

Chambers's Edinburgh Journal, No. 424 eBook

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Contents

Chambers's Edinburgh Journal, No. 424 eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	4
Page 1.....	5
Page 2.....	7
Page 3.....	8
Page 4.....	9
Page 5.....	10
Page 6.....	11
Page 7.....	12
Page 8.....	13
Page 9.....	14
Page 10.....	15
Page 11.....	16
Page 12.....	17
Page 13.....	18
Page 14.....	20
Page 15.....	21
Page 16.....	22
Page 17.....	23
Page 18.....	24
Page 19.....	25
Page 20.....	26
Page 21.....	27
Page 22.....	28

Page 23.....	29
Page 24.....	30
Page 25.....	31
Page 26.....	32
Page 27.....	33
Page 28.....	34
Page 29.....	35
Page 30.....	36
Page 31.....	38
Page 32.....	39
Page 33.....	40
Page 34.....	41
Page 35.....	42
Page 36.....	43
Page 37.....	44
Page 38.....	45
Page 39.....	46
Page 40.....	48
Page 41.....	50

Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
Title: Chambers's Edinburgh Journal, No. 424, New Series, February 14, 1852		1
THE PATTERN NATION.		1
MY TRAVELLING COMPANION.		6
POPULAR MUSIC—MAINZER.		17
FOOTNOTES:		22
A NEWCASTLE PAPER IN 1765-6.		22
GENIUS FOR EMIGRATION.		28
EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYED.		34
ANECDOTE OF THE FIELD OF SHERRIFMUIR.		37
THINNESS OF A SOAP-BUBBLE.		39
ENGLISH PLOUGHING.		39
JOHN BUNYAN AND MINCE-PIES.		39
FOREST-TEACHINGS.		39

Page 1

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THE PATTERN NATION.

It seems to be the destiny of France to work out all sorts of problems in state and social policy. It may be said to volunteer experiments in government for the benefit of mankind. All kinds of forms it tries, one after the other: each, in turn, is supposed to be the right thing; and when found to be wrong, an effort, fair or unfair, is made to try something else. It would surely be the height of ingratitude not to thank our versatile neighbour for this apparently endless series of experiments.

Unfortunately, the novel projects extemporised by the French are not on all occasions easily laid aside. What they have laid hold on, they cannot get rid of. We have a striking instance of this in the practice of subdividing lands. Forms of state administration may be altered, and after all not much harm done; it is only changing one variety of power at the Tuileries for another. A very different thing is a revolution in the method of holding landed property. Few things are more dangerous than to meddle with laws of inheritance: if care be not taken, the whole fabric of society may be overthrown. The unpleasant predicament which the French have got into on this

account is most alarming—far more terrible than the wildest of their revolutions. How they are to get out of it, no man can tell.

Latterly, the world has heard much of Socialism. This is the term applied to certain new and untried schemes of social organisation, by which, among other things, it is proposed to supersede the ordinary rights of property and laws of inheritance—the latter, as is observed, having, after due experience, failed to realise that happiness of condition which was anticipated sixty years ago at their institution. As it is always instructive to look back on the first departure from rectitude, let us say a few words as to how the French fell into their present unhappy position.

Page 2

At the Revolution of 1789-93, it will be recollected that the laws of primogeniture were overthrown, and it was ordained that in future every man's property should be divided equally among his children at his death: there can be no doubt that considerations of justice and humanity were at the foundation of this new law of inheritance. Hitherto, there had been a great disparity in the condition of high and low: certain properties, descending from eldest son to eldest son, had become enormously large, and were generally ill managed; while prodigious numbers of people had no property at all, and were dependents on feudal superiors. The country was undoubtedly in a bad condition, and some modification of the law was desirable. Reckless of consequences, the system as it stood was utterly swept away, and that of equal partition took its place. About the same period, vast domains belonging to the crown, the clergy, and the nobility, were sequestered and sold in small parcels; so that there sprang up almost at once a proprietary of quite a new description. Had the law of equal partition been extended only to cases in which there was no testamentary provision, it could not have inflicted serious damage, and would at all events have been consistent with reason and expediency: but it went the length of depriving a parent of the right to distribute his property in the manner he judged best, and handed over every tittle of his earnings in equal shares to his children. One child might be worthless, and another the reverse; no matter—all were to be treated alike. No preference could be shewn, no posthumous reward could be given for general good-conduct or filial respect. In all this, there was something so revolting to common sense, that one feels a degree of wonder that so acute a people as the French should have failed to observe the error into which they were plunging.

For every law, however bad, there is always some justification or plea of necessity. Besides tending to level the position of individuals, the plan of equal distribution of property was said to be justifiable on the ground that there are more than two parties concerned. Society, it was alleged, comes in as a third, and says to the parent: 'You must provide for this son, however worthless; you must not throw him destitute on our hands; for that is to shift the responsibility from yourself, who brought him into the world, to us, who have nothing to do with him.' This plea, more plausible than sound, had its effect. That an occasional wrong might not be inflicted, a great national error, practically injurious, was committed.

Page 3

A compulsory law of equal division of lands among the children of a deceased proprietor, may be long in revealing its horrors in a country where the redundant population sheds habitually off. In Switzerland, for example, the evil of a subdivision of lands is marked but in a moderate degree—though bad enough in the main—because a certain proportion of each generation emigrates in quest of a livelihood—the young men going off to be mercenary soldiers in Italy, waiters at hotels, and so forth; and the young women to be governesses and domestic servants. France, on the contrary, is the last nation in the world to try the subdivision principle. Its people, with some trifling exceptions, go nowhere, as if affecting to despise all the rest of the world. Contented with moderate fortunes, inclined to make amusement their occupation, unwilling or unable to learn foreign languages, or to care for anything abroad, and having so intense a love of France, that they will not emigrate, they necessarily settle down in a gradually aggregating mass, and are driven to the very last shifts for existence. Only two things have saved the nation from anarchy: the remarkable circumstance of few families consisting of more than two, or at most three children, any more being deemed a culpable monstrosity; and the draughting of young men for the army. In other words, the war-demon is an engine to keep the population in check; for if it does not at once kill off men, it occupies them in military affairs at the public expense. The prodigious number of civil posts under government—said to be upwards of half a million—acts also as a means for absorbing the overplus rural population.

Circumstances of the nature here pointed out have modified the evil effects of the law of subdivision; but after making every allowance on this and every other score that can be suggested, it is undeniable that the partition of property has gone down and down, till at length, in some situations, it can go no further. The morsels of land have become so small, that they are not worth occupying, and will barely realise the expense of legal transfer. In certain quarters, we are informed, the individual properties are not larger than a single furrow, or a patch the size of a cabbage-garden. A good number of these landed estates—one authority says a million and a quarter—are about five acres in extent, which is considered quite a respectable property; but as, at the death of each proprietor, there is a further partition, the probability would seem to be that, ultimately, the surface of France will resemble the worst parts of Ireland, with a population sunk to the lowest grade of humanity. Perhaps, however, the evils inflicted on society through the agency of subdivision, are mainly incidental. General injury goes on at a more rapid rate than the actual partition of property. From the causes above mentioned, the population in France is long in doubling itself; and the slower the increase, the slower the subdivision.

Page 4

Already, however, the properties are so small, that they do not admit of that profitable culture enjoined by principles of improved husbandry and correct social policy. In the proper cultivation of the soil, other parties besides agriculturists are concerned; for whatever limits production, affects the national wealth. The meagre husbandry of the small properties in France is thus a serious loss to the country, and tends to general impoverishment. But there is another and equally calamitous consequence of excessive subdivision. The small proprietors in France are for the greater part owners only in name: practically, they are tenants. Desperate in their circumstances, they have borrowed money on their wretched holdings; and so poor is the security, and so limited is the capital at disposal on loan, that the interest paid on mortgage runs from 8 to 10 per cent.—often is as high as 20 per cent. After paying taxes, interest on loans, and other necessary expenses, such is the exhaustion of resources, that thousands of these French peasant proprietors may be said to live in a continual battle with famine. According to official returns, there are in France upwards of 348,000 dwellings with no other aperture than the door; and nearly 2,000,000 with only one window. And to this the ‘pattern nation’ has brought itself by its headlong haste to upset, not simply improve, a bad institution. The living in these windowless and single-windowed abodes is not living, in the proper sense of the word: it is existence without comfort, without hope. The next step is to burrow in holes like rabbits.

It will thus be observed, that the subdivision of real estate has brought France pretty much back to the point where it started—a small wealthy class, and a very numerous poor class. The computation is, that in a population of 36,000,000, only 800,000 are in easy circumstances. A considerable proportion of this moneyed class are usurers, living in Paris and other large towns. They are the lenders of cash on bonds, which squeeze out the very vitals of the nation—the gay flutterers and loungers of the streets, theatres, and cafes, drawing the means of luxurious indulgence from the myriads who toil out their lives in the fields.

Obtaining a glimpse of these facts, we can no longer wonder at the submission of the French peasantry to a thinning of their families by military conscription; at the eager thirst for office which afflicts the whole nation; or at the morbid desire to overturn society, and strike out a better organisation. As matters grow worse, this passion for wholesale change becomes more fervidly manifested. The *jacqueries* of the middle ages are renewed. Various districts of country, in which poverty has reached its climax, break into universal insurrection. It is a war levied by those who have nothing against those who have something. To have coin in the pocket, is to be the enemy. The cry is: Down with the rich; take all they have got, and divide the plunder

Page 5

amongst us. Such are the avowed principles of the Socialists. According to them, all property is theft, and taking by violence is only recovering stolen goods! When a nation has come to this deplorable pass, what, it may be asked, can cure it? The malady is not political; it is social. Perhaps, under a right development of industry, France has not too great a population; but, subject to the present misdirection of its energies, the position of the country is assuming a gravity of aspect which may well engage the most earnest consideration. The least that could be recommended is an immediate change in the law which so unscrupulously subdivides and ruins landed property.

The history of the Revolution of 1789-93, must have made a feeble impression, if it has failed to print a deep and indelible conviction on the mind, that the acts of that great and wicked drama would some day be bitterly expiated. To expect anything else would be to impeach the principles of everlasting justice. Bearing in remembrance the horrid excesses of almost an entire nation, nothing that now occurs in France affords us the least surprise. The anarchical revolts of 1851, are only a sequence of crimes committed upwards of half a century ago. Philosophically, the beginning and the end are one thing. Blind with rage against all that was noble, holy, and simply respectable, the innocent were dragged in crowds to the scaffold, and their property confiscated and disposed of. See the consequence after a lapse of sixty years, 'My sin hath found me out.' The ill-gotten wealth has been the very instrument to punish and prostrate. A robbery followed by divisions among the spoilers. Waste succeeded by clamorous destitution. What a lesson!

It is needless to say, that Socialism, which proposes a universal re-distribution of property, with some unintelligible organisation of labour—all on an equality, no rich and no poor, no masters and no servants, everybody sharing his dinner with his neighbour—is a fancy as baseless as any crotchet which even the 'pattern nation' has ever concocted. Yet, it is not the less likely to be carried into execution, perhaps only the more likely from its practical absurdity. Of course, the more educated and wealthy portion of the nation view the doctrines of Socialism, as far as they can comprehend them, with serious apprehension; but unhappily for France, these classes uniformly submit to any folly or crime, which comes with the emphasis of authority, valid or usurped. At present, they may be said to have made a compromise, bartering civil liberty for bare safety—permission to live! But how long this will last, and what form the tenure of property is to assume, are questions not easy to answer. It would not surprise us to see the nation, in its corporate capacity, assume the position of universal lender of money on, or proprietor of, embarrassed estates; in which case the 'ryot system' of India will, strangely enough, have found domestication in Europe! Is this to be the next experiment?

Page 6

A curious and saddening problem is the future of this great country. 'France,' said Robespierre in one of his moments of studied inspiration, 'has astonished all Europe with her prodigies of reason!' We are now witnessing the development of several of these astonishing prodigies; and the spectacle, to say the least of it, is instructive.

MY TRAVELLING COMPANION.

My picture was a failure. Partial friends had guaranteed its success; but the Hanging Committee and the press are not composed of one's partial friends. The Hanging Committee thrust me into the darkest corner of the octagon-room, and the press ignored my existence—excepting in one instance, when my critic dismissed me in a quarter of a line as a 'presumptuous dauber.' I was stunned with the blow, for I had counted so securely on the L.200 at which my grand historical painting was dog-cheap—not to speak of the deathless fame which it was to create for me—that I felt like a mere wreck when my hopes were flung to the ground, and the untasted cup dashed from my lips. I took to my bed, and was seriously ill. The doctor bled me till I fainted, and then said, that he had saved me from a brain-fever. That might be, but he very nearly threw me into a consumption, only that I had a deep chest and a good digestion. Pneumonic expansion and active chyle saved me from an early tomb, yet I was too unhappy to be grateful.

But why did my picture fail? Surely it possessed all the elements of success! It was grandly historical in subject, original in treatment, pure in colouring; what, then, was wanting? This old warrior's head, of true Saxon type, had all the majesty of Michael Angelo; that young figure, all the radiant grace of Correggio; no Rembrandt shewed more severe dignity than yon burnt umber monk in the corner; and Titian never excelled the loveliness of this cobalt virgin in the foreground. Why did it not succeed? The subject, too—the 'Finding of the Body of Harold by Torch-light'—was sacred to all English hearts; and being conceived in an entirely new and original manner, it was redeemed from the charge of triteness and wearisomeness. The composition was pyramidal, the apex being a torch borne aloft for the 'high light,' and the base shewing some very novel effects of herbage and armour. But it failed. All my skill, all my hope, my ceaseless endeavour, my burning visions, all—all had failed; and I was only a poor, half-starved painter, in Great Howland Street, whose landlady was daily abating in her respect, and the butcher daily abating in his punctuality; whose garments were getting threadbare, and his dinners hypothetical, and whose day-dreams of fame and fortune had faded into the dull-gray of penury and disappointment. I was broken-hearted, ill, hungry; so I accepted an invitation from a friend, a rich manufacturer in Birmingham, to go down to his house for the Christmas holidays. He had a pleasant place in the midst of some ironworks, the blazing chimneys of which, he assured me, would afford me some exquisite studies of 'light' effects.

Page 7

By mistake, I went by the Express train, and so was thrown into the society of a lady whose position would have rendered any acquaintance with her impossible, excepting under such chance-conditions as the present; and whose history, as I learned it afterwards, led me to reflect much on the difference between the reality and the seeming of life.

She moved my envy. Yes—base, mean, low, unartistic, degrading as is this passion, I felt it rise up like a snake in my breast when I saw that feeble woman. She was splendidly dressed—wrapped in furs of the most costly kind, trailing behind; her velvets and lace worth a countess's dowry. She was attended by obsequious menials; surrounded by luxuries; her compartment of the carriage was a perfect palace in all the accessories which it was possible to collect in so small a space; and it seemed as though 'Cleopatra's cup' would have been no impracticable draught for her. She gave me more fully the impression of luxury, than any person I had ever met with before; and I thought I had reason when I envied her.

She was lifted into the carriage carefully; carefully swathed in her splendid furs and lustrous velvets; and placed gently, like a wounded bird, in her warm nest of down. But she moved languidly, and fretfully thrust aside her servants' busy hands, indifferent to her comforts, and annoyed by her very blessings. I looked into her face: it was a strange face, which had once been beautiful; but ill-health, and care, and grief, had marked it now with deep lines, and coloured it with unnatural tints. Tears had washed out the roses from her cheeks, and set large purple rings about her eyes; the mouth was hard and pinched, but the eyelids swollen; while the crossed wrinkles on her brow told the same tale of grief grown petulant, and of pain grown soured, as the thin lip, quivering and querulous, and the nervous hand, never still and never strong.

The train-bell rang, the whistle sounded, the lady's servitors stood bareheaded and courtesying to the ground, and the rapid rush of the iron giant bore off the high-born dame and the starveling painter in strange companionship. Unquiet and unresting—now shifting her place—now letting down the glass for the cold air to blow full upon her withered face—then drawing it up, and chafing her hands and feet by the warm-water apparatus concealed in her *chauffe-pied*, while shivering as if in an ague-fit—sighing deeply—lost in thought—wildly looking out and around for distraction—she soon made me ask myself whether my envy of her was as true as deep sympathy and pity would have been.

'But her wealth—her wealth!' I thought. 'True she may suffer, but how gloriously she is solaced! She may weep, but the angels of social life wipe off her tears with perfumed linen, gold embroidered; she may grieve, but her grief makes her joys so much the more blissful. Ah! she is to be envied after all!—envied, while I, a very beggar, might well scorn my place now!'

Page 8

Something of this might have been in my face, as I offered my sick companion some small attention—I forget what—gathering up one of her luxurious trifles, or arranging her cushions. She seemed almost to read my thoughts as her eyes rested on my melancholy face; and saying abruptly: 'I fear you are unhappy, young man?' she settled herself in her place like a person prepared to listen to a pleasant tale.

'I am unfortunate, madam,' I answered.

'Unfortunate?' she said impatiently. 'What! with youth and health, can you call yourself unfortunate? When the whole world lies untried before you, and you still live in the golden atmosphere of hope, can you pamper yourself with sentimental sorrows? Fie upon you!—fie upon you! What are your sorrows compared with mine?'

'I am ignorant of yours, madam,' I said respectfully; 'but I know my own; and, knowing them, I can speak of their weight and bitterness. By your very position, you cannot undergo the same kind of distress as that overwhelming me at this moment: you may have evils in your path of life, but they cannot equal mine.'

'Can anything equal the evils of ruined health and a desolated hearth?' she cried, still in the same impatient manner. 'Can the worst griefs of wayward youth equal the bitterness of that cup which you drink at such a time of life as forbids all hope of after-assuagement? Can the first disappointment of a strong heart rank with the terrible desolation of a wrecked old age? You think because you see about me the evidences of wealth, that I must be happy. Young man, I tell you truly, I would gladly give up every farthing of my princely fortune, and be reduced to the extreme of want, to bring back from the grave the dear ones lying there, or pour into my veins one drop of the bounding blood of health and energy which used to make life a long play-hour of delight. Once, no child in the fields, no bird in the sky, was more blessed than I; and what am I now?—a sickly, lonely old woman, whose nerves are shattered and whose heart is broken, without hope or happiness on the earth! Even death has passed me by in forgetfulness and scorn!'

Her voice betrayed the truth of her emotion. Still, with an accent of bitterness and complaint, rather than of simple sorrow, it was the voice of one fighting against her fate, more than of one suffering acutely and in despair: it was petulant rather than melancholy; angry rather than grieving; shewing that her trials had hardened, not softened her heart.

'Listen to me,' she then said, laying her hand on my arm, 'and perhaps my history may reconcile you to the childish depression, from what cause soever it may be, under which you are labouring. You are young and strong, and can bear any amount of pain as yet: wait until you reach my age, and then you will know the true meaning of the word despair! I am rich, as you may see,' she continued, pointing to her surroundings—'in

Page 9

truth, so rich that I take no account either of my income or my expenditure. I have never known life under any other form; I have never known what it was to be denied the gratification of one desire which wealth could purchase, or obliged to calculate the cost of a single undertaking. I can scarcely realise the idea of poverty. I see that all people do not live in the same style as myself, but I cannot understand that it is from inability: it always seems to me to be from their own disinclination. I tell you, I cannot fully realise the idea of poverty; and you think this must make me happy, perhaps?' she added sharply, looking full in my face.

'I should be happy, madam, if I were rich,' I replied. 'Suffering now from the strain of poverty, it is no marvel if I place an undue value on plenty.'

'Yet see what it does for me!' continued my companion. 'Does it give me back my husband, my brave boys, my beautiful girl? Does it give rest to this weary heart, or relief to this aching head? Does it soothe my mind or heal my body? No! It but oppresses me, like a heavy robe thrown round weakened limbs: it is even an additional misfortune, for if I were poor, I should be obliged to think of other things beside myself and my woes; and the very mental exertion necessary to sustain my position would lighten my miseries. I have seen my daughter wasting year by year and day by day, under the warm sky of the south—under the warm care of love! Neither climate nor affection could save her: every effort was made—the best advice procured—the latest panacea adopted; but to no effect. Her life was prolonged, certainly; but this simply means, that she was three years in dying, instead of three months. She was a gloriously lovely creature, like a fair young saint for beauty and purity—quite an ideal thing, with her golden hair and large blue eyes! She was my only girl—my youngest, my darling, my best treasure! My first real sorrow—now fifteen years ago—was when I saw her laid, on her twenty-first birthday, in the English burial-ground at Madeira. It is on the gravestone, that she died of consumption: would that it had been added—and her mother of grief! From the day of her death, my happiness left me!'

Here the poor lady paused, and buried her face in her hands. The first sorrow was evidently also the keenest; and I felt my own eyelids moist as I watched this outpouring of the mother's anguish. After all, here was grief beyond the power of wealth to assuage: here was sorrow deeper than any mere worldly disappointment.

'I had two sons,' she went on to say after a short time—'only two. They were fine young men, gifted and handsome. In fact, all my children were allowed to be very models of beauty. One entered the army, the other the navy. The eldest went with his regiment to the Cape, where he married a woman of low family—an infamous creature of no blood; though she was decently conducted

Page 10

for a low-born thing as she was. She was well-spoken of by those who knew her; but what *could* she be with a butcher for a grandfather! However, my poor infatuated son loved her to the last. She was very pretty, I have heard—young, and timid; but being of such fearfully low origin, of course she could not be recognised by my husband or myself! We forbade my son all intercourse with us, unless he would separate himself from her; but the poor boy was perfectly mad, and he preferred this low-born wife to his father and mother. They had a little baby, who was sent over to me when the wife died—for, thank God! she did die in a few years' time. My son was restored to our love, and he received our forgiveness; but we never saw him again. He took a fever of the country, and was a corpse in a few hours. My second boy was in the navy—a fine high-spirited fellow, who seemed to set all the accidents of life at defiance. I could not believe in any harm coming to *him*. He was so strong, so healthy, so beautiful, so bright: he might have been immortal, for all the elements of decay that shewed themselves in him. Yet this glorious young hero was drowned—wrecked off a coral-reef, and flung like a weed on the waters. He lost his own life in trying to save that of a common sailor—a piece of pure gold bartered for the foulest clay! Two years after this, my husband died of typhus fever, and I had a nervous attack, from which I have never recovered. And now, what do you say to this history of mine? For fifteen years, I have never been free from sorrow. No sooner did one grow so familiar to me, that I ceased to tremble at its hideousness, than another, still more terrible, came to overwhelm me in fresh misery. For fifteen years, my heart has never known an hour's peace; and to the end of my life, I shall be a desolate, miserable, broken-hearted woman. Can you understand, now, the valuelessness of my riches, and how desolate my splendid house must seem to me? They have been given me for no useful purpose here or hereafter; they encumber me, and do no good to others. Who is to have them when I die? Hospitals and schools? I hate the medical profession, and I am against the education of the poor. I think it the great evil of the day, and I would not leave a penny of mine to such a radical wrong. What is to become of my wealth?'—

'Your grandson,' I interrupted hastily: 'the child of the officer.'

The old woman's face gradually softened. 'Ah! he is a lovely boy,' she said; 'but I don't love him—no, I don't,' she repeated vehemently. 'If I set my heart on him, he will die or turn out ill: take to the low ways of his wretched mother, or die some horrible death. I steel my heart against him, and shut him out from my calculations of the future. He is a sweet boy: interesting, affectionate, lovely; but I will not allow myself to love him, and I don't allow him to love me! But you ought to see him. His hair is like my own daughter's—long,

Page 11

glossy, golden hair; and his eyes are large and blue, and the lashes curl on his cheek like heavy fringes. He is too pale and too thin: he looks sadly delicate; but his wretched mother was a delicate little creature, and he has doubtless inherited a world of disease and poor blood from her. I wish he was here though, for you to see; but I keep him at school, for when he is much with me, I feel myself beginning to be interested in him; and I do not wish to love him—I do not wish to remember him at all! With that delicate frame and nervous temperament, he *must* die; and why should I prepare fresh sorrow for myself, by taking him into my heart, only to have him plucked out again by death?’

All this was said with the most passionate vehemence of manner, as if she were defending herself against some unjust charge. I said something in the way of remonstrance. Gently and respectfully, but firmly, I spoke of the necessity for each soul to spiritualise its aspirations, and to raise itself from the trammels of earth; and in speaking thus to her, I felt my own burden lighten off my heart, and I acknowledged that I had been both foolish and sinful in allowing my first disappointment to shadow all the sunlight of my existence. I am not naturally of a desponding disposition, and nothing but a blow as severe as the non-success of my ‘Finding the Body of Harold by Torch-light’ could have affected me to the extent of mental prostration as that under which I was now labouring. But this was very hard to bear! My companion listened to me with a kind of blank surprise, evidently unaccustomed to the honesty of truth; but she bore my remarks patiently, and when I had ended, she even thanked me for my advice.

‘And now, tell me the cause of your melancholy face?’ she asked, as we were nearing Birmingham. ‘Your story cannot be very long, and I shall have just enough time to hear it.’

I smiled at her authoritative tone, and said quietly: ‘I am an artist, madam, and I had counted much on the success of my first historical painting. It has failed, and I am both penniless and infamous. I am the “presumptuous dauber” of the critics—despised by my creditors—emphatically a failure throughout.’

‘Pshaw!’ cried the lady impatiently; ‘and what is that for a grief? a day’s disappointment which a day’s labour can repair! To me, your troubles seem of no more worth than a child’s tears when he has broken his newest toy! Here is Birmingham, and I must bid you farewell. Perhaps you will open the door for me? Good-morning: you have made my journey pleasant, and relieved my ennui. I shall be happy to see you in town, and to help you forward in your career.’

And with these words, said in a strange, indifferent, matter-of-fact tone, as of one accustomed to all the polite offers of good society, which mean nothing tangible, she was lifted from the carriage by a train of servants, and borne off the platform.

Page 12

I looked at the card which she placed in my hand, and read the address of 'Mrs Arden, Belgrave Square.'

I found my friend waiting for me; and in a few moments was seated before a blazing fire in a magnificent drawing-room, surrounded with every comfort that hospitality could offer or luxury invent.

'Here, at least, is happiness,' I thought, as I saw the family assemble in the drawing-room before dinner. 'Here are beauty, youth, wealth, position—all that makes life valuable. What concealed skeleton can there be in this house to frighten away one grace of existence? None—none! They must be happy; and oh! what a contrast to that poor lady I met with to-day; and what a painful contrast to myself!'

And all my former melancholy returned like a heavy cloud upon my brow; and I felt that I stood like some sad ghost in a fairy-land of beauty, so utterly out of place was my gloom in the midst of all this gaiety and splendour.

One daughter attracted my attention more than the rest. She was the eldest, a beautiful girl of about twenty-three, or she might have been even a few years older. Her face was quite of the Spanish style—dark, expressive, and tender; and her manners were the softest and most bewitching I had ever seen. She was peculiarly attractive to an artist, from the exceeding beauty of feature, as well as from the depth of expression which distinguished her. I secretly sketched her portrait on my thumb-nail, and in my own mind I determined to make her the model for my next grand attempt at historical composition—'the Return of Columbus.' She was to be the Spanish queen; and I thought of myself as Ferdinand; for I was not unlike a Spaniard in appearance, and I was almost as brown.

I remained with my friend a fortnight, studying the midnight effects of the iron-foundries, and cultivating the acquaintance of Julia. In these two congenial occupations the time passed like lightning, and I woke as from a pleasant dream, to the knowledge of the fact, that my visit was expected to be brought to a close. I had been asked, I remembered, for a week, and I had doubled my furlough. I hinted at breakfast, that I was afraid I must leave my kind friends to-morrow, and a general regret was expressed, but no one asked me to stay longer; so the die was unhappily cast.

Julia was melancholy. I could not but observe it; and I confess that the observation caused me more pleasure than pain. Could it be sorrow at my departure? We had been daily, almost hourly, companions for fourteen days, and the surmise was not unreasonable. She had always shewn me particular kindness, and she could not but have seen my marked preference for her. My heart beat wildly as I gazed on her pale cheek and drooping eyelid; for though she had been always still and gentle, I had never seen—certainly I had never noticed—such evident traces of sorrow, as I saw in her face to-day. Oh, if it were for me, how I would bless each pang which

Page 13

pained that beautiful heart!—how I would cherish the tears that fell, as if they had been priceless diamonds from the mine!—how I would joy in her grief and live in her despair! It might be that out of evil would come good, and from the deep desolation of my unsold 'Body' might arise the heavenly blessedness of such love as this! I was intoxicated with my hopes; and was on the point of making a public idiot of myself, but happily some slight remnant of common-sense was left me. However, impatient to learn my fate, I drew Julia aside; and, placing myself at her feet, while she was enthroned on a luxurious ottoman, I pretended that I must conclude the series of lectures on art, and the best methods of colouring, on which I had been employed with her ever since my visit.

'You seem unhappy to-day, Miss Reay,' I said abruptly, with my voice trembling like a girl's.

She raised her large eyes languidly. 'Unhappy? no, I am never unhappy,' she said quietly.

Her voice never sounded so silvery sweet, so pure and harmonious. It fell like music on the air.

'I have, then, been too much blinded by excess of beauty to have been able to see correctly,' I answered. 'To me you have appeared always calm, but never sad; but to-day there is a palpable weight of sorrow on you, which a child might read. It is in your voice, and on your eyelids, and round your lips; it is on you like the moss on the young rose—beautifying while veiling the dazzling glory within.'

'Ah! you speak far too poetically for me,' said Julia, smiling. 'If you will come down to my level for a little while, and will talk to me rationally, I will tell you my history. I will tell it you as a lesson for yourself, which I think will do you good.'

The cold chill that went to my soul! Her history! It was no diary of facts that I wanted to hear, but only a register of feelings—a register of feelings in which I should find myself the only point whereto the index was set. History! what events deserving that name could have troubled the smooth waters of her life?

I was silent, for I was disturbed; but Julia did not notice either my embarrassment or my silence, and began, in her low, soft voice, to open one of the saddest chapters of life which I had ever heard.

'You do not know that I am going into a convent?' she said; then, without waiting for an answer, she continued: 'This is the last month of my worldly life. In four weeks, I shall have put on the white robe of the novitiate, and in due course I trust to be dead for ever to this earthly life.'

A heavy, thick, choking sensation in my throat, and a burning pain within my eyeballs, warned me to keep silence. My voice would have betrayed me.

Page 14

'When I was seventeen,' continued Julia, 'I was engaged to my cousin. We had been brought up together from childhood, and we loved each other perfectly. You must not think, because I speak so calmly now, that I have not suffered in the past. It is only by the grace of resignation and of religion, that I have been brought to my present condition of spiritual peace. I am now five-and-twenty—next week I shall be six-and-twenty: that is just nine years since I was first engaged to Laurence. He was not rich enough, and indeed he was far too young, to marry, for he was only a year older than myself; and if he had had the largest possible amount of income, we could certainly not have married for three years. My father never cordially approved of the engagement, though he did not oppose it. Laurence was taken partner into a large concern here, and a heavy weight of business was immediately laid on him. Youthful as he was, he was made the sole and almost irresponsible agent in a house which counted its capital by millions, and through which gold flowed like water. For some time, he went on well—to a marvel well. He was punctual, vigilant, careful; but the responsibility was too much for the poor boy: the praises he received, the flattery and obsequiousness which, for the first time, were lavished on the friendless youth, the wealth at his command, all turned his head. For a long time, we heard vague rumours of irregular conduct; but as he was always the same good, affectionate, respectful, happy Laurence when with us, even my father, who is so strict, and somewhat suspicious, turned a deaf ear to them. I was the earliest to notice a slight change, first in his face, and then in his manners. At last the rumours ceased to be vague, and became definite. Business neglected; fatal habits visible even in the early day; the frightful use of horrible words which once he would have trembled to use; the nights passed at the gaming-table, and the days spent in the society of the worst men on the turf—all these accusations were brought to my father by credible witnesses; and, alas! they were too true to be refuted. My father—Heaven and the holy saints bless his gray head!—kept them from me as long as he could. He forgave him again and again, and used every means that love and reason could employ to bring him back into the way of right; but he could do nothing against the force of such fatal habits as those to which my poor Laurence had now become wedded. With every good intention, and with much strong love for me burning sadly amid the wreck of his virtues, he yet would not refrain: the Evil One had overcome him; he was his prey here and hereafter. O no—not hereafter!' she added, raising her hands and eyes to heaven, 'if prayer, if fasting, patient vigil, incessant striving, may procure him pardon—not for ever his prey! Our engagement was broken off; and this step, necessary as it was, completed his ruin. He died'—Here a strong shudder shook her from head to foot, and I half rose, in alarm. The next instant she was calm.

Page 15

'Now, you know my history,' continued she. 'It is a tragedy of real life, which you will do well, young painter, to compare with your own!' With a kindly pressure of the hand, and a gentle smile—oh! so sweet, so pure, and heavenly!—Julia Reay left me; while I sat perfectly awed—that is the only word I can use—with the revelation which she had made both of her history and of her own grand soul.

'Come with me to my study,' said Mr Reay, entering the room; 'I have a world to talk to you about. You go to-morrow, you say. I am sorry for it; but I must therefore settle my business with you in good time to-day.'

I followed him mechanically, for I was undergoing a mental castigation which rather disturbed me. Indeed, like a young fool—as eager in self-reproach as in self-glorification—I was so occupied in inwardly calling myself hard names, that even when my host gave me a commission for my new picture, 'The Return of Columbus,' at two hundred and fifty pounds, together with an order to paint himself, Mrs Reay, and half-a-dozen of their children, I confess it with shame, that I received the news like a leaden block, and felt neither surprise nor joy—not though these few words chased me from the gates of the Fleet, whither I was fast hastening, and secured me both position and daily bread. The words of that beautiful girl were still ringing in my ears, mixed up with the bitterest self-accusations; and these together shut out all other sound, however pleasant. But that was always my way.

I went back to London, humbled and yet strengthened, having learned more of human nature and the value of events, in one short fortnight, than I had ever dreamed of before. The first lessons of youth generally come in hard shape. I had sense enough to feel that I had learned mine gently, and that I had cause to be thankful for the mildness of the teaching. From a boy, I became a man, judging more accurately of humanity than a year's ordinary experience would have enabled me to do. And the moral which I drew was this: that under our most terrible afflictions, we may always gain some spiritual good, if we suffer them to be softening and purifying rather than hardening influences over us. And also, that while we are suffering the most acutely, we may be sure that others are suffering still more acutely; and if we would but sympathise with them more than with ourselves—live out of our own selves, and in the wide world around us—we would soon be healed while striving to heal others. Of this I am convinced: the secret of life, and of all its good, is in love; and while we preserve this, we can never fail of comfort. The sweet waters will always gush out over the sandiest desert of our lives while we can love; but without it—nay, not the merest weed of comfort or of virtue would grow under the feet of angels. In this was the distinction between Mrs Arden and Julia Reay. The one had hardened her heart under her trials, and shut it up in itself; the other had opened hers to the purest love of man and love of God; and the result was to be seen in the despair of the one and in the holy peace of the other.

Page 16

Full of these thoughts, I sought out my poor lady, determined to do her real benefit if I could. She received me very kindly, for I had taken care to provide myself with a sufficient introduction, so as to set all doubts of my social position at rest: and I knew how far this would go with her. We soon became fast friends. She seemed to rest on me much for sympathy and comfort, and soon grew to regard me with a sort of motherly fondness that of itself brightened her life. I paid her all the attention which a devoted son might pay—humoured her whims, soothed her pains; but insensibly I led her mind out from itself—first in kindness to me, and then in love to her grandson.

I asked for him just before the midsummer holidays, and with great difficulty obtained an invitation for him to spend them with her. She resisted my entreaties stoutly, but at last was obliged to yield; not to me, nor to my powers of persuasion, but to the holy truth of which I was then the advocate. The child came, and I was there also to receive him, and to enforce by my presence—which I saw without vanity had great influence—a fitting reception. He was a pensive, clever, interesting little fellow; sensitive and affectionate, timid, gifted with wonderful powers, and of great beauty. There was a shy look in his eyes, which made me sure that he inherited much of his loveliness from his mother; and when we were great friends, he shewed me a small portrait of ‘poor mamma;’ and I saw at once the most striking likeness between the two. No human heart could withstand that boy, certainly not my poor friend’s. She yielded, fighting desperately against me and him, and all the powers of love, which were subduing her, but yielding while she fought; and in a short time the child had taken his proper place in her affections, which he kept to the end of her life. And she, that desolate mother, even she, with her seared soul and petrified heart, was brought to the knowledge of peace by the glorious power of love.

Prosperous, famous, happy, blessed in home and hearth, this has become my fundamental creed of life, the basis on which all good, whether of art or of morality, is rested: of art especially; for only by a tender, reverent spirit can the true meaning of his vocation be made known to the artist. All the rest is mere imitation of form, not insight into essence. And while I feel that I can live out of myself, and love others—the whole world of man—more than myself, I know that I possess the secret of happiness; ay, though my powers were suddenly blasted as by lightning, my wife and children laid in the cold grave, and my happy home desolated for ever. For I would go out into the thronged streets, and gather up the sorrows of others, to relieve them; and I would go out under the quiet sky, and look up to the Father’s throne; and I would pluck peace, as green herbs from active benevolence and contemplative adoration. Yes; love can save from the sterility of selfishness, and from the death of despair: but love alone. No other talisman has the power; pride, self-sustainment, coldness, pleasure, nothing—nothing—but that divine word of Life which is life’s soul!

Page 17

POPULAR MUSIC—MAINZER.

In our days, vocal music is beginning to assert in this country the place it has long held abroad as a great moral educator; no longer regarded as a superfluity of the rich, it is now established as a branch of instruction in almost every school, and is gradually finding its way into many nooks and corners, where it will act as an antidote to grosser pleasures, by supplying the means of an innocent and elevating recreation.

The apostle of music, considered as a boon and privilege of 'the million,' has lately passed away from the scene of his active labours; and it is but a tribute due to his memory as a philanthropist and man of genius, while we deplore his loss, to pause for a moment and briefly trace his career.

Joseph Mainzer was born, on the 21st October 1801, at Treves, of parents in the middle rank of life. When quite a child, the predominating taste of his life was so strongly developed, that in spite of harsh masters he learned to play on the piano, violin, bassoon, and several wind-instruments; and at the age of twelve could read at sight the most difficult music, and even attempted composition. Music, however, was not intended to be his profession, and was only carried on as a relaxation from the severer studies to which Mainzer devoted himself at the university of Treves, where he took the highest degree in general merit, and the first prize for natural science. At the age of twenty-one, he left college to descend into the heart of the Saarbruck Mountains as an engineer of mines, where, according to custom, he had to commence with the lowest grade of labour, and for months drag a heavy wheel-barrow, and wield the pickaxe. Yet here, in reality, dawned his mission as the apostle of popular music: he relieved the tedium of those interminable nights of toil—for days there were none—by composing and teaching choruses, thus leading the miners both in labour and in song. This underground life, however, was too severe for his constitution; and he was obliged to return home in impaired health. He now studied divinity and music; and, after a time, was advised to travel in order to perfect himself in the latter branch of art. Under Rinck at Darmstadt, and at Vienna and Rome, he enjoyed every advantage; and, on leaving the Eternal City, was invited to a farewell *fete* by Thorwaldsen, where all the eminent artists of the day were present, and joined in singing his compositions. On returning home, after two years' absence, he adopted music as his vocation, and published his first elementary work—the *Singschule*, which was introduced in Prussia and Germany as the *methode* in schools; and soon after, the king of Prussia sent him the gold medal awarded to men eminent in the arts and sciences. Paris, however, soon offered more attractions to Mainzer than his native place, and thither he repaired and pitched his tent for ten years. During this period,

Page 18

he established his reputation as a composer of dramatic, sacred, and domestic music, and as an acute and elegant writer and critic. His opera of *La Jacquerie* had a run of seventeen nights consecutively at the theatre. He was soon welcomed into the literary and artistic circles of Paris; and one evening, at an elegant *reunion*, being invited to play, he *improvised* a piece, which was taken for a composition of Palestrina's. Many were moved to tears, one pair of pre-eminently bright eyes especially; and the consequence was, that the composer and the bright eyes were soon after united in marriage!

But amid these captivating *salons* and congenial occupations, what had become of the apostle of popular music? He was not asleep; only digesting and preparing a system which should, by its simplicity and clearness, bring scientific music within the reach of the humblest as well as the highest classes of society. At last it was matured, and the working-classes were invited to come and test it—gratuitously of course. A few accepted the invitation; but their success and delight in the new art thus opened up to them, was so great, that the 'two or three' pioneers soon swelled into an army of 3000 *ouvriers*! But a band of 3000 workmen in Paris was considered dangerous: it could not be credited that they met merely for social improvement and relaxation; some political design must surely lurk under it: government was alarmed, the police threatened; and it was left to Mainzer's choice either to remain in Paris without his artisan classes, or to seek elsewhere a field for his popular labours. He decided at once on the latter alternative, and departed for England, amidst the heartfelt regrets of those whom he had attached so strongly to himself, while he inculcated peace, order, and every social virtue. On his revisiting Paris long after, his old pupils serenaded him unmolested; and in 1849, the Institute of France voluntarily placed his name on their list for the membership vacant by the death of Donizetti; yet he would not accept the proposal of a later French government to return and establish his system: he preferred the freedom of action which he enjoyed in Britain.

In London, a period of arduous labour commenced. Mainzer arrived without patronage, without the *prestige* that his name had earned abroad, and, what was a greater drawback, without any knowledge of English! But, nothing daunted, with his usual energy he set about the task of acquiring the language, which he did in an incredibly short time—commencing, like a child, by naming all familiar objects, and going on, until, without perplexing himself with rules or their exceptions, he had acquired facility enough to lecture in public. His work on *Music and Education* shows with what force and purity of style he could afterwards write in English. It was the same principle—that of commencing with practice and letting theory follow—which

Page 19

he carried out in his system of 'Singing for the Million.' He argued, that as children learn to speak before they can read or construct language grammatically, so they ought to be taught vocal music in such a way as to introduce the rules of harmony gradually, and prepare them for the manipulation of an instrument, if it is intended they should learn one; while for the great masses of both children and adults, *the voice* is the best and only instrument, and one that can be trained, with *very few exceptions*, to take part in choral, if not in solo singing, and at the same time be made a powerful and pleasing agent in moral culture. On this subject, we shall quote Dr Mainzer's own words, when speaking of the compositions introduced into his classes, he says: 'Besides religious compositions, there are others, which refer to the Creator, by calling attention to the beauty and grandeur of his works. Songs, shewing in a few touching lines the wondrous instinct of the sparrow, the ant, the bee, and cultivating a feeling of respect for all nature's children. Besides these, there are songs intended to promote social and domestic virtues—order, cleanliness, humility, contentment, unity, temperance, *etc.*; thus impressing, not the letter of the law of charity on immature minds, but the spirit of it in the memory, and so identifying them with the very fibres of the heart.'

With such views and principles, Mainzer arrived in England, to propagate his humanising art; and London soon became the centre of a series of lectures and classes, held in the principal towns accessible by railway—such as Brighton, Oxford, Reading, *etc.* But this divided work was not satisfactory, and the national schools and popular field in London were preoccupied by Hullah, who had some time previously introduced Wilhem's system, under the sanction of government. There was room and to spare, however, for every system, and Mainzer wished every man good-speed who advanced the cause; but as a fresh field for his own exertions, after two years spent in England, he turned his thoughts towards Edinburgh, where he had been invited by requisition, and warmly received in 1842.

On his return to Scotland, he found his cause somewhat damaged in his absence, by the attempt of precentors to teach his system in congregational classes. Unlike the church-organists of England, the Scotch precentors are not educated musicians—a naturally good voice and ear is their only pre-requisite. Dr Mainzer soon repaired this mistake in those congregations which invited his personal superintendence; and in one church (Free St Andrew's) the good effects of his system are still to be heard, in a congregation forming their own choir, and singing in *four parts*.

Page 20

To restore this country to the standard of musical eminence which we know from old authorities that it held in the sixteenth century, was the object of Dr Mainzer's energetic endeavours. The elements, he believed, were not wanting. In Scotland, the musical capacity of the people he found to be above rather than below the average of other nations: all that was wanting was to convince the people of this by the cultivation of their neglected powers. As a preliminary step, he excited those friendly to the object to found the 'Association for the Revival of Sacred Music in Scotland,' of which he was the director and moving spring; and under its auspices he commenced a course of *gratuitous* teaching to classes formed of pupils from the parish and district schools of Edinburgh, precentors, teachers, and operatives. The success of these normal classes was so great and so rapid, that at the end of the first year the pupils were able to become teachers in their turn in their own schools or homes; and at the close of the second and third sessions, concerts and rural fetes were held, at which many hundreds of young voices joined in giving true and powerful expression to such works of the great masters as *Judas Maccabaeus*; while for the delight of their parents' firesides, and their own moral improvement, the children carried home with them those simple but touching and expressive melodies, composed by Mainzer for their use. At the same time, Mr Mainzer carried on classes for the upper ranks, especially for young children; gave lectures on the history of music from the earliest times and in all countries; and published a talented work on *Music and Education*, of which very favourable reviews appeared at the time.[1] Mainzer had a peculiar predilection for Scotland: its scenery, its history, its music, all supplied food for his various tastes. With a poetic appreciation of the beauties of nature, he desired no greater pleasure than to wander in perfect freedom among our lochs and hills; and his descriptions of Edinburgh, the Highlands, and Western Islands, which appeared in the *Augsburg Gazette*, have brought some and inspired more with the wish to visit the Switzerland of Britain. The history and music of Scotland threw fresh light upon each other under his researches. He delighted to trace the reciprocal influence of national events and national music, from the time of the Culdee establishments of the sixth century, when 'Iona was the Rome of the north,' down to the *Covenanter's Lament*, and the Jacobite songs of the last century. Since these days, the spirit that invented and handed down popular song has passed away with the national and clannish feuds which gave rise to the gathering song and the lament. The age of peace has been heralded in by the songs of Burns and Lady Nairne, the authoress of *The Land o' the Leal*, who has done much to restore the taste for our beautiful old melodies, by wedding them to pure and appropriate verse.[2]

Page 21

In such pursuits, Mainzer—by this time dubbed doctor by a German university—passed five years very pleasantly, but, in a worldly point of view, very unprofitably. He had failed on first coming to Edinburgh in obtaining the musical chair, which seemed so appropriate a niche for him; and however reluctant to leave his favourite normal classes and his adopted home, still when he looked to the future, he was compelled to think of leaving Edinburgh—for the German proverb still held true: ‘Kunst geht nach brod;’ and if man cannot live by bread *alone*, neither can the artist live *without* bread! At this juncture, the Chevalier Neukomm, of European celebrity as a composer and organist, and a valued friend of Dr Mainzer, came to Edinburgh to inspect his friend’s normal classes. He was so much delighted with them, and considered Dr Mainzer so little appreciated by the general public, that he persuaded him to try Manchester as his future field of exertion.

In the autumn of 1848, accordingly, Neukomm introduced Mainzer to the leading men of that city, who received him so cordially, that he at once took his proper position, and entered on a career both useful and profitable, and which continued to be increasingly successful, until at Christmas 1850, he was laid aside by ill-health. Over-exertion had brought on a complication of diseases, to which he was a martyr for ten months, and which terminated fatally on the 10th November 1851. During that long period of intense suffering, his active mind was never clouded nor repining, and at every interval of comparative ease, he read or listened to reading with avidity. During the first months of his illness, he superintended the publication of a new musical work, called *The Orpheon*, two numbers of which appeared; and his last exertion in this way was arranging two songs: *The Sigh* of Charles Swain, and Longfellow’s *Footsteps of Angels*, adapted to Weber’s last song. Prophetic requiems both!

A few weeks after his death, the hall which had been built in Edinburgh for the classes of the Association which he founded, was opened by an amateur concert given as a tribute to his memory. He had promised to preside on this occasion; but his place was filled by his aged, but still vigorous friend, the Chevalier Neukomm, who had come to Edinburgh, at the request of the Association, to compose a series of psalms, one of which was sung by the pupils. Music for the Psalms, *adapted to the varying meaning of each verse*, has hitherto been a desideratum in the musical world; now being supplied in Chevalier Neukomm’s work, and already subscribed for by no mean judges—the Queen and Prince Albert, the king of Prussia, &c. It was touching, and yet gratifying, to see one of Dr Mainzer’s oft-cherished hopes realised for the first time that evening—that of the *musical union* of accomplished amateurs of private life with the pupils of the normal classes.

Page 22

Having thus briefly traced Dr Mainzer's life, it now remains to offer a few remarks on his general character. His talents were of a diversified and high order; and those who knew him only as the author of 'Singing for the Million,' were not aware of his general cultivation of mind. In the dead and living languages, he was equally at home: now he would be speculating on the formation of the Greek chorus, and again mastering some dialect of modern Europe, in order to elucidate the history of the people or their music and poetry. His literary articles were sought after by all the leading journals in Germany and Paris; and his volumes of *Sketches of Travel*, and of *The Lower Orders in Paris*, are graphic and entertaining. A year or two ago, a *Notice Bibliographique* of his works appeared in Paris, which contained a list of above thirty publications. Great diligence, joined to enthusiasm, enabled him to accomplish so much in these various departments of literature. His manners, too, were of that frank, cordial, and agreeable tone which inspires confidence, and prepossessed every one in his favour; so that from all he could obtain the information which he wished, and they could afford. Over his pupils, his influence was immense. He had the rare art of engaging the entire attention of children; and while he maintained strict discipline, he gained their warmest affection: his own earnestness was reflected on the countenances of his pupils.

Those alone who knew him in private life could thoroughly estimate that purity of mind and heart which eminently characterised him, along with a childlike simplicity and unworldliness, which often, indeed, made him the prey of designing persons, but which, joined to his general information and cheerfulness, made his society most attractive. His personal appearance was indicative of a delicate and nervous organisation: slight and fragile in figure, with an intellectual forehead and eye, that spoke of the preponderance of the *spirituelle* in his idiosyncrasy; one of those minds which are ever working beyond the powers of the body; ever planning new achievements and new labours of love, and which too often, alas! go out at noonday, while half their fond projects are unaccomplished, yet not before they have made a name to live, and left the world their debtors!

FOOTNOTES:

[1] See *Chambers's Journal*, No. 226, New Series.

[2] See *Lays from Strathearn*, 4to.

A NEWCASTLE PAPER IN 1765-6.

Page 23

There is scarcely anything more entertaining and instructive than a leisurely look over an old newspaper file. A newspaper of any age is an attraction, and the current newspaper something more, for it is now a necessity. But the next place to it in point of interest is perhaps due to the journal half a century, or two-thirds of a century old. It introduces us, if we be youthful, to the habits of our grandsires; and if we be in 'the sere, the yellow leaf,' to the habits of our fathers, more fully than the pleasantest novel or most elaborate essay, and far more intimately than the most correct and complete historical records. It enables us to observe freely the position and avocations of the denizens of the past, and catch hasty, but most suggestive glances at bygone days; it 'shews the very age and body of the time, its form and pressure.' It is a milestone from which we may reckon our progress, and must delight as well as surprise us by the advancement it shews us to have made in social and political life, particularly with regard to those 'triumphs of mind over matter,' for which recent times have been pre-eminently distinguished.

The writer of this article had lately an opportunity of inspecting a file of the *Newcastle Chronicle* for 1765-6, and the contrast between journals and things in general which that examination forced on the attention, was in some respects sufficiently striking or curious to be, in his opinion, deserving of some permanent record. At present, the journal in question almost, if not entirely, reaches 'the largest size allowed by law;' at that time, it consisted merely of a single demy sheet. Now, the Newcastle people would be amazed beyond measure if they did not receive at breakfast-time, on the morning of publication, the parliamentary, and all other important news of the night; then, the latest London news was four days old. But a better idea of the journal can perhaps be given, by stating what it lacked than what it then contained. It had no leaders, no parliamentary reports, and very little indeed, in any shape, that could be termed political news. In these matters, its conductor had to say, with Canning's knife-grinder: 'Story! God bless you, I have none to tell, sir.' Not that the political world was unfruitful in affairs of moment; it was a time of no small change, interest, and excitement. In the period referred to, the Grenville ministry had endeavoured to burden the American colonies, by means of the stamp-duties, with some of the debt contracted in the late war. Thereupon, immense discontent had arisen at home and abroad; that administration had fallen; and the Rockingham ministry, which was then formed, found full employment (in 1766) in undoing what had been effected in the previous year. How the Grafton ministry was next formed; how the unfortunate design of taxing the colonists was revived; and how that policy ended, readers of English history know full well. John Wilkes, too, had been already

Page 24

persecuted into prominence, although not yet forced up to the height of his popularity with the masses. But, notwithstanding these and other stirring incidents, the *Chronicle* was, politically speaking, almost a blank. From time to time, it was stated that the royal assent had been given to certain measures; but concerning the preparation and discussion of those measures, nothing was known. A few other political facts of interest, indeed, such as the arrival of Wilkes in London from France; the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act; the riots of the Spitalfields weavers on account of the importation of French silks; and an attack upon the Speaker, and many of the members of the Dublin parliament, who were grossly insulted, and kept from going to the House, in consequence of 'a report that parliament designed to impose more taxes,' were also curtly noticed. Political rumours abounded, although positive knowledge of that kind was exceedingly scanty; and the little that could be obtained was eked out by inuendo, rather than by venturing on any direct statement. The familiarity which, according to the proverb, is apt to breed contempt, was not then indulged in with reference to rulers, parliaments, or even agitators. The emperor of Russia was alluded to under the title of 'a great northern potentate;' parliament was spoken of as 'a certain august assembly;' and Wilkes was usually entitled, 'a certain popular gentleman.'

Some of the political rumours are worthy of republication. The subjoined, from the London news of July 29, 1766, serves to shew how long a political change may be mooted before its effect is tried in this country: 'It is said, a bill will be brought into parliament next session, binding elections for members of parliament to be by ballot.'

And, without at all entering into the discussion of political topics, it may perhaps be observed that the following, taken from the *Chronicle* of August 10, 1765, points out how an evil of the present day has long been felt and acknowledged: 'We hear the electors of a certain borough have been offered 3000 guineas for a seat, though there is but so short a time for the session of the present parliament.'

Great surprise is expressed (1766) that the consumption of coal in London 'hath increased from 400,000 odd to 600,000 chaldrons yearly.' We find that the coal imported into London during the first six months of 1851, amounted to 1,527,527 tons, besides 90,975 tons brought into the metropolis during the same period by railway and canal. 'Carrying coal to Newcastle' proved a successful speculation on September 25, 1765, when, on account of a strike among the pitmen, 'several pokes of coal were brought to this town by one of the common carriers, and sold on the Sandhill for 9d. a poke, by which he cleared 6d. a poke.' About the same time, wheat was selling in Darlington and Richmond for 4s. and 4s. 6d. per bushel, after having been nearly double that price only two or three weeks previously.

Page 25

In the number for June 25, 1766, we have the following quotation from a Doncaster letter:—'Corn sold last market-day from 12s. to 14s. per quarter; meat, from 2-1/2d. to 3d. per pound; fowls, and other kinds of poultry, had no price, being mostly carried home. I wish a scheme was set on foot, to run many such articles to London by land-carriage; there is plenty here.' In the same paper, the prices of grain in London are given: wheat, 36s. to 41s.; barley, 22s. to 25s.; oats, 16s. to 20s.

Recently, the Newcastle papers, led on by the *Chronicle*, have been making strenuous efforts to extend the French coal-trade, but such exertions formed no part of the 'wisdom of our ancestors.' The number for June 15, 1765, informs us that 'some sinister designs for exporting a very considerable quantity of coals to France and elsewhere, have lately been discovered and prevented.' Sturdy Britons had then far too much hatred for 'our natural enemies' to wish to exchange aught but hostilities with them. About the same time, we learn that 'clubs of young gentlemen of fortune' had come to the magnanimous resolve, 'to toast no lady who has so much inconsideration as to lavish her money away in French fopperies, to the detriment of her own country.'

The style of advertising then in vogue occasionally gave the paper a somewhat pictorial appearance. Cockfighting was in great force, and the public announcements relative to this barbarous sport were invariably headed by a portraiture of a couple of game-birds facing each other with a most belligerent aspect; while the numerous advertisements of horses 'stolen or strayed,' were embellished by a representation of the supposed thief, mounted on the missing animal, which was forced into a breakneck pace, while Satan himself, *in propria persona*, was perched on the crupper, in an excited and triumphant attitude. In the local paragraphs, we note several indicating a strong feeling of animosity between the Scotch and English borderers. We observe also that the Newcastle dogs—to this day a very numerous fraternity—were at times quite unmanageable, and caused, either by their ravenous exploits, or their downright madness, no small uneasiness to the town and neighbourhood. It must be confessed, that in its marriage-notices, at least, the *Chronicle* was far superior to anything that journalism can now exhibit in Newcastle or in Great Britain. These interesting announcements must have intensely delighted our grandmothers; and, we fear, have frequently tempted our grandsires into a somewhat precipitate plunge into the gulf of matrimony. Instead of barely specifying, as papers now do, that Mr Smith married Miss Brown, the *Chronicle* uniformly tantalised its bachelor readers with an account of the personal, mental, and, if such there were, metallic charms of the bride; so that how any single gentleman, in the teeth of such notifications, could retain his condition for long, is really marvellous. Most

Page 26

of the young ladies who had thus bestowed themselves on their fortunate admirers, are described as 'sprightly,' and many as 'genteel and agreeable;' some have 'a genteel fortune,' other's 'a considerable fortune,' and others, again, rejoice in the possession of 'a large fortune:' one man gains 'a well-accomplished young lady, with a fortune of L.1000;' another takes unto himself 'an agreeable widow lady, with a fortune of L.2000;' a third marches off with 'a young lady endowed with every accomplishment to make the marriage state happy, with a fortune of L.5000;' while a fourth *Benedict*, more lucky still, obtains 'a most amiable, affable, and agreeable young lady, with a fortune of L.10,000.' We suppose that the best excuse newspaper editors now have for being less florid in their matrimonial announcements is, that where the papers formerly had one, they have now at least a dozen of these interesting notices; so that their brevity may be less owing to the want of gallantry than to the want of space.

So extremely meagre was the news, both foreign and domestic, that a considerable portion of the four small pages of the *Chronicle* was usually devoted to literature. Extracts were frequently given from the works of Johnson, Smollett, and other popular writers, and a column was often occupied by an essay from a contributor to the paper, generally treating of some social evil or peculiarity, but never intermeddling with local or general politics. These effusions displayed a very respectable amount of ability, and the general getting-up, or what would now be termed the sub-editing of the paper, was also performed with care and ability. The scraps of news were always presented rewritten and carefully condensed, instead of the loose 'scissors-and-paste' style of publication adopted by many provincial papers of the present day. Notices not only of local theatricals, but of histrionic matters at Old Drury, were occasionally given; the number for March 15, 1766, containing a well-written criticism of '*The Clandestine Marriage; a New Comedy*,' performed there. As the *Chronicle* thus had to leave politics for literature, we may perhaps, in our turn, digress from a consideration of its pages, to note briefly that this period was set in the very midst of the celebrated Georgian era, in which this country could boast of more distinguished men—especially in literature—than at any other period. In about twenty previous years, many great ones had departed—notably Pope, Thomson, Fielding. Richardson also had died in 1761, and Shenstone in 1763; the author of the *Night-Thoughts* survived till 1765, when his burial was announced in the *Chronicle* of April 27. At this time (1765-6), Dr Johnson had reached the zenith of his fame; Gray was becoming popular; Smollett had written most of his novels; Goldsmith was about to present the world with his exquisite *Vicar of Wakefield*; Gibbon had returned to England from Rome with the idea of *The Decline and Fall* floating in his brain; Thomas Chatterton,

Page 27

——'the marvellous boy,
The sleepless soul that perished in his pride,'

had already given proofs of his wondrous precocity; the genuine sailor-poet, Falconer, had lately published *The Shipwreck*; Laurence Sterne had just collected the materials for his *Sentimental Journey*; Sir William Blackstone had published his celebrated *Commentaries*; Wesley and Whitefield had not yet ended their useful career; the star of Edmund Burke was rising; and Jeremy Bentham, being then (1766) but seventeen years of age, had taken his master's degree at Oxford, although, it is true, the first literary performance of the eccentric philosopher did not appear till some years later. Home, Moore, and Colman, had appeared successfully as dramatists, and were about to be followed by Macklin, Cumberland, Goldsmith, and Sheridan. Newcastle or district celebrities of the time included Mark Akenside, the author of *The Pleasures of the Imagination*; Dr Thomas Percy, dean of Carlisle, who published, in 1765, his *Reliques of English Poetry*; and Dr John Langhorne, a northern divine of no small popularity in his day as a poet. Among other illustrious living men, were Horace Walpole, Henry Mackenzie, Blair, Hume, Adam Smith, Dr Robertson, Garrick, Reynolds; and last, not least, William Pitt, who, in 1766, was created Earl of Chatham.

But let us return to our more immediate purpose—that of making a few selections from the *Chronicle*, some of which will doubtless reflect far less credit on the age than the enumeration we have just made of eminent individuals. Now and then, a duel took place in Hyde Park. The amusements of some of our aristocrats did not always exhibit them in any very dignified position, as witness the subjoined:—'Sir Charles Bunbury ran 100 yards at Newmarket for 1000 guineas, against a tailor with 40 lb. weight of cabbage, *alias* shreds.'

Here is a paragraph, from the number for March 15, 1766, relative to the recreations of some less elevated in the social scale: 'Sunday morning, a little before three o'clock, a match at marbles was played under the piazza at Covent Garden by the light of thirty-two links (by several rogues well known in that circle), for twenty guineas a side.'

A few other quotations may be deemed worthy of republication, although some of them may have no direct or important bearing. The audacity of highway robbers at this period is known to everybody. The following, dated December 21, 1765, gives a tolerably correct idea of the usual style adopted by those gentlemen of the road:—'Thursday, the Leeds and Leicester stage-coaches were stopped on Finchley Common by a highwayman, who took from the passengers a considerable sum of money. A nobleman's cook, a young woman about twenty-five, declared she would not be robbed, when the highwayman, admiring her courage, let her alone. He broke the coach-glass with his pistol, and gave the coachman half-a-crown to get it mended.' News from London, dated January 9, 1765, says: 'Early on Tuesday morning, a member of parliament, on his return home in a chair to his house in New Palace Yard, was stopped and robbed by a single footpad of his purse, in which were sixty-three guineas.'

Page 28

About the same time, we are informed that 'the celebrated J.J. Rousseau hath for the present taken up his residence at a friend's house in Putney.'—The number for October 26, 1765, contains an advertisement of a 'beggar's stand' (copied from the *Public Advertiser*), 'to be let, in a charitable neighbourhood. Income, about 30s. a week.'

The following reference to our acquaintances, the Sikhs, now sufficiently well known, is curious, as it is doubtless one of their first appearances in the columns of the English press. It is dated July 5, 1766: 'The Seyques, an idolatrous people inhabiting the neighbourhood of Cachemire, whose name was hardly known two years ago, have beaten Abdaly and the Patanes whom he commanded.' Modern Cockneys would stare to read a paragraph like this: 'A great deal of grass hath been cut down about Islington, Kentish-Town,' &c.

We will conclude our selections, which have now grown quite desultory and miscellaneous, by the brief obituary of a 'remarkable' man, from the *Chronicle* of July 26, 1766: 'Thursday, died at his house near Hampstead, the Rev. Mr Southcote, remarkable for having a leg of mutton every night for supper during a course of forty years, smoking ten pipes as constantly, and drinking three bottles of port.'

GENIUS FOR EMIGRATION.

Lady E. Stuart Wortley, in the account of her journey in America, mentions that she saw a man proceeding on foot across the Isthmus of Panama, bound for the Pacific, carrying a huge box on his back that would almost have contained a house. It was really a dreadful thing to see the poor man, full-cry for California, toiling along with his enormous burden, under a tropical sun, the heat of which he required to endure through forty miles of wilderness, and no chance of relief or refreshment by the way. Yet this serio-comic spectacle is not singular. Multitudes seem to have gone to the diggings with every species of encumbrance, and in a totally unsuitable garb. Splendid dress-coats and waistcoats, boots and pantaloons, but no working-clothes, nor implements for camping, and in many instances not even a cloak: everything suitable for the enjoyment of their golden promises, with nothing to assist in realising them.

Nearly the same thing has occurred in innumerable instances as regards Australia. The men going thither must in general be shepherds or their masters; and to be either to any purpose, they must go far into the bush. For this they required a talent for constructing huts for themselves and servants, and hurdles for the cattle, and consequently tools to assist them; but they often went without either tools or talents, and so had to pay extravagantly for very common services. They may have had common clothes, but they had made no provision for living far from the assistance of women; and consequently, if a coat-sleeve was torn, it must hang just as it was; if a stocking

Page 29

was out at heel, having neither needles nor worsted, nor the power of using them, they had no other resource but to *tie* the *hole* together. They had no idea of washing and dressing, and consequently must want clean linen, or stockings, and every other article of clean apparel, till a woman could be heard of, and bribed to assist them. The consequence was, that it was cheaper to buy new articles than either wash or mend the old. It is doubtful whether many had not omitted to learn to shave themselves, or to provide razors or strops, or even scissors.

Then as to baking bread, or cooking the humblest meal, they were equally at a loss. They seem to have had no idea of the humblest grate, or even of a flat and easily-cleaned stone for a hearth; and so, having kneaded their 'damper,' it is never said how they thrust it in the ashes till it was partially heated, and comparatively fit to be eaten. They have mutton, and mutton only; but how cooked is equally unknown. It is not known that they have any apparatus whatever, stew or frying pan, or even a hook and string. Yet the natives of Scotland may have seen many things nicely baked by means of a hot hearthstone below, a griddle with live coals above, and burning turf all round. A single pot with water is a boiler; with the juice of the meat, or little more, a stew-pan; or merely surrounded by fire, an oven: but it is believed many have not that single pot. Even the cheap crock that holds salted meat might also be turned into a pudding-dish; and such a vessel as that which of old held the ashes of the dead, and now occasionally holds salt, the French peasant often turns into a *pot-au-feu*—a pot for boiling his soup—and makes that soup out of docks and nettles collected by the wayside, with a little meal—delicious if seasoned with salt and a scrap of meat, or a well-picked lark or sparrow, or even a nicely-skinned and washed thigh of a frog!

The natives of New Holland themselves get fat upon serpents well-killed—that is, with the heads adroitly cut off, so as not to suffer the poison to go through the body; or upon earth or tree worms nicely roasted. The Turks roast their *kebabs*—something near to mutton-chops—by holding them to the fire on skewers. But the inhabitants of Great Britain, accustomed to comforts unknown to any other part of the world, are, when deprived of these comforts, the most helpless in the world.

The natives of Ireland might be supposed to be excellent subjects for emigration, for at home they have often only straw and rags for beds, stones for seats, and one larger in the middle for a table; while the basket or 'kish' that washes the potatoes, receives them again when boiled: so that the pot and basket are the only articles of furniture. Simplicity beyond this is hardly conceivable: there is but one step beyond it—wanting the pot, and throwing the potatoes, however cooked, broadcast upon the stone-table; and this is possible by roasting

Page 30

the potatoes in the embers. The Guachos of South America teach how even the most savoury meal of beef may be obtained without pot or oven—namely, by roasting it in the skin! It is called *carne-con-cuero*—flesh in the skin—and is pronounced delicious. Diogenes threw away his dish, his only article of furniture, upon seeing a boy drink from his hand; and after this example, an Irishman might throw away his pot; though we would not recommend him to do so.

Unless people know how to prepare food, they may starve in the midst of comparative plenty. It is alleged—though we do not vouch for the fact—that when wheat and maize were carried into Ireland and given gratis, the famine was not stayed. Though they had the wheat and maize, they could not grind them; if ground, they could not cook them—they had neither vessels nor fuel; if vessels and fuel were given, they were still unable to assist themselves—they had not skill to cook them; and if cooked, they could not eat them—they had never been accustomed to do so! Such are the effects of carrying contentment too far: the individual becomes wholly resourceless.

We try to induce them to fish with the same results. If we give them boats, they have no nets; give them nets, they know not how to use them; teach them to use them, and they can neither cook nor eat the fish; and as to selling them for other comforts, there is no market! Without a knowledge of agriculture, or fishing, or even talents to feed themselves, such men are useless in any quarter, unless as subjects to be taught; and now at last, but greatly too late, they are being taught, and the much-abused railway will carry their produce to the market.

The Scottish Celt is more shifty. In the old days when he had flesh and little else to eat, he could broil it on the coals; and a Scotch collop is perhaps equal to a Turkish kebob. We wonder if in Australia the long-forgotten Scotch collop has been revived? It requires no cooking-vessels. It may be held to the fire on a twig, or laid on the coals and turned by a similar twig—bent into a collop-tongs—or even by the fingers.

In the Rebellion of 1745, the Scotto-Celt could knead into a cake the meal, which he carried as his sole provision, and knew that it ought to be fired upon a griddle; but if he had no other convenience, he could knead it in his bonnet, and eat it raw, and go forth to meet and conquer the best-appointed soldiers in Europe. It was only when at last he had neither rest nor food that he was dispersed—not conquered. A lowland Scot is better. With a dish and hot water, and of course the meal and salt, he can make *brose*, and live and thrive upon it.

How John Bull, who in his own country is carnivorous, and will have his roast-pig on Sunday, if he should slave all the week—how he gets on in a new country, is more doubtful. Very likely, having more wants, he makes more provision for them; but as below a certain rank he is not a writing animal, less is known of his successes or

difficulties. For our own part, we think we would have made an excellent Crusoe, and your Crusoe is the only man for a new country.

Page 31

Some years ago, we travelled over the backbone of Scotland, and returned somewhat on its western fin, both on foot; and all our equipments were a travelling dress, a stout umbrella, and a parcel in wax-cloth strapped on our left shoulder, not larger than is generally seen in the hands of a commercial traveller—that is, twelve inches by six or eight; and yet we never wanted for anything. It is true we had generally the convenience of inns by the way; but if by our *Traveller's Guide* (which we also carried) we saw the stage was to be long, an oaten cake, with a *plug* of wheaten bread for the last mouthful, to keep down heartburn, and a slice of cold beef or ham, or a hard-boiled egg, were ample provisions. Drink? There was no lack of drink. Springs of the most beautiful water were frequent by the roadside, and constantly bubbling up, without noise or motion, through the purest sand, though heaven only was looking upon them; and a single leaf from our memorandum-book, formed into the shape of a grocer's twist as wanted, served us as a drinking-cup throughout the journey. Had we even been overtaken by night, it was summer, and a bed under whins, or upon heather, with our umbrella set against the wind, and secured to us, would have been delightful. Once, indeed, we feared this would have been our fate; for on the very top of Corryarrick, and consequently nine miles or more from house or home in any direction, we sprained our ankle, or rather an old sprain returned. To all appearance, we were done for, and might have sat stiff for days or weeks by the solitary spring that happened to be near at the instant. But a piece of flannel from the throat, and a tape from the wondrous parcel, enabled us again to wag; and we finished our allotted journey to Dalwhinnie in time for dinner, tea, and supper in one—and then to our journal with glorious serenity!

Our arrangements for the continent were equally simple. When we were asked to shew our luggage, on entering France, we produced a portmanteau nine inches by six. 'Voila ma magasin!' It was opened, and there were certainly some superfluities, though natural enough in an incipient traveller. 'Une plume pour ecrire l'Histoire de la France!'—'Un cahier pour la meme!' And the intending historian of France, even with his imported pen and paper-book, and also three shirts and some pairs of socks, was allowed to go to his dinner, with his *magasin* in his hand, and start by the first conveyance; while his less fortunate fellow-travellers had to dine in absence of their luggage, and perhaps give the town that had the honour of being their landing-place, the profit of their company for the night.

But what is the use of all these insinuations of aptitude for colonisation, when there is not such another man in the world? We beg pardon; but we have actually discovered such another, and to introduce him suitably has been the sole aim of our existence in writing this interesting preface. In a most authentic newspaper, we find the following admirable history, copied from the *New York Express*:—

Page 32

'A man who had been an unsuccessful delver in the mines of Georgia, on hearing the thrilling news of the gold placers of California, had his spirit quickened within him; and although he had arrived at an age—being about sixty—when the fires of youth usually cease to burn with vigour, he fixed his eyes upon the far-distant and but little-known country, and resolved that he would wend his way thither alone, and even in the absence of that friend, generally thought indispensable, money, of which he was wholly destitute.

'Under such circumstances, it would not avail to think of a passage round "The Horn," or by the more uncertain, and at the same time imperfected route, across the Isthmus. But as California was on this continent, he knew that there was a way thither, though it might lead through trackless deserts and barren wastes. These were not enough to daunt his determined spirit. He bent his way to the "Father of Waters," and worked his way as he could, till he found himself at "Independence," in health, and with no less strength, and with 150 dollars in his purse. He had no family to provide for, or even companion to care for, on the route which he was about to enter. Yet some things were necessary for himself; and to relieve his body from the pressure of a load, he provided himself with a wheel-barrow, on which to place his traps.

'It must not be supposed that our hero was ignorant of the large number of emigrants that was moving over the plains, and it is quite probable that his sagacity was precocious enough to look ahead at the result of attempting to carry forward such ponderous loads, and such a variety of at least dispensable things as the earlier parties started with. A detailed list of the 'amount and variety of goods and wares, useful and superfluous, including many of the appendages of refined and fashionable life, would astonish the reader. Our hero was not in a hurry. He reasoned thus: "The world was not made in a day; the race is not always for the swift." He trundled along his barrow, enjoying the comforts of his pipe, the object of wonder to many, and the subject of much sportive remark to those who were hurried along by their fresh and spirited teams on their first days.

'Many weeks had not passed, however, before our traveller had tangible evidence that trouble had fallen to the lot of some who had preceded him. A stray ox was feeding on his track: the mate of which, he afterwards learned, was killed, and this one turned adrift as useless. He coaxed this waif to be the companion of his journey, taking care to stop where he could provide himself with the needful sustenance. He had not travelled far before he found a mate for his ox, and ere long a wagon, which had given way in some of its parts, and been abandoned by its rightful owner, and left in the road. Our travelling genius was aroused to turn these mishaps to his own advantage; so he went straightway to work to patch and bolster up the wagon, bound his faithful

Page 33

oxen to it, and changed his employment from trundling a wheel-barrow to driving a team. Onward moved the new establishment, the owner gathering as he went, from the superabundance of those who had gone before him, various articles of utility—such as flour, provisions of all kinds, books, implements, even rich carpets, &c. which had been cast off as burdensome by other travellers. He would occasionally find poor worn-out animals that had been left behind, and as it was not important for him to speed his course, he gathered them together, stopping where there was abundance of grass, long enough for his cattle to gain a little strength and spirit. Time rolled on, and his wagon rolled with it, till he reached the end of his journey, when it was discovered that he had an uncommon fine team and a good wagon, &c. which produced him on the sale 2500 dollars.

'Being now relieved of the care of his team, and in the midst of the gold-diggings, he soon closed his prospecting by a location; and while all around him were concentrating their strength to consummate the work of years in a few months, he deliberately commenced building, finishing, and, as fast as he could, furnishing, a comfortable cabin. His wood he gathered and regularly piled in a straight line and perpendicular by the door, convenient as though the old lady had been within to provide his meals. He acted upon the adage, "Never to start till you are ready." Now our hero was ready to commence working his "claim;" and this he did, as he did everything else, steadily and systematically.

'He may yet be seen at his work, with the prospect—if he lives to be an old man—of being rich; for in the last two years he has accumulated 10,000 dollars.'

Need we add a word? This is decidedly the kind of man for emigrating—or, indeed, for remaining at home. We, being of his own character, can conceive his delicious nights of camping out, his head under his wheel-barrow, until he arrived at the dignity of a wagon; his principal luggage being perhaps a coverlet, to preserve him from the cold in sleep, and a gun that unscrewed, and its appendages, to provide him a fresh bird or beef. It is very probable that he sought neither of these, but was contented with something concentrated and preserved, and thus feasted; and with a drink from some delicious spring, or from a bottle—that could not be broken—supplied at the last spring he had passed, lay down conscious of his progress, well satisfied with the past, and hopeful of the future.

On his arrival at his destination, his conduct is equally exemplary. Every one should provide for the preservation of life and health as first measures; and if not done at a rate which future exertions are likely to render profitable, why make the expenditure? Now, many are in all these new adventures expending on inevitable necessities—having made no previous provision for them—such sums as render all their exertions hopeless; while at the same time they are sacrificing health and strength.

Page 34

The government of Australia has certainly been very successful in preserving order at the gold placers there, and has given its sanction upon moderate terms; for here, we believe, gold and silver mines are *inter regalia*, and could have been entirely seized by the crown. We sincerely trust it will appropriate the great and unexpected revenue thence arising in improving the roads through this magnificent country, and providing shelter for the traveller; for at this moment, many of the roads being over the steepest mountains, and the gradients unmitigated by cuttings, or any other act of engineering whatever, they are all but impassable, and are travelled with the greatest torture to the unfortunate animals concerned. It was the reproach of Spain, that though in possession of South America for centuries, she had formed few roads; and that the few formed were bad, and the accommodation in their neighbourhood of the worst description—often open sheds, without food or furniture, or indeed inhabitants; or if inhabited, with only stones for seats, and raised mounds of earth for beds. Even now, in little more than half a century, things are better in Australia than this, at least wherever government has extended. But there is a vast deal more to be done; and it is a pity that in the first place suitable schools are not formed for the persons intending to emigrate, and opportunity given them to do so, without the degradation of crime, and the expense and disgrace of conviction.

EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYED.

The *Westminster Review* for January, in an able and temperate article, entitled *Employers and Employed*, delineates the progress of the working power from the original condition of *serfdom*, through that of *vassalage*, which prevailed in the middle ages, to the system of simple contract in which we now find it in France and America. This the writer regards as part of a universal progress towards a more and more equalised condition of the various orders of men—'an equality, not perhaps of wealth, or of mind, or of inherent power, but of social condition, and of individual rights and freedom.' In England, however, we are only in a state of transition from that relation of protection on the one hand, and respect or loyalty on the other, which constituted the system of vassalage, to the true democratic relation which assumes a perfect equality and independence in the contracting parties. 'The master cannot divest himself of the idea, that in virtue of his rank he is entitled to deference and submission; and the workman conceives that, in virtue of his comparative poverty, he is entitled to assistance in difficulty, and to protection from the consequences of his own folly and improvidence. Each party expects from the other something more than is expressed or implied in the covenant between them. The workman, asserting his equality and independence, claims from his employer services which only inferiority can legitimately demand; the master, tacitly and in his heart denying this equality and independence, repudiates claims which only the validity of this plea of equality and independence can effectually nonsuit or liquidate.'

Page 35

Arguing that 'the reciprocal duties of employers and employed, *as such*, are comprised within the limits of their covenant,' the writer goes on to say, that nevertheless there remains a relation of 'fellow-citizenship and of Christian *neighbourhood*,' by virtue of which the employer owes service to his work-people, seeing that 'every man owes service to every man whom he is in a position to serve.' Let not the Pharisaic fundholder and lazy mortgagee suppose that the great employers of labour are thus under a peculiar obligation from which *they* are exempt. The obligation is assumed to be equal upon all who have power and means; and it only lies with special weight at the door of the employer of multitudes, in as far as he is in a situation to exercise influence over their character and conduct, and usually has greater means of rendering aid suited to their particular necessities.

Before proceeding to expound the various duties thus imposed upon the employer, the writer lays down a primary duty as essential to the due performance of the rest—namely, he must see to making his business succeed; and for this end he must possess a sufficient capital at starting; and he must not, for any reasons of vanity or benevolence, or through laxness, pay higher wages than the state of the labour-market and the prospects of trade require. Of the secondary duties which next come in course—and which, be it remembered, arise not from the mastership, but from the neighbourhood—the first is that of 'making his factory, and the processes carried on there, as healthy as care and sanitary science can render them.' 'This is the more incumbent upon him, as it is little likely to be thought of or demanded by his workmen. It is a topic on which his cultivated intelligence is almost sure to place him far ahead of them; and out of the superiority, as we have seen, springs the obligation.' Our reviewer adds the remark, that, 'in the minor workshops, and especially in the work-rooms of tailors and seamstresses, the employers are still, for the most part, unawakened to the importance and imperativeness of this class of obligations. The health of thousands is sacrificed from pure ignorance and want of thought.'

One mode of serving those who work for him, which the circumstances render appropriate, is to provide them with decent and comfortable dwellings. Much has been done in this way. 'In almost all country establishments, and in most of those in the smaller towns, the employers have been careful to surround their mills with substantial and well-built cottages, often with gardens attached to them, containing four rooms—kitchen, scullery, and two bedrooms: cottages which are let for rents which at once remunerate the owner and are easy for the occupier.' Even in large towns, where there are great local difficulties, something has been done by the building of Model Lodging-houses, and by the efforts of Societies for improving the

Page 36

Dwellings of the Poor. The writer specifies one of the greatest difficulties as existing in the working-people themselves: when provided with a variety of rooms for the separation of the various members of their families, they are very apt to defeat the whole plan by taking in lodgers, and contenting themselves with the filthy and depraving huddlement out of which their benevolent superiors endeavoured to rescue them. But it may be hoped that, by promoting only a few of the more intelligent and better-disposed to such improved dwellings, and thus setting up good examples, the multitude might in time be trained to an appreciation of the decency and comfort of ampler accommodation. Another wide field of usefulness is open to the employers in the establishment of schools, reading-rooms, baths, wash-houses, and the like.

It strikes us that the writer of this article is not true to his own principle in his view of the duties of the employer. We readily grant the duty of making his business prosperous and his workshops healthy. To fail in the latter particular especially, were not merely to fail in a duty, but to incur a heavy positive blame. But we cannot see how it is incumbent on the employer to provide houses for the persons who enter into the labour-contract with him, any more than to see that they get their four-pound loaf of a certain quality or price. It may be a graceful thing, a piece of noble benevolence, to enter into these building schemes, but it is also to go back into that system of vassalage out of which it is assumed that the relation of employer and employed is passing. Either the new buildings will pay as speculations, or they will not. If they are sure to pay, ordinary speculators will be as ready to furnish them as bakers are to sell bread. If the contrary be the case, why burden with the actual or probable loss the party in a simple contract which involves no such obligation? Clearly, there must be no great reason to expect a fair return for capital laid out in this way, or we should see building schemes for the working-classes taken up extensively by ordinary speculators. For employers, then, to enter into such plans, must in some degree be the result of benevolent feelings towards their men; and, so far, we must hold there is an acknowledgment on both sides that the system of vassalage is not yet extinct amongst us, and that the time for its extinction is not yet come.

If we look, however, at the entire condition of the working-people of England, we shall see that it acknowledges the same truth in some of its broadest features. When a time of depression comes, and factories do not require half of their usual number of hands, or even so many, it is never expected, on any hand, that the superfluous labourers are to maintain themselves till better times return. The employer is expected to keep them in his service, at least on short time, and at a reduced remuneration, although at a ruinous loss to himself. The workmen, though well aware

Page 37

of the contingency, make little or no provision against it, but calmly trust to the funds of their employers, or the contributions of the class to which these belong. Now, while such a practice exists, the relation of employer and employed is not that of independent contractors, but so far that of the feudal baron and his villeins, or of a chieftain and his 'following.' It is, in effect, a voluntarily maintained slavery on the part of the operatives—a habit as incompatible with political liberty as with moral dignity and progress, and therefore a sore evil in our state. Obviously, to perfect the system of independent contract, the workmen would need to redeem themselves from that condition of utter *unprovidedness* in which the great bulk of them are for the present content to live. Instead of what we see so prevalent now—a sort of hopelessness as to the benefits of saving—a dread to let it be known or imagined of them that they possess any store, lest it lead to a reduction of their wages (a foolish fallacy), or deprive them of a claim on their employer's consideration in the event of a period of depression (a mean and unworthy fear), we must see a dignified sense of independence, resting on the possession of some kind of property, before we can expect that even this stage in the Progress of Labour shall be truly reached.

But is it not just one of the essential disadvantages attending the contract system, or may we rather call it the system of weekly hire, that while it prompts the employer to frugality, by the obvious benefits to him of constant accumulation, it leaves the employed, as a mass, without a sufficient motive to the same virtue, and thus insures their being retained in that unprovidedness which forbids independence and true social dignity? On this point, were we a workman, we should be sorry to rest in an affirmative, or to allow it to slacken our exertions or sap our self-denial; because if there is a higher development of the labouring state in store for society, it can only be attained by the more speedy perfection of the contract state in *the entire independence of the workman*. The writer from whom we have quoted thinks, and with his sentiments we entirely concur, that 'society, in its progress towards an ideal state, may have to undergo modifications, compared with which all previous ones will seem trifling and superficial. Of one thing only can we feel secure—namely, that the loyal and punctual discharge of all the obligations arising out of existing social relations will best hallow, beautify, and elevate those relations, if they are destined to be permanent; and will best prepare a peaceful and beneficent advent for their successors, if, like so much that in its day seemed eternal, they too are doomed to pass away.'

ANECDOTE OF THE FIELD OF SHERRIFMUIR.

Page 38

My grandfather, William Wilson, was born in the farmhouse of Drumbrae, on the estate of Airthrey, at no great distance from the field of Sherrifmuir. At the rebellion of 1715, he was a lad of fifteen years of age, and learning that the rebels under the Earl of Mar had met with the royal forces under the Duke of Argyle in the neighbourhood, on the morning of Sunday the 12th November, while it was still dusk, he went to the top of a neighbouring hill named Glentye, from which the whole of the moor was discernible, and on which a number of country people were stationed, attracted to the spot, like himself, by curiosity. Being at no great distance from both armies, he could see them distinctly. The Highlanders, who observed no regular order, he compared to a large, dark, formless cloud, forming a striking contrast to the regular lines and disciplined appearance of the royal army. After observing them for some space of time, an orderly dragoon, sent by the Duke of Argyle, rode up to the spot where the spectators stood, warning them to remove from a position in which they were in as great danger as the combatants themselves. My grandfather accordingly returned home, listening with awe to the sharp report of musketry, intermixed with the booming of cannon, which now informed him that the battle had commenced. He had not been long in the house when a dismounted dragoon made his appearance, requesting to have his left wrist bandaged, so as to stop the blood. The hand had been cut off, and his horse killed under him, and he was on his way to Stirling to seek surgical aid. While his wishes were being complied with, he occupied himself in taking some refreshment, till one of the farm-servants came in and warned him that four armed Highlanders were coming down the hill in the direction of the house. The soldier, who had no doubt been taught at the Marlborough school, and served perhaps at Ramillies and Blenheim, immediately went out to the front of the house, which concealed him from his enemies. Presently, he heard by the footsteps that one was near, when he instantly presented himself at the gable, and shot the foremost Highlander with his carbine; then, seeing that the others came on in Indian file, with short distances between, he advanced to meet them, dropped the second with a bullet from his pistol, and cut down the third with his sword. The fourth, seeing the fate of his comrades, took to flight. After this wholesale execution, the dragoon, with perfect coolness, returned to the house, finished his repast, tranquilly said his thanks and adieus, and went off in the direction of Stirling. The next morning the country people were summoned to bury the dead. The ground was thickly covered with cranreuch, and life still remained in numbers of both armies, who begged earnestly for water. But what struck my grandfather particularly was, that the heads and bodies of a great many of the slain royalists were horribly mutilated by the claymores of the Highlanders; while on those of the Highlanders themselves nothing was observed but the wound which had caused their death.—*Communicated by Mr Alexander Wilson, shoemaker, Stirling.*



Page 39

THINNESS OF A SOAP-BUBBLE.

A soap-bubble as it floats in the light of the sun reflects to the eye an endless variety of the most gorgeous tints of colour. Newton shewed, that to each of these tints corresponds a certain thickness of the substance forming the bubble; in fact, he shewed, in general, that all transparent substances, when reduced to a certain degree of tenuity, would reflect these colours. Near the highest point of the bubble, just before it bursts, is always observed a spot which reflects no colour and appears black. Newton shewed that the thickness of the bubble at this black point was the 2,500,000th part of an inch! Now, as the bubble at this point possesses the properties of water as essentially as does the Atlantic Ocean, it follows that the ultimate molecules forming water must have less dimensions than this thickness.—*Lardner's Handbook*.

ENGLISH PLOUGHING.

The following, written from England, is going the round of the papers, and is as true as the gospel, in my opinion. I have seen better ploughing here with a pair of oxen than in the old country with five horses; but Johnny won't learn. 'Lord! only look at five great, elephant-looking beasts in one plough, with one great lummokin fellow to hold the handle, and another to carry the whip, and a boy to lead, whose boots have more iron on them than the horses' hoofs have, all crawling as if going to a funeral! What sort of a way is that to do work? It makes me mad to look at 'em. If there is any airthly clumsy fashion of doin' a thing, that's the way they are always sure to git here. They're a benighted, obstinate, bull-headed people the English, that's the fact, and always was.' Well done, Jonathan—quite true!—*From a private Letter from Boston*.

JOHN BUNYAN AND MINCE-PIES.

In No. 417 of this Journal it is chronicled that John Bunyan scrupled to eat mince-pies, because of the superstitious character popularly attached to them; but it would appear from an anecdote sent to us by a correspondent, that if this was true at all of the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, he must have received new light upon the subject at a later period of life. When he was imprisoned for preaching—so says the anecdote—in Bedford jail, a superstitious lady, thinking to entrap him, sent a servant to request his acceptance of a Christmas pie; whereupon Banyan replied: 'Tell your mistress that I accept her present thankfully, for I have learned to distinguish between a mince-pie and superstition.'



FOREST-TEACHINGS.

There was travelling in the wild-wood

Once, a child of song;

And he marked the forest-monarchs

As he went along.

Here, the oak, broad-eaved and spreading;

Here, the poplar tall;

Here, the holly, forky-leaved;

Here, the yew, for the bereaved;

Here, the chestnut, with its flowers, and its spine-bestudded ball.



Page 40

Here, the cedar, palmy-branched;
Here, the hazel low;
Here, the aspen, quivering ever;
Here, the powdered sloe.
Wondrous was their form and fashion,
Passing beautiful to see
How the branches interlaced,
How the leaves each other chased,
Fluttering lightly hither, thither on the wind-aroused tree.

Then he spake to those wood-dwellers:
'Ye are like to men,
And I learn a lesson from ye
With my spirit's ken.
Like to us in low beginning,
Children of the patient earth;
Born, like us, to rise on high,
Ever nearer to the sky,
And, like us, by slow advances from the minute of your birth.

'And, like mortals, ye have uses—
Uses each his own:
Each his gift, and each his beauty,
Not to other known.
Thou, O oak, the strong ship-builder,
For thy country's good,
Givest up thy noble life,
Like a patriot in the strife,
Givest up thy heart of timber, as he poureth out his blood.

'Thou, O poplar, tall and taper,
Reachest up on high;
Like a preacher pointing upward—
Upward to the sky.
Thou, O holly, with thy berries,
Gleaming redly bright,
Comest, like a pleasant friend,
When the dying year hath end,
Comest to the Christmas party, round the ruddy fire-light.

'Thou, O yew, with sombre branches,
And dark-veiled head—
Like a monk within the church-yard,
When the prayers are said,



Standing by the newly-buried
In the depth of thought—
Tellest, with a solemn grace,
Of the earthly dwelling-place,
Of the soul to live for ever—of the body come to nought,

'Thou, O cedar, storm-enduring,
Bent with years, and old,
Standest with thy broad-eaved branches,
Shadowing o'er the mould;
Shadowing o'er the tender saplings,
Like a patriarch mild,
When he lifts his hoary head,
And his hands a blessing shed,
On the little ones around him—on the children of his child.

'And the light, smooth-barked hazel,
And the dusky sloe,
Are the poor men of the forest—
Are the weak and low.
Yet unto the poor is given
Power the earth to bless;
And the sloe's small fruit of down,
And the hazel's clusters brown,
Are the tribute they can offer—are their mite of usefulness.

'When the awful words were spoken,
"It is finished!"—
When the all-loving heart was broken,
Bowed the patient head;
When the earth grew dark as midnight
In her solemn awe—
Then the forest-branches all
Bent, with reverential fall—
Bent, as bent the Jewish foreheads at the giving of the law.

Page 41

'But one tree was in the forest
That refused to bow;
Then a sudden blast came o'er it,
And a whisper low
Made the leaves and branches quiver—
Shook the guilty tree;
And the voice was: "Tremble ever
To eternity:
Be a lesson from thee read—
He that boweth not his head,
And obeyeth not his Maker, let him fear eternally!"

'So thou standest ever shaking,
Ever quivering with fear,
For the voice is still upon thee,
And the whisper near.
Like the guilty, conscience-haunted;
And the name for thee
Is, "The tree of many thoughts"—
Is, "The tree of many doubts;"
And thy leaves are thoughts and doubtings—for thou art the
sinner's tree.

'Thou, O chestnut, richly branched,
Standest in thy might,
Rising like a leafy tower
In the summer light.
And thy branches are fruit-laden,
Waving bold and free;
And the beams upon thee shed
Are like blessings on thy head:
Thou art strong, and fair, and fruitful—for thou art the good
man's tree.

'So, farewell, great forest-teachers:
There is a spirit dwells
In the veinings of each leaflet,
In each flower's cells:
Ye have each a voice and lesson,
And ye seem to say:
"Open, man, thine eyes to see
In each flower, stone, and tree,
Something pure and something holy, as thou passest on thy way."

F.C.W.

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