

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction. Volume 10, No. 271, Saturday, September 1, 1827.

Various

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THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

VOL. X, NO. 271.] SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1827. [PRICE 2d.

The New Prison, Norwich.

[Illustration: The New Prison, Norwich]

The old gaol in the city of Norwich, in the year 1823, being found no longer secure, nor according to the new act of parliament, admitting of sufficient room for the classification of the prisoners, the magistrates came to a resolution of erecting a new one outside the city, near St. Giles's gates; the same was accordingly advertised in the Norwich papers, in which architects were requested to send plans, elevations, and sections, (in competition,) accompanied with an estimate of the total expense of the new building. A great number of designs were in consequence submitted, when the plan sent by Mr. Brown, of Wells-street, Oxford-street, London, was adjudged to be the best: his plan was

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therefore adopted and carried into execution, of which the annexed engraving is a faithful representation, taken from the tower of St. Giles's Church, in the city of Norwich. The foundation stone was laid in 1824, and the building finished this year, 1827. It is designed to hold 120 prisoners, besides the necessary turnkeys and servants, and has cost the city £23,000; the boundary wall is quadrangular, but is cut off at the junction of the four angles by bastions, thereby giving to the wall a greater stability; the whole circumference is 1,220 feet, and encloses an area of one acre, two roods, and thirty-four poles, being nearly one acre and three quarters of ground.

The bastion at the entrance contains on the ground floor a porter's room, press room, hot and cold baths, and a room with an oven for the purpose of purifying foul linen. The upper story contains over the entrance gate the drop room: on each side are receiving cells, two for males and two for females, a searching room for the surgeon, and the prison wardrobe; directly over the drop room on the lead flat is the place where the more heinous malefactors expiate their crimes. The bastion on the right hand contains a building, on the ground floor and in the centre of which is the wash-house and laundry, and in front the drying ground; at each end of this building are the airing grounds for the sick prisoners, and on the second floor are the male and female infirmaries, separated by a strong partition wall. The left hand bastion contains the millhouse, stable, and a room for the van which takes the prisoners to the town hall in the assize time; over these three rooms are the mill chamber and hay-loft. The horizontal wind vane on the roof of this building is to assist the prisoners when there is not a sufficiency of them sentenced to the tread-wheels; by shutting the louvre boards of the arms it then produces employment for the prisoners when there is no corn in the mill to grind. In the remote bastion are seen the tread-wheels on which the prisoners are employed in keeping up a constant retrograde motion, which works the machinery in the millhouse by means of an iron shaft with universal joints concealed below the surface of the ground.

Here are four prison wings in the building, the right hand one contains in one ward common debtors, and in the other unconvicted men felons, not capital. The second wing on the right contains on one side unconvicted men felons, and unconvicted women felons for capital offences on the other. In the first left hand wing there is on the first side the master debtors, and on the other the court of conscience debtors; the second wing on the left contains on one side men misdemeanors, and on the other convicted men felons. There are two day-rooms in each of the four wings, and four condemned cells and four solitary ones in the back towers; there is also fourteen airing yards between the four wings, six of which are sunk three feet below the others, to enable the governor from the inspection gallery of his house to overlook the tread-wheels, millhouse, and infirmary; those yards are descended by stone steps, in each there is a day room, and they are appropriated to the following prisoners, namely, women debtors, unconvicted women felons, not capital; convicted women felons, women fines, men fines, and boys for misdemeanors. There is also a level passage between each two of the sunk yards, one leading to the infirmary, one to the millhouse, and the other to the tread-wheels.

In the governor's house there is in the basement story a kitchen, scullery, and bakehouse, store room, beer-cellar, and coal cellar; on the ground floor is the governor's office, living room, committee room, and matron's room; on the second floor are two bedrooms and the lower part of the chapel; and on the third floor are two bedrooms and the gallery of the chapel. There are likewise four bridge staircases, one from each prison wing leading to passages in the governor's house, which communicates with the chapel; the prisoners are not here able to see each others' class, as they are separated by fourteen partitions, being as many as there are yards in the prison, yet the governor and minister

have from their seats a complete view of every person and every part. Around the governor's house is an enclosed area, and above an inspection gallery, from which the governor is enabled to see into every part of the prison. On the towers of the four prison wings there are reservoirs for containing water, which is thrown up by a pump worked by the prisoners at the tread-wheel, whenever water is required, and by means of lead pipes, it is then conveyed to every part of the prison. The whole gaol is fire-proof, the floors being of stone, and the doors and windows of iron.

There is certainly a peculiar arrangement in the plan of this gaol not to be met with in any other in the kingdom; there are four yards between each of the wings excepting those two in the approach to the governor's house; the middle yards which are divided by a passage, have, as before stated, each of them a day-room. The prisoners allotted to these yards have their sleeping cells in the main wing, to which they are conducted along a passage, at the end of those upper yards which join the prison wing; the prisoners are therefore in their passage to and from the sleeping cells, concealed from the others; should there at any time be a greater number of prisoners belonging to the ward on the ground floor than there are sleeping cells they are then taken to the spare cells in the wards above through a door at the end of the upper yard, and yet concealed from those classes in the sunk yards. All our prison buildings hitherto erected are hid from the sight by the high boundary wall that encloses them, producing nothing interesting to the citizen or the traveller but a monotonous facade. Mr. Brown has obviated this in the gaol before us, by having raised towers on the ends of the four wings, which, with the top of the governor's house, mill, and infirmary, being seen rising above the boundary wall and entrance front, produces to the eye of the spectator on approaching the prison a *_tout ensemble_* truly imposing and grand.

ARCHITECTUS.

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LIVING AUTHORS.

No. 1.

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BERNARD BARTON.

"Sheltered, but not to social duties lost;
Secluded, but not buried; and with song
Cheering his days."

The productions of Mr. Barton are doubtless familiar to most of our readers, and from them they have learnt much of the amiable turn of the poet's character. Mr. Barton's compositions afford indications of genuine feeling, of deep affection, of benevolence, sympathy, taste, and integrity; he seems to have an ear ever on the listen for the accents of charity, patriotism, and religion; where human anguish causes the tear to start, there he would fain be to soothe and alleviate. Such is the character of the poet, and in the following sketch such will be proved to be the character of the man.

Bernard Barton was born in the vicinity of London, on the 31st of January, 1784. His father was in trade in the metropolis, whither he had

come from his native place, Carlisle. Bernard had the misfortune to lose his mother one month after his birth: her maiden name was Mary Done, and she was a native of Rockcliffe, Cumberland; she died at the early age of thirty-two. The following lines _To a Profile_ evince the feelings with which our poet still cherishes her memory, or rather the recollection of what has been told him respecting her:--

"I knew thee not! then wherefore gaze
Upon thy silent shadow there,
Which so imperfectly portrays
The form thy features used to wear?
Yet have I often looked at thee,
As if those lips could speak to me.

I knew thee not! and thou couldst know,
At best, but little more of one
Whose pilgrimage on earth below
Commenced, just ere thy own was done;
For few and fleeting days were thine,
To hope or fear for lot of mine.

Yet few and fleeting as they were,
Fancy and feeling picture this,
They prompted many a fervent prayer,
Witnessed, perchance, a parting kiss;
And might not kiss, and prayer, from thee,
At such a period, profit me?

Whether they did or not, I owe
At least this tribute to thy worth;
Though little all I _can_ bestow,
Yet fond affection gives it birth;
And prompts me, as thy shade I view,
To bless thee, whom I never knew!"[1]

His father died before Mr. Barton was seven years old; but his second marriage, which took place a few months before his death, provided an excellent parent for his children: to her, and to his two sisters,[2] both several years older than himself, our author owed infinite obligations.

His education at one of the quaker seminaries was, of course, plain and circumscribed, being pretty much confined to useful, indeed necessary, branches of knowledge. But his father had been a man of greater natural and more cultivated intellect than many; he had read much, and on the abolition of slavery, in which he was one of Clarkson's earliest associates, he had, on several occasions, proved that he could write well, though, we believe, he was never avowedly an author. He had left no despicable collection of books, so that in his school vacations ample means were afforded to his son of indulging his taste for reading. A pleasing tribute to the memory of Mr. Barton's father will be found in his _Napoleon and other Poems_.

In the year 1806, Mr. Barton took up his residence in the pleasant town of Woodbridge, in Suffolk, and commenced business as a merchant; but an unlooked-for domestic affliction of the severest kind was about to visit him, and his wordly prospects were to receive an irrecoverable shock,--the loss of his amiable wife, before they had been married a twelvemonth, and soon after the birth of her child! This excellent woman, to whom our poet was, for so short a time, united, gave rise to some of his best pieces, particularly to the poem beginning, _The heaven was cloudless_, [3] and that entitled _A Portrait, _in _Napoleon and other Poems_. In this last piece the poet no less beautifully than truly

observes,--

To sympathies, which soothe and bless
Our life from day to day,
Which throw, with silent tenderness,
Fresh flowers across our way,
The heart must ever fondly cling:
But can the poet's sweetest string
Their loveliness display?
No--nor could Titian's self supply
Their living presence, once gone by.

The air, in which we breathe and live,
Eludes our touch and sight;
The fairest flowers their fragrance give
To stillness, and to night;
The softest sounds that music flings,
In passing, from her heaven-plumed wings,
Are trackless in their flight!
And thus life's sweetest bliss is known
To silent, grateful thought alone.

This mournful event, combined with discouraging prospects of a mercantile nature, induced our author to retire from commercial pursuits on his own behalf; and in 1810 he obtained a situation as a clerk in the Woodbridge bank, which he still holds.

Soon after Mr. Barton had entered upon his present situation, he began "to commit the sin of rhyme," and a new provincial paper being established about this time, it became the vehicle of his effusions: by degrees our young poet became bold enough to send a short piece now and then to a London paper, and at last, in 1812, ventured on an anonymous volume, entitled *Metrical Effusions*, 250 copies of which were printed by a bookseller of Woodbridge, and sold within the immediate circle of our author's acquaintance. In 1818, Mr. Barton printed, by subscription, an elegant volume, in elephant octavo, of *Poems by an Amateur*, of which 150 only were struck off, and none ever sold at the shops. Encouraged by the very flattering manner in which these impressions of his poems were received by his friends, our author at last ventured to publish, in a small volume, *Poems, by Bernard Barton*, which was very favourably noticed by the literary journals, and, being afterwards made still more known by an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, has now reached a *third* edition. He afterwards published, in a handsome octavo volume, his *Napoleon and other Poems*; and subsequently a volume of poems, entitled *A Widow's Tale*, which appeared in an early month of the present year.

Such has been the literary career of Bernard Barton. If it have not left behind it the brilliant track of other poetical comets, it has been less erratic in its course; and if it have not been irradiated by the full blaze of a noonday sun, it has nevertheless been illumined by the silver lustre of the queen of night; and his Parnassian vespers may be said to possess all the mild and soothing beauties of the evening star. If his muse have not always reached the sunward path of the soaring eagle, it is no extravagant praise to say, that she has often emulated the sublimity of his aerial flight. But the great charm thrown around the effusions of the Suffolk bard is that "lucid veil" of morality and religion which "covers but not conceals"--that "silver net-work," through which his poetic "apples of gold" shine with an adventitious beauty, which even the gorgeous ornaments so profusely lavished by a Byron or a Moore would fail to invest them.

There is a fame which owes its spell
To popular applause alone;
Which seems on lip and tongue to dwell,
And finds--in others' breath--its own;
For such the eager worldling sighs,
And this the fickle world supplies.

There is a nobler fame--which draws
Its purer essence from the heart;
Which only seeks that calm applause
The virtuous and the wise impart:
Such fame beyond the grave shall live:
But this the world can never give.

--B. BARTON.

We have alluded to the amiable character of our poet; that his modesty is equal to his merit, the following extract, from a letter to a friend, will afford a pleasing evidence. Speaking of his literary career, he says, "it has been marked by an indulgence on the part of the public, and the dispensers of literary fame, which I never anticipated. When I consider that only about three years have elapsed since I avowed myself an author, I am really surprised at the notice my trivial productions have received, and the numerous acquaintance to which they have, by correspondence, introduced me. Much of this, I dare say, is owing to my quakerism; and to that, unquestionably, I was indebted for the article in the Edinburgh Review, and the more recent passing notice in the Quarterly. Still, as I do not believe that any outré or adventitious source of attraction would have alone procured me the attention I have found, I would hope it may partly have arisen from their simple, unaffected appeal to those quiet, domestic, secluded feelings, which endear the still undercurrent of existence--in short, to my being content to make the best I could of the homely and confined materials to which my situation has given me access, without affecting scholarship, or aiming at romantic embellishment. There is nothing like simple truth and nature, after all; and he who is satisfied with simply and faithfully describing what he actually sees, feels, and, thinks, may always hope to appeal successfully to the unsophisticated heart." [4]

We here conclude our notice of the bard of Woodbridge; and should this brief account excite the interest of our readers to become better acquainted with this "living author," we refer them to the whole-length portrait painted by himself, and held up to view in every page of his poems.

[1] Poems, by B. Barton, p.190, 3rd edit.

[2] One of these sisters is the present Mrs. Hack, favourably known as the authoress of several useful and highly interesting works for children. See some introductory verses to her, prefixed to the third edition of Mr. Barton's "Poems." His brother John has also distinguished himself by one or two judicious pamphlets on the situation and circumstances of the poor.

[3] Poems, by B. Barton, p. 133, 3rd edit.

[4] Time's Telescope, p. 18, vol. xi.

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RETROSPECTIVE GLEANINGS.

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THE GREAT FIRE OF 1666.

The fire of London broke out on Sunday morning, September 2, 1666, O.S., and being impelled by strong winds, raged with irresistible fury nearly four days and nights; nor was it entirely mastered till the fifth morning after it began. The conflagration commenced at the house of one Farryner, a baker, in Pudding-lane, near [New] Fish-street-hill, and within ten houses of Thames-street, into which it spread within a few hours; nearly the whole of the contiguous buildings being of timber, lath, and plaster, and the whole neighbourhood presenting little else than closely confined passages and narrow alleys. The fire quickly spread, and was not to be conquered by any human means, "Then, (says a contemporary writer,) then the city did shake indeed, and the inhabitants did tremble, and flew away in great amazement from their houses, lest the flames should devour them: _rattle, rattle, rattle_, was the noise which the fire struck upon the ear round about, as if there had been a thousand iron chariots beating upon the stones. You might see the houses _tumble, tumble, tumble_, from one end of the street to the other, with a great crash, leaving the foundations open to the view of the heavens." [5]

The destructive fury of this conflagration was never, perhaps, exceeded in any part of the world, by any fire originating in accident. _Within the walls_, it consumed almost five-sixths of the whole city; and _without_ the walls it cleared a space nearly as extensive as the one-sixth part left unburnt within. Scarcely a single building that came within the range of the flames was left standing. Public buildings, churches, and dwelling-houses, were alike involved in one common fate.

In the summary account of this vast devastation, given in one of the inscriptions on the Monument, and which was drawn up from the reports of the surveyors appointed after the fire, it is stated, that "The ruins of the city were 436 acres, [viz. 333 acres within the walls, and 63 in the liberties of the city;] that, of the six-and-twenty wards, it utterly destroyed fifteen, and left eight others shattered and half burnt; and that it consumed 400 streets, 13,200 dwelling-houses, 89 churches [besides chapels; 4 of] the city gates, Guildhall, many public structures, hospitals, schools, libraries, and a vast number of stately edifices." The immense property destroyed in this dreadful time cannot be estimated at less than _ten millions_ sterling. Amid all the confusion and multiplied dangers that arose from the fire, it does not appear that more than _six_ persons lost their lives. Calamitous as were the immediate consequences of this dreadful fire, its _remote effects_ have proved an inconcalculable blessing to subsequent generations. To this conflagration may be attributed the complete destruction of the _plague_, which, the year before only, swept off 68,590 persons!! To this tremendous fire we owe most of our grand public structures--the regularity and beauty of our streets--and, finally, the great salubrity and extreme cleanliness of a large part of the city of London.

In relation to this awful calamity we add the following remarks:--Heaven be praised (says Mr. Malcolm[6]) old London _was burnt_. Good reader, turn to the ancient prints, in order to see what it has been; observe those hovels convulsed; imagine the chambers within them, and wonder why the plague, the leprosy, and the sweating-sickness raged. Turn then to the prints illustrative of our present dwellings, and be happy. The misery of 1665 must have operated on the minds of the legislature and the citizens, when they rebuilt and inhabited their houses. The former enacted many salutary clauses for the preservation of health, and would have done more, had not the public rejected that which was for their benefit; those who preferred high habitations and narrow dark streets

had them. It is only to be lamented that we are compelled to suffer for their folly. These errors are now frequently partially removed by the exertion of the Corporation of London; but a complete reformation is impossible. It is to the improved dwellings composed of brick, the wainscot or papered walls, the high ceilings, the boarded floors, and large windows, and cleanliness, that we are indebted for the general preservation of health since 1666. From that auspicious year the very existence of the natives of London improved; their bodies moved in a large space of pure air; and, finding every thing clean and new around them, they determined to keep them so. Previously-unknown luxuries and improvements in furniture were suggested; and a man of moderate fortune saw his house vie with, nay, superior to, the old palaces of his governors. When he paced his streets, he felt the genial western breeze pass him, rich with the perfumes of the country, instead of the stench described by Erasmus; and looking upward, he beheld the beautiful blue of the air, variegated with fleecy clouds, in place of projecting black beams and plaster, obscured by vapour and smoke.

The streets of London must have been dangerously dark during the winter nights before it was burnt; lanterns with candles were very sparingly scattered, nor was light much better distributed even in the new streets previously to the 18th century. Globular lamps were introduced by Michael Cole, who obtained a patent in July, 1708.

We conclude the illustrations of this day with a singular opinion of the author just quoted. Speaking of the burning of London, he says, "This subject may be allowed to be familiar to me, and I have perhaps had more than common means of judging; and I now declare it to be my full and decided opinion, that London _was burnt by government, to annihilate the plague_, which was grafted in every crevice of the hateful old houses composing it."

[5] The progress of the fire might have been stopped, but for the foolish conduct of the Lord Mayor, who refused to give orders for pulling down some houses, _without the consent of the owners_. Buckets and engines were of no use, from the confined state of the streets.

[6] "Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London in the Eighteenth Century," vol. ii. p. 378.

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THE SKETCH BOOK

NO. XLV.

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BEHIND THE SCENES; OR, A BREAKFAST IN NEWGATE.

(_Concluded from page 134 _.)

No further delay was allowed. The sheriffs moved on, the ordinary, the culprits, and the officers did the same; and that class of attendants to which I belonged followed. I shall not easily forget the circumstances of this brief, but melancholy progress. The faltering step--the deep-drawn sigh--the mingling exclamations of anguish and devotion which marked the advance of the victims--the deep tones of the reverend gentleman who now commenced reading a portion of the burial service, and

the tolling of the prison bell, which, as we proceeded through some of the most dreary passages of the gaol, burst on the ear, rendered the whole spectacle impressive beyond description. Few steps sufficed to conduct us to the small room, or entrance-hall, into which the debtor's door opens, and from this we saw the ladder which the criminals were to ascend, and the scaffold on which they were to die. I was on the alert to detect any sudden emotion which this spectacle might cause, but could not perceive that it had the slightest effect. The minds of the sufferers had been so prepared, that a partial view of the machine to which they were being conducted, seemed to give no additional shock. No further pause was deemed necessary. The clock was striking eight, and the ordinary and the youth first brought to the press-room, immediately passed up the ladder. To the two culprits that remained, the gentleman whom I have already mentioned offered his services, and filled up with a prayer the little interval which elapsed, before the second was conducted to the platform.

I heard from without the murmur of awe, of expectation, and pity, which ran through the crowd in front of the prison, and stepping on a small erection to the left of the door, gained a momentary glimpse of a portion of the immense multitude, who, uncovered, and in breathless silence, gazed on the operations of the executioners. I retreated just as the third halter had been adjusted. The finisher of the law was in the act of descending, when the under-sheriff addressed him--

Is everything quite ready?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then take care and draw the bolt out smartly.--Now, don't bungle it."

"No, sir--you may depend upon it," was the answer. And the obsequious anxiety of the hangman to seem polite and obliging, his apparent zeal to give satisfaction, though very natural seemed to me not a little curious.

Prayers, which had been interrupted for a moment, while the last awful ceremony was in progress, were resumed. As he read them, I saw the clergyman fix his eye on the executioner with a peculiar expression. He drew his handkerchief from his pocket, and passed it slightly over his upper lip. This was the fatal signal. A lumbering noise, occasioned by the falling of part of the apparatus, announced that it had been obeyed.

In that moment, a rush from the scaffold forced me from the door. The sheriffs, the under-sheriff, the ordinary, the gentleman who had assisted him in preparing the sufferers for eternity, and several other persons quitted the platform as expeditiously as possible, that they might not behold the final agonies of the unhappy men. Sir Thomas took me by the arm as he passed, and signified that he wished me to accompany him. I did so. Again I marched through the passages which I had recently traversed. Two minutes brought me to the door of the room to which I had first been conducted. Here my friend accosted me with his natural firmness of tone, which before had been considerably subdued by humane emotions, and said--

"You must breakfast with us."

I started at the unsentimental idea of eating the moment after quitting so awful a spectacle, as that which I have attempted to describe. But I had not sufficient energy to resist the good will which rather unceremoniously handed me in. Here I found the other sheriff, the ordinary, the under-sheriff, the city-marshal, and one or two of the individuals I had previously met, already seated.

"Well, it is all over," said Sir Thomas, as he took his seat at the

table.

"Yes, it is," said the ordinary, in the same tone which I had heard a few moments before, and admired as appropriately solemn. "It is all over, and--" putting his cup and saucer to the under-sheriff, who prepared to pour out the tea--"I am very glad of it."

"I hope you do not mean the breakfast is all over," remarked the sheriff, whose wit I had previously admired, "for I have had none yet."

The moment had not arrived at which humour like this could be duly appreciated, and I did not observe that any of the company gave even that sort of note of face for a laugh which we had all used half an hour before.

Our conversation turned naturally on the manner in which the sufferers had conducted themselves; on the wishes they had expressed, and the confessions they had made.

But while I looked on the hospitably spread table, I could not help connecting operations rather different in their character, which must have been going on at the same moment. "In my mind's eye," I saw the attendants carrying the fowl and eggs to the breakfast table, while the sheriffs and their guests were conducting the sufferers to the scaffold.

From what I have already said, it must be inferred that the first speeches which accomplished the circuit of the table, were of a very serious character. But, mingled with them, some common breakfast-table requests and civilities caught my attention, as singular from their association. The performance of duties the most important cannot relieve man from the necessity of claiming his "daily bread," and I do not know that it is any reproach to a clergyman that he is not distinguished by versatility of manner. The abrupt transition from the gravity of the pulpit to the flippancy of the bar I should not admire; but the consistency of the reverend gentleman here attracted my notice. I had been just listening to him while he repeated, with devotional elongation, the solemn words of the burial service; and when I heard him with the same elongation of sound, address himself to me--"Shall I trouble you to cut up the fowl--can I help you to some tongue, sir?" I confess that I felt tempted not to laugh, but to comment on the oddly-contrasted feelings which the same voice, thus variously exerted, inspired.

Horror-struck, as I had been, at the first mention of the unfeeling word "breakfast," my excuse for staying was to see if others could eat. That I should take food was quite out of the question. But the wing of a fowl having been put on my plate, I thought it would be rudeness to reject it. I began to eat, inwardly reflecting that my abstinence would nothing benefit those whose sufferings I had still in my memory; and improving on this reconciling thought, I presently detected myself holding my plate for a second supply. "O sentiment!" I mentally exclaimed, "what art thou when opposed to a breakfast?"

By the time we had disposed of our first cup of tea, we had got through the pious reflections which each of us had to offer on the particular occasion which had brought us together, and conversation started in a livelier vein. The gentleman who had assisted the ordinary, by praying with the culprits, gaily remarked to him, with a benevolent chuckle on his face, that they (meaning himself and the reverend gentleman) had succeeded in refuting the Unitarian principles which A---- (one of the sufferers) had for some time avowed. The look which answered this speech, reminded me, I know not why, of the organist's comment on the organ blower's assertion that they had played famously well.

"Ay," said the minister, "I knew it would be so. I told him so

immediately after sentence. But, after all, what can we say for a recantation dictated by the dread of early death?"

"Very true!" was my exclamation, as the reverend gentleman looked as if he expected me to say something.

"At any rate," whispered a gentleman well-known in the city, with whom I had formerly done a little business in the funds, "it gives a man something of an _option_."

This technical application of a favourite stock-exchange word produced a general smile round the table, and I could not help contributing to lengthen it by replying--

"You mean, perhaps, that it gives him a _call_." But the lively sheriff, of whose witticisms I have already made honourable mention, cut me out of my share of applause altogether, as clean as a whistle, by instantly rejoining--

"The _put_ you mean, for, in this case, the party was going for the _fall_."

Of course there was no standing this, and we all joined in the laugh.

We were however brought back to gravity through the alarm expressed by the minister, at the idea of his having taken cold through officiating that morning without his wig. This introduced, I cannot tell how, some remarks on the head, which led to a disquisition on craniology. On this subject the witty sheriff was very amusing. _I_ said some tolerably lively things; but the ordinary beat us all hollow, when it was contended that the disposition and the mind might be known from the exterior of the skull, by remarking that he had now an additional reason to regret having come there without his wig.

With this epigrammatic touch he took his leave, I and the rest of the company laughing heartily, and having eaten as heartily as we then laughed. The facetious sheriff now had it all his own way, and said several things, nearly, or perhaps, quite as good as those which I have already placed on record. We were thus pleasantly engaged, when the aide-de-camp of the gallant officer in the blue and gold,--one of the city marshal's-men, entered to announce that it was past nine o'clock, and to ask if any of the company chose to see the bodies taken down.

"The bodies!" I repeated to myself, and the application of that word to those whom I had previously heard mentioned but by their names, recalled my thoughts which had somehow strayed from the business of the morning into unlooked-for cheerfulness, and presented, in that simple expression, an epitome of all that had moved my wonder, curiosity, and commiseration.

Again we passed through those parts of the prison which I had twice before traversed. We advanced with a quicker step than when following those whom we now expected to see brought to us. But with all the expedition we could use, on reaching the room from which the scaffold could be seen, we found the "bodies" already there. Nor was this, in my opinion, the least striking scene which the morning brought under my observation. The dead men were extended side by side, on the stone floor. The few persons present gazed on them in silence, duly impressed with the melancholy spectacle. But in this part of the building a copper is established, in which a portion of the provisions for its inmates is prepared. There was a savoury smell of soup, which we could not help inhaling while we gazed on death. The cooks too were in attendance, and though they, as became them, did all in their power to look decorously dismal, well as they managed their faces, they could not so divest themselves of their professional peculiarities, as not to awaken

thoughts which involuntarily turned to ludicrous or festive scenes. Their very costume was at variance with the general gloom, and no sympathy could at once repress the jolly rotundity of their persons.

I turned my eyes from them, wishing to give myself wholly up to religious meditation during the moments of my stay. Just then the executioner approach, ed. Sir Thomas desired him to remove the cap from the face of one of the sufferers. He prepared to comply--but his first act was to place his hand on the more prominent features and press them together. This, on inquiry being made, I learned was done that the bystanders might not be shocked by witnessing any distortion of countenance. Sir Thomas smiled at the anxiety of the man to make it appear that his work had been well performed. The cap was then withdrawn. There was nothing terrific in the aspect of the deceased. I recognized the features of the young man who had been so wildly, so violently agitated, when about to suffer. Now pain was at an end, apprehension was no more, and he seemed in the enjoyment of sweet repose. His countenance was tranquil as that of a sleeping infant, and happier than the infant, his rest was not in danger of being disturbed. While reflecting on the change which a single hour had sufficed to produce, I could hardly help regarding as idle the the sorrow, the pity, and the self-reproach for momentary forgetfulness of these, which I had felt and breathed within that period. I almost accused the sufferers of weakness, for showing themselves depressed as they had been, while I felt disposed, seeing their griefs were, to all appearance, terminated for ever, to demand with the poet,

"And what is death we so unwisely fear?"

and to answer as he replies to himself,

"An end of all our busy tumults here."

Knight's Quarterly Magazine.

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JEU D'ESPRIT.

(_For the Mirror._)

A sanctified hermit was heard to complain
That raiment and food he no longer could gain.
"For," quoth he "in this village the famine's so great
That there's not enough left e'en a mousetrap to bait."

A neighbour who happened to bear his sad plaint
Addressed in the following manner the saint:
"The nation will keep thee to support splendour's throne,
And interest will pay thee, because thou'rt _alone_."--(a loan.)

W.G.

* * * * *

The Months.

[Illustration: September]

SEPTEMBER.

"Now sober Autumn, with lack lustre eye,
Shakes with a chiding blast the yellow leaf,
And hears the woodman's song
And early sportsman's foot."

September is generally accounted the finest and most settled month in the year. The mornings and evenings are cool, but possess a delightful freshness, while the middle of the day is pleasantly warm and open. Hence the well-known proverb:

"September blows soft till the fruit's in the loft."

The destruction of the partridge commences with this month, large coveys of which may now be seen about the stubble fields, and in the corn, if any be left standing. These birds get very shy towards the end of the month, in consequence of being repeatedly fired at. Sportsmen, therefore, prefer the early part of the season, before the birds get too wild. Partridges, while the corn is standing, have a secure retreat from their numerous enemies; but when the harvest is gathered in, they resort in the day-time to groves and covers. At night, however, they return to the stubble to avoid foxes and weasels, &c., and there nestle together.

The swallow now takes his departure for milder regions, and many other of the small billed birds that feed on insects disappear when the cold weather commences. The throistle, the red-wing, and the fieldfare, which migrated in March, now return; and the ring-ouzel arrives from the Welsh and Scottish Alps to winter in more sheltered situations. All these birds feed upon berries, of which there is a plentiful supply, in our woods, during a great part of their stay. The throistle and the red-wing are delicate eating. The Romans kept thousands of them together in aviaries, and fed them with a sort of paste made of bruised figs and flour, &c., to improve the delicacy and flavour of their flesh. These aviaries were so contrived as to admit but little light; and every object which might tend to remind them of their former liberty was carefully kept out of sight, such as the fields, the woods, the birds, or whatever might disturb the repose necessary for their improvement. Under this management, these birds fattened to the great profit of their proprietors, who sold them to Roman epicures for three denarii, or about two shillings each of our money.

Towards the end of September the leaves of trees begin to put on their autumnal dress. Mr. Stillingfleet remarks, that, about the 25th, the leaves of the plane tree were tawny; of the hazel, yellow; of the oak, yellowish green; of the sycamore, dirty brown; of the maple, pale yellow; of the ash, a fine lemon-colour; of the elm, orange; of the hawthorn, tawny yellow; of the cherry, red; of the horn-beam, bright yellow; of the willow, still hoary. Yet, many of these tints cannot be considered complete, in some seasons, till the middle or latter end of October.

When the harvest is gathered in, the husbandman prepares for seed-time; and the fields are again ploughed up for the winter corn, rye, and wheat, which are sown in September and October. The entrances to

bee-hives are straightened, to prevent the access of wasps and other pilferers.

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ASTRONOMICAL OCCURRENCES

FOR SEPTEMBER, 1827.

(_For the Mirror_.)

The sun enters the cardinal and equinoctial sign Libra, on the 23rd at 8 h. 24 min. evening, once more bringing our day and night to an equal length; when 8 deg. of Gemini are due east, and 4 deg. of Aquarius due south, all the planets having a direct motion, and being below the horizon, Herschel excepted. The astrological aspects at this ingress are as follow:--Saturn is located in the third house; Mercury, Venus, and Mars in the fifth, the Sun, Moon, and Jupiter are in the sixth, while Herschel occupies the ninth.

Mercury is in conjunction with Mars on the 4th, at 1 h. morning; on the 6th with the fixed star, Regulus, or Corheoni; with Venus on the 18th, at midnight; and in superior conjunction with the Sun on the 24th, at 9-1/2 h. evening.

Venus rises at the beginning of the month about 4-1/2 h. morning, and towards the end at 5-1/2 h.

Mars rises through the month at 3 1/2 h. morning.

Jupiter is now gradually receding from our view, and will ere long be totally surrounded with the brighter beams of the Sun; his eclipses are therefore not visible.

Saturn is apparently now fast approaching this part of our hemisphere; he rises on the 1st at 12-1/2 h. and on the 31st at 10-3/4 h. evening.

Herschel culminates on the 1st at 9h. 6m. and on the 31st at 7h. 12m.

If the reader will refer to page 131 of the 8th vol. of the MIRROR, he will find his attention invited to the relative positions of the principal northern stars and constellations for September last year: their present appearance is precisely similar. Pasche.

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SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS

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"THE WOODSMAN."

A German newspaper contains a strange account--avouched with as much apparent accuracy almost as those which concerned the mermaids lately seen off our own coast, or the sea-serpent that visits the shores of America--of a conversion lately worked upon the morals of a famous robber, by a supernatural visitation in the forest of Wildeshausen. The hero of the tale, whose name is Conrad Braunsvelt, but who was better

known by the cognomen of "The Woodsman," was drinking one evening at a small inn on the borders of the forest of Wildeshausen, when a traveller, well mounted, and carrying a portmanteau on his horse behind him, came up by the road which runs from the direction of Hanover. The stranger, after inquiring if he could be accommodated with a bed, led his horse away to the stable, and in doing this, left his portmanteau upon a bench within the house--which Conrad immediately, as a preliminary measure, tried the weight of. He had just discovered that the valise was unusually heavy, when the return of the traveller compelled him to desist; but his curiosity, without any farther effort, was not long ungratified; for the stranger soon opened it before him, as it seemed, to take out some articles which were necessary for his use at night; and displayed in the process several large bags--larger almost than the machine would have seemed able to contain--which were evidently full of gold or silver money. The cupidity of Conrad was excited by this view, and he would gladly have at once secured the prize even at the hazard of a personal struggle with the stranger; but the people of the inn (according to his account afterwards) were such as would have expected a portion of the spoil. For this reason, although unwillingly, and trusting himself to sleep little, lest by any chance the prey should escape him, he abandoned his design of robbery, for that night; and on the next morning, having learned which way the stranger travelled--for the latter exhibited no suspicions or apprehension of those about him, but spoke freely of his intended road, though he never mentioned anything of the charge he carried--having ascertained this fact, he allowed the rider to depart, and after a short time, followed by a shorter track through the forest, which was practicable only to persons on foot, and which would enable him, had he even started later, easily to overtake the mounted traveller. Now, knowing that his nearer road saved, as has been noticed, full a league of ground, the "Woodsman" moved on slowly; and accounted that, when he reached the point at which they were to meet, he should still have some time to wait for the stranger: on emerging, however, into the high road, he found him to his surprise _already_ approaching; and, what was still more extraordinary, mounted upon a _black_ horse, when that on which he had left the inn, had certainly seemed to be a brown. The portmanteau, however, which was all that Conrad looked to, was still behind the traveller, and on he came riding as if nothing at all was the matter: the "Woodsman" never hung back, or staid reflecting, but levelled his rifle, and called upon him to "Stand and deliver," or his next moment was his last. The traveller upon this pulled up his horse with an air of great coolness; and, looking upon Conrad, said something, which, as the robber since says, he verily believes was--"That he hoped he had not kept him _waiting_!"--or words to that purpose; but he was too busy at the time to pay much attention to discourse. "Do you know who it is you are going to rob though?" asked the stranger, addressing the "Woodsman" directly. "Not I," replied the latter, boldly: "but, if you were der Dyvel himself, descend from that horse, and deliver the bags of money that you have on you, or you shall die!" Upon this, the black rider said no more; but dismounted quietly, although he had pistols in his holsters; and Conrad, immediately taking the portmanteau from the horse's back, was so eager to be sure of the contents, that he drew his knife, and cut the fastenings on the spot. In the meantime, the traveller might have fallen upon him unawares, and to advantage, but the "Woodsman" endeavoured to keep an eye upon him, while he went on forcing the valise open as well as he could. At length the straps were all cut, and the robber thrust his hands in eagerly, making sure to find the bags which he had seen the preceding evening, for he had distinctly felt them from the outside. But, when he drew out his hands, there was in one only a _halter_, and in the other a piece of brass in the shape of a _gibbet_! And, at the same moment, a gripe was laid upon his arm; and a deep low voice, which seemed to be close beside him, pronounced the words, "_This shall be thy fate_!" When he turned round in horror and consternation, the horse, and the rider, and the portmanteau, all were gone; and he found himself within a few paces of the inn door which he had quitted in the morning,

with the halter and the brass gibbet still remaining in his hand. The narrative states farther, that this horrible rencontre so affected Conrad Braunsvelt, that he forthwith delivered himself up to the rangers of the forest, and was sent to Cassel to await the pleasure of the Grand Duke. He is now confined in an asylum for repentant criminals, desirous of being restored to society; and his miraculous warning is noted in the records of the institution.--_Monthly Magazine_.

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CAMBRIAN CONVIVIALITY.

"Cloth must we wear,
Eat beef, and drink beer,
Though the dead go to bier."

Old Ballad.

There is something refreshing, and not a little inspiriting, in the scanty relics of those hearty customs and pastimes which imparted such a manly tone to the character of our ancestors; but now, like the ruined castle, or the old ivied abbey, they have become objects of admiration rather than sources of delight. Fifty years ago, the inhabitants of North Wales, a rude and blunt race even now, were far less sophisticated by modern refinement than they are at present; and it was then a common matter for the _Penteulu_, or head of the family, to dine in the large stone hall of the mansion--he and his own particular friends at a table, raised on a _Dais_--and his numerous tenants and dependants at another table running the whole length of the said hall. Then came the wassailing--worthy of the days of Arthur--wine for the upper table; ale, medd, (_mead_) and spirits for the other; and after all came the friendly contest at some manly game--wrestling, racing, pitching the bar, or the like. At a period somewhat later, these boisterous pastimes began to degenerate; and the Welsh squire became more polished, but not, perhaps, more happy. Still the custom of inordinate potation fondly clung to him. Immediately contiguous to every mansion of any magnitude was erected a summerhouse, usually situated in a spot, selected for the beauty of the scene which it commanded; and to this _sanctum_ did the gentlemen retire after dinner, to enjoy, unrestrained by the presence of the ladies, a full indulgence in that boisterous carousal, which their bluff hearts so dearly loved. But these good and glorious customs have died the death, and gone the way, of all perishable things; _they_ are gone, as are those jovial souls who gave them life and buoyancy; but the eternal hills, which echoed to their merriment and glee--they remain unaltered by time, and unshaken by the storms which have passed over them.

Yet is there still much jovial heartiness in the festive revelry of the mountaineers. One scene, in which I was a participator, I will endeavour to portray--it is impressed on my memory by more than one token of grateful reminiscence. It was in the summer of 1825 that I left London for a few weeks, and sought among my native hills a reparation of the wear and tear of half-a-dozen years of hard and unceasing toil. Two days after my arrival In Merionethshire was celebrated the birthday of Robert Williams Vaughan, Esq., of Nannau, the only son of Sir Robert Williams Vaughan, Bart., and member for the county; a gentleman of whom it may be truly said, that his heart is replete with every noble and benevolent attribute, and that his mind is dignified by practical wisdom, sound sense, and energy to direct, for the benefit of his dependents, the fine and Christian virtues which he possesses. "Come up to Nannau," is his encouraging address to the labourer, when the hardships of winter are pressing upon the poor: "Come up to Nannau, show me that you are willing

to work, and I will give you your wages." It is for benevolence like this, well and usefully exercised, that Sir Robert Vaughan is especially remarkable, as well also for all those qualities which adorn and dignify the British country gentleman. Always careful of the welfare, habits, and comforts of the poor around him; patronizing the industry, ingenuity, and good conduct of his more humble countrymen, and ministering to the wants of the sick and the poor; hospitable in the extreme; kind, affable, and friendly to all, he fulfils in every respect the happy duties of the wealthy British landholder; and by his generous courtesy he has ensured to himself the perfect esteem of every person who knows him. Living in the midst of a cheerful and contented tenantry, the chieftain as it were of a devoted clan, the proprietor of Nannau may be truly termed a happy man. The empty blandishments of the world have no charms for him, nor have its ephemeral pleasures any allurements; for, like the gallant knight of Peugwern, when invited by Henry the Seventh to share the honors of his court, for services rendered at Bosworth Field, he would meekly but promptly reply, "Sire! I love to dwell among mine own people." Such is Sir Robert Vaughan of Nannau, whose memory will be long and fondly cherished by those who have enjoyed his friendship, and witnessed his calm, manly, and useful virtues.

We sat down to dinner, about forty in number, occupying two tables placed parallel to each other, in the spacious dining-room of the mansion. Choice fish of every kind; venison from Nannau Park, celebrated for the delicious flavour of its fat bucks; mountain-mutton, from the fertile pastures of Llanfachreth; the noble sirloin, and, in fact, every substantial delicacy that wealth could procure, pressed even to groaning the broad tables of our host; while the harper in the hall twanged his instrument with a force and a fury, that plainly showed his previous intimacy with the good cheer of the place. But noble and magnificent as our entertainment was in the eating department, it was infinitely surpassed by that which was devoted to the orgies of Bacchus. No sooner was the brief and scarcely audible grace pronounced by the chaplain, than in marched old Pearson, the gray-headed butler, bearing in each hand a goblet, in form like an acorn, and fashioned of the dark polished oak of the far-famed Spirits-Blasted Tree,[7] richly ornamented with appropriate silver emblems. One of these was placed reversed by the side of the president and croupier of each table, and presently afterwards flanked by a huge silver tankard of foaming ale, strong enough almost to blow into the air a first-rate man-of-war. Filling this goblet, which held very nearly a pint, the president made his speech to the health and happiness of the young 'squire, and draining it dry, passed it on to his left-hand neighbour. The croupier did the same, and like the great bear of Bradwardine, did the acorn of Nannau begin to make its rounds, in a manner quite as fearful to me as was the terrific approach of the bear aforesaid to the heir of Waverley Honor. Unfortunately for me, I sat between two determined and well-seasoned toppers, who took especial care that I should not only fill to each toast, but drain the cup to the very bottom; so that, novice as I was in this sort of hilarity, I found myself, in a very short time, lying down under a laburnum tree in the lawn, and composing myself very comfortably--no, not very comfortably--to sleep. I had my sleep, however; and when I awoke and re-entered the house, a merry group of guests had surrounded the harper in the hall, and were singing Penillion at full stretch, to the now unsteady and somewhat discordant accompaniment of the minstrel; the laugh was of course against me, but good-nature, rather than contempt, characterised the bantering, and I bore it all in good part. The party broke up about eleven, and before midnight I was at home, after a magnificent walk of three miles, over the mountains, in the moonlight.

The Inspector.

[7] This was an old blasted oak, standing a few years ago in Nannau Park, to the infinite horrification of the honest mountaineers. Tradition had imbued it with a terrible and awful influence--for, some four or five hundred years ago, the gigantic skeleton of a

warrior was found incased in its trunk, and grasping with its bony fingers a long and ponderous sword. It was blown down one stormy night, and the wood has been manufactured into a variety of articles.

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THE SELECTOR, AND LITERARY NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

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NEW SOUTH WALES.

The following observations, recorded in Mr. Cunningham's Two Years in New South Wales, are as valuable as they are interesting; for hitherto we have known but little of the natural history of that country:--

Trees.--Trees here appear to follow the same laws as other vegetable substances, regarding the effects they produce upon the soil wherein they grow. It has long been remarked in America, that on the forests being cut down, young trees of a different species sprout up in place of the old ones; and here the same remark, in a great measure, holds good,--acacias very commonly making their appearance on land that has been once under cultivation, and afterwards permitted to relapse into a state of nature. From this circumstance it should seem, that trees, like other vegetables, extract a particular substance from the ground, which substance it is necessary should be restored before the same species of tree can be readily grown a second time,--a restoration to be effected, perhaps, by such chemical changes in the constituent particles of the soil as may arise from the cultivation of other species.

Fruits.--Of native fruits, we possess raspberries equal in flavour and not otherwise distinguishable from the English. They grow plentifully on the alluvial banks of Hunter's river, and supply a yearly Christmas feast to the birds. Our native currants are strongly acidulous, like the cranberry, and make an excellent preserve when mixed with the raspberry. They grow on low shrubs not higher than the whortleberry bush. Our cherries are destitute both of pleasant taste and flavour, and have the stone adhering to their outside. Our native pears are tolerably tempting to the look, but defy both mastication and digestion, being the pendulous seed-pods of a tree here, and their outer husks of such a hard woody consistence, as to put the edge of even a well-tempered knife to proof of its qualities in slicing them down. The burwan is a nut much relished by our natives, who prepare it by roasting and immersion in a running stream, to free it from its poisonous qualities. The jibbong is another tasteless fruit, as well as the five-corners, much relished by children. The wild potato strongly resembles the species now in use in Europe, but the stem and leaf are essentially different. It grows on the loose flooded alluvial margins of the rivers, and at one period of the year composes the chief sustenance of the natives, having the watery look and taste of the yam. Of foreign fruits now climatized we possess a great variety. Here are oranges, lemons, citrons, nectarines, apricots, peaches, plums, cherries, figs, loquats, grenadillos, quinces, pears, apples, mulberries, pomegranates, grapes, olives, raspberries, strawberries, bananas, guavas, pineapples, and English and Cape gooseberries and currants. Of shell-fruits we have the almond, walnut, chestnut, and filbert; and of other garden fruits, strawberries, melons, peppers, &c.

Melons and pumpkins will absolutely overrun you, if you do not give them

most bounteous scope, and you need want neither water nor musk-melons for six or eight months yearly on an average, if you duly time the sowings. Nothing can exceed their rich juiciness and flavour, and the rapidity of their growth is almost miraculous, when a few showers of rain temper the hot days. The pumpkin makes an excellent substitute for the apple in a pie, when soured and sweetened to a proper temper by lemons and sugar. The black children absolutely dance and scream when they see one, pumpkin and sugar being their delight. To the half of a shrivelled pumpkin hanging at the door of my tent on my first essay in settling, one of our sooty satyrs could do nothing for some minutes but fidget and skip; and with his eyes sparkling, and countenance beaming with ecstasy, exclaim, "Dam my eye, pambucan; dam my eye, pambucan!" such being the nearest point they can attain to the right pronunciation of their favourite fruit.

Birds.--We are not moved here with the deep mellow note of the blackbird, poured out from beneath some low stunted bush; nor thrilled with the wild warblings of the thrush, perched on the top of some tall sapling; nor charmed with the blithe carol of the lark as we proceed early afield; none of our birds at all rivalling these divine songsters in realising the poetical idea of the "music of the grove;" while "parrots' chattering" must supply the place of "nightingales' singing" in the future amorous lays of our sighing Celadons. We have our lark certainly, but both his appearance and note are a most wretched parody upon the bird our English poets have made so many fine similes about. He will mount from the ground, and rise fluttering upward in the same manner, and with a few of the starting notes of the English lark; but on reaching the height of thirty feet or so, down he drops suddenly and mutely, diving into concealment among the long grass, as if ashamed of his pitiful attempt. For the pert, frisky robin, pattering and pecking against the windows in the dull days of winter, we have the lively "superb warbler," with his blue shining plumage and his long tapering tail, picking up the crumbs at our doors; while the pretty little redbills, of the size and form of the goldfinch, constitute the sparrow of our clime, flying in flocks about our houses, and building their soft downy pigmy nests in the orange, peach, and lemon trees surrounding them. Nor are we without our rural noters of the time, to call us to our early task, and warn us of evening's close. The loud and discordant noise of the laughing jackass, (or settler's clock, as he is called,) as he takes up his roost on the withered bough of one of our tallest trees, acquaints us that the sun has just dipped behind the hills, and that it is time to trudge homewards; while the plaintive notes of the curlew, and the wild and dismal screechings of the flying squirrel, skimming from branch to branch, whisper us to retire to our bedchambers. In the morning, again, the dull monotonous double note of the whew-whew, (so named from the sound of its calls,) chiming in at as regular intervals as the tick of a clock, warns us to rub our eyes and con over the tasks of the impending day, as it is but half an hour to dawn; till again the loud laughter of the jackass summons us to turn out, and take a peep at the appearance of the morning, which just begins to glimmer beyond the dusky outline of the eastern hills.

Animals.--Our wild animals are numerous, but few of them carnivorous, and none of a size to endanger human life. The native dog is generally believed to be an importation, being deficient of the false uterus or pouch characterising all our other quadrupeds. He closely resembles the Chinese dog in form and appearance, being either of a reddish or dark colour, with shaggy hair, long bushy tail, prick ears, large head, and slightly tapering nose; in size he reminds one of a shepherd's dog, running with considerable speed, and snapping in attack or defence. He does not bark, but howls in melancholy sort, when prowling in quest of prey, and has a strong and peculiar odour, which makes European dogs shy at first of attacking him, doubtless intimidated too by his snapping mode of fighting; for it is observed of poodles, and all which snap, that few other dogs are fond of engaging them. He is most destructive on

breaking in among a flock of sheep, as he bites a piece out of every one he seizes; not holding fast and worrying dead like the fox, but snapping at all he can overtake, till twenty or thirty may be killed by one dog, there being something so peculiarly venomous in their bite that few recover from it. Their cross with the tame dog forms a very useful breed for emu-hunting, and many even of the pure ones are caught young, tamed by the natives, and bred up to hunt emus and kangaroos. They have as many pups as the tame dog, littering either in some hollow log, deserted ant-hill, hole in the ground, or thick brush. They will hunt, kill, and devour a tame dog also, if a troop of them can catch him alone. A settler in the interior informed me, that, while out hunting one morning, he observed his dog running direct towards him at full speed, with two large native dogs close at his heels; and so eager were they to seize their prey, that his own dog was actually sheltered between his legs, and the native dogs within pistol-shot, before they perceived their danger. Hence he was enabled to shoot one of them. The native cat is the only other carnivorous animal we possess; but its depredations extend no farther than the poultry-yard. It is small and long-bodied, with a long tail, claws like a common cat, a nose like a pig, striped down the sides with brown and black, and dotted over with white spots. It climbs trees and preys on birds while they sleep, being a night animal.

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FARM-HOUSES ON THE SNEEUWBERG MOUNTAINS.

The farm-houses in the Sneeuwberg, and in most of the colder districts of the colony, are usually of the following description:--The house resembles a large barn divided into two or three apartments. One of these is the kitchen, which also serves for the sitting and eating apartment. In the others the family sleep; while, in the outer one already mentioned, visitors and travellers are accommodated with a rush mat, a feather bed, and a coverlet spread on the clay floor. In this situation I have often enjoyed, after a fatiguing day's ride, the most balmy repose; while a swarthy train of slaves and Hottentots were moving round the embers of the fire, wrapped in their sheepskin mantles, and dogs, cats, and fowls were trampling over my body. The more wealthy and long settled families, however, usually have the kitchen separate from their sitting-room. In such houses curtained beds, and other articles of decent furniture, are not unfrequently found; but the poorer classes are content with a few thong-bottomed chairs and stools, two or three wagon-chests, and a couple of deal tables. At one of the latter sits the mistress of the house, with a tea-urn and a chafing-dish before her, dealing out every now and then tea-water, or coffee, and elevating her sharp shrill voice occasionally to keep the dilatory slaves and Hottentots at their duty. In this same apartment is also invariably to be seen the carcass of a sheep killed in the morning, and hung up under the eye of the mistress, to be served out frugally for the day's provision as it may be required. The houses, being without any ceiling, are open to the thatch; and the rafters are generally hung full of the ears of Indian corn, leaves or rolls of tobacco, slices of dried meat, called bill tongue, &c. The last is a sort of ham from the muscular part of the thigh of the ox, or the larger species of antelopes; it is very convenient for carrying on journeys, and is found in the boor's houses in every part of the colony. It is cut into very thin slices, and eaten with bread and butter, or with bread and the melted fat of the sheep's tail, which is a common substitute for butter; either way it is no contemptible dish when one is a little hungry, and many a time I have heartily enjoyed it.

A traveller, on arriving, if it does not happen to be meal-time, is always presented with a cup of tea, without sugar, milk, or bread;

unless occasionally, when you may be favoured with a small piece of sugar-candy out of a tin snuff-box, to be kept in your mouth to sweeten the bitter beverage as it passes. When their tea and coffee are exhausted, a succedaneum is found in roasted grain, prepared in the same way as Hunt's radical coffee, which, if not very palatable, is nevertheless a refreshment to a thirsty and weary traveller. They never think of asking you to eat unless at meal-time; but then you are expected to draw in your chair, and help yourself, without invitation, in the same easy manner as one of the family. The dishes consist for the most part of mutton stewed in sheep's-tail fat, or boiled to rags; sometimes with very palatable soup, and a dish of boiled corn, maize, or pumpkin. Cayenne-pepper, vinegar, and few home-made pickles, are also usually produced to relish the simple fare, which, served up twice a day, forms, with tea-water and the _soopie_, or dram of Cape brandy, the amount of their luxuries. In this quarter of the colony, however, I found every where excellent bread; and, upon the whole, the farmers of Bruintjes-Hoogte and the Sneeuwberg appeared in much more independent and comfortable circumstances than those along the coast.

Thompson's Southern Africa.

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HOSPITAL FOR THE DUMB.

The Banian hospital at Surat is a most remarkable institution; it consists of a large plot of ground, enclosed with high walls, divided into several courts or wards, for the accommodation of animals; in sickness they are attended with the tenderest care, and find a peaceful asylum for the infirmities of age. When an animal breaks a limb, or is otherwise disabled from serving his master, he carries him to the hospital, and, indifferent to what nation or caste the owner may belong, the patient is never refused admittance. If he recover, he cannot be reclaimed, but must remain in the hospital for life, subject to the duty of drawing water for those pensioners debilitated by age or disease from procuring it for themselves. At my visit, the hospital contained horses, mules, oxen, sheep, goats, monkeys, poultry, pigeons, and a variety of birds, with an aged tortoise, who was known to have been there for seventy-five years. The most extraordinary ward was that appropriated to rats, mice, bugs, and other noxious vermin. The overseers of the hospital frequently hire beggars from the streets, for a stipulated sum, to pass a night among the fleas, lice, and bugs, on the express condition of suffering them to enjoy their feast without molestation.

Forbes's Oriental Memoirs.

* * * * *

Useful Domestic Hints

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NORFOLK PUNCH. NO. 1.

In twenty quarts of French brandy put the peels of thirty lemons and thirty oranges, pared so thin that not the least of the white is left; infuse twelve hours. Have ready thirty quarts of cold water that has been boiled; put to it fifteen pounds of double-refined sugar; and when

well mixed, pour it upon the brandy and peels, adding the juice of the oranges and of twenty-four lemons; mix well. Then strain, through a fine hair-sieve, into a very clean barrel that has held spirits, and put two quarts of new milk. Stir, and then bung it close; let it stand six weeks in a warm cellar; bottle the liquor for use, taking great care that the bottles are perfectly clean and dry, and the corks of the best quality and well put in. This liquor will keep many years, and improves by age.--_The Vintner's Guide._

NORFOLK PUNCH. NO. 2.

Pare six lemons and three Seville oranges very thin; squeeze the juice into a large jar; put to it two quarts of brandy, one of white wine, and one of milk, and one pound and a quarter of sugar. Let it be mixed, and then covered for twenty-four hours. Strain through a jelly-bag till clear, then bottle it.--_Ibid._

TO MANAGE AND IMPROVE RED PORT WINE WHEN POOR AND THIN.

If your wines be sound, but wanting in body, colour, and flavour, draw out thirty or forty gallons, and return the same quantity of young and rich wines, such its are generally brought to this country for that purpose; to a can of which put a quart of colouring, with a bottle of wine or brandy, in which half an ounce of powdered cochineal has been previously mixed. Whisk it well together, and put it in your cask, stirring it well about with a staff; and if not bright in about a week or ten days, you may fine it for use; previous to which, put in at different times a gallon of good brandy. If Port wines are short of body, put a gallon or two of brandy into each pipe, as you see necessary. If the wines be in your own stock, put it in by a quart or two at a time, as it feeds the wine better in this way than putting it in all at once; but, if your wines are in a bonded cellar, procure a funnel that will go down to the bottom of the cask, that the brandy may be completely incorporated with the wine. When your Port is thus made fine and pleasant, bottle it off, taking care to pack it in a temperate place with saw-dust or dry sand, after which it will not be proper to drink for at least two months. When laying your wines down in bottles you should never use new deal saw-dust, as that causes it to fret too much, and often communicates a strong turpentine smell through the corks to the wine.--_Ibid._

RED CURRANT WINE.

Take seventy pounds of red currants, bruised and pressed, good moist sugar forty-five pounds, water sufficient to fill up a fifteen-gallon cask, ferment; this produces a very pleasant red wine, rather tart, but keeps well.--_Ibid._

* * * * *

The Gatherer.

"I am but a _Gatherer_ and disposer of other men's stuff."--_Wotton_.

* * * * *

ON CRANIOLOGY.

In days of yore,
Laid wit and lore,
And wisdom in the wig;
But now the skull
Contains them all,
The peruke is too big.

* * * * *

"According to Julius Africanus," says Gibbon, "the world was created on the _first of September_--an opinion almost too foolish to be recorded."

* * * * *

In the memoirs of the celebrated French actor, Preville, we find the following letter, addressed by the manager of a strolling company to his prompter:--

"At last, my dear boy, here we are safe in Provins. The coach-office undertook to deliver the boxes of snow and hail. The winds and tempest came later than we expected--we even lost a zephyr. The thunder got broke on the road, and we have been forced to have fresh sodder for the two lightnings. Our divinities are well, with the exception of Love, who has got the small-pox; the Graces have been inoculated; we were obliged to leave them behind on the road, with the brick wall, which being wrapt round the sun to keep it from getting soiled, was rubbed to pieces by the sharp rays. Our rivers and sea are coming by water; and pray, when you come yourself, do not forget to bring lots of clouds with you, and a new moon. A torrent too will be wanted, for our last has most unluckily got burnt. I am anxious for a full account of all your purchases, to which you must add two yards of weeping willows. Above all, bring me a drawbridge, a fortress, and my linen, if it was not turned into tinder for the last sea-fight. Ever yours."

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