LAMB'S ESSAYS.
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MEMOIR.
In my seventy-seventh year, I have been invited to place on record my recollections of Charles Lamb. I am, I believe, nearly the only man now surviving who knew much of the excellent "Elia." Assuredly I knew him more intimately than any other existing person, during the last seventeen or eighteen years of his life.

In this predicament, and because I am proud to associate my name with his, I shall endeavour to recall former times, and to bring my old friend before the eyes of a new generation.

I request the "courteous reader" to accept, for what they are worth, these desultory labours of a lover of letters; and I hope that the advocate for modern times will try to admit into the circle of his sympathy my recollections of a fine Genius departed.

No harm—possibly some benefit—will accrue to any one who may consent to extend his acquaintance to one of the rarest and most delicate of the Humorists of England.

B. W. Procter.

May, 1866.
CHAPTER I.

Introduction—Biography, few events—One predominant—His devotion to it—Tendency to Literature—First Studies—Influence of Antique Dwellings—Early Friends—Humour—Qualities of Mind—Sympathy for neglected Objects—A Nonconformist—Predilections—Character—Taste—Style.

The biography of Charles Lamb lies within a narrow compass. It comprehends only few events. His birth and parentage, and domestic sorrows; his acquaintance with remarkable men; his thoughts and habits; and his migrations from one home to another; constitute the sum and substance of his almost uneventful history. It is a history with one event, predominant.

For this reason, and because I, in common with many others, hold a book needlessly large to be a great evil, it is my intention to confine the present memoir within moderate limits. My aim is not to write the "Life and Times" of Charles Lamb. Indeed Lamb had no influence on his own times. He had little or nothing in common with his gene-
ration, which was almost a stranger to him. There was no reciprocity between them. His contemplations were retrospective. He was, when living, the centre of a small social circle; and I shall therefore deal incidentally with some of its members. In other respects, this memoir will contain only what I recollect and what I have learned from authentic sources, of my old friend.

The fact that distinguished Charles Lamb from other men was his entire devotion to one grand and tender purpose. There is, probably, a romance involved in every life. In his life it exceeded that of others. In gravity, in acuteness, in his noble battle with a great calamity, it was beyond the rest. Neither pleasure nor toil ever distracted him from his holy purpose. Everything was made subservient to it. He had an insane sister, who, in a moment of uncontrollable madness, had unconsciously destroyed her own mother; and to protect and save this sister—a gentlewoman, who had watched like a mother over his own infancy—the whole length of his life was devoted. What he endured, through the space of nearly forty years, from the incessant fear and frequent recurrence of his sister's insanity, can now only be conjectured. In this constant and uncomplaining endurance, and in his steady adherence to a great principle of conduct, his life was heroic.

We read of men giving up all their days to a single object: to religion, to vengeance, to some overpowering selfish wish; of daring acts done to avert death or disgrace, or some oppressing misfortune. We read mythical tales of friendship; but we do not recollect any instance in which a great object has been so unremittingly carried out throughout a whole life, in defiance of a thousand
difficulties, and of numberless temptations, straining the good resolution to its utmost, except in the case of our poor clerk of the India House.

This was, substantially, his life. His actions, thoughts, and sufferings were all concentrated on this one important end. It was what he had to do; it was in his reach; and he did it, therefore, manfully, religiously. He did not waste his mind on too many things; for whatever too much expands the mind weakens it; nor on vague or multitudinous thoughts and speculations, nor on dreams or things distant or unattainable. However interesting, they did not absorb him, body and soul, like the safety and welfare of his sister.

Subject to this primary unflinching purpose, the tendency of Lamb's mind pointed strongly towards literature. He did not seek literature, however; and he gained from it nothing except his fame. He worked laboriously at the India House from boyhood to manhood: for many years without repining; although he must have been conscious of an intellect qualified to shine in other ways than in entering up a trader's books. None of those coveted offices, which bring money and comfort in their train, ever reached Charles Lamb. He was never under that bounteous shower which Government leaders and persons of influence direct towards the heads of their adherents. No Dives ever selected him for his golden bounty. No potent critic ever shouldered him up the hill of fame. In the absence of these old-fashioned helps, he was content that his own unassisted efforts should gain for him a certificate of capability to the world; and that the choice reputation which he thus earned should, with his own qualities, bring round him the unenvying love of a host of friends.
CHARLES LAMB.

Lamb had always been a studious boy and a great reader; and after passing through Christ's Hospital and the South Sea House, and being for some years in the India House, this instinctive passion of his mind (for literature) broke out. In this he was, without doubt, influenced by the example and counsel of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, his schoolfellow and friend, for whom he entertained a high and most tender respect. The first books which he loved to read were volumes of poetry, and essays on serious and religious themes. The works of the old poets, the history of Quakers, the biography of Wesley, the controversial papers of Priestley, and other books on devout subjects, sank into his mind. From reading he speedily rose to writing; from being a reader he became an author. His first writings were entirely serious. These were verses, or letters, wherein religious thoughts and secular criticisms took their places in turn; or they were grave dramas, which exhibit and lead to the contemplation of character; and which nourish those moods out of which humour ultimately arises.

So much has been already published, that it is needless to encumber this short narrative with any minute enumeration of the qualities which constitute his station in literature; but I shall, as a part of my task, venture to refer to some of those which distinguish him from other writers.

Lamb's very curious and peculiar humour showed itself early. It was perhaps born of the solitude in which his childhood passed away; perhaps cherished by the seeds of madness that were in him,—that were in his sister,—that were in the ancestry from which he sprung. Without doubt, it caught colour from the scenes in the
midst of which he grew up. Born in the Temple; educated in Christ's Hospital; and passed onwards to the South Sea House; his first visions were necessarily of antiquity. The grave old buildings tenanted by lawyers and their clerks, were replaced by "the old and awful cloisters" of the School of Edward; and these in turn gave way to the palace of the famous Bubble, now desolate, with its unpeopled Committee Rooms, its pictures of Governors of Queen Anne's time, "its dusty maps of Mexico, dim as dreams, and soundings of the Bay of Panama." These things, if they impressed his mind imperfectly at first, in time formed themselves into the shape of truths, and assumed significance and importance; as words and things, glanced over hastily in childhood, grow and ripen, and enrich the understanding in after days.

Lamb's earliest friends and confidants (with one exception) were singularly void of wit and the love of jesting. His sister was grave; his father gradually sinking into dotage; Coleridge was immersed in religious subtleties and poetic dreams; and Charles Lloyd, sad and logical and analytical, was the antithesis of all that is lively and humorous. But thoughts and images stole in from other quarters; and Lamb's mind was essentially quick and productive. Nothing lay barren in it; and much of what was planted there grew and spread, and became beautiful. He himself has sown the seeds of humour in many English hearts. His own humour is essentially English. It is addressed to his own countrymen; to the men "whose limbs were made in England;" not to foreign intellects, nor perhaps to the universal mind. Humour, which is the humour of a man (of the writer himself or of his creations), must frequently remain, in its fra-
grant blossoming state, in the land of its birth. Like some of the most delicate wines and flowers, it will not bear travel.

Apart from his humour and other excellences, Charles Lamb combined qualities such as are seldom united in one person; which indeed seem not easily reconcilable with each other: namely, much prudence, with much generosity; great tenderness of heart, with a firm will. To these was super-added that racy humour which has served to distinguish him from other men. There is no other writer that I know of, in whom tenderness and good sense and humour are so intimately and happily blended; no one whose view of men and things is so invariably generous and true, and independent. These qualities made their way slowly and fairly. They were not taken up as a matter of favour or fancy, and then abandoned. They struggled through many years of neglect, and some of contumely, before they took their stand triumphantly, and as things not to be ignored by any one.

Lamb pitied all objects which had been neglected or despised. Nevertheless the lens through which he viewed the objects of his pity—beggars, and chimney-sweepers, and convicts—was always clear: it served him even when their shortcomings were to be contemplated. For he never paltered with truth. He had no weak sensibilities, few tears for imaginary griefs. But his heart opened wide to real distress. He never applauded the fault; but he pitied the offender. He had a word of compassion for the sheep-stealer, who was arrested and lost his ill-acquired sheep, "his first, last, and only hope of a mutton pie;" and vented his feelings in that sonnet (rejected by the magazines) which he has called "The Gypsy’s Malison." Although he
was willing to acknowledge merit when it was successful, he preferred it, perhaps, when it was not clothed with prosperity.

By education and habit he was an Unitarian. Indeed, he was a true Nonconformist in all things. He was not a dissenter by imitation, nor from any deep principle or obstinate heresy; nor was he made servile and obedient by formal logic alone. His reasoning always rose and streamed through the heart. He liked a friend for none of the ordinary reasons; because he was famous, or clever, or powerful, or popular. He at once took issue with the previous verdicts, and examined the matter in his own way. If a man was unfortunate he gave him money. If he was calumniated, he accorded him sympathy. He gave freely; not to merit, but to want.

He pursued his own fancies; his own predilections. He did not neglect his own instinct (which is always true), and aim at things foreign to his nature. He did not cling to any superior intellect, nor cherish any inferior humourist or wit.

Perhaps no one ever thought more independently. He had great enjoyment in the talk of able men, so that it did not savour of form or pretension. He liked the strenuous talk of Hazlitt, who never descended to fine words. He liked the unaffected quiet conversation of Manning; the vivacious excursive talk of Leigh Hunt. He heard with wondering admiration the monologues of Coleridge. Perhaps he liked the simplest talk the best; expressions of pity or sympathy, or affection for others; from young people, who thought and said little or nothing about themselves.

He had no craving for popularity, nor even for fame. I do not recollect any passage in his writings,
nor any expression in his talk, which runs counter to my opinion. In this respect he seems to have differed from Milton (who desired fame, like "Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides"), and to have rather resembled Shakespeare, who was indifferent to fame or assured of it; but perhaps he resembled no one.

Lamb had not many personal antipathies, but he had a strong aversion to pretence and false repute. In particular, he resented the adulation of the epitaph-mongers who endeavoured to place Garrick, the actor, on a level with Shakespeare. Of that greatest of all poets he has said such things as I imagine Shakespeare himself would have liked to hear. He has also uttered brave words in behalf of Shakespeare's cotemporary dramatists; partly because they deserved them; partly because they were unjustly forgotten. The sentence of oblivion, passed by ignorant ages on the reputation of these fine authors, he has annulled, and forced the world to confess that preceding judges were incompetent to entertain the case.

I cannot imagine the mind of Charles Lamb, even in early boyhood, to have been weak or childish. In his first letters you see that he was a thinker. He is for a time made sombre by unhappy reflections. He is a reader of thoughtful books. The witticisms which he coined for sixpence each (for the "Morning Chronicle") had, no doubt, less of metallic lustre than those which he afterwards meditated; and which were highly estimated. Effodiuntur opes. His jests were never the mere overflowings of the animal spirits; but were exercises of the mind. He brought the wisdom of old times and old writers to bear upon the taste and intellect of his day. What was in a manner
foreign to his age, he naturalized and cherished. And he did this with judgment and great delicacy. His books never unhinge or weaken the mind; but bring before it tender and beautiful thoughts, which charm and nourish it, as only good books can. No one was ever worse from reading Charles Lamb's writings; but many have become wiser and better. Sometimes, as he hints, "he affected that dangerous figure, irony;" and he would sometimes interrupt grave discussion, when he thought it too grave, with some light jest, which nevertheless was "not quite irrelevant." Long talkers, as he confesses, "hated him;" and assuredly he hated long talkers.

In his countenance you might sometimes read—what may be occasionally read on almost all foreheads—the letters and lines of old, unforgotten calamity. Yet there was at the bottom of his nature a buoyant self-sustaining strength: for although he encountered frequent seasons of mental distress, his heart recovered itself in the interval, and rose and sounded, like music played to a happy tune. Upon fit occasion, his lips could shut in a firm fashion; but the gentle smile that played about his face showed that he was always ready to relent. His quick eye never had any sullenness: his mouth, tender and tremulous, showed that there would be nothing cruel or inflexible in his nature.

On referring to his letters, it must be confessed that in literature Lamb's taste, like that of all others, was at first imperfect. For taste is a portion of our judgment, and must depend a good deal on our experience, and on our opportunities of comparing the claims of different pretenders. Lamb's affections swayed him at all times. He sympathized deeply with Cowper and his melan-
charley history; and at first estimated his verse perhaps beyond its strict value. He was intimate with Southey, and anticipated that he would rival Milton. Then his taste was at all times peculiar. He seldom worshipped the Idol which the multitude had set up. I was never able to prevail on him to admit that "Paradise Lost" was greater than "Paradise Regained;" I believe, indeed, he liked the last the best. He would not discuss the Poetry of Lord Byron or Shelley, with a view of being convinced of their beauties. Apart from a few points like these, his opinions must be allowed to be sound, almost always; if not as to the style of the author, then as to the quality of his book or passage which he chose to select. And his own style was always good, from the beginning, in verse as well as in prose. His first sonnets are unaffected, well sustained, and well written.

I do not know much of the opinion of others; but to my thinking the style of Charles Lamb, in his "Elia," and in the letters written by him in the later (the last twenty) years of his life, is full of grace; not antiquated, but having a touch of antiquity. It is self-possessed, choice, delicate, penetrating, his words running into the innermost sense of things. It is not, indeed, adapted to the meanest capacity, but is racy, and chaste, after his fashion. Perhaps it is sometimes scriptural: at all events it is always earnest and sincere. He was painfully in earnest, in his advocacy of Hazlitt and Hunt, and in his pleadings for Hogarth and the old dramatists. Even in his humour, his fictitious (as well as his real) personages have a character of reality about them which gives them their standard value. They all ring like true coin. In conversation he loved to discuss persons or books, and seldom ven-
tured upon the stormy sea of politics; his intimates lying on the two opposite shores, Liberal and Tory. Yet, when occasion moved him, he did not refuse to express his liberal opinions. There was little or nothing cloudy or vague about him; he required that there should be known ground even in fiction. He rejected the poems of Shelley (many of them so consummately beautiful) because they were too exclusively ideal. Their efflorescence, he thought, was not natural. He preferred Southey's "Don Roderick" to his "Curse of Kehama;" of which latter poem he says, "I don't feel that firm footing in it that I do in 'Roderick.' My imagination goes sinking and floundering in the vast spaces of unopened systems and faiths. I am put out of the pale of my old sympathies."

Charles Lamb had much respect for some of the modern authors. In particular, he admired (to the full extent of his capacity for liking) Coleridge, and Wordsworth, and Burns. But with these exceptions his affections rested mainly on writers who had lived before him; on some of them; for there were "things in books' clothing," from which he turned away loathing. He was not a worshipper of the customs and manners of old times, so much as of the tangible objects that old times have bequeathed to us; the volumes tinged with decay, the buildings (the Temple, Christ's Hospital, &c.) coloured and enriched by the hand of age. Apart from these, he clung to the time present; for if he hated anything in the extreme degree, he hated change. He clung to life, although life had bestowed upon him no magnificent gifts; none, indeed, beyond books and friends (a "ragged regiment"), and an affectionate contented mind. He had, he confesses, "an intolerable disinclination to
dying;" which beset him especially in the winter months. "I am not content to pass away like a weaver's shuttle. Any alteration in this earth of mine discomposes me. My household gods plant a terrible fixed foot, and are not rooted up without blood." He seems never to have looked into the Future. His eyes were on the present or (oftener) on the past. It was always thus from his boyhood. His first readings were principally Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Isaac Walton, &c. "I gather myself up" (he writes) "unto the old things." He has indeed extracted the beauty and innermost value of Antiquity, whenever he has pressed it into his service.
CHAPTER II.


On the south side of Fleet Street, near to where it adjoins Temple Bar, lies the Inner Temple. It extends southward to the Thames, and contains long ranges of melancholy buildings, in which lawyers (those reputed birds of prey) and their followers congregate. It is a district very memorable. About seven hundred years ago it was the abiding place of the Knights Templars, who erected there a church, which still uplifts its round tower (its sole relic) for the wonder of modern times. Fifty years since, I remember, you entered the precinct through a lowering archway that opened into a gloomy passage, Inner Temple Lane. On the east side rose the church; and on the west was a dark line of chambers, since pulled down and rebuilt, and now called Johnson’s Buildings. At some distance westward was an open court, in which was a sundial: and, in the midst, a solitary fountain, that sent its silvery voice into the air above; the murmur of which, descending, seemed to render the
place more lonely. Midway between the Inner Temple Lane and the Thames was, and I believe still is, a range of substantial chambers (overlooking the gardens and the busy river), called Crown Office Row. In one of these chambers, on the 18th day of February, 1775, Charles Lamb was born.

He was the son of John and Elizabeth Lamb; and he and his brother John and his sister Mary (both of whom were considerably older than himself) were the only children of their parents. John was twelve years, and Mary (properly Mary Anne) was ten years older than Charles. Their father held the post of clerk to Mr. Samuel Salt, a barrister, one of the benchers of the Inner Temple; a mild, amiable man, very indolent, very shy, and, as I imagine, not much known in what is called "the profession." Lamb sprang, paternally, from a humble stock, which had its root in the county of Lincoln. At one time of his life his father appears to have dwelt at Stamford. In his imaginary ascent from plain Charles Lamb to Pope Innocent, one of the gradations is Lord Stamford. His mother's family came from Hertfordshire, where his grandmother was a housekeeper in the Plumer family, and where several of his cousins long resided. He did not attempt to trace his ancestry (of which he wisely made no secret) beyond two or three generations. In an agreeable sonnet, entitled "The Family Name," he speaks of his sire's sire, but no further; "We trace our stream no higher." Then he runs into some pleasant conjectures as to his possible progenitors, of whom he knew nothing.

"Perhaps some shepherd on Lincolnian plains,"
he says, first received the name; perhaps some martial lord, returned from "holy Salem;" and then he concludes with a resolve,

"No deed of mine shall shame thee, gentle Name,"

which he kept religiously throughout his life.

When Charles was between seven and eight years of age, he became a scholar in Christ's Hospital; a presentation having been given to his father, for the son's benefit. He entered that celebrated school on the 9th of October, 1782, and remained there until the 23rd November, 1789; being then between fourteen and fifteen years old. The records of his boyhood are very scanty. He was always a grave, inquisitive boy. Once, when walking with his sister through some churchyard, he inquired anxiously, "where do the naughty people lie?" the unqualified panegyrics which he encountered on the tombstones doubtless suggesting the inquiry. Mr. Samuel Le Grice (his schoolfellow) states that he was an amiable, gentle youth, very sensible, and keenly observing; that "his complexion was clear brown, his countenance mild, his eyes differing in colour, and that he had a slow and peculiar walk." He adds that he was never mentioned without the addition of his Christian name, Charles, implying a general feeling of kindness towards him. His delicate frame and difficulty of utterance, it is said, unfitted him for joining in any boisterous sports. After he left Christ's Hospital he returned home, where he had access to the large miscellaneous library of Mr. Salt. He and his sister were (to use his own words) "tumbled into a spacious closet of good old English reading, and browsed at will on that fair and wholesome pasturage." This, however, could not have lasted long, for it was the
The destiny of Charles Lamb to be compelled to labour almost from his boyhood. He was able to read Greek, and had acquired great facility in Latin composition, when he left the Hospital; but an unconquerable impediment in his speech deprived him of an "exhibition" in the school, and, as a consequence, of the benefit of a college education.

The state of Christ's Hospital, at the time when Lamb was a scholar there, may be ascertained with tolerable correctness from his two essays, entitled "Recollections of Christ's Hospital" and "Christ's Hospital five-and-thirty years ago." These papers when read together show the different (favourable and unfavourable) points of this great establishment. They leave no doubt as to its extensive utility. Although, strictly speaking, it was a charitable home for the sustenance and education of boys, slenderly provided, or un-provided, with the means of learning, they were neither lifted up beyond their own family nor depressed by mean habits, such as an ordinary charity school is supposed to generate. They floated onwards towards manhood in a wholesome middle region, between a too rare ether and the dense and abject atmosphere of pauperism. The Hospital boy (as Lamb says) never felt himself to be a charity boy. The antiquity and regality of the foundation to which he belonged, and the mode or style of his education, sublimated him beyond the heights of the labouring classes. From the "Christ's Hospital five-and-thirty years ago," it would appear that the comforts enjoyed by Lamb himself exceeded those of his schoolfellows; owing to his friends supplying him with extra delicacies. There is no doubt that great tyranny was then exercised by the older boys (the monitors)
over the younger ones; that the scholars had anything but choice and ample rations; and that hunger ("the eldest, strongest of the passions") was not a tyrant unknown throughout this large Institution.

Lamb remained at Christ's Hospital for seven years; but on the half-holidays (two in every week) he used to go to his parents' home, in the Temple, and when there would muse on the terrace or by the lonely fountain, or contemplate the dial, or pore over the books in Mr. Salt's library; until those antiquely coloured thoughts rose up in his mind, which in after years he presented to the world.

Amongst the advantages which Charles derived from his stay at Christ's Hospital, was one which, although accidental, was destined to have great effect on his subsequent life. It happened that he reckoned, amongst his schoolfellows, one who afterwards achieved a very extensive reputation, namely, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. This youth was his elder by two years; and his example influenced Lamb materially on many occasions, and ultimately led him into literature. Coleridge's projects, at the outset of life, were vacillating. In this respect Lamb was no follower of his schoolfellow: his own career being steady and unwavering, from his entrance into the India House until the day of his freedom from service; between thirty and forty years. His literary tastes, indeed, took independently almost the same tone as those of his friend; and their religious views (for Coleridge in his early years became an Unitarian) were the same. When Coleridge left Christ's Hospital he went to the University—to Jesus College, Cambridge; but came back occasionally
to London, where the intimacy between him and Lamb was cemented. Their meetings at the smoky little public-house in the neighbourhood of Smithfield—the "Salutation and Cat;" consecrated by pipes and tobacco (Orinoco), by egg-hot and Welsh rabbits, and metaphysics and poetry; are exultingly referred to in Lamb's letters. Lamb entertained for Coleridge's genius the greatest respect, until death dissolved their friendship. In his earliest verses (so dear to a young poet) he used to submit his thoughts to Coleridge's amendments or critical suggestions; and on one occasion was obliged to cry out, "Spare my ewe lambs, they are the reflected images of my own feelings."

It was at a very tender age that Charles Lamb entered the "work-a-day" world. His elder brother, John, had at that time a clerkship in the South Sea House, and Charles passed a short time there under his brother's care or control, and must thus have gained some knowledge of figures. The precise nature of his occupation in this deserted place, however (where some forms of business were kept up, "though the soul be long since fled," and where the directors met mainly "to declare a dead dividend"), is not stated in the charming paper of "The South Sea House." Charles remained in this office only until the 5th April, 1792, when he obtained an appointment (through the influence, I believe, of Mr. Salt) as clerk in the Accountant's Office of the East India Company. He was then seventeen years of age.

About three years after Charles became a clerk in the India House, his family appear to have moved from Crown Office Row, into poor lodgings at No. 7, Little Queen Street, Holborn. His father at that time had a small pension from Mr.
Salt, whose service he had left, being almost fatuous; his mother was ill and bedridden; and his sister Mary was tired out, by needlework all day, and by taking care of her mother throughout the night. "Of all the people in the world" (Charles says) "she was most thoroughly devoid of all selfishness." There was also, as a member of the family, an old aunt, who had a trifling annuity for her life, which she poured into the common fund. John Lamb (Charles's elder brother) lived elsewhere; having occasional intercourse only with his kindred. He continued however to visit them, whilst he preserved his "comfortable" clerkship in the South Sea House.

It was under this state of things that they all drifted down to the terrible year, 1796. It was a year dark with horror. There was an hereditary taint of insanity in the family, which caused even Charles himself to be placed, for a short time, in Hoxton Lunatic Asylum. "The six weeks that finished last year and began this (1796), your very humble servant spent very agreeably in a madhouse, at Hoxton." These are his words when writing to Coleridge. Mary Lamb had previously been repeatedly attacked by the same dreadful disorder; and this now broke out afresh in a sudden burst of acute madness. She had been moody and ill, for some little time previously, and the illness came to a crisis on the 23rd of September, 1796. On that day, just before dinner, Mary seized a "case knife" which was lying on the table; pursued a little girl (her apprentice) round the room; hurled about the dinner forks; and, finally, in a fit of uncontrollable frenzy, stabbed her mother to the heart. Charles was at hand, only in time to snatch the knife out of her grasp, before further hurt could be done.
He found his father wounded in the forehead by one of the forks, and his aunt lying insensible and apparently dying, on the floor of the room.

This happened on a Thursday; and on the following day an inquest was held on the mother's body, and a verdict of Mary's lunacy was immediately found by the jury. The Lambs had a few friends. Mr. Norris—the friend of Charles's father and of his own childhood—"was very kind to us;" and Sam. Le Grice "then in town" (Charles writes) was as a brother to me, and gave up every hour of his time in constant attendance on my father."

After the fatal deed, Mary Lamb was deeply afflicted. Her act was in the first instance totally unknown to her. Afterwards, when her consciousness returned and she was informed of it, she suffered great grief. And subsequently, when she became "calm and serene," and saw the misfortune in a clearer light, this was "far, very far from an indecent or forgetful serenity," as her brother says. She had no defiant air; no affectation, nor too extravagant a display of sorrow. She saw her act, as she saw all other things, by the light of her own clear and gentle good sense. She was sad; but the deed was past recall, and at the time of its commission had been utterly beyond either her control or knowledge.

After the inquest, Mary Lamb was placed in a lunatic asylum; where, after a short time, she recovered her serenity. A rapid recovery after violent madness is not an unusual mark of the disease; it being in cases of quiet, inveterate insanity, that the return to sound mind (if it ever recur) is more gradual and slow. The recovery, however, was only temporary in her case. She was throughout her life subject to frequent recurrences of the
same disease. At one time her brother Charles writes, "Poor Mary's disorder so frequently recurring has made us a sort of marked people." At another time he says, "I consider her as perpetually on the brink of madness." And so, indeed, she continued during the remainder of her life; and she lived to the age of eighty-two years.

Charles was now left alone in the world. His father was imbecile; his sister insane; and his brother afforded no substantial assistance or comfort. He was scarcely out of boyhood when he learned that the world has its dangerous places and barren deserts; and that he had to struggle for his living without health. He found that he had to take upon himself all the cares of a parent or protector (to his sister) even before he had studied the duties of a man.

Sudden as death, came down the necessary knowledge: how to live, and how to live well. The terrible event that had fallen upon him and his, instead of casting him down, and paralyzing his powers, braced and strung his sinews into preternatural firmness. It is the character of a feeble mind to lie prostrate before the first adversary. In his case it lifted him out of that momentary despair which always follows a great calamity. It was like extreme cold to the system, which often overthrows the weak and timid, but gives additional strength and power of endurance to the brave and the strong. "My aunt was lying apparently dying" (writes Lamb), "my father with a wound on his poor forehead, and my mother a murdered corpse, in the next room. I felt that I had something else to do than to regret. I had the whole weight of the family upon me; for my brother —little disposed at any time to take care of old
age and infirmity—has now, with his bad leg, exemption from such duties; and I am now left alone."

In about a month after his mother's death (3rd October) Charles writes, "My poor, dear, dearest sister, the unhappy and unconscious instrument of the Almighty's judgment on our house, is restored to her senses; to a dreadful sense of what has passed; awful to her mind, but tempered with a religious resignation. She knows how to distinguish between a deed committed in a fit of frenzy and the terrible guilt of a mother's murder." In another place, he says, "She bears her situation as one who has no right to complain." He himself visits her and upholds her, and rejoices in her continued reason. For her use, he borrows books ("for reading was her daily bread"), and gives up his time and all his thoughts to her comfort.

Thus, in their quiet grief, making no show, yet suffering more than could be shown by clamorous sobs or frantic words, the two—brother and sister—enter upon the bleak world together. "Her love," as Mr. Wordsworth states in the epitaph on Charles Lamb, "was as the love of mothers" towards her brother. It may be said that his love for her was the deep, lifelong love of the tenderest son. In one letter, he writes, "It was not a family where I could take Mary with me; and I am afraid that there is something of dishonesty in any pleasures I take without her." Many years afterwards (in 1834, the very year in which he died) he writes to Miss Fryer, "It is no new thing for me to be left with my sister. When she is not violent her rambling chat is better to me than the sense and sanity of the world." Surely there is great depth of pathos in these unaffected words; in the love
that has outlasted all the troubles of life, and is thus tenderly expressed, almost at his last hour.

John Lamb, the elder brother of Charles, held a clerkship, with some considerable salary, in the South Sea House. I do not retain an agreeable impression of him. If not rude, he was sometimes, indeed generally, abrupt and unprepossessing in manner. He was assuredly deficient in that courtesy which usually springs from a mind at friendship with the world. Nevertheless, without much reasoning power (apparently) he had much cleverness of character; except when he had to purchase paintings, at which times his judgment was often at fault. One of his sayings is mentioned in the (Elia) essay of “My Relations.” He seems to have been, on one occasion, contemplating a group of Eton boys at play, when he observed “What a pity it is to think that these fine ingenuous lads will some day be changed into frivolous members of Parliament.” Like some persons who, although case-hardened at home, overflow with sympathy towards distant objects, he cared less for the feelings of his neighbour close at hand than for the eel out of water or the oyster disturbed in its shell.

John Lamb was the favourite of his mother, as the deformed child is frequently the dearest. “She would always love my brother above Mary,” Charles writes in 1796, “although he was not worth one-tenth of the affection which Mary had a right to claim. Poor Mary! my mother never understood her right.” In another place (after he had been unburthening his heart to Coleridge), he writes cautiously, “Since this has happened” [the death of his mother] “he has been very kind and brotherly; but I fear for his mind. He has taken
his ease in the world, and is not fit to struggle with difficulties. Thank God, I can unconnect myself with him, and shall manage my father's moneys myself, if I take charge of Daddy, which poor John has not hinted a wish at any future time to share with me." Mary herself, when she was recovering, said that "she knew she must go to Bethlehem for life; that one of her brothers would have it so; the other would not wish it, but would be obliged to go with the stream."

At this time, reckoning up their several means of living, Charles Lamb and his father had together an income of £170 or £180; out of which, he says, "we can spare £50 or £60 at least for Mary whilst she stays in an asylum. If I and my father and an old maidservant can't live and live comfortably on £130 or £120 a year, we ought to burn by slow fires. I almost would, so that Mary might not go into an hospital." She was then recovering her health; had become serene and cheerful; and Charles was passionately desirous that, after a short residence in the lunatic establishment wherein she then was, she should return home: "But the surviving members of her family" (these are Sir Thomas Talfourd's words), "especially John, who enjoyed a fair income from the South Sea House, opposed her discharge." Charles however ultimately succeeded in his pious desire, upon entering into a solemn undertaking to take care of his sister thereafter. He provided a lodging for her at Hackney, and spent all his Sundays and holidays with her. I never heard of John Lamb having contributed anything, in money or otherwise, towards the support of his deranged sister, or to assist his young struggling brother. Soon after this time, Charles took his sister Mary
to live with himself entirely. Whenever the approach of one of her fits of insanity was announced, by some irritability or change of manner, he would take her under his arm to Hoxton Asylum. It was very afflicting to encounter the young brother and his sister walking together (weeping together) on this painful errand; Mary herself, although sad, very conscious of the necessity for temporary separation from her only friend. They used to carry a strait jacket with them.

In the latter days of his father’s life, Charles must have had an uncomfortable home. “I go home at night overwearied, quite faint, and then to cards with my father: who will not let me enjoy a meal in peace. After repeated games at cribbage” (he is writing to Coleridge), “I have got my father’s leave to write; with difficulty got it: for when I expostulated about playing any more, he replied, ‘If you won’t play with me, you might as well not come home at all.’ The argument was unanswerable, and I set to afresh.” Soon after this, the father, who at last had become entirely imbecile, died; and the pension which he had received from Mr. Salt, the old bencher, ceased. The aunt, who had been taken for a short time to the house of a rich relation, but had been sent back, also died in the following month. “My poor old aunt” (Charles writes), “who was the kindest creature to me when I was at school, and used to bring me good things; when I, school-boy like, used to be ashamed to see her come, and open her apron, and bring out her basin with some nice thing which she had saved for me—the good old creature is now lying on her death-bed. She says, poor thing, she is glad she has come home to die with me. I was always her favourite.” Thus Charles was left to his
own poor resources (scarcely, if at all, exceeding £100 a year); and these remained very small for some considerable time. His writings were not calculated to attract immediate popularity, and the increase of his salary at the India House was slow. Even in 1809 (November), almost fifteen years later, the addition of Twenty pounds a year, which comes to him on the resignation of a clerk in the India House, is very important, and is the subject of a joyful remark by his sister Mary.

The impression made, in the first instance, on Charles Lamb, by the terrible death of his mother, cannot be explained in any condensed manner. His mind, short of insanity, seems to have been utterly upset. He had been fond of poetry to excess; almost all his leisure hours seemed to have been devoted to the books of poets and religious writers; to the composition of poetry; and to criticizing various writers in verse. But afterwards, in his distress, he requests Coleridge to "mention nothing of poetry. I have destroyed every vestige of past vanities of that kind. Never send me a book, I charge you. I am wedded" (he adds) "to the fortunes of my sister and my poor old father."

At another time he writes, "On the dreadful day I preserved a tranquillity, not of despair." Some persons coming into the "house of misery," and persuading him to take some food, he says, "In an agony of emotion, I found my way mechanically into the adjoining room, and fell on my knees by the side of her coffin, asking forgiveness of Heaven, and sometimes of her, for forgetting her so soon."

A few days later, he says to his friend, "You are the only correspondent, and, I might add, the only friend I have in the world. I go nowhere and see no acquaintance." At this time, he gave away all
Coleridge's letters; burned all his own poetry; all the numerous poetical extracts he had made; and the little journal of "My foolish passion, which I had a long time kept." Subsequently, when he becomes better, he writes again to his friend, "Correspondence with you has roused me a little from my lethargy, and made me conscious of my existence."

Charles was now entirely alone with his sister. She was the only object between him and God: and out of this misery and desolation sprang that wonderful love between brother and sister, which has no parallel in history. Neither would allow any stranger to partake of the close affection that seemed to be solely the other's right. Doubts have existed whether Charles Lamb ever gave up for the sake of Mary the one real attachment of his youth. It has been considered somewhat probable that Alice W. was an imaginary being; some Celia or Campaspe or Lindamira; that she was in effect one of those visions which float over us when we escape from childhood. But it may have been a real love, driven deeper into the heart, and torn out for another love, more holy and as pure: for he was capable of a grand sacrifice. No one will perhaps ever ascertain the truth precisely. It must remain undiscovered—magnified by the mist of uncertainty—like those Hesperian Gardens which inspired the verses of poets, but are still surrounded by fable. For my own part, I am persuaded that the attachment was real. He says that his sister would often "lend an ear to his desponding love sick lay." After he himself had been in a lunatic asylum, he writes to Coleridge, that his "head ran upon him, in his madness, as much almost as on another person, who was the more immediate cause of my
frenzy." Later in the year, he burned the "little journal of his foolish passion;" and when writing to his friend on the subject of his love sonnets, he says, "It is a passion of which I retain nothing." It is clear, I think, that it was love for a real person, however transient it may have been. But the fact, whether true or false, is inexpressibly unimportant. It could not add to his stature: it could not diminish it. His whole life is acted; and in it are numerous other things which substantially raise and honour him. The ashes (if ashes there were) are cold. His struggles and pains, and hopes and visions are over. All lie, diffused, intermingled in that vast Space which has No Name; like the winds and light of yesterday, which came and gave pleasure for a moment, and now have changed and left us, for ever.

In contrast with this apocryphal attachment, stands out his deep and unalterable love for his sister Mary. "God love her," he says; "may we two never love each other less." They never did. Their affection continued throughout life, without interruption; without a cloud, except such as rose from the fluctuations of her health. It is said that a woman rises or falls with the arm on which she leans. In this case, Mary Lamb at all times had a safe support; an arm that never shook nor wavered, but kept its elevation, faithful and firm throughout life.

It is difficult to explain fully the great love of Charles for his sister, except in his own words. Whenever her name occurs in the correspondence, the tone is always the same; always tender; without abatement, without change. "I am a fool" (he writes) "bereft of her co-operation. I am used to look up to her, in the least and biggest perplexi-
ties. To say all that I find her would be more than I think anybody could possibly understand. She is older, wiser, and better than I am; and all my wretched imperfections I cover to myself, by resolutely thinking on her goodness. She would share life and death with me.” This (to anticipate) was written in 1805, when she was suffering from one of her attacks of illness. After she became better he became better also; and opened his heart to the pleasures and objects around him. It was open at all times to want and sickness and wretchedness; and generally to the friendly voices and homely realities that rose up and surrounded him in his daily walk through life.

During all his years he was encircled by groups of loving friends. There were no others habitually round him. It is reported of some person that he had not merit enough to create a foe. In Lamb’s case, I suppose, he did not possess that peculiar merit: for he lived and died without an enemy.
CHAPTER III.


AFTER the pain arising from the deaths of his parents had somewhat subsided, and his sorrow, exhausting itself in the usual manner, had given way to calm, the story of Lamb becomes mainly an account of his intercourse with society. He was surrounded, during his somewhat monotonous career, by affectionate and admiring friends, who helped to bring out his rare qualities,—who stimulated his genius, and who are in fact interwoven with his own history. One of the earliest of these was his schoolfellow, James (familiarly Jem) White. This youth, who at the beginning of this period was his most frequent companion, had great cleverness and abundant animal spirits, under the influence of which he had produced a small volume, entitled "Original Letters of Sir John Falstaff and his Friends." These letters were ingenious imitations of the style and tone of thought of the celebrated Shakesperian knight and his familiars. Beyond this merit they are not perhaps sufficiently full of that enduring
matter which is intended for posterity. Nevertheless they contain some good and a few excellent things. The letters of Davy (Justice Shallow's servant) giving an account to his master of the death of poor Abram Slender is very touching. Slender dies from mere love of sweet Ann Page; "Master Abram is dead; gone, your worship. A' sang his soul and body quite away. A' turned like the latter end of a lover's lute." White's book was published in 1796; and one of the early copies was sold at the Roxburgh sale for five guineas. Is it possible that the imitations could have been mistaken for originals? Afterwards, the little book could be picked up for eighteenpence; even for sixpence. It was always a great favourite with Lamb. He reviewed it, after White's death, in the Examiner. Lamb's friendship and sympathy in taste with White induced him to attach greater value to this book than it was perhaps strictly entitled to; he even passes some commendation on the frontispiece; which is undoubtedly a very poor specimen of art. It is remarkable how Lamb, who was able to enter so completely into Hogarth's sterling humour, could ever have placed any value upon this counterfeit coin.

But Lamb had a great regard for Jem White. They had been boys together, schoolfellows in Christ's Hospital; and these very early friendships seldom undergo any severe critical tests. At all events, Lamb thought highly of White's book, which he used often to purchase and give away to his friends, in justification of his own taste and to extend the fame of the author. The copy which he gave me I have still. White, it seems, after leaving Christ's Hospital as a scholar, took some office there; but eventually left it and became an
agent for newspapers. In one of the Elia essays "The Praise of Chimney Sweepers," Lamb has set forth some of the merits of his old friend. Undoubtedly Jem White must have been a thoroughly kind-hearted man, since he could give a dinner every year, on St. Bartholomew's day, to the little chimney-sweepers of London; waiting on them, and cheering them up with his jokes and lively talk; creating at least one happy day annually in each of their poor lives. At the date of the essay (May, 1822), he had died. In Lamb's words "James White is extinct; and with him the suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died—of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield departed for ever."

The great friend and mentor, however, of Charles Lamb's youth, was (as has frequently been asserted) Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who was a philosopher, and who was considered, almost universally, to be the greater genius of the two. It may be so; and there is little doubt that, in mere capacity, in the power of accumulating and disbursing ideas, and in the extent and variety of his knowledge, he exceeded Lamb and also most of his other cotemporaries; but the mind of Lamb was quite as original, and more compact. The two friends were very dissimilar; the one wandering amongst lofty ill-defined objects; whilst the other "clung to the realities of life." It is fortunately not necessary to enter into any comparative estimate of these two remarkable persons. Each had his positive qualities and peculiarities, by which he was distinguishable from other men; and by these he
may therefore be separately and more safely judged.

In his mature age (when I knew him) Coleridge had a full round face, a fine broad forehead, rather thick lips, and strange dreamy eyes, which were often lighted up by eagerness, but wanted concentration, and were adapted apparently for musing or speculation, rather than for precise or rapid judgment. Yet he was very shrewd as well as eloquent; was (slightly) addicted to jesting; and would talk "at sight" upon any subject with extreme fluency and much knowledge. "His white hair," in Lamb's words, "shrouded a capacious brain." Coleridge had browsed and expatiated over all the rich regions of literature, at home and abroad. In youth his studies had, in the first instance, been mainly in theology, he having selected the "Church" for his profession. Although he was educated in the creed and rites of the Church of England, he became for a time an Unitarian preacher, and scattered his eloquent words over many human audiences. He was fond of questions of logic, and of explaining his systems and opinions by means of diagrams; but his projects were seldom consummated; and his talk (sometimes) and his prose writing (often) were tedious and diffuse. His "Christabel," from which he derived much of his fame, remained, after a lapse of more than thirty years, incomplete at his death. He gained much reputation from the "Ancient Mariner" (which is perhaps his best poem), but his translation of Schiller's "Wallenstein" is the only achievement that shows him capable of a great prolonged effort. Lamb used to boast that he supplied one line to his friend in the fourth scene of that tragedy, where the description of the Pagan deities occurs.
In speaking of Saturn, he is figured as "an old man melancholy." "That was my line," Lamb would say, exultingly. I forget how it was originally written, except that it had not the extra (or eleventh) syllable, which it now possesses.

There is some beautiful writing in this fourth scene, which may be read after Mr. Wordsworth's equally beautiful reference to the Olympian gods and goddesses, in the fourth book of the "Exursion," entitled "Despondency Corrected." The last explains more completely than the other the attributes of the deities specially named.

The most elaborate (perhaps impartial) sketches of Coleridge—his great talents, combined with his great weaknesses—may be found in Hazlitt's Essays, "The Spirit of the Age" and "My First Acquaintance with Poets;" and in the eighth chapter of Mr. Carlyle's "Life of John Sterling."

In Lamb's letters it is easy to perceive that the writer soon became aware of the foibles of his friend. "Cultivate simplicity, Coleridge," is his admonition as early as 1796. In another place his remark is, "You have been straining your faculties to bring together things infinitely distant and unlike." Again, "I grieve from my very soul to observe you in your plans of life veering about from this hope to the other and settling nowhere." Robert Southey, whose prose style was the perfection of neatness, and who was intimate with Coleridge throughout his life, laments that it is "extraordinary that he should write in so rambling and inconclusive a manner;" his mind, which was undoubtedly very pliable and subtle, "turning and winding, till you get weary of following his mazy movements."

Charles Lamb, however, always sincerely admired and loved his old schoolfellow, and grieved
deeply when he died. The recollection of this event, which happened many years afterwards (in 1834), never left Lamb until his own death; he used perpetually to exclaim, "Coleridge is dead, Coleridge is dead," in a low, musing, meditative voice. These exclamations (addressed to no one) were, as Lamb was a most unaffected man, assuredly involuntary, and showed that he could not get rid of the melancholy truth. At this distance of time, many persons (judging by what he has left behind him), wondered at the extent of admiration which possessed some of Coleridge's contemporaries: Charles Lamb accorded to his genius something scarcely short of absolute worship: Robert Southey considered his capacity as exceeding that of almost all other writers; and Leigh Hunt, speaking of Coleridge's personal appearance, says "he had a mighty intellect put upon a sensual body." Persons who were intimate with both have suggested that even Wordsworth was indebted to him for some of his philosophy. As late as 1818 Lamb, when dedicating his works to him, says that Coleridge "first kindled in him if not the power the love of poetry and beauty and kindness." He must be judged, however, by what he has actually done.

I am not here as the valuer of Coleridge's merits. I have no pretensions and no desire to assume so delicate an office. His dreams and intentions were undoubtedly good, and, had he been able to carry them out for the benefit of the world, would have entitled himself to the name of a great poet, a great genius. His readiness to discuss all subjects, and his ability to talk on most of them with ease, were marvellous. But he was always infirm of purpose, and never did justice to his own capacity. Amongst other men of talent who have sung Cole-
ridge's praises should be named Hazlitt, who knew him in 1798, and has enshrined him in the first of his charming papers, entitled "Winterslow Essays." Hazlitt admits his feebleness of purpose; but speaks of his genius, shining upon his own (then) dumb inarticulate nature, as the sun "upon the puddles of the road." Coleridge at that time was an Unitarian minister, and had come to preach, instead of the minister for the time being, at Shrewsbury. Hazlitt rose before daylight (it was in January) and walked from Wem to Shrewsbury, a distance of ten miles, to hear the "celebrated" man, who combined the inspirations of poet and preacher in one person, enlighten a Shropshire congregation. "Never, the longest day I have to live" (says he), "shall I have such another walk as this cold raw comfortless one, in the winter of 1798. When I got there [to the Chapel], the organ was playing the 100th Psalm, and when it was done, Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text,—

'And he went up into the mountain to pray, HIMSELF ALONE.' The preacher then launched into his subject, like an eagle dallying with the wind," &c. Coleridge was at that time only five and twenty years of age; yet he seems even then to have been able to decide on many writers in logic and rhetoric, philosophy and poetry. Of course, he was familiar with the works of his friend Wordsworth; of whom he cleverly observed, in reply to the depreciating opinion of Mackintosh, "He strides on so far before you, that he dwindles in the distance."

It would be very interesting, were it practicable, 1 The most convincing evidence of Coleridge's powers is to be found in his Table Talk. It appears from it that he was ready to discuss (almost) any subject; and that he was capable of talking ably upon most, and cleverly upon all.
to trace with certainty the sources that supplied Charles Lamb’s inspiration. But this must always be impossible. For inspiration, in all cases, proceeds from many sources, although there may be one influence predominating. It is clear that a great Tragedy mainly determined his conduct through life, and operated therefore materially on his thoughts as well as actions. The terrible death of his mother concentrated and strengthened his mind, and prevented its dissipation into trifling and ignoble thoughts. The regularity of the India House labour upheld him. The extent and character of his acquaintance also helped to determine the quality of the things which he produced. Had he seen less, his mind might have become warped and rigid, as from want of space. Had he seen too much, his thoughts might have been split and exhausted upon too many points,—and would thus have been so perplexed and harassed that the value of his productions now known and current through all classes might scarcely have exceeded a negative quantity. Then, in his companions he must be accounted fortunate. Coleridge helped to unloose his mind from too precise notions: Southey gave it consistency and correctness: Manning expanded his vision: Hazlitt gave him daring: perhaps even poor George Dyer, like some unrecognized virtue, may have kept alive and nourished the pity and tenderness which were originally sown within him. We must leave the difficulty as we must leave the great problems of Nature, unexplained; and be content with what is self-evident before us. We know, at all events, that he had an open heart, and that the heart is a fountain which never fails.

The earliest productions of Lamb which have come down to us, namely verses, and criticism and
letters, are all in a grave and thoughtful tone. The letters, at first, are on melancholy subjects, but afterwards stray into criticism or into details of his readings, or an account of his predilections for books and authors. At one or two and twenty he had read and formed opinions on Shakespeare, on Beaumont and Fletcher, on Massinger, Milton, Cowley, Izaac Walton, Burns, Collins, and others; some of these, be it observed, lying much out of the ordinary course of a young man's reading. He was also acquainted with the writings of Priestley and Wesley and Jonathan Edwards; for the first of whom he entertained the deepest respect.

Lamb's verses were always good, steady, and firm, and void of those magniloquent commonplaces which so clearly betray the immature writer. They were at no time misty nor inconsequent; but contained proof that he had reasoned out his idea. From the age of twenty-one to the age of fifty-nine, when he died, he hated fine words and flourishes of rhetoric. His imagination (not very lofty perhaps) is to be discovered less in his verse than in his prose humour, than in his letters and essays. In these it was never trivial; but was always knit together by good sense, or softened by tenderness. Real humour seldom makes its appearance in the first literary ventures of young writers. Accordingly, symptoms of humour (which nevertheless were not long delayed) are not to be discovered in Charles Lamb's first letters or poems; the latter, when prepared for publication in 1796, being especially grave. They are entitled "Poems by Charles Lamb of the India House," and are inscribed to "Mary Anne Lamb, the author's best friend and sister." After some procrastination, the book containing them was published in 1797, conjointly
with other verses by Coleridge and Charles Lloyd. "We came into our first battle" (Charles says in his dedication to Coleridge, in 1818), "under cover of the greater Ajax." In this volume, Lloyd's verses took precedence of Lamb's, at Coleridge's suggestion. This suggestion, the reason of which is not very obvious, was very readily acceded to; Lamb having a sincere regard for Lloyd, who (with a fine reasoning mind) was subject to that sad mental disease, which was common to both their families. Lamb has addressed some verses to Lloyd at this date, which indicate the great respect he felt towards his friend's intellect:

I'll think less meanly of myself,  
That Lloyd will sometimes think of me

This joint volume was published without much success. In the same year Lamb and his sister paid a visit to Coleridge then living at Stowey, in Somersetshire; after which Coleridge, for what purpose does not very clearly appear, migrated to Germany. This happened in the year 1798.

Charles Lloyd, one of the triumvirate of 1797, was the son of a banker at Birmingham. He was educated as a Quaker, but seceded from that body, and afterwards became "perplexed in mind," and very desponding. He often took up his residence in London, but did not mingle much with society. An extreme melancholy darkened his latter days; and, as I believe, he died insane. He published various poems, and translated, from the Italian into English blank verse, the tragedies of Alfieri. His poems are distinguished rather by a remarkable power of intellectual analysis than by the delicacy or fervour of the verse.

The last time I saw Charles Lloyd was in com-
pany with Hazlitt. We heard that he had taken lodgings at a working brazier’s shop, in Fetter-lane, and we visited him there and found him in bed, much depressed, but very willing to discuss certain problems with Hazlitt, who carried on the greater part of the conversation. We understood that he had selected these noisy apartments, in order that they might distract his mind from the fears and melancholy thoughts which at that time distressed him.

It was soon after the publication of the joint volume that Charles chronicles the different tastes of himself and his friend. “Burns,” he says, “is the god of my idolatry, as Bowles of yours.” Posterity has universally joined in the preference of Lamb. Burns, indeed, was always one of his greatest favourites. He admired and sometimes quoted a line or two from the last stanza of the “Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn,” “The bridegroom may forget his bride,” &c.; and I have more than once heard him repeat, in a fond tender voice, when the subject of poets or poetry came under discussion, the following beautiful lines from the Epistle to Simpson of Ochiltree.

The Muse, nae poet ever fand her,
Till by himsel he learn’d to wander,
Adown some trotting burn’s meander
An’ no think’t lang.

These he would press upon the attention of any one present (chanting them aloud), and would bring down the volume of Burns, and open it, in order that the page might be impressed on the hearer’s memory. Sometimes—in a way scarcely discernible—he would kiss the volume; as he would also a book by Chapman or Sir Philip Sidney, or any other which he particularly valued.
I have seen him read out a passage from the Holy Dying and the Urn Burial, and express in the same way his devotion and gratitude.

Lamb had been brought up an Unitarian, but he appears to have been occasionally fluctuating in a matter as to which boys are not apt to entertain very rigid opinions. At one time he longed to be with superior thinkers. "I am always longing to be with men more excellent than myself," are his words. At another time he writes, "I have had thoughts of turning Quaker, lately." A visit, however, to one of the Quaker meetings in 1797, decides him against such conversion: "This cured me of Quakerism. I love it in the books of Penn and Woolmar; but I detest the vanity of man, thinking he speaks by the Spirit." A similar story is told of Coleridge. Mr. Justice Coleridge's statement is, "He told us a humorous story of his enthusiastic fondness for Quakers, when at Cambridge, and his attending one of their meetings, which had entirely cured him."

In 1797 Charles Lamb (who had been introduced to Southey by Coleridge two years previously) accompanied Lloyd to a little village near Christchurch in Hampshire, where Southey was at that time reading. This little holiday (of a fortnight) seems to have converted the acquaintance-ship between Southey and Lamb into something like intimacy. He then paid another visit (which he had long meditated) to Coleridge, who was residing at Stowey. It must have been shortly after this first visit (for Lamb went again to Stowey, and met Wordsworth there in 1801), that Coleridge undertook the office of minister to an Unitarian congregation at Shrewsbury, and preached there, as detailed by Hazlitt in the manner already set
forth. In 1798 he took his departure for Germany, and this led to a familiar correspondence between Lamb and Southey. The opening of Lamb’s humour may probably be referred to this friendship with a congenial humorist, and one like himself, taking a strong interest in worldly matters. Coleridge, between whom and Lamb there was not much similarity of feeling, beyond their common love for poetry and religious writings, was absent, and Lamb was enticed by the kindred spirit of Southey into the accessible regions of humour. These two friends never arrived at that close friendship which had been forming between Coleridge and Lamb ever since their school-days at Christ’s Hospital. But they interchanged ideas on poetical and humorous topics, and did not perplex themselves with anything speculative or transcendental. The first letter to Southey, which has been preserved (July, 1798), announces that Lamb is ready to enter into any jocose contest. It includes a list of queries to be defended by Coleridge at Leipsic or Gottingen; the first of which was, “Whether God loves a lying angel better than a true man?” Some of these queries, in all probability, had relation to Coleridge’s own infirmities: at all events, they were sent over to him in reply to the benediction which he had thought proper to bequeath to Charles on leaving England. “Poor Lamb, if he wants any knowledge he may apply to me.” I must believe that this message was jocose, otherwise it would have been insolent in the extreme degree. Coleridge’s answers to the queries above adverted to are not known; I believe that the proffered knowledge was not afforded so readily as it was demanded.— It has been surmised that there was some interrup-
tion of the good feeling between Coleridge and Lamb about this period of their lives; but I cannot discern this in the letters that occurred between the two schoolfellows. The message of Coleridge, and the questions in reply, occur in 1798; and in May, 1800, there is a letter from Lamb to Coleridge, and subsequently two others, in the same year, all couched in the old customary, friendly tone. In addition to this, Charles Lamb, many years afterwards, said that there had been an uninterrupted friendship of fifty years between them. In one letter of Lamb's, indeed (17th March, 1800), it appears that his early notions of Coleridge being a "very good man" had been traversed by some doubts; but these "foolish impressions" were shortlived, and did not apparently form any check to the continuance of their lifelong friendship.

It is clear that Lamb's judgment was at this time becoming independent. In one of his letters to Coleridge, when comparing his friend's merits with those of Southey, he says, "Southey has no pretensions to vie with you in the sublime of poetry, but he tells a plain story better." Even to Southey he is equally candid. Writing to him on the subject of a volume of poems which he had lately published, he remarks, "The Rose is the only insipid poem in the volume; it has neither thorns nor sweetness."

In 1798 or 1799, Lamb contributed to the Annual Anthology (which Mr. Cottle, a bookseller of Bristol, published,) jointly with Coleridge and Southey. In 1800 he was introduced by Coleridge to Godwin. It is clear that Charles's intimacy with Coleridge, and Southey, and Lloyd, was not productive of unmitigated pleasure. For the 'Anti-
jacobin' made its appearance about this time, and denounced them all in a manner which in the present day would itself be denounced as infamous. Some of these gentlemen (Lamb's friends), in common with many others, augured at first favourably of the actors in the great French Revolution, and this had excited much displeasure in the Tory ranks. Accordingly they were represented as being guilty of blasphemy and slander, and as being adorers of a certain French revolutionist, named Lepaux; of whom Lamb at all events was entirely ignorant. They were, moreover, the subject of a caricature by Gilray, in which Lamb and Lloyd were portrayed as toad and frog. I cannot think with Sir T. Talfourd, that all these libels were excusable, on the ground of the "sportive wit" of the offending parties. Lamb's writings had no reference whatever to political subjects; they were, on the contrary, as the first writings of a young man generally are, serious,—even religious. Referring to Coleridge, it is stated that he "was dishonoured at Cambridge for preaching Deism, and that he had since left his native country, and left his poor children fatherless, and his wife destitute:"

ex his disce his friends Lamb and Southey.

A scurrilous libel of this stamp would now be rejected by all persons of good feeling or good character. It would be spurned by a decent publication, or if published would be consigned to the justice of a jury.

The little story of Rosamond Gray was wrought out of the artist's brain in the year 1798, stimulated, as Lamb confesses, by the old ballad of "An old woman clothed in gray," which he had been reading. It is defective as a regular tale. It wants circumstance and probability, and is slenderly
provided with character. There is moreover no construction in the narrative, and little or no progress in the events. Yet it is very daintily told. The mind of the author wells out in the purest streams. Having to deal with one foul incident, the tale is nevertheless without speck or blemish. A virgin nymph, born of a lily, could not have unfolded her thoughts more delicately. And, in spite of its improbability, Rosamond Gray is very pathetic. It touches the sensitive points in young hearts; and it was by no means without success; the author's first success. It sold much better than his poems, and added "a few pounds" to his slender income.

George Dyer, once a pupil in Christ's Hospital, possessing a good reputation as a classical scholar, and who had preceded Lamb in the school, about this time came into the circle of his familiars. Dyer was one of the simplest and most inoffensive men in the world; in his heart there existed nothing but what was altogether pure and unsophisticated. He seemed never to have outgrown the innocence of childhood; or rather he appeared to be without those germs or first principles of evil which sometimes begin to show themselves even in childhood itself. He was not only without any of the dark passions himself, but he would not perceive them in others. He looked only on the sunshine. Hazlitt, speaking of him in his "Conversation of Authors," says, "He lives amongst the old authors, if he does not enter much into their spirit. He handles the covers, and turns over the pages, and is familiar with the names and dates. He is busy and self-involved. He hangs like a film and cobweb upon letters, or is like the dust upon the outside of knowledge, which should not too rudely
be brushed aside. He follows learning as its shadow, but as such he is respectable. He browses on the husks and leaves of books.” And Lamb says, “The Gods, by denying him the very faculty of discrimination, have effectually cut off every seed of envy in his bosom.”

Dyer was very thin and short in person, and was extremely near-sighted; and his motions were often (apparently) spasmodic. His means of living were very scanty; he subsisted mainly by supervising the press, being employed for that purpose by booksellers when they were printing Greek or Latin books. He dwelt in Clifford’s Inn, “like a dove in an asp’s nest,” as Charles Lamb wittily says; and he might often have been seen with a classical volume in his hand, and another in his pocket, walking slowly along Fleet Street or its neighbourhood, unconscious of gazers; cogitating over some sentence, the correctness of which it was his duty to determine. You might meet him murmuring to himself in a low voice, and apparently tasting the flavour of the words. Dyer’s knowledge of the drama (which formed part of the subject of his first publication), may be guessed, by his having read Shakespeare, “an irregular genius,” and having dipped into Rowe and Otway; but never having heard of any other writers in that class. In absence of mind, he probably exceeded every other living man. Lamb has set forth one instance (which I know to be a fact) of Dyer’s forgetfulness, in his “Oxford in the Vacation;” and to this various others might be added, such as his emptying his snuff-box into the teapot when he was preparing breakfast for a hungry friend, &c. But it is scarcely worth while to chronicle minutely the harmless foibles of this inoffensive old man. If
I had to write his epitaph I should say that he was neither much respected nor at all hated; too good to dislike, too inactive to excite great affection; and that he was as simple as the daisy, which we think we admire, and daily tread under foot.

In 1799 Charles Lamb visited Cambridge, and there, through the introduction of Lloyd, made the important acquaintance of Mr. Thomas Manning, then a mathematical tutor in the university. This soon grew into a close intimacy. Charles readily perceived the intellectual value of Manning; and seems to have eagerly sought his friendship, which, he says (December, 1799), will render the prospect of the approaching century very pleasant. "That century must needs commence auspiciously for me" (he adds) "that brings with it Manning's friendship as an earnest of its after gifts." At first sight it appears strange that there should be formed a close friendship between a youth, a beginner or student in poetry (no more), and a professor of science at one of our great seats of learning. But these men had, I suppose, an intuitive perception of each other's excellences. And there sometimes lie behind the outer projections of character a thousand concealed shades which readily intermingle with those of other people. There were amongst Lamb's tender thoughts, and Manning's mathematical tendencies, certain neutral qualities which assimilated with each other, and which eventually served to cement that union between them which continued unshaken during the lives of both. Lamb's correspondence assumed more character, and showed more critical quality, after the intimacy with Manning began. His acquaintance with Southey, in the first instance, had the effect of increasing
the activity of his mind. Previously to that time, his letters had consisted chiefly of witticisms (clever, indeed, but not of surpassing quality), religious thoughts, reminiscences, &c., for the most part unadorned and simple. Afterwards, especially after the Manning era, they exhibit far greater weight of meaning, more fecundity, original thoughts, and brilliant allusions; as if the imagination had begun to awaken and enrich the understanding. Manning's solid, scientific mind had, without doubt, the effect of arousing the sleeping vigour of Lamb's intellect.

A long correspondence took place between them. At first Lamb sent Manning his opinions only; "opinion is a species of property that I am always desirous of sharing with my friends." Then he communicates the fact that George Dyer, "that good-natured poet, is now more than nine months gone with twin volumes of odes." Afterwards he tells him that he is reading Burnet's History of his Own Times; "full of scandal, as all true history is." On Manning quitting England for China (1806), the letters become less frequent; they continue, however, during his absence; one of them, surpassing the Elia essay, to "Distant Correspondents," is very remarkable; and when the Chinese traveller returned to London, he was very often a guest at Lamb's residence. I have repeatedly met him there. His countenance was that of an intelligent, steady, almost serious man. His journey to the celestial empire had not been unfruitful of good; his talk at all times being full of curious information, including much anecdote, and some (not common) speculations on men and things. When he returned, he brought with him a native of China, whom he took one evening
to a ball in London; where the foreigner from Shanghai, or Pekin, enquired with much naïveté as to the amount of money which his host had given to the dancers for their evening's performance, and was persuaded with difficulty that their exertions were entirely gratuitous. Manning had a curious habit of bringing with him (in his waistcoat pocket) some pods of the red pepper, whenever he expected to partake of a meal. His original intention (as I understood) when he set out for China, was to frame and publish a Chinese and English dictionary; yet—although he brought over much material for the purpose—his purpose was never carried into effect. Lamb had great love and admiration for him. In a letter to Coleridge, in after years (1826), he says, "I am glad you esteem Manning; though you see but his husk or shrine. He discloses not, save to select worshippers; and will leave the world without any one hardly but me knowing how stupendous a creature he is."

During these years Lamb's correspondence with Coleridge, Wordsworth, Walter Wilson, and Manning (principally with Manning) goes on. It is sometimes critical, sometimes jocose. He discusses the merits of various authors, and more than once expresses his extreme distaste for didactic writing. Now, he says, it is too directly instructive. Then he complains that the knowledge, insignificant and vapid as it is, must come in the shape of knowledge. He could not obtain at Newberry's shop any of the old "classics of the Nursery," he says; whilst "Mrs. Barbauld's and Mrs. Trimmer's nonsense lay in piles about." His own domestic affairs struggle on as usual; at one time calm and pleasant; at another time troubled and uncomfortable; owing to the frequent recurrence of his sister's
Charles Lamb. 

malady. In general he bore these changes with fortitude; I do not observe more than one occasion on which (being then himself ill) his firmness seemed altogether to give way. In 1798, indeed, he had said, “I consider her perpetually on the brink of madness.” But in May, 1800, his old servant Hetty having died, and Mary (sooner than usual) falling ill again, Charles was obliged to remove her to an asylum; and was left in the house alone with Hetty’s dead body. “My heart is quite sick” (he cries), “and I don’t know where to look for relief. My head is very bad. I almost wish that Mary were dead.” This was the one solitary cry of anguish that he uttered, during his long years of anxiety and suffering. At all other times he bowed his head in silence, uncomplaining.

Charles Lamb, with his sister, left Little Queen Street, on or before 1800; in which year he seems to have migrated, first to Chapel Street, Pentonville; next to Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane; and finally to No. 16, Mitre Court Buildings, in the Temple, “a pistol shot off Baron Masere’s;” and here he resided for about nine years.

It was during his stay at Pentonville that he “fell in love,” with a young Quaker, called Hester Savory. As (he confesses) “I have never spoken to her during my life,” it may be safely concluded that the attachment was essentially Platonic. This was the young girl who inspired those verses, now so widely known and admired. I remember them as being the first lines which I ever saw of Charles Lamb’s writing. I remember and admire them still; for their natural unaffected style; no pretence, no straining for images and fancies flying too high above the subject; but deal-
ing with thoughts that were near his affections, in a fit and natural manner. The conclusion of the poem, composed and sent after her death (in February, 1803) to Manning, who was then in Paris, is very sad and tender:—

My sprightly neighbour, gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet, as heretofore,
Some summer morning?

When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that will not go away,
* A sweet forewarning.
CHAPTER IV.


It is not always easy to fix Charles Lamb's doings (writings or migrations) to any precise date. The year may generally be ascertained; but the day or month is often a matter of surmise only. Even the dates of the letters are often derived from the post-marks, or are sometimes conjectured from circumstances.¹

¹ As Lamb's changes of residence were frequent, it may be convenient to chronicle them in order, in this place, although the precise date of his moving from one to another can scarcely be specified in a single instance. 1775, Charles Lamb, born in Crown Office Row, Temple. 1795, lives at No. 7, Little Queen Street, Holborn. 1800 (early), lives at No. 45, Chapel Street, Pentonville. Same year, lives in Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane. Same year, removes to No. 16, Mitre Court Buildings, Temple. 1809, removes to No. 4, Inner Temple Lane. 1817, removes to Russell Street, Covent Garden. 1823, removes to Colebrook Row, Islington. 1826, removes to Enfield. 1829, removes into lodgings, in Enfield. 1830, lodges in Southampton Buildings. 1833, lives at Mrs. Walden's, in Church Street, Edmonton; where he dies on 27th December, 1834.
Occasionally the labours of a drama or of lyric poems traverse several years, and are not to be referred to any one definite period. Thus "John Woodvil" (his tragedy) was begun in 1799, printed in 1800, and submitted to Mr. Kemble (then manager of Drury Lane Theatre) in the Christmas of that year; but was not published until 1801.

After this tragedy had been in Mr. Kemble's hands for about a year, Lamb naturally became urgent to hear his decision upon it. Upon applying for this he found that his play was—lost! This was at once acknowledged, and a "courteous request made for another copy, if I had one by me." Luckily, another copy existed. The "first runnings" of a genius were not therefore altogether lost, by having been cast, without a care, into the dusty limbo of the theatre. The other copy was at once supplied, and the play very speedily rejected. It was afterwards facetiously brought forward in one of the early numbers of the "Edinburgh Review," and there noticed as a rude specimen of the earliest age of the drama, "older than Æschylus!" Lamb met these accidents of fortune manfully, and did not abstain from exercising his own Shandean humour thereon. It must be confessed that "John Woodvil" is not a tragedy likely to bring much success to a playhouse. It is such a drama as a young poet, full of love for the Elizabethan writers, and without any knowledge of the requisitions of the stage, would be likely to produce. There is no plot; little probability in the story; which itself is not very scientifically developed. There are some pretty lines, especially some which have often been the subject of quotation; but there is not much merit in the characters of the drama, with the exception of the heroine, who is a heroine of
the "purest water." Lamb's friend, Southey, in writing to a correspondent, pronounces the following opinion. "Lamb is printing his play, which will please you by the exquisite beauty of its poetry, and provoke you by the exquisite silliness of its story."

In October, 1799, Lamb went to see the remains of the old house (Gilston) in Hertfordshire, where his grandmother once lived, and the "old church where the bones of my honoured granddame lie." This visit was, in later years, recorded in the charming paper entitled "Blakesmoor in H—shire." He found that the house where he had spent his pleasant holidays, when a little boy, had been demolished; it was, in fact, taken down for the purpose of reconstruction; but out of the ruins he conjures up pleasant ghosts, whom he restores and brings before a younger generation. There are few of his papers in which the past years of his life are more delightfully revived. The house had been "reduced to an antiquity." But we go with him to the grass plat, where he used to read Cowley; to the tapestried bedrooms where the mythological people of Ovid used to stand forth, half alive; even to "that haunted bedroom in which old Sarah Battle died," and into which he "used to creep in a passion of fear." These things are all touched with a delicate pen; mixed and incorporated with tender reflections; for "The solitude of childhood" (as he says) "is not so much the mother of thought as the feeder of love." With him it was both.

Lamb became acquainted with Wordsworth when he visited Coleridge, in the summer of 1800. At that time his old schoolfellow lived at Stowey, and the greater poet was his neighbour. It is not satisfactorily shown in what manner the poetry of
Wordsworth first attracted the notice of Charles Lamb, nor its first effect upon him. Perhaps the verse of Coleridge was not a bad stepping-stone to that elevation which enabled Charles to look into the interior of Wordsworth's mind. The two poets were not unlike in some respects; although Coleridge seldom (except perhaps in the "Ancient Mariner") ventured into the plain downright phraseology of the other. It is very soon apparent, however, that Lamb was able to admit Wordsworth's great merits. In August, 1800 (just after the completion of his visit to Stowey), he writes, "I would pay five and forty thousand carriages," (parcel fares) "to read Wordsworth's tragedy. Pray give me an order on Longman for the 'Lyrical Ballads.'" And in October, 1800, the two authors must have been on familiar terms with each other; for in a letter addressed by Lamb to Wordsworth, "Dear Wordsworth," it appears that the latter had requested him to advance money for the purchase of books, to a considerable amount. This was at a time when Lamb was "not plethorically abounding in cash." The books required an outlay of eight pounds, and Lamb had not the sum then in his possession. "It is a scurvy thing" (he writes) "to cry give me the money first; and I am the first of the Lambs that has done this for many centuries." Shortly afterwards Lamb sent his play to Wordsworth, who (this was previous to 30 January, 1801) appears to have invited Charles to visit him in Cumberland. Our humorist did not accept this invitation, being doubtful whether he could "afford so desperate a journey," and being (he says) "not at all romance-bit about Nature;" the earth and sea and sky, being, "when all is said, but a house to live in."
It is not part of my task to adjust the claims of the various writers of verse in this country to their stations in the Temple of Fame. If Keats was by nature the most essentially a poet in the present century, there is little doubt that Wordsworth has left his impress more broadly and more permanently than any other of our later writers upon the literature of England. There are barren, unpeopled wastes in the "Excursion," and in some of the longer poems; but when his Genius stirs, we find ourselves in rich places which have no parallel in any book since the death of Milton. When his lyrical ballads first appeared, they encountered much opposition and some contempt. Readers had not for many years been accustomed to drink the waters of Helicon pure and undefiled; and Wordsworth (a prophet of the true faith) had to gird up his loins, march into the desert, and prepare for battle. He has, indeed, at last achieved a conquest; but a long course of time, although sure of eventual success, elapsed before he could boast of victory. The battle has been perilous. When the "Excursion" was published (in 1814) Lamb wrote a review of it for "The Quarterly Review." Whatever might have been the actual fitness of this performance, it seems to have been hacked to pieces; more than a third of the substance cut away; the warm expressions converted into cold ones; and (in Lamb's phrase) "the eyes pulled out and the bleeding sockets left." This mangling (or amendment, as I suppose it was considered) was the work of the late Mr. Gifford. Charles had a great admiration for Wordsworth. It was short of prostration, however. He states that the style of "Peter Bell" does not satisfy him: but "'Hartleap Well? is the tale for me," are his words in 1819.
I have a vivid recollection of Wordsworth, who was a very grave man, with strong features and a deep voice. I met him first at the chambers (they were in the Temple) of Mr. Henry Crabb Robinson, one of the most amiable of men. I was a young versifier, and Wordsworth was just emerging out of a cloud of ignorant contumely into the sunrise of his fame. He was fond (perhaps too fond) of reciting his own poetry before friends and strangers. I was not attracted by his manner, which was almost too solemn, but I was deeply impressed by some of the weighty notes in his voice, when he was delivering out his oracles. I forget whether it was "Dion" or the beautiful poem of "Laodamia" that he read; but I remembered the reading long afterwards, as one recollects the roll of the spent thunder.

I met Wordsworth occasionally afterwards at Charles Lamb’s, at Mr. Rogers’s, and elsewhere, and once he did me the honour to call upon me. I remember that he had a very gentle aspect when he looked at my children. He took the hand of my dear daughter (who died lately) in his hand, and spoke some words to her, the recollection of which, perhaps, helped, with other things, to incline her to poetry. Hazlitt says that Wordsworth’s face, notwithstanding his constitutional gravity, sometimes revealed indications of dry humour. And once, at a morning visit, I heard him give an account of his having breakfasted in company with Coleridge, and allowed him to expatiate to the extent of his lungs. "How could you permit him to go on and weary himself?" said Rogers; "why, you are to meet him at dinner this evening." "Yes," replied Wordsworth; "I know that very well; but we like to take the sting out of him beforehand."
About a year after Lamb's first knowledge of Manning, his small stock of friends was enlarged by the acquisition of Mr. John Rickman, one of the clerks of the House of Commons. "He is a most pleasant hand" (writes Lamb), "a fine rattling fellow, who has gone through life laughing at solemn apes; himself hugely literate, from matter of fact, to Xenophon and Plato: he can talk Greek with Porson, and nonsense with me." "He understands you" (he adds) "the first time. You never need speak twice to him. Fullest of matter, with least verbosity." A year or two afterwards, when Rickman went to Ireland, Lamb wrote to Manning:—"I have lost by his going what seems to me I never can recover—a finished man. I almost dare pronounce you never saw his equal. His memory will come to me as the brazen serpent to the Israelites." Robert Southey also, when writing to his brother (in 1804), says: "Coleridge and Rickman, with William Taylor, make my Trinity of living greatness." A voluminous correspondence took place between Southey and Rickman, ranging from 1800 to 1839, in the course of which a variety of important subjects—namely, History, Antiquities, Political Economy, Poor Law, and general Politics, were deliberately argued between them. From this it appears that Southey, whose reading was very extensive, must have had great trust in the knowledge and judgment of Rickman.

Lamb's acquaintance with Godwin, Holcroft, and Clarkson, was formed about this time. Godwin had been introduced to Lamb by Coleridge, in 1800. The first interview is made memorable by Godwin's opening question: "And pray, Mr. Lamb, are you toad or frog?" This inquiry having reference to Gilray's offensive caricature, did not
afford promise of a very cheerful intimacy. Lamb, however, who accorded great respect to Godwin's intellect, did not resent it; but received his approaches favourably, and indeed entertained him at breakfast the next morning. The acquaintance afterwards expanded into familiarity: but I never observed the appearance of any warm friendship between them. Godwin's precision and extreme coldness of manner (perhaps of disposition) prevented this; and Lamb was able, through all his admiration of the other's power, to discern those points in his character, which were obnoxious to his own. Some years previously, Charles had entertained much dislike to the philosopher's opinions, and referred to him as "that Godwin;" and afterwards, when eulogizing the quick and fine intellect of Rickman, he says, "He does not want explanation, translations, limitations, as Godwin does, when you make an assertion." When Godwin published his "Essay on Sepulchres," wherein he professed to erect a wooden slab and a white cross, to be perpetually renewed to the end of time ("to survive the fall of empires," as Miss Lamb says), in order to distinguish the site of every great man's grave, Lamb speaks of the project in these terms: "Godwin has written a pretty absurd book about Sepulchres. He was affronted, because I told him that it was better than Hervey, but not so good as Sir Thomas Browne." Sufficient intimacy, however, had arisen between them to induce Lamb to write a facetious epilogue to Godwin's tragedy of "Antonio; or, the Soldier's Return." This came out in 1800, and was very speedily damned; although Lamb said that "it had one fine line;" which indeed he repeated occasionally. Godwin bore this failure, it must be admitted, without being
depressed by it, although he was a very poor man, and although he was "£500 ideal money out of pocket by the failure."

In 1802, Lamb visited Coleridge, who was then living near Keswick, in Cumberland. For the first time in his life, he beheld lakes and mountains; and the effect upon him was startling and unexpected. It was much like the impression made by the first sight of the Alps upon Leigh Hunt, who had theretofore always maintained that those merely great heaps of earth ought to have no effect upon a properly constituted mind; but he freely confessed afterwards, that he had been mistaken. Lamb had been more than once invited to visit the romantic Lake country. He had no desire to inspect the Ural chain, where the malachite is hidden, nor the silver regions of Potosi; but he was all at once affected by a desire of "visiting remote regions." It was a sudden irritability, which could only be quieted by travel. Charles and his sister therefore went, without giving any notice to Coleridge, who, however, received them very kindly, and gave up all his time in order to show them the wonders of the neighbourhood. The visitors arrived there in a "gorgeous sunset" (the only one that Lamb saw during his stay in the country), and thought that they had got "into fairy land." "We entered Coleridge's study" (he writes to Manning, shortly afterwards) "just in the dusk, when the mountains were all dark. Such an impression I never received from objects of sight, nor do I suppose I ever can again. Glorious creatures, Skiddaw, &c. I shall never forget how ye lay about that night, like an entrenchment; gone to bed, as it seemed, for the night."

They went to Coleridge's House, in which "he
had a large antique, ill-shaped room, with an old organ, never played upon, an Eolian harp, and shelves of scattered folios;” and remained there three weeks, visiting Wordsworth’s Cottage, he himself being absent, and meeting the Clarksons (“good, hospitable people”). They tarried there one night, and met Lloyd. They clambered up to the top of Skiddaw, “and went to Grasmere, Ambleside, Ullswater, and over the middle of Helvellyn.” Coleridge then dwelt upon a small hill by the side of Keswick, quite “enveloped on all sides by a net of mountains.” On his return to London, Lamb wrote to his late host, saying, “I feel I shall remember your mountains to the last day of my life. They haunt me perpetually. I am like a man who has been falling in love unknown to himself, which he finds out when he leaves the lady.” He soon subsided, however, into his old natural metropolitan happiness.

Wordsworth was not in the Lake country when Lamb visited Coleridge, but after his return the great poet visited Charles in London; passed some time there; and then departed for Yorkshire, where he went in order to be married.

At this time Lamb contributed (generally face-tiae) to various newspapers, now forgotten. One of them, it was said jocosely, had “two-and-twenty readers; including the printer, the pressmen, and the devil.” But he was still very poor; so poor that Coleridge offered to supply him with prose translations from the German, in order that he might versify them for the “Morning Post,” and thus obtain a little money. In one of his letters Lamb says:—“If I got or could but get £50 a year only, in addition to what I have, I should live in affluence.”
About the time that he is writing this, he is recommending Chapman’s “Homer” to Coleridge; is refusing to admit Coleridge’s bonâ fide debt to himself of £15; is composing Latin letters; and in other respects deporting himself like a “gentleman who lives at home at ease;” not like a poor clerk, obliged to husband his small means, and to deny himself the cheap luxury of books that he had long coveted. “Do you remember” (his sister says to him, in the Essay on “Old China”) “the brown suit that grew so threadbare, all because of that folio of Beaumont and Fletcher that you dragged home late at night from Barker’s in Covent Garden;” “when you set off near ten o’clock, on Saturday night, from Islington, fearing you should be too late; and when you lugged it home, wishing it was twice as cumbersome,” &c.

These realities of poverty, very imperfectly covered over by words of fiction, are very touching. It is deeply interesting, that Essay, where the rare enjoyments of a poor scholar are brought into contrast and relief with the indifference that grows upon him when his increased income enables him to acquire any objects he pleases. Those things are no longer distinguished as “enjoyments” which are not purchased by sacrifice. “A purchase is but a purchase now. Formerly it used to be a triumph. A thing was worth buying, when we felt the money that we paid for it.”

(1804.) The intimacy of that extraordinary man, William Hazlitt, was the great gain of Lamb at this period of his life. If Lamb’s youngest and tenderest reverence was given to Coleridge, Hazlitt’s intellect must also have commanded his later permanent respect. Without the imagination and extreme facility of Coleridge, he had almost as
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much subtlety and far more steadfastness of mind. Perhaps this steadfastness remained sometimes until it took the colour of obstinacy; but, as in the case of his constancy to the first Napoleon, it was obstinacy riveted and made firm by some concurring respect. I do not know that Hazlitt had the more affectionate nature of the two; but assuredly he was less tossed about and his sight less obscured by floating fancies and vast changing projects (muscae volitantes) than the other. To the one is ascribed fierce and envious passions; coarse thoughts and habits—(he has indeed been crowned by defamation); whilst to Coleridge has been awarded reputation and glory, and praise from a thousand tongues. To secure justice we must wait for unbiased posterity.

I meet, at present, with few persons who recollect much of Hazlitt. Some profess to have heard nothing of him except his prejudices and violence; but his prejudices were few, and his violence (if violence he had), was of very rare occurrence. He was extremely patient, indeed, although earnest when discussing points in politics, respecting which he held very strong and decided opinions. But he circulated his thoughts on many other subjects, whereon he ought not to have excited offence or opposition. He wrote (and he wrote well), upon many things lying far beyond the limits of politics. To use his own words, "I have at least glanced over a number of subjects; painting, poetry, prose, plays, politics, parliamentary speakers, metaphysical lore, books, men, and things." This list, extensive as it is, does not specify very precisely all the subjects on which he wrote. His thoughts range over the literature of Elizabeth and James's times, and of the time of
Charles II.; over a large portion of modern literature; over the distinguishing character of men, their peculiarities of mind and manners; over the wonders of poetry, the subtleties of metaphysics, and the luminous regions of art. In painting, his criticisms (it is prettily said, by Leigh Hunt) cast a light upon the subject, like the glory reflected "from a painted window." I myself have, in my library, eighteen volumes of Hazlitt’s works, and I do not possess all that he published. Besides being an original thinker, Hazlitt excelled in conversation. He was, moreover, a very temperate liver; yet his enemies proclaimed to the world that he was wanting even in sobriety. During the thirteen years that I knew him intimately, and (at certain seasons) saw him almost every day, I know that he drank nothing stronger than water; except tea, indeed, in which he indulged in the morning. Had he been as temperate in his political views as in his cups, he would have escaped the slander that pursued him through life.

The great intimacy between these two distinguished writers, Charles Lamb and William Hazlitt (for they had known each other before), seems to have commenced in a singular manner. They were one day at Godwin’s, when "a fierce dispute was going on between Holcroft and Coleridge, as to which was best, 'Man as he was, or man as he is to be.' 'Give me,' says Lamb, 'man as he is not to be.'" "This was the beginning" (Hazlitt says) "of a friendship which, I believe, still continues." Hazlitt married in 1805, and his wife soon became familiar with Mary Lamb. Indeed, Charles and his sister more than once visited the Hazlitts, who at that time lived at Winterslow,
near Salisbury Plain; and enjoyed their visits greatly, walking from eight to twenty miles a day, and seeing Wilton, Stonehenge, and the other (to them unaccustomed) sights of the country. "The quiet, lazy, delicious month" passed there, is referred to, in one of Miss Lamb's pleasant letters. And the acquaintance soon deepened into friendship. Whatever goodwill was exhibited by Hazlitt (and there was much) is repaid by Lamb in his letter to Southey, published in the "London Magazine" (October, 1823), wherein he places on record his pride and admiration of his friend. "So far from being ashamed of the intimacy" (he says), "it is my boast that I was able, for so many years, to have preserved it entire; and I think I shall go to my grave without finding or expecting to find such another companion."

Lamb's respect for men and things did not depend on repute. His fondness for old books seldom (never, perhaps, except in the single case of the Duchess of Newcastle) deluded him into a respect for old books which were without merit. He required that excellence should be combined with antiquity. A great name was generally to him simply a great name; no more. If it had lasted through centuries, indeed, as in the case of Michael Angelo, then he admitted that "a great name implied greatness." He did not think that greatness lay in the "thews and sinews," or in the bulk alone. When Nelson was walking on the quay at Yarmouth, the mob cried out in derision, "What! make that little fellow a captain!" Lamb thought otherwise; and in regret for the death of that great seaman, he says, "I have followed him ever since I saw him walking in Pall Mall, looking just as a hero should look" (i.e., simply). "He was the only
pretence of a great man we had." The large stage blusterer and ostentatious drawcansir were never, in Lamb's estimation, models for heroes. In the case of the first Napoleon also, he writes:—
"He is a fine fellow, as my barber says; and I should not mind standing bareheaded at his table to do him service in his fall." This was in August, 1815.

The famous "Ode to Tobacco" was written in 1805, and the pretty stories founded on the plays of Shakespeare were composed or translated about the year 1806; Lamb taking the tragic, and his sister the other share of the version. These tales were to produce about £60; to them a sum which was most important, for he and Mary at that time hailed the addition of £20 to his salary (on the retirement of an elder clerk) as a grand addition to their comforts.

Charles was at this period (February, 1806) at work upon a farce, to be called "Mr. H.;" from which he says, "if it has a 'good run' I shall get £200, and I hope £100 for the copyright." "Mr. H." (which rested solely upon the absurdity of a name, which after all was not irresistibly absurd) was accepted at the theatre, but unfortunately it had not 'a good run.' It failed, not quite undeservedly perhaps, for (although it has since had some success in America) there was not much probability of its prosperity in London. It was acted once (10th December, 1806), and was announced for repetition on the following evening, but was withdrawn. Lamb's courage and good humour did not fail. He joked about it to Wordsworth, said that he had many fears about it, and admitted that "John Bull required solider fare than a bare letter." As he says, in his letter to the poet, "a hundred hisses (hang
the word, I write it like kisses) outweigh a thousand claps. The former come more directly from the heart. Well” (he adds) “it is withdrawn, and there’s an end.”

In 1807 were published “Specimens of Dramatic Poets contemporary with Shakespeare,” and these made Lamb known as a man conversant with our old English literature, and helped mainly to direct the taste of the public to those fine writers. The book brought repute (perhaps a little money) to him. Soon afterwards he published “The Adventures of Ulysses,” which was intended to be an introduction to the reading of “Telemachus,” always a popular book. These “adventures” were derived from Chapman’s “Translation of Homer,” of which Lamb says, “Chapman is divine; and my abridgment has not, I hope, quite emptied him of his divinity.”

In or about 1808 Miss Lamb’s pretty little stories called “Mrs. Leicester’s School” (to which Charles contributed three tales) were published; and soon afterwards a small book entitled “Poetry for Children,” being a joint publication by brother and sister, came out. “It was done by me and Mary in the last six months” (January, 1809). It does not appear to what extent, if at all, it added to the poor clerk’s means.

In the same year (as Miss Lamb writes in December, 1808), Charles was invited by Tom Sheridan to write some scenes in a speaking Pantomime; the other parts of which (the eloquence not of words) had been already manufactured by Tom and his more celebrated father, Richard Brinsley. Lamb and Tom Sheridan had been, it seems, communicative over a bottle of claret, when an agreement for the above purpose was entered
into between them. This was subsequently carried into effect, and a drama was composed. This drama, still extant in the British Museum, in Lamb's own writing, appears to be a species of comic opera, the scene of which is laid in Gibraltar, but is without a name. I have not seen it, but speak upon the report of others.

In 1809 Lamb moved once more into the Temple, now to the top story of No. 4, Inner Temple Lane, "where the household gods are slow to come, but where I mean to live and die," (he says). From this place (since pulled down and rebuilt), he writes to Manning, who is in China; "Come, and bring any of your friends the Mandarins with you. My best room commands a court, in which there are trees and a pump, the water of which is excellent cold—with brandy; and not very insipid without." He sends Manning some of his little books, to give him "some idea of European literature." It is in this letter (January, 1810) that he speaks of Braham and his singing, which I have elsewhere alluded to; of Kate with nine stars * * * * * * * ("though she is but one"); of his book (for children) "on titles of honour," exemplifying the eleven gradations, by which Mr. C. Lamb rises in succession to be Baron, Marquis, Duke, and Emperor Lamb, and finally Pope Innocent, and other lively matters fit to solace an English mathematician self-banished to China.

In July, 1810, an abstinence from all spirituous liquors took place. Lamb says that his sister has "taken to water like a hungry otter," whilst he "limps after her" for virtue's sake; but he is "full of cramps and rheumatism, and cold internally, so that fire don't warm him." It is scarcely
necessary to state that the period of entire absti-
nence was very transient.

A quarterly magazine, called "The Reflector," was published in the autumn of 1810, and con-
tained essays by Charles Lamb and several other writers. Amongst these are some of the best of Lamb's earlier writings—namely, the paper on Hogarth and that on the Tragedies of Shakespeare. It is singular that these two essays, which are as fine as anything of a similar nature in English criticism, should have been almost unnoticed (un-
discovered, except by literary friends) until the year 1818, when Lamb's works were collected and published. The grand passage on "Lear" has caused the Essay on the Shakespeare Tragedies to be well known. Less known is the Essay on Hogarth, although it is more elaborate and criti-
cal; the labour being quite necessary in this case, as the pretensions of Hogarth to the grand style had been denounced by Sir Joshua Reynolds. In af
fluence of genius, in variety and exuberance of thought, there surely can exist little comparison between Reynolds and Hogarth. Reynolds was, indeed the finest painter, especially the most superb colorist, of the English school. But Hogarth was the greatest inventor,—the greatest discoverer of character, in the English or any other school. As a painter of manners he is unapproached. In a kindred walk, he traversed all the passions from the lowest mirth to the profoundest melancholy, possessing the tragic element in the most eminent degree. And if grandeur can exist—as I presume it can—in beings who have neither costume nor rank to set off their qualities, then some of the characters of Hogarth in essential grandeur are far beyond the conventional figures of many other
artists. Pain and joy and poverty and human
daring are not to be circumscribed by dress and
fashion. Their seat is deeper (in the soul), and is
altogether independent of such trivial accretions.
In point of expression, I never saw the face of the
madman (in the "Rake's Progress") exceeded in
any picture, ancient or modern. "It is a face"
(Lamb says) "that no one that has seen can easily
forget." It is, as he argues, human suffering
stretched to its utmost endurance. I cannot for-
bear directing the attention of the reader to Lamb's
bold and excellent defence of Hogarth. He will
like both painter and author, I think, better than
before. I have, indeed, been in company where
young men, professing to be painters, spoke slight-
ingly of Hogarth. To this I might have replied
that Hogarth did not paint for the applause of
tyros in art, but—for the world!

The "Reflector" was edited by an old Christ's
Hospital boy, Mr. Leigh Hunt, who subsequently
became and during their joint lives remained one
of Lamb's most familiar friends. It was a quarterly
magazine, and received, of course, the contributions
of various writers; amongst whom were Mr.
Barnes (of the "Times"), Barron Field, Dr. Aikin,
Mr. Landseer (the elder), Charles Lamb, Octavius
Gilchrist, Mitchell (the translator of Aristophanes),
and Leigh Hunt himself. I do not observe Lamb's
name appended to any of the articles in the first
volume; but the second comprises the Essays on
Hogarth and on Burial Societies, together with a
paper on the Custom of Hissing at the Theatres,
under the signature of "Semel Damnatus." There
is a good deal of humour in this paper (which has
not been republished, I believe). It professes to
come from one of a club of condemned authors;
no person being admissible as a member until he had been unequivocally damned.

I observe that in the letters, &c., of Lamb, which were published in 1841, and copiously commented on by Sir Thomas N. Talfourd (the editor), there is not much beyond a bare mention of Leigh Hunt's name, and no letter from Charles Lamb to Mr. Hunt is published. It is now too late to remedy this last defect; my recent endeavours to obtain such letters having resulted in disappointment: otherwise I should have been very glad to record the extent of Lamb's liking for a poor and able man whom I knew well for at least forty years. I know that at one time Lamb valued him, and that he always thought highly of his intellect, as indeed he has testified in his famous remonstrance to Southey. And in Mr. Hunt's autobiography I find abundant evidence of his admiration for Lamb, in a generous eulogy upon him.

Charles Lamb, William Hazlitt, and Leigh Hunt formed a remarkable trio of men; each of whom was decidedly different from the others. Only one of them (Hunt) cared much for praise. Hazlitt's sole ambition was to sell his essays, which he rated scarcely beyond their marketable value; and Lamb saw enough of the manner in which praise and censure were at that time distributed, to place any high value on immediate success. Of posterity neither of them thought. Leigh Hunt, from temperament, was more alive to pleasant influences (sunshine, freedom from work, rural walks, complimentary words) than the others. Hazlitt cared little for these things; a fierce argument or a well-contested game at rackets was more to his taste; whilst Lamb's pleasures (except perhaps from his pipe) lay amongst the books of the old English
writers. His soul delighted in communion with ancient generations; more especially with men who had been unjustly forgotten. Hazlitt's mind attached itself to abstract subjects; Lamb's was more practical, and embraced men. Hunt was somewhat indifferent to persons as well as to things, except in the cases of Shelley and Keats, and his own family; yet he liked poetry and poetical subjects. Hazlitt (who was ordinarily very shy) was the best talker of the three. Lamb said the most pithy and brilliant things. Hunt displayed the most ingenuity. All three sympathized often with the same persons or the same books; and this, no doubt, cemented the intimacy that existed between them for so many years. Moreover, each of them understood the others, and placed just value on their objections when any difference of opinion (not infrequent) arose between them. Without being debaters, they were accomplished talkers. They did not argue for the sake of conquest, but to strip off the mists and perplexities which sometimes obscure truth. These men—who lived long ago—had a great share of my regard. They were all slandered; chiefly by men who knew little of them, and nothing of their good qualities; or by men who saw them only through the mist of political or religious animosity. Perhaps it was partly for this reason that they came nearer to my heart.

All the three men, Lamb, Hazlitt, and Hunt, were throughout their lives Unitarians, as was also George Dyer; Coleridge was an Unitarian preacher in his youth, having seceded from the Church of England; to which, however, he returned, and was in his latter years a strenuous supporter of the National faith. George Dyer once sent a pamphlet
to convert Charles to Unitarianism. "Dear blundering soul" (Lamb said), "why, I am as old a One Goddite as himself." To Southey Lamb writes, "Being, as you know, not quite a churchman, I felt a jealousy at the Church taking to herself the whole deserts of Christianity." His great, and indeed infinite reverence, nevertheless, for Christ is shown in his own Christian virtues and in constant expressions of reverence. In Hazlitt's Paper of "Persons one would wish to have seen," Lamb is made to refer to Jesus Christ as he "who once put on a semblance of mortality," and to say, "If he were to come into the room, we should all fall down and kiss the hem of his garment." I do not venture to comment on these delicate matters, where men like Hazlitt, and Lamb, and Coleridge (the latter for a short time only) have entertained opinions which differ from those of the generality of their countrymen.

During these years, Mary Lamb's illnesses were frequent, as usual. Her relapses were not dependent on the seasons; they came in hot summers and with the freezing winters. The only remedy seems to have been extreme quiet, when any slight symptom of uneasiness was apparent. Charles (poor fellow) had to live, day and night, in the society of a person who was—mad! If any exciting talk occurred he had to dismiss his friend, with a whisper. If any stupor or extraordinary silence was observed, then he had to rouse her instantly. He has been seen to take the kettle from the fire, and place it for a moment on her headdress, in order to startle her into recollection. He lived in a state of constant anxiety;—and there was no help.

Not to neglect Charles Lamb's migrations, it
should be noted that he moved his residence from Inner Temple Lane ("where he meant to live and die") into Russell Street, Covent Garden, in the latter part of the year 1817. When there, he became personally acquainted with several members of the theatrical profession; amongst others, with Munden and Miss Kelly, for both of whom he entertained the highest admiration. One of the (Elia) Essays is written to celebrate Munden's histrionic talent; and in his letters he speaks of "Fanny Kelly's divine plain face." The Barbara S. of the second (or last) series of essays is, in fact, Miss Kelly herself. All his friends knew that he was greatly attached to her. He also became acquainted with Miss Burrell—afterwards Mrs. Gould—but who, he says, "remained uncoined." Subsequently he was introduced to Liston and Elliston, each of whom received tokens of his liking. The first was the subject of an amusing fictitious biography. In Lamb's words it was "a lying life of Liston," uncontaminated by a particle of truth. Munden, he says, had faces innumerable; Liston had only one; "but what a face!" he adds, admitting it to be beyond all vain description. Perhaps this subject of universal laughter and admiration never received such a compliment; except from Hazlitt, who, after commenting on Hogarth's excellences, his invention, his character, his satire, &c., concludes by saying, "I have never seen anything in the expression of comic humour equal to Hogarth's humour, except Liston's face."

In the course of time, official labour becomes tiresome, and the India House clerk grows spleenetic. He complains sadly of his work. Even the incursions of his familiars annoy him; although it annoys him more when they go away. In the midst
of this trouble his works are collected and published; and he emerges at once from the obscure shades of Leadenhall Street, into the full blaze of public notice. He wakes from dulness and discontent, and "finds himself famous."
CHAPTER V.


In the year 1817 or 1818 I first became personally acquainted with Charles Lamb. This was about the time of his removal from the Temple. It was in the course of the year 1818 that his works had been first collected and published. They came upon the world by surprise: scarcely any one, at that time, being aware that a fine genius and humorist existed within the dull shades of London, whose quality very few of the critics had assayed, and none of them had commended. He was thus thrown (waif-like) amongst the great body of the people; was at once estimated, and soon rose into renown.

Persons who had been in the habit of traversing Covent Garden at that time (seven-and-forty years ago), might by extending their walk a few yards into Russell Street, have noted a small spare man, clothed in black, who went out every morning and returned every afternoon, as regularly as the hands
of the clock moved towards certain hours. You could not mistake him. He was somewhat stiff in his manner, and almost clerical in dress; which indicated much wear. He had a long, melancholy face, with keen penetrating eyes; and he walked with a short, resolute step, City-wards. He looked no one in the face for more than a moment, yet contrived to see everything as he went on. No one who ever studied the human features could pass him by without recollecting his countenance; it was full of sensibility, and it came upon you like a new thought, which you could not help dwelling upon afterwards; it gave rise to meditation and did you good. This small, half-clerical man was—Charles Lamb.

I had known him for a short time previously to 1818; having been introduced to him at Mr. Leigh Hunt's house, where I enjoyed his company once or twice over agreeable suppers; but I knew him slightly only, and did not see much of him until he and his sister went to occupy the lodgings in Russell Street, where he invited me to come and see him. They lived in the corner house adjoining Bow Street. This house belonged, at that time, to an ironmonger (or brazier), and was comfortable and clean,—and a little noisy. Charles Lamb was about forty years of age when I first saw him; and I knew him intimately for the greater part of twenty years. Small and spare in person, and with small legs ("immaterial legs," Hood called them), he had a dark complexion, dark, curling hair, almost black, and a grave look, lightening up occasionally, and capable of sudden merriment. His laugh was seldom excited by jokes merely ludicrous; it was never spiteful; and his quiet smile was sometimes inexpressibly sweet: perhaps
it had a touch of sadness in it. His mouth was well-shaped; his lip tremulous with expression; his brown eyes were quick, restless, and glittering: and he had a grand head, full of thought. Leigh Hunt said that "he had a head worthy of Aristotle." Hazlitt calls it "a fine Titian head, full of dumb eloquence." I knew that, before he had attained the age of twenty years, he had to make his way in the world; and that his lines had not been cast in pleasant places. I had heard, indeed, that his family had at one time consisted of a father and mother and an insane sister; all helpless and poor, and all huddled together in a small lodging, scarcely large enough to admit of their moving about without restraint. It is difficult to imagine a more disheartening youth. Nevertheless, out of this desert, in which no hope was visible, he rose up eventually a cheerful man, (cheerful when his days were not clouded by his sister's illness); a charming companion, full of pleasant and gentle fancies, and the finest humorist of his age.

Although sometimes strange in manner, he was thoroughly unaffected; in serious matters thoroughly sincere. He was, indeed (as he confesses) terribly shy; diffident, not awkward in manner; with occasionally nervous twitching motions that betrayed this infirmity. He dreaded the criticisms of servants far more than the observations of their masters. To undergo the scrutiny of the first, as he said to me, when we were going to breakfast with Mr. Rogers one morning, was "terrible." His speech was brief and pithy; not too often humorous; never sententious nor didactic. Although he sometimes talked whilst walking up and down the room (at which time he seldom looked at
the person with whom he was talking), he very often spoke as if impelled by the necessity of speaking—suddenly, precipitately. If he could have spoken very easily he might possibly have uttered long sentences, expositions, or orations; such as some of his friends indulged in, to the utter confusion of their hearers.

But he knew the value of silence; and he knew that even truth may be damaged by too many words. When he did speak his words had a flavour in them beyond any that I have heard elsewhere. His conversation dwelt upon persons or things within his own recollection, or it opened (with a startling doubt, or a question, or a piece of quaint humour) the great circle of thought.

In temper he was quick, but easily appeased. He never affected that exemption from sensibility, which has sometimes been mistaken for philosophy; and has conferred reputation upon little men. In a word, he exhibited his emotions in a fine, simple, natural manner. Contrary to the usual habits of wits, no retort or reply by Lamb, however smart in character, ever gave pain. It is clear that ill-nature is not wit; and that there may be sparkling flowers which are not surrounded by thorns. Lamb's dissent was very intelligible, but never superfluously demonstrative: often, indeed, expressed by his countenance only: sometimes merely by silence.

He was more pleasant to some persons (more pleasant, I confess, to me) for the few faults or weaknesses that he had. He did not daunt us, nor throw us to a distance, by his formidable virtues. We sympathized with him; and this sympathy, which is an union between two similitudes, does not exist between perfect and imper-
fect natures. Like all of us, he had a few prejudices: he did not like Frenchmen; he shrunk from Scotchmen (excepting, however, Burns); he disliked bankrupts; he hated close bargainers. For the Jewish nation he entertained a mysterious awe: the Jewesses he admired, with trembling; "Jael had those full, dark, inscrutable eyes," he says. Of Braham's triumphant singing he repeatedly spoke; there had been nothing like it in his recollection: he considered him equal to Mrs. Siddons. In his letters he characterizes him as "a mixture of the Jew, the gentleman, and the angel." He liked chimney-sweepers—the young ones—the "innocent blacknesses;" and with beggars he had a strong sympathy. He always spoke tenderly of them, and has written upon them an essay full of beauty. Do not be frightened (he says) at the hard words, imposture, &c. "Cast thy bread upon the waters: some have unawares entertained angels."

Much injustice has been done to Lamb, by accusing him of excess in drinking. The truth is, that a small quantity of any strong liquid (wine, &c.) disturbed his speech, which at best was but an eloquent stammer. The distresses of his early life made him ready to resort to any remedy which brought forgetfulness; and he himself, frail in body and excitable, was very speedily affected. During all my intimacy with him I never knew him drink immoderately; except once, when having been prevailed upon to abstain altogether from wine and spirits, he resented the vow thus forced upon him, by imbibing an extraordinary quantity of the "spurious" liquid. When he says, "The waters have gone over me," he speaks in metaphor; not historically. He was never vanquished by
water, and seldom by wine. His energy, or mental power, was indeed subject to fluctuation; no excessive merriment, perhaps, but much depression. "My waking life," he writes, "has much of the confusion, the trouble, and obscure perplexity of an ill dream. In the daytime I stumble upon dark mountains."

Lamb's mode of life was temperate: his dinner consisting of meat, with vegetables and bread only. "We have a sure hot joint on Sundays," he writes, "and when had we better?" He appears to have had a relish for game, roast pig, and brawn, &c., roast pig especially, when given to him; but his poverty first, and afterwards his economical habits, prevented his indulging in such costly luxuries. He was himself a small and delicate eater at all times; and he entertained something like aversion towards great feeders. During a long portion of his life his means were much straitened. The reader may note his want of money in several of his letters. Speaking of a play, he says, "I am quite aground for a plan; and I must do something for money."

He was restless and fond of walking. I do not think that he could ride on horseback; but he could walk during all the day. He had in that manner traversed the whole of London and its suburbs (especially the northern and north-eastern parts) frequently. "I cannot sit and think," he said. Tired with exercise, he went to bed early, except when friends supped with him; and he always rose early, from necessity, being obliged to attend at his office, in Leadenhall Street, every day, from ten until four o'clock—sometimes later. It was there that his familiar letters were written. On his return, after a humble meal, he strolled (if
it was summer) into the suburbs, or traversed the streets where the old bookshops were to be found. He seldom or never gave dinners. You were admitted at all times to his plain supper, which was sufficiently good when any visitor came; at other times, it was spare. "We have tried to eat suppers," Miss Lamb writes to Mrs. Hazlitt, "but we left our appetites behind us; and the dry loaf, which offended you, now comes in at night unaccompanied." You were sure of a welcome at his house: sure of easy unfettered talk. After supper you might smoke a pipe with your host, or gossip (upon any subject) with him or his sensible sister. Perhaps the pipe was the only thing in which Lamb really exceeded. He was fond of it from the very early years, when he was accustomed to smoke "Orinooko" at the "Salutation and Cat," with Coleridge, in 1796. He attempted on several occasions to give it up, but his struggles were overcome by counter influences. "Tobacco," he says, "stood in its own light." At last, in 1805, he was able to conquer and abandon it,—for a time. His success, like Desertion from a friend, caused some remorse and a great deal of regret. In writing to Coleridge, about his house, which was "smoky," he inquires, "Have you cured it? It is hard to cure anything of smoking." Apart from the mere pleasure of smoking, the narcotic soothed his nerves and controlled those perpetual apprehensions which his sister's frequent illnesses excited. Of Mary Lamb, Hazlitt has said (somewhere) that she was the most rational and wisest woman whom he had ever known.—Lamb and his sister had an open party once a week, every Wednesday evening, when his friends generally went to visit him, without any special invitation. He
invited you suddenly, not pressingly; but with such heartiness that you at once agreed to come. There was usually a game at whist on these evenings, in which the stakes were very moderate, indeed almost nominal.

When my thoughts turn backward, as they sometimes do, to these past days, I see my dear, old friend again,—"in my mind's eye, Horatio;" with his outstretched hand, and his grave sweet smile of welcome. It was always in a room of moderate size, comfortably, but plainly furnished, that he lived. An old mahogany table was opened out in the middle of the room, round which, and near the walls, were old high-backed chairs (such as our grandfathers used), and a long plain book-case completely filled with old books. These were his "ragged veterans." In one of his letters he says, "My rooms are luxurious, one for prints and one for books; a summer and winter parlour." They, however, were not otherwise decorated. I do not remember ever to have seen a flower or an image in them. He had not been educated into expensive tastes. His extravagances were confined to books. These were all chosen by himself, all old, and all in "admired disorder;" yet he could lay his hand on any volume in a moment. "You never saw," he writes, "a bookcase in more true harmony with the contents than what I have nailed up in my room. Though new it has more aptitude for growing old than you shall often see; as one sometimes gets a friend in the middle of life who becomes an old friend in a short time."

Here Charles Lamb sate, when at home, always near the table. At the opposite side was his sister, engaged in some domestic work, knitting or sewing, or poring over a modern novel. "Bridget in
some things is behind her years.” In fact, although she was ten years older than her brother, she had more sympathy with modern books and with youthful fancies than he had. She wore a neat cap, of the fashion of her youth: an old-fashioned dress. Her face was pale and somewhat square; but very placid; with grey intelligent eyes. She was very mild in her manner to strangers; and to her brother gentle and tender, always. She had often an upward look of peculiar meaning, when directed towards him; as though to give him assurance that all was then well with her. His affection for her was somewhat less on the surface; but always present. There was great gratitude intermingled with it. “In the days of weakling infancy,” he writes, “I was her tender charge, as I have been her care in foolish manhood since.” Then he adds, pathetically, “I wish I could throw into a heap the remainder of our joint existences, that we might share them in equal division.”

Lamb himself was always dressed in black. “I take it,” he says, “to be the proper costume of an author.” When this was once objected to, at a wedding, he pleaded the raven’s apology in the fable, that “he had no other.” His clothes were entirely black; and he wore long black gaiters, up to the knees. His head was bent a little forward, like one who had been reading; and, if not standing or walking, he generally had in his hand an old book, a pinch of snuff, or, later in the evening, a pipe. He stammered a little, pleasantly, just enough to prevent his making speeches; just enough to make you listen eagerly for his words, always full of meaning, or charged with a jest; or referring (but this was rare) to some line or passage from one of the old Elizabethan writers, which was
always ushered in with a smile of tender reverence. When he read aloud it was with a slight tone, which I used to think he had caught from Coleridge; Coleridge’s recitation, however, rising to a chant. Lamb’s reading was not generally in books of verse, but in the old lay writers, whose tendency was towards religious thoughts. He liked however religious verse: “I can read,” he writes to Bernard Barton, “the homely old version of the Psalms in our prayer-books, for an hour or two, without sense of weariness.” He avoided manuscripts as much as practicable: “all things read raw to me in manuscript.” Lamb wrote much, including many letters; but his hands were wanting in pliancy (“inveterate clumsiness” are his words), and his handwriting was therefore never good. It was neither text nor running hand, and the letters did not indicate any fluency; it was not the handwriting of an old man nor of a young man; yet it had a very peculiar character; stiff, resolute, distinct; quite unlike all others that I have seen, and easily distinguishable amongst a thousand.

No one has described Lamb’s manner or merits so well as Hazlitt: “He always made the best pun and the best remark in the course of the evening. His serious conversation, like his serious writing, is his best. No one ever stammered out such fine piquant, deep, eloquent things, in half a dozen sentences, as he does. His jests scald like tears; and he probes a question with a play upon words. There was no fuss or cant about him. He has furnished many a text for Coleridge to preach upon.” (I. Plain Speaker.) Charles was frequently merry, but ever, at the back of his merriment, there reposed a grave depth, in which rich colours and tender lights were inlaid. For his jests sprang
from his sensibility; which was as open to pleasure as to pain. This sensibility, if it somewhat impaired his vigour, led him into curious and delicate fancies, and taught him a liking for things of the highest relish, which a mere robust jester never tastes.

Large sounding words, unless embodying great thoughts (as in the case of Lear), he did not treasure up or repeat. He was an admirer of what was high and good, of what was delicate (especially); but he delighted most to saunter along the humbler regions, where kindness of heart and geniality of humour made the way pleasant. His intellect was very quick, piercing into the recon- dite meaning of things in a moment. His own sentences were compressed and full of meaning; his opinions independent and decisive; no qualifying or doubting. His descriptions were not highly coloured; but, as it were, sharply cut, like a piece of marble, rather than like a picture. He liked and encouraged friendly discussion; but he hated contentious argument, which leads to quarrel rather than to truth.

There was an utter want of parade in everything he said and did, in everything about him and his home. The only ornaments on his walls were a few engravings in black frames: one after Leonardo da Vinci; one after Titian; and four, I think, by Hogarth, about whom he has written so well. Images of quaint beauty, and all gentle, simple things (things without pretension) pleased him to the fullest extent; perhaps a little beyond their strict merit. I have heard him express admiration for Leonardo da Vinci that he did not accord to Raffaelle. Raffaelle was too ostentatious of meaning; his merits were too obvious,—too much thrust
upon the understanding; not retired nor involved, so as to need discovery or solution. He preferred even Titian (whose meaning is generally obvious enough) to Raffaelle; but Leonardo was above both. Without doubt, Lamb's taste on several matters was peculiar; for instance, there were a few obsolete words, such as arride, agnize, burgeon, &c., which he fancied, and chose to rescue from oblivion. Then he did not care for music. I never heard a song in his house, nor any conversation on the subject of melody or harmony. "I have no ear," he says; yet the sentiment, apart from the science of music, gave him great pleasure. He reverenced the fine organ playing of Mr. Novello, and admired the soaring singing of his daughter,—"the tuneful daughter of a tuneful sire;" but he resented the misapplication of the theatres to sacred music. He thought this a profanation of the good old original secular purposes of a playhouse.

As a comprehension of all delights he loved London; with its bustle and its living throngs of men and women; its shops, its turns and windings; the cries and noises of trade and life; beyond all other things. He liked also old buildings and out of the way places; Colleges; solemn churchyards, round which the murmuring thousands floated unheeding. In particular he was fond of visiting, in his short vacations, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Although (he writes) "Mine have been anything but studious hours," he professes to have received great solace from those "repositories of 'mouldering' learning." "What a place to be in is an old library!" he exclaims, "where the souls of the old writers seem reposing; as in some dormitory or middle state." The odour of the "moth-scented" coverings of the old books is "as
fragrant as the blooms of the tree of knowledge which grew in the happy orchard.” An ancient manor-house, that Vanbrugh might have built, dwelt like a picture in his memory. “Nothing fills a child’s mind like an old mansion,” he says. Yet he could feel unaffectedly the simplicity and beauty of a country life. The heartiness of country people went to his heart direct, and remained there for ever. The Fields and the Gladmans, with their homely dwellings and hospitality, drew him to them like magnets. There was nothing too fine or too lofty in these friends for his tastes or his affection; they did not “affront him with their light.” His fancy always stooped to moralize; he hated the stilted attitudes and pretensions of poetasters and self-glorifying artists.—He never spoke disparagingly of any person, nor overpraised any one. When it was proposed to erect a statue of Clarkson, during his life; he objected to it: “We should be modest,” he says, “for a modest man.” He was himself eminently modest; he never put himself forward; he was always sought. He had much to say on many subjects, and he was repeatedly pressed to say this, before he consented to do so. He was almost teased into writing the Elia Essays. These and all his other writings are brief and to the point. He did not exhale in words. It was said that Coleridge’s talk was worth so many guineas a sheet. Charles Lamb talked but sparingly. He put forth only so much as had complete flavour. I know that high pay and frequent importance failed to induce him to squander his strength in careless essays; he waited until he could give them their full share of meaning and humour.

When I speak of his extreme liking for London,
it must not be supposed that he was insensible to great scenery. After his only visit to the Lake country, and beholding Skiddaw, he writes back to his host, "Oh! its fine black head, and the bleak air at the top of it, with a prospect of mountains all about, making you giddy. It was a day that will stand out like a mountain in my life;" adding, however, "Fleet Street and the Strand are better places to live in, for good and all. I could not live in Skiddaw. I could spend there two or three years; but I must have a prospect of seeing Fleet Street at the end of that time, or I should mope and pine away." He loved even its smoke, and asserted that it suited his vision. A short time previously he had, in a touching letter to Wordsworth (1801), enumerated the objects that he liked so much in London. "These things," he writes, "work themselves into my mind: the rooms where I was born; a bookcase that has followed me about like a faithful dog (only exceeding him in knowledge), wherever I have moved; old chairs; old tables; squares where I have sunned myself; my old school: these are my mistresses. Have I not enough, without your mountains? I do not envy you; I should pity you, did I not know that the mind will make friends with anything."

Besides his native London, "the centre of busy interests," he had great liking for unpretending men, who would come and gossip with him in a friendly companionable way, or who liked to talk about old authors or old books. In his love of books he was very catholic. "Shaftesbury is not too genteel, nor Jonathan Wild too low. But for books which are no books," such as "scientific treatises, and the histories of Hume, Smollett,
and Gibbon," &c., he confesses that he becomes splenetic when he sees them perched up on shelves, "like false saints, who have usurped the true shrines" of the legitimate occupants. He loved old books and authors, indeed, beyond most other things. He used to say (with Shakespeare) "The Heavens themselves are old." He would rather have acquired an ancient forgotten volume than a modern one, at an equal price; the very circumstance of its having been neglected and cast disdainfully into the refuse basket of a bookstall gave it value in his eyes. He bought it, and rejoiced in being able thus to remedy the injustice of fortune. He liked best those who had not thriven with posterity: his reverence for Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, can only be explained in this way. It must not be forgotten that his pity or generosity towards neglected authors extended also to all whom the goddess of Good Fortune had slighted. In this list were included all who had suffered in purse or repute. He was ready to defend man or beast, whenever unjustly attacked. I remember that, at one of the monthly magazine dinners, when John Wilkes was too roughly handled, Lamb quoted the story (not generally known) of his replying, when the blackbirds were reported to have stolen all his cherries, "Poor birds, they are welcome." He said that those impulsive words showed the inner nature of the man more truly than all his political speeches. Lamb's charity extended to all things. I never heard him speak spitefully of any author. He thought that every one should have a clear stage, unobstructed. His heart, young at all times, never grew hard or callous during life. There was always in it a tender spot, which Time was unable to touch.
He gave away greatly, when the amount of his means are taken into consideration; he gave away money,—even annuities, I believe, to old impoverished friends whose wants were known to him. I remember that once, when we were sauntering together on Pentonville Hill, and he noticed great depression in me, which he attributed to want of money, he said, suddenly, in his stammering way, "My dear boy, I—I have a quantity of useless things. I have now—in my desk, a—a hundred pounds—that I don't—don't know what to do with. Take it." I was much touched; but I assured him that my depression did not arise from want of money. He was very home-loving; he loved London as the best of places; he loved his home as the dearest spot in London: it was the inmost heart of the sanctuary. Whilst at home he had no curiosity for what passed beyond his own territory. His eyes were never truant; no one ever saw him peering out of window, examining the crowds flowing by; no one ever surprised him gazing on vacancy. "I lose myself," he says, "in other men's minds. When I am not walking I am reading; I cannot sit and think; books think for me." If it was not the time for his pipe, it was always the time for an old play, or for a talk with friends. In the midst of this society his own mind grew green again and blossomed; or, as he would have said, "burgeoned."

In the foregoing desultory account of Charles Lamb I have, without doubt, set forth many things that are frequently held as trivial. Nothing, however, seems to me unimportant which serves in any way to illustrate a character. The floating straws, it is said, show from what quarter the wind is blowing. So, the arching or knitting of the
brow is sometimes sufficient to indicate wonder or pride, anger or contempt. On the stage, indeed, it is often the sole means of expressing the fluctuation of the passions. I myself have heard of a "Pooh!" which interrupted a long intimacy, when the pander was administering sweet words in too liberal a measure.

As with Lamb so with his companions. Each was notable for some individual mark or character. His own words will best describe them:—"Not many persons of science, and few professed literati, were of his councils. They were for the most part persons of an uncertain fortune. His intimados were, to confess a truth, in the world's eye, a ragged regiment; he found them floating on the surface of society, and the colour or something else in the weed pleased him. The burrs stuck to him; but they were good and loving burrs, for all that."

None of Lamb's intimates were persons of title or fashion, or of any political importance. They were reading men, or authors, or old friends who had no name or pretensions. The only tie that held these last and Lamb together was a long-standing mutual friendship; a sufficient link. None of them ever forsook him; they loved him, and in return he had a strong regard for them. His affections, indeed, were concentrated on few persons; not widened (weakened) by too general a philanthropy. When you went to Lamb's rooms on the Wednesday evenings, (his "At Home," ) you generally found the card table spread out, Lamb himself one of the players. On the corner of the table was a snuff-box; and the game was enlivened by sundry brief ejaculations and pungent questions, which kept alive the wits of the party
present. It was not "silent whist!" I do not remember whether, in common with Sarah Battle, Lamb had a weakness in favour of "Hearts." I suppose that it was at one of these meetings that he made that shrewd remark which has since escaped into notoriety: "Martin" (observed he), "if dirt were trumps, what a hand you would hold." It is not known what influence Martin's trumps had on the rubber then in progress.—When the conversation became general, Lamb's part in it was very effective. His short clear sentences always produced effect. He never joined in talk unless he understood the subject; then, if the matter in question interested him, he was not slow in showing his earnestness; but I never heard him argue or talk for argument's sake. If he was indifferent to the question, he was silent.

The supper of cold meat, on these occasions, was always on the side table; not very formal, as may be imagined; and every one might rise, when it suited him, and cut a slice or take a glass of porter, without reflecting on the abstinence of the rest of the company. Lamb would, perhaps, call out and bid the hungry guest help himself without ceremony. We learn (from Hazlitt) that Martin Burney's eulogies on books were sometimes intermingled with expressions of his satisfaction with the veal pie which employed him at the sideboard. After the game was won (and lost) the ring of the cheerful glasses announced that punch or brandy and water had become the order of the night.

It was curious to observe the gradations in Lamb's manner to his various guests; although it was courteous to all. With Hazlitt he talked as though they met the subject in discussion on equal
Charles Lamb. 

terms; with Leigh Hunt he exchanged repartees; to Wordsworth he was almost respectful; with Coleridge he was sometimes jocose, sometimes deferring; with Martin Burney fraternally familiar; with Manning affectionate; with Godwin merely courteous; or if friendly, then in a minor degree. The man whom I found at Lamb's house more frequently than any other person was Martin Burney. He is now scarcely known; yet Lamb dedicated his prose works to him, in 1818, and there described him as "no common judge of books and men;" and Southey, corresponding with Rickman, when his "Joan of Arc" was being reprinted, says, "The best omen I have heard of its well-doing is that Martin Burney likes it." Lamb was very much attached to Martin, who was a sincere and able man, although with a very unprepossessing physiognomy. His face was warped by paralysis, which affected one eye and one side of his mouth. He was plain and unaffected in manner, very diffident and retiring; yet pronouncing his opinions, when asked to do so, without apology or hesitation. He was a barrister; and travelled the western circuit at the same time as Sir Thomas Wilde (afterwards Lord Truro), whose briefs he used to read before the other considered them; marking out the principal facts and points for attention. Martin Burney had excellent taste in books; eschewed the showy and artificial, and looked into the sterling qualities of writing. He frequently accompanied Lamb in his visits to friends, and although very familiar with Charles, he always spoke of him, with respect, as Mr. Lamb. "He is on the top scale of my friendship ladder," Lamb says, "on which an angel or two is still climbing, and some, alas! descending."
The last time I saw Burney was at the corner of a street in London, when he was overflowing on the subject of Raffaelle and Hogarth. After a great and prolonged struggle, he said, he had arrived at the conclusion that Raffaelle was the greater man of the two.

Notwithstanding Lamb's somewhat humble description of his friends and familiars, some of them were men well known in literature. Amongst others, I met there Messrs. Coleridge, Manning, Hazlitt, Haydon, Wordsworth, Barron Field, Leigh Hunt, Clarkson, Sheridan Knowles, Talfourd, Kenney, Godwin, the Burneys, Payne Collier, and others whose names I need not chronicle. I met there, also, on one or two occasions, Liston, and Miss Kelly, and, I believe, Rickman. Politics were rarely discussed amongst them. Anecdotes, characteristic, showing the strong and weak points of human nature, were frequent enough. But politics (especially party politics) were seldom admitted. Lamb disliked them as a theme for evening talk; he perhaps did not understand the subject scientifically. And when Hazlitt's impetuousity drove him, as it sometimes did, into fierce expressions on public affairs, these were usually received in silence; and the matter thus raised up for assent or controversy was allowed to drop.

—Lamb's old associates are now dead. "They that lived so long," as he says, "and flourished so steadily, are all crumbled away." The beauty of these evenings was that every one was placed upon an easy level. No one out-topped the others. No one—not even Coleridge—was permitted to out-talk the rest. No one was allowed to hector another, or to bring his own grievances too prominently forward; so as to disturb the harmony of
the night. Every one had a right to speak, and to be heard; and no one was ever trodden or clamoured down (as in some large assemblies) until he had proved that he was not entitled to a hearing, or until he had abused his privilege. I never, in all my life, heard so much unpretending good sense talked, as at Charles Lamb's social parties. Often, a piece of sparkling humour was shot out that illuminated the whole evening. Sometimes there was a flight of high and earnest talk, that took one half way toward the stars.

It seems great matter for regret that the thoughts of men like Lamb's associates should have passed away altogether; for scarcely any of them, save Wordsworth and Coleridge, are now distinctly remembered; and it is, perhaps, not impossible to foretell the duration of their fame. All have answered their purpose, I suppose. Each has had his turn, and has given place to a younger thinker, as the father is replaced by the son. Thus Jeremy Taylor and Sir Thomas Browne, and Webster, and the old Dramatists, have travelled out of sight; and their thoughts are reproduced by modern writers; the originators of those thoughts often remaining unknown. Perhaps one, out of many thousand authors, survives into an immortality. The manner and the taste change. The armour and falchion of old give place to the new weapons of modern warfare; less weighty, but perhaps as trenchant. We praise the old authors, but we do not read them. The Soul of Antiquity seems to survive only in its proverbs; which contain the very essence of wisdom.
CHAPTER VI.


THE “London Magazine” was established in January, 1820; the publishers being Messrs. Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, and its editor being Mr. John Scott, who had formerly edited “The Champion” newspaper, and whose profession was exclusively that of a man of letters. At this distance of time, it is impossible to specify the authors of all the various papers which gave a tone to the magazine; but as this publication forms, in fact, the great foundation of Lamb’s fame, I think it well to enter somewhat minutely into its constitution and character.

Mr. John Scott was the writer of the several articles entitled “The Living Authors;” of a good many of the earlier criticisms; of some of the papers on politics; and of some which may be termed “Controversial.” The essays on Sir Walter Scott, Wordsworth, Godwin, and Lord Byron, are from his hand. He contributed also the critical papers, on the writings of Keats, Shelley, Leigh Hunt, and Hazlitt.
Mr. Hazlitt wrote all the articles which appear under the head "Drama;" the twelve essays entitled "Table Talk;" and the papers on Fonthill Abbey, and on the Angerstein pictures, and the Elgin marbles.

Mr. Charles Lamb's papers were the well-known Elia Essays, which first appeared in this magazine. Mr. Elia (whose name he assumed) was, at one time, a clerk in the India House. He died, however, before the Essays were made public, and was ignorant of Lamb's intention to do honour to his name.

Mr. Thomas Carlyle was author of the "Life and Writings of Schiller," in the eighth, ninth, and tenth volumes of the magazine. These papers, although very excellent, appear to be scarcely prophetic of the great fame which their author was afterwards destined, so justly, to achieve.

Mr. De Quincey's contributions were the "Confessions of an Opium Eater;" also various papers specified as being "by the Opium Eater;" the essay on Jean Paul Richter, and papers translated from the German, or dealing with German literature.

The Reverend Henry Francis Cary (the translator of Dante) wrote the Notices of the Early French poets; the additions to Orford's "Royal and Noble Authors;" and, I believe, the continuations of Johnson's "Lives of the Poets." Of these last, however, I am not certain.

Mr. Allan Cunningham (the Scottish poet) was author of the "Twelve Tales of Lyddal Cross;" of the series of stories or papers styled "Traditional Literature;" and of various other contributions in poetry and prose.

Mr. John Poole contributed the " Beauties of the
living Dramatists;" being burlesque imitations of modern writers for the stage; viz. Morton, Dibdin, Reynolds, Moncrieff, &c.

_Mr. John Hamilton Reynolds_ wrote, I believe, in every number of the periodical, after it came into the hands of Taylor and Hessey, who were his friends. All the papers with the name of Henry Herbert affixed were written by him; also the descriptive accounts of the Coronation, Greenwich Hospital, The Cockpit Royal, The Trial of Thurtell, &c.

_Mr. Thomas Hood_ fleshed his maiden sword here; and his first poems of length, "Lycus the Centaur" and "The two Peacocks of Bedfont" may be found in the magazine.

_Mr. George Darley_ (author of "Thomas à Becket," &c.) wrote the several papers entitled "Dramaticles;" some pieces of verse; and the Letters addressed to "The Dramatists of the Day."

_Mr. Richard Ayton_ wrote "The Sea Roamers," the article on "Hunting," and such papers as are distinguished by the signature "R.A."

_Mr. Keats_ (the poet) and _Mr. James Montgomery_ contributed verses.

_Sir John Bowring_ (I believe) translated into English verse the Spanish poetry, and wrote the several papers which appear under the head of "Spanish Romances."

_Mr. Henry Southern_ (editor of "The Retrospective Review") wrote the "Conversations of Lord Byron," and "The Fanariotes of Constantinople," in the tenth volume.

_Mr. Walter Savage Landor_ was author of the Imaginary Conversation between Southey and Porson, in volume eight.
Mr. Julius (Archdeacon) Hare reviewed the works of Landor in the tenth volume.

Mr. Elton contributed many translations from Greek and Latin authors; from the minor poems of Homer, from Catullus, Nonnus, Propertius, &c.

Messrs. Hartley Coleridge, John Clare, Cornelius Webb, Bernard Barton, and others sent poems; generally with the indicating name.

I myself was amongst the crowd of contributors; and was author of various pieces, some in verse, and others in prose, now under the protection of that great Power which is called "Oblivion."

Finally, the too celebrated Thomas Griffiths Wainewright contributed various fantasies, on Art and Arts: all or most of which may be recognized by his assumed name of Janus Weathercock.

To show the difficulty of specifying the authorship of all the articles contributed,—even Mr. Hessey (one of the proprietors) was unable to do so; and, indeed, shortly before his death, applied to me for information on the subject.

By the aid of the gentlemen who contributed—each his quota—to the "London Magazine," it acquired much reputation, and a very considerable sale. During its career of five years, it had, for a certain style of essay, no superior (scarcely an equal) amongst the periodicals of the day. It was perhaps not so widely popular as works directed to the multitude, instead of to the select few, might have been; for thoughts and words addressed to the cultivated intellect only must always reckon upon limited success. Yet the magazine was successful, to an extent that preserved its proprietors from loss; perhaps not greatly beyond that point. Readers in those years were insignificant in number, compared with readers of the present time;
when almost all men are able to derive benefit from letters, and letters are placed within every one’s reach.

On the death of Mr. John Scott, the magazine, in July, 1821, passed into the hands of Messrs. Taylor and Hessey; the former being the gentleman who discovered the identity of Junius with Sir Philip Francis; the latter being simply very courteous to all, and highly respectable and intelligent.

John Scott was an able literary man. I do not remember much more of him than that he was a shrewd and, I believe, a conscientious writer; that he had great industry; was, generally, well read, and possessed a very fair amount of critical taste; that, like other persons, he had some prejudices, and that he was sometimes, moreover, a little hasty and irritable. Yet, he agreed well, as far as I know, with the regiment of mercenaries who marched under his flag.

When Taylor and Hessey assumed the management of the “London Magazine,” they engaged no editor. They were tolerably liberal paymasters: the remuneration for each page of prose (not very laborious) being, if the writer were a person of repute or ability, one pound; and for each page of verse, two pounds. Charles Lamb received (very fitly) for his brief and charming essays, two or three times the amount of the other writers. When they purchased the magazine, the proprietors opened a house, in Waterloo Place, for the better circulation of the publication.

It was there that the contributors met once a month, over an excellent dinner, given by the firm; and consulted and talked on literary matters together. These meetings were very social; all the
guests coming with a determination to please and to be pleased. I do not know that many important matters were arranged, for the welfare of the magazine, at these dinners; but the hearts of the contributors were opened, and with the expansion of the heart the intellect widened also. If there had been any shades of jealousy amongst them, they faded away before the light of the friendly carousal; if there was any envy, it died. All the fences and restraints of authorship were cast off, and the natural human being was disclosed.

Amongst others, Charles Lamb came to most of these dinners, always dressed in black (his old snuff-coloured suit having been dismissed for years); always kind and genial; conversational, not talkative, but quick in reply; eating little, and drinking moderately with the rest. Allan Cunningham, a stalwart man, was generally there; very Scotch in aspect, but ready to do a good turn to any one. His talk was not too abundant, although he was a voluminous writer in prose. His songs, not unworthy of being compared with even those of Burns, are (as everybody knows) excellent. His face shone at these festivities. Reynolds came always. His good temper and vivacity were like condiments at the feast. There also came, once or twice, the Rev. H. F. Cary, the quiet gentleness of whose face almost interfered with its real intelligence. Yet he spoke well and with readiness, on any subject that he chose to discuss. He was very intimate with Lamb, who latterly often dined with him, and was always punctual: "By Cot's plessing we will not be absent at the Grace" (he writes in 1834). Lamb's taste was very homely: he liked tripe and cow-heel, and once when he was suggesting a particular dish to his friend, he wrote "we
were talking of roast shoulder of mutton and onion sauce; but I scorn to prescribe hospitalities." Charles had great regard for Mr. Cary; and in his last letter (written on his death bed) he inquired for a book, which he was very uneasy about, and which he thought he had left at Mrs. Dyer's; "It is Mr. Cary's book (he says), and I would not lose it for the world." Cary was entirely without vanity; and he, who had traversed the ghastly regions of the Inferno, interchanged little courtesies on equal terms with workers who had never travelled beyond the pages of "The London Magazine." No one (it is said) who has performed anything great ever looks big upon it. Thomas Hood was there, almost silent, except when he shot out some irresistible pun, and disturbed the gravity of the company. Hood's labours were poetic, but his sports were passerine. It is remarkable that he, who was capable of jesting even on his own prejudices and predilections, should not (like Catullus) have brought down the "Sparrow," and enclosed him in an ode. Lamb admired and was very familiar with him. "What a fertile genius he is" (Charles Lamb writes to Bernard Barton), "and quiet withal." He then expatiates particularly on Hood's sketch of "Very Deaf indeed!" wherein a footpad has stopped an old gentleman, but cannot make him understand what he wants, although the fellow is firing a pistol into his ear trumpet: "you'd like him very much," he adds. Although Lamb liked him very much, he was a little annoyed once by Hood writing a comical essay in imitation of (and so much like) one of his own, that people generally thought that Elia had awakened in an unruly mood. Hazlitt attended once or twice; but he was a rather silent guest, rising into emphatic talk only when
some political discussion (very rare) stimulated him. Mr. De Quincy appeared at only one of these dinners. The expression of his face was intelligent, but cramped and somewhat peevish. He was self-involved, and did not add to the cheerfulness of the meeting. I have consulted this gentleman's three essays, of which Charles Lamb is professedly the subject; but I cannot derive from them anything illustrative of my friend Lamb's character. I have been mainly struck therein by De Quincy's attacks on Hazlitt; to whom the essays had no relation. I am aware that the two authors (Hazlitt and De Quincy) had a quarrel in 1823; Hazlitt having claimed certain theories or reasonings which the other had propounded as his own. In reply to Mr. De Quincy's claims to have had a familiar acquaintance with Charles Lamb (in 1821 and 1823), I have to observe that during these years (when I was almost continually with him) I never saw Mr. De Quincy at his house, and never heard Lamb speak of him or refer to his writings on any occasion. His visits to Lamb were surely very rare.

John Clare, a peasant from Northamptonshire, and a better poet than Bloomfield, was one of the visitors. He was thoroughly rustic; dressed in conspicuously country fashion, and was as simple as a daisy. His delight at the wonders of London formed the staple of his talk. This was often stimulated into extravagance by the facetious fictions of Reynolds. Poor fellow, he died insane.

About this time Lamb determined to leave London; and in 1823 he moved into Colebrook Cottage, Islington, a small detached white house of six rooms. "The New River, rather elderly by this time" (he says), "runs, if a moderate walking pace can be so termed, close to the foot of the house;
behind, is a spacious garden, &c., and the cheerful dining-room is studded all over and rough with old books: I feel like a great lord; never having had a house before."

From this place (which a friend of his christened "petty Venice") he used often to walk into London, to breakfast or dine with an acquaintance. For walking was always grateful to him. When confined to his room in the India House, he counted it amongst his principal recreations, and even now, with the whole world of leisure before him, it ranked amongst his daily enjoyments. By himself, or with an acquaintance, and subsequently with Hood's dog Dash (whose name should have been Rover), he wandered over all the roads and bypaths of the adjoining country. He was a peripatetic, in every way, beyond the followers of Aristotle. Walking occupied his energies; and when he returned home, he (like Sarah Battle), "unbent his mind over a book." "I cannot sit and think" is his phrase. If he now and then stopped for a minute at a rustic public house, tired with the excursive caprices of Dash—beguiled perhaps by the simple attractions of a village sign—I hold him excusable for the glass of porter which sometimes invigorated him in his fatigue.

In the course of these walks he traversed all the green regions which lie on the north and northeast of the metropolis. In London he loved to frequent those streets where the old bookshops were, Wardour Street, Princes Street, Seven Dials (where the shop has been long closed): he loved also Gray's Inn, in the garden of which he met Dodd, just before his death ("with his buffoon mask taken off"); and the Temple, into which you pass from the noise and crowd of Fleet Street,—into
the quiet and "ample squares and green recesses," where the old Dial, "the garden god of Christian gardens," then told of Time, and where the still living fountain sends up its song into the listening air.

Of the Essays of "Elia," written originally for the London Magazine, I feel it difficult to speak. They are the best amongst the good: his best. I see that they are genial, delicate, terse, full of thought and full of humour; that they are delightfully personal; and when he speaks of himself you cannot hear too much: that they are not imitations, but adoptions. We encounter his likings and fears, his fancies (his nature) in all. The words have an import never known before: the syllables have expanded their meaning, like opened flowers; the goodness of others is heightened by his own tenderness; and what is in nature hard and bad is qualified (qualified, not concealed) by the tender light of pity, which always intermingles with his own vision. Gravity and laughter, fact and fiction are heaped together, leavened in each case by charity and toleration; and all are marked by a wise humanity. Lamb's humour, I imagine, often reflected (sometimes, I hope, relieved) the load of pain that always weighed on his own heart.

The first of the Essays ("The South Sea House") appeared in the month of August, 1820: the last ("Captain Jackson") in November, 1824. Lamb's literary prosperity during this period was at the

1 The first Essays of Elia were published by Taylor and Hessey under the title "Elia," in 1823. The second Essays were, together with the "Popular Fallacies," collected and published under the title of "The Last Essays of Elia," by Moxon, in 1833.
highest; yet he was always loth to show himself too much before the world. After the first series of essays had been published (for they are divided into two parts) he feigned that he was dead, and caused the second series to be printed as by "a friend of the late Elia." These were written somewhat reluctantly. His words are, "To say the truth, it is time he [Elia] were gone. The humour of the thing, if ever there were much humour in it, was pretty well exhausted; and a two-years-and-a-half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom." It is thus modestly that he speaks of essays which have delighted all cultivated readers.

I want a phrase to express the combination of qualities which constitutes Lamb's excellence in letters. In the absence of this, I must content myself with referring to some of the papers which live most distinctly in my recollection. I will not transcribe any part of his eulogy on Hogarth; nor of his fine survey of "Lear," that grandest of all tragedies. They are well known to students of books. I turn for a moment to the Elia Essays only. In mere variety of subject (extant in a small space) they surpass almost all other essays. They are full of a witty melancholy. Many of them may be termed autobiographical, which trebles their interest with most readers.

Let me recollect:—How he mourns over the ruins of Blakesmoor (once his home on holidays), "reduced to an antiquity." How he stalks, ghost-like, through the desolate rooms of the South Sea House; or treads the avenues of the Temple (where the benchers, "supposed to have been children once"); are pacing the stony terraces. Then there is the inimitable Sarah Battle (unconquered
even by Chance), arming herself for the war of whist; and the young Africans, "preaching from their chimney-pulpits lessons of patience to mankind." If your appetite is keen, by all means visit Bobo, who invented roast pig: if gay, and disposed to saunter through the pleasant lanes of Hertfordshire, go to Mackery End, where the Gladmans and Brutons will bid you welcome: if grave, let your eyes repose on the face of dear old Bridget Elia, "in a season of distress the truest comforter." Should you wish to enlarge your humanity, place a few coins (maravedis) in the palm of one of the beggars (the "blind Tobits") of London, and try to believe his tales, histories or fables, as though they were the veritable stories (told by night) on the banks of the famous Tigris. Do not despise the poorest of the poor—even the writer of valentines; "All valentines are not foolish," as you may read in Elia's words; and "All fools' day" may cheer you, as the fool in "Lear" may make you wise and tolerant.

I could go on for many pages—to the poor relations, and the old books, and the old actors; to Dodd, who "dying put on the weeds of Dominic;" and to Mrs. Jordan and Dickey Suet (both whom I well remember); to Elliston, always on the stage; to Munden, with features ever changing; and to Liston with only one face; "But what a face!" I forbear. I pass also over Comberbatch (Coleridge), borrower of books, and Captain Jackson, and Barbara S. (Miss Kelly); and go to the rest of my little history.

The "Popular Fallacies," which in course of time followed, and were eventually added to the second series and re-published, are in manner essays also on a small scale, brief and dealing with abstract sub-
jects more than the "Elia." It may be interesting to know that Lamb's two favourites were "That home is home, though it is never so homely," and "That we should rise with the lark." In the first of these he enters into all the discomforts and terrible distractions of a poor man's home; in the second he descants on the luxuries of bed, and the nutritious value of dreams: "The busy part of mankind," he says, "are content to swallow their sleep by wholesale: we choose to linger in bed and digest our dreams." The last "Fallacy" is remarkable for a sentence which seems to refer to Alice W.:—"We were never much in the world," he says; "disappointment early struck a dark veil between us and its dazzling illusions:" he then concludes with "We once thought life to be something, but it has unaccountably fallen from us before its time. The sun has no purposes of ours to light us to. Why should we get up?"

It will be observed by the sagacious student of the entire Essays, that however quaint or familiar, or (rarely, however) sprinkled with classical allusions, they are never vulgar, nor commonplace, nor pedantic. They are "natural with a self-pleasing quaintness." The phrases are not affected; but are derived from our ancestors, now gone to another country; they are brought back from the land of shadows and made denizens of England, in modern times. Lamb's studies were the lives and characters of men: his humours and tragic meditations were generally dug out of his own heart; there are in them earnestness and pity and generosity and truth; and there is not a mean or base thought to be found throughout all.

In reading over these old essays, some of them affect me with a grave pleasure, amounting to pain.
I seem to import into them the very feeling with which he wrote them; his looks and movements are transfigured, and communicated to me by the poor art of the printer. His voice, so sincere and earnest, rings in my ear again. He was no Feignwell: apart from his joke, never was a man so real, and free from pretence. No one as I believe will ever taste the flavour of certain writers as he has done. He was the last true lover of Antiquity. Although he admitted a few of the beauties of modern times, yet in his stronger love he soared backwards to old acclivities, and loved to rest there. His essays, like his sonnets, are (as I have said) reflections of his own feelings. And so, I think, should essays generally be. A history or sketch of science,—or a logical effort, may help the reader some way up the ladder of learning; but they do not link themselves with his affections. I myself prefer the affections to the sciences. The story of the heart is the deepest of all histories; and Shakespeare is profounder and longer lived than Maclaurin or Malthus or Ricardo.

Lamb’s career throughout his later years was marked by an enlarged intercourse with society (it had never been confined to persons of his own way of thinking); by more frequent absences in the country and elsewhere; and by the reception of a somewhat wider body of acquaintance into his own house. He visited the Universities, in which he much delighted; he fraternized with many of the contributors to the "London Magazine." He received the letters and calls of his admirers; strangers and others. These were now much extended in number, by the publication of the Essays of Elia. I was in the habit of seeing him very frequently at his home; I met him also at Mr.
Cary's, at Leigh Hunt's, at Novello's, at Haydon's, once at Hazlitt's, and elsewhere. It must have been about this time that one of his visits (which always took place when the students were absent) was made to Oxford, where he met George Dyer, dreaming amongst the quadrangles, as he has described in his pleasant paper called "Oxford in the Vacation." Lamb's letters to correspondents are perhaps not quite so frequent now, as formerly. He writes occasionally to his old friends; to Wordsworth and Southey and Coleridge; also to Manning, who is still in China, and to whom in December, 1815, he had sent one of his best and most characteristic letters, describing the (imaginary) death and decrepitude of his correspondent's friends in England; although he takes care (the next day) to tell him that his first was a "lying letter." Indeed that letter itself, humorous as it is, is so obviously manufactured in the fabulous district of hyperbole, that it requires no disavowal. Manning, however, returns to England not long afterwards, and then the correspondence, if less humorous, is also less built up of improbabilities. He corresponds also with Mr. Barron Field, who is relegated to the Judicial Bench in New South Wales. Of him he inquires about "The Land of Thieves:” he wants to know if their poets be not plagiarists; and suggests that half the truth which his letters contain "will be converted into lies" before they reach his correspondent. Mr. Field is the gentleman to whom the pleasant paper on "Distant Correspondents” is addressed.

In 1822 Charles Lamb and his sister travelled as far as Paris; neither of them understanding a word of the French language. What tempted them to undertake this expedition I never knew. Per-
haps, as he formerly said, when journeying to the Lakes, it was merely a daring ambition to see "remote regions." The French journey seems to have been almost barren of good. He brought nothing back in his memory; and there is no account whatever of his adventures there. It has been stated that Mary Lamb was taken ill on the road; but I do not know this with certainty. From a short letter to Barron Field, it appears, indeed, that he thought Paris "a glorious picturesque old city," to which London looked "mean and new," although the former had "no Saint Paul's or Westminster Abbey." "I and sister," he writes, "are just returned from Paris. We have eaten frogs!—It has been such a treat. Nicest little delicate things; like Lilliputian rabbits." But this is all. His Reminiscences, whatever they were, do not enrich his correspondence. In conversation he used to tell how he had once intended to ask the waiter for an egg (œuf), but called, in his ignorance, for Eau de vie, and that the mistake produced so pleasant a result, that his enquiries afterwards for Eau de vie were very frequent.

In his travels to Cambridge, which began to be frequent about this time, his gains were greater. For there he first became acquainted with Miss Emma Isola, for whom, as I can testify, he at all times exhibited the greatest parental regard. When he and Mary Lamb first knew her, she was a little orphan girl, at school. They invited her to spend her holidays with them; and she went accordingly: the liking became mutual, and gradually deepened into great affection. The visit once made and so much relished, became habitual; and Miss Isola's holidays were afterwards regularly spent at the
Lambs' house. She used to take long walks with Charles, when his sister was too old and infirm to accompany him. Ultimately she was looked upon in the light of a child: and Charles Lamb when speaking of her (and he did this always tenderly), used invariably to call her "Our Emma." To show how deep his regard was, he at one time was invited to engage in some profitable engagement (1830) whilst Miss Isola was in bad health; but he at once replied, "Whilst she is in danger, and till she is out of it, I feel that I have no spirits for an engagement of any kind." Some years afterwards when she became well, and was about to be married, Lamb writes: "I am about to lose my only walk companion," whose mirthful spirits (as he prettily terms it) were "the youth of our house." "With my perfect approval, and more than concurrence," as he states, she was to be married to Mr. Moxon. Miss Emma Isola, who was, in Charles Lamb's phrase, "a very dear friend of ours;" remained his friend till death, and became eventually his principal legatee. After her marriage, Charles, writing to her husband (Nov., 1833), says: "Tell Emma I every day love her more, and miss her less. Tell her so, from her loving Uncle, as she has let me call myself." It was, as I believe, a very deep paternal affection.

The particulars disclosed by the letters of 1823 and 1824 are so generally unimportant, that it is unnecessary to refer to them. Lamb, indeed, became acquainted with the author of "Virginius" (Sheridan Knowles), with Mr. Macready, and with the writers in the "London Magazine" (which then had not been long established). And he appears gradually to discover that his work at the India House is wearisome, and complains of it in bitter
terms: "Thirty years have I served the Philistines" (he writes to Wordsworth) "and my neck is not subdued to the yoke." He confesses that he had once hoped to have a pension on "this side of absolute incapacity and infirmity," and to have walked out in the "fine Isaac Walton mornings, careless as a beggar, and walking, walking, and dying walking;" but he says, "the hope is gone. I sit like Philomel all day (but not singing), with my breast against this thorn of a desk." The character of his letters at this time is not generally lively; there is, he says, "a certain deadness to everything, which I think I may date from poor John's [his brother's] loss. Deaths overset one. Then there's Captain Burney gone. What fun has whist now?" He proceeds, "I am made up of queer points. My theory is to enjoy life: but my practice is against it." The only hope he has, he says, is "that some pulmonary affection may relieve me." — The success which attended the "Elia" Essays did not comfort him, nor the (pecuniary) temptations of the bookseller to renew them. "The spirit of the thing in my own mind is gone" (he writes). "Some brains," as Ben Jonson says, "will endure but one skimming." Notwithstanding his melancholy humour, however, there is Hope in the distance, which he does not see, and Freedom is not far off.

It was during this period of Lamb's life (1823) that the quarrel between him and his old friend Robert Southey took place. Southey had long been (as was well known) one of the most constant and efficient contributors to the "Quarterly Review;" and Lamb assigned to him the authorship of one of the Review articles, in which he himself was scantily complimented, and his friends Haz-
litt and Leigh Hunt denounced. Sir T. Talfourd thinks that Mr. Southey was not the author of the offending essay. Be that as it may, Lamb was then of opinion that his old Tory friend was the enemy. In a letter to Bernard Barton (July, 1823) he writes, "Southey has attacked 'Elia,' on the score of infidelity. He might have spared an old friend. I hate his Review, and his being a Reviewer;" but he adds "I love and respect Southey, and will not retort." However, in the end, irritated by the calumny, or (which is more probable) resenting compliments bestowed on himself at the expense of his friends, he sat down and penned his famous "Letter of Elia to Robert Southey, Esq.," which appeared in the "London Magazine" for October, 1823, and which was afterwards published amongst his collected letters.

This letter, I remember, produced a strong sensation in literary circles; and Mr. Southey's acquaintances smiled, and his enemies rejoiced at it. Indeed, the letter itself is a remarkable document. With much of Lamb's peculiar phraseology, it is argumentative and defends the imaginary weaknesses or faults, against which (as he guesses) the "Quarterly" reproofs had been levelled. The occasion having gone by, this letter has been dismissed from most minds; except that part of it which exhibits Lamb's championship on behalf of Hunt and Hazlitt; and which is more touching than anything to be found in controversial literature.

Lamb's letter was unknown to his sister, until after it appeared in the Magazine, it being his practice to write his letters in Leadenhall Street. It caused her a good deal of annoyance, when she saw it in print. It is pleasant to think, however,
that it was the means of restoring the old intimacy between Southey and Lamb, and also of strengthening the friendship between Lamb and Hazlitt, which some misunderstanding, at that time, had a little loosened.

When I was married (October, 1824) Lamb sent me a congratulatory letter; which, as it was not published by Sir T. Talfourd, and is, moreover, characteristic, I insert here, from the MS.

"My Dear Procter,—I do agnise a shame in not having been to pay my congratulations to Mrs. Procter and your happy self, but on Sunday (my only morning) I was engaged to a country walk; and in virtue of the hypostatical union between us, when Mary calls, it is understood that I call too, we being univocal.

"But indeed I am ill at these ceremonious inductions. I fancy I was not born with a call on my head, though I have brought one down upon it with a vengeance. I love not to pluck that sort of frail crude, but to stay its ripening into visits. In probability Mary will be at Southampton Row this morning, and something of that kind be matured between you, but in any case not many hours shall elapse before I shake you by the hand.

"Meantime give my kindest felicitations to Mrs. Procter, and assure her I look forward with the greatest delight to our acquaintance. By the way, the deuce a bit of cake has come to hand, which hath an inauspicious look at first, but I comfort myself that that Mysterious Service hath the property of Sacramental Bread, which mice cannot nibble, nor time moulder.

"I am married myself—to a severe step-wife—who keeps me, not at bed and board, but at desk
and board, and is jealous of my morning aberrations. I cannot slip out to congratulate kinder unions. It is well she leaves me alone o’ nights—the d—d Day-hag Business. She is even now peeping over me to see I am writing no Love Letters. I come, my dear—Where is the Indigo Sale Book?

“Twenty adieus, my dear friends, till we meet.

“Yours, most truly,

“C. Lamb.

“Leadenhall, Nov. 11th, ’24.”

The necessity for labour continued for some short time longer.—At last (in the beginning of the year 1825) deliverance came. Charles had previously intimated his wish to resign. The Directors of the East India House call him into their private room, and after complimenting him on his long and meritorious services, they suggest that his health does not appear to be good; that a little ease is expedient at his time of life, and they then conclude their conversation, by suddenly intimating their intention of granting him a pension for his life, of two-thirds of the amount of his salary; “a magnificent offer,” as he terms it. He is from that moment emancipated; let loose from all ties of labour, free to fly wheresoever he will. At the commencement of the talk Charles had had misgivings, for he was summoned into the “formidable back parlour,” he says, and thought that the Directors were about to intimate that they had no further occasion for his services. The whole scene seems like one of the summer sunsets, preceded by threatenings of tempest, when the dark piles of clouds are separated and disappear, lost and swallowed by the radiance which fills the whole length
and breadth of the sky, and looks as if it would be eternal. "I don't know what I answered," Lamb says, "between surprise and gratitude; but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and, at just ten minutes after eight, I went home—for ever."

At this time Lamb's salary was £600 per annum. The amount of two-thirds of this sum, therefore, would be an annuity of £400. But an annual provision was also made for his sister, in case she should survive him, and this occasioned a small diminution. In exact figures he was to receive £391 a year during the remainder of his life, and then an annuity was to become payable to Mary Lamb. His sensations, first of stupification, and afterwards of measureless delight, will be seen by reference to his exulting letters of this period.

First he writes to Wordsworth of "the good that has befallen me." These are his words: "I came home—for ever—on Tuesday last. The incomprehensibleness of my condition overwhelmed me. It was like passing from Time into Eternity."

"Mary wakes every morning with an obscure feeling that some good has happened to us."

To Bernard Barton his words are, "I have scarce steadiness of head to compose a letter. I am free, B. B.; free as air. I will live another fifty years."

"Would I could sell you some of my leisure! positively the best thing a man can have to do is—NOTHING: and next to that, perhaps, Good Works."—To Miss Hutchinson he writes, "I would not go back to my prison for seven years longer for £10,000 a-year. For some days I was staggered, and could not comprehend the magnitude of my deliverance; was confused, giddy.
But these giddy feelings have gone away, and my weather-glass stands at a degree or two above ‘Content.’ All being holidays, I feel as if I had none; as they do in Heaven, where ’tis all Red Letter days.”

Lamb’s discharge or relief was timely and graciously bestowed. It opened a bright vista through which he beheld (in hope) many years of enjoyment; scenes in which his spirit, rescued from painful work, had only to disport itself in endless delights. He had well earned his discharge. He had laboured without cessation for thirty-three years; had been diligent, and trusted—a labourer worthy of his hire. And the consciousness of this long and good service must have mingled with his reward and sweetened it. It is a great thing to have earned your meal—your rest, whatever may be the payment in full for your deserts. You have not to force up gratitude from oblivious depths, day by day, for undeserved bounty. In Lamb’s case it happened, unfortunately, that the activity of mind which had procured his repose, tended afterwards to disqualify him from enjoying it. The leisure that he had once reckoned on so much, exceeded, when it came, the pains of the old counting-house travail. It is only the imbecile, or those brought up in complete laziness, who can encounter successfully the monotony of “nothing to do,” and can slumber away their lives unharmed amongst the dumb weeds and flowers.

In the course of a short time it appeared that he was unable to enjoy so perfectly as he had anticipated, his golden time of “Nothing to do,” his Liberia. He therefore took long walks into the country. He also acquired the companionship of the large dog, Dash, much given to wandering, to
whose erratic propensities (Lamb walking at the rate of fourteen miles a day) he eventually became a slave. The rambling, inconstant dog rendered the clear serene day of leisure almost turbid; and he was ultimately (in order to preserve for Charles some little remaining enjoyment), bestowed upon another master. Lamb was always (as I have said) fond of walking, and he had some vague liking, I suppose, for free air and green pastures; although he had no great relish specially for the flowers and ornaments of the country. I have often walked with him, in the neighbourhood of our great city; and I do not think that he ever treasured up in his memory the violets (or other flowers), the songs of birds, or the pictures of sheep or kine dotting the meadows. Neither his conversation nor writings afforded evidence that he had done so. It is not easy therefore to determine what the special attractions were that drew him out of London, which he loved, into the adjoining country, where his walks oftenest lay.

At the time of Lamb's deliverance from office labour, he was living in Colebrook Row. It was there that George Dyer, whose blindness and absence of mind rendered it almost dangerous for him to wander unaccompanied about the suburbs of London, came to visit him on one occasion. By accident, instead of entering the house door, Dyer's aqueous instincts led him towards the water, and in a moment he had plunged overhead in the New River. I happened to go to Lamb's house about an hour after his rescue and restoration to dry land, and met Miss Lamb in the passage in a state of great alarm: she was whimpering, and could only utter "Poor Mr. Dyer! Poor Mr. Dyer," in tremulous tones. I went upstairs, aghast,
and found that the involuntary diver had been placed in bed, and that Miss Lamb had administered brandy and water, as a well-established preventive against cold. Dyer, unaccustomed to anything stronger than the "crystal spring," was sitting upright in the bed, perfectly delirious. His hair had been rubbed up, and stood out like so many needles of iron grey. He did not (like Falstaff) babble of "green fields," but of the "watery Neptune." "I soon found out where I was," he cried out to me, laughing; and then he went wandering on, his words taking flight into regions where no one could follow. Charles Lamb has commemorated this immersion of his old friend in his (Elia) essay of "Amicus redivivus."

In the summer of 1826 Lamb published, in "Blackwood's Magazine," a little drama in one act, entitled "The Wife's Trial." It was founded on Crabbe's poetical tale of "The Confidant;" and contains the germ of a plot, which undoubtedly might have been worked out with more effect, if Lamb had devoted sufficient labour to that object.

Amongst the remarkable persons whom Charles became acquainted with, in these years, was Edward Irving. Lamb used to meet him at Coleridge's house at Highgate, and elsewhere; and he came to the conclusion that he was (as indeed he was) a fine sincere spirited man, terribly slandered. Edward Irving, who issued, like a sudden light, from the obscure little town of Annan, in Scotland, acquired, in the year 1822, a wide reputation in London. He was a minister of the Scotch Church, and before he came to England had acted as an assistant preacher to Dr. Chalmers. In one of Charles's letters (in 1835)
to Bernard Barton (who had evidently been measuring Irving by a low Quaker standard), he takes the opportunity of speaking of the great respect that he entertained for the Scotch minister. “Let me adjure you” (writes Charles), “have no doubt of Irving. Let Mr. — [?] drop his disrespect.”—“Irving has prefixed a dedication, of a missionary character, to Coleridge—most beautiful, cordial, and sincere. He there acknowledges his obligations to S. T. C., at whose Gamaliel feet he sits weekly, rather than to all men living.” Again he writes: “Some friend said to Irving, ‘This will do you no good’ (no good in worldly repute). ‘That is a reason for doing it,’ quoth Irving. I am thoroughly pleased with him. He is firm, out-speaking, intrepid, and docile as a pupil of Pythagoras.” In April, 1825, Lamb writes to Wordsworth to the same effect. “Have you read the noble dedication of Irving’s Missionary Sermons?” he inquires; and then he repeats Irving’s fine answer to the suggested impolicy of publishing his book with its sincere prefix.—Poor Edward Irving! whom I always deeply respected, and knew intimately for some years, and who was one of the best and truest men whom it has been my good fortune to meet in life! He entered London amidst the shouts of his admirers, and he departed in the midst of contumely; sick and sad, and malignèd, and misunderstood; going back to his dear native Scotland only to die. The time has long passed for discussing the truths or errors of Edward Irving’s peculiar creed; but there can be no doubt that he himself was true and faithful till death; and that he preached only what he entirely believed. And what can man do more?—If he was wrong, his errors arose from his extreme modesty,
his extreme veneration, for the subject to which he raised his thoughts.

In the last year of Edward Irving's life (1834), he was counselled by his physician to pass the next winter in a milder climate—that "it was the only safe thing for him." Prevented from ministering in his own church, where "he had become an embarrassment," he travels into the rural places, subdued and chastened by his weakness,—to the Wye and the Severn—to the fine mountains and pleasant places of Wales. Sometimes he thinks himself better. He quits London (for ever) in the early part of September, and on the 23rd of that month he writes to his wife that he is "surely better, for his pulse has come to be under 100." He passes by Cader Idris and Snowdon—by Bedgelert to Bangor, "a place of repose;" but gets wet whilst viewing the Menai Bridge, and had "a fevered night;" yet he is able to droop on to Liverpool. Thence (the love of his native land drawing him on) he goes northwards, instead of to the south. He reaches Glasgow, where "he thinks of organizing a church;" although Dr. Darling "decidedly says that he cannot humanly live over the winter." Yet still he goes on with his holy task; he writes "pastoral letters," and preaches, and prays, and offers kind advice. His friends, from Kirkcaldy and elsewhere, come to see him, where "for a few weeks still, he is visible, about Glasgow. In the sunshine—in a lonely street, his gaunt gigantic figure rises feebly against the light." At last he lies down on "the bed from which he is never to rise;" his mind wanders, and his articulation becomes indistinct; but he is occasionally understood, and is heard murmuring (in Hebrew) parts of the 23rd Psalm, "The Lord is my shep-
herd: He leadeth me beside the still waters.”  And thus gradually sinking, at the close of a gloomy Sunday night in December, he dies.

Mr. Thomas Carlyle, his friend (the friend of his youth), has written an eloquent epitaph upon him; not partial, for they differed in opinion—but eloquent, and very touching. I read it over once or twice in every year. Edward Irving’s last words, according to his statement, were, “In life and in death I am the Lord’s.” Carlyle then adds:—“But for Irving, I had never known what the communion of man with man means. He was the freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul mine ever came in contact with; the best man I have ever (after trial enough) found in this world, or now hope to find.”

So Edward Irving went to the true and brave enthusiasts who have gone before him. He died on his final Sabbath (7th December, 1834), and left the world and all its troubles behind him.
CHAPTER VII.

Specimen of Lamb's humour—Death of Mr. Norris—Garrick Plays—Letters to Barton—Opinions on Books—Breakfast with Mr. N. P. Willis—Moves to Enfield—Caricature of Lamb—Albums and Acrostics—Pains of Leisure—The Barton Correspondence—Death of Hazlitt—Munden's Acting and Quitting the Stage—Lamb becomes a Boarder—Moves to Edmonton—Metropolitan Attachments—Death of Coleridge—Lamb's Fall and Death—Death of Mary Lamb—POSTSCRIPT.

With the expiration of the "London Magazine," Lamb's literary career terminated. A few trifling contributions to the "New Monthly," and other periodicals, are scarcely sufficient to qualify this statement.

It may be convenient, in this place, to specify some of those examples of humour and of jocose speech, for which Charles Lamb in his lifetime was well known. These (not his best thoughts) can be separated from the rest, and may attract the notice of the reader, here and there, and relieve the tameness of a not very eventful narrative.

It is possible to define wit (which, as Mr. Coleridge says, is "impersonal"), and humour also; but it is not easy to distinguish the humour of one man from that of all other humorists, so as to bring his special quality clearly before the appre-
hension of the reader. Perhaps the best (if not the most scientific) way, might be to produce specimens of each. In Charles Lamb’s case, instances of his humour are to be found in his essays, in his sayings (already partially reported), and throughout his letters; where they are very frequent. They are often of the composite order, in which humour and wit and (sometimes) pathos are intermingled. Sometimes they merely exhibit the character of the man.

He once said of himself that his biography "would go into an epigram." His sayings require greater space. Some of those which have been circulated are apocryphal. The following are taken chiefly from his letters, and from my own recollections.

—In his exultation, on being released from his thirty-four years of labour at the India House, he says "Had I a little son, I would christen him 'Nothing to do.'" (This is in "the Superannuated man.")

Speaking of Don Quixote he calls him "the errant Star of Knighthood, made more tender by eclipse."

On being asked by a schoolmistress for some sign indicative of her calling, he recommended "The Murder of the Innocents."

I once said something in his presence, which I thought possessed smartness. He commended me with a stammer: "Very well, my dear boy, very well; Ben (taking a pinch of snuff), Ben Jonson has said worse things than that—and and b—b—better."!

1 This, with a small variation, is given in Mr. Thomas Moore's autobiography. I suppose I must have repeated it to him, and that he forgot the precise words.
His young chimney sweepers "from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys) in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind."

His saying to Martin Burney has been often repeated: "Oh Martin, if dirt were trumps, what a hand you would hold!"

To Coleridge, "Bless you, old sophist, who next to human nature taught me all the corruption I was capable of knowing."

To Mr. Gilman, a surgeon ("query Killman?"), he writes, "Coleridge is very bad, but he wonderfully picks up, and his face, when he repeats his verses, hath its ancient glory: an archangel a little damaged."

To Wordsworth (who was superfluously solemn), he writes, "Some d—d people have come in, and I must finish abruptly. By d—d, I only mean deuced."

The second son of George the Second, it was said, had a very cold and ungenial manner. Lamb stammered out in his defence that "this was very natural in the Duke of Cu-Cum-ber-land."

To Bernard Barton, of a person of repute: "There must be something in him. Such great names imply greatness. Which of us has seen Michael Angelo's things? yet which of us dis-believes his greatness?"

To Mrs. H., of a person eccentric, "Why does not his guardian angel look to him? He deserves one—may be he has tired him out."

"Charles," said Coleridge to Lamb, "I think you have heard me preach?" "I n—n—never heard you do anything else," replied Lamb.

One evening Coleridge had consumed the whole time in talking of some "regenerated" orthodoxy.
Leigh Hunt, who was one of the listeners, on leaving the house, expressed his surprise at the prodigality and intensity of Coleridge's religious expressions. Lamb tranquillized him by "Ne—ne—never mind what Coleridge says; he's full of fun."

There were, &c., &c., "and at the top of all, Hunger (eldest, strongest of the Passions), predominant, breaking down the stony fences of shame."

The Bank, the India House and other rich traders look insultingly on the old deserted South Sea House, as on "their poor neighbour out of business."

To a Frenchman, setting up Voltaire's character in opposition to that of Christ, Lamb asserted that "Voltaire was a very good Jesus Christ—for the French."

Of a Scotchman. "His understanding is always at its meridian. Between the affirmative and the negative there is no border land with him. You cannot hover with him on the confines of truth."

On a book of Coleridge's nephew he writes, "I confess he has more of the Sterne about him than the Sternhold. But he saddens into excellent sense, before the conclusion."

As to a monument being erected for Clarkson, in his lifetime, he opposes it; and argues, "Goodness blows no trumpet, nor desires to have it blown. We should be modest for a modest man."

"M. B. is on the top scale of my friendship's ladder, which an angel or two is still climbing: and some, alas, descending."

A fine sonnet of his (The Gipsy's Malison) being refused publication, he exclaimed, "Hang the age! I will write for Antiquity."
Once, whilst waiting in the Highgate stage a woman came to the door, and inquired in a stern voice, "Are you quite full inside?" "Yes, ma'am," said Charles, in meek reply, "quite; that plateful of Mrs. Gillman's pudding has quite filled us."

Mrs. K., after expressing her love for her young children, added, tenderly, "And how do you like babies, Mr. Lamb?" His answer, immediate, almost precipitate, was "Boi-boi-boiled, ma'am."

Hood tempting Lamb to dine with him, said, "We have a hare." "And many friends?" inquired Lamb.

It being suggested that he would not sit down to a meal with the Italian witnesses at the Queen's trial, Lamb rejected the imputation, asserting that he would sit with anything, except a hen or a tailor.

Of a man too prodigal of lampoons and verbal jokes, Lamb said, threateningly, "I'll Lamb-pun him."

On two Prussians of the same name being accused of the same crime, it was remarked as curious that they were not in any way related to each other. "A mistake," said he, "they are cozens german."

An old lady, fond of her dissenting minister, wearied Lamb by the length of her praises. I speak, because I know him well, said she. "Well, I don't;" replied Lamb; "I don't; but d——n him, at a 'venture.'"

The Scotch, whom he did not like, ought, he said, to have double punishment; and to have fire without brimstone.

Southey, in 1799, showed him a dull poem on a
rose; Lamb's criticism was "Your rose is insipid: it has neither thorns nor sweetness."

A person sending an unnecessarily large sum with a lawyer's brief, Lamb said it was 'a fee simple.'"

Mr. H. C. Robinson, just called to the bar, tells him, exultingly, that he is retained in a cause in the King's Bench. "Ah," said Lamb, "the great first cause, least understood."

Of a pun, Lamb says it is "a noble thing per se. It is entire. It fills the mind; it is as perfect as a sonnet; better. It limps ashamed, in the train and retinue of humour."¹

¹ I fear that I have not, in all the foregoing instances, set forth with sufficient precision, the grounds or premises upon which the jests were founded. There were moreover, various other sayings of Lamb, which do not come into the above catalogue; as where—when enjoying a pipe with Dr. Parr, that Divine inquired how he came to acquire the love of smoking so much, he replied, "I toiled after it as some people do after virtue."—When Godwin was expatiating on the benefit of unlimited freedom of thought, especially in matters of religion, Lamb, who did not like this, interrupted him by humming the little child's song of "Old father Longlegs won't say his prayers," adding, violently, "Throw him down stairs!"—He consoles Mr. Crabb Robinson, suffering under tedious rheumatism, by writing "Your doctor seems to keep you under the long cure."—To Wordsworth, in order to explain that his friend A was in good health, he writes, "A is well, he is proof against weather, ingratitude, meat underdone, and every weapon of fate." The story of Lamb replying to some one, who insisted very strenuously on some uninteresting circumstances being "a matter of fact," by saying that he was "a matter of lie" man, is like Leigh Hunt, who in opposing the frequent confessions of "I'm in love," asserted, in a series of verses, that he was "In hate."—Charles hated noise and fuss and fine words, but never hated any person. Once when he had said "I hate Z," some one present remonstrated with him, "Why, you have never seen him." "No," replied Lamb, "certainly not; I never could hate any man that I have once seen."—Being
Lamb’s puns, as far as I recollect, were not frequent; and, except in the case of a pun, it is difficult to divest a good saying of the facts surrounding it, without impoverishing the saying itself. Lamb’s humour is generally embedded in the surrounding sense; and cannot often be disentangled without injury.

I have said that the proprietorship of the “London Magazine,” in the year 1821, became vested in Messrs. Taylor and Hessey, under whom it became a social centre for the meeting of many literary men. The publication, however, seems to have interfered with the ordinary calling of the booksellers; and the sale was not therefore (I suppose) sufficiently important to remunerate them for the disturbance of their general trade. At all events, asked how he felt when amongst the lakes and mountains of Cumberland, he replied that he was obliged to think of the Ham and Beef shop near Saint Martin’s Lane; this was in order to bring down his thoughts from their almost too painful elevation, to the sober regions of every day life.

In the foregoing little history, I have set forth such facts as tend, in my opinion, to illustrate my friend’s character. One anecdote I have omitted, and it should not be forgotten. Lamb, one day, encountered a small urchin loaded with a too heavy package of grocery. It caused him to tremble and stop. Charles inquired where he was going, took (although weak) the load upon his own shoulders, and managed to carry it to Islington, the place of destination. Finding that the purchaser of the grocery was a female, he went with the urchin before her, and expressed a hope that she would intercede with the poor boy’s master, in order to prevent his being overweighted in future. “Sir,” said the dame, after the manner of Tisiphone, frowning upon him, “I buy my sugar and have nothing to do with the man’s manner of sending it.” Lamb at once perceived the character of the purchaser, and taking off his hat, said, humbly, “Then I hope, ma’am, you’ll give me a drink of small beer.” This was of course refused. He afterwards called upon the grocer, on the boy’s behalf. With what effect I do not know.
it was sold to Mr. Henry Southern, the editor of "The Retrospective Review," at the expiration of 1825, after having been in existence during five entire years. In Mr. Southern's hands, under a different system of management, it speedily ceased.

In 1826 (January) Charles Lamb suffered great grief from the loss of a very old friend, Mr. Norris. It may be remembered that he was one of the two persons who went to comfort Lamb when his mother so suddenly died. Mr. Norris had been one of the officers of the Inner Temple or Christ's Hospital, and had been intimate with the Lambs for many years; and Charles, when young, used always to spend his Christmases with him. "He was my friend and my father's friend," Lamb writes, "all the life I can remember. I seem to have made foolish friendships ever since. Old as I am, in his eyes, I was still the child he first knew me. To the last, he called me 'Charley.' I have none to call me Charley now. He was the last link that bound me to the Temple."

It was after his death that Lamb once more resorted to the British Museum; which he had been in the habit of frequenting formerly, when his first "Dramatic Specimens" were published. Now he went there to make other extracts from the old plays. These were entitled "The Garrick Plays," and were bestowed upon Mr. Hone, who was poor, and were by him published in his "Every Day Book." Subsequently they were collected by Charles himself, and formed a supplement to the earlier "Specimens." Lamb's labours in this task were by no means trivial. "I am now going through a course of reading" (of old plays), he writes, "I have two thousand to go through."

Lamb's correspondence with his Quaker friend,
Bernard Barton ("the busy B," as Hood called him), whose knowledge of the English drama was confined to Shakespeare and Miss Baillie, went on constantly. His letters to this gentleman comprised a variety of subjects, on most of which Charles offers him good advice. Sometimes they are less personal, as where he tells him that "six hundred have been sold of Hood’s book; while Sion’s songs do not disperse so quickly;" and where he enters (very ably) into the defects and merits of Martin’s pictures, Belshazzar and Joshua; and ventures an opinion as to what Art should and should not be. He is strenuous in advising him not to forsake the bank (where he is a clerk) and throw himself on what the chance of employ by booksellers would afford. "Throw yourself, rather, from the steep Tarpeian rock, headlong upon the iron spikes. Keep to your bank, and your bank will keep you. Trust not to the Public," he says. Then, referring to his own previous complaints of official toil, he adds, "I retract all my fond complaints. Look on them as lovers’ quarrels. I was but half in earnest. Welcome, dead timber of a desk that gives me life. A little grumbling is wholesome for the spleen; but in my inner heart I do approve and embrace this our close but unharassing way of life."

Lamb’s opinions on books, as well as on conduct, making some deduction for his preference of old writers, is almost always sound. When he is writing to Mr. Walter Wilson, who is editing De Foe, he says of the famous author of "Robinson Crusoe":"

"In appearance of truth his works exceed any works of fiction that I am acquainted with. It is perfect illusion. It is like reading evidence in a court of justice. There is all the minute detail of
a log-book in it. Facts are repeated in varying phrases till you cannot choose but believe them. His liking for books (rather than his criticism on them) is shown frequently in his letters. "Oh! to forget Fielding, Steele, &c., and to read 'em new," he says. Of De Foe, "His style is everywhere beautiful, but plain and homely." Again, he speaks of "Fielding, Smollett, Sterne,—great Nature's stereotypes." "Milton," he says, "almost requires a solemn service of music to be played before you enter upon him." Of Shenstone he speaks as "the dear author of the School-mistress;" and so on from time to time, as occasion prompts, of Bunyan, Isaac Walton, and Jeremy Taylor, and Fuller and Sir Philip Sidney, and others in affectionate terms. These always relate to English authors. Lamb, although a good Latinist, had not much of that which ordinarily passes under the name of Learning. He had little knowledge of languages, living or dead. Of French, German, Italian, &c., he knew nothing; and in Greek his acquirements were very moderate. These children of the tongues were never adopted by him; but in his own Saxon English he was a competent scholar, a lover, nice, discriminative, and critical.

The most graphic account of Lamb at a somewhat later period of his life appears in Mr. N. P. Willis's "Pencillings by the Way." He had been invited by a gentleman in the Temple, Mr. R— (Robinson?), to meet Charles Lamb and his sister at breakfast. The Lambs lived at that time "a little way out of London," and were not quite punctual. At last, they enter; "the gentleman in black small clothes and gaiters, short and very slight in person; his head set on his shoulders with a thoughtful forward bend, his hair just sprinkled
with grey, a beautiful deep set eye, an aquiline nose, and a very indescribable mouth. Whether it expressed most humour or feeling, good nature or a kind of whimsical peevishness, or twenty other things which passed over it by turns, I cannot in the least be certain." This is Mr. Willis's excellent picture of Lamb at that period. The guest places a large arm-chair for Mary Lamb; Charles pulls it away, saying, gravely, "Mary, don't take it; it looks as if you were going to have a tooth drawn." Miss Lamb was at that time very hard of hearing, and Charles took advantage of her temporary deafness to impute various improbabilities to her, which however were so obvious as to render any denial or explanation unnecessary. Willis told Charles that he had bought a copy of the "Elia" in America, in order to give to a friend. "What did you give for it?" asked Lamb. "About seven and sixpence." "Permit me to pay you that," said Lamb, counting out the money with earnestness on the table; "I never yet wrote anything that could sell. I am the publisher's ruin. My last poem won't sell,—not a copy. Have you seen it?" No; Willis had not. "It's only eighteen-pence, and I'll give you sixpence toward it," said Lamb; and he described where Willis would find it, "sticking up in a shop window in the Strand." Lamb ate nothing; but inquired anxiously for some potted fish, which Mr. R—— used to procure for him. There was none in the house; he therefore asked to see the cover of the pot which had contained it; he thought it would do him good. It was brought, and on it was a picture of the fish. Lamb kissed it, and then left the table and began to wander about the room, with an uncertain step, &c.
This visit must have taken place, I suppose, at or after the time when Lamb was living at Colebrook Cottage; and the breakfast took place probably in Mr. Henry Crabb Robinson's chambers in the Temple, where I first met Wordsworth.

In the year 1827 Lamb moved into a small house at Enfield, a "gamboge coloured house," he calls it, where I and other friends went to dine with him; but it was too far from London, except for rare visits.—It was rather before that time that a very clever caricature of him had been designed and engraved ("scratched on copper," as the artist termed it) by Mr. Brook Pulham. It is still extant; and although somewhat ludicrous and hyperbolical in the countenance and outline, it certainly renders a likeness of Charles Lamb. The nose is monstrous, and the limbs are dwarfed and attenuated. Lamb himself, in a letter to Bernard Barton (10th August, 1827), adverts to it in these terms, "'Tis a little sixpenny thing: too like by half, in which the draughtsman has done his best to avoid flattery." Charles's hatred for annuals and albums was continually breaking out, "I die of albophobia." "I detest to appear in an annual," he writes; "I hate the paper, the type, the gloss, the dandy plates." "Coleridge is too deep," again he says, "among the prophets, the gentleman annuals." "If I take the wings of the morning, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, there will albums be." To Southey he writes about this time, "I have gone lately into the acrostic line. I find genius declines with me; but I get clever." The reader readily appreciates the distinction, which the humorist thus cleverly (more than cleverly) makes. In proof of his subdued quality, however, under the acrostical tyranny, I quote two little
unpublished specimens addressed to the Misses Locke, whom he had never seen.

To M. L. [Mary Locke.]

Must I write with pen unwilling,
And describe those graces killing,
Rightly, which I never saw?
Yes—it is the album's law.

Let me then invention strain,
On your excelling grace to feign,
Cold is fiction. I believe it
Kindly as I did receive it;
Even as I. F.'s tongue did weave it.

To S. L. [Sarah Locke.]

Shall I praise a face unseen,
And extol a fancied mien,
Rave on visionary charm,
And from shadows take alarm!
Hatred hates without a cause.

Love may love without applause,
Or, without a reason given,
Charmed be with unknown heaven,
Keep the secret, though, unmocked,
Ever in your bosom Locked.

After the transfer to Mr. Southern of the "London Magazine," Lamb was prevailed upon to allow some short papers to be published in the "New Monthly Magazine." They were entitled "Popular Fallacies," and were subsequently published conjointly with the "Elia Essays." He also sent brief contributions to the "Athenæum" and the "Englishman," and wrote some election squibs for Serjeant Wilde, during his then contest for "Newark." But his animal spirits were not so elastic as formerly, when his time was divided between official work and companionable leisure;
the latter acting as a wholesome relief to his mind when wearied by labour.

On this subject hear him speaking to Bernard Barton, to whom, as to others, he had formerly complained of his harassing duties at the India House, and of his delightful prospect of leisure. Now he writes, "Deadly long are the days, with but half an hour's candle-light and no fire-light. The streets, the shops remain, but old friends are gone." "I assure you" (he goes on) "no work is worse than overwork. The mind preys on itself, the most unwholesome food. I have ceased to care almost for anybody." To remedy this tedium, he tries visiting; for the houses of his old friends were always open to him, and he had a welcome everywhere. But this visiting will not revive him. His spirits descended to zero: below it. He is convinced that happiness is not to be found abroad. It is better to go "to my hole at Enfield, and hide like a sick cat in my corner." Again, he says, "Home I have none. Never did the waters of heaven pour down on a forlorn head. What I can do, and overdo, is to walk. I am a sanguinary murderer of time. But the snake is vital. Your forlorn—C. L." These are his meditations in 1829, four years only after he had rushed abroad, full of exaltation and delight, from the prison of a "work-a-day" life, into the happy gardens of boundless leisure. Time, which was once his friend, had become his enemy. His letters, which were always full of goodness, generally full of cheerful humour, sink into discontent. "I have killed an hour or two with this poor scrawl," he writes. It is unnecessary to inflict upon the reader all the points of the obvious moral, that obtrudes itself at this period of Charles Lamb's history. It is clear that
the Otiosa Eternitas was pressing upon his days, and he did not know how to find relief. Although a good Latin scholar, indeed fond of writing letters in Latin, he did not at this period resort to classical literature. I heard him indeed once (and once only) quote the well-known Latin verse from the Georgics, "O Fortunatos," &c., but generally he showed himself careless about Greeks and Romans; and when (as Mr. Moxon states) "a traveller brought him some acorns from an ilex that grew over the tomb of Virgil, he valued them so little that he threw them at the hackney coachmen as they passed by his window."

I have been much impressed by Lamb's letters to Bernard Barton, which are numerous, and which, taken altogether, are equal to any which he has written. The letters to Coleridge do not exhibit so much care or thought; nor those to Wordsworth or Manning, nor to any others of his intellectual equals. These correspondents could think and speculate for themselves, and they were accordingly left to their own resources. "The Volsces have much corn." But Bernard Barton was in a different condition: he was poor. His education had been inferior, his range of reading and thinking had been very confined, his knowledge of the English drama being limited to Shakespeare and Miss Baillie. He seems however to have been an amiable man, desirous of cultivating the power, such as it was, which he possessed; and Lamb therefore lavished upon him—the poor Quaker clerk of a Suffolk Banker—all that his wants or ambition required; excellent worldly counsel; sound thoughts upon literature and art; critical advice on his own verses; letters, which in their actual value surpass the wealth of many
more celebrated collections. Lamb's correspondence with Barton, whom he had first known in 1822, continued until his death.

In 1830 (September 18th) Hazlitt died. It is unnecessary to enter into any enumeration of his remarkable qualities. They were known to all his friends, and to some of his enemies. In Sir Edward Lytton's words, "He went down to the dust, without having won the crown for which he so bravely struggled. He who had done so much for the propagation of thought, left no stir upon the surface when he sank." I will not in this place attempt to weave the moral which nevertheless lies hid in his unrequited life. At that time the number of Lamb's old intimates was gradually diminished. The eternally recurring madness of his sister was more frequent. The hopelessness of it—if hope indeed ever existed—was more palpable, more depressing. His own spring of mind was fast losing its power of rebound. He felt the decay of the active principle, and now confined his efforts to morsels of criticism, to verses for albums, and small contributions to periodicals, which (excepting only the "Popular Fallacies") it has not been thought important enough to reprint. To the editor of the "Athenaeum" indeed he laments sincerely over the death of Munden. This was in February, 1832, and was a matter that touched his affections. "'He was not an actor" (he writes) but something better." To a reader of the present day,—even to a contemporary of Lamb himself, there was something almost amounting to extravagance in the terms of his admiration. Yet Munden was, in his way, a remarkable man; and although he was an actor in farce, he often stood aloof and beyond the farce itself. The play was
a thing merely on which to hang his own conceptions. These did not arise from the drama; but were elsewhere cogitated; and were interleaved, as it were, with the farce or comedy which served as an excuse for their display. The actor was to all intents and purposes sui generis.

To speak of my own impressions, Munden did not affect me much in some of his earlier performances; for then he depended on the play. Afterwards, when he took the matter into his own hands, and created personages who owed little or nothing to the playwright, then he became an inventor. He rose with the occasion. *Sic ivit ad astra.* In the drama of "Modern Antiquities," especially, space was allowed him for his movements. The words were nothing. The prosperity of the piece depended exclusively on the genius of the actor. Munden enacted the part of an old man credulous beyond ordinary credulity; and when he came upon the stage there was in him an almost sublime look of wonder, passing over the scene and people around him, and settling apparently somewhere beyond the moon. What he believed in, improbable as it was to mere terrestrial visions, you at once conceived to be quite possible,—to be true. The sceptical idiots of the play pretend to give him a phial nearly full of water. He is assured that this contains Cleopatra's tear. Well; who can disprove it? Munden evidently recognized it. "What a large tear!" he exclaimed. Then they place in his hands a druidical harp, which to vulgar eyes might resemble a modern gridiron. He touches the chords gently: "pipes to the spirit ditties of no tone;" and you imagine Æolian strains. At last, William Tell's cap is produced. The people who affect to cheat him,
apparently cut the rim from a modern hat, and place the skull-cap in his hands; and then begins the almost finest piece of acting that I ever witnessed. Munden accepts the accredited cap of Tell, with confusion and reverence. He places it slowly and solemnly on his head, growing taller in the act of crowning himself. Soon he swells into the heroic size; a great archer; and enters upon his dreadful task. He weighs the arrow carefully; he tries the tension of the bow, the elasticity of the string; and finally, after a most deliberate aim, he permits the arrow to fly, and looks forward at the same time with intense anxiety. You hear the twang, you see the hero's knitted forehead, his eagerness; you tremble; — at last you mark his calmer brow, his relaxing smile, and are satisfied that the son is saved! — It is difficult to paint in words this extraordinary performance, which I have several times seen; but you feel that it is transcendent. You think of Sagittarius, in the broad circle of the Zodiac; you recollect that archery is as old as Genesis: you are reminded that Ishmael, the son of Hagar, wandered about the Judean deserts and became an archer.

The old actor is now dead; but on his last performance, when he was to act Sir Robert Bramble, on the night of his taking final leave of the stage, Lamb greatly desired to be present. He had always loved the actors, especially the old actors, from his youth; and this was the last of the Romans. Accordingly Lamb and his sister went to the Drury Lane; but there being no room in the ordinary parts of the house (boxes or pit), Munden obtained places for his two visitors, in the orchestra, close to the stage. He saw them carefully ushered in and well posted; then acted
with his usual vigour, and no doubt enjoyed the plaudits wrung from a thousand hands. Afterwards, in the interval between the comedy and the farce, he was seen to appear cautiously, diffidently, at the low door of the orchestra (where the musicians enter) and beckon to his friends; who then perceived that he was armed with a mighty pot of porter, for their refreshment. Lamb, grateful for the generous liquid, drank heartily but not ostentatiously, and returned the pot of beer to Munden, who had waited to remove it from fastidious eyes. He then retreated into the farce, and then he retired—for ever.

After Munden's retirement Lamb almost entirely forsook the theatre; and his habits became more solitary. He had not relinquished society, nor professedly narrowed the circle of his friends. But insensibly his visitors became fewer in number and came less frequently. Some had died; some had grown old; some had increased occupation to care for. His old Wednesday evenings had ceased; and he had placed several miles of road between London (the residence of their families) and his own home. The weight of years indeed had its effect, in pressing down his strength and buoyancy; his spirit no longer possessed its old power of rebound. Even the care of housekeeping (not very onerous one would suppose) troubled Charles and his sister so much, that they determined to abandon it. This occurred in 1829. Then they became boarders and lodgers, with an old person (T. W.), who was their next-door-neighbour at Enfield; and of him Lamb has given an elaborate description:—T. W., his new landlord or housekeeper, he says, is seventy years old; "he has something under a competence;" he has one joke, and £40
a year, upon which he retires in a green old age; he laughs when he hears a joke, and when (which is much oftener) he hears it not. Having served the greater parish offices, Lamb and his sister become greater, being his lodgers, than they were when substantial householders. The children of the village venerate him for his gentility; but wonder also at him, for a gentle endorsement of the person, not amounting to a hump, or if one, then like that of the buffalo, and coronative of as mild qualities."

Writing to Wordsworth (and speaking as a great landed proprietor), he says "We have ridded ourselves of the dirty acres; settled down into poor boarders and lodgers; confiding ravens." The distasteful country, however, still remains, and the clouds still hang over it. "Let not the lying poets be believed, who entice men from the cheerful streets," he writes. The country, he thinks, does well enough when he is amongst his books, by the fire and with candle-light; but day and the green fields return and restore his natural antipathies; then he says "In a calenture I plunge into St. Giles's." So Lamb and his sister leave their comfortable little house and subside into the rooms of the Humpback. Their chairs and tables and beds also retreat; all except the ancient book-case full of his "ragged veterans." This I saw, years after Charles Lamb's death, in the possession of his sister, Mary. "All our furniture has faded," he writes, "under the auctioneer's hammer; going for nothing, like the tarnished frippery of the prodigal." Four years afterwards (in 1833) Lamb moves to his last home, in Church Street, Edmonton: where he is somewhat nearer to his London friends.
Very curious was the antipathy of Charles to objects that are generally so pleasant to other men. It was not a passing humour, but a lifelong dislike. He admired the trees and the meadows and murmuring streams in poetry. I have heard him repeat some of Keats's beautiful lines in the Ode to the Nightingale, about the "pastoral eglantine," with great delight. But that was another thing: that was an object in its proper place: that was a piece of art. Long ago he had admitted that the mountains of Cumberland were grand objects "to look at," but (as he said) "the houses in streets were the places to live in." I imagine that he would no more have received the former as an equivalent for his own modest home, than he would have accepted a portrait as a substitute for a friend. He was, beyond all other men whom I have met, essentially metropolitan. He loved "the sweet security of streets;" as he says: "I would set up my tabernacle there."

In the spring of 1834, Coleridge's health began to decline. Charles had written to him (in reply) on the 14th April; at which time, his friend had been evidently unwell; for Lamb says that he is glad to see that he could write so long a letter. He was indeed very ill; and no further personal intercourse (I believe) took place between Charles and his old schoolfellow. Coleridge lay ill for months; but his faculties seem to have survived his bodily decay. He died on the 25th July, 1834; yet on the 5th of that month he was able to discourse with his nephew on Dryden and Barrow, on Lord Brook, and Fielding and Richardson, without any apparent diminution of judgment. Even on the 10th (a fortnight only before his death) there was no symptom of speedy dissolution; he then said
"the scenes of my early life have stolen into my mind, like breezes blown from the Spice Islands." Charles's sorrow was unceasing. "He was my fifty years' old friend" (he says) "without a dissension. I cannot think without an ineffectual reference to him." Lamb's frequent exclamation, "Coleridge is dead! Coleridge is dead!" have been already noticed.

And now the figures of other old friends of Charles Lamb, gradually (one by one) slip out of sight. Still in his later letters are to be found glimpses of Wordsworth and Southey, of Rogers and Hood, of Cary (with whom his intimacy increases), especially may be noted Miss Isola, whom he tenderly regarded, and after whose marriage (then left more alone) he retreats to his last retreat, in Church Street, Edmonton.

From details let us escape into a more general narrative. The latest facts need not be painfully enumerated. There is little left, indeed, to particularize. Mary's health fluctuates perhaps more frequently than heretofore. At one time, she is well and happy; at another her mind becomes turbid, and she is then sheltered as usual under her brother's care. The last Essays of Elia are published;—friends visit him;—and he occasionally visits them in London. He dines with Talfourd and Cary. The sparks which are brought out are as bright as ever, although the splendour is not so frequent. Apparently the bodily strength, never great, but sufficient to move him pleasantly throughout life, seemed to flag a little. Yet he walks as usual. He and his sister "scramble through the Inferno" (as he says to Cary), "Mary's chief pride in it was that she should some day brag of it to you." Then he and Mary be-
came very poorly. He writes:—"We have had a sick child, sleeping, or not sleeping, next to me, with a pasteboard partition between, who killed my sleep. My bedfellows are Cough and Cramp: we sleep three in a bed. Don't come yet, to this house of pest and age." This is in 1833. At the end of that year (in December) he writes (once more humorously) to Rogers, expressing amongst other things his love for that fine artist, Stothard: "I met the dear old man, and it was sublime to see him sit, deaf, and enjoy all that was going on mirthful with the company. He reposed upon the many graceful and many fantastic images he had created." His last letter, written to Mrs. Dyer on the day after his fall, was an effort to recover a book of Mr. Cary, which had been mislaid or lost, so anxious was he always that every man should have his own.

In December, 1834, the history of Charles Lamb comes suddenly to a close. He had all along had a troubled day: now came the night. His spirits had previously been tolerably cheerful; reading and conversing as heretofore, with his friends, on subjects that were familiar to him. There was little manifest alteration or falling off, in his condition of mind or body. He took his morning walks, as usual. One day he stumbled against a stone, and fell. His face was slightly wounded; but no fatal or (even alarming) consequence was foreboded. Erysipelas, however, followed the wound, and his strength (never robust) was not sufficient to enable him to combat successfully that inflammatory and exhausting disease. He suffered no pain (I believe); and when the presence of a clergyman was suggested to him, he made no remark, but understood that his life was
in danger; he was quite calm and collected, quite resigned. At last, his voice began to fail, his perceptions became confused, and he sank gradually—very gradually, until the 27th of December, 1834; and then—he died! It was the fading away or disappearance of life, rather than a violent transit into another world.

He died at Edmonton; not, as has been supposed, at Enfield, to which place he never returned as to a place of residence, after he had once quitted it.

It is not true that he was ever deranged, or subjected to any restraint, shortly before his death. There never was the least symptom of mental disturbance in him, after the time (1795-6) when he was placed for a few weeks in Hoxton Asylum, to allay a little nervous irritation. If it were necessary to confirm this assertion, which is known to me from personal observation and other incontrovertible evidence, I would adduce ten of his published letters (in 1833) and several in 1834; one of them bearing date only four days before his death. All these documents afford ample testimony of his clear good sense and kind heart: some of them indeed being tinged with his usual humour.

Charles Lamb was fifty-nine years old at his death; of the same age as Cromwell; between whom and himself there was of course no other similitude. A few years before, when he was about to be released from his wearisome toil, at the India House, he said exultingly, that he was passing out of Time into Eternity. But now came the true Eternity; the old Eternity,—without change or limit; in which all men surrender their leisure, as well as their labour; when their sensations and infirmities (sometimes harassing enough) cease and are at rest.
No more anxiety for the debtor; no more toil for the worker. The rich man's ambition, the poor man's pains at last are over. *Hic jacet*. That "forlorn" inscription is the universal epitaph. What a world of moral—what speculations—what pathetic wishes, and what terrible dreams—lie enshrouded in that one final issue, which we call—Death.

To him who never gave pain to a human being; whose genius yielded nothing but instruction and delight, was awarded a calm and easy death. No man, it is my belief, was ever loved or lamented more sincerely than Charles Lamb. His sister (his elder by a decade) survived him for the space of thirteen years.

By strict economy, without meanness; with much unpretending hospitality; with frequent gifts and lendings, and without any borrowing; he accumulated, during his thirty-three years of constant labour, the moderate sum of £2000. No more. That was the sum, I believe, which was eventually shared amongst his legatees. His other riches were gathered together and deposited elsewhere; in the memory of those who loved him, and there were many of them: or amongst others of our Anglo-Saxon race, whose minds he has helped to enrich and soften.

The property of Charles Lamb, or so much as might be wanted for the purpose, was by his will directed to be applied towards the maintenance and comfort of his sister; and, subject to this primary object, it was vested in Trustees for the benefit of Miss Isola—Mrs. Moxon.

Mary Lamb's comforts were supplied, with anxiety and tenderness, throughout the thirteen years, during which she survived her brother. I
went to see her, after her brother's death; but her frequent illnesses did not render visits at all times welcome or feasible. She then resided in Alpha Road, Saint John's Wood, under the care of an experienced nurse. There was a twilight of consciousness in her, scarcely more, at times; so that perhaps the mercy of God saved her from full knowledge of her great loss. Charles—who had given up all his days for her protection and benefit,—who had fought the great battle of life so nobly,—had left her "for that unknown and silent shore," where, it is hoped, the brother and sister will renew the love which once united them on earth and made their lives holy. Mary Lamb died on the 20th May, 1847; and the brother and sister now lie near each other (in the same grave) in the churchyard of Edmonton, in Middlesex.
HAVE thus told, as far as my ability permits, the story of the life of Charles Lamb.

I have not ventured to deduce any formidable moral from it. Like Lamb himself, I have great dislike to ostentatious precepts and impertinent lessons. Facts themselves should disclose their own virtues. A man who is able to benefit by a lesson, will no doubt discover it, under any husk or disguise, before it is stripped and laid bare—to the kernel.

Besides, too much teaching may disagree with the reader. It is apt to harden the heart; wearying the attention, and mortifying the self-love. Such disturbances of the system interfere with the digestion of a truth.

Even Gulliver is sometimes too manifestly didactic. His adventures simply told would have emitted spontaneously a luminous atmosphere, and need not have been distilled into brilliant or pungent drops.

No history is barren of good. Even from the foregoing narrative some benefit may be gleaned, some sympathy may be excited, which naturally forms itself into a lesson.
Let us look at it cursorily.

Charles Lamb was born almost in penury, and he was taught to labour for his bread. Even when a boy he was forced to labour for his bread. In the first opening of manhood a terrible calamity fell upon him; in magnitude fit to form the mystery or centre of an antique drama. He had to dwell, all his days, with a person incurably mad. From poverty he passed at once to unpleasant toil and perpetual fear. These were the sole changes in his fortune. Yet, he gained friends, respect, a position; and great sympathy from all; showing what one poor man of genius under grievous misfortune may do, if he be courageous and faithful to the end.

Charles Lamb never preached nor prescribed; but let his own actions tell their tale and produce their natural effects; neither did he deal out little apophthegms or scraps of wisdom, derived from other minds. But he succeeded; and in every success there must be a mainstay of right or truth to support it; otherwise it will eventually fail.

It is true that in his essays and numerous letters many of his sincere thoughts and opinions are written down. These, however, are written down simply and just as they occur, without any special design. Some persons exhibit only their ingenuity, or learning. It is not every one who is able, like the licentiate Pedro Garcias, to deposit his wealth of soul by the road-side.

Like all persons of great intellectual sensibility, Lamb responded to all impressions. To sympathize with Tragedy or Comedy only, argues a limited capacity. The mind thus constructed is partially lame or torpid. One hemisphere has never been reached.
It should not be forgotten that Lamb possessed one great advantage. He lived and died amongst his equals. This was what enabled him to exercise his natural strength; as neither a parasite nor a patron can. It is marvellous how freedom of thought operates; what strength it gives to the system; with what lightness and freshness it endues the spirit.—Then, he was made stronger by trouble; made wiser by grief.

I have not attempted to fix the precise spot in which Charles Lamb is to shine hereafter in the firmament of letters. I am not of sufficient magnitude to determine his astral elevation—where he is to dwell—between the sun Shakespeare, and the twinkling Zoilus. That must be left to time. Even the fixed stars at first waver and coruscate, and require long seasons for their consummation and final settlement.

Whenever he differs with us in opinion, (as he does occasionally,) let us not hastily pronounce him to be wrong. It is wise, as well as modest, not to show too much eagerness to adjust the ideas of all other thinkers to the (sometimes low) level of our own.
THE ESSAYS OF ELIA.
TO ELIA.

ELIA, thy reveries and vision'd themes
To Care's low heart a luscious pleasure prove;
Wild as the mystery of delightful dreams,
Soft as the anguish of remember'd love:
Like records of past days their memory dances,
Mid the cool feelings manhood's reason brings,
As the unearthly visions of romances
Peopled with sweet and uncreated things;—
And yet thy themes thy gentle worth enhances!
Then wake again thy wild harp's tenderest strings;
Sing on, sweet bard; let fairy loves again
Smile in thy dreams with angel extacies;
Bright o'er our souls will break the heavenly strain
Through the dull gloom of earth's realities.

TO ELIA.

Delightful author! unto whom I owe
Moments and moods of fancy and of feeling,
Afresh to grateful memory now appealing,
Fain would I "bless thee ere I let thee go!"
From month to month has the exhaustless flow
Of thy original mind, its worth revealing
With quaintest humour and deep pathos healing
The world's rude wounds, revived life's early glow;
And mixt with this, at times, to earnest thought,
Glimpses of truth, most simple and sublime,
By thy imagination have been brought
Over my spirit. From the olden time
Of authorship thy patent should be dated,
And thou with Marvell, Browne, and Burton mated.

BERNARD BARTON.
READER, in thy passage from the Bank—where thou hast been receiving thy half-yearly dividends (supposing thou art a lean annuitant like myself)—to the Flower Pot, to secure a place for Dalston, or Shacklewell, or some other thy suburban retreat northerly—dost thou never observe a melancholy-looking, handsome, brick and stone edifice, to the left, where Threadneedle Street abuts upon Bishopsgate? I dare say thou hast often admired its magnificent portals ever gaping wide, and disclosing to view a grave court, with cloisters and pillars, with few or no traces of goers-in or comers-out—a desolation something like Balclutha's.

This was once a house of trade—a centre of busy interests. The throng of merchants was here—the quick pulse of gain—and here some forms of business are still kept up, though the soul be long since

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1 I passed by the walls of Balclutha, and they were desolate.—Ossian.
fled. Here are still to be seen stately porticos; imposing staircases, offices roomy as the state apartments in palaces—deserted, or thinly peopled with a few straggling clerks; the still more sacred interiors of court and committee rooms, with venerable faces of beadles, door-keepers—directors seated in form on solemn days (to proclaim a dead dividend) at long worm-eaten tables, that have been mahogany, with tarnished gilt-leather coverings, supporting massy silver inkstands long since dry;—the oaken wainscots hung with pictures of deceased governors and sub-governors, of Queen Anne, and the two first monarchs of the Brunswick dynasty;—huge charts, which subsequent discoveries have antiquated;—dusty maps of Mexico, dim as dreams, and soundings of the Bay of Panama! The long passages hung with buckets, appended, in idle row, to walls, whose substance might defy any, short of the last, conflagration:—with vast ranges of cellarage under all, where dollars and pieces of eight once lay, an "unsunned heap," for Mammon to have solaced his solitary heart withal—long since dissipated, or scattered into air at the blast of the breaking of that famous Bubble.

Such is the South-Sea House. At least such it was forty years ago, when I knew it—a magnificent relic! What alterations may have been made in it since, I have no opportunities of verifying. Time, I take it for granted, has not freshened it. No wind has resuscitated the face of the sleeping waters. A thicker crust by this time stagnates upon it. The moths, that were then battening upon its obsolete ledgers and day-books, have rested from their depredations, but other light generations have succeeded, making fine fretwork among their single and double entries.
dust have accumulated (a superfcetation of dirt!) upon the old layers, that seldom used to be disturbed, save by some curious finger, now and then, inquisitive to explore the mode of book-keeping in Queen Anne's reign; or, with less hallowed curiosity, seeking to unveil some of the mysteries of that tremendous HOAX, whose extent the petty peculators of our day look back upon with the same expression of incredulous admiration and hopeless ambition of rivalry as would become the puny face of modern conspiracy contemplating the Titan size of Vaux's superhuman plot.

Peace to the manes of the Bubble! Silence and destitution are upon thy walls, proud house, for a memorial!

Situated, as thou art, in the very heart of stirring and living commerce—amid the fret and fever of speculation—with the Bank, and the 'Change, and the India House about thee, in the heyday of present prosperity, with their important faces, as it were, insulting thee, their poor neighbour out of business—to the idle and merely contemplative—to such as me, old house! there is a charm in thy quiet:—a cessation—a coolness from business—an indolence almost cloistral—which is delightful! With what reverence have I paced thy great bare rooms and courts at eventide! They spoke of the past:—the shade of some dead accountant, with visionary pen in ear, would flit by me, stiff as in life. Living accounts and accountants puzzle me. I have no skill in figuring. But thy great dead tomes, which scarce three degenerate clerks of the present day could lift from their enshrining shelves—with their old fantastic flourishes and decorative rubric interlacings—their sums in triple columniations, set down with formal superfluity of ciphers
—with pious sentences at the beginning, without which our religious ancestors never ventured to open a book of business, or bill of lading—the costly vellum covers of some of them almost persuading us that we are got into some better library—are very agreeable and edifying spectacles. I can look upon these defunct dragons with complacency. Thy heavy odd-shaped ivory-handled penknives (our ancestors had everything on a larger scale than we have hearts for) are as good as anything from Herculaneum. The pounceboxes of our days have gone retrograde.

The very clerks which I remember in the South-Sea House—I speak of forty years back—had an air very different from those in the public offices that I have had to do with since. They partook of the genius of the place!

They were mostly (for the establishment did not admit of superfluous salaries) bachelors. Generally (for they had not much to do) persons of a curious and speculative turn of mind. Old-fashioned, for a reason mentioned before; humorists, for they were of all descriptions; and, not having been brought together in early life (which has a tendency to assimilate the members of corporate bodies to each other), but, for the most part, placed in this house in ripe or middle age, they necessarily carried into it their separate habits and oddities, unqualified, if I may so speak, as into a common stock. Hence they formed a sort of Noah's ark. Odd fishes. A lay-monastery. Domestic retainers in a great house, kept more for show than use. Yet pleasant fellows, full of chat—and not a few among them had arrived at considerable proficiency on the German flute.

The cashier at that time was one Evans, a Cam-
bro-Briton. He had something of the choleric complexion of his countrymen stamped on his visage, but was a worthy, sensible man at bottom. He wore his hair, to the last, powdered and frizzed out, in the fashion which I remember to have seen in caricatures of what were termed, in my young days, Maccaronies. He was the last of that race of beaux. Melancholy as a gib-cat over his counter all the forenoon, I think I see him making up his cash (as they call it) with tremulous fingers, as if he feared every one about him was a defaulter; in his hypochondry, ready to imagine himself one; haunted, at least, with the idea of the possibility of his becoming one: his tristful visage clearing up a little over his roast neck of veal at Anderton’s at two (where his picture still hangs, taken a little before his death by desire of the master of the coffee-house which he had frequented for the last five-and-twenty years), but not attaining the meridian of its animation till evening brought on the hour of tea and visiting. The simultaneous sound of his well-known rap at the door with the stroke of the clock announcing six, was a topic of never-failing mirth in the families which this dear old bachelor gladdened with his presence. Then was his forte, his glorified hour! How would he chirp and expand over a muffin! How would he dilate into secret history! His countryman, Pennant himself, in particular, could not be more eloquent than he in relation to old and new London—the site of old theatres, churches, streets gone to decay—where Rosamond’s pond stood—the Mulberry-gardens—and the Conduit in Cheap—with many a pleasant anecdote, derived from paternal tradition, of those grotesque figures which Hogarth has immortalized in his picture of Noon—the worthy de-
scendants of those heroic confessors, who, flying to this country from the wrath of Louis the Fourteenth and his dragoons, kept alive the flame of pure religion in the sheltering obscurities of Hog Lane and the vicinity of the Seven Dials!

Deputy, under Evans, was Thomas Tame. He had the air and stoop of a nobleman. You would have taken him for one, had you met him in one of the passages leading to Westminster Hall. By stoop, I mean that gentle bending of the body forwards, which, in great men, must be supposed to be the effect of an habitual condescending attention to the applications of their inferiors. While he held you in converse, you felt strained to the height in the colloquy. The conference over, you were at leisure to smile at the comparative insignificance of the pretensions which had just awed you. His intellect was of the shallowest order. It did not reach to a saw or a proverb. His mind was in its original state of white paper. A sucking babe might have posed him. What was it, then? Was he rich? Alas, no! Thomas Tame was very poor. Both he and his wife looked outwardly gentlefolks, when I fear all was not well at all times within. She had a neat meagre person, which it was evident she had not sinned in over-pampering; but in its veins was noble blood. She traced her descent, by some labyrinth of relationship, which I never thoroughly understood,—much less can explain with any heraldic certainty at this time of day,—to the illustrious but unfortunate house of Derwentwater. This was the secret of Thomas’s stoop. This was the thought—the sentiment—the bright solitary star of your lives,—ye mild and happy pair,—which cheered you in the night of intellect, and in the obscurity of your sta-
tion! This was to you instead of riches, instead of rank, instead of glittering attainments: and it was worth them all together. You insulted none with it; but, while you wore it as a piece of defensive armour only, no insult likewise could reach you through it. Decus et solamen.

Of quite another stamp was the then accountant, John Tipp. He neither pretended to high blood, nor in good truth cared one fig about the matter. He "thought an accountant the greatest character in the world, and himself the greatest accountant in it." Yet John was not without his hobby. The fiddle relieved his vacant hours. He sang, certainly, with other notes than to the Orphean lyre. He did, indeed, scream and scrape most abominably. His fine suite of official rooms in Thread-needle Street, which, without anything very substantial appended to them, were enough to enlarge a man's notions of himself that lived in them (I know not who is the occupier of them now1), resounded fortnightly to the notes of a concert of "sweet breasts," as our ancestors would have called them, culled from club-rooms and orchestras—chorus singers—first and second violoncellos—double basses—and clarionets—who ate his cold mutton, and drank his punch, and praised his ear. He sat like Lord Midas among them. But at the desk Tipp was quite another sort of creature. Thence all ideas, that were purely ornamental, were banished. You could not speak of anything romantic without rebuke.

[1 I have since been informed, that the present tenant of them is a Mr. Lamb, a gentleman who is happy in the possession of some choice pictures, and among them a rare portrait of Milton, which I mean to do myself the pleasure of going to see, and at the same time to refresh my memory with the sight of old scenes. Mr. Lamb has the character of a right courteous and communicative collector.]
Politics were excluded. A newspaper was thought too refined and abstracted. The whole duty of man consisted in writing off dividend warrants. The striking of the annual balance in the company's books (which, perhaps, differed from the balance of last year in the sum of £25 1s. 6d.) occupied his days and nights for a month previous. Not that Tipp was blind to the deadness of things (as they called them in the city) in his beloved house, or did not sigh for a return of the old stirring days when South Sea hopes were young (he was indeed equal to the wielding of any the most intricate accounts of the most flourishing company in these or those days): but to a genuine accountant the difference of proceeds is as nothing. The fractional farthing is as dear to his heart as the thousands which stand before it. He is the true actor, who, whether his part be a prince or a peasant, must act it with like intensity. With Tipp form was everything. His life was formal. His actions seemed ruled with a ruler. His pen was not less erring than his heart. He made the best executor in the world: he was plagued with incessant executorships accordingly, which excited his spleen and soothed his vanity in equal ratios. He would swear (for Tipp swore) at the little orphans, whose rights he would guard with a tenacity like the grasp of the dying hand that commended their interests to his protection. With all this there was about him a sort of timidity (his few enemies used to give it a worse name)—a something which, in reverence to the dead, we will place, if you please, a little on this side of the heroic. Nature certainly had been pleased to endow John Tipp with a sufficient measure of the principle of self-preservation. There is a cowardice which we do not despise, because it has nothing base or
treacherous in its elements; it betrays itself, not you: it is mere temperament; the absence of the romantic and the enterprising; it sees a lion in the way, and will not, with Fortinbras, "greatly find quarrel in a straw," when some supposed honour is at stake. Tipp never mounted the box of a stage-coach in his life; or leaned against the rails of a balcony; or walked upon the ridge of a parapet; or looked down a precipice; or let off a gun; or went upon a water-party; or would willingly let you go if he could have helped it; neither was it recorded of him, that for lucre, or for intimidation, he ever forsook friend or principle.

Whom next shall we summon from the dusty dead, in whom common qualities become uncommon? Can I forget thee, Henry Man, the wit, the polished man of letters, the author, of the South Sea House? who never enteredst thy office in a morning or quittedst it in mid-day (what didst thou in an office?) without some quirk that left a sting! Thy gibes and thy jokes are now extinct, or survive but in two forgotten volumes, which I had the good fortune to rescue from a stall in Barbican, not three days ago, and found thee terse, fresh, epigrammatic, as alive. Thy wit is a little gone by in these fastidious days—thy topics are staled by the "new-born gauds" of the time:—but great thou used to be in Public Ledgers, and in Chronicles, upon Chatham, and Shelburne, and Rockingham, and Howe, and Burgoyne, and Clinton, and the war which ended in the tearing from Great Britain her rebellious colonies,—and Keppel, and Wilkes, and Sawbridge, and Bull, and Dunning, and Pratt, and Richmond—and such small politics.—

A little less facetious, and a great deal more ob-
streperous, was fine rattling, rattleheaded Plumer. He was descended,—not in a right line, reader (for his lineal pretensions, like his personal, favoured a little of the sinister bend)—from the Plumers of Hertfordshire. So tradition gave him out; and certain family features not a little sanctioned the opinion. Certainly old Walter Plumer (his reputed author) had been a rake in his days, and visited much in Italy, and had seen the world. He was uncle, bachelor-uncle, to the fine old Whig still living, who has represented the county in so many successive parliaments, and has a fine old mansion near Ware. Walter flourished in George the Second's days, and was the same who was summoned before the House of Commons about a business of franks, with the old Duchess of Marlborough. You may read of it in Johnson's "Life of Cave." Cave came off cleverly in that business. It is certain our Plumer did nothing to discouragement the rumour. He rather seemed pleased whenever it was, with all gentleness, insinuated. But besides his family pretensions, Plumer was an engaging fellow, and sang gloriously.—

Not so sweetly sang Plumer as thou sangest, mild, child-like, pastoral M—; a flute's breathing less divinely whispering than thy Arcadian melodies, when, in tones worthy of Arden, thou didst chant that song sung by Amiens to the banished duke, which proclaims the winter wind more lenient than for a man to be ungrateful. Thy sire was old surly M—, the unapproachable churchwarden of Bishopsgate. He knew not what he did, when he begat thee, like spring, gentle offspring of blustering winter:—only unfortunate in thy ending, which should have been mild, conciliatory, swan-like.—
Much remains to sing. Many fantastic shapes rise up, but they must be mine in private:—already I have fooled the reader to the top of his bent;—else could I omit that strange creature Woollett, who existed in trying the question, and bought litigations!—and still stranger, inimitable, solemn Hepworth, from whose gravity Newton might have deduced the law of gravitation. How profoundly would he nib a pen—with what deliberation would he wet a wafer!—

But it is time to close—night’s wheels are rattling fast over me—it is proper to have done with this solemn mockery.

Reader, what if I have been playing with thee all this while—peradventure the very names which I have summoned up before thee are fantastic—insubstantial—like Henry Pimpernel, and old John Naps of Greece:—

Be satisfied that something answering to them has had a being. Their importance is from the past.
ASTING a preparatory glance at the bottom of this article—as the very connoisseur in prints, with cursory eye (which, while it reads, seems as though it read not), never fails to consult the quis sculpsit in the corner, before he pronounces some rare piece to be a Vivařes, or a Woollet—methinks I hear you exclaim, Reader, Who is Elia?

Because in my last I tried to divert thee with some half-forgotten humours of some old clerks de-funct, in an old house of business, long since gone to decay, doubtless you have already set me down in your mind as one of the self-same college—a votary of the desk—a notched and cropt scrivener—one that sucks his sustenance, as certain sick people are said to do, through a quill.

Well, I do agnize something of the sort. I confess that it is my humour, my fancy—in the forepart of the day, when the mind of your man of letters requires some relaxation (and none better than such as at first sight seems most abhorrent from his beloved studies)—to while away some good hours of my time in the contemplation of indigos, cottons, raw silks, piece-goods, flowered or otherwise. In the first place * * * and then it sends you home with such increased
appetite to your books not to say, that your outside sheets, and waste wrappers of foolscap, do receive into them, most kindly and naturally, the impression of sonnets, epigrams, essays—so that the very parings of a counting-house are, in some sort, the settings up of an author. The enfranchised quill, that has plodded all the morning among the cart-rucks of figures and ciphers, frisks and curvets so at its ease over the flowery carpet-ground of a midnight dissertation.—It feels its promotion So that you see, upon the whole, the literary dignity of Elia is very little, if at all, compromised in the condescension.

Not that, in my anxious detail of the many commodities incidental to the life of a public office, I would be thought blind to certain flaws, which a cunning carper might be able to pick in this Joseph's vest. And here I must have leave, in the fulness of my soul, to regret the abolition, and doing-away-with altogether, of those consolatory interstices, and sprinklings of freedom, through the four seasons,—the red-letter days, now become, to all intents and purposes, dead-letter days. There was Paul, and Stephen, and Barnabas—

Andrew and John, men famous in old times

—we were used to keep all their days holy, as long back as when I was at school at Christ's. I remember their effigies, by the same token, in the old Basket Prayer Book. There hung Peter in his uneasy posture—holy Bartlemy in the troublesome act of flaying, after the famous Marsyas by Spagnoletti.—I honoured them all, and could almost have wept the defalcation of Iscariot—so much did we love to keep holy memories sacred:—only me-
thought I a little grudged at the coalition of the better Jude with Simon—clubbing (as it were) their sanctities together, to make up one poor gaudy-day between them—as an economy unworthy of the dispensation.

These were bright visitations in a scholar's and a clerk's life—"far off their coming shone."—I was as good as an almanac in those days. I could have told you such a saint's-day falls out next week, or the week after. Peradventure the Epiphany, by some periodical infelicity, would, once in six years, merge in a Sabbath. Now am I little better than one of the profane. Let me not be thought to arraign the wisdom of my civil superiors, who have judged the further observation of these holy tides to be papistical, superstitious. Only in a custom of such long standing, methinks, if their Holinesses the Bishops had, in decency, been first sounded—but I am wading out of my depths. I am not the man to decide the limits of civil and ecclesiastical authority—I am plain Elia—no Selden, nor Archbishop Usher—though at present in the thick of their books, here in the heart of learning, under the shadow of the mighty Bodley.

I can here play the gentleman, enact the student. To such a one as myself, who has been defrauded in his young years of the sweet food of academic institution, nowhere is so pleasant, to while away a few idle weeks at, as one or other of the Universities. Their vacation, too, at this time of the year, falls in so pat with ours. Here I can take my walks unmolested, and fancy myself of what degree or standing I please. I seem admitted ad eundem. I fetch up past opportunities. I can rise at the chapel-bell, and dream that it rings for me. In moods of humility I can be a Sizar, or a Servitor.
When the peacock vein rises, I strut a Gentleman Commoner. In graver moments, I proceed Master of Arts. Indeed I do not think I am much unlike that respectable character. I have seen your dim-eyed vergers, and bed-makers in spectacles, drop a bow or a curtsy as I pass, wisely mistaking me for something of the sort. I go about in black, which favours the notion. Only in Christ Church reverend quadrangle I can be content to pass for nothing short of a Seraphic Doctor.

The walks at these times are so much one’s own,—the tall trees of Christ’s, the groves of Magdalen! The halls deserted, and with open doors, inviting one to slip in unperceived, and pay a devoir to some Founder, or noble or royal Benefactress (that should have been ours) whose portrait seems to smile upon their over-looked beadsman, and to adopt me for their own. Then, to take a peep in by the way at the butteries, and sculleries, redolent of antique hospitality: the immense caves of kitchens, kitchen fire-places, cordial recesses; ovens whose first pies were baked four centuries ago; and spits which have cooked for Chaucer! Not the meanest minister among the dishes but is hallowed to me through his imagination, and the Cook goes forth a Manciple.

Antiquity! thou wondrous charm, what art thou? that, being nothing, art everything! When thou wert, thou wert not antiquity—then thou wert nothing, but hadst a remoter antiquity, as thou calledst it, to look back to with blind veneration; thou thyself being to thyself flat, jejune, modern! What mystery lurks in this retroversion? or what half Januses¹ are we, that cannot look forward with

¹ Januses of one face.—Sir Thomas Browne.
the same idolatry with which we for ever revert! The mighty future is as nothing, being everything! the past is everything, being nothing!

What were thy dark ages? Surely the sun rose as brightly then as now, and man got him to his work in the morning? Why is it we can never hear mention of them without an accompanying feeling, as though a palpable obscure had dimmed the face of things, and that our ancestors wandered to and fro groping!

Above all thy rarities, old Oxenford, what do most arride and solace me, are thy repositories of mouldering learning, thy shelves—

What a place to be in is an old library! It seems as though all the souls of all the writers, that have bequeathed their labours to these Bodleians, were reposing here, as in some dormitory, or middle state. I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves, their winding-sheets. I could as soon dislodge a shade. I seem to inhale learning, walking amid their foliage; and the odour of their old moth-scented coverings is fragrant as the first bloom of those sciential apples which grew amid the happy orchard.

Still less have I curiosity to disturb the elder repose of MSS. Those varie lectiones, so tempting to the more erudite palates, do not disturb and unsettle my faith. I am no Herculanean raker. The credit of the three witnesses might have slept unimpeached for me. I leave these curiosities to Porson, and to G. D.—whom, by the way, I found busy as a moth over some rotten archive, rummaged out of some seldom-explored press, in a nook at Oriel. With long poring, he is grown almost into a book. He stood as passive as one by the side of the old shelves. I longed to new-coat him in Russia,
and assign him his place. He might have mustered for a tall Scapula.

D. is assiduous in his visits to these seats of learning. No inconsiderable portion of his moderate fortune, I apprehend, is consumed in journeys between them and Clifford's Inn—where, like a dove on the asp's nest, he has long taken up his unconscious abode, amid an incongruous assembly of attorneys, attorneys' clerks, apparitors, promoters, vermin of the law, among whom he sits, "in calm and sinless peace." The fangs of the law pierce him not—the winds of litigation blow over his humble chambers—the hard sheriff's officer moves his hat as he passes—legal nor illegal discourtesy touches him—none thinks of offering violence or injustice to him—you would as soon "strike an abstract idea."

D. has been engaged, he tells me, through a course of laborious years, in an investigation into all curious matter connected with the two Universities; and has lately lit upon a MS. collection of charters, relative to C—, by which he hopes to settle some disputed points—particularly that long controversy between them as to priority of foundation. The ardour with which he engages in these liberal pursuits, I am afraid, has not met with all the encouragement it deserved, either here or at C—. Your caputs, and heads of colleges, care less than anybody else about these questions.—Contented to suck the milky fountains of their Alma Maters, without inquiring into the venerable gentlewomen's years, they rather hold such curiosities to be impertinent—unreverend. They have their good glebe lands in manu, and care not much to rake into the title-deeds. I gather at least so much from other sources, for D. is not a man to complain.
D. started like an unbroke heifer, when I interrupted him. *A priori* it was not very probable that we should have met in Oriel. But D. would have done the same, had I accosted him on the sudden in his own walks in Clifford's Inn, or in the Temple. In addition to a provoking short-sightedness (the effect of late studies and watchings at the midnight oil) D. is the most absent of men. He made a call the other morning at our friend M.'s in Bedford Square; and, finding nobody at home, was ushered into the hall, where, asking for pen and ink, with great exactitude of purpose he enters me his name in the book—which ordinarily lies about in such places, to record the failures of the untimely or unfortunate visitor—and takes his leave with many ceremonies, and professions of regret. Some two or three hours after, his walking destinies returned him into the same neighbourhood again, and again the quiet image of the fireside circle at M.'s—Mrs. M. presiding at it like a Queen Lar, with pretty A. S. at her side—striking irresistibly on his fancy, he makes another call (forgetting that they were "certainly not to return from the country before that day week") and disappointed a second time, inquires for pen and paper as before: again the book is brought, and in the line just above that in which he is about to print his second name (his re-script)—his first name (scarce dry) looks out upon him like another Sosia, or as if a man should suddenly encounter his own duplicate!—The effect may be conceived. D. made many a good resolution against any such lapses in future. I hope he will not keep them too rigorously.

For with G. D.—to be absent from the body, is sometimes (not to speak it profanely) to be present with the Lord. At the very time when, personally
encountering thee, he passes on with no recognition—or, being stopped, starts like a thing surprised—at that moment, reader, he is on Mount Tabor—or Parnassus—or co-sphered with Plato—or, with Harrington, framing "immortal common-wealths"—devising some plan of amelioration to thy country, or thy species—peradventure meditating some individual kindness or courtesy, to be done to thee thyself, the returning consciousness of which made him to start so guiltily at thy obtruded personal presence.

[D. commenced life, after a course of hard study in the house of "pure Emanuel," as usher to a knavish fanatic schoolmaster at * * *, at a salary of eight pounds per annum, with board and lodging. Of this poor stipend, he never received above half in all the laborious years he served this man. He tells a pleasant anecdote, that when poverty, staring out at his ragged knees, has sometimes compelled him, against the modesty of his nature, to hint at arrears, Dr. * * * would take no immediate notice, but after supper, when the school was called together to even-song, he would never fail to introduce some instructive homily against riches, and the corruption of the heart occasioned through the desire of them—ending with "Lord, keep Thy servants, above all things, from the heinous sin of avarice. Having food and raiment, let us therewithal be content. Give me Hagar's wish"—and the like—which, to the little auditory, sounded like a doctrine full of Christian prudence and simplicity, but to poor D. was a receipt in full for that quarter's demand at least.

And D. has been under-working for himself ever since;—drudging at low rates for unappreciating booksellers,—wasting his fine erudition in silent
corrections of the classics, and in those unostentatious but solid services to learning which commonly fall to the lot of laborious scholars, who have not the heart to sell themselves to the best advantage. He has published poems, which do not sell, because their character is unobtrusive, like his own, and because he has been too much absorbed in ancient literature to know what the popular mark in poetry is, even if he could have hit it. And, therefore, his verses are properly, what he terms them, crotchets; voluntaries; odes to liberty and spring; effusions; little tributes and offerings, left behind him upon tables and window-seats at parting from friends' houses; and from all the inns of hospitality, where he has been courteously (or but tolerably) received in his pilgrimage. If his muse of kindness halt a little behind the strong lines in fashion in this excitement-loving age, his prose is the best of the sort in the world, and exhibits a faithful transcript of his own healthy, natural mind, and cheerful, innocent tone of conversation.]

D. is delightful anywhere, but he is at the best in such places as these. He cares not much for Bath. He is out of his element at Buxton, at Scarborough, or Harrowgate. The Cam and the Isis are to him "better than all the waters of Damascus." On the Muses' hill he is happy, and good, as one of the Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains; and when he goes about with you to show you the halls and colleges, you think you have with you the Interpreter at the House Beautiful.
CHRIST’S HOSPITAL

FIVE AND THIRTY YEARS AGO.

Mr. Lamb’s “Works,” published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school,1 such as it was, or now appears to him to have been, between the years 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own standing at Christ’s was nearly corresponding with his; and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember L. at school; and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his schoolfellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand; and he had the privilege of going to see them, almost as often as he wished, through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. The present worthy sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple can explain how that happened. He had his tea and hot rolls in a morning, while we were battenning upon our quarter of a penny loaf—our crug—moistened with attenuated

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1 Recollections of Christ’s Hospital.

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small beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porritich, blue and tasteless, and the pease soup of Saturday, coarse and choking, were enriched for him with a slice of "extraordinary bread and butter," from the hot-loaf of the Temple. The Wednesday's mess of millet, somewhat less repugnant (we had three banyan to four meat days in the week)—was endeared to his palate with a lump of double-refined, and a smack of ginger (to make it go down the more glibly) or the fragrant cinnamon. In lieu of our half-pickled Sundays, or quite fresh boiled beef on Thursdays (strong as caro equina), with detestable marigolds floating in the pail to poison the broth—our scanty mutton scraggs on Fridays—and rather more savoury, but grudging, portions of the same flesh, rotten-roasted or rare, on the Tuesdays (the only dish which excited our appetites, and disappointed our stomachs, in almost equal proportion)—he had his hot plate of roast veal, or the more tempting griskin (exotics unknown to our palates), cooked in the paternal kitchen (a great thing), and brought him daily by his maid or aunt! I remember the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride) squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the Tishbite); and the contending passions of L. at the unfolding. There was love for the bringer; shame for the thing brought, and the manner of its bringing; sympathy for those who were too many to share in it; and, at top of all, hunger (eldest, strongest of the passions!) predominant, breaking down the stony fences of shame, and awkwardness, and a troubling over-consciousness.
I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years! How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and faces! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire!

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from the haunting memory of those whole-day-leaves when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the livelong day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none. I remember those bathing-excursions to the New River, which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can—for he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such water pastimes:—How merrily we would sally forth into the fields; and strip under the first warmth of the sun; and wanton like young dace in the streams; getting us appetites for noon, which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying—while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to
satisfy our cravings—the very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them!—How faint and languid, finally, we would return, towards night-fall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired!

It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the streets objectless—shivering at cold windows of print shops, to extract a little amusement; or haply, as a last resort, in the hopes of a little novelty, to pay a fifty-times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to the wardens as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower—to whose levée, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

L.'s governor (so we called the patron who presented us to the foundation) lived in a manner under his paternal roof. Any complaint which he had to make was sure of being attended to. This was understood at Christ's, and was an effectual screen to him against the severity of masters, or worse tyranny of the monitors. The oppressions of these young brutes are heart-sickening to call to recollection. I have been called out of my bed, and waked for the purpose, in the coldest winter nights—and this not once, but night after night—in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leathern thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my callow overseer, when there has been any talking heard after we were gone to bed, to make the six last beds in the dormitory, where the youngest children of us slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit, nor had the power to hinder. —The same execrable tyranny drove the younger part of us from the fires, when our feet were
perishing with snow; and, under the cruelest penalties, forbade the indulgence of a drink of water, when we lay in sleepless summer nights, fevered with the season, and the day’s sports.

There was one H——, who, I learned in after days, was seen expiating some maturer offence in the hulks. (Do I flatter myself in fancying that this might be the planter of that name, who suffered—at Nevis, I think, or St. Kitts,—some few years since? My friend Tobin was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red-hot iron; and nearly starved forty of us, with exacting contributions, to the one-half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse’s daughter (a young flame of his) he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the leads of the ward, as they called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat—happier than Caligula’s minion, could he have kept his own counsel—but, foolisher, alas! than any of his species in the fables—waxing fat, and kicking, in the fulness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below; and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram’s horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho) set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to Smithfield; but I never understood that the patron underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L.’s admired Perry.

Under the same facile administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses
used to carry away openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practised in that magnificent apartment, which L. (grown connoisseur since, we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings "by Verrio and others," with which it is "hung round and adorned." But the sight of sleek, well-fed blue-coat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions carried away before our faces by harpies; and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido)

To feed our mind with idle portraiture.

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to gags, or the fat of fresh beef boiled; and sets it down to some superstition. But these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fat-haters), and in strong, coarse, boiled meats, unsalted, are detestable. A gag-eater in our time was equivalent to a goule, and held in equal detestation. —— suffered under the imputation:

... 'Twas said
He ate strange flesh.

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remains left at his table (not many, nor very choice fragments, you may credit me)—and, in an especial manner, these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away, and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bedside. None saw when he ate them. It was rumoured that he privately devoured them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such midnight practices
were discoverable. Some reported that, on leave days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spake to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated; put out of the pale of the school. He was too powerful a boy to be beaten, but he underwent every mode of that negative punishment, which is more grievous than many stripes. Still he persevered. At length he was observed by two of his schoolfellows, who were determined to get at the secret, and had traced him one leave-day for the purpose, to enter a large worn-out building, such as there exist specimens of in Chancery Lane, which are let out to various scales of pauperism, with open door, and a common staircase. After him they silently slunk in, and followed by stealth up four flights, and saw him tap at a poor wicket, which was opened by an aged woman, meanly clad. Suspicion was now ripened into certainty. The informers had secured their victim. They had him in their toils. Accusation was formally preferred, and retribution most signal was looked for. Mr. Hathaway, the then steward (for this happened a little after my time), with that patient sagacity which tempered all his conduct, determined to investigate the matter, before he proceeded to sentence. The result was, that the supposed mendicants, the receivers or purchasers of the mysterious scraps, turned out to be the parents of ——, an honest couple come to decay,—whom this seasonable supply had, in all probability, saved from mendicancy; and that this young stork, at the
expense of his own good name, had all this while been only feeding the old birds!—The governors on this occasion, much to their honour, voted a present relief to the family of — , and presented him with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon rash judgment, on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal to — , I believe, would not be lost upon his auditory.—I had left school then, but I well remember — . He was a tall, shambling youth, with a cast in his eye, not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad; and the sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven; and had only read of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had run away. This was the punishment for the first offence.—As a novice, I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little, square, Bedlam cells, where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket—a mattress, I think, was afterwards substituted—with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison-orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water—who might not speak to him;—or of the beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude:—and here he was shut up by himself of nights, out of the reach of any
sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves, and superstition incident to his time of life, might subject him to.¹ This was the penalty for the second offence. Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree?

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was at this time deemed irreversible, was brought forth, as at some solemn auto da fé, arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire—all traces of his late “watchet-weeds” carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket, resembling those which London lamp-lighters formerly delighted in, with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frightened features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante had seized upon him. In this disguisement he was brought into the hall (L.’s favourite state-room), where awaited him the whole number of his school-fellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was thenceforth to share no more; the awful presence of the steward, to be seen for the last time; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion; and of two faces more, of direr import, because never but in these extremities visible. These were the governors; two of whom, by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these Ultima Supplicia; not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the uttermost

¹ One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide, accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture to the spirits was dispensed with.—This fancy of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard’s brain; for which (saving the reverence due to Holy Paul) methinks I could willingly spit upon his statue,
stripe. Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, I remember, were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attending to the previous disgusting circumstances to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made over, in his San Benito, to his friends, if he had any (but commonly such poor runagates were friendless), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so often as to spoil the general mirth of the community. We had plenty of exercise and recreation after school hours; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier than in them. The Upper and the Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds. Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer was the Upper Master; but the Rev. Matthew Feilde presided over that portion of the apartment, of which I had the good fortune to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just what we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried an accidence, or a grammar, for form; but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we had learned about
them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Feilde never used the rod; and in truth he wielded the cane with no great good will—holding it "like a dancer." It looked in his hands rather like an emblem than an instrument of authority; and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but often staid away whole days from us; and when he came, it made no difference to us—he had his private room to retire to, the short time he staid, to be out of the sound of our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to "insolent Greek or haughty Rome," that passed current among us—"Peter Wilkins"—"The Adventures of the Hon. Captain Robert Boyle"—"The Fortunate Blue-coat Boy"—and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic and scientific operations; making little sundials of paper; or weaving those ingenious parentheses, called cat-cradles; or making dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin pipe; or studying the art military over that laudable game "French and English," and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time—mixing the useful with the agreeable—as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Feilde belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the gentleman, the scholar, and the Christian; but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the compo-
sition. He was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly bow at some episcopal levée, when he should have been attending upon us. He had for many years the classical charge of a hundred children, during the four or five first years of their education; and his very highest form seldom proceeded further than two or three of the introductory fables of Phædrus. How things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses, always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference, send to borrow a rod of the Under Master, and then, with Sardonic grin, observe to one of his upper boys, "how neat and fresh the twigs looked." While his pale students were battering their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoyed by the Samite, we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us; his storms came near, but never touched us; contrary to Gideon's miracle, while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry. His boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Feilde comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and

1 Cowley.
summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a "playing holiday."

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus. B. was a rabid pedant. His English style was cramp't to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scrannel pipes.¹—He would laugh—ay, and heartily—but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex*—or at the *tristis severitas in vultu*, or *inspicere in patinas*, of Terence—thin jests, which at their first broaching could hardly have had *vis* enough to move a Roman muscle.—He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discoloured, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer.—J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a "Sirrah, do you presume to set your

¹ In this and everything B. was the antipodes of his coadjutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F. would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of "Vertumnus and Pomona," is not yet forgotten by the chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction.—B. used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was *too classical for representation*. 
wits at me?"—Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the schoolroom, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, "Od's my life, sirrah" (his favourite adjuration), "I have a great mind to whip you,"—then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair—and, after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell—"and I will too."—In his gentler moods, when the rabidus furor was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, at the same time; a paragraph and a lash between; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall ineffectual from his hand—when droll squinting W—having been caught putting the inside of the master's desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that he did not know that the thing had been forewarned. This exquisite irrecognition of any law antecedent to the oral or declaratory, struck so irresistibly upon the fancy of all who heard it (the pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L. has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. Coleridge, in his literary life, has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium
on them. The author of the "Country Spectator" doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better than with the pious ejaculation of C.—when he heard that his old master was on his death-bed: "Poor J. B.!—may all his faults be forgiven; and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, with no bottoms to reproach his sublunary infirmities."

Under him were many good and sound scholars bred.—First Grecian of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since Co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with Dr. T—e. What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the anti-socialities of their predecessors!—You never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm-in-arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it convenient to retire, the other was not long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to turn over the Cicero De Amicitia, or some tale of Antique Friendship, which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate!—Co-Grecian with S. was Th——, who has since executed with ability various diplomatic functions at the Northern courts. Th—— was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing of speech, with raven locks.—Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta), a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He has the reputation
of an excellent critic; and is author (besides the "Country Spectator") of a "Treatise on the Greek Article," against Sharpe. M. is said to bear his mitre high in India, where the *regni novitas* (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility quite as primitive as that of Jewel or Hooker might not be exactly fitted to impress the minds of those Anglo-Asiatic diocesans with a reverence for home institutions, and the church which those fathers watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild and unassuming.—Next to M. (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the "Aboriginal Britons," the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems; a pale, studious Grecian.—Then followed poor S——, ill-fated M——! of these the Muse is silent.

Finding some of Edward's race
Unhappy, pass their annals by.

Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee—the dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard!—How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young Mirandula), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar—while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy!*—Many were the "wit-combats" (to dally awhile with the words of old Fuller), between him and C. V. Le G——,
"which two I behold like a Spanish great gal-  
leon, and an English man of war: Master Cole-  
ridge, like the former, was built far higher in  
learning, solid, but slow in his performances.  
C. V. L., with the English man of war, lesser  
in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with  
all times, tack about, and take advantage of  
all winds, by the quickness of his wit and inven-  
tion."

Nor shalt thou, their compeer, be quickly for-  
gotten, Allen, with the cordial smile, and still more  
cordial laugh, with which thou wert wont to make  
the old Cloisters shake, in thy cognition of some  
poignant jest of theirs; or the anticipation of some  
more material, and, peradventure practical one, of  
thine own. Extinct are those smiles, with that  
beautiful countenance, with which (for thou wert  
the Nircus formosus of the school), in the days of  
thy maturer waggery, thou didst disarm the wrath  
of infuriated town-damsel, who, incensed by pro-  
voking pinch, turning tigress-like round, suddenly  
converted by thy angel-look, exchanged the half-  
formed terrible "bl—," for a gentler greeting—  
"bless thy handsome face!"

Next follow two, who ought to be now alive,  
and the friends of Elia—the junior Le G— and  
F——; who impelled, the former by a roving  
temper, the latter by too quick a sense of neglect—  
ill capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are  
sometimes subject to in our seats of learning—ex-  
changed their Alma Mater for the camp; perishing,  
one by climate, and one on the plains of Sala-  
manca:—Le G——, sanguine, volatile, sweet-  
natured; F——, dogged, faithful, anticipative of  
insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old  
Roman height about him.
Fine, frank-hearted Fr—, the present master of Hertford, with Marmaduke T—, mildest of Missionaries—and both my good friends still—close the catalogue of Grecians in my time.
THE TWO RACES OF MEN.

THE human species, according to the best theory I can form of it, is composed of two distinct races, the men who borrow, and the men who lend. To these two original diversities may be reduced all those impertinent classifications of Gothic and Celtic tribes, white men, black men, red men. All the dwellers upon earth, "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites," flock hither, and do naturally fall in with one or other of these primary distinctions. The infinite superiority of the former, which I choose to designate as the great race, is discernible in their figure, port, and a certain instinctive sovereignty. The latter are born degraded. "He shall serve his brethren." There is something in the air of one of this cast, lean and suspicious; contrasting with the open, trusting, generous manners of the other.

Observe who have been the greatest borrowers of all ages—Alcibiades—Falstaff—Sir Richard Steele—our late incomparable Brinsley—what a family likeness in all four!

What a careless, even deportment hath your borrower! what rosy gills! what a beautiful reliance on Providence doth he manifest,—taking no more thought than lilies! What contempt for
money,—accounting it (yours and mine especially) no better than dross! What a liberal confounding of those pedantic distinctions of meum and tuum! or rather, what a noble simplification of language (beyond Tooke), resolving these supposed opposites into one clear, intelligible pronoun adjective!—What near approaches doth he make to the primitive community,—to the extent of one half of the principle at least.

He is the true taxer who "calleth all the world up to be taxed;" and the distance is as vast between him and one of us, as subsisted between the Augustan Majesty and the poorest obolary Jew that paid it tribute-pittance at Jerusalem!—His exactions, too, have such a cheerful, voluntary air! So far removed from your sour parochial or state-gatherers,—those ink-horn varlets, who carry their want of welcome in their faces! He cometh to you with a smile, and troubleth you with no receipt; confining himself to no set season. Every day is his Candlemas, or his Feast of Holy Michael. He applieth the lena tormentum of a pleasant look to your purse,—which to that gentle warmth expands her silken leaves, as naturally as the cloak of the traveller, for which sun and wind contended! He is the true Propontic which never ebbeth! The sea which taketh handsomely at each man's hand. In vain the victim, whom he delighteth to honour, struggles with destiny; he is in the net. Lend therefore cheerfully, O man ordained to lend—that thou lose not in the end, with thy worldly penny, the reversion promised. Combine not preposterously in thine own person the penalties of Lazarus and of Dives!—but, when thou seest the proper authority coming, meet it smilingly, as it were half-way.
THE TWO RACES OF MEN.

Come, a handsome sacrifice! See how light he makes of it! Strain not courtesies with a noble enemy.

Reflections like the foregoing were forced upon my mind by the death of my old friend, Ralph Bigod, Esq., who parted this life on Wednesday evening; dying, as he had lived, without much trouble. He boasted himself a descendant from mighty ancestors of that name, who heretofore held ducal dignities in this realm. In his actions and sentiments he belied not the stock to which he pretended. Early in life he found himself invested with ample revenues; which, with that noble disinterestedness which I have noticed as inherent in men of the great race, he took almost immediate measures entirely to dissipate and bring to nothing: for there is something revolting in the idea of a king holding a private purse; and the thoughts of Bigod were all regal. Thus furnished, by the very act of disfurnishment; getting rid of the cumbersome luggage of riches, more apt (as one sings)

To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise,

he set forth, like some Alexander, upon his great enterprise, "borrowing and to borrow!"

In his periegesis, or triumphant progress throughout this island, it has been calculated that he laid a tythe part of the inhabitants under contribution. I reject this estimate as greatly exaggerated:—but having had the honour of accompanying my friend, divers times, in his perambulations about this vast city, I own I was greatly struck at first with the prodigious number of faces we met, who claimed a sort of respectful acquaintance with us. He was one day so obliging as to explain the phenomenon.
It seems, these were his tributaries; feeders of his exchequer; gentlemen, his good friends (as he was pleased to express himself), to whom he had occasionally been beholden for a loan. Their multitudes did no way disconcert him. He rather took a pride in numbering them; and, with Comus, seemed pleased to be "stocked with so fair a herd."

With such sources, it was a wonder how he contrived to keep his treasury always empty. He did it by force of an aphorism, which he had often in his mouth, that "money kept longer than three days stinks." So he made use of it while it was fresh. A good part he drank away (for he was an excellent toss-pot), some he gave away, the rest he threw away, literally tossing and hurling it violently from him—as boys do burrs, or as if it had been infectious,—into ponds, or ditches, or deep holes, inscrutable cavities of the earth;—or he would bury it (where he would never seek it again) by a river's side under some bank, which (he would facetiously observe) paid no interest—but out away from him it must go peremptorily, as Hagar's offspring into the wilderness, while it was sweet. He never missed it. The streams were perennial which fed his fisc. When new supplies became necessary, the first person that had the felicity to fall in with him, friend or stranger, was sure to contribute to the deficiency. For Bigod had an undeniable way with him. He had a cheerful, open exterior, a quick jovial eye, a bald forehead, just touched with grey (cana fides). He anticipated no excuse, and found none. And, waiving for a while my theory as to the great race, I would put it to the most un-theorizing reader, who may at times have disposable coin in his pocket, whether it is not more
repugnant to the kindliness of his nature to refuse such a one as I am describing, than to say no to a poor petitionary rogue (your bastard borrower), who, by his mumping visnomy, tells you that he expects nothing better; and, therefore, whose pre-conceived notions and expectations you do in reality so much less shock in the refusal.

When I think of this man; his fiery glow of heart; his swell of feeling; how magnificent, how ideal he was; how great at the midnight hour; and when I compare with him the companions with whom I have associated since, I grudge the saving of a few idle ducats, and think that I am fallen into the society of lenders, and little men.

To one like Elia, whose treasures are rather cased in leather covers than closed in iron coffers, there is a class of alienators more formidable than that which I have touched upon; I mean your borrowers of books—those mutilators of collections, spoilers of the symmetry of shelves, and creators of odd volumes. There is Comberbatch, matchless in his depredations!

That foul gap in the bottom shelf facing you, like a great eye-tooth knocked out—(you are now with me in my little back study in Bloomsbury, reader!)—with the huge Switzer-like tomes on each side (like the Guildhall giants, in their reformed posture, guardant of nothing) once held the tallest of my folios, *Opera Bonaventure*, choice and massy divinity, to which its two supporters (school divinity also, but of a lesser calibre,—Bellarmine, and Holy Thomas), showed but as dwarfs,—itself an Ascapart!—that Comberbatch abstracted upon the faith of a theory he holds, which is more easy, I confess, for me to suffer by than to refute, namely, that "the title to property in a book (my Bonaventure, for
instance), is in exact ratio to the claimant’s powers of understanding and appreciating the same.” Should he go on acting upon this theory, which of our shelves is safe?

The slight vacuum in the left-hand case—two shelves from the ceiling—scarcely distinguishable but by the quick eye of a loser—was whilom the commodious resting-place of Brown on Urn Burial. C. will hardly allege that he knows more about that treatise than I do, who introduced it to him, and was indeed the first (of the moderns) to discover its beauties—but so have I known a foolish lover to praise his mistress in the presence of a rival more qualified to carry her off than himself.—Just below, Dodsley’s dramas want their fourth volume, where Vittoria Corombona is! The remainder nine are as distasteful as Priam’s refuse sons, when the Fates borrowed Hector. Here stood the Anatomy of Melancholy, in sober state.—There loitered the Complete Angler; quiet as in life, by some stream side. In yonder nook, John Buncle, a widower-volume, with “eyes closed,” mourns his ravished mate.

One justice I must do my friend, that if he sometimes, like the sea, sweeps away a treasure, at another time, sea-like, he throws up as rich an equivalent to match it. I have a small under-collection of this nature (my friend’s gatherings in his various calls), picked up, he has forgotten at what odd places, and deposited with as little memory at mine. I take in these orphans, the twice-deserted. These proselytes of the gate are welcome as the true Hebrews. They stand in conjunction; natives, and naturalized. The latter seem as little disposed to inquire out their true lineage as I am.—I charge no warehouse-room for
these deodands, nor shall ever put myself to the ungentlemanly trouble of advertising a sale of them to pay expenses.

To lose a volume to C. carries some sense and meaning in it. You are sure that he will make one hearty meal on your viands, if he can give no account of the platter after it. But what moved thee, wayward, spiteful K., to be so importunate to carry off with thee, in spite of tears and adjurations to thee to forbear, the Letters of that princely woman, the thrice noble Margaret Newcastle—knowing at the time, and knowing that I knew also, thou most assuredly wouldst never turn over one leaf of the illustrious folio:—what but the mere spirit of contradiction, and childish love of getting the better of thy friend?—Then, worst cut of all! to transport it with thee to the Gallican land—

Unworthy land to harbour such a sweetness,
A virtue in which all ennobling thoughts dwelt,
Pure thoughts, kind thoughts, high thoughts, her sex's wonder!

—hadst thou not thy play-books, and books of jests and fancies about thee, to keep thee merry, even as thou keepest all companies with thy quips and mirthful tales? Child of the Green-room, it was unkindly done of thee. Thy wife, too, that part-French, better part-Englishwoman!—that she could fix upon no other treatise to bear away, in kindly token of remembering us, than the works of Fulke Greville, Lord Brook—of which no Frenchman, nor woman of France, Italy, or England, was ever by nature constituted to comprehend a tittle! Was there not Zimmerman on Solitude?

Reader, if haply thou art blessed with a moderate collection, be shy of showing it; or if thy
heart overfloweth to lend them, lend thy books; but let it be to such a one as S. T. C.—he will return them (generally anticipating the time appointed) with usury; enriched with annotations, tripling their value. I have had experience. Many are these precious MSS. of his—(in matter oftentimes, and almost in quantity not unfrequently, vying with the originals) in no very clerkly hand—legible in my Daniel; in old Burton; in Sir Thomas Browne; and those abstruser cogitations of the Greville, now, alas! wandering in Pagan lands.—I counsel thee, shut not thy heart, nor thy library, against S. T. C.
NEW YEAR'S EVE.

EVERY man hath two birth-days: two days at least, in every year, which set him upon revolving the lapse of time, as it affects his moral duration. The one is that which in an especial manner he termeth his. In the gradual desuetude of old observances, this custom of solemnizing our proper birth-day hath nearly passed away, or is left to children, who reflect nothing at all about the matter, nor understand anything in it beyond cake and orange. But the birth of a New Year is of an interest too wide to be pretermitted by king or cobbler. No one ever regarded the First of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time, and count upon what is left. It is the Nativity of our common Adam.

Of all sound of all bells—(bells, the music highest bordering upon heaven)—most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year. I never hear it without a gathering-up of my mind to a concentration of all the images that have been diffused over the past twelvemonth; all I have done or suffered, performed or neglected, in that regretted time. I begin to know its worth, as when a person dies. It takes a personal colour;
nor was it a poetical flight in a contemporary, when he exclaimed

I saw the skirts of the departing Year.

It is no more than what in sober sadness everyone of us seems to be conscious of, in that awful leave-taking. I am sure I felt it, and all felt it with me, last night; though some of my companions affected rather to manifest an exhilaration at the birth of the coming year, than any very tender regrets for the decease of its predecessor. But I am none of those who—

Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

I am naturally, beforehand, shy of novelties; new books, new faces, new years,—from some mental twist which makes it difficult in me to face the prospective. I have almost ceased to hope; and am sanguine only in the prospects of other (former) years. I plunge into foregone visions and conclusions. I encounter pell-mell with past disappointments, I am armour-proof against old discouragements. I forgive, or overcome in fancy, old adversaries. I play over again for love, as the gamesters phrase it, games for which I once paid so dear. I would scarce now have any of those untoward accidents and events of my life reversed. I would no more alter them than the incidents of some well-contrived novel. Methinks, it is better that I should have pined away seven of my goldenest years, when I was thrall to the fair hair, and fairer eyes, of Alice W—n, than that so passionate a love adventure should be lost. It was better that our family should have missed that legacy, which old Dorrell cheated us of, than that I should have at this moment two thousand pounds in banco, and be without the idea of that specious old rogue.
In a degree beneath manhood, it is my infirmity to look back upon those early days. Do I advance a paradox when I say, that, skipping over the intervention of forty years, a man may have leave to love *himself*, without the imputation of self-love?

If I know aught of myself, no one whose mind is introspective—and mine is painfully so—can have a less respect for his present identity than I have for the man Elia. I know him to be light, and vain, and humorous; a notorious **; addicted to **; averse from counsel, neither taking it, nor offering it; besides; a stammering buffoon; what you will; lay it on, and spare not; I subscribe to it all, and much more, than thou canst be willing to lay at his door—but for the child Elia—that "other me," there, in the background—I must take leave to cherish the remembrance of that young master—with as little reference, I protest, to his stupid changeling of five-and-forty, as if it had been a child of some other house, and not of my parents. I can cry over its patient small-pox at five, and rougher medications. I can lay its poor fevered head upon the sick pillow at Christ's, and wake with it in surprise at the gentle posture of maternal tenderness hanging over it, that unknown had watched its sleep. I know how it shrank from any the least colour of falsehood.—God help thee, Elia, how art thou changed!—Thou art sophisticated.—I know how honest, how courageous (for a weakling) it was—how religious, how imaginative, how hopeful! From what have I not fallen, if the child I remember was indeed myself,—and not some dissembling guardian, presenting a false identity, to give the rule to my unpractised steps, and regulate the tone of my moral being!
That I am fond of indulging, without a hope of sympathy, in such retrospection, may be the symptom of some sickly idiosyncrasy. Or is it owing to another cause: simply that being without wife or family, I have not learned to project myself enough out of myself; and having no offspring of my own to dally with, I turn back upon memory, and adopt my own early idea, as my heir and favourite? If these speculations seem fantastical to thee, reader (a busy man, perchance), if I tread out of the way of thy sympathy, and am singularly conceited only, I retire, impenetrable to ridicule, under the phantom cloud of Elia.

The elders, with whom I was brought up, were of a character not likely to let slip the sacred observance of any old institution; and the ringing out of the Old Year was kept by them with circumstances of peculiar ceremony. In those days the sound of those midnight chimes, though it seemed to raise hilarity in all around me, never failed to bring a train of pensive imagery into my fancy. Yet I then scarce conceived what it meant, or thought of it as a reckoning that concerned me. Not childhood alone, but the young man till thirty, never feels practically that he is mortal. He knows it indeed, and, if need were, he could preach a homily on the fragility of life; but he brings it not home to himself, any more than in a hot June we can appropriate to our imagination the freezing days of December. But now, shall I confess a truth?—I feel these audits but too powerfully. I begin to count the probabilities of my duration, and to grudge at the expenditure of moments and shortest periods, like misers' farthings. In proportion as the years both lessen and shorten, I set more count upon their periods, and would fain lay
my ineffectual finger upon the spoke of the great wheel. I am not content to pass away "like a weaver's shuttle." Those metaphors solace me not, nor sweeten the unpalatable draught of mortality. I care not to be carried with the tide, that smoothly bears human life to eternity; and reluct at the inevitable course of destiny. I am in love with this green earth; the face of town and country; the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. I would set up my tabernacle here. I am content to stand still at the age to which I am arrived; I, and my friends: to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer. I do not want to be weaned by age; or drop, like mellow fruit, as they say, into the grave.—Any alteration, on this earth of mine, in diet or in lodging, puzzles and discomposes me. My household-gods plant a terrible fixed foot, and are not rooted up without blood. They do not willingly seek Lavinian shores. A new state of being staggers me.

Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and fireside conversations, and innocent vanities, and jests, and irony itself—do these things go out with life?

Can a ghost laugh, or shake his gaunt sides, when you are pleasant with him?

And you, my midnight darlings, my Folios; must I part with the intense delight of having you (huge armfuls) in my embraces? Must knowledge come to me, if it come at all, by some awful experiment of intuition, and no longer by this familiar process of reading?

Shall I enjoy friendships there, wanting the
smiling indications which point me to them here, —the recognizable face—the "sweet assurance of a look?"—

In winter this intolerable disinclination to dying —to give it its mildest name—does more especially haunt and beset me. In a genial August noon, beneath a sweltering sky, death is almost problematic. At those times do such poor snakes as myself enjoy an immortality. Then we expand and burgeon. Then we are as strong again, as valiant again, as wise again, and a great deal taller. The blast that nips and shrinks me, puts me in thoughts of death. All things allied to the insubstantial, wait upon that master feeling; cold, numbness, dreams, perplexity; moonlight itself, with its shadowy and spectral appearances,—that cold ghost of the sun, or Phœbus’ sickly sister, like that innutritious one denounced in the Canticles:—I am none of her minions—I hold with the Persian.

Whatsoever thwarts, or puts me out of my way, brings death unto my mind. All partial evils, like humours, run into that capital plague-sore.—I have heard some profess an indifference to life. Such hail the end of their existence as a port of refuge; and speak of the grave as of some soft arms, in which they may slumber, as on a pillow. Some have wooed death— but out upon thee, I say, thou foul, ugly phantom! I detest, abhor, execrate, and (with Friar John) give thee to six score thousand devils, as in no instance to be excused or tolerated, but shunned as an universal viper; to be branded, proscribed, and spoken evil of! In no way can I be brought to digest thee, thou thin, melancholy Privation, or more frightful and confounding Positive!
Those antidotes, prescribed against the fear of thee, are altogether frigid and insulting, like thyself. For what satisfaction hath a man, that he shall "lie down with kings and emperors in death," who in his lifetime never greatly coveted the society of such bed-fellows?—or, forsooth, that "so shall the fairest face appear?"—why, to comfort me, must Alice W—n be a goblin? More than all, I conceive disgust at those impertinent and misbecoming familiarities, inscribed upon your ordinary tombstones. Every dead man must take upon himself to be lecturing me with his odious truism, that "Such as he now is I must shortly be." Not so shortly, friend, perhaps, as thou imaginest. In the meantime, I am alive. I move about. I am worth twenty of thee. Know thy betters! Thy New Years' days are past. I survive, a jolly candidate for 1821. Another cup of wine—and while that turncoat bell, that just now mournfully chanted the obsequies of 1820 departed, with changed notes lustily rings in a successor, let us attune to its peal the song made on a like occasion, by hearty, cheerful Mr. Cotton.

THE NEW YEAR.

Hark, the cock crows, and yon bright star
Tells us, the day himself's not far;
And see where, breaking from the night,
He gilds the western hills with light.
With him old Janus doth appear,
Peeping into the future year,
With such a look as seems to say
The prospect is not good that way.
Thus do we rise ill sights to see,
And 'gainst ourselves to prophesy;
When the prophetic fear of things
A more tormenting mischief brings,
More full of soul-tormenting gall
Than direst mischiefs can befall
ESSAYS OF ELIA.

But stay! but stay! methinks my sight,
Better informed by clearer light,
Discerns serenity in that brow
That all contracted seemed but now.
His revers'd face may show distaste,
And frown upon the ills are past;
But that which this way looks is clear,
And smiles upon the New-born Year.
He looks too from a place so high,
The year lies open to his eye;
And all the moments open are
To the exact discoverer.
Yet more and more he smiles upon
The happy revolution.
Why should we then suspect or fear
The influences of a year,
So smiles upon us the first morn,
And speaks us good so soon as born?
Plague on't! the last was ill enough,
This cannot but make better proof;
Or, at the worst, as we brush'd through
The last, why so we may this too;
And then the next in reason shou'd
Be superexcellently good:
For the worst ills (we daily see)
Have no more perpetuity
Than the best fortunes that do fall;
Which also bring us wherewithal
Longer their being to support,
Than those do of the other sort:
And who has one good year in three,
And yet repines at destiny,
Appears ungrateful in the case,
And merits not the good he has.
Then let us welcome the New Guest
With lusty brimmers of the best:
Mirth always should Good Fortune meet,
And renders e'en Disaster sweet:
And though the Princess turn her back,
Let us but line ourselves with sack,
We better shall by far hold out,
Till the next year she face about.

How say you, reader—do not these verses smack
of the rough magnanimity of the old English vein?
Do they not fortify like a cordial; enlarging the
heart, and productive of sweet blood, and generous spirits, in the concoction? Where be those puling fears of death, just now expressed or affected?—Passed like a cloud—absorbed in the purging sunlight of clear poetry—clean washed away by a wave of genuine Helicon, your only Spa for these hypochondries. And now another cup of the generous! and a merry New Year, and many of them to you all, my masters!
MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS
ON WHIST.

CLEAR fire, a clean hearth,\(^1\) and the rigour of the game.\(^2\) This was the celebrated wish of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who, next to her devotions, loved a good game of whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half-and-half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary, who had slipped a wrong card, to take it up and play another.\(^3\) These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She de-

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\(^1\) This was before the introduction of rugs, reader. You must remember the intolerable crash of the unswept cinders betwixt your foot and the marble.

\(^2\) As if a sportsman should tell you he liked to kill a fox one day and lose him the next.
tested them, as I do, from her heart and soul, and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated favours. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight: cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) "like a dancer." She sate bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side—their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that Hearts was her favourite suit.

I never in my life—and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it—saw her take out her snuff-box when it was her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced, or connived at, miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards; and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candour, declared that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do,—and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards—over a book.

Pope was her favourite author: his Rape of the Lock her favourite work. She once did me the
favour to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that poem; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, tradrille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles; but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she had often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners—a thing which the constancy of whist abhors; the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille—absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter give him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces;—the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone; above all, the overpowering attractions of a Sans Prendre Vole,—to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist;—all these, she would say, make quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the solider game: that was her word. It was a long meal; not like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever-fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel: perpetually changing postures and connec-
MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST. 215

tions; bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow; kissing and scratching in a breath;—but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favourite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage—nothing superfluous. No flushes—that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up:—that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and colour, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colours of things.—Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have an uniformity of array to distinguish them: but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit from dressing up his tenantry in red jackets, that never were to be marshalled—never to take the field?—She even wished that whist were more simple than it is; and, in my mind, would have stripped it of some appendages, which, in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably, allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps?—Why two colours, when the mark of the suit would have sufficiently distinguished them without it?

"But the eye, my dear madam, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason—he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic
countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your quaker spirit of unsensualizing would have kept out.—You yourself have a pretty collection of paintings—but confess to me, whether, walking in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the ante-room, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to that you have in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court-cards?—the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession—the gay triumph-assuring scarlets—the contrasting deadly-killing sables—the 'hoary majesty of spades'—Pam in all his glory!—

"All these might be dispensed with; and with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, pictureless. But the beauty of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling. Imagine a dull deal board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature's), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and turneys in!—Exchange those delicately-turned ivory markers—(work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol,—or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess)—exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors' money), or chalk and a slate!"—

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favourite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted for the legacy
of a curious cribbage-board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated), brought with him from Florence:—this, and a trifile of five hundred pounds, came to me at her death.

The former bequest (which I do not least value), I have kept with religious care; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say,—disputing with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She could never heartily bring her mouth to pronounce "Go"—or "That's a go." She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five-dollar stake) because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring "two for his heels." There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms—such as pique—repique—the capot—they savoured (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate, or square. She would argue thus:—Cards are warfare: the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war, in disguise of a sport: when single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves, it is too close a fight; with spectators, it is not much bettered. No looker-on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money; he cares not for your luck sympathetically,
or for your play.—Three are still worse; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance; or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in tradrille.—But in square games (she meant whist), all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honour, common to every species—though the latter can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in whist are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold—or even an interested—bystander witnesses it, but because your partner sympathizes in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game. By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favourite pastime.

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game, where chance entered into the composition, for nothing. Chance, she would argue—and here again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion;—chance is nothing, but where something else depends upon it. It is obvious that cannot be
glory. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spectators, where no stake was depending?—Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number—and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively without a prize? Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one man’s wit,—his memory, or combination-faculty rather—against another’s; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless. She could not conceive a game wanting the spritely infusion of chance, the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room, whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with insufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of Castles and Knights, the imagery of the board, she would argue, (and I think in this case justly) were entirely misplaced and senseless. Those hard-head contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and colour. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort, that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other:—that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than
upon a game at cards: that cards are a temporary illusion; in truth, a mere drama; for we do but play at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during the illusion, we are as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling, and little bloodshed; mighty means for disproportioned ends: quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious games of life, which men play without esteeming them to be such.

With great deference to the old lady's judgment in these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life, when playing at cards for nothing has even been agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet for love with my cousin Bridget—Bridget Elia.

I grant there is something sneaking in it; but with a tooth-ache, or a sprained ankle,—when you are subdued and humble,—you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as sick whist.

I grant it is not the highest style of man—I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle—she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologize.

At such times, those terms which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible.—I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted her)—(dare I tell thee, how foolish I am?)—I wished it might have lasted for ever,
though we gained nothing, and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly for ever. The pipkin should be ever boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over: and, as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.
HAVE no ear.—

Mistake me not, reader—nor imagine that I am by nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments, and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me.—I am, I think, rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those ingenious labyrinthine inlets—those indispensable side-intelligencers.

Neither have I incurred, or done anything to incur, with Defoe, that hideous disfigurement, which constrained him to draw upon assurance—to feel "quite unabashed,"¹ and at ease upon that article. I was never, I thank my stars, in the pillory; nor, if I read them aright, is it within the compass of my destiny, that I ever should be.

When therefore I say that I have no ear, you will understand me to mean—for music. To say that this heart never melted at the concord of sweet sounds, would be a foul self-libel. "Water

¹ "Earless on high stood, unabashed, Defoe."—Dunciad.]
parted from the sea” never fails to move it strangely. So does “In infancy.” But they were used to be sung at her harpsichord (the old-fashioned instrument in vogue in those days) by a gentlewoman—the gentlest, sure, that ever merited the appellation—the sweetest—why should I hesitate to name Mrs. S——, once the blooming Fanny Weatheral of the Temple—who had power to thrill the soul of Elia, small imp as he was, even in his long coats; and to make him glow, tremble, and blush with a passion, that not faintly indicated the day-spring of that absorbing sentiment which was afterwards destined to overwhelm and subdue his nature quite for Alice W—— n.

I even think that sentimentally I am disposed to harmony. But organically I am incapable of a tune. I have been practising “God save the King” all my life; whistling and humming of it over to myself in solitary corners; and am not yet arrived, they tell me, within many quavers of it. Yet hath the loyalty of Elia never been impeached.

I am not without suspicion, that I have an undeveloped faculty of music within me. For thrumming, in my mild way, on my friend A.’s piano, the other morning, while he was engaged in an adjoining parlour,—on his return he was pleased to say, “he thought it could not be the maid!” On his first surprise at hearing the keys touched in somewhat an airy and masterful way, not dreaming of me, his suspicions had lighted on Jenny. But a grace, snatched from a superior refinement, soon convinced him that some being—technically, perhaps, deficient, but higher informed from a principle common to all the fine arts—had swayed the keys to a mood which Jenny, with all her (less cultivated) enthusiasm, could never have elicited.
from them. I mention this as a proof of my friend’s penetration, and not with any view of disparaging Jenny.

Scientifically I could never be made to understand (yet have I taken some pains) what a note in music is; or how one note should differ from another. Much less in voices can I distinguish a soprano from a tenor. Only sometimes the thorough-bass I contrive to guess at, from its being super-eminentely harsh and disagreeable. I tremble, however, for my misapplication of the simplest terms of that which I disclaim. While I profess my ignorance, I scarce know what to say I am ignorant of. I hate, perhaps, by misnomers. *Sostenuto* and *adagio* stand in the like relation of obscurity to me; and *Sol, Fa, Mi, Re*, is as conjuring as *Baralipton*.

It is hard to stand alone in an age like this,—(constituted to the quick and critical perception of all harmonious combinations, I very believe, beyond all preceding ages, since Jubal stumbled upon the gamut), to remain, as it were, singly unimpressible to the magic influences of an art, which is said to have such an especial stroke at soothing, elevating, and refining the passions.—Yet, rather than break the candid current of my confessions, I must avow to you that I have received a great deal more pain than pleasure from this so cried-up faculty.

I am constitutionally susceptible of noises. A carpenter’s hammer, in a warm summer noon, will fret me into more than midsummer madness. But those unconnected, unset sounds, are nothing to the measured malice of music. The ear is passive to those single strokes; willingly enduring stripes while it hath no task to con. To music it cannot
be passive. It will strive—mine at least will—spite of its inaptitude, to thread the maze; like an unskilled eye painfully poring upon hieroglyphics. I have sat through an Italian Opera, till, for sheer pain, and inexplicable anguish, I have rushed out into the noisiest places of the crowded streets, to solace myself with sounds, which I was not obliged to follow, and get rid of the distracting torment of endless, fruitless, barren attention! I take refuge in the unpretending assemblage of honest common-life sounds;—and the purgatory of the Enraged Musician becomes my paradise.

I have sat at an Oratorio (that profanation of the purposes of the cheerful playhouse) watching the faces of the auditory in the pit (what a contrast to Hogarth's "Laughing Audience"!) immovable, or affecting some faint emotion—till (as some have said, that our occupations in the next world will be but a shadow of what delighted us in this) I have imagined myself in some cold Theatre in Hades, where some of the forms of the earthly one should be kept up, with none of the enjoyment; or like that

—— Party in a parlour
All silent, and all damned.

Above all, those insufferable concertos, and pieces of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension.—Words are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a dying; to lie stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up languor by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar, and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze on empty
frames, and be forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book, *all stops*, and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore tragedies to answer to the vague gestures of an inexplicable rambling mime—these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this empty *instrumental music*.

I deny not, that in the opening of a concert, I have experienced something vastly lulling and agreeable:—afterwards followeth the languor and the oppression.—Like that disappointing book in Patmos; or, like the comings on of melancholy, described by Burton, doth music make her first insinuating approaches:—"Most pleasant it is to such as are melancholy given, to walk alone in some solitary grove, betwixt wood and water, by some brook side, and to meditate upon some delightsome and pleasant subject, which shall affect him most, *amabilis insania*, and *mentis gratissimus error*. A most incomparable delight to build castles in the air, to go smiling to themselves, acting an infinite variety of parts, which they suppose, and strongly imagine, they act, or that they see done.—So delightsome these toys at first, they could spend whole days and nights without sleep, even whole years in such contemplations, and fantastical meditations, which are like so many dreams, and will hardly be drawn from them—winding and unwinding themselves as so many clocks, and still pleasing their humours, until at the last the *scene turns upon a sudden*, and they being now habituated to such meditations and solitary places, can endure no company, can think of nothing but harsh and distasteful subjects. Fear, sorrow, suspicion, *subrusticus pudor*, discontent, cares, and
weariness of life, surprise them on a sudden, and they can think of nothing else: continually suspecting, no sooner are their eyes open, but this infernal plague of melancholy seizeth on them, and terrifies their souls, representing some dismal object to their minds; which now, by no means, no labour, no persuasions, they can avoid, they cannot be rid of, they cannot resist."

Something like this "SCENE TURNING" I have experienced at the evening parties, at the house of my good Catholic friend Nov——; who, by the aid of a capital organ, himself the most finished of players, converts his drawing-room into a chapel, his week days into Sundays, and these latter into minor heavens.¹

When my friend commences upon one of those solemn anthems, which peradventure struck upon my heedless ear, rambling in the side aisles of the dim Abbey, some five-and-thirty years since, waking a new sense, and putting a soul of old religion into my young apprehension—(whether it be that, in which the Psalmist, weary of the persecutions of bad men, wisheth to himself dove’s wings—or that other, which, with a like measure of sobriety and pathos, inquireth by what means the young man shall best cleanse his mind)—a holy calm pervadeth me.—I am for the time

—— rapt above earth,
And possess joys not promised at my birth.

But when this master of the spell, not content to have laid a soul prostrate, goes on, in his power, to inflict more bliss than lies in her capacity to receive —impatient to overcome her "earthly" with his

¹ I have been there, and still would go,
"Tis like a little heaven below.—Dr. Watts.
"heavenly,"—still pouring in, for protracted hours, fresh waves and fresh from the sea of sound, or from that inexhausted German ocean, above which, in triumphant progress, dolphin-seated, ride those Arions Haydn and Mozart, with their attendant Tritons, Bach, Beethoven, and a countless tribe, whom to attempt to reckon up would but plunge me again in the deeps,—I stagger under the weight of harmony, reeling to and fro at my wits' end;—clouds, as of frankincense, oppress me—priests, altars, censers, dazzle before me—the genius of his religion hath me in her toils—a shadowy triple tiara invests the brow of my friend, late so naked, so ingenuous—he is Pope,—and by him sits, like as in the anomaly of dreams, a she-Pope too,—tricoroneted like himself!—I am converted, and yet a Protestant;—at once malleus hereticorum, and myself grand heresiarch: or three heresies centre in my person:—I am Marcion, Ebion, and Cerinthus—Gog and Magog—what not?—till the coming in of the friendly supper-tray dissipates the figment, and a draught of true Lutheran beer (in which chiefly my friend shows himself no bigot) at once reconciles me to the rationalities of a purer faith; and restores to me the genuine unterrifying aspects of my pleasant-countenanced host and hostess.
ALL FOOLS' DAY.

The compliments of the season to my worthy masters, and a merry first of April to us all!

Many happy returns of this day to you—and you—and you, Sir—nay, never frown, man, nor put a long face upon the matter. Do not we know one another? what need of ceremony among friends? we have all a touch of that same—you understand me—a speck of the motley. Be-shrew the man who on such a day as this, the general festival, should affect to stand aloof. I am none of those sneakers. I am free of the corporation, and care not who knows it. He that meets me in the forest to-day, shall meet with no wise-acre, I can tell him. Stultus sum. Translate me that, and take the meaning of it to yourself for your pains. What! man, we have four quarters of the globe on our side, at the least computation.

Fill us a cup of that sparkling gooseberry—we will drink no wise, melancholy, politic port on this day—and let us troll the catch of Amiens—duc ad me—duc ad me—how goes it?

Here shall he see
Gross fools as he.

Now would I give a trifle to know, historically
and authentically, who was the greatest fool that ever lived. I would certainly give him in a bumper. Marry, of the present breed, I think I could without much difficulty name you the party.

Remove your cap a little further, if you please: it hides my bauble. And now each man bestride his hobby, and dust away his bells to what tune he pleases. I will give you, for my part,

— The crazy old church clock,
    And the bewilder’d chimes.

Good master Empedocles, you are welcome. It is long since you went a salamander-gathering down Ætna. Worse than samphire-picking by some odds. 'Tis a mercy your worship did not singe your mustachios.

Ha! Cleombrotus! and what salads in faith did you light upon at the bottom of the Mediterranean? You were founder, I take it, of the disinterested sect of the Calenturists.

Gebir, my old free-mason, and prince of plumbers at Babel, bring in your trowel, most Ancient Grand! You have claim to a seat here at my right hand, as patron of the stammerers. You left your work, if I remember Herodotus correctly, at eight hundred million toises, or thereabout, above the level of the sea. Bless us, what a long bell you must have pulled, to call your top workmen to their luncheon on the low grounds of Shinar. Or did you send up your garlic and onions by a rocket?

[¹ — He who, to be deem’d
    A god, leap’d fondly into Ætna flames—]
[² — He who, to enjoy
    Plato’s Elysium, leap’d into the sea—]
[³ The builders next of Babel on the plain
    Of Senaar—]
I am a rogue if I am not ashamed to show you our Monument on Fish-street Hill, after your altitudes. Yet we think it somewhat.

What, the magnanimous Alexander in tears?—cry, baby, put its finger in its eye, it shall have another globe, round as an orange, pretty moppet!

Mister Adams—'odso, I honour your coat—pray do us the favour to read to us that sermon, which you lent to Mistress Slipslop—the twenty and second in your portmanteau there—on Female Incontinence—the same—it will come in most ir-relevantly and impertinently seasonable to the time of day.

Good Master Raymund Lully, you look wise. Pray correct that error.

Duns, spare your definitions. I must fine you a bumper or a paradox. We will have nothing said or done syllogistically this day. Remove those logical forms, waiter, that no gentleman break the tender shins of his apprehension stumbling across them.

Master Stephen, you are late.—Ha! Cokes, it is you?—Aguecheek, my dear knight, let me pay my devoir to you.—Master Shallow, your worship's poor servant to command.—Master Silence, I will use few words with you.—Slender, it shall go hard if I edge not you in somewhere.—You six will engross all the poor wit of the company to-day.—I know it, I know it.

Ha! honest R—, my fine old Librarian of Ludgate, time out of mind, art thou here again? Bless my doublet, it is not over-new, threadbare as thy stories:—what dost thou flitting about the world at this rate?—Thy customers are extinct, defunct, bed-rid, have ceased to read long ago.—Thou goest still among them, seeing if, peradven-
nature, thou canst hawk a volume or two.—Good Granville S——, thy last patron, is flown.

King Pandion, he is dead,
All thy friends are lapt in lead.—

Nevertheless, noble R——, come in, and take your seat here, between Armado and Quisada; for in true courtesy, in gravity, in fantastic smiling to thyself, in courteous smiling upon others, in the goodly ornature of well-apparelled speech, and the commendation of wise sentences, thou art nothing inferior to those accomplished Dons of Spain. The spirit of chivalry forsake me for ever, when I forget thy singing the song of Macheath, which declares that he might be happy with either, situated between those two ancient spinsters—when I forget the inimitable formal love which thou didst make, turning now to the one, and now to the other, with that Malvolian smile—as if Cervantes, not Gay, had written it for his hero; and as if thousands of periods must revolve before the mirror of courtesy could have given his invidious preference between a pair of so goodly-propertied and meritorious-equal damsels.

To descend from these altitudes, and not to protract our Fool's Banquet beyond its appropriate day,—for I fear the second of April is not many hours' distant—in sober verity I will confess a truth to thee, reader. I love a Fool—as naturally as if I were of kith and kin to him. When a child, with child-like apprehensions, that dived not below the surface of the matter, I read those Parables—not guessing at the involved wisdom—I had more yearnings towards that simple architect that built his house upon the sand, than I entertained for his more cautious neighbour: I grudged at the
hard censure pronounced upon the quiet soul that kept his talent; and—prizing their simplicity beyond the more provident, and, to my apprehension, somewhat unfeminine wariness of their competitors—I felt a kindliness, that almost amounted to a tendre, for those five thoughtless virgins.—I have never made an acquaintance since, that lasted: or a friendship, that answered; with any that had not some tincture of the absurd in their characters. I venerate an honest obliquity of understanding. The more laughable blunders a man shall commit in your company, the more tests he giveth you, that he will not betray or overreach you. I love the safety which a palpable hallucination warrants; the security, which a word out of reason ratifies. And take my word for this, reader, and say a fool told it you, if you please, that he who hath not a dram of folly in his mixture, hath pounds of much worse matter in his composition. It is observed, that "the foolisher the fowl or fish,—woodcocks,—dotterels—cods'-heads, &c., the finer the flesh thereof," and what are commonly the world's received fools but such whereof the world is not worthy? and what have been some of the kindliest patterns of our species, but so many darlings of absurdity, minions of the goddess, and her white boys?—Reader, if you wrest my words beyond their fair construction, it is you, and not I, that are the April Fool.
A QUAKERS' MEETING.

Still-born Silence! thou that art
Flood-gate of the deeper heart!
Offspring of a heavenly kind!
Frost o' the mouth, and thaw o' the mind!
Secrecy's confidant, and he
Who makes religion mystery!
Admiration's speaking'st tongue!
Leave, thy desert shades among.
Reverend hermit's hallow'd cells,
Where retired devotion dwells!
With thy enthusiasms come,
Seize our tongues, and strike us dumb! 1

READER, would'st thou know what true peace and quiet mean; would'st thou find a refuge from the noises and clamours of the multitude; would'st thou enjoy at once solitude and society; would'st thou possess the depth of thine own spirit in stillness, without being shut out from the consolatory faces of thy species; would'st thou be alone and yet accompanied; solitary, yet not desolate; singular, yet not without some to keep thee in countenance; a unit in aggregate; a simple in composite:—come with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

Dost thou love silence deep as that “before the

1 From “Poems of all sorts,” by Richard Fleckno, 1653.
winds were made?" go not out into the wilderness, descend not into the profundities of the earth; shut not up thy casements; nor pour wax into the little cells of thy ears, with little-faith'd self-mistrusting Ulysses.—Retire with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

For a man to refrain even from good words, and to hold his peace, it is commendable; but for a multitude it is great mastery.

What is the stillness of the desert compared with this place? what the uncommunicating muteness of fishes?—here the goddess reigns and revels.—"Boreas, and Cesias, and Argestes loud," do not with their interconfounding uproars more augment the brawl—nor the waves of the blown Baltic with their clubbed sounds—than their opposite (Silence her sacred self) is multiplied and rendered more intense by numbers and by sympathy. She too hath her deeps, that call unto deeps. Negation itself hath a positive more and less; and closed eyes would seem to obscure the great obscurity of midnight.

There are wounds which an imperfect solitude cannot heal. By imperfect I mean that which a man enjoyeth by himself. The perfect is that which he can sometimes attain in crowds, but nowhere so absolutely as in a Quakers' Meeting.—Those first hermits did certainly understand this principle when they retired into Egyptian solitudes, not singly, but in shoals, to enjoy one another's want of conversation. The Carthusian is bound to his brethren by this agreeing spirit of incomunicativeness. In secular occasions, what so pleasant as to be reading a book through a long winter evening, with a friend sitting by—say a wife—he, or she, too, (if that be probable,) reading
another without interruption, or oral communication?—can there be no sympathy without the gabble of words?—away with this inhuman, shy, single, shade-and-cavern-haunting solitariness. Give me, Master Zimmerman, a sympathetic solitude.

To pace alone in the cloisters or side aisles of some cathedral, time stricken;

Or under hanging mountains,
Or by the fall of fountains;

is but a vulgar luxury compared with that which those enjoy who come together for the purposes of more complete, abstracted solitude. This is the loneliness "to be felt."—The Abbey Church of Westminster hath nothing so solemn, so spirit-soothing, as the naked walls and benches of a Quakers' Meeting. Here are no tombs, no inscriptions.

— Sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruin'd sides of kings—

but here is something which throws antiquity herself into the fore-ground—SILENCE—eldest of things—language of old Night—primitive discoursor—to which the insolent decays of mouldering grandeur have but arrived by a violent, and, as we may say, unnatural progression.

How reverend is the view of these hush'd heads,
Looking tranquillity!

Nothing-plotting, nought-caballing, unmischiefous synod! convocation without intrigue! parliament without debate! what a lesson dost thou read to council and to consistory!—if my pen treat of you lightly—as haply it will wander—yet my spirit hath gravely felt the wisdom of your custom, when, sitting among you in deepest peace,
which some out-welling tears would rather confirm than disturb, I have reverted to the times of your beginnings, and the sowing of the seed by Fox and Dewesbury.—I have witnessed that which brought before my eyes your heroic tranquillity, inflexible to the rude jests and serious violences of the insolent soldiery, republican or royalist, sent to molest you—for ye sate betwixt the fires of two persecutions, the outcast and off-scouring of church and presbytery.—I have seen the reeling sea-ruffian, who had wandered into your receptacle with the avowed intention of disturbing your quiet, from the very spirit of the place receive in a moment a new heart, and presently sit among ye as a lamb amidst lambs. And I remember Penn before his accusers, and Fox in the bail dock, when he was lifted up in spirit, as he tells us, and "the Judge and the Jury became as dead men under his feet."

Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recommend to you, above all church-narratives, to read Sewel's History of the Quakers. It is in folio, and is the abstract of the journals of Fox and the primitive Friends. It is far more edifying and affecting than anything you will read of Wesley and his colleagues. Here is nothing to stagger you, nothing to make you mistrust, no suspicion of alloy, no drop or dreg of the worldly or ambitious spirit. You will here read the true story of that much-injured, ridiculed man (who perhaps hath been a byword in your mouth)—James Naylor: what dreadful sufferings, with what patience, he endured, even to the boring through of his tongue with red-hot irons, without a murmur; and with what strength of mind, when the delusion he had fallen into, which they stigmatized for blasphemy, had
given way to clearer thoughts, he could renounce his error, in a strain of the beautifullest humility, yet keep his first grounds, and be a Quaker still!—so different from the practice of your common converts from enthusiasm, who, when they apostatize, *apostatize all*, and think they can never get far enough from the society of their former errors, even to the renunciation of some saving truths, with which they had been mingled, not implicated.

Get the writings of John Woolman by heart; and love the early Quakers.

How far the followers of these good men in our days have kept to the primitive spirit, or in what proportion they have substituted formality for it, the Judge of Spirits can alone determine. I have seen faces in their assemblies upon which the dove sat visibly brooding. Others, again, I have watched, when my thoughts should have been better engaged, in which I could possibly detect nothing but a blank inanity. But quiet was in all, and the disposition to unanimity, and the absence of the fierce controversial workings.—If the spiritual pretensions of the Quakers have abated, at least they make few pretences. Hypocrites they certainly are not, in their preaching. It is seldom, indeed, that you shall see one get up amongst them to hold forth. Only now and then a trembling, female, generally *ancient*, voice is heard—you cannot guess from what part of the meeting it proceeds—with a low, buzzing, musical sound, laying out a few words which "she thought might suit the condition of some present," with a quaking diffidence, which leaves no possibility of supposing that anything of female vanity was mixed up, where the tones were so full of tenderness, and a
restraining modesty.—The men, for what I have observed, speak seldom.

Once only, and it was some years ago, I witnessed a sample of the old Foxian orgasm. It was a man of giant stature, who, as Wordsworth phrases it, might have danced "from head to foot equipt in iron mail." His frame was of iron, too. But he was malleable. I saw him shake all over with the spirit—I dare not say of delusion. The strivings of the outer man were unutterable—he seemed not to speak, but to be spoken from. I saw the strong man bowed down, and his knees to fail—his joints all seemed loosening—it was a figure to set off against Paul preaching—the words he uttered were few, and sound—he was evidently resisting his will—keeping down his own word-wisdom with more mighty effort than the world's orators strain for theirs. "He had been a wit in his youth," he told us, with expressions of a sober remorse. And it was not till long after the impression had begun to wear away that I was enabled, with something like a smile, to recall the striking incongruity of the confession—understanding the term in its worldly acceptation—with the frame and physiognomy of the person before me. His brow would have scared away the Levities—the Jocos Risus-que—faster than the Loves fled the face of Dis at Enna.—By wit, even in his youth, I will be sworn he understood something far within the limits of an allowable liberty.

More frequently the Meeting is broken up without a word having been spoken. But the mind has been fed. You go away with a sermon not made with hands. You have been in the milder caverns of Trophonius; or as in some den, where that fiercest and savagest of all wild creatures, the
Tongue, that unruly member, has strangely lain tied up and captive. You have bathed with stillness.—O, when the spirit is sore fretted, even tired to sickness of the janglings and nonsense-noises of the world, what a balm and a solace it is to go and seat yourself for a quiet half-hour upon some undisputed corner of a bench, among the gentle Quakers!

Their garb and stillness conjoined, present a uniformity, tranquil and herd-like—as in the pasture—"forty feeding like one."

The very garments of a Quaker seem incapable of receiving a soil; and cleanliness in them to be something more than the absence of its contrary. Every Quakeress is a lily; and when they come up in bands to their Whitsun-conferences, whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis, from all parts of the United Kingdom, they show like troops of the Shining Ones.
THE OLD AND THE NEW SCHOOLMASTER.

My reading has been lamentably desultory and immethodical. Odd, out of the way, old English plays, and treatises, have supplied me with most of my notions, and ways of feeling. In everything that relates to science, I am a whole Encyclopædia behind the rest of the world. I should have scarcely cut a figure among the franklins, or country gentlemen, in king John's days. I know less geography than a schoolboy of six weeks' standing. To me a map of old Ortelius is as authentic as Arrowsmith. I do not know whereabout Africa merges into Asia; whether Ethiopia lie in one or other of those great divisions; nor can form the remotest conjecture of the position of New South Wales, or Van Diemen's Land. Yet do I hold a correspondence with a very dear friend in the first-named of these two Terre Incognitae. I have no astronomy. I do not know where to look for the Bear, or Charles's Wain; the place of any star; or the name of any of them at sight. I guess at Venus only by her brightness—and if the sun on some portentous morn were to make his first appearance in the West, I verily believe, that, while all the world were gasping in apprehension about me, I
alone should stand unterrified, from sheer incuriosity and want of observation. Of history and chronology I possess some vague points, such as one cannot help picking up in the course of miscellaneous study; but I never deliberately sat down to a chronicle, even of my own country. I have most dim apprehensions of the four great monarchies; and sometimes the Assyrian, sometimes the Persian, floats as first in my fancy. I make the widest conjectures concerning Egypt, and her shepherd kings. My friend M., with great pains-taking, got me to think I understood the first proposition in Euclid, but gave me over in despair at the second. I am entirely unacquainted with the modern languages; and, like a better man than myself, have "small Latin and less Greek." I am a stranger to the shapes and texture of the commonest trees, herbs, flowers—not from the circumstance of my being town-born—for I should have brought the same inobservant spirit into the world with me, had I first seen it "on Devon's leafy shores,"—and am no less at a loss among purely town objects, tools, engines, mechanic processes. Not that I affect ignorance—but my head has not many mansions, nor spacious; and I have been obliged to fill it with such cabinet curiosities as it can hold without aching. I sometimes wonder how I have passed my probation with so little discredit in the world, as I have done, upon so meagre a stock. But the fact is, a man may do very well with a very little knowledge, and scarce be found out, in mixed company; everybody is so much more ready to produce his own, than to call for a display of your acquisitions. But in a tête-à-tête there is no shuffling. The truth will out. There is nothing which I dread so much, as the being left
alone for a quarter of an hour with a sensible, well-informed man, that does not know me. I lately got into a dilemma of this sort.—

In one of my daily jaunts between Bishopsgate and Shacklewell, the coach stopped to take up a staid-looking gentleman, about the wrong side of thirty, who was giving his parting directions (while the steps were adjusting), in a tone of mild authority, to a tall youth, who seemed to be neither his clerk, his son, nor his servant, but something partaking of all three. The youth was dismissed, and we drove on. As we were the sole passengers, he naturally enough addressed his conversation to me; and we discussed the merits of the fare; the civility and punctuality of the driver; the circumstance of an opposition coach having been lately set up, with the probabilities of its success—to all which I was enabled to return pretty satisfactory answers, having been drilled into this kind of etiquette by some years' daily practice of riding to and fro in the stage aforesaid—when he suddenly alarmed me by a startling question, whether I had seen the show of prize cattle that morning in Smithfield? Now, as I had not seen it, and do not greatly care for such sort of exhibitions, I was obliged to return a cold negative. He seemed a little mortified, as well as astonished, at my declaration, as (it appeared) he was just come fresh from the sight, and doubtless had hoped to compare notes on the subject. However, he assured me that I had lost a fine treat, as it far exceeded the show of last year. We were now approaching Norton Falgate, when the sight of some shop-goods ticketed freshened him up into a dissertation upon the cheapness of cottons this spring. I was now a little in heart, as the nature of my morning avocations had brought me
into some sort of familiarity with the raw material; and I was surprised to find how eloquent I was becoming on the state of the India market; when, presently, he dashed my incipient vanity to the earth at once, by inquiring whether I had ever made any calculation as to the value of the rental of all the retail shops in London. Had he asked of me what song the Syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, I might, with Sir Thomas Browne, have hazarded a "wide solution."¹ My companion saw my embarrassment, and, the almshouses beyond Shoreditch just coming in view, with great good-nature and dexterity shifted his conversation to the subject of public charities; which led to the comparative merits of provision for the poor in past and present times, with observations on the old monastic institutions, and charitable orders; but, finding me rather dimly impressed with some glimmering notions from old poetic associations, than strongly fortified with any speculations reducible to calculation on the subject, he gave the matter up; and, the country beginning to open more and more upon us, as we approached the turnpike at Kingsland (the destined termination of his journey), he put a home thrust upon me, in the most unfortunate position he could have chosen, by advancing some queries relative to the North Pole Expedition. While I was muttering out something about the Panorama of those strange regions (which I had actually seen), by way of parrying the question, the coach stopping relieved me from any further apprehensions. My companion getting out, left me in the comfortable possession of my ignorance;

¹ Urn Burial.
and I heard him, as he went off, putting questions to an outside passenger, who had alighted with him, regarding an epidemic disorder that had been rise about Dalston, and which my friend assured him had gone through five or six schools in that neighbourhood. The truth now flashed upon me, that my companion was a schoolmaster; and that the youth, whom he had parted from at our first acquaintance, must have been one of the bigger boys, or the usher.—He was evidently a kind-hearted man, who did not seem so much desirous of provoking discussion by the questions which he put, as of obtaining information at any rate. It did not appear that he took any interest, either, in such kind of inquiries, for their own sake; but that he was in some way bound to seek for knowledge. A greenish-coloured coat, which he had on, forbade me to surmise that he was a clergyman. The adventure gave birth to some reflections on the difference between persons of his profession in past and present times.

Rest to the souls of those fine old Pedagogues; the breed, long since extinct, of the Lilys, and the Linacres: who believing that all learning was contained in the languages which they taught, and despising every other acquirement as superficial and useless, came to their task as to a sport! Passing from infancy to age, they dreamed away all their days as in a grammar-school. Revolving in a perpetual cycle of declensions, conjugations, syntaxes, and prosodies; renewing constantly the occupations which had charmed their studious childhood; rehearsing continually the part of the past; life must have slipped from them at last like one day. They were always in their first garden, reaping harvests of their golden time, among their
Flori and their Spici-legia; in Arcadia still, but kings; the ferule of their sway not much harsher, but of like dignity with that mild sceptre attributed to king Basileus; the Greek and Latin, their stately Pamela and their Philoclea; with the occasional duncery of some untoward tyro, serving for a refreshing interlude of a Mopsa, or a clown Damœtas!

With what a savour doth the Preface to Colet's, or (as it is sometimes called) Paul's Accidence, set forth! "To exhort every man to the learning of grammar, that intendeth to attain the understanding of the tongues, wherein is contained a great treasury of wisdom and knowledge, it would seem but vain and lost labour; for so much as it is known, that nothing can surely be ended, whose beginning is either feeble or faulty; and no building be perfect whereas the foundation and groundwork is ready to fall, and unable to uphold the burden of the frame." How well doth this stately preamble (comparable to those which Milton commendeth as "having been the usage to prefix to some solemn law, then first promulgated by Solon or Lycurgus") correspond with and illustrate that pious zeal for conformity, expressed in a succeeding clause, which would fence about grammar-rules with the severity of faith-articles!—"as for the diversity of grammars, it is well profitably taken away by the King's Majesties wisdom, who foreseeing the inconvenience, and favourably providing the remedie, caused one kind of grammar by sundry learned men to be diligently drawn, and so to be set out, only everywhere to be taught for the use of learners, and for the hurt in changing of schoolmaisters." What a gusto in that which follows: "wherein it is profitable that he (the pupil)
can orderly decline his noun and his verb.” *His
noun!

The fine dream is fading away fast; and the
least concern of a teacher in the present day is to
inculcate grammar-rules.

The modern schoolmaster is expected to know a
little of everything, because his pupil is required
not to be entirely ignorant of anything. *He must
be superficially, if I may so say, omniscient. *He
is to know something of pneumatics; of chemistry;
of whatever is curious or proper to excite the at-
tention of the youthful mind; an insight into me-
chanics is desirable, with a touch of statistics; the
quality of soils, &c., botany, the constitution of his
country, *cum multis aliis. *You may get a notion
of some part of his expected duties by consulting
the famous Tractate on Education, addressed to
Mr. Hartlib.

All these things—these, or the desire of them—
he is expected to instil, not by set lessons from
professors, which he may charge in the bill, but at
school intervals, as he walks the streets, or saun-
ters through green fields (those natural instructors)
with his pupils. The least part of what is expected
from him is to be done in school-hours. *He must
insinuate knowledge at the *mollia tempora fundi.
He must seize every occasion—the season of the
year—the time of the day—a passing cloud—a
rainbow—a waggon of hay—a regiment of soldiers
going by—to inculcate something useful. *He can
receive no pleasure from a casual glimpse of Na-
ture, but must catch at it as an object of instruction.
He must interpret beauty into the picturesque. *He
cannot relish a beggar-man, or a gipsy, for thinking
of the suitable improvement. *Nothing comes to
him, not spoiled by the sophisticating medium of
moral uses. The Universe—that Great Book, as it has been called—is to him, indeed, to all intents and purposes, a book out of which he is doomed to read tedious homilies to distasting schoolboys.—Vacations themselves are none to him, he is only rather worse off than before; for commonly he has some intrusive upper-boy fastened upon him at such times; some cadet of a great family; some neglected lump of nobility, or gentry; that he must drag after him to the play, to the Panorama, to Mr. Bartley's Orrery, to the Panopticon, or into the country, to a friend's house, or his favourite watering-place. Wherever he goes this uneasy shadow attends him. A boy is at his board, and in his path, and in all his movements. He is boy-rid, sick of perpetual boy.

Boys are capital fellows in their own way, among their mates; but they are unwholesome companions for grown people. The restraint is felt no less on the one side than on the other.—Even a child, that "plaything for an hour," tires always. The noises of children, playing their own fancies—as I now hearken to them, by fits, sporting on the green before my window, while I am engaged in these grave speculations at my neat suburban retreat at Shacklewell—by distance made more sweet—inexpressibly take from the labour of my task. It is like writing to music. They seem to modulate my periods. They ought at least to do so—for in the voice of that tender age there is a kind of poetry, far unlike the harsh prose-accents of man's conversation.—I should but spoil their sport, and diminish my own sympathy for them, by mingling in their pastime.

I would not be domesticated all my days with a person of very superior capacity to my own—not, if
I know myself at all, from any considerations of jealousy or self-comparison, for the occasional communion with such minds has constituted the fortune and felicity of my life—but the habit of too constant intercourse with spirits above you, instead of raising you, keeps you down. Too frequent doses of original thinking from others restrain what lesser portion of that faculty you may possess of your own. You get entangled in another man's mind, even as you lose yourself in another man's grounds. You are walking with a tall varlet, whose strides outpace yours to lassitude. The constant operation of such potent agency would reduce me, I am convinced, to imbecility. You may derive thoughts from others; your way of thinking, the mould in which your thoughts are cast, must be your own. Intellect may be imparted, but not each man's intellectual frame.—

As little as I should wish to be always thus dragged upward, as little (or rather still less) is it desirable to be stunted downwards by your associates. The trumpet does not more than stun you by its loudness, than a whisper teases you by its provoking inaudibility.

Why are we never quite at our ease in the presence of a schoolmaster?—because we are conscious that he is not quite at his ease in ours. He is awkward, and out of place in the society of his equals. He comes like Gulliver from among his little people, and he cannot fit the stature of his understanding to yours. He cannot meet you on the square. He wants a point given him, like an indifferent whist-player. He is so used to teaching, that he wants to be teaching you. One of these professors, upon my complaining that these little sketches of mine were anything but methodical,
and that I was unable to make them otherwise, kindly offered to instruct me in the method by which young gentlemen in his seminary were taught to compose English themes. The jests of a school-master are coarse, or thin. They do not tell out of school. He is under the restraint of a formal or didactive hypocrisy in company, as a clergyman is under a moral one. He can no more let his intellect loose in society than the other can his inclinations. He is forlorn among his coevals; his juniors cannot be his friends.

"I take blame to myself," said a sensible man of this profession, writing to a friend respecting a youth who had quitted his school abruptly, "that your nephew was not more attached to me. But persons in my situation are more to be pitied than can well be imagined. We are surrounded by young, and, consequently, ardently affectionate hearts, but we can never hope to share an atom of their affections. The relation of master and scholar forbids this. How pleasing this must be to you, how I envy your feelings! my friends will sometimes say to me, when they see young men whom I have educated, return after some years' absence from school, their eyes shining with pleasure, while they shake hands with their old master, bringing a present of game to me, or a toy to my wife, and thanking me in the warmest terms for my care of their education. A holiday is begged for the boys; the house is a scene of happiness; I, only, am sad at heart.—This fine-spirited and warm-hearted youth, who fancies he repays his master with gratitude for the care of his boyish years—this young man—in the eight long years I watched over him with a parent's anxiety, never could repay me with one look of genuine feeling. He was proud, when
I praised; he was submissive, when I reproved him; but he did never love me—and what he now mistakes for gratitude and kindness for me, is but the pleasant sensation which all persons feel at revisiting the scenes of their boyish hopes and fears; and the seeing on equal terms the man they were accustomed to look up to with reverence. My wife, too," this interesting correspondent goes on to say, "my once darling Anna, is the wife of a schoolmaster.—When I married her—knowing that the wife of a schoolmaster ought to be a busy notable creature, and fearing that my gentle Anna would ill supply the loss of my dear bustling mother, just then dead, who never sat still, was in every part of the house in a moment, and whom I was obliged sometimes to threaten to fasten down in a chair, to save her from fatiguing herself to death—I expressed my fears that I was bringing her into a way of life unsuitable to her; and she, who loved me tenderly, promised for my sake to exert herself to perform the duties of her new situation. She promised, and she kept her word. What wonders will not woman's love perform?—My house is managed with a propriety and decorum unknown in other schools; my boys are well fed, look healthy, and have every proper accommodation; and all this performed with a careful economy, that never descends to meanness. But I have lost my gentle helpless Anna! When we sit down to enjoy an hour of repose after the fatigue of the day, I am compelled to listen to what have been her useful (and they are really useful) employments through the day, and what she proposes for her to-morrow's task. Her heart and her features are changed by the duties of her situation. To the boys, she never appears other than the master's
wife, and she looks up to me as the boy’s master; to whom all show of love and affection would be highly improper, and unbecoming the dignity of her situation and mine. Yet this my gratitude forbids me to hint to her. For my sake she submitted to be this altered creature, and can I reproach her for it?"—For the communication of this letter I am indebted to my cousin Bridget.
IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES.

I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy in anything. Those natural repugnancies do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch.—Religio Medici.

That the author of the Religio Medici mounted upon the airy stilts of abstraction, conversant about notional and conjectural essences; in whose categories of Being the possible took the upper hand of the actual; should have overlooked the impertinent individualities of such poor concretions as mankind, is not much to be admired. It is rather to be wondered at, that in the genus of animals he should have condescended to distinguish that species at all. For myself—earth-bound and fettered to the scene of my activities,—

Standing on earth, not rapt above the sky,

I confess that I do feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons. Whatever is, is to me a matter of taste or distaste; or when once it becomes indifferent it begins to be disrelishing. I am, in plainer words, a bundle of prejudices—made up of likings and
dislikings—the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies. In a certain sense, I hope it may be said of me that I am a lover of my species. I can feel for all indifferently, but I cannot feel towards all equally. The more purely-English word that expresses sympathy, will better explain my meaning. I can be a friend to a worthy man, who upon another account cannot be my mate or fellow. I cannot like all people alike.

I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me—and in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it. There is something more plain and ingenuous in their mode of proceeding. We know

1 I would be understood as confining myself to the subject of imperfect sympathies. To nations or classes of men there can be no direct antipathy. There may be individuals born and constellated so opposite to another individual nature, that the same sphere cannot hold them. I have met with my moral antipodes, and can believe the story of two persons meeting (who never saw one another before in their lives) and instantly fighting.

— We by proof find there should be 'Twixt man and man such an antipathy, That though he can show no just reason why For any former wrong or injury, Can neither find a blemish in his fame, Nor aught in face or feature justly blame, Can challenge or accuse him of no evil, Yet notwithstanding hates him as a devil.

The lines are from old Heywood’s "Hierarchie of Angels," and he subjoins a curious story in confirmation, of a Spaniard who attempted to assassinate a king Ferdinand of Spain, and being put to the rack could give no other reason for the deed but an inveterate antipathy which he had taken to the first sight of the king.

— The cause which to that act compell’d him Was, he ne’er loved him since he first beheld him.
one another at first sight. There is an order of imperfect intellects (under which mine must be content to rank) which in its constitution is essentially anti-Caledonian. The owners of the sort of faculties I allude to, have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive. They have no pretences to much clearness or precision in their ideas, or in their manner of expressing them. Their intellectual wardrobe (to confess fairly) has few whole pieces in it. They are content with fragments and scattered pieces of Truth. She presents no full front to them—a feature or side-face at the most. Hints and glimpses, germs and crude essays at a system, is the utmost they pretend to. They beat up a little game peradventure—and leave it to knottier heads, more robust constitutions, to run it down. The light that lights them is not steady and polar, but mutable and shifting: waxing, and again waning. Their conversation is accordingly. They will throw out a random word in or out of season, and be content to let it pass for what it is worth. They cannot speak always as if they were upon their oath—but must be understood, speaking or writing, with some abatement. They seldom wait to mature a proposition, but e’en bring it to market in the green ear. They delight to impart their defective discoveries as they arise, without waiting for their development. They are no systematizers, and would but err more by attempting it. Their minds, as I said before, are suggestive merely. The brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) is constituted upon quite a different plan. His Minerva is born in panoply. You are never admitted to see his ideas in their growth—if, indeed, they do grow, and are not rather put together upon principles of clock-work. You never
catch his mind in an undress. He never hints or suggests anything, but unladen his stock of ideas in perfect order and completeness. He brings his total wealth into company, and gravely unpacks it. His riches are always about him. He never stoops to catch a glittering something in your presence to share it with you, before he quite knows whether it be true touch or not. You cannot cry halves to anything that he finds. He does not find, but bring. You never witness his first apprehension of a thing. His understanding is always at its meridian—you never see the first dawn, the early streaks.—He has no falterings of self-suspicion. Surmises, guesses, misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousnesses, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo conceptions, have no place in his brain or vocabulary. The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him. Is he orthodox—he has no doubts. Is he an infidel—he has none either. Between the affirmative and the negative there is no border-land with him. You cannot hover with him upon the confines of truth, or wander in the maze of a probable argument. He always keeps the path. You cannot make excursions with him—for he sets you right. His taste never fluctuates. His morality never abates. He cannot compromise, or understand middle actions. There can be but a right and a wrong. His conversation is as a book. His affirmations have the sanctity of an oath. You must speak upon the square with him. He stops a metaphor like a suspected person in an enemy's country. "A healthy book!"—said one of his countrymen to me, who had ventured to give that appellation to John Buncle,—"Did I catch rightly what you said? I have heard of a man in health, and of a healthy state of body, but I do not see
how that epithet can be properly applied to a book."

Above all, you must beware of indirect expressions before a Caledonian. Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blest with a vein of it. Remember you are upon your oath. I have a print of a graceful figure after Leonardo da Vinci, which I was showing off to Mr. * * * * After he had examined it minutely, I ventured to ask him how he liked MY BEAUTY (a foolish name it goes by among my friends)—when he very gravely assured me, that "he had considerable respect for my character and talents" (so he was pleased to say), "but had not given himself much thought about the degree of my personal pretensions."

The misconception staggered me, but did not seem much to disconcert him.—Persons of this nation are particularly fond of affirming a truth—which nobody doubts. They do not so properly affirm, as annunciate it. They do indeed appear to have such a love of truth (as if, like virtue, it were valuable for itself) that all truth becomes equally valuable, whether the proposition that contains it be new or old, disputed, or such as is impossible to become a subject of disputation. I was present not long since at a party of North Britons, where a son of Burns was expected; and happened to drop a silly expression (in my South British way), that I wished it were the father instead of the son—when four of them started up at once to inform me, that "that was impossible, because he was dead." An impracticable wish, it seems, was more than they could conceive. Swift has hit off this part of their character, namely, their love of truth, in his biting way, but with an illiberality that necessarily confines the passage to the margin.¹

¹ There are some people who think they sufficiently ac-
The tediousness of these people is certainly provoking. I wonder if they ever tire one another!—In my early life I had a passionate fondness for the poetry of Burns. I have sometimes foolishly hoped to ingratiate myself with his countrymen by expressing it. But I have always found that a true Scot resents your admiration of his compatriot even more than he would your contempt of him. The latter he imputes to your "imperfect acquaintance with many of the words which he uses;" and the same objection makes it a presumption in you to suppose that you can admire him.—Thomson they seem to have forgotten. Smollett they have neither forgotten nor forgiven, for his delineation of Rory and his companion, upon their first introduction to our metropolis.—Speak of Smollett as a great genius, and they will retort upon you Hume's History compared with his Continuation of it. What if the historian had continued Humphrey Clinker?

I have, in the abstract, no disrespect for the Jews. They are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with which Stonehenge is in its nonage. They date beyond the pyramids. But I should not care to be in habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation. I confess that I have not the nerves to enter their synagogues. Old prejudices quit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating facts of no consequence, not at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture, peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable.—Hints towards an Essay on Conversation.
cling about me. I cannot shake off the story of Hugh of Lincoln. Centuries of injury, contempt, and hate, on the one side,—of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate, on the other, between our and their fathers, must and ought to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run clear and kindly yet; or that a few words, such as candour, liberality, the light of the nineteenth century, can close up the breaches of so deadly a disunion. A Hebrew is nowhere congenial to me. He is least distasteful on 'Change—for the mercantile spirit levels all distinctions, as all are beauties in the dark. I boldly confess that I do not relish the approximation of Jew and Christian, which has become so fashionable. The reciprocal endearments have, to me, something hypocritical and unnatural in them. I do not like to see the Church and Synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility. If they are converted, why do they not come over to us altogether? Why keep up a form of separation, when the life of it is fled? If they can sit with us at table, why do they quack at our cookery? I do not understand these half convertites. Jews christianizing—Christians judaizing—puzzle me. I like fish or flesh. A moderate Jew is a more confounding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker. The spirit of the synagogue is essentially separative. B—would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face, which nature meant to be of—Christians.—The Hebrew spirit is strong in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the Shibboleth. How it breaks out, when he sings, "The Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea!" The auditors, for the
moment, are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our necks in triumph. There is no mistaking him. B—— has a strong expression of sense in his countenance, and it is confirmed by his singing. The foundation of his vocal excellence is sense. He sings with understanding, as Kemble delivered dialogue. He would sing the Commandments, and give an appropriate character to each prohibition. His nation, in general, have not over-sensible countenances. How should they?—but you seldom see a silly expression among them.—Gain, and the pursuit of gain, sharpen a man's visage. I never heard of an idiot being born among them.—Some admire the Jewish female-physiognomy. I admire it—but with trembling. Jael had those full dark inscrutable eyes.

In the Negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity. I have felt yearnings of tenderness towards some of these faces—or rather masks—that have looked out kindly upon one in casual encounters in the streets and highways. I love what Fuller beautifully calls—these "images of God cut in ebony." But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and my good nights with them—because they are black.

I love Quaker ways, and Quaker worship. I venerate the Quaker principles. It does me good for the rest of the day when I meet any of their people in my path. When I am ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, the sight, or quiet voice of a Quaker, acts upon me as a ventilator, lightening the air, and taking off a load from the bosom. But I cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemona would say) "to live with them." I am all over sophisticated—with humours, fancies, craving
hourly sympathy. I must have books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes, ambiguities, and a thousand whim-whams, which their simpler taste can do without. I should starve at their primitive banquet. My appetites are too high for the salads which (according to Evelyn) Eve dressed for the angel; my gusto too excited

To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

The indirect answers which Quakers are often found to return to a question put to them may be explained, I think, without the vulgar assumption, that they are more given to evasion and equivocating than other people. They naturally look to their words more carefully, and are more cautious of committing themselves. They have a peculiar character to keep up on this head. They stand in a manner upon their veracity. A Quaker is by law exempted from taking an oath. The custom of resorting to an oath in extreme cases, sanctified as it is by all religious antiquity, is apt (it must be confessed) to introduce into the laxer sort of minds the notion of two kinds of truth—the one applicable to the solemn affairs of justice, and the other to the common proceedings of daily intercourse. As truth bound upon the conscience by an oath can be but truth, so in the common affirmations of the shop and the market-place a latitude is expected and conceded upon questions wanting this solemn covenant. Something less than truth satisfies. It is common to hear a person say, "You do not expect me to speak as if I were upon my oath." Hence a great deal of incorrectness and inadvertency, short of falsehood, creeps into ordinary conversation; and a kind of secondary or laic-truth is tolerated, where clergy-truth—oath-truth, by the
nature of the circumstances, is not required. A Quaker knows none of this distinction. His simple affirmation being received upon the most sacred occasions, without any further test, stamps a value upon the words which he is to use upon the most indifferent topics of life. He looks to them, naturally, with more severity. You can have of him no more than his word. He knows, if he is caught tripping in a casual expression, he forfeits, for himself at least, his claim to the invidious exemption. He knows that his syllables are weighed—and how far a consciousness of this particular watchfulness, exerted against a person, has a tendency to produce indirect answers, and a diverting of the question by honest means, might be illustrated, and the practice justified by a more sacred example than is proper to be adduced upon this occasion. The admirable presence of mind, which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies, might be traced to this imposed self-watchfulness—if it did not seem rather an humble and secular scion of that old stock of religious constancy, which never bent or faltered, in the Primitive Friends, or gave way to the winds of persecution, to the violence of judge or accuser, under trials and racked examinations. “You will never be the wiser, if I sit here answering your questions till midnight,” said one of those upright Justicers to Penn, who had been putting law-cases with a puzzling subtlety. “Thereafter as the answers may be,” retorted the Quaker. The astonishing composure of this people is sometimes ludicrously displayed in lighter instances.—I was travelling in a stage-coach with three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straitest nonconformity of their sect. We stopped to bait at Andover, where a meal, partly tea apparatus,
partly supper, was set before us. My friends confined themselves to the tea-table. I in my way took supper. When the landlady brought in the bill, the eldest of my companions discovered that she had charged for both meals. This was resisted. Mine hostess was very clamorous and positive. Some mild arguments were used on the part of the Quakers, for which the heated mind of the good lady seemed by no means a fit recipient. The guard came with his usual peremptory notice. The Quakers pulled out their money and formally tendered it—so much for tea—I, in humble imitation, tendering mine—for the supper which I had taken. She would not relax in her demand. So they all three quietly put up their silver, as did myself, and marched out of the room, the eldest and gravest going first, with myself closing up the rear, who thought I could not do better than follow the example of such grave and warrantable personages. We got in. The steps went up. The coach drove off. The murmurs of mine hostess, not very indistinctly or ambiguously pronounced, became after a time inaudible—and now my conscience, which the whimsical scene had for a while suspended, beginning to give some twitches, I waited, in the hope that some justification would be offered by these serious persons for the seeming injustice of their conduct. To my great surprise not a syllable was dropped on the subject. They sat as mute as at a meeting. At length the eldest of them broke silence, by inquiring of his next neighbour, "Hast thee heard how indigos go at the India House?" and the question operated as soporific on my moral feeling as far as Exeter.
WITCHES, AND OTHER NIGHT FEARS.

E are too hasty when we set down our ancestors in the gross for fools, for the monstrous inconsistencies (as they seem to us) involved in their creed of witchcraft. In the relations of this visible world we find them to have been as rational, and shrewd to detect an historic anomaly, as ourselves. But when once the invisible world was supposed to be open, and the lawless agency of bad spirits assumed, what measures of probability, of decency, of fitness, or proportion—of that which distinguishes the likely from the palpable absurd—could they have to guide them in the rejection or admission of any particular testimony?—That maidens pined away, wasting inwardly as their waxen images consumed before a fire—that corn was lodged, and cattle lamed—that whirlwinds uptore in diabolical revelry the oaks of the forest—or that spits and kettles only danced a fearful-innocent vagary about some rustic’s kitchen when no wind was stirring—were all equally probable where no law of agency was understood. That the prince of the powers of darkness, passing by the flower and pomp of the earth, should lay preposterous siege to the weak fantasy of indigent
eld—has neither likelihood nor unlikelihood à priori to us, who have no measure to guess at his policy, or standard to estimate what rate those anile souls may fetch in the devil's market. Nor, when the wicked are expressly symbolized by a goat, was it to be wondered at so much, that he should come sometimes in that body, and assert his metaphor.—That the intercourse was opened at all between both worlds was perhaps the mistake—but that once assumed, I see no reason for disbeliefing one attested story of this nature more than another on the score of absurdity. There is no law to judge of the lawless, or canon by which a dream may be criticized.

I have sometimes thought that I could not have existed in the days of received witchcraft; that I could not have slept in a village where one of those reputed hags dwelt. Our ancestors were bolder or more obtuse. Amidst the universal belief that these wretches were in league with the author of all evil, holding hell tributary to their muttering, no simple justice of the peace seems to have scrupled issuing, or silly Headborough serving, a warrant upon them—as if they should subpoena Satan!—Prospero in his boat, with his books and wand about him, suffers himself to be conveyed away at the mercy of his enemies to an unknown island. He might have raised a storm or two, we think, on the passage. His acquiescence is in exact analogy to the non-resistance of witches to the constituted powers.—What stops the Fiend in Spenser from tearing Guyon to pieces—or who had made it a condition of his prey that Guyon must take assay of the glorious bait—we have no guess. We do not know the laws of that country.

From my childhood I was extremely inquisitive
about witches and witch-stories. My maid, and more legendary aunt, supplied me with good store. But I shall mention the accident which directed my curiosity originally into this channel. In my father's book-closet the history of the Bible by Stackhouse occupied a distinguished station. The pictures with which it abounds—one of the ark, in particular, and another of Solomon's temple, delineated with all the fidelity of ocular admeasurement, as if the artist had been upon the spot—attracted my childish attention. There was a picture, too, of the Witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that I had never seen. We shall come to that hereafter. Stackhouse is in two huge tomes; and there was a pleasure in removing folios of that magnitude, which, with infinite straining, was as much as I could manage, from the situation which they occupied upon an upper shelf. I have not met with the work from that time to this, but I remember it consisted of Old Testament stories, orderly set down, with the objection appended to each story, and the solution of the objection regularly tacked to that. The objection was a summary of whatever difficulties had been opposed to the credibility of the history by the shrewdness of ancient or modern insidelity, drawn up with an almost complimentary excess of candour. The solution was brief, modest, and satisfactory. The bane and antidote were both before you. To doubts so put, and so quashed, there seemed to be an end for ever. The dragon lay dead, for the foot of the veriest babe to trample on. But—like as was rather feared than realized from that slain monster in Spenser—from the womb of those crushed errors young dragonets would creep, exceeding the prowess of so tender a Saint George as myself to vanquish.
The habit of expecting objections to every passage set me upon starting more objections, for the glory of finding a solution of my own for them. I became staggered and perplexed, a sceptic in long-coats. The pretty Bible stories which I had read, or heard read in church, lost their purity and sincerity of impression, and were turned into so many historic or chronologic theses to be defended against whatever impugners. I was not to disbelieve them, but—the next thing to that—I was to be quite sure that some one or other would or had disbelieved them. Next to making a child an infidel is the letting him know that there are infidels at all. Credulity is the man’s weakness, but the child’s strength. O, how ugly sound scriptural doubts from the mouth of a babe and a suckling!—I should have lost myself in these mazes, and have pined away, I think, with such unfit sustenance as these husks afforded, but for a fortunate piece of ill-fortune which about this time befell me. Turning over the picture of the ark with too much haste, I unhappily made a breach in its ingenious fabric—driving my inconsiderate fingers right through the two larger quadrupeds, the elephant and the camel, that stare (as well they might) out of the two last windows next the steerage in that unique piece of naval architecture. Stackhouse was henceforth locked up, and became an interdicted treasure. With the book, the objections and solutions gradually cleared out of my head, and have seldom returned since in any force to trouble me. But there was one impression which I had imbibed from Stackhouse which no lock or bar could shut out, and which was destined to try my childish nerves rather more seriously.—That detestable picture!

I was dreadfully alive to nervous terrors. The
night-time, solitude, and the dark, were my hell. The sufferings I endured in this nature would justify the expression. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life—so far as memory serves in things so long ago—without an assurance, which realized its own prophecy, of seeing some frightful spectre. Be old Stackhouse then acquitted in part, if I say, that to his picture of the Witch raising up Samuel—(O that old man covered with a mantle!)—I owe—not my midnight terrors, the hell of my infancy—but the shape and manner of their visitation. It was he who dressed up for me a hag that nightly sate upon my pillow—a sure bedfellow, when my aunt or my maid was far from me. All day long, while the book was permitted me, I dreamed waking over his delineation, and at night (if I may use so bold an expression) awoke into sleep, and found the vision true. I durst not, even in the day-light, once enter the chamber where I slept, without my face turned to the window, aversely from the bed where my witch-ridden pillow was. Parents do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in the dark. The feeling about for a friendly arm—the hoping for a familiar voice—when they wake screaming—and find none to soothe them—what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves! The keeping them up till midnight, through candle-light and the un-wholesome hours, as they are called,—would, I am satisfied, in a medical point of view, prove the better caution.—That detestable picture, as I have said, gave the fashion to my dreams—if dreams they were—for the scene of them was invariably the room in which I lay. Had I never met with
the picture, the fears would have come self-pictured in some shape or other—

Headless bear, black man, or ape—

but, as it was, my imaginations took that form.—It is not book, or picture, or the stories of foolish servants, which create these terrors in children. They can at most but give them a direction. Dear little T. H., who of all children has been brought up with the most scrupulous exclusion of every taint of superstition—who was never allowed to hear of goblin or apparition, or scarcely to be told of bad men, or read or hear of my distressing story—finds all this world of fear, from which he has been so rigidly excluded ab extra, in his own "thick-coming fancies;" and from his little midnight pillow, this nurse-child of optimism will start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition, in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-damned murderer are tranquillity.

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire—stories of Celæno and the Harpies—may reproduce themselves in the brain of superstition—but they were there before. They are transcripts, types—the archetypes are in us, and eternal. How else should the recital of that, which we know in a waking sense to be false, come to affect us at all?—or

— Names, whose sense we see not,
Fray us with things that be not?

Is it that we naturally conceive terror from such objects, considered in their capacity of being able to inflict upon us bodily injury?—O, least of all! These terrors are of older standing. They date beyond body—or, without the body, they would
have been the same. All the cruel, tormenting, defined devils in Dante—tearing, mangling, choking, stifling, scorching demons—are they one half so fearful to the spirit of a man, as the simple idea of a spirit unembodied following him—

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turn'd round, walks on
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.¹

That the kind of fear here treated of is purely spiritual—that it is strong in proportion as it is objectless upon earth—that it predominates in the period of sinless infancy—are difficulties, the solution of which might afford some probable insight into our ante-mundane condition, and a peep at least into the shadowland of pre-existence.

My night-fancies have long ceased to be afflicting. I confess an occasional nightmare; but I do not, as in early youth, keep a stud of them. Fiendish faces, with the extinguished taper, will come and look at me; but I know them for mockeries, even while I cannot elude their presence, and I fight and grapple with them. For the credit of my imagination, I am almost ashamed to say how tame and prosaic my dreams are grown. They are never romantic, seldom even rural. They are of architecture and of buildings—cities abroad, which I have never seen and hardly have hoped to see. I have traversed, for the seeming length of a natural day, Rome, Amsterdam, Paris, Lisbon—their churches, palaces, squares, market-places, shops, suburbs, ruins, with an inexpressible sense of de-

¹ Mr. Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner."
light—a map-like distinctness of trace, and a daylight vividness of vision, that was all but being awake.—I have formerly travelled among the Westmoreland fells—my highest Alps,—but they are objects too mighty for the grasp of my dreaming recognition; and I have again and again awoke with ineffectual struggles of the inner eye, to make out a shape, in any way whatever, of Helvellyn. Methought I was in that country, but the mountains were gone. The poverty of my dreams mortifies me. There is Coleridge, at his will can conjure up icy domes, and pleasure-houses for Kubla Khan, and Abyssinian maids, and songs of Abara, and caverns,

Where Alph, the sacred river, runs,

to solace his night solitudes—when I cannot muster a fiddle. Barry Cornwall has his tritons and his nereids gambolling before him in nocturnal visions, and proclaiming sons born to Neptune—when my stretch of imaginative activity can hardly, in the night season, raise up the ghost of a fish-wife. To set my failures in somewhat a mortifying light—it was after reading the noble dream of this poet that my fancy ran strong upon these marine spectra; and the poor plastic power, such as it is, within me set to work to humour my folly in a sort of dream that very night. Methought I was upon the ocean billows at some sea-nuptials, riding and mounted high, with the customary train sounding their conchs before me, (I myself, you may be sure, the leading god,) and jollily we went careering over the main, till just where Ino Leucothea should have greeted me (I think it was Ino) with a white embrace, the billows gradually subsiding, fell from a sea roughness to a sea calm, and thence to a river
motion, and that river (as happens in the familiarization of dreams) was no other than the gentle Thames, which landed me in the wafture of a placid wave or two, alone, safe and inglorious, somewhere at the foot of Lambeth palace.

The degree of the soul's creativeness in sleep might furnish no whimsical criterion of the quantum of poetical faculty resident in the same soul waking. An old gentleman, a friend of mine, and a humorist, used to carry this notion so far, that when he saw any stripling of his acquaintance ambitious of becoming a poet, his first question would be,—"Young man, what sort of dreams have you?" I have so much faith in my old friend's theory, that when I feel that idle vein returning upon me, I presently subside into my proper element of prose, remembering those eluding nereids, and that inauspicious inland landing.
HAİL to thy returning festival, old Bishop Valentine! Great is thy name in the rubric, thou venerable Archflamen of Hymen! Immortal Go-between; who and what manner of person art thou? Art thou but a name, typifying the restless principle which impels poor humans to seek perfection in union? or wert thou indeed a mortal prelate, with thy tippet and thy rochet, thy apron on, and decent lawn sleeves? Mysterious personage! Like unto thee, assuredly, there is no other mitred father in the calendar; not Jerome, nor Ambrose, nor Cyril; nor the consigner of undipt infants to eternal torments, Austin, whom all mothers hate; nor he who hated all mothers, Origen; nor Bishop Bull, nor Archbishop Parker, nor Whitgift. Thou comest attended with thousands and ten thousands of little Loves, and the air is

Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings.

Singing Cupids are thy choristers and thy precentors; and instead of the crosier, the mystical arrow is borne before thee.

In other words, this is the day on which those charming little missives, ycleped Valentines, cross and intercross each other at every street and turn-
The weary and all forespent twopenny postman sinks beneath a load of delicate embarrassments, not his own. It is scarcely credible to what extent this ephemeral courtship is carried on in this loving town, to the great enrichment of porters, and detriment of knockers and bell-wires. In these little visual interpretations, no emblem is so common as the heart,—that little three-cornered exponent of all our hopes and fears,—the bestuck and bleeding heart; it is twisted and tortured into more allegories and affectations than an opera-hat. What authority we have in history or mythology for placing the headquarters and metropolis of god Cupid in this anatomical seat rather than in any other, is not very clear; but we have got it, and it will serve as well as any other. Else we might easily imagine, upon some other system which might have prevailed for anything which our pathology knows to the contrary, a lover addressing his mistress, in perfect simplicity of feeling, "Madam, my liver and fortune are entirely at your disposal;" or putting a delicate question, "Amanda, have you a midriff to bestow?" But custom has settled these things, and awarded the seat of sentiment to the aforesaid triangle, while its less fortunate neighbours wait at animal and anatomical distance.

Not many sounds in life, and I include all urban and all rural sounds, exceed in interest a knock at the door. It "gives a very echo to the throne where hope is seated." But its issues seldom answer to this oracle within. It is so seldom that just the person we want to see comes. But of all the clamorous visitations the welcomest in expectation is the sound that ushers in, or seems to usher in, a Valentine. As the raven himself was hoarse that announced the fatal entrance of Duncan, so
the knock of the postman on this day is light, airy, confident, and befitting one that bringeth good tidings. It is less mechanical than on other days; you will say, "That is not the post, I am sure." Visions of Love, of Cupids, of Hymens!—delightful eternal commonplaces, which "having been will always be;" which no school-boy nor schoolman can write away; having your irreversible throne in the fancy and affections—what are your transports when the happy maiden, opening with careful finger, careful not to break the emblematic seal, bursts upon the sight of some well-designed allegory, some type, some youthful fancy, not without verses—

Lovers all,
A madrigal,

or some such devise, not over-abundant in sense—young Love disclaims it,—and not quite silly—something between wind and water, a chorus where the sheep might almost join the shepherd, as they did, or as I apprehend they did, in Arcadia.

All Valentines are not foolish; and I shall not easily forget thine, my kind friend (if I may have leave to call you so) E. B—. E. B. lived opposite a young maiden whom he had often seen, unseen, from his parlour window in C—e Street. She was all joyousness and innocence, and just of an age to enjoy receiving a Valentine, and just of a temper to bear the disappointment of missing one with good humour. E. B. is an artist of no common powers; in the fancy parts of designing, perhaps inferior to none; his name is known at the bottom of many a well-executed vignette in the way of his profession, but no further; for E. B. is modest, and the world meets nobody half way. E. B. meditated how he could repay this young
maiden for many a favour which she had done him unknown; for when a kindly face greets us, though but passing by, and never knows us again, nor we it, we should feel it as an obligation: and E. B. did. This good artist set himself at work to please the damsel. It was just before Valentine’s day three years since. He wrought, unseen and unsuspected, a wondrous work. We need not say it was on the finest gilt paper with borders—full, not of common hearts and heartless allegory, but all the prettiest stories of love from Ovid, and older poets than Ovid (for E. B. is a scholar). There was Pyramus and Thisbe, and be sure Dido was not forgot, nor Hero and Leander, and swans more than sang in Cayster, with mottoes and fanciful devices, such as beseeemed—a work, in short, of magic. Iris dipt the woof. This on Valentine’s eve he commended to the all-swallowing indiscriminate orifice (O ignoble trust!) of the common post; but the humble medium did its duty, and from his watchful stand, the next morning he saw the cheerful messenger knock, and by-and-by the precious charge delivered. He saw, unseen, the happy girl unfold the Valentine, dance about, clap her hands, as one after one the pretty emblems unfolded themselves. She danced about, not with light love, or foolish expectations, for she had no lover; or, if she had, none she knew that could have created those bright images which delighted her. It was more like some fairy present; a Godsend, as our familiarly pious ancestors termed a benefit received where the benefactor was unknown. It would do her no harm. It would do her good for ever after. It is good to love the unknown. I only give this as a specimen of E. B. and his modest way of doing a concealed kindness.
Good morrow to my Valentine, sings poor Ophe- lia; and no better wish, but with better auspices, we wish to all faithful lovers, who are not too wise to despise old legends, but are content to rank themselves humble diocesans of old Bishop Valentine and his true church.
MY RELATIONS.

I am arrived at that point of life at which a man may account it a blessing, as it is a singularity, if he have either of his parents surviving. I have not that felicity—and sometimes think feelingly of a passage in Browne's "Christian Morals," where he speaks of a man that hath lived sixty or seventy years in the world. "In such a compass of time," he says, "a man may have a close apprehension what it is to be forgotten, when he hath lived to find none who could remember his father, or scarcely the friends of his youth, and may sensibly see with what a face in no long time oblivion will look upon himself."

I had an aunt, a dear and good one. She was one whom single blessedness had soured to the world. She often used to say, that I was the only thing in it which she loved; and, when she thought I was quitting it, she grieved over me with mother's tears. A partiality quite so exclusive my reason cannot altogether approve. She was from morning till night poring over good books and devotional exercises. Her favourite volumes were, "Thomas à Kempis," in Stanhope's translation; and a Roman Catholic Prayer Book, with the *matins* and *complies* regularly set down—terms
which I was at that time too young to understand. She persisted in reading them, although admonished daily concerning their Papistical tendency; and went to church every Sabbath, as a good Protestant should do. These were the only books she studied; though, I think at one period of her life, she told me, she had read with great satisfaction the "Adventures of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman." Finding the door of the chapel in Essex Street open one day—it was in the infancy of that heresy—she went in, liked the sermon, and the manner of worship, and frequented it at intervals for some time after. She came not for doctrinal points, and never missed them. With some little asperities in her constitution, which I have above hinted at, she was a steadfast, friendly being, and a fine old Christian. She was a woman of strong sense, and a shrewd mind—extraordinary at a repartee; one of the few occasions of her breaking silence—else she did not much value wit. The only secular employment I remember to have seen her engaged in, was the splitting of French beans, and dropping them into a china basin of fair water. The odour of those tender vegetables to this day comes back upon my senses, redolent of soothing recollections. Certainly it is the most delicate of culinary operations.

Male aunts, as somebody calls them, I had none—to remember. By the uncle's side I may be said to have been born an orphan. Brother, or sister, I never had any—to know them. A sister, I think, that should have been Elizabeth, died in both our infancies. What a comfort, or what a care, may I not have missed in her!—But I have cousins sprinkled about in Hertfordshire—besides two, with whom I have been all my life in
habits of the closest intimacy, and whom I may term cousins par excellence. These are James and Bridget Elia. They are older than myself by twelve, and ten, years; and neither of them seems disposed, in matters of advice and guidance, to waive any of the prerogatives which primogeniture confers. May they continue still in the same mind; and when they shall be seventy-five, and seventy-three, years old (I cannot spare them sooner), persist in treating me in my grand climacteric precisely as a stripling, or younger brother!

James is an inexplicable cousin. Nature hath her unities, which not every critic can penetrate; or, if we feel, we cannot explain them. The pen of Yorick, and of none since his, could have drawn J. E. entire—those fine Shandean lights and shades, which make up his story. I must limp after in my poor antithetical manner, as the fates have given me grace and talent. J. E. then—to the eye of a common observer at least—seemeth made up of contradictory principles. The genuine child of impulse, the frigid philosopher of prudence—the phlegm of my cousin's doctrine, is invariably at war with his temperament, which is high sanguine. With always some fire-new project in his brain, J. E. is the systematic opponent of innovation, and crier down of everything that has not stood the test of age and experiment. With a hundred fine notions chasing one another hourly in his fancy, he is startled at the least approach to the romantic in others; and, determined by his own sense in everything, commends you to the guidance of common sense on all occasions.—With a touch of the eccentric in all which he does or says, he is only anxious that you should not commit yourself by doing anything absurd or singu-
lar. On my once letting slip at table, that I was not fond of a certain popular dish, he begged me at any rate not to say so—for the world would think me mad. He disguises a passionate fondness for works of high art (whereof he hath amassed a choice collection), under the pretext of buying only to sell again—that his enthusiasm may give no encouragement to yours. Yet, if it were so, why does that piece of tender, pastoral Domenichino hang still by his wall?—is the ball of his sight much more dear to him?—or what picture-dealer can talk like him?

Whereas mankind in general are observed to warp their speculative conclusions to the bent of their individual humours, his theories are sure to be in diametrical opposition to his constitution. He is courageous as Charles of Sweden, upon instinct; chary of his person upon principle, as a travelling Quaker. He has been preaching up to me, all my life, the doctrine of bowing to the great—the necessity of forms, and manner, to a man's getting on in the world. He himself never aims at either, that I can discover,—and has a spirit that would stand upright in the presence of the Cham of Tartary. It is pleasant to hear him discourse of patience—extolling it as the truest wisdom—and to see him during the last seven minutes that his dinner is getting ready. Nature never ran up in her haste a more restless piece of workmanship than when she moulded this impetuous cousin—and Art never turned out a more elaborate orator than he can display himself to be, upon his favourite topic of the advantages of quiet and contentedness in the state, whatever it be, that we are placed in. He is triumphant on this theme, when he has you safe in one of those short stages that ply for the western
road, in a very obstructing manner, at the foot of John Murray's street—where you get in when it is empty, and are expected to wait till the vehicle hath completed her just freight—a trying three quarters of an hour to some people. He wonders at your fidgetiness,—"where could we be better than we are, thus sitting, thus consulting?"—"prefers, for his part, a state of rest to locomotion,"—with an eye all the while upon the coachman,—till at length, waxing out of all patience, at your want of it, he breaks out into a pathetic remonstrance at the fellow for detaining us so long over the time which he had professed, and declares peremptorily, that "the gentleman in the coach is determined to get out, if he does not drive on that instant."

Very quick at inventing an argument, or detecting a sophistry, he is incapable of attending you in any chain of arguing. Indeed, he makes wild work with logic; and seems to jump at most admirable conclusions by some process not at all akin to it. Consonantly enough to this, he hath been heard to deny, upon certain occasions, that there exists such a faculty at all in man as reason; and wondereth how man came first to have a conceit of it—enforcing his negation with all the might of reasoning he is master of. He has some speculative notions against laughter, and will maintain that laughing is not natural to him—when peradventure the next moment his lungs shall crow like chanticleer. He says some of the best things in the world, and declareth that wit is his aversion. It was he who said, upon seeing the Eton boys at play in their grounds—What a pity to think that these fine ingenuous lads in a few years will all be changed into frivolous Members of Parliament!
His youth was fiery, glowing, tempestuous—and in age he discovereth no symptom of cooling. This is that which I admire in him. I hate people who meet Time half way. I am for no compromise with that inevitable spoiler. While he lives, J. E. will take his swing.—It does me good, as I walk towards the street of my daily avocation, on some fine May morning, to meet him marching in a quite opposite direction, with a jolly handsome presence, and shining sanguine face, that indicates some purchase in his eye—a Claude—or a Hobbima—for much of his enviable leisure is consumed at Christie's and Phillips's—or where not, to pick up pictures, and such gauds. On these occasions he mostly stoppeth me, to read a short lecture on the advantage a person like me possesses above himself, in having his time occupied with business which he must do—assureth me that he often feels it hang heavy on his hands—wishes he had fewer holidays—and goes off—Westward Ho!—chanting a tune, to Pall Mall—perfectly convinced that he has convinced me—while I proceed in my opposite direction tuneless.

It is pleasant, again, to see this Professor of Indifference doing the honours of his new purchase, when he has fairly housed it. You must view it in every light, till he has found the best—placing it at this distance, and at that, but always suiting the focus of your sight to his own. You must spy at it through your fingers, to catch the aerial perspective—though you assure him that to you the landscape shows much more agreeable without that artifice. Woe be to the luckless wight who does not only not respond to his rapture, but who should drop an unseasonable intimation of preferring one of his anterior bargains to the present!—The last
is always his best hit—his "Cynthia of the minute."
—Alas! how many a mild Madonna have I known to come in—a Raphael!—keep its ascendancy for a few brief moons—then, after certain intermedial degradations, from the front drawing-room to the back gallery, thence to the dark parlour,—adopted in turn by each of the Carracci, under successive lowering ascriptions of filiation, mildly breaking its fall—consigned to the oblivious lumber-room, go out at last a Lucca Giordano, or plain Carlo Maratti!—which things when I beheld—musing upon the chances and mutabilities of fate below hath made me to reflect upon the altered condition of great personages, or that woeful Queen of Richard the Second—

—set forth in pomp,
She came adorned hither like sweet May;
Sent back like Hallowmass or shortest day.

With great love for you, J. E. hath but a limited sympathy with what you feel or do. He lives in a world of his own, and makes slender guesses at what passes in your mind. He never pierces the marrow of your habits. He will tell an old-established play-goer that Mr. Such-a-one, of So-and-so (naming one of the theatres), is a very lively comedian—as a piece of news! He advertised me but the other day of some pleasant green lanes which he had found out for me, knowing me to be a great walker, in my own immediate vicinity—who have haunted the identical spot any time these twenty years!—He has not much respect for that class of feelings which goes by the name of sentimental. He applies the definition of real evil to bodily sufferings exclusively—and rejecteth all others as imaginary. He is affected by the sight,
or the bare supposition, of a creature in pain, to a
degree which I have never witnessed out of woman-
kind. A constitutional acuteness to this class of
sufferings may in part account for this. The animal
tribe in particular he taketh under his especial pro-
tection. A broken-winded or spur-galled horse is
sure to find an advocate in him. An over-loaded
ass is his client for ever. He is the apostle to the
brute kind—the never-failing friend of those who
have none to care for them. The contemplation of
a lobster boiled, or eels skinned alive, will wring
him so, that "all for pity he could die." It will
take the savour from his palate, and the rest from
his pillow, for days and nights. With the intense
feeling of Thomas Clarkson, he wanted only the
steadiness of pursuit, and unity of purpose, of that
"true yoke-fellow with Time," to have effected as
much for the Animal as he hath done for the Negro
Creation. But my uncontrollable cousin is but
imperfectly formed for purposes which demand co-
operation. He cannot wait. His amelioration-
plans must be ripened in a day. For this reason
he has cut but an equivocal figure in benevolent
societies, and combinations for the alleviation of
human sufferings. His zeal constantly makes him
to outrun, and put out, his coadjutors. He thinks
of relieving,—while they think of debating. He
was black-balled out of a society for the Relief of
* * * * * because the fervour of his
humanity toiled beyond the formal apprehension
and creeping processes of his associates. I shall
always consider this distinction as a patent of no-
bility in the Elia family!

Do I mention these seeming inconsistencies to
smile at, or upbraid, my unique cousin? Marry,
heaven, and all good manners, and the under-
standing that should be between kinsfolk, forbid!—With all the strangeness of this strangest of the Elías—I would not have him in one jot or tittle other than he is; neither would I barter or exchange my wild kinsman for the most exact, regular, and every way consistent kinsman breathing.

In my next, reader, I may perhaps give you some account of my cousin Bridget—if you are not already surfeited with cousins—and take you by the hand, if you are willing to go with us, on an excursion which we made a summer or two since, in search of more cousins—

Through the green plains of pleasant Hertfordshire.
BRIDGET ELIA has been my housekeeper for many a long year. I have obligations to Bridget, extending beyond the period of memory. We house together, old bachelor and maid, in a sort of double singleness; with such tolerable comfort, upon the whole, that I, for one, find in myself no sort of disposition to go out upon the mountains, with the rash king's offspring, to bewail my celibacy. We agree pretty well in our tastes and habits—yet so, as "with a difference." We are generally in harmony, with occasional bickerings—as it should be among near relations. Our sympathies are rather understood than expressed; and once, upon my dissembling a tone in my voice more kind than ordinary, my cousin burst into tears, and complained that I was altered. We are both great readers in different directions. While I am hanging over (for the thousandth time) some passage in old Burton, or one of his strange contemporaries, she is abstracted in some modern tale or adventure, whereof our common reading-table is daily fed with assiduously fresh supplies. Narrative teases me. I have little concern in the progress of events. She
must have a story—well, ill, or indifferently told—so there be life stirring in it, and plenty of good or evil accidents. The fluctuations of fortune in fiction—and almost in real life—have ceased to interest, or operate but dully upon me. Out-of-the-way humours and opinions—heads with some diverting twist in them—the oddities of authorship, please me most. My cousin has a native disrelish of anything that sounds odd or bizarre. Nothing goes down with her that is quaint, irregular, or out of the road of common sympathy. She "holds Nature more clever." I can pardon her blindness to the beautiful obliquities of the Religio Medici; but she must apologize to me for certain disrespectful insinuations, which she has been pleased to throw out latterly, touching the intellectuals of a dear favourite of mine, of the last century but one—the thrice noble, chaste, and virtuous, but again somewhat fantastical and original brained, generous Margaret Newcastle.

It has been the lot of my cousin, oftener perhaps than I could have wished, to have had for her associates and mine, free-thinkers—leaders, and disciples, of novel philosophies and systems; but she neither wrangles with, nor accepts, their opinions. That which was good and venerable to her, when a child, retains its authority over her mind still. She never juggles or plays tricks with her understanding.

We are both of us inclined to be a little too positive; and I have observed the result of our disputes to be almost uniformly this—that in matters of fact, dates, and circumstances, it turns out that I was in the right, and my cousin in the wrong. But where we have differed upon moral points; upon something proper to be done, or let
alone; whatever heat of opposition or steadiness of conviction I set out with, I am sure always, in the long-run, to be brought over to her way of thinking.

I must touch upon the foibles of my kinswoman with a gentle hand, for Bridget does not like to be told of her faults. She hath an awkward trick (to say no worse of it) of reading in company: at which times she will answer yes or no to a question, without fully understanding its purport—which is provoking, and derogatory in the highest degree to the dignity of the putter of the said question. Her presence of mind is equal to the most pressing trials of life, but will sometimes desert her upon trifling occasions. When the purpose requires it, and is a thing of moment, she can speak to it greatly; but in matters which are not stuff of the conscience, she hath been known sometimes to let slip a word less seasonably.

Her education in youth was not much attended to; and she happily missed all that train of female garniture which passeth by the name of accomplishments. She was tumbled early, by accident or design, into a spacious closet of good old English reading, without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage. Had I twenty girls, they should be brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not whether their chance in wedlock might not be diminished by it, but I can answer for it that it makes (if the worst come to the worst) most incomparable old maids.

In a season of distress, she is the truest comforter; but in the teasing accidents and minor perplexities, which do not call out the will to meet them, she sometimes maketh matters worse by an excess of
participation. If she does not always divide your trouble, upon the pleasanter occasions of life she is sure always to treble your satisfaction. She is excellent to be at a play with, or upon a visit; but best, when she goes a journey with you.

We made an excursion together a few summers since into Hertfordshire, to beat up the quarters of some of our less-known relations in that fine corn country.

The oldest thing I remember is Mackery End, or Mackarel End, as it is spelt, perhaps more properly, in some old maps of Hertfordshire; a farm-house,—delightfully situated within a gentle walk from Wheathamstead. I can just remember having been there, on a visit to a great-aunt, when I was a child, under the care of Bridget; who, as I have said, is older than myself by some ten years. I wish that I could throw into a heap the remainder of our joint existences, that we might share them in equal division. But that is impossible. The house was at that time in the occupation of a substantial yeoman, who had married my grandmother's sister. His name was Gladman. My grandmother was a Bruton, married to a Field. The Gladmans and the Brutons are still flourishing in that part of the country, but the Fields are almost extinct. More than forty years had elapsed since the visit I speak of; and, for the greater portion of that period, we had lost sight of the other two branches also. Who or what sort of persons inherited Mackery End—kindred or strange folk—we were afraid almost to conjecture, but determined some day to explore.

By somewhat a circuitous route, taking the noble park at Luton in our way from St. Albans, we arrived at the spot of our anxious curiosity about
noon. The sight of the old farm-house, though every trace of it was effaced from my recollections, affected me with a pleasure which I had not experienced for many a year. For though I had forgotten it, we had never forgotten being there together, and we had been talking about Mackery End all our lives, till memory on my part became mocked with a phantom of itself, and I thought I knew the aspect of a place which, when present, O how unlike it was to that which I had conjured up so many times instead of it!

Still the air breathed balmily about it; the season was in the "heart of June," and I could say with the poet,

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation!

Bridget's was more a waking bliss than mine, for she easily remembered her old acquaintance again—some altered features, of course, a little grudged at. At first, indeed, she was ready to disbelieve for joy; but the scene soon re-confirmed itself in her affections—and she traversed every outpost of the old mansion, to the wood-house, the orchard, the place where the pigeon-house had stood (house and birds were alike flown)—with a breathless impatience of recognition, which was more pardonable perhaps than decorous at the age of fifty odd. But Bridget in some things is behind her years.

The only thing left was to get into the house—and that was a difficulty which to me singly would have been insurmountable; for I am terribly shy in making myself known to strangers and out-of-date kinsfolk. Love, stronger than scruple, winged my cousin in without me; but she soon returned with
a creature that might have sat to a sculptor for the image of Welcome. It was the youngest of the Gladmans; who, by marriage with a Bruton, had become mistress of the old mansion. A comely brood are the Brutons. Six of them, females, were noted as the handsomest young women in the county. But this adopted Bruton, in my mind, was better than they all—more comely. She was born too late to have remembered me. She just recollected in early life to have had her cousin Bridget once pointed out to her, climbing a stile. But the name of kindred and of cousinship was enough. Those slender ties, that prove slight as gossamer in the rending atmosphere of a metropolis, bind faster, as we found it, in hearty, homely, loving Hertfordshire. In five minutes we were as thoroughly acquainted as if we had been born and bred up together; were familiar, even to the calling each other by our Christian names. So Christians should call one another. To have seen Bridget and her—it was like the meeting of the two scriptural cousins! There was a grace and dignity, an amplitude of form and stature, answering to her mind, in this farmer's wife, which would have shined in a palace—or so we thought it. We were made welcome by husband and wife equally—we, and our friend that was with us—I had almost forgotten him—but B. F. will not so soon forget that meeting, if peradventure he shall read this on the far distant shores where the kangaroo haunts. The fatted calf was made ready, or rather was already so, as if in anticipation of our coming; and, after an appropriate glass of native wine, never let me forget with what honest pride this hospitable cousin made us proceed to Wheathampstead, to introduce us (as some new-found rarity) to her
mother and sister Gladmans, who did indeed know something more of us, at a time when she almost knew nothing.—With what corresponding kindness we were received by them also—how Bridget's memory, exalted by the occasion, warmed into a thousand half-obliterated recollections of things and persons, to my utter astonishment, and her own—and to the astoundment of B. F. who sat by, almost the only thing that was not a cousin there,—old effaced images of more than half-forgotten names and circumstances still crowding back upon her, as words written in lemon come out upon exposure to a friendly warmth,—when I forget all this, then may my country cousins forget me; and Bridget no more remember, that in the days of weakling infancy I was her tender charge—as I have been her care in foolish manhood since—in those pretty pastoral walks, long ago, about Mackery End, in Hertfordshire.
MY FIRST PLAY.

At the north end of Cross-court there yet stands a portal, of some architectural pretensions, though reduced to humble use, serving at present for an entrance to a printing-office. This old door-way, if you are young, reader, you may not know was the identical pit entrance to Old Drury—Garrick's Drury—all of it that is left. I never pass it without shaking some forty years from off my shoulders, recurring to the evening when I passed through it to see my first play. The afternoon had been wet, and the condition of our going (the elder folks and myself) was, that the rain should cease. With what a beating heart did I watch from the window the puddles, from the stillness of which I was taught to prognosticate the desired cessation! I seem to remember the last spurt, and the glee with which I ran to announce it.

We went with orders, which my godfather F. had sent us. He kept the oil shop (now Davies's) at the corner of Featherstone-buildings, in Holborn. F. was a tall grave person, lofty in speech, and had pretensions above his rank. He associated in those days with John Palmer, the comedian, whose gait and bearing he seemed to copy; if John (which is quite as likely) did not rather borrow somewhat of
his manner from my godfather. He was also known to and visited by Sheridan. It was to his house in Holborn that young Brinsley brought his first wife on her elopement with him from a boarding-school at Bath—the beautiful Maria Linley. My parents were present (over a quadrille table) when he arrived in the evening with his harmonious charge. From either of these connections it may be inferred that my godfather could command an order for the then Drury-lane theatre at pleasure—and, indeed, a pretty liberal issue of these cheap billets, in Brinsley's easy autograph, I have heard him say was the sole remuneration which he had received for many years' nightly illumination of the orchestra and various avenues of that theatre—and he was content it should be so. The honour of Sheridan's familiarity—or supposed familiarity—was better to my godfather than money.

F. was the most gentlemanly of oilmen; grandiloquent, yet courteous. His delivery of the commonest matters of fact was Ciceronian. He had two Latin words almost constantly in his mouth (how odd sounds Latin from an oilman's lips!), which my better knowledge since has enabled me to correct. In strict pronunciation they should have been sounded *vice* *versâ*—but in those young years they impressed me with more awe than they would now do, read aright from Seneca or Varro—in his own peculiar pronunciation, monosyllabically elaborated, or Anglicized, into something like *verse* *verse*. By an imposing manner, and the help of these distorted syllables, he climbed (but that was little) to the highest parochial honours which St. Andrew's has to bestow.

He is dead—and thus much I thought due to his memory, both for my first orders (little wondrous
talismans!—slight keys, and insignificant to outward sight, but opening to me more than Arabian paradises!) and, moreover, that by his testamentary beneficence I came into possession of the only landed property which I could ever call my own—situate near the road-way village of pleasant Pucke-ridge, in Hertfordshire. When I journeyed down to take possession, and planted foot on my own ground, the stately habits of the donor descended upon me, and I strode (shall I confess the vanity?) with larger paces over my allotment of three quarters of an acre, with its commodious mansion in the midst, with the feeling of an English freeholder that all betwixt sky and centre was my own. The estate has passed into more prudent hands, and nothing but an agrarian can restore it.

In those days were pit orders. Beshrew the uncomfortable manager who abolished them!—with one of these we went. I remember the waiting at the door—not that which is left—but between that and an inner door in shelter—O when shall I be such an expectant again!—with the cry of non-pareils, an indispensable play-house accompaniment in those days. As near as I can recollect, the fashionable pronunciation of the theatrical fruiteresses then was, "Chase some oranges, chase some numparels, chase a bill of the play;"—chase pro chuse. But when we got in, and I beheld the green curtain that veiled a heaven to my imagination, which was soon to be disclosed—the breathless anticipations I endured! I had seen something like it in the plate prefixed to Troilus and Cressida, in Rowe's Shakespeare—the tent scene with Diomede—and a sight of that plate can always bring back in a measure the feeling of that evening.—The boxes at that time, full of well-
dressed women of quality, projected over the pit; and the pilasters reaching down were adorned with a glistening substance (I know not what) under glass (as it seemed), resembling—a homely fancy—but I judged it to be sugar-candy—yet to my raised imagination, divested of its homelier qualities, it appeared a glorified candy!—The orchestra lights at length rose, those “fair Auroras!” Once the bell sounded. It was to ring out yet once again—and, incapable of the anticipation, I reposed my shut eyes in a sort of resignation upon the maternal lap. It rang the second time. The curtain drew up—I was not past six years old, and the play was Artaxerxes!

I had dabbled a little in the Universal History—the ancient part of it—and here was the court of Persia.—It was being admitted to a sight of the past. I took no proper interest in the action going on, for I understood not its import—but I heard the word Darius, and I was in the midst of Daniel. All feeling was absorbed in vision. Gorgeous vests, gardens, palaces, princesses, passed before me. I knew not players. I was in Persepolis for the time, and the burning idol of their devotion almost converted me into a worshipper. I was awe-struck, and believed those significations to be something more than elemental fires. It was all enchantment and a dream. No such pleasure has since visited me but in dreams.—Harlequin’s invasion followed; where, I remember, the transformation of the magistrates into reverend beldams seemed to me a piece of grave historic justice, and the tailor carrying his own head to be as sober a verity as the legend of St. Denys.

The next play to which I was taken was the Lady of the Manor, of which, with the exception
of some scenery, very faint traces are left in my memory. It was followed by a pantomime, called Lun's Ghost—a satiric touch, I apprehend, upon Rich, not long since dead—but to my apprehension (too sincere for satire), Lun was as remote a piece of antiquity as Lud—the father of a line of Harlequins—transmitting his dagger of lath (the wooden sceptre) through countless ages. I saw the primeval Motley come from his silent tomb in a ghastly vest of white patchwork, like the apparition of a dead rainbow. So Harlequins (thought I) look when they are dead.

My third play followed in quick succession. It was the Way of the World. I think I must have sat at it as grave as a judge; for I remember the hysterical affectations of good Lady Wishfort affected me like some solemn tragic passion. Robinson Crusoe followed; in which Crusoe, man Friday, and the parrot, were as good and authentic as in the story.—The clownery and pantaloony of these pantomimes have clean passed out of my head. I believe, I no more laughed at them, than at the same age I should have been disposed to laugh at the grotesque Gothic heads (seeming to me then replete with devout meaning) that gape, and grin, in stone around the inside of the old Round Church (my church) of the Templars.

I saw these plays in the season 1781-2, when I was from six to seven years old. After the intervention of six or seven other years (for at school all play-going was inhibited) I again entered the doors of a theatre. That old Artaxerxes evening had never done ringing in my fancy. I expected the same feelings to come again with the same occasion. But we differ from ourselves less at sixty and sixteen, than the latter does from six. In that inter-
val what had I not lost! At the first period I knew nothing, understood nothing, discriminated nothing. I felt all, loved all, wondered all—

Was nourish'd, I could not tell how—

I had left the temple a devotee, and was returned a rationalist. The same things were there materially; but the emblem, the reference, was gone!—The green curtain was no longer a veil, drawn between two worlds, the unfolding of which was to bring back past ages, to present a "royal ghost,"—but a certain quantity of green baize, which was to separate the audience for a given time from certain of their fellow-men who were to come forward and pretend those parts. The lights—the orchestra lights—came up a clumsy machinery. The first ring, and the second ring, was now but a trick of the prompter's bell—which had been, like the note of the cuckoo, a phantom of a voice, no hand seen or guessed at which ministered to its warning. The actors were men and women painted. I thought the fault was in them; but it was in myself, and the alteration which those many centuries—of six short twelvemonths—had wrought in me.—Perhaps it was fortunate for me that the play of the evening was but an indifferent comedy, as it gave me time to crop some unreasonable expectations, which might have interfered with the genuine emotions with which I was soon after enabled to enter upon the first appearance to me of Mrs. Siddons in Isabella. Comparison and retrospection soon yielded to the present attraction of the scene; and the theatre became to me, upon a new stock, the most delightful of recreations.
MODERN GALLANTRY.

In comparing modern with ancient manners, we are pleased to compliment ourselves upon the point of gallantry; a certain obsequiousness, or deferential respect, which we are supposed to pay to females, as females.

I shall believe that this principle actuates our conduct, when I can forget, that in the nineteenth century of the era from which we date our civility, we are but just beginning to leave off the very frequent practice of whipping females in public, in common with the coarsest male offenders.

I shall believe it to be influential, when I can shut my eyes to the fact, that in England women are still occasionally—hanged.

I shall believe in it, when actresses are no longer subject to be hissed off a stage by gentlemen.

I shall believe in it, when Dorimant hands a fish-wife across the kennel; or assists the apple-woman to pick up her wandering fruit, which some unlucky dray has just dissipated.

I shall believe in it, when the Dorimants in humbler life, who would be thought in their way notable adepts in this refinement, shall act upon it in places where they are not known, or think themselves not observed—when I shall see the
traveller for some rich tradesman part with his admired box-coat, to spread it over the defenceless shoulders of the poor woman, who is passing to her parish on the roof of the same stage-coach with him, drenched in the rain—when I shall no longer see a woman standing up in the pit of a London theatre, till she is sick and faint with the exertion, with men about her, seated at their ease, and jeering at her distress; till one, that seems to have more manners or conscience than the rest, significantly declares “she should be welcome to his seat, if she were a little younger and handsomer.” Place this dapper warehouseman, or that rider, in a circle of their own female acquaintance, and you shall confess you have not seen a politer-bred man in Lothbury.

Lastly, I shall begin to believe that there is some such principle influencing our conduct, when more than one-half of the drudgery and coarse servitude of the world shall cease to be performed by women.

Until that day comes, I shall never believe this boasted point to be anything more than a conventional fiction; a pageant got up between the sexes, in a certain rank, and at a certain time of life, in which both find their account equally.

I shall be even disposed to rank it among the salutary fictions of life, when in polite circles I shall see the same attentions paid to age as to youth, to homely features as to handsome, to coarse complexions as to clear—to the woman, as she is a woman, not as she is a beauty, a fortune, or a title.

I shall believe it to be something more than a name, when a well-dressed gentleman in a well-dressed company can advert to the topic of female
old age without exciting, and intending to excite, a sneer:—when the phrases "antiquated virginity," and such a one has "overstood her market," pronounced in good company, shall raise immediate offence in man, or woman, that shall hear them spoken.

Joseph Paice, of Bread-street-hill, merchant, and one of the Directors of the South Sea company— the same to whom Edwards, the Shakespeare commentator, has addressed a fine sonnet—was the only pattern of consistent gallantry I have met with. He took me under his shelter at an early age, and bestowed some pains upon me. I owe to his precepts and example whatever there is of the man of business (and that is not much) in my composition. It was not his fault that I did not profit more. Though bred a Presbyterian, and brought up a merchant, he was the finest gentleman of his time. He had not one system of attention to females in the drawing-room, and another in the shop, or at the stall. I do not mean that he made no distinction. But he never lost sight of sex, or overlooked it in the casualities of a disadvantageous situation. I have seen him stand bareheaded—smile if you please—to a poor servant-girl, while she has been inquiring of him the way to some street—in such a posture of unforced civility, as neither to embarrass her in the acceptance, nor himself in the offer, of it. He was no dangler, in the common acceptation of the word, after women; but he reverenced and upheld, in every form in which it came before him, womanhood. I have seen him—nay, smile not—tenderly escorting a market-woman, whom he had encountered in a shower, exalting his umbrella over her poor basket of fruit, that it might receive no damage, with as
much carefulness as if she had been a countess. To the reverend form of Female Eld he would yield the wall (though it were to an ancient beggar-woman) with more ceremony than we can afford to show our grandams. He was the Preux Chevalier of Age; the Sir Calidore, or Sir Tristan, to those who have no Calidores or Tristans to defend them. The roses, that had long faded thence, still bloomed for him in those withered and yellow cheeks.

He was never married, but in his youth he paid his addresses to the beautiful Susan W instanley—old W instanley's daughter of Clapton—who dying in the early days of their courtship, confirmed in him the resolution of perpetual bachelorship. It was during their short courtship, he told me, that he had been one day treating his mistress with a profusion of civil speeches—the common gallantries— to which kind of thing she had hitherto manifested no repugnance—but in this instance with no effect. He could not obtain from her a decent acknowledgment in return. She seemed rather to resent his compliments. He could not set it down to caprice, for the lady had always shown herself above that littleness. When he ventured on the following day, finding her a little better humoured, to expostulate with her on her coldness of yesterday, she confessed, with her usual frankness, that she had no sort of dislike to his attentions; that she could even endure some high-flown compliments; that a young woman placed in her situation had a right to expect all sort of civil things said to her; that she hoped she could digest a dose of adulation, short of insincerity, with as little injury to her humility as most young women; but that—a little before he had commenced his compliments—she
had overheard him by accident, in rather rough language, rating a young woman, who had not brought home his cravats quite to the appointed time, and she thought to herself, "As I am Miss Susan Winstanley, and a young lady—a reputed beauty, and known to be a fortune—I can have my choice of the finest speeches from the mouth of this very fine gentleman who is courting me—but if I had been poor Mary Such-a-one (naming the milliner),—and had failed of bringing home the cravats to the appointed hour—though perhaps I had sat up half the night to forward them—what sort of compliments should I have received then?—And my woman's pride came to my assistance; and I thought, that if it were only to do me honour, a female, like myself, might have received handsomer usage; and I was determined not to accept any fine speeches, to the compromise of that sex, the belonging to which was after all my strongest claim and title to them."

I think the lady discovered both generosity, and a just way of thinking, in this rebuke which she gave her lover; and I have sometimes imagined, that the uncommon strain of courtesy, which through life regulated the actions and behaviour of my friend towards all of womankind indiscriminately, owed its happy origin to this seasonable lesson from the lips of his lamented mistress.

I wish the whole female world would entertain the same notion of these things that Miss Winstanley showed. Then we should see something of the spirit of consistent gallantry; and no longer witness the anomaly of the same man—a pattern of true politeness to a wife—of cold contempt, or rudeness, to a sister—the idolater of his female mistress—the disparager and despiser of his no less female aunt, or un-
fortunate—still female—maiden cousin. Just so much respect as a woman derogates from her own sex, in whatever condition placed—her hand-maid, or dependent—she deserves to have diminished from herself on that score; and probably will feel the diminution, when youth, and beauty, and advantages, not inseparable from sex, shall lose of their attraction. What a woman should demand of a man in courtship, or after it, is first—respect for her as she is a woman;—and next to that—to be respected by him above all other women. But let her stand upon her female character as upon a foundation; and let the attentions, incident to individual preference, be so many pretty additaments and ornaments—as many, and as fanciful, as you please—to that main structure. Let her first lesson be with sweet Susan Winstanley—to reverence her sex.
THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE.

WAS born, and passed the first seven years of my life, in the Temple. Its church, its halls, its gardens, its fountains, its river, I had almost said—for in those young years, what was this king of rivers to me but a stream that watered our pleasant places?—these are of my oldest recollections. I repeat, to this day, no verses to myself more frequently, or with kindlier emotion, than those of Spenser, where he speaks of this spot:

There when they came, whereas those bricky towers,
The which on Themmes brode aged back doth ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whylome wont the Templer knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride.

Indeed, it is the most elegant spot in the metropolis. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time—the passing from the crowded Strand or Fleet Street, by unexpected avenues, into its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses! What a cheerful, liberal look hath that portion of it, which, from three sides, overlooks the greater garden; that goodly pile

Of building strong, albeit of Paper hight,
confronting with massy contrast, the lighter, older, more fantastically shrouded one, named of Har-court, with the cheerful Crown Office-row (place of my kindly engendure), right opposite the stately stream, which washes the garden foot with her yet scarcely trade-polluted waters, and seems but just weaned from her Twickenham Naiades! a man would give something to have been born in such places. What a collegiate aspect has that fine Elizabethan hall, where the fountain plays, which I have made to rise and fall, how many times! to the astoundment of the young urchins, my con-temporaries, who, not being able to guess at its recondite machinery, were almost tempted to hail the wondrous work as magic! What an antique air had the now almost effaced sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that Time which they measured, and to take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding cor-respondence with the fountain of light! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on, watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its move-ment, never caught, nice as an evanescent cloud, or the first arrests of sleep!

Ah! yet doth beauty like a dial hand
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived!

What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowelments of lead and brass, its pert or solemn dulness of communication, compared with the simple altar-like structure and silent heart-language of the old dial! It stood as the garden god of Christian gardens. Why is it almost everywhere vanished? If its business-use be superseded by more elaborate inventions, its moral uses, its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance. It spoke
of moderate labours, of pleasures not protracted after sunset, of temperance, and good hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe of the first world. Adam could scarce have missed it in Paradise. It was the measure appropriate for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to apportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherd "carved it out quaintly in the sun;" and, turning philosopher by the very occupation, provided it with mottoes more touching than tombstones. It was a pretty device of the gardener, recorded by Marvell, who, in the days of artificial gardening, made a dial out of herbs and flowers. I must quote his verses a little higher up, for they are full, as all his serious poetry was, of a witty delicacy. They will not come in awkwardly, I hope, in a talk of fountains and sun-dials. He is speaking of sweet garden scenes:—

What wondrous life is this I lead!  
Ripe apples drop about my head.  
The luscious clusters of the vine  
Upon my mouth do crush their wine.  
The nectarine, and curious peach,  
Into my hands themselves do reach.  
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,  
Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass.  
Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less  
Withdraws into its happiness.  
The mind, that ocean, where each kind  
Does straight its own resemblance find;  
Yet it creates, transcending these,  
Far other worlds and other seas;  
Annihilating all that's made  
To a green thought in a green shade.  
Here at the fountain's sliding foot,  
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,  
Casting the body's vest aside,  
My soul into the boughs does glide;  
There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
Then whets and claps its silver wings,
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.
How well the skilful gardener drew
Of flowers and herbs, this dial new,
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run:
And, as it works, the industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckoned, but with herbs and flowers?¹

The artificial fountains of the metropolis are, in like manner, fast vanishing. Most of them are dried up or bricked over. Yet, where one is left, as in that little green nook behind the South-Sea House, what a freshness it gives to the dreary pile! Four little winged marble boys used to play their virgin fancies, spouting out ever fresh streams from their innocent-wanton lips in the square of Lincoln’s Inn, when I was no bigger than they were figured. They are gone, and the spring choked up. The fashion, they tell me, is gone by, and these things are esteemed childish. Why not, then, gratify children, by letting them stand? Lawyers, I suppose, were children once. They are awakening images to them at least. Why must everything smack of man, and mannish? Is the world all grown up? Is childhood dead? Or is there not in the bosoms of the wisest and the best some of the child’s heart left, to respond to its earliest enchantments? The figures were grotesque. Are the stiff-wigged living figures, that still flitter and chatter about that area, less Gothic in appearance? or is the splutter of their hot rhetoric one-half so refreshing and innocent as the little cool playful streams those exploded cherubs uttered?

¹ From a copy of verses entitled “The Garden.”
They have lately gothicized the entrance to the Inner Temple-hall, and the library front; to assimilate them, I suppose, to the body of the hall, which they do not at all resemble. What is become of the winged horse that stood over the former? a stately arms! and who has removed those frescoes of the Virtues, which Italianized the end of the Paper-buildings?—my first hint of allegory! They must account to me for these things, which I miss so greatly.

The terrace is, indeed, left, which we used to call the parade; but the traces are passed away of the footsteps which made its pavement awful! It is become common and profane. The old benchers had it almost sacred to themselves, in the forepart of the day at least. They might not be sided or jostled. Their air and dress asserted the parade. You left wide spaces betwixt you when you passed them. We walk on even terms with their successors.

The roguish eye of J——Il, ever ready to be delivered of a jest, almost invites a stranger to vie a repartee with it. But what insolent familiar durst have mated Thomas Coventry?—whose person was a quadrate, his step massy and elephantine, his face square as the lion's, his gait peremptory and path-keeping, indvertible from his way as a moving column, the scarecrow of his inferiors, the brow-beater of equals and superiors, who made a solitude of children wherever he came, for they fled his insufferable presence, as they would have shunned an Elisha bear. His growl was as thunder in their ears, whether he spake to them in mirth or in rebuke; his invitatory notes being, indeed, of all, the most repulsive and horrid. Clouds of snuff, aggravating the natural terrors of his speech, broke from each majestic nostril, darkening the air. He
took it, not by pinches, but a palmful at once,—diving for it under the mighty flaps of his old-fashioned waistcoat pocket; his waistcoat red and angry, his coat dark rappee, tinctured by dye original, and by adjuncts, with buttons of obsolete gold. And so he paced the terrace.

By his side a milder form was sometimes to be seen; the pensive gentility of Samuel Salt. They were coevals, and had nothing but that and their benchership in common. In politics Salt was a whig, and Coventry a staunch tory. Many a sarcastic growl did the latter cast out—for Coventry had a rough spinous humour—at the political confederates of his associate, which rebounded from the gentle bosom of the latter like cannon-balls from wool. You could not ruffle Samuel Salt.

S. had the reputation of being a very clever man, and of excellent discernment in the chamber practice of the law. I suspect his knowledge did not amount to much. When a case of difficult disposition of money, testamentary, or otherwise, came before him, he ordinarily handed it over, with a few instructions, to his man Lovel, who was a quick little fellow, and would despatch it out of hand by the light of natural understanding, of which he had an uncommon share. It was incredible what repute for talents S. enjoyed by the mere trick of gravity. He was a shy man; a child might pose him in a minute—indolent and procrastinating to the last degree. Yet men would give him credit for vast application, in spite of himself. He was not to be trusted with himself with impunity. He never dressed for a dinner party but he forgot his sword—they wore swords then—or some other necessary part of his equipage. Lovel had his eye upon him on all these
occasions, and ordinarily gave him his cue. If there was anything which he could speak unseasonably, he was sure to do it.—He was to dine at a relative's of the unfortunate Miss Blandy on the day of her execution;—and L., who had a wary foresight of his probable hallucinations, before he set out schooled him, with great anxiety, not in any possible manner to allude to her story that day. S. promised faithfully to observe the injunction. He had not been seated in the parlour, where the company was expecting the dinner summons, four minutes, when, a pause in the conversation ensuing, he got up, looked out of the window, and pulling down his ruffles—an ordinary motion with him—observed, "it was a gloomy day," and added, "Miss Blandy must be hanged by this time, I suppose." Instances of this sort are perpetual. Yet S. was thought by some of the greatest men of his time a fit person to be consulted, not alone in matters pertaining to the law, but in the ordinary niceties and embarrassments of conduct—from force of manner entirely. He never laughed. He had the same good fortune among the female world,—was a known toast with the ladies, and one or two are said to have died for love of him—I suppose, because he never trifled or talked gallantly with them, or paid them, indeed, hardly common attentions. He had a fine face and person, but wanted, methought, the spirit that should have shown them off with advantage to the women. His eye lacked lustre.—Not so, thought Susan P—; who, at the advanced age of sixty, was seen, in the cold evening time, unaccompanied, wetting the pavement of B—d Row with tears that fell in drops which might be heard, because her friend had died that day—he, whom she had
pursued with a hopeless passion for the last forty years—a passion which years could not extinguish or abate; nor the long-resolved, yet gently-enforced, puttings off of unrelenting bachelorhood dissuade from its cherished purpose. Mild Susan P——, thou hast now thy friend in heaven!

Thomas Coventry was a cadet of the noble family of that name. He passed his youth in contracted circumstances, which gave him early those parsimonious habits which in after life never forsook him: so that with one windfall or another, about the time I knew him, he was master of four or five hundred thousand pounds; nor did he look or walk worth a moidore less. He lived in a gloomy house opposite the pump in Serjeant's-inn, Fleet-street. J., the counsel, is doing self-imposed penance in it, for what reason I divine not, at this day. C. had an agreeable seat at North Cray, where he seldom spent above a day or two at a time in the summer; but preferred, during the hot months, standing at his window in this damp, close, well-like mansion, to watch, as he said, "the maids drawing water all day long." I suspect he had his within-door reasons for the preference. *Hic currus et arma fuère.* He might think his treasures more safe. His house had the aspect of a strong box. C. was a close hunks—a hoarder rather than a miser—or, if a miser, none of the mad Elwes breed, who have brought discredit upon a character which cannot exist without certain admirable points of steadiness and unity of purpose. One may hate a true miser, but cannot, I suspect, so easily despise him. By taking care of the pence he is often enabled to part with the pounds, upon a scale that leaves us careless generous fellows halting at an immeasurable distance behind.
C. gave away £30,000 at once in his lifetime to a blind charity. His house-keeping was severely looked after, but he kept the table of a gentleman. He would know who came in and who went out of his house, but his kitchen chimney was never suffered to freeze.

Salt was his opposite in this, as in all—never knew what he was worth in the world; and having but a competency for his rank, which his indolent habits were little calculated to improve, might have suffered severely if he had not had honest people about him. Lovel took care of everything. He was at once his clerk, his good servant, his dresser, his friend, his "flapper," his guide, stopwatch, auditor, treasurer. He did nothing without consulting Lovel, or failed in anything without expecting and fearing his admonishing. He put himself almost too much in his hands, had they not been the purest in the world. He resigned his title almost to respect as a master, if L. could ever have forgotten for a moment that he was a servant.

I knew this Lovel. He was a man of incorrigible and losing honesty. A good fellow withal, and "would strike." In the cause of the oppressed he never considered inequalities, or calculated the number of his opponents. He once wrested a sword out of the hand of a man of quality that had drawn upon him, and pommelled him severely with the hilt of it. The swordsman had offered insult to a female—an occasion upon which no odds against him could have prevented the interference of Lovel. He would stand next day bare-headed to the same person modestly to excuse his interference—for L. never forgot rank where something better was not concerned. L. was the live-
liest little fellow breathing, had a face as gay as Garrick's, whom he was said greatly to resemble (I have a portrait of him which confirms it), possessed a fine turn for humorous poetry—next to Swift and Prior—moulded heads in clay and plaster of Paris to admiration, by the dint of natural genius merely; turned cribbage boards, and such small cabinet toys, to perfection; took a hand at quadrille or bowls with equal facility; made punch better than any man of his degree in England; had the merriest quips and conceits; and was altogether as brimful of rogueries and inventions as you could desire. He was a brother of the angle, moreover, and just such a free, hearty, honest companion as Mr. Izaak Walton would have chosen to go a-fishing with. I saw him in his old age and the decay of his faculties, palsy-smitten, in the last sad stage of human weakness—"a remnant most forlorn of what he was,"—yet even then his eye would light up upon the mention of his favourite Garrick. He was greatest, he would say, in Bayes—"was upon the stage nearly throughout the whole performance, and as busy as a bee." At intervals, too, he would speak of his former life, and how he came up a little boy from Lincoln, to go to service, and how his mother cried at parting with him, and how he returned, after some few years' absence, in a smart new livery, to see her, and she blest herself at the change, and could hardly be brought to believe that it was "her own bairn." And then, the excitement subsiding, he would weep, till I have wished the sad second-childhood might have a mother still to lay its head upon her lap. But the common mother of us all in no long time after received him gently into hers.
With Coventry and with Salt, in their walks upon the terrace, most commonly Peter Pierson would join to make up a third. They did not walk linked arm-in-arm in those days—"as now our stout triumvirs sweep the streets,"—but generally with both hands folded behind them for state, or with one at least behind, the other carrying a cane. P. was a benevolent, but not a prepossessing man. He had that in his face which you could not term unhappiness; it rather implied an incapacity of being happy. His cheeks were colourless, even to whiteness. His look was uninviting, resembling (but without his sourness) that of our great philanthropist. I know that he did good acts, but I could never make out what he was. Contemporary with these, but subordinate, was Daines Barrington—another oddity—he walked burly and square—in imitation, I think, of Coventry—howbeit he attained not to the dignity of his prototype. Nevertheless, he did pretty well, upon the strength of being a tolerable antiquarian, and having a brother a bishop. When the account of his year's treasurership came to be audited, the following singular charge was unanimously disallowed by the bench: "Item, disbursed Mr. Allen, the gardener, twenty shillings for stuff to poison the sparrows, by my orders." Next to him was old Barton—a jolly negation, who took upon him the ordering of the bills of fare for the parliament chamber, where the benchers dine—answering to the combination rooms at College—much to the easement of his less epicurean brethren. I know nothing more of him.—Then Read, and Twopeny—Read, good-humoured and personable—Twopeny, good-humoured, but thin, and felicitous in jests upon his own figure. If T. was thin, Wharry was attenuated and fleeting.
Many must remember him (for he was rather of later date) and his singular gait, which was performed by three steps and a jump regularly succeeding. The steps were little efforts, like that of a child beginning to walk; the jump comparatively vigorous, as a foot to an inch. Where he learned this figure, or what occasioned it, I could never discover. It was neither graceful in itself, nor seemed to answer the purpose any better than common walking. The extreme tenuity of his frame, I suspect, set him upon it. It was a trial of poising. Twopeny would often rally him upon his leanness, and hail him as Brother Lusty; but W. had no relish of a joke. His features were spiteful. I have heard that he would pinch his cat's ears extremely when anything had offended him. Jackson—the omniscient Jackson, he was called—was of this period. He had the reputation of possessing more multifarious knowledge than any man of his time. He was the Friar Bacon of the less literate portion of the Temple. I remember a pleasant passage of the cook applying to him, with much formality of apology, for instructions how to write down edge bone of beef in the bill of commons. He was supposed to know, if any man in the world did. He decided the orthography to be—as I have given it—fortifying his authority with such anatomical reasons as dismissed the manciple (for the time) learned and happy. Some do spell it yet, perversely, aitch bone, from a fanciful resemblance between its shape and that of the aspirate so denominated. I had almost forgotten Mingay with the iron hand—but he was somewhat later. He had lost his right hand by some accident, and supplied it with a grappling-hook, which he wielded with a tolerable adroitness. I detected
the substitute before I was old enough to reason whether it were artificial or not. I remember the astonishment it raised in me. He was a blustering, loud-talking person; and I reconciled the phenomenon to my ideas as an emblem of power—somewhat like the horns in the forehead of Michael Angelo's Moses. Baron Maseres, who walks (or did till very lately) in the costume of the reign of George the Second, closes my imperfect recollections of the old benchers of the Inner Temple.

Fantastic forms, whither are ye fled? Or, if the like of you exist, why exist they no more for me? Ye inexplicable, half-understood appearances, why comes in reason to tear away the preternatural mist, bright or gloomy, that enshrouded you? Why make ye so sorry a figure in my relation, who made up me—to my childish eyes—the mythology of the Temple? In those days I saw Gods, as "old men covered with a mantle," walking upon the earth. Let the dream of classic idolatry perish,—extinct be the fairies and fairy trumpery of legendary fabling, in the heart of childhood there will, for ever, spring up a well of innocent or wholesome superstition—the seeds of exaggeration will be busy there, and vital—from every-day forms educating the unknown and the uncommon. In that little Goshen there will be light when the grown world flounders about in the darkness of sense and materiality. While childhood, and while dreams, reducing childhood, shall be left, imagination shall not have spread her holy wings totally to fly the earth.

P.S.—I have done injustice to the soft shade of Samuel Salt. See what it is to trust to imperfect memory, and the erring notices of childhood! Yet I protest I always thought that he had been a
bachelor! This gentleman, R. N. informs me, married young, and losing his lady in childbirth, within the first year of their union, fell into a deep melancholy, from the effects of which, probably, he never thoroughly recovered. In what a new light does this place his rejection (O call it by a gentler name!) of mild Susan P——, unravelling into beauty certain peculiarities of this very shy and retiring character! Henceforth let no one receive the narratives of Elia for true records! They are, in truth, but shadows of fact—verisimilitudes, not verities—or sitting but upon the remote edges and outskirts of history. He is no such honest chronicler as R. N., and would have done better perhaps to have consulted that gentleman before he sent these incondite reminiscences to press. But the worthy sub-treasurer—who respects his old and new masters—would but have been puzzled at the indecorous liberties of Elia. The good man wots not, peradventure, of the licence which Magazines have arrived at in this plain-speaking age, or hardly dreams of their existence beyond the "Gentleman's"—his furthest monthly excursions in this nature having been long confined to the holy ground of honest "Urban's" obituary. May it be long before his own name shall help to swell those columns of unenvied flattery!—Meantime, O ye New Benchers of the Inner Temple, cherish him kindly, for he is himself the kindliest of human creatures. Should infirmities overtake him—he is yet in green and vigorous senility—make allowances for them, remembering that "ye yourselves are old." So may the Winged Horse, your ancient badge and cognizance, still flourish! so may future Hookers and Seldens illustrate your church and chambers! so may the sparrows, in default of more
melodious quiristers, unpoisoned hop about your walks! so may the fresh-coloured and cleanly nursery-maid, who, by leave, airs her playful charge in your stately gardens, drop her prettiest blushing courtesy as ye pass, reductive of juvenescent emotion! so may the younkers of this generation eye you, pacing your stately terrace, with the same superstitious veneration with which the child Elia gazed on the Old Worthies that solemnized the parade before ye!
HE custom of saying grace at meals had, probably, its origin in the early times of the world, and the hunter-state of man, when dinners were precarious things, and a full meal was something more than a common blessing! when a belly-full was a wind-fall, and looked like a special providence. In the shouts and triumphal songs with which, after a season of sharp abstinence, a lucky booty of deer's or goat's flesh would naturally be ushered home, existed, perhaps, the germ of the modern grace. It is not otherwise easy to be understood, why the blessing of food—the act of eating—should have had a particular expression of thanksgiving annexed to it, distinct from that implied and silent gratitude with which we are expected to enter upon the enjoyment of the many other various gifts and good things of existence.

I own that I am disposed to say grace upon twenty other occasions in the course of the day besides my dinner. I want a form for setting out upon a pleasant walk, for a moonlight ramble, for a friendly meeting, or a solved problem. Why have we none for books, those spiritual repasts—a grace before Milton—a grace before Shakespeare—a devotional exercise proper to be said before
reading the Fairy Queen?—but the received ritual having prescribed these forms to the solitary ceremony of manducation, I shall confine my observations to the experience which I have had of the grace, properly so called; commending my new scheme for extension to a niche in the grand philosophical, poetical, and perchance in part heretical, liturgy, now compiling by my friend Homo Humanus, for the use of a certain snug congregation of Utopian Rabelæsian Christians, no matter where assembled.

The form, then, of the benediction before eating has its beauty at a poor man's table, or at the simple and unprovocative repast of children. It is here that the grace becomes exceedingly graceful. The indigent man, who hardly knows whether he shall have a meal the next day or not, sits down to his fare with a present sense of the blessing, which can be but feebly acted by the rich, into whose minds the conception of wanting a dinner could never, but by some extreme theory, have entered. The proper end of food—the animal sustenance—is barely contemplated by them. The poor man's bread is his daily bread, literally his bread for the day. Their courses are perennial.

Again, the plainest diet seems the fittest to be preceded by the grace. That which is least stimulative to appetite, leaves the mind most free for foreign considerations. A man may feel thankful, heartily thankful, over a dish of plain mutton with turnips, and have leisure to reflect upon the ordinance and institution of eating; when he shall confess a perturbation of mind, inconsistent with the purposes of the grace, at the presence of venison or turtle. When I have sate (a varus hospes) at rich men's tables, with the savoury soup and messes
steaming up the nostrils, and moistening the lips of the guests with desire and a distracted choice, I have felt the introduction of that ceremony to be unseasonable. With the ravenous orgasm upon you, it seems impertinent to interpose a religious sentiment. It is a confusion of purpose to mutter out praises from a mouth that waters. The heats of epicurism put out the gentle flame of devotion. The incense which rises round is pagan, and the belly-god intercepts it for its own. The very excess of the provision beyond the needs, takes away all sense of proportion between the end and means. The giver is veiled by his gifts. You are startled at the injustice of returning thanks—for what?—for having too much while so many starve. It is to praise the Gods amiss.

I have observed this awkwardness felt, scarce consciously perhaps, by the good man who says the grace. I have seen it in clergymen and others—a sort of shame—a sense of the co-presence of circumstances which unhallow the blessing. After a devotional tone put on for a few seconds, how rapidly the speaker will fall into his common voice! helping himself or his neighbour, as if to get rid of some uneasy sensation of hypocrisy. Not that the good man was a hypocrite, or was not most conscientious in the discharge of the duty; but he felt in his inmost mind the incompatibility of the scene and the viands before him with the exercise of a calm and rational gratitude.

I hear somebody exclaim,—Would you have Christians sit down at table, like hogs to their troughs, without remembering the Giver?—no—I would have them sit down as Christians, remembering the Giver, and less like hogs. Or, if their appetites must run riot, and they must pamper
themselves with delicacies for which east and west are ransacked, I would have them postpone their benediction to a fitter season, when appetite is laid; when the still small voice can be heard, and the reason of the grace returns—with temperate diet and restricted dishes. Gluttony and surfeiting are no proper occasions for thanksgiving. When Jeshurun waxed fat, we read that he kicked. Virgil knew the harpy-nature better, when he put into the mouth of Celæno anything but a blessing. We may be gratefully sensible of the deliciousness of some kinds of food beyond others, though that is a meaner and inferior gratitude: but the proper object of the grace is sustenance, not relishes; daily bread, not delicacies; the means of life, and not the means of pampering the carcass. With what frame or composure, I wonder, can a city chaplain pronounce his benediction at some great Hall-feast, when he knows that his last concluding pious word—and that in all probability, the sacred name which he preaches—is but the signal for so many impatient harpies to commence their foul orgies, with as little sense of true thankfulness (which is temperance) as those Virgilian fowl! It is well if the good man himself does not feel his devotions a little clouded, those foggy sensuous steams mingling with and polluting the pure altar sacrifice.

The severest satire upon full tables is the banquet which Satan, in the "Paradise Regained," provides for a temptation in the wilderness:

A table richly spread in regal mode
With dishes piled, and meats of noblest sort
And savour; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boiled,
Gris-amber-steamed; all fish from sea or shore,
Freshet or purling brook, for which was drained
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.
The Tempter, I warrant you, thought these cates would go down without the recommendatory preface of a benediction. They are like to be short graces where the devil plays the host. I am afraid the poet wants his usual decorum in this place. Was he thinking of the old Roman luxury, or of a gaudy day at Cambridge? This was a temptation fitter for a Heliogabalus. The whole banquet is too civic and culinary, and the accompaniments altogether a profanation of that deep, abstracted, holy scene. The mighty artillery of sauces, which the cook-fiend conjures up, is out of proportion to the simple wants and plain hunger of the guest. He that disturbed him in his dreams, from his dreams might have been taught better. To the temperate fantasies of the famished Son of God, what sort of feasts presented themselves?—He dreamed indeed,

—— As appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.

But what meats?—

Him thought he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn;
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought:
He saw the prophet also how he fled
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awaked
He found his supper on the coals prepared,
And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
And ate the second time after repose,
The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
Sometimes, that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

Nothing in Milton is finelier fancied than these temperate dreams of the divine Hungerer. To
which of these two visionary banquets, think you, would the introduction of what is called the grace have been the most fitting and pertinent?

Theoretically I am no enemy to graces; but practically I own that (before meat especially) they seem to involve something awkward and unseasonable. Our appetites, of one or another kind, are excellent spurs to our reason, which might otherwise but feebly set about the great ends of preserving and continuing the species. They are fit blessings to be contemplated at a distance with a becoming gratitude; but the moment of appetite (the judicious reader will apprehend me) is, perhaps, the least fit season for that exercise. The Quakers, who go about their business of every description with more calmness than we, have more title to the use of these benedictory prefaces. I have always admired their silent grace, and more because I have observed their applications to the meat and drink following to be less passionate and sensual than ours. They are neither gluttons nor wine-bibbers as a people. They eat, as a horse bolts his chopped hay, with indifference, calmness, and cleanly circumstances. They neither grease nor slop themselves. When I see a citizen in his bib and tucker, I cannot imagine it a surplice.

I am no Quaker at my food. I confess I am not indifferent to the kinds of it. Those unctuous morsels of deer's flesh were not made to be received with dispassionate services. I hate a man who swallows it, affecting not to know what he is eating. I suspect his taste in higher matters. I shrink instinctively from one who professes to like minced veal. There is a physiognomical character in the tastes for food. C—— holds that a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple-dumplings.
I am not certain but he is right. With the decay of my first innocence, I confess a less and less relish daily for those innocuous cates. The whole vegetable tribe have lost their gust with me. Only I stick to asparagus, which still seems to inspire gentle thoughts. I am impatient and querulous under culinary disappointments, as to come home at the dinner hour, for instance, expecting some savoury mess, and to find one quite tasteless and sapidless. Butter ill melted—that commonest of kitchen failures—puts me beside my tenor.—The author of the Rambler used to make inarticulate animal noises over a favourite food. Was this the music quite proper to be preceded by the grace? or would the pious man have done better to postpone his devotions to a season when the blessing might be contemplated with less perturbation? I quarrel with no man's tastes, nor would set my thin face against those excellent things, in their way, jollity and feasting. But as these exercises, however laudable, have little in them of grace or gracefulness, a man should be sure, before he ventures so to grace them, that while he is pretending his devotions otherwhere, he is not secretly kissing his hand to some great fish—his Dagon—with a special consecration of no ark but the fat tureen before him. Graces are the sweet preluding strains to the banquets of angels and children; to the roots and severer repasts of the Chartreuse; to the slender, but not slenderly acknowledged, reflection of the poor and humble man; but at the heaped-up boards of the pampered and the luxurious they become of dissonant mood, less timed and tuned to the occasion, methinks, than the noise of those better befitting organs would be which children hear tales of, at Hog's Norton.
We sit too long at our meals, or are too curious in the study of them, or too disordered in our application to them, or engross too great a portion of those good things (which should be common) to our share, to be able with any grace to say grace. To be thankful for what we grasp exceeding our proportion, is to add hypocrisy to injustice. A lurking sense of this truth is what makes the performance of this duty so cold and spiritless a service at most tables. In houses where the grace is as indispensable as the napkin, who has not seen that never-settled question arise, as to who shall say it? while the good man of the house and the visitor clergyman, or some other guest belike of next authority, from years or gravity, shall be bandying about the office between them as a matter of compliment, each of them not unwilling to shift the awkward burthen of an equivocal duty from his own shoulders?

I once drank tea in company with two Methodist divines of different persuasions, whom it was my fortune to introduce to each other for the first time that evening. Before the first cup was handed round, one of these reverend gentlemen put it to the other, with all due solemnity, whether he chose to say anything. It seems it is the custom with some sectaries to put up a short prayer before this meal also. His reverend brother did not at first quite apprehend him, but upon an explanation, with little less importance he made answer that it was not a custom known in his church: in which courteous evasion the other acquiescing for good manners' sake, or in compliance with a weak brother, the supplementary or tea grace was waived altogether. With what spirit might not Lucian have painted two priests, of his religion, playing into each other's
GRACE BEFORE MEAT.

hands the compliment of performing or omitting a sacrifice,—the hungry God meantime, doubtful of his incense, with expectant nostrils hovering over the two flamens, and (as between two stools) going away in the end without his supper.

A short form upon these occasions is felt to want reverence; a long one, I am afraid, cannot escape the charge of impertinence. I do not quite approve of the epigrammatic conciseness with which that equivocal wag (but my pleasant school-fellow) C. V. L., when importuned for a grace, used to inquire, first slyly leering down the table, "Is there no clergyman here?"—significantly adding, "Thank G—." Nor do I think our old form at school quite pertinent, where we were used to preface our bald bread-and-cheese-suppers with a preamble, connecting with that humble blessing a recognition of benefits the most awful and overwhelming to the imagination which religion has to offer. Non tunc illis erat locus. I remember we were put to it to reconcile the phrase "good creatures," upon which the blessing rested, with the fare set before us, wilfully understanding that expression in a low and animal sense,—till some one recalled a legend, which told how, in the golden days of Christ's, the young Hospitallers were wont to have smoking joints of roast meat upon their nightly boards, till some pious benefactor, commiserating the decencies, rather than the palates, of the children, commuted our flesh for garments, and gave us—horresco referens—trousers instead of mutton.
DREAM CHILDREN; A REVERIE.

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when they were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle, or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene—so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country—of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts; till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge
of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort, while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighbourhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psalter by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer—here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till, upon my looking grave, it desisted—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she be-
lieved that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm;" and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grand-children, having us to the great house in the holydays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the twelve Caesars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out—sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then,—and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew-trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir-apples, which were good for nothing but to look at—or in lying about upon the fresh grass with all the fine garden smells around me—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the
DREAM CHILDREN; A REVERIE.

garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings,—I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such-like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then, in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain;—and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed
as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb. — Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W—n; and as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial, meant in maidens—when suddenly turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding, till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech: "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams."
only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name — and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side—but John L. (or James Elia) was gone for ever.
DISTANT CORRESPONDENTS.

IN A LETTER TO B. F., ESQ., AT SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES.

MY DEAR F.—When I think how welcome the sight of a letter from the world where you were born must be to you in that strange one to which you have been transplanted, I feel some compunctious visitings at my long silence. But, indeed, it is no easy effort to set about a correspondence at our distance. The weary world of waters between us oppresses the imagination. It is difficult to conceive how a scrawl of mine should ever stretch across it. It is a sort of presumption to expect that one's thoughts should live so far. It is like writing for posterity; and reminds me of one of Mrs. Rowe's super- scriptions, "Alcander to Strephon in the shades." Cowley's Post-Angel is no more than would be expedient in such an intercourse. One drops a packet at Lombard Street, and in twenty-four hours a friend in Cumberland gets it as fresh as if it came in ice. It is only like whispering through a long trumpet. But suppose a tube let down from the moon, with yourself at one end and the man at the other; it would be some balk to the spirit of conversation, if you knew that the dialogue ex-
changed with that interesting theosophist would take two or three revolutions of a higher luminary in its passage. Yet, for aught I know, you may be some parasangs nigher that primitive idea—Plato's man—than we in England here have the honour to reckon ourselves.

Epistolary matter usually compriseth three topics; news, sentiment, and puns. In the latter, I include all non-serious subjects; or subjects serious in themselves, but treated after my fashion, non-seriously.—And first, for news. In them the most desirable circumstance, I suppose, is that they shall be true. But what security can I have that what I now send you for truth shall not, before you get it, unaccountably turn into a lie? For instance, our mutual friend P. is at this present writing—my Now—in good health, and enjoys a fair share of worldly reputation. You are glad to hear it. This is natural and friendly. But at this present reading—your Now—he may possibly be in the Bench, or going to be hanged, which in reason ought to abate something of your transport (i.e., at hearing he was well, &c.), or at least considerably to modify it. I am going to the play this evening, to have a laugh with Munden. You have no theatre, I think you told me, in your land of d—d realities. You naturally lick your lips and envy me my felicity. Think but a moment, and you will correct the hateful emotion. Why, it is Sunday morning with you, and 1823. This confusion of tenses, this grand solecism of two presents, is in a degree common to all postage. But if I sent you word to Bath or Devizes, that I was expecting the aforesaid treat this evening, though at the moment you received the intelligence my full feast of fun would be over, yet there would be for a day or two
after, as you would well know, a smack, a relish left upon my mental palate, which would give rational encouragement for you to foster a portion, at least, of the disagreeable passion, which it was in part my intention to produce. But ten months hence, your envy or your sympathy would be as useless as a passion spent upon the dead. Not only does truth, in these long intervals, unessence herself, but (what is harder) one cannot venture a crude fiction, for the fear that it may ripen into a truth upon the voyage. What a wild improbable banter I put upon you, some three years since,—of Will Weatherall having married a servant-maid! I remember gravely consulting you how we were to receive her—for Will’s wife was in no case to be rejected; and your no less serious replication in the matter; how tenderly you advised an abstemious introduction of literary topics before the lady, with a caution not to be too forward in bringing on the carpet matters more within the sphere of her intelligence; your deliberate judgment, or rather wise suspension of sentence, how far jacks, and spits, and mops, could, with propriety, be introduced as subjects; whether the conscious avoiding of all such matters in discourse would not have a worse look than the taking of them casually in our way; in what manner we should carry ourselves to our maid Becky, Mrs. William Weatherall being by; whether we should show more delicacy, and a truer sense of respect for Will’s wife, by treating Becky with our customary chiding before her, or by an unusual deferential civility paid to Becky, as to a person of great worth, but thrown by the caprice of fate into a humble station. There were difficulties, I remember, on both sides, which you did me the
favour to state with the precision of a lawyer, united to the tenderness of a friend. I laughed in my sleeve at your solemn pleadings, when lo! while I was valuing myself upon this flam put upon you in New South Wales, the devil in England, jealous possibly of any lie-children not his own, or working after my copy, has actually instigated our friend (not three days since) to the commission of a matrimony, which I had only conjured up for your diversion. William Weatherall had married Mrs. Cotterel's maid. But to take it in its truest sense, you will see, my dear F., that news from me must become history to you; which I neither profess to write, nor indeed care much for reading. No person, under a diviner, can, with any prospect of veracity, conduct a correspondence at such an arm's length. Two prophets, indeed, might thus interchange intelligence with effect; the epoch of the writer (Habakkuk) falling in with the true present time of the receiver (Daniel); but then we are no prophets.

Then as to sentiment. It fares little better with that. This kind of dish, above all, requires to be served up hot, or sent off in water-plates, that your friend may have it almost as warm as yourself. If it have time to cool, it is the most tasteless of all cold meats. I have often smiled at a conceit of the late Lord C. It seems that travelling somewhere about Geneva, he came to some pretty green spot, or nook, where a willow, or something, hung so fantastically and invitingly over a stream—was it? —or a rock?—no matter—but the stillness and the repose, after a weary journey, 'tis likely, in a languid moment of his Lordship's hot, restless life, so took his fancy that he could imagine no place so proper, in the event of his death, to lay his bones
in. This was all very natural and excusable as a sentiment, and shows his character in a very pleasing light. But when from a passing sentiment it came to be an act; and when, by a positive testamentary disposal, his remains were actually carried all that way from England; who was there, some desperate sentimentalists excepted, that did not ask the question, Why could not his Lordship have found a spot as solitary, a nook as romantic, a tree as green and pendent, with a stream as emblematic to his purpose, in Surrey, in Dorset, or in Devon? Conceive the sentiment boarded up, freighted, entered at the Custom House (startling the tide-waiters with the novelty), hoisted into a ship. Conceive it pawed about and handled between the rude jests of tarpaulin ruffians—a thing of its delicate texture—the salt bilge wetting it till it became as vapid as a damaged lustring. Suppose it in material danger (mariners have some superstition about sentiments) of being tossed over in a fresh gale to some propitiatory shark (spirit of Saint Gothard, save us from a quietus so foreign to the deviser's purpose!), but it has happily evaded a fishy consummation. Trace it then to its lucky landing—at Lyons shall we say?—I have not the map before me—jostled upon four men's shoulders—baiting at this town—stopping to refresh at t'other village—waiting a passport here, a licence there; the sanction of the magistracy in this district, the concurrence of the ecclesiastics in that canton; till at length it arrives at its destination, tired out and jaded, from a brisk sentiment into a feature of silly pride or tawdry senseless affectation. How few sentiments, my dear F., I am afraid we can set down, in the sailor's phrase, as quite seaworthy.
Lastly, as to the agreeable levities, which though contemptible in bulk, are the twinkling corpuscula which should irradiate a right friendly epistle—your puns and small jests are, I apprehend, extremely circumscribed in their sphere of action. They are so far from a capacity of being packed up and sent beyond sea, they will scarce endure to be transported by hand from this room to the next. Their vigour is as the instant of their birth. Their nutriment for their brief existence is the intellectual atmosphere of the by-standers: or this last is the fine slime of Nilus—the melior lutus—whose maternal recipiency is as necessary as the sol pater to their equivocal generation. A pun hath a hearty kind of present ear-kissing smack with it; you can no more transmit it in its pristine flavour than you can send a kiss.—Have you not tried in some instances to palm off a yesterday’s pun upon a gentleman, and has it answered? Not but it was new to his hearing, but it did not seem to come new from you. It did not hitch in. It was like picking up at a village ale-house a two-days’-old newspaper. You have not seen it before, but you resent the stale thing as an affront. This sort of merchandise above all requires a quick return. A pun, and its recognitory laugh, must be co-instantaneous. The one is the brisk lightning, the other the fierce thunder. A moment’s interval, and the link is snapped. A pun is reflected from a friend’s face as from a mirror. Who would consult his sweet vis- nomy, if the polished surface were two or three minutes (not to speak of twelve months, my dear F.) in giving back its copy?

I cannot image to myself whereabout you are. When I try to fix it, Peter Wilkins’s island comes across me. Sometimes you seem to be in the
Hades of Thieves. I see Diogenes prying among you with his perpetual fruitless lantern. What must you be willing by this time to give for the sight of an honest man! You must almost have forgotten how we look. And tell me what your Sydneyites do? are they thieves all day long? Merciful Heaven! what property can stand against such a depredation! The kangaroos—your Aborigines—do they keep their primitive simplicity un-Europe-tainted, with those little short fore puds, looking like a lesson framed by nature to the pickpocket! Marry, for diving into fobs they are rather lamely provided à priori; but if the hue and cry were once up, they would show as fair a pair of hind-shifters as the expertest loco-motor in the colony. We hear the most improbable tales at this distance. Pray is it true that the young Spartans among you are born with six fingers, which spoils their scanning?—It must look very odd; but use reconciles. For their scansion, it is less to be regretted; for if they take it into their heads to be poets, it is odds but they turn out, the greater part of them, vile plagiarists. Is there much difference to see, too, between the son of a thief and the grandson? or where does the taint stop? Do you bleach in three or in four generations? I have many questions to put, but ten Delphic voyages can be made in a shorter time than it will take to satisfy my scruples. Do you grow your own hemp?—What is your staple trade,—exclusive of the national profession, I mean? Your locksmiths, I take it, are some of your great capitalists.

I am insensibly chatting to you as familiarly as when we used to exchange good-morrows out of our old contiguous windows, in pump-famed Hare Court in the Temple. Why did you ever leave that
quiet corner?—Why did I?—with its complement of four poor elms, from whose smoke-dyed barks, the theme of jesting ruralists, I picked my first lady-birds! My heart is as dry as that spring sometimes proves in a thirsty August, when I revert to the space that is between us; a length of passage enough to render obsolete the phrases of our English letters before they can reach you. But while I talk I think you hear me,—thoughts dallying with vain surmise—

Aye me! while thee the seas and sounding shores
Hold far away.

Come back, before I am grown into a very old man, so as you shall hardly know me. Come, before Bridget walks on crutches. Girls whom you left children have become sage matrons while you are tarrying there. The blooming Miss W—r (you remember Sally W—r) called upon us yesterday, an aged crone. Folks whom you knew die off every year. Formerly, I thought that death was wearing out,—I stood ramparted about with so many healthy friends. The departure of J. W., two springs back, corrected my delusion. Since then the old divorcer has been busy. If you do not make haste to return, there will be little left to greet you, of me, or mine.

[Something of home matters I could add; but that, with certain remembrances never to be omitted, I reserve for the grave postscript to this light epistle; which postscript, for weighty reasons, justificatory in any court of feeling, I think better omitted in this first edition.]
LIKE to meet a sweep—understand me—not a grown sweeper—old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive—but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigritude, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek—such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the peep-peep of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aërial ascents not seldom anticipating the sun-rise?

I have a kindly yearning towards these dim specks—poor blots—inocent blacknesses—

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth—these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger than one's-self, enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the fauces Averni—to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid
shades! to shudder with the idea that "now, surely, he must be lost for ever!"—to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered day-light—and then (O fulness of delight!) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel! I seem to remember having been told, that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle, certainly; not much unlike the old stage direction in Macbeth, where the "Apparition of a child crowned, with a tree in his hand, rises."

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny,—it is better to give him two-pence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.

There is a composition, the ground-work of which I have understood to be the sweet wood 'yclept sassafras. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this "wholesome and pleasant beverage," on the south side of Fleet Street, as thou approachest Bridge Street—the only Salopian house—I have never yet ventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients—a cautious premonition to the olfactories con-
stantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegancies, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformations of the organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper—whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften the fuliginous concretions, which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive—but so it is, that no possible taste or odour to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals—cats—when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the only Salopian house; yet be it known to thee, reader—if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou art haply ignorant of the fact—he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savoury mess to humbler customers, at that dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan leaving his bed to resume the premature labours of the day,
jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honours of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen-fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odours. The rake, who wisheth to dissipate his o'ernight vapours in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

This is saloop—the precocious herb-woman's darling—the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas—the delight, and oh! I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldst thou haply encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost but three-halfpennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny)—so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'ercharged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter volume to the welkin—so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingrediented soups—nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the fired chimney, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket!

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts; the jeers and taunts of the populace; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularity of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness.—In the last winter but one, pacing along Cheapside with my accus-
tomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough—yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened—when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth—but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in the March to Finchley, grinning at the pieman—there he stood, as he stands in the picture, immovable, as if the jest was to last for ever—with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth—for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it—that I could have been content, if the honour of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight.

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket presumably holding such jewels; but, methinks, they should take leave to "air" them as frugally as possible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me their teeth, show me bones. Yet must I confess, that from the mouth of a true sweep a display (even to ostentation) of those white and shiny ossifications, strikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when
A sable cloud
Turns forth her silver lining on the night.

It is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct; a badge of better days; a hint of nobility:—and, doubtless, under the obscuring darkness and double night of their forlorn disguise, oftentimes lurketh good blood, and gentle conditions, derived from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The premature apprenticements of these tender victims give but too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine and almost infantile abductions; the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so often discernible in these young grafts (not otherwise to be accounted for) plainly hint at some forced adoptions; many noble Rachels mourning for their children, even in our days, countenance the fact; the tales of fairy spiriting away may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu be but a solitary instance of good fortune out of many irreparable and hopeless defiliations.

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few years since—under a ducal canopy—(that seat of the Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the late duke was especially a connoisseur)—encircled with curtains of delicarest crimson, with starry coronets inwoven—folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius—was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noon-day, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which he
there saw exhibited; so creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle.—But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I had just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions—is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to be lapped by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was now but creeping back as into his proper incunabula, and resting-place.—By no other theory than by this sentiment of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed, upon any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend Jem White was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield,
upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew. Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who, relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper, (all is not soot which looks so,) was quoited out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity, but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlours three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savour. James White, as head waiter, had charge of the first table; and myself, with our trusty companion Bigod, ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clambering and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table, for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humours of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honour the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing,
half-cursing "the gentleman," and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable younkers lick in the unctuous meat, with his more unctuous sayings—how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for 'the seniors—how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it "must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman's eating"—how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony—how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good, he should lose their custom; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts—"the King," —"the Cloth,"—which whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering; and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, "May the Brush supersede the Laurel!" All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a "Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so," which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savouriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.
Golden lads and lasses must,  
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust—

James White is extinct, and with him these sup-  
pers have long ceased. He carried away with him  
half the fun of the world when he died—of my  
world at least. His old clients look for him among  
the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered  
feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smith-  
field departed for ever.
A COMPLAINT OF THE DECAY OF BEGGARS, IN THE METROPOLIS.

The all-sweeping besom of societarian reformation—your only modern Alcides’ club to rid the time of its abuses—is uplift with many-handed sway to extirpate the last fluttering tatters of the bugbear Mendicity from the metropolis. Scrips, wallets, bags—staves, dogs, and crutches—the whole mendicant fraternity, with all their baggage, are fast posting out of the purlieus of this eleventh persecution. From the crowded crossing, from the corners of streets and turnings of alleys, the parting Genius of Beggary is “with sighing sent.”

I do not approve of this wholesale going to work, this impertinent crusado, or bellum ad exterminationem, proclaimed against a species. Much good might be sucked from these Beggars.

They were the oldest and the honourablest form of pauperism. Their appeals were to our common nature; less revolting to an ingenuous mind than to be a supplicant to the particular humours or caprice of any fellow-creature, or set of fellow-creatures, parochial or societarian. Theirs were the only
rates uninvidious in the levy, ungrudged in the assessment.

There was a dignity springing from the very depth of their desolation; as to be naked is to be so much nearer to the being a man, than to go in livery.

The greatest spirits have felt this in their reverses; and when Dionysius from king turned schoolmaster, do we feel anything towards him but contempt? Could Vandyke have made a picture of him, swaying a ferula for a sceptre, which would have affected our minds with the same heroic pity, the same compassionate admiration, with which we regard his Belisarius begging for an obolum? Would the moral have been more graceful, more pathetic?

The Blind Beggar in the legend—the father of pretty Bessy—whose story doggrel rhymes and ale-house signs cannot so degrade or attenuate but that some sparks of a lustrous spirit will shine through the disguisements—this noble Earl of Cornwall (as indeed he was) and memorable sport of fortune, fleeing from the unjust sentence of his liege lord, stript of all, and seated on the flowering green of Bethnal, with his more fresh and springing daughter by his side, illumining his rags and his beggary—would the child and parent have cut a better figure doing the honours of a counter, or expiating their fallen condition upon the three-foot eminence of some sempstering shop-board?

In tale or history your Beggar is ever the just antipode to the King. The poets and romancical writers (as dear Margaret Newcastle would call them), when they would most sharply and feelingly paint a reverse of fortune, never stop till they have brought down their hero in good earnest to rags
and the wallet. The depth of the descent illustrates the height he falls from. There is no medium which can be presented to the imagination without offence. There is no breaking the fall. Lear, thrown from his palace, must divest him of his garments, till he answer "mere nature;" and Cresseid, fallen from a prince's love, must extend her pale arms, pale with other whiteness than of beauty, supplicating Lazar arms with bell and clap-dish.

The Lucian wits knew this very well; and, with a converse policy, when they would express scorn of greatness without the pity, they show us an Alexander in the shades cobbling shoes, or a Semiramis getting up foul linen.

How would it sound in song, that a great monarch had declined his affections upon the daughter of a baker! yet do we feel the imagination at all violated when we read the "true ballad," where King Cophetua woos the beggar maid?

Pauperism, pauper, poor man, are expressions of pity, but pity alloyed with contempt. No one properly contemns a Beggar. Poverty is a comparative thing, and each degree of it is mocked by its "neighbour grice." Its poor rents and comings-in are soon summed up and told. Its pretences to poverty are almost ludicrous. Its pitiful attempts to save excite a smile. Every scornful companion can weigh his trifle-bigger purse against it. Poor man reproaches poor man in the street with impolitic mention of his condition, his own being a shade better, while the rich pass by and jeer at both. No rascally comparative insults a Beggar, or thinks of weighing purses with him. He is not in the scale of comparison. He is not under the measure of poverty. He confessedly hath none,
any more than a dog or a sheep. No one twitteth him with ostentation above his means. No one accuses him of pride, or upbraideth him with mock humility. None jostle with him for the wall, or pick quarrels for precedency. No wealthy neighbour seeketh to eject him from his tenement. No man sues him. No man goes to law with him. If I were not the independent gentleman that I am, rather than I would be a retainer to the great, a led captain, or a poor relation, I would choose, out of the delicacy and true greatness of my mind, to be a Beggar.

Rags, which are the reproach of poverty, are the Beggar's robes, and graceful insignia of his profession, his tenure, his full dress, the suit in which he is expected to show himself in public. He is never out of the fashion, or limpeth awkwardly behind it. He is not required to put on court mourning. He weareth all colours, fearing none. His costume hath undergone less change than the Quaker's. He is the only man in the universe who is not obliged to study appearances. The ups and downs of the world concern him no longer. He alone continueth in one stay. The price of stock or land affecteth him not. The fluctuations of agricultural or commercial prosperity touch him not, or at worst but change his customers. He is not expected to become bail or surety for any one. No man troubleth him with questioning his religion or politics. He is the only free man in the universe.

The Mendicants of this great city were so many of her sights, her lions. I can no more spare them than I could the Cries of London. No corner of a street is complete without them. They are as indispensable as the Ballad Singer; and in their picturesque attire as ornamental as the signs of old
London. They were the standing morals, emblems, mementos, dial-mottos, the spital sermons, the books for children, the salutary checks and pauses to the high and rushing tide of greasy citizenry—

________ Look
Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there.

Above all, those old blind Tobits that used to line the wall of Lincoln’s-inn Garden, before modern fastidiousness had expelled them, casting up their ruined orbs to catch a ray of pity, and (if possible) of light, with their faithful Dog Guide at their feet,—whither are they fled? or into what corners, blind as themselves, have they been driven, out of the wholesome air and sun-warmth? immersed between four walls, in what withering poor-house do they endure the penalty of double darkness, where the chink of the dropt halfpenny no more consoles their forlorn bereavement, far from the sound of the cheerful and hope-stirring tread of the passenger? Where hang their useless staves? and who will farm their dogs?—Have the overseers of St. L—caused them to be shot? or were they tied up in sacks and dropt into the Thames, at the suggestion of B— the mild rector of——?

Well fare the soul of unfastidious Vincent Bourne,—most classical, and, at the same time, most English of the Latinists!—who has treated of this human and quadrupedral alliance, this dog and man friendship in the sweetest of his poems, the Epitaphium in Canem, or, Dog’s Epitaph. Reader, peruse it; and say, if customary sights which could call up such gentle poetry as this, were of a nature to do more harm or good to the moral sense of the passengers through the daily thoroughfares of a vast and busy metropolis.
THE DECAY OF BEGGARS.

Pauperis hic Iri requiesco Lyciscus, herilis,
Dum vixi, tutela vigil columnenque senectæ,
Dux cæco fidus: nec, me ducente, solebat,
Prætenso hinc atque hinc baculo, per iniqua locorum
IncERTAM explorare viam; sed fila secutus,
Quæ dubios regerent passûs, vestigia tuta
Fixit inoffenso gressu; gelidumque sedile
In nudo nactus saxo, quæ prætereuntium
Unda frequens confluxit, iber miserisque tenebras
Lamentis, noctemque oculis ploravit obortam.
Ploravit nec frustra; obulum dedit alter et alter,
Quæs corda et mentem indiderat natura benignam.
Ad latus interea jacui sopitus herile,
Vel mediis vigil in somnis; ad herilia jussa
Auresque atque animum arrectus, seu frustula amicè
Porrexit sociasque dapes, seu longa diei
Tsedia perpessus, retitum sub nocte parabat.

Hi mores, haec vita fuit, dum fata sinebant,
Dum neque languebam morbis, nec inerte senectâ
Quae tandem obrepsit, veterique satellite caecum
Orbavit dominum; prisci sed gratia facti
Ne tota intereart, longos deleta per annos,
Exiguum hunc Irus tumulum de cespite fecit,
Etsi inopis, non ingratae, munuscula dextrae;
Carmine signavitque brevi, dominumque canemque,
Quod memoret, fidumque Canem dominumque Benignum.

Poor Irus’ faithful wolf-dog here I lie,
That wont to tend my old blind master’s steps,
His guide and guard; nor, while my service lasted,
Had he occasion for that staff, with which
He now goes picking out his path in fear
Over the highways and crossings; but would plant,
Safe in the conduct of my friendly string,
A firm foot forward still, till he had reach’d
His poor seat on some stone, nigh where the tide
Of passers-by in thickest confluence flow’d:
To whom with loud and passionate laments
From morn to eve his dark estate he wail’d.
Nor wail’d to all in vain: some here and there,
The well-disposed and good, their pennies gave.
I meantime at his feet obsequious slept;
Not all-asleep in sleep, but heart and ear
Prick’d up at his least motion; to receive
At his kind hand my customary crumbs,
And common portion in his feast of scraps;
Or when night warn'd us homeward, tired and spent
With our long day and tedious beggary.

These were my manners, this my way of life
Till age and slow disease me overtook,
And sever'd from my sightless master's side.
But lest the grace of so good deeds should die,
Through tract of years in mute oblivion lost,
This slender tomb of turf hath Irus reared,
Cheap monument of no ungrudging hand,
And with short verse inscribed it, to attest,
In long and lasting union to attest,
The virtues of the Beggar and his Dog.

These dim eyes have in vain explored for some
months past a well-known figure, or part of the
figure, of a man, who used to glide his comely
upper half over the pavements of London, wheel-
ing along with most ingenious celerity upon a
machine of wood; a spectacle to natives, to
foreigners, and to children. He was of a robust
make, with a florid sailor-like complexion, and his
head was bare to the storm and sunshine. He was
a natural curiosity, a speculation to the scientific, a
prodigy to the simple. The infant would stare at
the mighty man brought down to his own level.
The common cripple would despise his own pusil-
lanimity, viewing the hale stoutness, and hearty
heart, of this half-limbed giant. Few but must
have noticed him; for the accident which brought
him low took place during the riots of 1780, and
he has been a groundling so long. He seemed
earth-born, an Antæus, and to suck in fresh vigour
from the soil which he neighboured. He was a
grand fragment; as good as an Elgin marble. The
nature, which should have recruited his rest legs
and thighs, was not lost, but only retired into his
upper parts, and he was half a Hercules. I heard
a tremendous voice thundering and growling, as
before an earthquake, and casting down my eyes,
it was this mandrake reviling a steed that had started at his portentous appearance. He seemed to want but his just stature to have rent the offending quadruped in shivers. He was as the man-part of a centaur, from which the horse-half had been cloven in some dire Lapithan controversy. He moved on, as if he could have made shift with yet half of the body portion which was left him. The os sublime was not wanting; and he threw out yet a jolly countenance upon the heavens. Forty-and-two years had he driven this out-of-door trade, and now that his hair is grizzled in the service, but his good spirits no way impaired, because he is not content to exchange his free air and exercise for the restraints of a poor-house, he is expiating his contumacy in one of those houses (ironically christened) of Correction.

Was a daily specimen like this to be deemed a nuisance, which called for legal interference to remove? or not rather a salutary and touching object to the passers-by in a great city? Among her shows, her museums, and supplies for ever-gaping curiosity (and what else but an accumulation of sights—endless sights—is a great city; or for what else is it desirable?) was there not room for one Lusus (not Nature, indeed, but) Accidentium? What if in forty-and-two years’ going about, the man had scraped together enough to give a portion to his child (as the rumour ran) of a few hundreds—whom had he injured?—whom had he imposed upon? The contributors had enjoyed their sight for their pennies. What if after being exposed all day to the heats, the rains, and the frosts of heaven—shuffling his ungainly trunk along in an elaborate and painful motion—he was enabled to retire at night to enjoy himself at a club of his fel-
low cripples over a dish of hot meat and vegetables, as the charge was gravely brought against him by a clergyman deposing before a House of Commons' Committee—was this, or was his truly paternal consideration, which (if a fact) deserved a statue rather than a whipping-post, and is inconsistent, at least, with the exaggeration of nocturnal orgies which he has been slandered with—a reason that he should be deprived of his chosen, harmless, nay, edifying way of life, and be committed in hoary age for a sturdy vagabond?

There was a Yorick once, whom it would not have shamed to have sate down at the cripples' feast, and to have thrown in his benediction, ay, and his mite too, for a companionable symbol. "Age, thou hast lost thy breed."

Half of these stories about the prodigious fortunes made by begging are (I verily believe) misers' calumnies. One was much talked of in the public papers some time since, and the usual charitable inferences deduced. A clerk in the Bank was surprised with the announcement of a five-hundred pound legacy left him by a person whose name he was a stranger to. It seems that in his daily morning walks from Peckham (or some village thereabouts) where he lived, to his office, it had been his practice for the last twenty years to drop his halfpenny duly into the hat of some blind Bartimeus, that sate begging alms by the wayside in the Borough. The good old beggar recognized his daily benefactor by the voice only; and, when he died, left all the amassings of his alms (that had been half a century perhaps in the accumulating) to his old Bank friend. Was this a story to purse up people's hearts, and pennies, against giving an alms to the blind?—or
not rather a beautiful moral of well-directed charity on the one part, and noble gratitude upon the other?
I sometimes wish I had been that Bank clerk.
I seem to remember a poor old grateful kind of creature, blinking, and looking up with his no eyes in the sun—
Is it possible I could have steeled my purse against him?
Perhaps I had no small change.
Reader, do not be frightened at the hard words imposition, imposture—give, and ask no questions. Cast thy bread upon the waters. Some have unawares (like this Bank clerk) entertained angels.
Shut not thy purse-strings always against painted distress. Act a charity sometimes. When a poor creature (outwardly and visibly such) comes before thee, do not stay to inquire whether the "seven small children," in whose name he implores thy assistance, have a veritable existence. Rake not into the bowels of unwelcome truth to save a halfpenny. It is good to believe him. If he be not all that he pretendeth, give, and under a personate father of a family, think (if thou pleasest) that thou hast relieved an indigent bachelor. When they come with their counterfeit looks, and mumping tones, think them players. You pay your money to see a comedian feign these things, which, concerning these poor people, thou canst not certainly tell whether they are feigned or not.
["Pray God, your honour, relieve me," said a poor beadswoman to my friend L—one day: "I have seen better days." "So have I, my good woman," retorted he, looking up at the welkin, which was just then threatening a storm—and the
jest (he will have it) was as good to the beggar as a tester. It was, at all events, kinder than consigning her to the stocks, or the parish beadle.—

But L. has a way of viewing things in rather a paradoxical light on some occasions.]}
A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG.

MANKIND, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius in the second chapter of his Mundane Mutations, where he designates a kind of golden age by the term Cho-fang, literally the Cooks' Holiday. The manuscript goes on to say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swine-herd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as younkers of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian make-shift of a building, you may think
it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East, from the remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in the utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labour of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odour assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from?—not from the burnt cottage—he had smelt that smell before—indeed, this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young firebrand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted—crackling! Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and surrendering himself up to the new-born pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched
skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue’s shoulders, as thick as hail-stones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

“You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog’s tricks, and be hanged to you! but you must be eating fire, and I know not what—what have you got there, I say?”

“Oh father, the pig, the pig! do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats.”

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out, “Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste—O Lord!”—with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not
put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavour, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretence, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious), both father and son fairly set down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbours would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assize town. Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it; and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest
charge which judge had ever given,—to the sur-
prise of the whole court, townsmen, strangers, re-
porters, and all present—without leaving the box,
or any manner of consultation whatever, they
brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.
The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at
the manifest iniquity of the decision: and when
the court was dismissed, went privily and bought
up all the pigs that could be had for love or money.
In a few days his lordship's town-house was ob-
served to be on fire. The thing took wing, and
now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every
direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear
all over the district. The insurance-offices one and
all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter
every day, until it was feared that the very science
of architecture would in no long time be lost to the
world. Thus this custom of firing houses con-
tinued, till in process of time, says my manuscript,
a sage arose, like our Locke, who made a dis-
covery that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any
other animal, might be cooked (burnt, as they
called it) without the necessity of consuming a
whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude
form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string or spit
came in a century or two later, I forget in whose
dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the
manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the
most obvious, arts make their way among man-
kind——

Without placing too implicit faith in the account
above given, it must be agreed that if a worthy
pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting
houses on fire (especially in these days) could be
assigned in favour of any culinary object, that pre-
text and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.
Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*, I will maintain it to be the most delicate—*princeps obsoniorum*.

I speak not of your grown porkers—things between pig and pork—those hobbledehoys—but a young and tender suckling—under a moon old—guiltless as yet of the sty—with no original speck of the *amor immunditiae*, the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest—his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble and a grumble—the mild forerunner or *præludium* of a grunt.

*He must be roasted.* I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled—but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!

There is no flavour comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling*, as it is well called—the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance—with the adhesive oleaginous—O call it not fat! but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it—the tender blossoming of fat—fat cropped in the bud—taken in the shoot—in the first innocence—the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food—the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna, or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result or common substance.

Behold him while he is "doing"—it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirls the string! Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age! he hath wept out his pretty eyes—radiant jellies—shooting stars.
A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG. 371

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth!—wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indolently which too often accompany maturer swinehood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal—wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation—from these sins he is happily snatched away—

Ere sin could blight or sorrow fade,
Death came with timely care—

his memory is odoriferous—no clown curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon—no coalheaver bolteth him in reeking sausages—he hath a fair sepulchre in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure—and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of sapors. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent—a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause—too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and excoriateth the lips that approach her—like lovers' kisses, she biteth—she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish—but she stoppeth at the palate—she meddleth not with the appetite—and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton-chop.

Pig—let me speak his praise—is no less provocative of the appetite than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and the weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably interwoven, and not to be unravelled without hazard, he is—good
throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbours' fare.

I am one of those who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "endear Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"), capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them, as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything." I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good flavours to extra-domiciliate, or send out of the house slightingly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what) a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate.—It argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing, into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London Bridge) a grey-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt, at this time of day, that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombrity of charity, schoolboy like, I made him a present of—the whole
cake! I walked on a little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but, before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger that I had never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I—I myself, and not another—would eat her nice cake—and what should I say to her the next time I saw her—how naughty I was to part with her pretty present!—and the odour of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last—and I blamed my impertinent spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness; and above all I wished never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old grey impostor.

Our ancestors were nice in their method of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipt to death with something of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards intenegering and dulcifying a substance, naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto.—

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the
young students, when I was at St. Omer's, and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavour of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (per flagellationem extremam) superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedly, a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots, stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make them stronger than they are—but consider, he is a weakling—a flower.
A BACHELOR'S COMPLAINT OF THE BEHAVIOUR OF MARRIED PEOPLE.

As a single man, I have spent a good deal of my time in noting down the infirmities of Married People, to console myself for those superior pleasures, which they tell me I have lost by remaining as I am.

I cannot say that the quarrels of men and their wives ever made any great impression upon me, or had much tendency to strengthen me in those anti-social resolutions which I took up long ago upon more substantial considerations. What oftenest offends me at the houses of married persons where I visit, is an error of quite a different description;—it is that they are too loving.

Not too loving neither: that does not explain my meaning. Besides, why should that offend me? The very act of separating themselves from the rest of the world, to have the fuller enjoyment of each other's society, implies that they prefer one another to all the world.

But what I complain of is, that they carry this preference so undisguisedly, they perk it up in the faces of us single people so shamelessly, you cannot be in their company a moment without being
made to feel by some indirect hint or open avowal, that you are not the object of this preference. Now there are some things which give no offence, while implied or taken for granted merely; but expressed, there is much offence in them. If a man were to accost the first homely-featured or plain-dressed young woman of his acquaintance, and tell her bluntly, that she was not handsome or rich enough for him, and he could not marry her, he would deserve to be kicked for his ill-manners; yet no less is implied in the fact, that having access and opportunity of putting the question to her, he has never yet thought fit to do it. The young woman understands this as clearly as if it were put into words; but no reasonable young woman would think of making this the ground of a quarrel. Just as little right have a married couple to tell me by speeches, and looks that are scarce less plain than speeches, that I am not the happy man,—the lady's choice. It is enough that I know I am not: I do not want this perpetual reminding.

The display of superior knowledge or riches may be made sufficiently mortifying, but these admit of a palliative. The knowledge which is brought out to insult me, may accidentally improve me; and in the rich man's houses and pictures,—his parks and gardens, I have a temporary usufruct at least. But the display of married happiness has none of these palliatives: it is throughout pure, unrecompensed, unqualified insult.

Marriage by its best title is a monopoly, and not of the least invidious sort. It is the cunning of most possessors of any exclusive privilege to keep their advantage as much out of sight as possible, that their less favoured neighbours seeing little of the benefit, may the less be disposed to question
the right. But these married monopolists thrust the most obnoxious part of their patent into our faces.

Nothing is to me more distasteful than that entire complacency and satisfaction which beam in the countenances of a new-married couple,—in that of the lady particularly: it tells you that her lot is disposed of in this world: that you can have no hopes of her. It is true, I have none: nor wishes either, perhaps: but this is one of those truths which ought, as I said before, to be taken for granted, not expressed.

The excessive airs which those people give themselves, founded on the ignorance of us unmarried people, would be more offensive if they were less irrational. We will allow them to understand the mysteries belonging to their own craft better than we, who have not had the happiness to be made free of the company: but their arrogance is not content within these limits. If a single person presume to offer his opinion in their presence, though upon the most indifferent subject, he is immediately silenced as an incompetent person. Nay, a young married lady of my acquaintance, who, the best of the jest was, had not changed her condition above a fortnight before, in a question on which I had the misfortune to differ from her, respecting the properest mode of breeding oysters for the London market, had the assurance to ask with a sneer, how such an old Bachelor as I could pretend to know anything about such matters!

But what I have spoken of hitherto is nothing to the airs which these creatures give themselves when they come, as they generally do, to have children. When I consider how little of a rarity children are,—that every street and blind alley
swarms with them,—that the poorest people commonly have them in most abundance,—that there are few marriages that are not blest with at least one of these bargains,—how often they turn out ill, and defeat the fond hopes of their parents, taking to vicious courses, which end in poverty, disgrace, the gallows, &c.—I cannot for my life tell what cause for pride there can possibly be in having them. If they were young phœnixes, indeed, that were born but one in a year, there might be a pretext. But when they are so common——

I do not advert to the insolent merit which they assume with their husbands on these occasions. Let them look to that. But why we, who are not their natural-born subjects, should be expected to bring our spices, myrrh, and incense,—our tribute and homage of admiration,—I do not see.

"Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, even so are the young children;" so says the excellent office in our Prayer-book appointed for the churching of women. "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them." So say I; but then don't let him discharge his quiver upon us that are weaponless;—let them be arrows, but not to gall and stick us. I have generally observed that these arrows are double-headed: they have two forks, to be sure to hit with one or the other. As for instance, when you come into a house which is full of children, if you happen to take no notice of them (you are thinking of something else, perhaps, and turn a deaf ear to their innocent caresses), you are set down as untractable, morose, a hater of children. On the other hand, if you find them more than usually engaging,—if you are taken with their pretty manners, and set about in earnest to romp and play with them,—some pretext or other is sure
to be found for sending them out of the room; they are too noisy or boisterous, or Mr. — does not like children. With one or other of these forks the arrow is sure to hit you.

I could forgive their jealousy, and dispense with toying with their brats, if it gives them any pain; but I think it unreasonable to be called upon to love them, where I see no occasion,—to love a whole family, perhaps eight, nine, or ten, indiscriminately,—to love all the pretty dears,—because children are so engaging!

I know there is a proverb, "Love me, love my dog:" that is not always so very practicable, particularly if the dog be set upon you to tease you or snap at you in sport. But a dog, or a lesser thing—any inanimate substance, as a keepsake, a watch or a ring, a tree, or the place where we last parted when my friend went away upon a long absence, I can make shift to love, because I love him, and anything that reminds me of him; provided it be in its nature indifferent, and apt to receive whatever hue fancy can give it. But children have a real character, and an essential being of themselves: they are amiable or unamiable per se; I must love or hate them as I see cause for either in their qualities. A child's nature is too serious a thing to admit of its being regarded as a mere appendage to another being, and to be loved or hated accordingly; they stand with me upon their own stock, as much as men and women do. Oh! but you will say, sure it is an attractive age,—there is something in the tender years of infancy that of itself charms us? That is the very reason why I am more nice about them. I know that a sweet child is the sweetest thing in nature, not even excepting the delicate creatures which bear them;
but the prettier the kind of thing is, the more desirable it is that it should be pretty of its kind. One daisy differs not much from another in glory; but a violet should look and smell the daintiest. —I was always rather squeamish in my women and children.

But this is not the worst: one must be admitted into their familiarity at least, before they can complain of inattention. It implies visits, and some kind of intercourse. But if the husband be a man with whom you have lived on a friendly footing before marriage—if you did not come in on the wife's side—if you did not sneak into the house in her train, but were an old friend in fast habits of intimacy before their courtship was so much as thought on,—look about you—your tenure is precarious—before a twelvemonth shall roll over your head, you shall find your old friend gradually grow cool and altered towards you, and at last seek opportunities of breaking with you. I have scarce a married friend of my acquaintance, upon whose firm faith I can rely, whose friendship did not commence after the period of his marriage. With some limitations, they can endure that; but that the good man should have dared to enter into a solemn league of friendship in which they were not consulted, though it happened before they knew him, —before they that are now man and wife ever met, —this is intolerable to them. Every long friendship, every old authentic intimacy, must be brought into their office to be new stamped with their currency, as a sovereign prince calls in the good old money that was coined in some reign before he was born or thought of, to be new marked and minted with the stamp of his authority, before he will let it pass current in the world. You may
guess what luck generally befalls such a rusty piece of metal as I am in these new mintings.

Innumerable are the ways which they take to insult and worm you out of their husbands' confidence. Laughing at all you say with a kind of wonder, as if you were a queer kind of fellow that said good things, but an oddity, is one of the ways;—they have a particular kind of stare for the purpose;—till at last the husband, who used to defer to your judgment, and would pass over some excrescences of understanding and manner for the sake of a general vein of observation (not quite vulgar) which he perceived in you, begins to suspect whether you are not altogether a humorist,—a fellow well enough to have consorted with in his bachelor days, but not quite so proper to be introduced to ladies. This may be called the staring way; and is that which has oftenest been put in practice against me.

Then there is the exaggerating way, or the way of irony; that is, where they find you an object of especial regard with their husband, who is not so easily to be shaken from the lasting attachment founded on esteem which he has conceived towards you, by never qualified exaggerations to cry up all that you say or do, till the good man, who understands well enough that it is all done in compliment to him, grows weary of the debt of gratitude which is due to so much candour, and by relaxing a little on his part, and taking down a peg or two in his enthusiasm, sinks at length to the kindly level of moderate esteem—that "decent affection and complacent kindness" towards you, where she herself can join in sympathy with him without much stretch and violence to her sincerity.

Another way (for the ways they have to accom-
plish so desirable a purpose are infinite) is, with a kind of innocent simplicity, continually to mistake what it was which first made their husband fond of you. If an esteem for something excellent in your moral character was that which riveted the chain which she is to break, upon any imaginary discovery of a want of poignancy in your conversation, she will cry, "I thought, my dear, you described your friend, Mr.———, as a great wit?" If, on the other hand, it was for some supposed charm in your conversation that he first grew to like you, and was content for this to overlook some trifling irregularities in your moral deportment, upon the first notice of any of these she as readily exclaims, "This, my dear, is your good Mr.———!" One good lady whom I took the liberty of expostulating with for not showing me quite so much respect as I thought due to her husband's old friend, had the candour to confess to me that she had often heard Mr.——— speak of me before marriage, and that she had conceived a great desire to be acquainted with me, but that the sight of me had very much disappointed her expectations; for, from her husband's representations of me, she had formed a notion that she was to see a fine, tall, officer-like looking man (I use her very words), the very reverse of which proved to be the truth. This was candid; and I had the civility not to ask her in return, how she came to pitch upon a standard of personal accomplishments for her husband's friends which differed so much from his own; for my friend's dimensions as near as possible approximate to mine; he standing five feet five in his shoes, in which I have the advantage of him by about half an inch; and he no more than myself exhibiting
any indications of a martial character in his air or countenance.

These are some of the mortifications which I have encountered in the absurd attempt to visit at their houses. To enumerate them all would be a vain endeavour; I shall therefore just glance at the very common impropriety of which married ladies are guilty,—of treating us as if we were their husbands, and vice versa. I mean, when they use us with familiarity, and their husbands with ceremony. Testacea, for instance, kept me the other night two or three hours beyond my usual time of supping, while she was fretting because Mr. did not come home, till the oysters were all spoiled, rather than she would be guilty of the impoliteness of touching one in his absence. This was reversing the point of good manners: for ceremony is an invention to take off the uneasy feeling which we derive from knowing ourselves to be less the object of love and esteem with a fellow-creature than some other person is. It endeavours to make up, by superior attentions in little points, for that invidious preference which it is forced to deny in the greater. Had Testacea kept the oysters back for me, and withstood her husband's importunities to go to supper, she would have acted according to the strict rules of propriety. I know no ceremony that ladies are bound to observe to their husbands, beyond the point of a modest behaviour and decorum: therefore I must protest against the vicarious gluttony of Cerasia, who at her own table sent away a dish of Morellas, which I was applying to with great good-will, to her husband at the other end of the table, and recommended a plate of less extraordinary gooseberries to my unwedded palate.
in their stead. Neither can I excuse the wanton affront of—

But I am weary of stringing up all my married acquaintance by Roman denominations. Let them amend and change their manners, or I promise to record the full length English of their names, to the terror of all such desperate offenders in future.
ON SOME OF THE OLD ACTORS.

The casual sight of an old Play Bill, which I picked up the other day—I know not by what chance it was preserved so long—tempts me to call to mind a few of the Players, who make the principal figure in it. It presents the cast of parts in the Twelfth-Night, at the old Drury-lane Theatre two-and-thirty years ago. There is something very touching in these old remembrances. They make us think how we once used to read a Play Bill—not, as now peradventure, singling out a favourite performer, and casting a negligent eye over the rest; but spelling out every name, down to the very mutes and servants of the scene; when it was a matter of no small moment to us whether Whitfield, or Packer, took the part of Fabian; when Benson, and Burton, and Phillimore—names of small account—had an importance, beyond what we can be content to attribute now to the time’s best actors.—"Orsino, by Mr. Barrymore."—What a full Shakespearian sound it carries! how fresh to memory arise the image and the manner of the gentle actor! Those who have only seen Mrs. Jordan within the last ten or fifteen years, can have no adequate notion of her performance of such parts as Ophelia; Helena, in All’s Well that Ends
Well; and Viola, in this play. Her voice had latterly acquired a coarseness, which suited well enough with her Nells and Hoydens, but in those days it sank, with her steady, melting eye, into the heart. Her joyous parts—in which her memory now chiefly lives—in her youth were outdone by her plaintive ones. There is no giving an account how she delivered the disguised story of her love for Orsino. It was no set speech, that she had foreseen, so as to weave it into an harmonious period, line necessarily following line, to make up the music—yet I have heard it so spoken, or rather read, not without its grace and beauty—but, when she had declared her sister's history to be a "blank," and that she "never told her love," there was a pause, as if the story had ended—and then the image of the "worm in the bud" came up as a new suggestion—and the heightened image of "Patience" still followed after that, as by some growing (and not mechanical) process, thought springing up after thought, I would almost say, as they were watered by her tears. So in those fine lines—

Right loyal cantons of contemned love—
Halloo your name to the reverberate hills—

there was no preparation made in the foregoing image for that which was to follow. She used no rhetoric in her passion; or it was nature's own rhetoric, most legitimate then, when it seemed altogether without rule or law.

Mrs. Powel (now Mrs. Renard), then in the pride of her beauty, made an admirable Olivia. She was particularly excellent in her unbending scenes in conversation with the Clown. I have seen some Olivias—and those very sensible actresses too—who in these interlocutions have seemed
to set their wits at the jester, and to vie conceits with him in downright emulation. But she used him for her sport, like what he was, to trifle a leisure sentence or two with, and then to be dismissed, and she to be the Great Lady still. She touched the imperious fantastic humour of the character with nicety. Her fine spacious person filled the scene.

The part of Malvolio has, in my judgment, been so often misunderstood, and the general merits of the actor, who then played it, so unduly appreciated, that I shall hope for pardon, if I am a little prolix upon these points.

Of all the actors who flourished in my time—a melancholy phrase if taken aright, reader—Bensley had most of the swell of soul, was greatest in the delivery of heroic conceptions, the emotions consequent upon the presentment of a great idea to the fancy. He had the true poetical enthusiasm—the rarest faculty among players. None that I remember possessed even a portion of that fine madness which he threw out in Hotspur's famous rant about glory, or the transports of the Venetian incendiary at the vision of the fired city. His voice had the dissonance, and at times the inspiring effect, of the trumpet. His gait was uncouth and stiff, but no way embarrassed by affectation; and the thorough-bred gentleman was uppermost in every movement. He seized the moment of passion with greatest truth; like a faithful clock, never striking before the time; never anticipating or leading you to anticipate. He was totally destitute of trick and artifice. He seemed come upon the stage to do the poet's message simply, and he did it with as genuine fidelity as the nuncios in Homer deliver the errands of the gods. He let the passion or the
sentiment do its own work without prop or bolstering. He would have scorned to mountebank it; and betrayed none of that cleverness which is the bane of serious acting. For this reason, his Iago was the only endurable one which I remember to have seen. No spectator, from his action, could divine more of his artifice than Othello was supposed to do. His confessions in soliloquy alone put you in possession of the mystery. There were no by-intimations to make the audience fancy their own discernment so much greater than that of the Moor—who commonly stands like a great helpless mark, set up for mine Ancient, and a quantity of barren spectators, to shoot their bolts at. The Iago of Bensley did not go to work so grossly. There was a triumphant tone about the character, natural to a general consciousness of power; but none of that petty vanity which chuckles and cannot contain itself upon any little successful stroke of its knavery—as is common with your small villains, and green probationers in mischief. It did not clap or crow before its time. It was not a man setting his wits at a child, and winking all the while at other children, who are mightily pleased at being let into the secret; but a consummate villain entrapping a noble nature into toils against which no discernment was available, where the manner was as fathomless as the purpose seemed dark, and without motive. The part of Malvolio, in the Twelfth Night, was performed by Bensley with a richness and a dignity, of which (to judge from some recent castings of that character) the very tradition must be worn out from the stage. No manager in those days would have dreamed of giving it to Mr. Baddely, or Mr. Parsons; when Bensley was occasionally absent from the theatre,
John Kemble thought it no derogation to succeed to the part. Malvolio is not essentially ludicrous. He becomes comic but by accident. He is cold, austere, repelling; but dignified, consistent, and, for what appears, rather of an over-stretched morality. Maria describes him as a sort of Puritan; and he might have worn his gold chain with honour in one of our old roundhead families, in the service of a Lambert, or a Lady Fairfax. But his morality and his manners are misplaced in Illyria. He is opposed to the proper levities of the piece, and falls in the unequal contest. Still his pride, or his gravity (call it which you will), is inherent, and native to the man, not mock or affected, which latter only are the fit objects to excite laughter. His quality is at the best unlovely, but neither buffoon nor contemptible. His bearing is lofty, a little above his station, but probably not much above his deserts. We see no reason why he should not have been brave, honourable, accomplished. His careless committal of the ring to the ground (which he was commissioned to restore to Cesario), bespeaks a generosity of birth and feeling. His dialect on all occasions is that of a gentleman and a man of education. We must not confound him with the eternal old, low steward of comedy. He is master of the household to a great princess; a dignity probably conferred upon him for other respects than age or length of service. Olivia, at the first indication of his supposed madness, declares that she "would not have him miscarry for half of her dowry." Does this look as if the character was meant to appear little or insignificant? Once, indeed, she accuses him to his face—of what?—of being "sick of self-love,"—but with a gentleness and considerateness, which could not have been, if she had not thought that
this particular infirmity shaded some virtues. His rebuke to the knight and his sottish revellers, is sensible and spirited; and when we take into consideration the unprotected condition of his mistress, and the strict regard with which her state of real or dissembled mourning would draw the eyes of the world upon her house-affairs, Malvolio might feel the honour of the family in some sort in his keeping; as it appears not that Olivia had any more brothers, or kinsmen, to look to it—for Sir Toby had dropped all such nice respects at the buttery-hatch. That Malvolio was meant to be represented as possessing estimable qualities, the expression of the Duke, in his anxiety to have him reconciled, almost infers: "Pursue him, and entreat him to a peace." Even in his abused state of chains and darkness, a sort of greatness seems never to desert him. He argues highly and well with the supposed Sir Topas, and philosophizes gallantly upon his straw. There must have been some shadow of worth about the man; he must have been something more than a mere vapour—a thing of straw, or Jack in office—before Fabian and Maria could have ventured sending him upon a courtling-errand to Olivia. There was some consonancy (as he would say) in the undertaking, or the jest would have been too bold even for that house of misrule.

Bensley, accordingly, threw over the part an air of Spanish loftiness. He looked, spake, and moved like an old Castilian. He was starch, spruce,

1 Clown. What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?
Mal. That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.
Clown. What thinkest thou of his opinion?
Mal. I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve of his opinion.
ON SOME OF THE OLD ACTORS.

opinionated, but his superstructure of pride seemed bottomed upon a sense of worth. There was something in it beyond the coxcomb. It was big and swelling, but you could not be sure that it was hollow. You might wish to see it taken down, but you felt that it was upon an elevation. He was magnificent from the outset; but when the decent sobrieties of the character began to give way, and the poison of self-love, in his conceit of the Countess's affection, gradually to work, you would have thought that the hero of La Mancha in person stood before you. How he went smiling to himself! with what ineffable carelessness would he twirl his gold chain! what a dream it was! you were infected with the illusion, and did not wish that it should be removed! you had no room for laughter! if an unseemly reflection of morality obtruded itself, it was a deep sense of the pitiable infirmity of man's nature, that can lay him open to such frenzies—but, in truth, you rather admired than pitied the lunacy while it lasted—you felt that an hour of such mistake was worth an age with the eyes open. Who would not wish to live but for a day in the conceit of such a lady's love as Olivia? Why, the Duke would have given his principality but for a quarter of a minute, sleeping or waking, to have been so deluded. The man seemed to tread upon air, to taste manna, to walk with his head in the clouds, to mate Hyperion. O! shake not the castles of his pride—endure yet for a season, bright moments of confidence—"stand still, ye watches of the element," that Malvolio may be still in fancy fair Olivia's lord!—but fate and retribution say no—I hear the mischievous titter of Maria—the witty taunts of Sir Toby—the still more insupportable triumph of the foolish knight
—the counterfeit Sir Topas is unmasked—and "thus the whirligig of time," as the true clown hath it, "brings in his revenges." I confess that I never saw the catastrophe of this character, while Bensley played it, without a kind of tragic interest. There was good foolery too. Few now remember Dodd. What an Aguecheek the stage lost in him! Lovegrove, who came nearest to the old actors, revived the character some few seasons ago, and made it sufficiently grotesque; but Dodd was it, as it came out of nature's hands. It might be said to remain in puris naturalibus. In expressing slowness of apprehension, this actor surpassed all others. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little, with a painful process, till it cleared up at last to the fulness of a twilight conception—its highest meridian. He seemed to keep back his intellect, as some have had the power to retard their pulsation. The balloon takes less time in filling than it took to cover the expansion of his broad moony face over all its quarters with expression. A glimmer of understanding would appear in a corner of his eye, and for lack of fuel go out again. A part of his forehead would catch a little intelligence, and be a long time in communicating it to the remainder.

I am ill at dates, but I think it is now better than five-and-twenty years ago, that walking in the gardens of Gray's Inn—they were then far finer than they are now—the accursed Verulam Buildings had not encroached upon all the east side of them, cutting out the delicate green crankles, and shouldering away one or two of the stately alcoves of the terrace—the survivor stands gaping and relationless as if it remembered its brother—they are
still the best gardens of any of the Inns of Court, my beloved Temple not forgotten—have the gravest character; their aspect being altogether reverend and law-breathing—Bacon has left the impress of his foot upon their gravel walks—taking my afternoon solace on a summer day upon the aforesaid terrace, a comely sad personage came towards me, whom, from his grave air and deportment, I judged to be one of the old Benchers of the Inn. He had a serious, thoughtful forehead, and seemed to be in meditations of mortality. As I have an instinctive awe of old Benchers, I was passing him with that sort of sub-indicative token of respect which one is apt to demonstrate towards a venerable stranger, and which rather denotes an inclination to greet him, than any positive motion of the body to that effect—a species of humility and will-worship which I observe, nine times out of ten, rather puzzles than pleases the person it is offered to—when the face turning full upon me strangely identified itself with that of Dodd. Upon close inspection I was not mistaken. But could this sad thoughtful countenance be the same vacant face of folly which I had hailed so often under circumstances of gaiety; which I had never seen without a smile, or recognized but as the usher of mirth; that looked out so formally flat in Foppington, so frothily pert in Tattle, so impotently busy in Backbite; so blankly divested of all meaning, or resolutely expressive of none, in Acres, in Fribble, and a thousand agreeable impertinences? Was this the face—full of thought and carefulness—that had so often divested itself at will of every trace of either to give me diversion, to clear my cloudy face for two or three hours at least of its furrows! Was this the face—manly, sober, intelligent—which I had so often de-
spised, made mocks at, made merry with! The remembrance of the freedoms which I had taken with it came upon me with a reproach of insult. I could have asked it pardon. I thought it looked upon me with a sense of injury. There is something strange as well as sad in seeing actors—your pleasant fellows particularly—subjected to and suffering the common lot;—their fortunes, their casualties, their deaths, seem to belong to the scene, their actions to be amenable to poetic justice only. We can hardly connect them with more awful responsibilities. The death of this fine actor took place shortly after this meeting. He had quitted the stage some months; and, as I learned afterwards, had been in the habit of resorting daily to these gardens, almost to the day of his decease. In these serious walks, probably, he was divesting himself of many scenic and some real vanities—weaning himself from the frivolities of the lesser and the greater theatre—doing gentle penance for a life of no very reprehensible fooleries—taking off by degrees the buffoon mask which he might feel he had worn too long—and rehearsing for a more solemn cast of part. Dying, he "put on the weeds of Dominic." ¹

¹ Dodd was a man of reading, and left at his death a choice collection of old English literature. I should judge him to have been a man of wit. I know one instance of an impromptu which no length of study could have bettered. My merry friend, Jem White, had seen him one evening in Aguecheek, and recognizing Dodd the next day in Fleet Street, was irresistibly impelled to take off his hat and salute him as the identical Knight of the preceding evening with a "Save you, Sir Andrew." Dodd, not at all disconcerted at this unusual address from a stranger, with a courteous half-rebuking wave of the hand, put him off with an "Away, Fool."
If few can remember Dodd, many yet living will not easily forget the pleasant creature, who in those days enacted the part of the Clown to Dodd's Sir Andrew.—Richard, or rather Dicky Suett—for so in his life-time he delighted to be called, and time hath ratified the appellation—lieth buried on the north side of the cemetery of Holy Paul, to whose service his nonage and tender years were dedicated. There are who do yet remember him at that period—his pipe clear and harmonious. He would often speak of his chorister days, when he was "cherub Dicky."

What clipped his wings, or made it expedient that he should exchange the holy for the profane state; whether he had lost his good voice (his best recommendation to that office), like Sir John, "with hallooing and singing of anthems;" or whether he was adjudged to lack something, even in those early years, of the gravity indispensable to an occupation which professeth to "commerce with the skies,"—I could never rightly learn; but we find him, after the probation of a twelvemonth or so, reverting to a secular condition and become one of us.

I think he was not altogether of that timber out of which cathedral seats and sounding-boards are hewed. But if a glad heart—kind, and therefore glad—be any part of sanctity, then might the robe of Motley, with which he invested himself with so much humility after his deprivation, and which he wore so long with so much blameless satisfaction to himself and to the public, be accepted for a surplice—his white stole, and albe.

The first fruits of his secularization was an engagement upon the boards of Old Drury, at which
theatre he commenced, as I have been told, with adopting the manner of Parsons in old men’s characters. At the period in which most of us knew him, he was no more an imitator than he was in any true sense himself imitable.

He was the Robin Goodfellow of the stage. He came in to trouble all things with a welcome perplexity, himself no whit troubled for the matter. He was known, like Puck, by his note—Ha! Ha! Ha!—sometimes deepening to Ho! Ho! Ho! with an irresistible accession, derived, perhaps, remotely from his ecclesiastical education, foreign to his prototype of—O La! Thousands of hearts yet respond to the chuckling O La! of Dicky Suett, brought back to their remembrance by the faithful transcript of his friend Mathew’s mimicry. The “force of nature could no further go.” He drolled upon the stock of these two syllables richer than the cuckoo.

Care, that troubles all the world, was forgotten in his composition. Had he had but two grains (nay, half a grain) of it, he could never have supported himself upon those two spider’s strings, which served him (in the latter part of his unmixed existence) as legs. A doubt or a scruple must have made him totter, a sigh have puffed him down; the weight of a frown had staggered him, a wrinkle made him lose his balance. But on he went, scrambling upon those airy stilts of his, with Robin Goodfellow, “through brake, through briar,” reckless of a scratched face or a torn doublet.

Shakespeare foresaw him, when he framed his fools and jesters. They have all the true Suett stamp, a loose and shambling gait, a slippery tongue, this last the ready midwife to a without-pain-delivered jest; in words, light as air, venting
ON SOME OF THE OLD ACTORS.

truths deep as the centre; with idlest rhymes tagging conceit when busiest, singing with Lear in the tempest, or Sir Toby at the buttery-hatch.

Jack Bannister and he had the fortune to be more of personal favourites with the town than any actors before or after. The difference, I take it, was this:—Jack was more beloved for his sweet, good-natured, moral pretensions. Dicky was more liked for his sweet, good-natured, no pretensions at all. Your whole conscience stirred with Bannister's performance of Walter in the Children in the Wood—but Dicky seemed like a thing, as Shakespeare says of Love, too young to know what conscience is. He put us into Vesta's days. Evil fled before him—not as from Jack, as from an antagonist,—but because it could not touch him, any more than a cannon-ball a fly. He was delivered from the burthen of that death; and, when Death came himself, not in metaphor, to fetch Dicky, it is recorded of him by Robert Palmer, who kindly watched his exit, that he received the last stroke, neither varying his accustomed tranquillity, nor tune, with the simple exclamation, worthy to have been recorded in his epitaph—

O La! O La! Bobby!

The elder Palmer (of stage-treading celebrity) commonly played Sir Toby in those days; but there is a solidity of wit in the jests of that half-Falstaff which he did not quite fill out. He was as much too showy as Moody (who sometimes took the part) was dry and sottish. In sock or buskin there was an air of swaggering gentility about Jack Palmer. He was a gentleman, with a slight infusion of the footman. His brother Bob (of recenter memory), who was his shadow in everything while he lived, and dwindled into less than a shadow
afterwards—was a gentleman with a little stronger infusion of the latter ingredient; that was all. It is amazing how a little of the more or less makes a difference in these things. When you saw Bobby in the Duke's Servant,¹ you said, "What a pity such a pretty fellow was only a servant!" When you saw Jack figuring in Captain Absolute, you thought you could trace his promotion to some lady of quality who fancied the handsome fellow in his topknot, and bought him a commission. Therefore Jack in Dick Amlet was insuperable.

Jack had two voices, both plausible, hypocritical, and insinuating; but his secondary or supplemental voice still more decisively histrionic than his common one. It was reserved for the spectator; and the _dramatis personæ_ were supposed to know nothing at all about it. The _lies_ of Young Wilding, and the _sentiments_ in Joseph Surface, were thus marked out in a sort of italics to the audience. This secret correspondence with the company before the curtain (which is the bane and death of tragedy) has an extremely happy effect in some kinds of comedy, in the more highly artificial comedy of Congreve or of Sheridan especially, where the absolute sense of reality (so indispensable to scenes of interest) is not required, or would rather interfere to diminish your pleasure. The fact is, you do not believe in such characters as Surface—the villain of artificial comedy—even while you read or see them. If you did, they would shock and not divert you. When Ben, in Love for Love, returns from sea, the following exquisite dialogue occurs at his first meeting with his father:—

¹ High Life Below Stairs.
ON SOME OF THE OLD ACTORS.

Sir Sampson. Thou hast been many a weary league, Ben, since I saw thee.

Ben. Ey, ey, been. Been far enough, an that be all.—Well, father and how do all at home? how does brother Dick and brother Val?

Sir Sampson. Dick! body o' me, Dick has been dead these two years. I writ you word when you were at Leghorn.

Ben. Mess, that's true; Marry, I had forgot. Dick's dead, as you say—well, and how?—I have a many questions to ask you—

Here is an instance of insensibility which in real life would be revolting, or rather in real life could not have co-existed with the warm-hearted temperament of the character. But when you read it in the spirit with which such playful selections and specious combinations rather than strict metaphrases of nature should be taken, or when you saw Bannister play it, it neither did, nor does, wound the moral sense at all. For what is Ben—the pleasant sailor which Bannister gives us—but a piece of satire—a creation of Congreve's fancy—a dreamy combination of all the accidents of a sailor's character—his contempt of money—his credulity to women—with that necessary estrangement from home which it is just within the verge of credibility to suppose might produce such an hallucination as is here described. We never think the worse of Ben for it, or feel it as a stain upon his character. But when an actor comes, and instead of the delightful phantom—the creature dear to half-belief—which Bannister exhibited—displays before our eyes a downright concretion of a Wapping sailor—a jolly warm-hearted Jack Tar—and nothing else—when instead of investing it with a delicious confusedness of the head, and a veering undirected goodness of purpose—he gives to it a downright daylight understanding, and a full con-
sciousness of its actions; thrusting forward the sensibilities of the character with a pretence as if it stood upon nothing else, and was to be judged by them alone—we feel the discord of the thing; the scene is disturbed; a real man has got in among the dramatis persona, and puts them out. We want the sailor turned out. We feel that his true place is not behind the curtain, but in the first or second gallery.
ON THE ARTIFICIAL COMEDY OF THE LAST CENTURY.

THE artificial Comedy, or Comedy of manners, is quite extinct on our stage. Congreve and Farquhar show their heads once in seven years only, to be exploded and put down instantly. The times cannot bear them. Is it for a few wild speeches, an occasional licence of dialogue? I think not altogether. The business of their dramatic characters will not stand the moral test. We screw everything up to that. Idle gallantry in a fiction, a dream, the passing pageant of an evening, startles us in the same way as the alarming indications of profligacy in a son or ward in real life should startle a parent or guardian. We have no such middle emotions as dramatic interests left. We see a stage libertine playing his loose pranks of two hours' duration, and of no after consequence, with the severe eyes which inspect real vices with their bearings upon two worlds. We are spectators to a plot or intrigue (not reducible in life to the point of strict morality), and take it all for truth. We substitute a real for a dramatic person, and judge him accordingly. We try him in our courts, from which there is no appeal to the dramatis
persona, his peers. We have been spoiled with—not sentimental comedy—but a tyrant far more pernicious to our pleasures which has succeeded to it, the exclusive and all-devouring drama of common life; where the moral point is everything; where, instead of the fictitious half-believed personages of the stage (the phantoms of old comedy), we recognize ourselves, our brothers, aunts, kinsfolk, allies, patrons, enemies,—the same as in life,—with an interest in what is going on so hearty and substantial, that we cannot afford our moral judgment, in its deepest and most vital results, to compromise or slumber for a moment. What is there transacting, by no modification is made to affect us in any other manner than the same events or characters would do in our relationships of life. We carry our fire-side concerns to the theatre with us. We do not go thither like our ancestors, to escape from the pressure of reality, so much as to confirm our experience of it; to make assurance double, and take a bond of fate. We must live our toilsome lives twice over, as it was the mournful privilege of Ulysses to descend twice to the shades. All that neutral ground of character which stood between vice and virtue; or which in fact was indifferent to neither, where neither properly was called in question; that happy breathing-place from the burthen of a perpetual moral questioning—the sanctuary and quiet Alsatia of hunted casuistry—is broken up and disfranchised, as injurious to the interests of society. The privileges of the place are taken away by law. We dare not dally with images, or names, of wrong. We bark like foolish dogs at shadows. We dread infection from the scenic representation of disorder, and fear a painted pustule. In our anxiety that our morality should
not take cold, we wrap it up in a great blanket surtout of precaution against the breeze and sunshine.

I confess for myself that (with no great delinquencies to answer for) I am glad for a season to take an airing beyond the diocese of the strict conscience,—not to live always in the precincts of the law-courts,—but now and then, for a dream-while or so, to imagine a world with no meddling restrictions—to get into recesses, whither the hunter cannot follow me—

Secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.

I come back to my cage and my restraint the fresher and more healthy for it. I wear my shackles more contentedly for having respired the breath of an imaginary freedom. I do not know how it is with others, but I feel the better always for the perusal of one of Congreve's—nay, why should I not add even of Wycherley's—comedies. I am the gayer at least for it; and I could never connect those sports of a witty fancy in any shape with any result to be drawn from them to imitation in real life. They are a world of themselves almost as much as fairy land. Take one of their characters, male or female (with few exceptions they are alike), and place it in a modern play, and my virtuous indignation shall rise against the profligate wretch as warmly as the Catos of the pit could desire; because in a modern play I am to judge of the right and the wrong. The standard of police is the measure of political justice. The atmosphere will blight it; it cannot live here. It has got into a moral world, where it has no business, from
which it must needs fall headlong; as dizzy, and incapable of making a stand, as a Swedenborgian bad spirit that has wandered unawares into the sphere of one of his Good Men, or Angels. But in its own world do we feel the creature is so very bad?—The Fainalls and the Mirabels, the Dormants and the Lady Touchwoods, in their own sphere, do not offend my moral sense; in fact, they do not appeal to it at all. They seem engaged in their proper element. They break through no laws or conscientious restraints. They know of none. They have got out of Christendom into the land—what shall I call it?—of cuckoldry—the Utopia of gallantry, where pleasure is duty, and the manners perfect freedom. It is altogether a speculative scene of things, which has no reference whatever to the world that is. No good person can be justly offended as a spectator, because no good person suffers on the stage. Judged morally, every character in these plays—the few exceptions only are mistakes—is alike essentially vain and worthless. The great art of Congreve is especially shown in this, that he has entirely excluded from his scenes—some little generosities in the part of Angelica perhaps excepted—not only anything like a faultless character, but any pretensions to goodness or good feelings whatsoever. Whether he did this designedly, or instinctively, the effect is as happy as the design (if design) was bold. I used to wonder at the strange power which his Way of the World in particular possesses of interesting you all along in the pursuits of characters for whom you absolutely care nothing—for you neither hate nor love his personages—and I think it is owing to this very indifference for any, that you endure the whole. He has spread a privation
of moral light, I will call it, rather than by the ugly name of palpable darkness, over his creations; and his shadows flit before you without distinction or preference. Had he introduced a good character, a single gush of moral feeling, a revulsion of the judgment to actual life and actual duties, the impertinent Goshen would have only lighted to the discovery of deformities, which now are none, because we think them none.

Translated into real life, the characters of his, and his friend Wycherley's dramas, are profligates and strumpets,—the business of their brief existence, the undivided pursuit of lawless gallantry. No other spring of action, or possible motive of conduct, is recognized; principles which, universally acted upon, must reduce this frame of things to a chaos. But we do them wrong in so translating them. No such effects are produced, in their world. When we are among them, we are amongst a chaotic people. We are not to judge them by our usages. No reverend institutions are insulted by their proceedings—for they have none among them. No peace of families is violated—for no family ties exist among them. No purity of the marriage bed is stained—for none is supposed to have a being. No deep affections are disquieted, no holy wedlock bands are snapped asunder—for affection's depth and wedded faith are not of the growth of that soil. There is neither right nor wrong,—gratitude or its opposite,—claim or duty,—paternity or sonship. Of what consequence is it to Virtue, or how is she at all concerned about it, whether Sir Simon or Dapperwit steal away Miss Martha; or who is the father of Lord Froth's or Sir Paul Pliant's children?

The whole is a passing pageant, where we should
sit as unconcerned at the issues, for life or death, as at the battle of the frogs and mice. But, like Don Quixote, we take part against the puppets, and quite as impertinently. We dare not contemplate an Atlantis, a scheme, out of which our coxcombical moral sense is for a little transitory ease excluded. We have not the courage to imagine a state of things for which there is neither reward nor punishment. We cling to the painful necessities of shame and blame. We would indict our very dreams.

Amidst the mortifying circumstances attendant upon growing old, it is something to have seen the School for Scandal in its glory. This comedy grew out of Congreve and Wycherley, but gathered some allays of the sentimental comedy which followed theirs. It is impossible that it should be now acted, though it continues, at long intervals, to be announced in the bills. Its hero, when Palmer played it at least, was Joseph Surface. When I remember the gay boldness, the graceful solemn plausibility, the measured step, the insinuating voice—to express it in a word—the downright acted villany of the part, so different from the pressure of conscious actual wickedness,—the hypocritical assumption of hypocrisy,—which made Jack so deservedly a favourite in that character, I must needs conclude the present generation of playgoers more virtuous than myself, or more dense. I freely confess that he divided the palm with me with his better brother; that, in fact, I liked him quite as well. Not but there are passages,—like that, for instance, where Joseph is made to refuse a pittance to a poor relation,—incongruities which Sheridan was forced upon by the attempt to join the artificial with the sentimental comedy, either of which must destroy
the other—but over these obstructions Jack's manner floated him so lightly, that a refusal from him no more shocked you, than the easy compliance of Charles gave you in reality any pleasure; you got over the paltry question as quickly as you could, to get back into the regions of pure comedy, where no cold moral reigns. The highly artificial manner of Palmer in this character counteracted every disagreeable impression which you might have received from the contrast, supposing them real, between the two brothers. You did not believe in Joseph with the same faith with which you believed in Charles. The latter was a pleasant reality, the former a no less pleasant poetical foil to it. The comedy, I have said, is incongruous; a mixture of Congreve with sentimental incompatibilities; the gaiety upon the whole is buoyant; but it required the consummate art of Palmer to reconcile the discordant elements.

A player with Jack's talents, if we had one now, would not dare to do the part in the same manner. He would instinctively avoid every turn which might tend to unrealize, and so to make the character fascinating. He must take his cue from his spectators, who would expect a bad man and a good man as rigidly opposed to each other as the deathbeds of those geniuses are contrasted in the prints, which I am sorry to say have disappeared from the windows of my old friend Carrington Bowles, of St. Paul's Churchyard memory—(an exhibition as venerable as the adjacent cathedral, and almost coeval) of the bad and good man at the hour of death; where the ghastly apprehensions of the former,—and truly the grim phantom with his reality of a toasting-fork is not to be despised,—so finely contrast with the meek complacent kissing of
the rod,—taking it in like honey and butter,—with which the latter submits to the scythe of the gentle bleeder, Time, who wields his lancet with the apprehensive finger of a popular young ladies' surgeon. What flesh, like loving grass, would not covet to meet half-way the stroke of such a delicate mower? —John Palmer was twice an actor in this exquisite part. He was playing to you all the while that he was playing upon Sir Peter and his lady. You had the first intimation of a sentiment before it was on his lips. His altered voice was meant to you, and you were to suppose that his fictitious co-flutterers on the stage perceived nothing at all of it. What was it to you if that half reality, the husband, was overreached by the puppetry—or the thin thing (Lady Teazle's reputation) was persuaded it was dying of a plethory? The fortunes of Othello and Desdemona were not concerned in it. Poor Jack has passed from the stage in good time, that he did not live to this our age of seriousness. The pleasant old Teazle King, too, is gone in good time. His manner would scarce have passed current in our day. We must love or hate—acquit or condemn—censure or pity—exert our detestable coxcombry of moral judgment upon everything. Joseph Surface, to go down now, must be a downright revolting villain—no compromise—his first appearance must shock and give horror—his specious plausibilities, which the pleasurable faculties of our fathers welcomed with such hearty greetings, knowing that no harm (dramatic harm even) could come, or was meant to come, of them, must inspire a cold and killing aversion. Charles (the real canting person of the scene—for the hypocrisy of Joseph has its ulterior legitimate ends, but his brother's professions of a good heart centre in downright self-satis-
faction) must be loved, and Joseph hated. To balance one disagreeable reality with another, Sir Peter Teazle must be no longer the comic idea of a fretful old bachelor bridegroom, whose teasings (while King acted it) were evidently as much played off at you, as they were meant to concern anybody on the stage,—he must be a real person, capable in law of sustaining an injury—a person towards whom duties are to be acknowledged—the genuine crim. con. antagonist of the villainous seducer Joseph. To realize him more, his sufferings under his unfortunate match must have the downright pungency of life—must (or should) make you not mirthful but uncomfortable, just as the same predicament would move you in a neighbour or old friend.

The delicious scenes which give the play its name and zest, must affect you in the same serious manner as if you heard the reputation of a dear female friend attacked in your real presence. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin—those poor snakes that live but in the sunshine of your mirth—must be ripened by this hot-bed process of realization into asps or amphisbænas; and Mrs. Candour—O! frightful!—become a hooded serpent. Oh! who that remembers Parsons and Dodd—the wasp and butterfly of the School for Scandal—in those two characters; and charming natural Miss Pope, the perfect gentlewoman as distinguished from the fine lady of comedy, in the latter part—would forego the true scenic delight—the escape from life—the oblivion of consequences—the holiday barring out of the pedant Reflection—those Saturnalia of two or three brief hours, well won from the world—to sit instead at one of our modern plays—to have his coward conscience (that forsooth must not be left
for a moment) stimulated with perpetual appeals—dulled rather, and blunted, as a faculty without repose must be—and his moral vanity pampered with images of notional justice, notional beneficence, lives saved without the spectator's risk, and fortunes given away that cost the author nothing?

No piece was, perhaps, ever so completely cast in all its parts as this manager's comedy. Miss Farren had succeeded to Mrs. Abington in Lady Teazle; and Smith, the original Charles, had retired when I first saw it. The rest of the characters, with very slight exceptions, remained. I remember it was then the fashion to cry down John Kemble, who took the part of Charles after Smith; but, I thought, very unjustly. Smith, I fancy, was more airy, and took the eye with a certain gaiety of person. He brought with him no sombre recollections of tragedy. He had not to expiate the fault of having pleased beforehand in lofty declamation. He had no sins of Hamlet or of Richard to atone for. His failure in these parts was a passport to success in one of so opposite a tendency. But, as far as I could judge, the weighty sense of Kemble made up for more personal incapacity than he had to answer for. His harshest tones in this part came steeped and dulcified in good-humour. He made his defects a grace. His exact declamatory manner, as he managed it, only served to convey the points of his dialogue with more precision. It seemed to head the shafts to carry them deeper. Not one of his sparkling sentences was lost. I remember minutely how he delivered each in succession, and cannot by any effort imagine how any of them could be altered for the better. No man could deliver brilliant dialogue—the dialogue of Congreve or of Wycherley—because none understood
it—half so well as John Kemble. His Valentine, in Love for Love, was, to my recollection, faultless. He flagged sometimes in the intervals of tragic passion. He would slumber over the level parts of an heroic character. His Macbeth has been known to nod. But he always seemed to me to be particularly alive to pointed and witty dialogue. The relaxing levities of tragedy have not been touched by any since him—the playful court-bred spirit in which he condescended to the players in Hamlet—the sportive relief which he threw into the darker shades of Richard—disappeared with him. [Tragedy is become a uniform dead weight. They have fastened lead to her buskins. She never pulls them off for the ease of a moment. To invert a commonplace from Niobe, she never forgets herself to liquefaction.] He had his sluggish moods, his torpors—but they were the halting-stones and resting-place of his tragedy—politic savings, and fetches of the breath—husbandry of the lungs, where nature pointed him to be an economist—rather, I think, than errors of the judgment. They were, at worst, less painful than the eternal tormenting unappeasable vigilance,—the "lidless dragon eyes," of present fashionable tragedy.

[The story of his swallowing opium pills to keep him lively on the first night of a certain tragedy, we may presume to be a piece of retaliatory pleasantry on the part of the suffering author; but, indeed, John had the art of diffusing a complacent equable dulness (which you knew not where to quarrel with), over a piece which he did not like, beyond any of his contemporaries. John Kemble had made up his mind early, that all the good tragedies which could be written, had been written; and he resented any new attempt. His
shelves were full. The old standards were scope enough for his ambition. He ranged in them absolute—and fair "in Otway, full in Shakespeare shone." He succeeded to the old lawful thrones, and did not care to adventure bottomry with a Sir Edward Mortimer or any casual speculator that offered. I remember, too acutely for my peace, the deadly extinguisher which he put upon my friend G.'s "Antonio." G., satiate with visions of political justice (possibly not to be realized in our time), or willing to let the sceptical worldlings see that his anticipations of the future did not preclude a warm sympathy for men as they are and have been—wrote a tragedy. He chose a story, affecting, romantic, Spanish—the plot simple, without being naked—the incidents uncommon, without being overstrained. Antonio, who gives the name to the piece, is a sensitive young Castilian, who, in a fit of his country honour, immolates his sister—

But I must not anticipate the catastrophe—the play, reader, is extant in choice English—and you will employ a spare half-crown not injudiciously in the quest of it.

The conception was bold, and the dénouement—the time and place in which the hero of it existed, considered—not much out of keeping; yet it must be confessed, that it required a delicacy of handling both from the author and the performer, so as not much to shock the prejudices of a modern English audience. G., in my opinion, had done his part.

John, who was in familiar habits with the philosopher, had undertaken to play Antonio. Great expectations were formed. A philosopher's first play was a new era. The night arrived. I was favoured with a seat in an advantageous box, be-
between the author and his friend M——. G. sat cheerful and confident. In his friend M.'s looks, who had perused the manuscript, I read some terror. Antonio, in the person of John Philip Kemble, at length appeared, starched out in a ruff which no one could dispute, and in most irreproachable moustachios. John always dressed most provokingly correct, on these occasions. The first act swept by, solemn and silent. It went off, as G. assured M., exactly as the opening act of a piece—the protasis—should do. The cue of the spectators was, to be mute. The characters were but in their introduction. The passions and the incidents would be developed hereafter. Applause hitherto would be impertinent. Silent attention was the effect all-desirable. Poor M. acquiesced—but in his honest, friendly face I could discern a working which told how much more acceptable the plaudit of a single hand (however misplaced) would have been than all this reasoning. The second act (as in duty bound) rose a little in interest, but still John kept his forces under—in policy, as G. would have it—and the audience were most complacently attentive. The protasis, in fact, was scarcely unfolded. The interest would warm in the next act, against which a special incident was provided. M. wiped his cheek, flushed with a friendly perspiration—'tis M.'s way of showing his zeal—"from every pore of him a perfume falls"—I honour it above Alexander's. He had once or twice during this act joined his palms, in a feeble endeavour to elicit a sound—they emitted a solitary noise, without an echo—there was no deep to answer to his deep. G. repeatedly begged him to be quiet. The third act at length brought on the scene which was to warm the piece, progressively,
to the final flaming forth of the catastrophe. A philosophic calm settled upon the clear brow of G., as it approached. The lips of M. quivered. A challenge was held forth upon the stage, and there was a promise of a fight. The pit roused themselves on this extraordinary occasion, and, as their manner is, seemed disposed to make a ring,—when suddenly, Antonio, who was the challenged, turning the tables upon the hot challenger, Don Gusman (who, by the way, should have had his sister) baulks his humour, and the pit's reasonable expectation at the same time, with some speeches out of the "New Philosophy against Duelling." The audience were here fairly caught—their courage was up, and on the alert—a few blows, ding-dong, as R—s, the dramatist, afterwards expressed it to me, might have done the business, when their most exquisite moral sense was suddenly called in to assist in the mortifying negation of their own pleasure. They could not applaud for disappointment; they would not condemn for morality's sake. The interest stood stone still; and John's manner was not at all calculated to unpetrify it. It was Christmas time, and the atmosphere furnished some pretext for asthmatic affections. One began to cough—his neighbour sympathized with him—till a cough became epidemic. But when, from being half artificial in the pit, the cough got frightfully naturalized among the fictitious persons of the drama, and Antonio himself (albeit it was not set down in the stage directions) seemed more intent upon relieving his own lungs than the distresses of the author and his friends,—then G., "first knew fear;" and, mildly turning to M., intimated that he had not been aware that Mr. K. laboured under a cold; and that the performance
might possibly have been postponed with advantage for some nights further—still keeping the same serene countenance, while M. sweat like a bull. It would be invidious to pursue the fates of this ill-starred evening. In vain did the plot thicken in the scenes that followed; in vain the dialogue waxed more passionate and stirring, and the progress of the sentiment point more and more clearly to the arduous development which impended. In vain the action was accelerated, while the acting stood still. From the beginning John had taken his stand; had wound himself up to an even tenor of stately declamation, from which no exigence of dialogue or person could make him swerve for an instant. To dream of his rising with the scene (the common trick of tragedians) was preposterous; for, from the onset, he had planted himself, as upon a terrace, on an eminence vastly above the audience, and he kept that sublime level to the end. He looked from his throne of elevated sentiment upon the under-world of spectators with a most sovereign and becoming contempt. There was excellent pathos delivered out to them: an they would receive it, so; an they would not receive it, so; there was no offence against decorum in all this; nothing to condemn, to damn. Not an irreverent symptom of a sound was to be heard. The procession of verbiage stalked on through four and five acts, no one venturing to predict what would come of it, when, towards the winding up of the latter, Antonio, with an irrelevancy that seemed to stagger Elvira herself—for she had been coolly arguing the point of honour with him—suddenly whips out a poniard, and stabs his sister to the heart. The effect was as if a murder had been committed in cold blood. The whole
house rose up in clamorous indignation, demanding justice. The feeling rose far above hisses. I believe at that instant, if they could have got him, they would have torn the unfortunate author to pieces. Not that the act itself was so exorbitant, or of a complexion different from what they themselves would have applauded upon another occasion, in a Brutus or an Appius, but for want of attending to Antonio's words, which palpably led to the expectation of no less dire an event, instead of being seduced by his manner, which seemed to promise a sleep of a less alarming nature than it was his cue to inflict upon Elvira: they found themselves betrayed into an accompliceship of murder, a perfect misprision of parricide, while they dreamed of nothing less. M., I believe, was the only person who suffered acutely from the failure; for G. thenceforward, with a serenity unattainable but by the true philosophy, abandoning a precarious popularity, retired into his fasthold of speculation,—the drama in which the world was to be his tiring-room, and remote posterity his applauding spectators, at once, and actors.
NOT many nights ago I had come home from seeing this extraordinary performer in Cockletop; and when I retired to my pillow, his whimsical image still stuck by me, in a manner as to threaten sleep. In vain I tried to divest myself of it, by conjuring up the most opposite associations. I resolved to be serious. I raised up the gravest topics of life; private misery, public calamity. All would not do:

— There the antic sate
Mocking our state —

his queer visnomy—his bewildering costume—all the strange things which he had raked together—his serpentine rod swagging about in his pocket—Cleopatra’s tear, and the rest of his relics—O’Keefe’s wild farce, and his wilder commentary—till the passion of laughter, like grief in excess, relieved itself by its own weight, inviting the sleep which in the first instance it had driven away.

But I was not to escape so easily. No sooner did I fall into slumbers, than the same image, only more perplexing, assailed me in the shape of dreams. Not one Munden, but five hundred, were dancing before me, like the faces which, whether
you will or no, come when you have been taking opium—all the strange combinations, which this strangest of all strange mortals ever shot his proper countenance into, from the day he came commissioned to dry up the tears of the town for the loss of the now almost forgotten Edwin. O for the power of the pencil to have fixed them when I awoke! A season or two since, there was exhibited a Hogarth gallery. I do not see why there should not be a Munden gallery. In richness and variety, the latter would not fall short of the former.

There is one face of Farley, one face of Knight, one (but what a one it is!) of Liston; but Munden has none that you can properly pin down, and call his. When you think he has exhausted his battery of looks, in unaccountable warfare with your gravity, suddenly he sprouts out an entirely new set of features, like Hydra. He is not one, but legion; not so much a comedian, as a company. If his name could be multiplied like his countenance, it might fill a play-bill. He, and he alone, literally makes faces: applied to any other person, the phrase is a mere figure, denoting certain modifications of the human countenance. Out of some invisible wardrobe he dips for faces, as his friend Suett used for wigs, and fetches them out as easily. I should not be surprised to see him some day put out the head of a river-horse: or come forth a pewitt, or lapwing, some feathered metamorphosis.

I have seen this gifted actor in Sir Christopher Curry—in old Dornton—diffuse a glow of sentiment which has made the pulse of a crowded theatre beat like that of one man; when he has come in aid of the pulpit, doing good to the moral heart of a people. I have seen some faint ap-
proaches to this sort of excellence in other players. But in the grand grotesque of farce, Munden stands out as single and unaccompanied as Hogarth. Hogarth, strange to tell, had no followers. The school of Munden began, and must end, with himself.

Can any man wonder, like him? can any man see ghosts, like him? or fight with his own shadow—"SESSA"—as he does in that strangely-neglected thing, the Cobbler of Preston—where his alternations from the Cobbler to the Magnifico, and from the Magnifico to the Cobbler, keep the brain of the spectator in as wild a ferment, as if some Arabian Night were being acted before him. Who like him can throw, or ever attempted to throw, a preternatural interest over the commonest daily-life objects? A table or a joint-stool, in his conception, rises into a dignity equivalent to Cassiopeia's chair. It is invested with constellatory importance. You could not speak of it with more deference, if it were mounted into the firmament. A beggar in the hands of Michael Angelo, says Fuseli, rose the Patriarch of Poverty. So the gusto of Munden antiquates and ennobles what it touches. His pots and his ladles are as grand and primal as the seething-pots and hooks seen in old prophetic vision. A tub of butter, contemplated by him, amounts to a Platonic idea. He understands a leg of mutton, in its quiddity. He stands wondering, amid the commonplace materials of life, like primæval man with the sun and stars about him.

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EVANGELINE.

A TALE OF ACADIE.

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks, 
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, 
indistinct in the twilight, 
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic, 
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms. 
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighbouring ocean 
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that beneath it 
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice of the huntsman? 
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers,— 
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,
deceived Men than forced them. Nay, it were better to meet some Dangers half way, though they come nothing near, than to keep too long a watch upon their Approaches; for if a Man watch too long, it is odds he will fall asleep. On the other side, to be deceived with too long Shadows (as some have been when the Moon was low and shone on their Enemies' Back), and so to shoot off before the time; or to teach Dangers to come on by over early buckling towards them, is another Extreme. The Ripeness or Unripeness of the Occasion (as we said) must ever be well weighed; and generally it is good to commit the Beginnings of all great Actions to Argus with his hundred Eyes; and the Ends to Bia- reus with his hundred Hands: first to Watch, and then to Speed. For the Helmet of Pluto, which maketh the politick Man go invisible, is Secrecy in the Counsel, and Celerity in the Execution. For when things are once come to the Execution, there is no Secrecy comparable to Celerity; like the Motion of a Bullet in the Air, which flieth so swift as it outruns the Eye.

XXII.

OF CUNNING.

We take Cunning for a sinister or crooked Wisdom; and certainly there is great difference between a cunning Man and a wise Man, not only in Point of Honesty, but in point of Ability. There be that can

3 Hom. II. l. v. l. 845.