Doubleyear Managed to get down into the water behind aim, and holding him by one hand, the boy was thus enabled to make a plunge forward as the body was floating by. He succeeded in reaching it, but the jerk was too much for his aged companion, who was pulled forward into the canal. A loud cry burst from both of them, which was yet more loudly echoed by Peggy on the bank. Doubleyear and the boy were now struggling almost in the middle of the canal, with the body of



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the man twirling about between them. They would inevitably have been drowned, had not old Peggy caught up a long dust-rake that was close at hand—scrambled down up to her knees in the canal—clawed hold of the struggling group with the teeth of the rake, and fairly brought the whole to land. Jem was first up the bank, and helped up his two heroic companions; after which, with no small difficulty, they contrived to haul the body of the stranger out of the water. Jem at once recognized in him the forlorn figure of the man who had passed by in the morning, looking so sadly into the canal as he walked along.

It is a fact well known to those who work in the vicinity of these great Dust-heaps, that when the ashes have been warmed by the sun, cats and kittens that have been taken out of the canal and buried a few inches beneath the surface, have usually revived; and the same has often occurred in the case of men. Accordingly, the three, without a moment's hesitation, dragged the body along to the Dust-heap, where they made a deep trench, in which they placed it, covering it all over up to the neck.

“There now,” ejaculated Peggy, sitting down with a long puff to recover her breath, “he’ll lie very comfortable, whether or no.”

“Couldn’t lie better,” said old Doubleyear, “even if he knew it.”

The three now seated themselves close by, to await the result.

“I thought I’d a lost him,” said Jem, “and myself too; and when I pulled Daddy in arter me, I guv us all three up for this world.”

“Yes,” said Doubleyear, “it must have gone queer with us if Peggy had not come in with the rake. How d’ye feel, old girl? for you’ve had a narrow escape too. I wonder we were not too heavy for you, and so pulled you in to go with us.”

“The Lord be praised!” fervently ejaculated Peggy, pointing toward the pallid face that lay surrounded with ashes. A convulsive twitching passed over the features, the lips trembled, the ashes over the breast heaved, and a low moaning sound, which might have come from the bottom of the canal, was heard. Again the moaning sound, and then the eyes opened, but closed almost immediately.

“Poor dear soul,” whispered Peggy, “how he suffers in surviving. Lift him up a little. Softly. Don’t be afeard. We’re only your good angels, like—only poor cinder-sifters—don’tee be afeard.”

By various kindly attentions and maneuvers such as these poor people had been accustomed to practice on those who were taken out of the canal, the unfortunate gentleman was gradually brought to his senses. He gazed about him, as well he might



—now looking in the anxious, though begrimed, faces of the three strange objects, all in their “weeds” and dust—and then up at the huge Dust-heap, over which the moon was now slowly rising.

“Land of quiet Death!” murmured he, faintly, “or land of Life, as dark and still—I have passed from one into the other; but which of ye I am now in, seems doubtful to my senses.”

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“Here we are, poor gentleman,” cried Peggy, “here we are, all friends about you. How did’ee tumble into the canal?”

“The Earth, then, once more!” said the stranger, with a deep sigh. “I know where I am, now. I remember this great dark hill of ashes—like Death’s kingdom, full of all sorts of strange things, and put to many uses.”

“Where do you live?” asked old Doubleyear. “Shall we try and take you home, sir?”

The stranger shook his head mournfully. All this time, little Jem had been assiduously employed in rubbing his feet and then big hands; in doing which, the piece of dirty parchment, with the miniature-frame, dropped out of his breast-pocket. A good thought instantly struck Peggy.

“Run, Jemmy dear—run with that golden thing to Mr. Spikechin, the pawnbroker’s—get something upon it directly, and buy some nice brandy—and some Godfrey’s cordial—and a blanket, Jemmy—and call a coach, and get up outside on it, and make the coachee drive back here as fast as you can.”

But before Jemmy could attend to this, Mr. Waterhouse, the stranger whose life they had preserved, raised himself on one elbow, and extended his hand to the miniature-frame. Directly he looked at it he raised himself higher up—turned it about once or twice—then caught up the piece of parchment, and uttering an ejaculation which no one could have distinguished either as of joy or of pain, sank back fainting.

In brief, this parchment was a portion of the title-deeds he had lost; and though it did not prove sufficient to enable him to recover his fortune, it brought his opponent to a composition, which gave him an annuity for life. Small as this was, he determined that these poor people, who had so generously saved his life at the risk of their own, should be sharers in it. Finding that what they most desired was to have a cottage in the neighborhood of the Dust-heap, built large enough for all three to live together, and keep a cow, Mr. Waterhouse paid a visit to Manchester Square, where the owner of the property resided. He told his story, as far as was needful, and proposed to purchase the field in question.

The great Dust-Contractor was much amused, and his daughter—a very accomplished young lady—was extremely interested. So the matter was speedily arranged to the satisfaction and pleasure of all parties. The acquaintance, however, did not end here. Mr. Waterhouse renewed his visits very frequently, and finally made proposals for the young lady’s hand, she having already expressed her hopes of a propitious answer from her father.

“Well, Sir,” said the latter, “you wish to marry my daughter, and she wishes to marry you. You are a gentleman and a scholar, but you have no money. My daughter is what



you see, and she has no money. But I have; and therefore, as she likes you and I like you, I'll make you both an offer. I will give my daughter twenty thousand pounds,—or you shall have the Dust-heap. Choose!"



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Mr. Waterhouse was puzzled and amused, and referred the matter entirely to the young lady. But she was for having the money, and no trouble. She said the Dust-heap might be worth much, but they did not understand the business.

“Very well,” said her father, laughing, “then, there’s the money.”

This was the identical Dust-heap, as we know from authentic information, which was subsequently sold for forty thousand pounds, and was exported to Russia to rebuild Moscow.

\* \* \* \* \*

[FROM HOUSEHOLD WORDS.]

AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY.

In one of the dirtiest and most gloomy streets leading to the Rue St. Denis, in Paris, there stands a tall and ancient house, the lower portion of which is a large mercer’s shop. This establishment is held to be one of the very best in the neighborhood, and has for many years belonged to an individual on whom we will bestow the name of Ramin.

About ten years ago, Monsieur Ramin was a jovial red-faced man of forty, who joked his customers into purchasing his goods, flattered the pretty *grisettes* outrageously, and now and then gave them a Sunday treat at the barrier, as the cheapest way of securing their custom. Some people thought him a careless, good-natured fellow, and wondered how, with his off-hand ways, he contrived to make money so fast, but those who knew him well saw that he was one of those who “never lost an opportunity.” Others declared that Monsieur Ramin’s own definition of his character was, that he was a “*bon enfant*,” and that “it was all luck.” He shrugged his shoulders and laughed when people hinted at his deep scheming in making, and his skill in taking advantage of Excellent Opportunities.

He was sitting in his gloomy parlor one fine morning in spring, breakfasting from a dark liquid honored with the name of onion soup, glancing at the newspaper, and keeping a vigilant look on the shop through the open door, when his old servant Catharine suddenly observed:

“I suppose you know Monsieur Bonelle has come to live in the vacant apartment on the fourth floor?”

“What!” exclaimed Monsieur Ramin, in a loud key.

Catharine repeated her statement, to which her master listened in total silence.



“Well!” he said at length, in his most careless tones, “what about the old fellow?” and he once more resumed his triple occupation of reading, eating, and watching.

“Why,” continued Catharine, “they say he is nearly dying, and that his housekeeper, Marguerite, vowed he could never get up stairs alive. It took two men to carry him up; and when he was at length quiet in bed, Marguerite went down to the porter’s lodge, and sobbed there a whole hour, saying her poor master had the gout, the rheumatics, and a bad asthma; that though he had been got up stairs, he would never come down again alive; that if she could only get him to confess his sins and make his will, she would not mind it so much; but that when she spoke of the lawyer or the priest, he blasphemed at her like a heathen, and declared that he would live to bury her and everybody else.”



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Monsieur Ramin heard Catharine with great attention, forgot to finish his soup, and remained for five minutes in profound rumination, without so much as perceiving two customers who had entered the shop and were waiting to be served. When aroused, he was heard to exclaim:

“What an excellent opportunity!”

Monsieur Bonelle had been Ramin’s predecessor. The succession of the latter to the shop was a mystery. No one ever knew how it was that this young and poor assistant managed to replace his patron. Some said that he had detected Monsieur Bonelle in frauds which he threatened to expose unless the business were given up to him as the price of his silence; others averred, that having drawn a prize in the lottery, he had resolved to set up a fierce opposition over the way, and that Monsieur Bonelle, having obtained a hint of his intentions, had thought it most prudent to accept the trifling sum his clerk offered, and avoid a ruinous competition. Some charitable souls—moved no doubt by Monsieur Bonelle’s misfortune—endeavored to console and pump him; but all they could get from him was the bitter exclamation, “To think I should have been duped by *him!*” For Ramin had the art, though then a mere youth, to pass himself off on his master as an innocent provincial lad. Those who sought an explanation from the new mercer were still more unsuccessful. “My good old master,” he said in his jovial way, “felt in need of repose, and so I obligingly relieved him of all business and botheration.”

Years passed away; Ramin prospered, and neither thought nor heard of his “good old master.” The house, of which he tenanted the lower portion, was offered for sale. He had long coveted it, and had almost concluded an agreement with the actual owner, when Monsieur Bonelle unexpectedly stepped in at the eleventh hour, and by offering a trifle more secured the bargain. The rage and mortification of Monsieur Ramin were extreme. He could not understand how Bonelle, whom he had thought ruined, had scraped up so large a sum; his lease was out, and he now felt himself at the mercy of the man he had so much injured. But either Monsieur Bonelle was free from vindictive feelings, or those feelings did not blind him to the expediency of keeping a good tenant: for though he raised the rent until Monsieur Ramin groaned inwardly, he did not refuse to renew the lease. They had met at that period, but never since.

“Well, Catharine,” observed Monsieur Ramin to his old servant on the following morning, “How is that good Monsieur Bonelle getting on?”

“I dare say you feel very uneasy about him,” she replied with a sneer.

Monsieur Ramin looked up and frowned.

“Catharine,” said he, dryly, “you will have the goodness, in the first place, not to make impertinent remarks: in the second place, you will oblige me by going up stairs to inquire after the health of Monsieur Bonelle, and say that I sent you.”



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Catharine grumbled, and obeyed. Her master was in the shop, when she returned in a few minutes, and delivered with evident satisfaction the following gracious message:

“Monsieur Bonelle desires his compliments to you, and declines to state how he is; he will also thank you to attend to your own shop, and not to trouble yourself about his health.”

“How does he look?” asked Monsieur Ramin, with perfect composure.

“I caught a glimpse of him, and he appears to me to be rapidly preparing for the good offices of the undertaker.”

Monsieur Ramin smiled, rubbed his hands, and joked merrily with a dark-eyed *grisette*, who was cheapening some ribbon for her cap. That girl made an excellent bargain that day.

Toward dusk the mercer left the shop to the care of his attendant, and softly stole up to the fourth story. In answer to his gentle ring, a little old woman opened the door, and giving him a rapid look, said briefly:

“Monsieur is inexorable: he won't see any doctor whatever.”

She was going to shut the door in his face, when Ramin quickly interposed, under his breath, with “I am not a doctor.”

She looked at him from head to foot.

“Are you a lawyer?”

“Nothing of the sort, my good lady.”

“Well then, are you a priest?”

“I may almost say, quite the reverse.”

“Indeed, you must go away, Master sees no one.”

Once more she would have shut the door, but Ramin prevented her.

“My good lady,” said he in his most insinuating tones, “it is true I am neither a lawyer, a doctor, nor a priest. I am an old friend, a very old friend of your excellent master; I have come to see good Monsieur Bonelle in his present affliction.”

Marguerite did not answer, but allowed him to enter, and closed the door behind him. He was going to pass from the narrow and gloomy ante-chamber into an inner room—



whence now proceeded a sound of loud coughing—when the old woman laid her hand on his arm, and raising herself on tip-toe, to reach his ear, whispered:

“For Heaven’s sake, sir, since you are his friend, do talk to him: do tell him to make his will, and hint something about a soul to be saved, and all that sort of thing: do, sir!”

Monsieur Ramin nodded and winked in a way that said “I will.” He proved however his prudence by not speaking aloud; for a voice from within sharply exclaimed,

“Marguerite, you are talking to some one! Marguerite! I will see neither doctor nor lawyer; and if any meddling priest dare—”

“It is only an old friend, sir;” interrupted Marguerite, opening the inner door.

Her master, on looking up, perceived the red face of Monsieur Ramin peeping over the old woman’s shoulder, and irefully cried out:

“How dare you bring that fellow here? And you, sir, how dare you come?”

“My good old friend, there are feelings,” said Ramin, spreading his fingers over the left pocket of his waistcoat—“there are feelings,” he repeated, “that cannot be subdued. One such feeling brought me here. The fact is, I am a good-natured easy fellow, and I never bear malice. I never forget an old friend, but love to forget old differences when I find one party in affliction.”



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He drew a chair forward as he spoke, and composedly seated himself opposite to his late master.

Monsieur Bonelle was a thin old man, with a pale sharp face and keen features. At first he eyed his visitor from the depths of his vast arm-chair; but, as if not, satisfied with this distant view, he bent forward, and laying both hands on his thin knees, he looked up into Ramin's face with a fixed and piercing gaze. He had not, however, the power of disconcerting his guest.

"What did you come here for?" he at length asked.

"Merely to have the extreme satisfaction of seeing how you are, my good old friend. Nothing more."

"Well, look at me—and then go."

Nothing could be so discouraging: but this was an Excellent Opportunity, and when Monsieur Ramin *had* an excellent opportunity in view, his pertinacity was invincible. Being now resolved to stay, it was not in Monsieur Bonelle's power to banish him. At the same time he had tact enough to render his presence agreeable. He knew that his coarse and boisterous wit had often delighted Monsieur Bonelle of old, and he now exerted himself so successfully as to betray the old man two or three times into hearty laughter. "Ramin," said he at length, laying his thin hand on the arm of his guest, and peering with his keen glance into the mercer's purple face, "you are a funny fellow, but I know you; you cannot make me believe you have called just to see how I am, and to amuse me. Come, be candid for once; what do you want?"

Ramin threw himself back in his chair, and laughed blandly, as much as to say, "Can you suspect me?"

"I have no shop now out of which you can wheedle me," continued the old man; "and surely you are not such a fool as to come to me for money."

"Money!" repeated the draper, as if his host had mentioned something he never dreamt of. "Oh, no!"

Ramin saw it would not do to broach the subject he had really come about, too abruptly, now that suspicion seemed so wide awake—the opportunity had not arrived.

"There is something up, Ramin, I know; I see it in the twinkle of your eye; but you can't deceive me again."

"Deceive *you*?" said the jolly schemer, shaking his head reverentially. "Deceive a man of your penetration and depth? Impossible! The bare supposition is flattery. My dear friend," he continued, soothingly, "I did not dream of such a thing. The fact is, Bonelle,



though they call me a jovial, careless, rattling dog, I have a conscience; and, somehow, I have never felt quite easy about the way in which I became your successor downstairs. It was rather sharp practice, I admit.”

Bonelle seemed to relent.

“Now for it,” said the Opportunity-hunter to himself—“By-the-bye,” (speaking aloud,) “this house must be a great trouble to you in your present weak state? Two of your lodgers have lately gone away without paying—a great nuisance, especially to an invalid.”



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“I tell you I’m as sound as a colt.”

“At all events, the whole concern must be a great bother to you. If I were you, I would sell the house.”

“And if I were *you*,” returned the landlord, dryly, “I would buy it—”

“Precisely,” interrupted the tenant, eagerly.

“That is, if you could get it. Pooh! I knew you were after something. Will you give eighty thousand francs for it?” abruptly asked Monsieur Bonelle.

“Eighty thousand francs!” echoed Ramin. “Do you take me for Louis Philippe or the Bank of France!”

“Then we’ll say no more about it—are you not afraid of leaving your shop so long?”

Ramin returned to the charge, heedless of the hint to depart. “The fact is, my good old friend, ready money is not my strong point just now. But if you wish very much to be relieved of the concern, what say you to a life annuity? I could manage that.”

Monsieur Bonelle gave a short, dry, church-yard cough, and looked as if his life were not worth an hour’s purchase. “You think yourself immensely clever, I dare say,” he said. “They have persuaded you that I am dying. Stuff! I shall bury you yet.”

The mercer glanced at the thin fragile frame, and exclaimed to himself, “Deluded old gentleman!” “My dear Bonelle,” he continued, aloud, “I know well the strength of your admirable constitution: but allow me to observe that you neglect yourself too much. Now, suppose a good sensible doctor—”

“Will you pay him?” interrogated Bonelle, sharply.

“Most willingly,” replied Ramin, with an eagerness that made the old man smile. “As to the annuity, since the subject annoys you, we will talk of it some other time.”

“After you have heard the doctor’s report,” sneered Bonelle.

The mercer gave him a stealthy glance, which the old man’s keen look immediately detected. Neither could repress a smile: these good souls understood one another perfectly, and Ramin saw that this was not the Excellent Opportunity he desired, and departed.

The next day Ramin sent a neighboring medical man, and heard it was his opinion that if Bonelle held on for three months longer, it would be a miracle. Delightful news!



Several days elapsed, and although very anxious, Ramin assumed a careless air, and did not call upon his landlord, or take any notice of him. At the end of the week old Marguerite entered the shop to make a trifling purchase.

“And how are we getting on up-stairs?” negligently asked Monsieur Ramin.

“Worse and worse, my good sir,” she sighed. “We have rheumatic pains which often make us use expressions the reverse of Christian-like, and yet nothing can induce us to see either the lawyer or the priest; the gout is getting nearer to our stomach every day, and still we go on talking about the strength of our constitution. Oh, sir, if you have any influence with us, do, pray do, tell us how wicked it is to die without making one’s will or confessing one’s sins.”



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"I shall go up this very evening," ambiguously replied Monsieur Ramin.

He kept his promise, and found Monsieur Bonelle in bed, groaning with pain, and in the worst of tempers.

"What poisoning doctor did you send?" he asked, with an ireful glance; "I want no doctor, I am not ill; I will not follow his prescription; he forbade me to eat; I *will* eat."

"He is a very clever man," said the visitor. "He told me that never in the whole course of his experience has he met with what he called so much 'resisting power' as exists in your frame. He asked me if you were not of a long-lived race."

"That is as people may judge," replied Monsieur Bonelle. "All I can say is, that my grandfather died at ninety, and my father at eighty-six."

"The doctor owned that you had a wonderfully strong constitution."

"Who said I hadn't?" exclaimed the invalid feebly.

"You may rely on it, you would preserve your health better if you had not the trouble of these vexatious lodgers. Have you thought about the life annuity?" said Ramin as carelessly as he could, considering how near the matter was to his hopes and wishes.

"Why, I have scruples," returned Bonelle, coughing. "I do not wish to take you in. My longevity would be the ruin of you."

"To meet that difficulty," quickly replied the mercer, "we can reduce the interest."

"But I must have high interest," placidly returned Monsieur Bonelle.

Ramin, on hearing this, burst into a loud fit of laughter, called Monsieur Bonelle a sly old fox, gave him a poke in the ribs, which made the old man cough for five minutes, and then proposed that they should talk it over some other day. The mercer left Monsieur Bonelle in the act of protesting that he felt as strong as a man of forty.

Monsieur Ramin felt in no hurry to conclude the proposed agreement. "The later one begins to pay, the better," he said, as he descended the stairs.

Days passed on, and the negotiation made no way. It struck the observant tradesman that all was not right. Old Marguerite several times refused to admit him, declaring her master was asleep: there was something mysterious and forbidding in her manner that seemed to Monsieur Ramin very ominous. At length a sudden thought occurred to him: the housekeeper—wishing to become her master's heir—had heard his scheme and opposed it. On the very day that he arrived at this conclusion, he met a lawyer, with whom he had formerly had some transactions, coming down the staircase. The sight



sent a chill through the mercer's commercial heart, and a presentiment—one of those presentiments that seldom deceive—told him it was too late. He had, however, the fortitude to abstain from visiting Monsieur Bonelle until evening came; when he went up, resolved to see him in spite of all Marguerite might urge. The door was half-open, and the old housekeeper stood talking on the landing to a middle-aged man in a dark cassock.



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"It is all over! The old witch has got the priests at him," thought Ramin, inwardly groaning at his own folly in allowing himself to be forestalled.

"You cannot see Monsieur to-night," sharply said Marguerite, as he attempted to pass.

"Alas! is my excellent friend so very ill?" asked Ramin, in a mournful tone.

"Sir," eagerly said the clergyman, catching him by the button of his coat, "if you are indeed the friend of that unhappy man, do seek to bring him into a more suitable frame of mind. I have seen many dying men, but never so much obstinacy, never such infatuated belief in the duration of life."

"Then you think he really *is* dying," asked Ramin; and, in spite of the melancholy accent he endeavored to assume, there was something so peculiar in his tone, that the priest looked at him very fixedly as he slowly replied,

"Yes, air, I think he is."

"Ah!" was all Monsieur Ramin said; and as the clergyman had now relaxed his hold of the button, Ramin passed in spite of the remonstrances of Marguerite, who rushed after the priest. He found Monsieur Bonelle in bed and in a towering rage.

"Oh! Ramin, my friend," he groaned, "never take a housekeeper, and never let her know you have any property. They are harpies, Ramin,—harpies! such a day as I have had; first, the lawyer, who comes to write down 'my last testamentary dispositions,' as he calls them; then the priest, who gently hints that I am a dying man. Oh, what a day!"

"And *did* you make your will, my excellent friend?" softly asked Monsieur Ramin, with a keen look.

"Make my will?" indignantly exclaimed the old man; "make my will? what do you mean, sir? do you mean to say I am dying?"

"Heaven forbid!" piously ejaculated Ramin.

"Then why do you ask me if I had been making my will?" angrily resumed the old man. He then began to be extremely abusive.

When money was in the way, Monsieur Ramin, though otherwise of a violent temper, had the meekness of a lamb. He bore the treatment of his host with the meekest patience, and having first locked the door so as to make sure that Marguerite would not interrupt them, he watched Monsieur Bonelle attentively, and satisfied himself that the Excellent Opportunity he had been ardently longing for had arrived: "He is going fast," he thought; "and unless I settle the agreement to-night, and get it drawn up and signed to-morrow, it will be too late."



“My dear friend,” he at length said aloud, on perceiving that the old gentleman had fairly exhausted himself and was lying panting on his back, “you are indeed a lamentable instance of the lengths to which the greedy lust of lucre will carry our poor human nature. It is really distressing to see Marguerite, a faithful, attached servant, suddenly converted into a tormenting harpy by the prospect of a legacy! Lawyers and priests flock around you like birds of prey, drawn hither by the scent of gold! Oh, the miseries of having delicate health combined with a sound constitution and large property!”



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“Ramin,” groaned the old man, looking inquiringly into his visitor’s face, “you are again going to talk to me about that annuity—I know you are!”

“My excellent friend, it is merely to deliver you from a painful position.”

“I am sure, Ramin, you think in your soul I am dying,” whimpered Monsieur Bonelle.

“Absurd, my dear sir. Dying? I will prove to you that you have never been in better health. In the first place you feel no pain.”

“Excepting from rheumatism,” groaned Monsieur Bonelle.

“Rheumatism! who ever died of rheumatism? and if that be all—”

“No, it is not all,” interrupted the old man with great irritability; “what would you say to the gout getting higher and higher up every day?”

“The gout is rather disagreeable, but if there is nothing else—”

“Yes, there is something else,” sharply said Monsieur Bonelle. “There is an asthma that will scarcely let me breathe, and a racking pain in my head that does not allow me a moment’s ease. But if you think I am dying, Ramin, you are quite mistaken.”

“No doubt, my dear friend, no doubt; but in the meanwhile suppose we talk of this annuity. Shall we say one thousand francs a year.”

“What!” asked Bonelle, looking at him very fixedly.

“My dear friend, I mistook; I meant two thousand francs per annum,” hurriedly rejoined Ramin.

Monsieur Bonelle closed his eyes, and appeared to fall into a gentle slumber. The mercer coughed; the sick man never moved.

“Monsieur Bonelle.”

No reply.

“My excellent friend.”

Utter silence.

“Are you asleep?”

A long pause.



“Well, then, what do you say to three thousand?”

Monsieur Bonelle opened his eyes.

“Ramin,” said he, sententiously, “you are a fool; the house brings me in four thousand as it is.”

This was quite false, and the mercer knew it; but he had his own reasons for wishing to seem to believe it true.

“Good Heavens!” said he, with an air of great innocence, “who could have thought it, and the lodgers constantly running away. Four thousand? Well, then, you shall have four thousand.”

Monsieur Bonelle shut his eyes once more, and murmured “The mere rental—nonsense!” He then folded his hands on his breast, and appeared to compose himself to sleep.

“Oh, what a sharp man of business he is!” Ramin said, admiringly: but for once omnipotent flattery failed in its effect: “So acute!” continued he, with a stealthy glance at the old man, who remained perfectly unmoved.

“I see you will insist upon making it the other five hundred francs.”

Monsieur Ramin said this as if five thousand five hundred francs had already been mentioned, and was the very summit of Monsieur Bonelle’s ambition. But the ruse failed in its effect; the sick man never so much as stirred.



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“But, my dear friend,” urged Monsieur Ramin in a tone of feeling remonstrance, “there is such a thing as being too sharp, too acute. How can you expect that I shall give you more when your constitution is so good, and you are to be such a long liver?”

“Yes, but I may be carried off one of these days,” quietly observed the old man, evidently wishing to turn the chance of his own death to account.

“Indeed, and I hope so,” muttered the mercer, who was getting very ill-tempered.

“You see,” soothingly continued Bonelle, “you are so good a man of business, Ramin, that you will double the actual value of the house in no time. I am a quiet, easy person, indifferent to money; otherwise this house would now bring me in eight thousand at the very least.”

“Eight thousand!” indignantly exclaimed the mercer. “Monsieur Bonelle, you have no conscience. Come now, my dear friend, do be reasonable. Six thousand francs a year (I don’t mind saying six) is really a very handsome income for a man of your quiet habits. Come, be reasonable.” But Monsieur Bonelle turned a deaf ear to reason, and closed his eyes once more. What between opening and shutting them for the next quarter of an hour, he at length induced Monsieur Ramin to offer him seven thousand francs.

“Very well, Ramin, agreed,” he quietly said; “you have made an unconscionable bargain.” To this succeeded a violent fit of coughing.

As Ramin unlocked the door to leave, he found old Marguerite, who had been listening all the time, ready to assail him with a torrent of whispered abuse for duping her “poor dear innocent old master into such a bargain.” The mercer bore it all very patiently: he could make all allowances for her excited feelings, and only rubbed his hands and bade her a jovial good evening.

The agreement was signed on the following day, to the indignation of old Marguerite, and the mutual satisfaction of the parties concerned.

Every one admired the luck and shrewdness of Ramin, for the old man every day was reported worse; and it was clear to all that the first quarter of the annuity would never be paid. Marguerite, in her wrath, told the story as a grievance to every one; people listened, shook their heads, and pronounced Monsieur Ramin to be a deuced clever fellow.

A month elapsed. As Ramin was coming down one morning from the attics, where he had been giving notice to a poor widow who had failed in paying her rent, he heard a light step on the stairs. Presently a sprightly gentleman, in buoyant health and spirits, wearing the form of Monsieur Bonelle, appeared. Ramin stood aghast.



“Well, Ramin,” gaily said the old man, “how are you getting on? Have you been tormenting the poor widow up stairs? Why, man, we must live and let live!”

“Monsieur Bonelle,” said the mercer, in a hollow tone; “may I ask where are your rheumatics?”

“Gone, my dear friend,—gone.”



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“And the gout that was creeping higher and higher every day,” exclaimed Monsieur Ramin, in a voice of anguish.

“It went lower and lower, till it disappeared altogether,” composedly replied Bonelle.

“And your asthma—”

“The asthma remains, but asthmatic people are proverbially long-lived. It is, I have been told, the only complaint that Methusalah was troubled with.” With this Bonelle opened his door, shut it, and disappeared.

Ramin was transfixed on the stairs; petrified with intense disappointment, and a powerful sense of having been duped. When he was discovered, he stared vacantly, and raved about an Excellent Opportunity of taking his revenge.

The wonderful cure was the talk of the neighborhood, whenever Monsieur Bonelle appeared in the streets, jauntily flourishing his cane. In the first frenzy of his despair, Ramin refused to pay; he accused every one of having been in a plot to deceive him; he turned off Catharine and expelled his porter: he publicly accused the lawyer and priest of conspiracy; brought an action against the doctor and lost it. He had another brought against him for violently assaulting Marguerite, in which he was cast in heavy damages. Monsieur Bonelle did not trouble himself with useless remonstrances, but when his annuity was refused, employed such good legal arguments, as the exasperated mercer could not possibly resist.

Ten years have elapsed, and MM. Ramin and Bonelle still live on. For a house which would have been dear at fifty thousand francs, the draper has already handed over seventy thousand.

The once red-faced, jovial Ramin is now a pale haggard man, of sour temper and aspect. To add to his anguish he sees the old man thrive on that money which it breaks his heart to give. Old Marguerite takes a malicious pleasure in giving him an exact account of their good cheer, and in asking him if he does not think Monsieur looks better and better every day. Of one part of this torment Ramin might get rid, by giving his old master notice to quit, and no longer having him in his house. But this he cannot do; he has a secret fear that Bonelle would take some Excellent Opportunity of dying without his knowledge, and giving some other person an Excellent Opportunity of persecuting him, and receiving the money in his stead.

The last accounts of the victim of Excellent Opportunities represent him as being gradually worn down with disappointment. There seems every probability of his being the first to leave the world; for Bonelle is heartier than ever.

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[FROM HOUSEHOLD WORDS.]

THE OLD CHURCHWARD TREE.

A PROSE POEM.

There is an old yew tree which stands by the wall in a dark quiet corner of the churchyard.

And a child was at play beneath its wide-spreading branches, one fine day in the early spring. He had his lap full of flowers, which the fields and lanes had supplied him with, and he was humming a tune to himself as he wove them into garlands.



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And a little girl at play among the tombstones crept near to listen; but the boy was so intent upon his garland, that he did not hear the gentle footsteps, as they trod softly over the fresh green grass. When his work was finished, and all the flowers that were in his lap were woven together in one long wreath, he started up to measure its length upon the ground, and then he saw the little girl, as she stood with her eyes fixed upon him. He did not move or speak, but thought to himself that she looked very beautiful as she stood there with her flaxen ringlets hanging down upon her neck. The little girl was so startled by his sudden movement, that she let fall all the flowers she had collected in her apron, and ran away as fast as she could. But the boy was older and taller than she, and soon caught her, and coaxed her to come back and play with him, and help him to make more garlands; and from that time they saw each other nearly every day, and became great friends.

Twenty years passed away. Again, he was seated beneath the old yew tree in the churchyard.

It was summer now; bright, beautiful summer, with the birds singing, and the flowers covering the ground, and scenting the air with their perfume.

But he was not alone now, nor did the little girl steal near on tiptoe, fearful of being heard. She was seated by his side, and his arm was round her, and she looked up into his face, and smiled as she whispered: "The first evening of our lives we were ever together was passed here; we will spend the first evening of our wedded life in the same quiet, happy place." And he drew her closer to him as she spoke.

The summer is gone; and the autumn; and twenty more summers and autumns have passed away since that evening, in the old churchyard.

A young man, on a bright moonlight night, comes reeling through the little white gate, and stumbling over the graves. He shouts and he sings, and is presently followed by others like unto himself, or worse. So, they all laugh at the dark solemn head of the yew tree, and throw stones up at the place where the moon had silvered the boughs.

Those same boughs are again silvered by the moon, and they droop over his mother's grave. There is a little stone which bears this inscription:—

"HER HEART BRAKE IN SILENCE."

But the silence of the churchyard is now broken by a voice—not of the youth—nor a voice of laughter and ribaldry.

"My son!—dost thou see this grave? and dost thou read the record in anguish, whereof may come repentance?"



“Of what should I repent?” answers the son; “and why should my young ambition for fame relax in its strength because my mother was old and weak?”

“Is this indeed our son?” says the father, bending in agony over the grave of his beloved.

“I can well believe I am not;” exclaimeth the youth. “It is well that you have brought me here to say so. Our natures are unlike; our courses must be opposite. Your way lieth here—mine yonder!”



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So the son left the father kneeling by the grave.

Again a few years are passed. It is winter, with a roaring wind and a thick gray fog. The graves in the Church-yard are covered with snow, and there are great icicles in the Church-yard. The wind now carries a swathe of snow along the tops of the graves as though the "sheeted dead" were at some melancholy play; and hark! the icicles fall with a crash and jingle, like a solemn mockery of the echo of the unseemly mirth of one who is now coming to his final rest.

There are two graves near the old yew tree; and the grass has overgrown them. A third is close by; and the dark earth at each side has just been thrown up. The bearers come; with a heavy pace they move along; the coffin heaveth up and down, as they step over the intervening graves.

Grief and old age had seized upon the father, and worn out his life; and premature decay soon seized upon the son, and gnawed away his vain ambition, and his useless strength, till he prayed to be borne, not the way yonder that was most opposite to his father and his mother, but even the same way they had gone—the way which leads to the Old Churchyard Tree.

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In dreamy hours the dormant imagination looks out and sees vague significances in things which it feels can at an after time be vividly conceived and expressed; the most familiar objects have a strange double meaning in their aspects; the very chair seems to be patiently awaiting there the expounder of its silent, symbolical language.—*Boston Morning Post*.

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[FROM BENTLEY'S MISCELLANY.]

GREECE AND TURKEY.[2]

Whatever Mr. AUBREY DE VERE sees, he picturesquely describes; and so far as words can do so, he makes pictures of all the subjects he writes upon; and had he painted as he has written, or used his pencil equally well with his pen, two more delightful volumes, to any lover of Greece, it would be difficult to name. With an evidently refined taste, and a perfect acquaintance with the ancient history of the country he traveled through, and the ever famous characters that made its history what it is, his descriptions combine most pleasingly together, the past with the present. He peoples the scenery with the men whose deeds give to that scenery all its interest; and whether on the plain of Marathon, or the site of Delphi or the Acropolis, he has a store of



things to say of their past glories, and links together, with great artistic skill, that which is gone with that which remains.

[Footnote 2: Picturesque Sketches of Greece and Turkey. By Aubrey De Vere, 2 vols.  
[Philadelphia: A. Hart.]]



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By the scholar and the man of taste the volumes will be read with no little delight, as they abound much more with reflections and sensible observations, than with the commonplace incidents of travel. Indeed, the author has left but small space for his accidents at sea and his hardships on shore, since all the chapters but four are devoted to Athens, Delphi, and Constantinople. The classical reader will prefer the chapters on the two first-named places; the general reader will find perhaps more interesting his sketches of the city of the Sultan, and an anecdote which he gives of the present Sultan, and which declares him to possess more of decision, and firmness of character, and good sense, than the world gives him credit for. His description of the Bosphorus will create in many a desire to see what he has seen, and to look upon some, at least, of the fifty-seven palaces which the sultans have raised upon its banks; and upon the hundreds of others, which, while the Commander of the Faithful permits it, are the property of his subjects.

It argued far more of a wild spirit of adventure than of a sober understanding in Aubrey de Vere, to go with that clever Frenchman to the Turk's house, and to play off all those tricks in the presence of its master and his ten unvailed wives. Rarely indeed, if ever before, has an Englishman passed an hour so comfortably with the whole of a rich man's harem, and seen them as de Vere saw them in all their artlessness and beauty. We live, indeed, in strange times, when the once scorned and loathed Giaours contrive to possess themselves of such extraordinary privileges, and to escape unharmed from such hitherto unheard-of enjoyments.

Where one thought was given to Constantinople a hundred years since from the west of the Dalmatian coast, ten thousand eyes are now constantly directed to it, and with continually increasing anxiety. The importance of that city is now understood by all the European powers, and its future fate has become a subject of deep interest to all the western states, in consequence of the determined set made upon it by its powerful northern neighbor. With the Cossacks at Istamboul instead of Turks, we should be very ill satisfied, and the whole charm of this city on its seven hills would have departed: already is it on the wane. Sultan Mahmoud's hostility to beards and to flowing robes, to the turban and the jherid, has deprived his capital city of much of its picturesqueness and peculiarity; but still enough remains of eastern manners and costumes to make it one of the most interesting cities in the world to visit and roam over. Such as, like ourselves, may not hope to sport a caique on the Bosphorus, will do well to acquaint themselves with the information Aubrey de Vere can give them, and to suffer their imagination to transport them to scenes among the fairest and the loveliest on the earth's surface, and which are presented to them in these volumes as graphically as words can paint them.



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By the possessor of Wordsworth's Greece, where every spot almost, of the slightest historical interest, is given in a picture on its pages, these "Picturesque Sketches" will be read with the highest gratification that scenes and descriptions together can supply. There is so much of mind in them; so much of sound philosophy in the observations; such beautiful thoughts; so well, so elegantly expressed; so many allusions to the past, that are continually placing before us Pericles, Themistocles, or Demosthenes, that we are improved while amused, and feel at every page that we are reading a work far above the general works on such subjects; a work of lasting interest, that may be read and re-read, and still with delight and advantage.

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DEATH AND SLEEP.

FROM THE GERMAN OF KRUMMACHER.

In brotherly embrace walked the Angel of Sleep and the Angel of Death upon the earth.

It was evening. They laid themselves down upon a hill not far from the dwelling of men. A melancholy silence prevailed around, and the chimes of the evening-bell in the distant hamlet ceased.

Still and silent, as was their custom, sat these two beneficent Genii of the human race, their arms entwined with cordial familiarity, and soon the shades of night gathered around them.

Then arose the Angel of Sleep from his moss-grown couch, and strewed with a gentle hand the invisible grains of slumber. The evening breeze wafted them to the quiet dwelling of the tired husbandman, infolding in sweet sleep the inmates of the rural cottage—from the old man upon the staff, down to the infant in the cradle. The sick forgot their pain: the mourners their grief; the poor their care. All eyes closed.

His task accomplished, the benevolent Angel of Sleep laid himself again by the side of his grave brother. "When Aurora awakes," exclaimed he, with innocent joy, "men praise me as their friend and benefactor. Oh! what happiness, unseen and secretly to confer such benefits! How blessed are we to be the invisible messengers of the Good Spirit! How beautiful is our silent calling!"

So spake the friendly Angel of Slumber.

The Angel of Death sat with still deeper melancholy on his brow, and a tear, such as mortals shed, appeared in his large dark eyes. "Alas!" said he, "I may not, like thee, rejoice in the cheerful thanks of mankind; they call me upon the earth their enemy, and joy-killer."



“Oh! my brother,” replied the gentle Angel of Slumber, “and will not the good man, at his awakening, recognize in thee his friend and benefactor, and gratefully bless thee in his joy? Are we not brothers, and ministers of one Father?”

As he spake, the eyes of the Death-Angel beamed with pleasure, and again did the two friendly Genii cordially embrace each other.

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THE MODERN SCHOOLS OF ATHENS.—I visited, with equal surprise and satisfaction, an Athenian school, which contained seven hundred pupils, taken from every class of society. The poorer classes were gratuitously instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the girls in needlework likewise. The progress which the children had made was very remarkable; but what particularly pleased me was that air of bright alertness and good-humored energy which belonged to them, and which made every task appear a pleasure, not a toil. The greatest punishment which can be inflicted on an Athenian child is exclusion from school, though but for a day. About seventy of the children belonged to the higher classes, and were instructed in music, drawing, the modern languages, the ancient Greek, and geography. Most of them were at the moment reading Herodotus and Homer. I have never seen children approaching them in beauty; and was much struck by their Oriental cast of countenance, their dark complexions, their flashing eyes, and that expression, at once apprehensive and meditative, which is so much more remarkable in children than in those of a more mature age.—*De Vere*.

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At Berlin, the Academy of Sciences has been holding a sitting, according to its statutes, in honor of the memory of Leibnitz. In the course of the oration delivered on the occasion, it was stated that the 4th of August being the fiftieth anniversary of the admission of Alexander Von Humboldt as a member of the Academy, it had been resolved, in celebration of the event, to place a marble bust of the "Nestor of Science" in the lecture room of the society.