

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction. Volume 20, No. 567, Saturday, September 22, 1832.

Various

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THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

VOL. XX, NO. 567.] SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1832. [PRICE 2d.

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Public Buildings of Manchester

[Illustration: TOWN HALL. INFIRMARY. ROYAL INSTITUTION.]

PUBLIC BUILDINGS OF MANCHESTER.

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The annexed Engravings are important illustrations of the statement in a recent *Edinburgh Review*: [1]--that Lancashire from being amongst the most backward parts of England, has *worked* its way into the front rank. They are, however, not only characteristic of the public spirit which animates the whole county; but they are monuments of commercial wealth, active benevolence, and intellectual superiority, of which the Manchesterians have ample cause to be proud. It will be seen from their details, that the structures have been built within the last half century, at an expense of more than one hundred thousand pounds; while their association with the fame and fortunes of men illustrious in science [2] will render the subjoined Engravings of no common interest. The details which follow have been abridged from Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary*, 4to. 1831.

[1] *Ed. Rev.* No. 109--article "Life and Writings of Dr. Currie." For quotations from this paper, see "Improvement of Lancashire," and "London and the Provinces compared";--in *The Mirror*, vol. xix.

[2] DR. FERRIAR was physician to the Infirmary and Lunatic Asylum; and the Royal Institution has been the area of the philosophical labours of DALTON and HENRY.

THE TOWN-HALL

Is a noble and elegant edifice, erected under the superintendance and from a design of Mr. Francis Goodwin, of London, in the Grecian style, after the temple of Erectheus at Athens, with a beautiful tower and dome in the centre, resembling the tower of Andronicus, called "The Temple of the Winds." The principal entrance is by a magnificent colonnade, with a rich entablature, in front of which are sculptured representations of the town of Manchester, and emblems of trade and commerce. In the wings are niches for statues of Solon and Alfred; in the medallions of the attic are busts in alto relievo of Pythagoras, Lycurgus, Hale, and Locke. The building contains various apartments for conducting the public business of the town: on the principal floor is a splendid room, 132 feet long, 43 ft. 8 in. wide, and 51-1/2 feet in height to the centre of the principal dome. The room is divided into three parts by two ranges of eight elegant Ionic pillars, so disposed that each may form a separate apartment; the central part being lighted by a superb dome, supported on 16 dwarf columns of scagliola marble, corresponding with the exterior design of the tower. The style of the whole room is that of chaste and classic beauty: the light is tastefully introduced into the extreme sections of the great room by concealed skylights, and through stained glass in the panels of the ceiling and the dome, decorated to correspond with those that are not pierced for that purpose. Three staircases lead to this splendid room, with the interior of which the principal staircase is made to harmonize. The foundation-stone of the building was laid August 19, 1822, by James Brierley, Esq. Boroughreeve; and its expense is stated at 40,000 l.

THE INFIRMARY

Was established in 1752, by Joseph Bancroft, Esq., in conjunction with Charles White, Esq., M.D.; and in 1755, a building for the purpose was erected by subscription. It has been liberally supported, and since it was first opened for the reception of patients, has afforded medical relief to more than half a million of the labouring class. The buildings, which have been progressively enlarged, and to which other establishments have been attached, contain 180 beds for the accommodation of in-patients, with apartments for the officers and attendants, and a surgery, library of medical books, committee-rooms,

and other offices; also a complete set of baths for the use of the patients. The grounds are tastefully laid out in gravel-walks, lawns, and parterres, and form a public promenade, to which a fine pool in front of the buildings adds considerable beauty. A complete set of hot, cold, vapour, and medicated baths has been fitted up here, with every accommodation for the public use, the profits arising from which are appropriated to the support of the institution. A Lunatic Asylum and Hospital was founded in 1765, and the building was opened for the reception of patients in the following year. The Dispensary was established in 1792, and an edifice for its use erected by subscription adjoining the Infirmary. In 1830, his Majesty, on the solicitation of the chairman and committee, graciously became the patron of this institution, which is now styled "The Manchester Royal Infirmary, Dispensary, Lunatic Hospital, and Asylum." The buildings for these several uses being previously contiguous, an uniformity of design has been given to them by facing the front and the north side with stone. The plan comprehends a principal and a side front, of which the elevation is strikingly elegant and imposing. (See the Engraving.) The principal front has in the centre a lofty and boldly projecting portico of four fluted Ionic columns, 38 feet high, supporting a pediment, of which the frieze and cornice are carried round the building, the angles of which are ornamented with antae of appropriate character: the side-front is of similar design, differing only in the slighter projection of the portico, which has but two columns in the centre, with engaged antae at the angles. The whole building is three stories high above the basement, and the lower story is channelled in horizontal lines.

THE ROYAL INSTITUTION

Embracing a variety of objects connected with the pursuits of literature and science, and the cultivation of the fine arts, originated with a few public-spirited individuals, in the year 1823, and was soon honoured with the public, and finally, with royal, patronage. The building, which has been erected from a design by Mr. Barry, of London, and is of a durable and richly-coloured stone, from the vicinity of Colne, forms a splendid addition to the architectural ornaments of the town. It is in the Grecian style. The principal elevation, (seen in the Engraving) towards Mosley-street, has a noble portico of six lofty columns of the Ionic order, supporting a rich entablature and pediment in the centre, on each side of which are columns and pilasters connecting it with the wings. Above the doors and windows are panels for bas-reliefs symbolical of the design of the Institution: the attic story of the hall has been recently, or is to be, surmounted by a finely-sculptured figure of Minerva. The area round the building is enclosed with a handsome iron palisade on a lofty plinth of masonry, with pedestals at the angles of the steps leading to the portico and side entrances. The centre comprises the Hall and the Theatre; one of the wings is appropriated as an Academy of the Fine Arts, with exhibition rooms, and the other as a Museum of Natural History. The Hall which is wholly lighted from the attic story, is 40 feet square, and 60 feet high; it contains a grand staircase of stone, consisting of central and lateral flights, with pedestals for sculptures, leading to a gallery on three sides of the hall, supported on Doric pillars; and to the theatre, which is of a semicircular form. On the gallery are entrances on each side leading through corridors flanked with columns, into the exhibition-rooms in each wing of the building; the ceiling of the Hall is richly-paneled in deeply-recessed compartments, and beneath the attic windows is a rich frieze for bas-reliefs. The Theatre will hold 600 persons, has a gallery supported on columns of bronze, and the walls are decorated with engaged columns, and with isolated columns in the angles: the ceiling is richly paneled, and the theatre is lighted by a lantern, which, by machinery, may be darkened instantaneously, at the will of the lecturer. There are three exhibition rooms in each wing, which may be thrown into one. There

are also various rooms for the use of officers and others connected with the Institution, to which access is obtained from the hall and other parts of the building. The whole cost of this elegant pile is stated at about 50,000_1_. The Institution is under the direction of a President, twelve vice-presidents, and a committee, chosen from a body of nearly 700 hereditary and life governors, of whom the former are contributors of forty, and the latter of twenty-five guineas each.

These Views are from well-executed engravings, by Fothergill, of Manchester, which we recommend to the notice of tourists, for memoranda of their visit, as well as of the due rank of Manchester among the provincial towns of the United Kingdom.

Among the other public buildings of Manchester, are the Exchange, a handsome Grecian structure; the Hall of the Literary and Philosophical Society, universally known by its excellent published memoirs; the Portico, and other public libraries; theatres, hospitals, churches, bridges, &c.

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PRAYER.--A FRAGMENT.

Prayer is an arrow wing'd with love,
And urg'd by mercy on
Which by "the arm of Faith" is driv'n
Up through the starry vault of heav'n,
And scales "the Eternal's throne."
On seraph's wings the spirit flies,
Ev'n in that arrow's flight,
Soars through its _vista_ in the skies
And gains the realms of light.

N.C.

* * * * *

BREVITIES.

Poverty will often lead to great intellectual pursuits; but the resources of fortune will frequently suppress the most cogent ideas.

Never subdue a feeling arising from principle; for the mockery of conscience will contend against the hostile powers of a nation.

Never wantonly offend any man however feeble his situation: you know not how soon his personal interest may be acceptable.

In choosing a wife, a good disposition will be found the most staple commodity. Most other virtues will flourish in so luxuriant a soil.

It should be the study of every individual to become rather a _useful_ than a _rich_ member of society.

Weak opponents are universally great calumniators.

To adduce an opinion without some argumentative reason to support it, shows great precipitancy of idea. It is like raising a sumptuous pile for the mere gratification of witnessing its destruction.

It is not the _enormity_, but the _certainty_, of punishment that deters

mankind from evil. Hope will always gain the ascendancy.

Precept and example are great opposites. The one is generally too extravagantly lavished: the other abridges more personal comfort than most people like to sacrifice.

Few individuals are patriotic enough to participate in the correction of a public abuse, until the corruption produces personal inconvenience.

Flattery will ever, more or less, accompany the first overtures to friendship. It may not be deemed impolitic if it be found to recede as the intimacy matures.

W.H.

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RETROSPECTIVE GLEANINGS.

* * * * *

ROBIN HOOD.

Lithe and lysten, gentylnen,
That be of frebore blode,
I shall you tell of a good yeman,
His name was Robyn Hode.

Old Ballad.

Centuries have passed away, yet are the merry men of the cross-bow not forgotten. The oft-told tale of blended theft and charity has run the round of ages, delighting the homely circle; historians and poets have found in them a theme suited to their energies, and sung the song of their exploits to everlasting remembrance. It may be said that few subjects of yore can boast so bewitching an interest as the present: for even now, after the lapse of six or seven hundred years, the names of Robin Hood and Little John are

Familiar in our mouths as household words.

Drayton writes

In this our spacious isle I think there is not one,
But he, of Robin Hood hath heard, and Little John;
And to the end of time the tales shall ne'er be done,
Of Scarlock, George a Green, and Much, the miller's son,
Of Tuck, the merry friar, which many a sermon made
In praise of Robin Hood, his outlaws and their trade.

Robin Hood, from the best accounts, was born at Locksley, in the county of Nottingham, in the reign of King Henry II., and about the year of Christ 1160. His extraction was noble, and his true name was Robert Fitzoothes, which vulgar pronunciation corrupted into Robin Hood. He was frequently styled, and commonly reputed to have been Earl of Huntington,

descending from Ralph Fitzoothes, a Norman, who came over to England with William Rufus; marrying Maud, daughter of Gilbert de Gaunt, Earl of Kyme and Lindsey, to which title in the latter part of his life, he appears to have had some pretension. In his youth, he is reported to have been of a wild and extravagant disposition, insomuch that his inheritance being consumed or forfeited by his excesses, and his person outlawed for debt, either from necessity or choice, he sought an asylum in the woods and forests. Or, as some writers state, one of his first exploits was the going into a forest, when, bearing with him a bow of exceeding strength, he fell into company with certain rangers or woodmen, who quarrelled with him for making show to use such a bow as no man was able to shoot with. Robin replied, that he had two better than that at Locksley, only he bore that with him now as a byrding bowe. At length the contention grew so hot that a wager was laid about the killing of a deer at a great distance, for performance of which Robin offered to lay his head to a sum of money, the advantage of which rash speech the others presently took; the mark being found out, one of them, to make Robin's heart faint, and hand unsteady, when he was about to shoot, urged him with the loss of head if he missed the mark, notwithstanding which, Robin killed the deer, and gave every man his money again, except him who upbraided him with loss of head if he lost the wager; he now said they would drink together, when they began to quarrel and fight with him, but Robin getting a little distance off, with shooting, despatched them, then fled away and retired to the woods; the chief of which seems to be Barnsdale, in Yorkshire, Sherwood, in Nottinghamshire, and Plompton Park, in Cumberland. Here he either found, or was afterwards joined by, a number of persons in similar circumstances,

Such as the fury of ungovern'd youth
Thrust from the company of lawful men;

who appear to have considered him as their leader. Of these, his principal favourites, or those in whose courage and fidelity he most confided, were Little John, (whose surname is said to have been Nailor;) William Scadlock, (Scathelock or Scarlet;) George a Green, pinder, (or pound-keeper;) of Wakefield; Much, a miller's son; and a certain monk or friar, named Tuck. He is likewise said to have been accompanied in his retreat by a female, of whom he was enamoured, and whose real or adopted name was Marian. His company, in process of time consisted of a hundred archers, "men," says Major, "most skilful in battle, whom four times that number of the boldest fellows durst not attack." His manner of recruiting was somewhat singular; for, in the words of an old writer, "wheresoever he heard of any that were of unusual strength and hardiness, he would disguise himselfe, and rather than fayle, go lyke a begger to become acquainted with them, and after he had tryed them with fygthing, never give them over tyl he had used means to draw them to lyve after his fashion; numerous instances of which are recorded in the common and popular songs, where indeed he seldom fails to receive a sound thrashing. After such manner he procured the pynner of Wakefyld, friar Tuck, and Scadlock. One day meeting him, Scadlock, as he walked solitary, and like to a man forlorn, because a maid to whom he was affianced was taken from him by her friends, and given to another that was old and wealthy; Robin hearing when the marriage day would be, came to the church as a beggar, having his own company not far off; and who at the sound of his horn rushed in, took the bride from him that was to marry her, and caused the priest to wed her and Scadlock together." In shooting with the long bow, the company excelled all the men in the land; their archery indeed was unparalleled, as both Robin Hood and Little John, _it is said_, have frequently shot an arrow a measured mile, or 1,760 yards.

Charlton informs us, that in one of Robin's peregrinations, he, attended

by his trusty mate, John, went to dine at Whitby Abbey, with the abbot, Richard, who having heard them often famed for their great dexterity in shooting with the long bow, begged them after dinner to show him a specimen. They went up top of the abbey, and each of them shot an arrow that fell not far from Whitby-laths. The abbot placed a pillar on the spot where each arrow fell, and named one Robin Hood's field, the other John's field. Their distance from Whitby is more than a measured mile.

In these forests, and with his company, Robin for many years reigned like an independent sovereign. At perpetual war with the King of England and all his subjects, (with the exception of the poor and needy, the desolate and oppressed, and those who stood in need of his protection,) he defied the power of law and government; an outlaw in those times having no protection, owed no allegiance, his hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him;

The world was not his friend, nor the world's law.

The deer with which the royal forests then abounded, afforded Robin and his companions an ample supply of food throughout the year. Their mode of life and domestic economy are more easily guessed at than described. Nevertheless, the poet has endeavoured to give us an outline in the following:

The merry pranks he play'd would ask an age to tell,
And the adventures strange that Robin Hood befel;
When Mansfield many a time for Robin hath been laid,
How he hath cousen'd them, that him would have betray'd:
An hundred valiant men had this brave Robin Hood,
Still ready at his call, that bowmen were right good,
And of these archers brave, there was not any one
But he could kill a deer, his swiftest speed upon,
Which they did boil and roast, in many a mighty wood,
Sharp hunger, the fine sauce to their more kingly food.
Then taking them to rest, his merry men and he
Slept many a summer's night under the greenwood tree.
What oftentimes he took, he shar'd amongst the poor,
From wealthy Abbot's chests, and churl's abundant store,
He from the husband's bed no married woman wan,
But to his mistress dear, his loved Marian,
Was ever constant known, which wheresoe'er she came
Was sovereign of the woods, chief lady of the game;
Her clothes tuck'd to the knee, and dainty braided hair,
With bow and quiver arm'd, she wander'd here and there
Amongst the forests wild, Diana never knew
Such pleasures, nor such harts as Mariana slew.

Robin took away the goods of rich men only, never killing any person unless he was attacked: nor would he suffer a woman to be maltreated. Fordun, in the fourteenth century, calls him "that most celebrated robber;" and Major says, "I disapprove of the rapine of the man, but he was the most humane, and prince of all robbers."

Robin Hood seems to have held bishops, abbots, priests, and monks, indeed all the clergy, in decided aversion; and this hostility was strongly impressed upon his men:

Thyse Byshoppes and thyse Archbyshoppes,
Ye shall them bete and bynde.

The abbot of St. Mary's, York, from possessing so much wealth, appears to have met with Robin's especial animosity: his yearly revenues amounted to L2,850. 1_s._5_d_. Robin was, however, a man of exemplary piety, according to the notions of that age, and retained a domestic chaplain, (friar Tuck,) no doubt, for the diurnal celebration of the divine mysteries. This we learn from an anecdote preserved by Fordun, "One day, as he heard mass, he was espied by a certain sheriff and officers belonging to the king, who had frequently before molested him. His people perceiving what was going forward, advised him to fly with all speed, but out of reverence of the Sacrament in which he was then engaged, he refused to do so. Most of his men fled, fearing death, but Robin confiding in him whom he worshipped, with the few that remained, set upon his enemies, and soon vanquished them, enriching himself with the spoils and ransom." Robin held masses in greater veneration ever after, stating, that Providence deserved still more from him, having delivered him thus miraculously. At length, the infirmities of age increasing, and having a great sickness upon him, Robin was desirous to lose a little blood, and for that purpose he applied to the prioress of Kirkleys Nunnery, in Yorkshire; who, though a relation, treacherously suffered him to bleed to death, in, it is said, his 87th year. According to Grafton's Chronicle, it is said that after his death, the prioress caused him to be buried under a great stone "by the hywayes syde, and upon his grave the sayde prioress did lay a very fayre stone, wherein the names of Robert Hood, William of Goldesborough, and others were graven. And the cause why she buryed him there was for that the common passengers and travellers, knowyng and seeyng him there buryed, might more safely and without feare take their jorneyes that way, which they durst not do in the life of the sayed outlawes; and at eyther ende of the sayde tombe was erected a crosse of stone."

Amongst the papers of the learned Dr. Gale, late Dean of York, was found this epitaph of Robin Hood, written in old English:

Hear underneath this laitl stean,
 Laiz Robert, Earl of Huntingtun,
 Near arcir ther az hie sa goud
 An pipi kauld im Robin Heud,
 Sick utlawz az hi an iz men
 Wil England nivr si agen.

Obiit 24--kal dekembris, 1247.

There is an odd story related of this tombstone: that a certain knight taking it into his head to have it removed and placed as a hearth-stone in his great hall, it was laid over night, but the next morning it was surprisingly removed on one side; it was again laid a second and third time, and as often turned aside. The knight thinking he had done wrong by removing it, ordered it should be drawn back again, which was performed by a pair of oxen and four horses, when twice the number could scarce remove it before.

(_To be concluded in our next._)

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ANECDOTE GALLERY.

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HENRY BROUGHAM.

In the year ----, as Wull, or William Hall, then overseer of the farm of Sunderland, in Selkirkshire, Scotland, the labours of the day being over, was leaning against the dyke of the farm-yard, a young gentleman of genteel appearance came up to him, wished him good evening, and observed that the country here looked beautiful. The two getting into conversation, Hall, who was a talkative lad, after a few observations, asked him "where he was ga'in?" He said he intended going to Jedburgh; "and what business hae ye at Jeddart?" says Wull. "Oh," says the gentleman, "I am going to attend the circuit court; but my feet have failed me on the road." And observing a pony in the farm-yard, he said, "That's a bit nice pony of yours;--is it to sell?--would you like to part with it?" "A wad' na' care," Wull says; "but ma brother Geordy, he's the farmer; and he's at Selkirk the day. But if we could get a guid price for't, a daresay we might part wi't." "What do you ask for it?" says the stranger. "Ma brother," quoth Wull. "says it's a thing we hae nae use for, and if we could get ought of a wiselike price for't, it would be as well to let it gang." There were only two words to the bargain; the gentleman and Wull agreed. Says the gentleman, "By the way, I cannot pay you to-night; but if you have any hesitation about me, my name is Henry Brougham, and I refer you to the Earl of Buchan, or Mr. George Currie, of Greenhead, who will satisfy you." It will be observed that the places of residence of this nobleman, and Henry's brother advocate, Mr. Currie, were in the neighbourhood. On this reference, without making any inquiry, honest, Wull immediately gave the gentleman the pony, with the necessary trappings. Wull being a man of orderly habits, went early to bed; and next morning, when the business of the farm called him and Geordy together, says Wull to Geordy, "Ye was unco late in coming hame last night; aw salt the powny." "And wha did you sell it to?" "Oh, to a young gentleman." "And what did you get for't?" Wull having mentioned the price--"My faith," says Geordy, "ye hae selt it weel." "But," says Wull, "a did na' get the siller." "You d--d idiot, ye did na' gie away the powny without getting the siller for't; wha was he?" "Oh, he ca'd himsel' Henry Brougham, and he said if a had ony jealousin' about him, that the Earl of Buchan, or George Currie, advocate, Greenhead, would say he was guid enough for the money. On, he was an honest-looking lad; a could hae trusted ony thing in his hand." Geordy's temper became quite ungovernable at Wull's simplicity. After the whole southern circuit was finished, there was no word of payment, and Wull's life became quite miserable at Geordy's incessant grumbling and taunting; the latter ever and anon repeating, "What a d--d idiot Wull was to gie the beest without the money till a man he kend naething about;" and the other as pertinaciously insisting, "that he (the gentleman) was an honest-looking man, there was nae fear o' him." In the course of six weeks an order came for the payment of the steed. "L--d," says Wull, "did na I tell ye he was an honest man, a kend by the look o' him." From that moment Wull stood eminently high in Geordy's eyes; and while the one chuckled at his penetration of character, the other was no less humbled at having called his superior judgment in question. William Hall is still alive, and there is not a prouder man in Britain's Isle than he is when he relates the little incident in his life, of which the present Lord Chancellor of Great Britain forms the hero.--_Schoolmaster._

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O'BRIEN, THE IRISH GIANT.

This extraordinary giant, whose height was nearly nine feet, was born at Kinsale, in the kingdom of Ireland. His real name was Patrick Cotter; he

was of obscure parentage, and originally laboured as a brick-layer; but his uncommon size rendered him a mark for the avarice of a showman, who, for the payment of L50. per annum, obtained the liberty of exhibiting him for three years in England. Not contented with his bargain, the chapman attempted to _underlet_ to another speculator, the liberty of showing him, and poor Cotter resisting this nefarious transaction, was saddled with a fictitious debt, and thrown into a spunging house in Bristol. In this situation he was, happily for him, visited in prison by a gentleman of the city, who, in compassion to his distress, and having reason to think that he was unjustly detained, very generously became his bail, and ultimately so far investigated the affair, that he not only obtained him his liberty, but freed him from all kind of obligation to serve his task-master any longer. He was at this time eighteen years old. He subsequently retained, to his last breath, a most lively sense of the obligation conferred upon him when a stranger, and in need; which he manifested also by very _honourable mention_ in his will. It happened to be September when he was liberated, and, by the further assistance of his benefactor, he was enabled to set up for himself in the fair then held in St. James's. Success crowned his undertaking, and in three days, instead of being in penury, he saw himself possessed of thirty pounds, English money. Let those who know the peasantry of Ireland, judge of his riches! He now commenced a regular exhibition of his person, which he continued until the last two years of his life, when, having realized a sufficient fortune to keep a carriage and live in good style, he declined what was always exceedingly irksome to his feelings. He was unoffending and amiable in his manners, to his friends and acquaintance, of whom he had latterly a large circle; and he was neither averse to a cheerful glass nor pleasant company. He had naturally good sense, and his mind was not uncultivated. Mr. Cotter had at one time in his possession, a regular journal of his life, written from day to day, for amusement, but which a whim of the moment induced him to commit to the flames, though he afterwards much regretted the circumstance. He died in his 46th year, September 8, 1806, at the Hotwells, Bristol. In his last moments he was attended by Mr. Plowden, and departed without the smallest apparent pain or agony. He was buried in the Romish chapel, Trenchard-street, at the early hour of six, to prevent as much as possible, a crowd; notwithstanding which, the street was so thronged, that the assistance of the constables, was necessary to keep the door of the chapel, and resist the importunity of the public to behold the interment. It is supposed 2,000 persons at least were present. The ceremony of High Mass was performed at ten o'clock. The coffin, of lead, measured 9 feet 2 inches in the clear, and the wooden case 4 inches more. It was 3 feet across the shoulders. No hearse could be procured sufficiently long to contain it; on which account, that end of the coffin which could not be shut in, was covered with black cloth. Fourteen men bore him from the hearse to the grave, into which he was let down with pulleys. To prevent any attempt to disturb his remains, of which Cotter had, when living, the greatest horror, the grave was made 12 feet in a solid rock.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

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SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY.

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STEAM CARRIAGES ON COMMON ROADS.

[One of the most accredited works upon this vital topic is An Historical and Practical Treatise upon Elemental Locomotion; by Mr. Alexander Gordon, Civil Engineer. It shows the commercial, political, and moral advantages; the means by which an elemental power is obtained; the rise, progress, and description of steam-carriages; the roads upon which they may be made to travel; and the ways and means for their general introduction. This arrangement of the subject is exceedingly well executed by Mr. Gordon, who has added a series of efficient illustrations--from a diagram simplifying the high-pressure modification of the steam-engine as applied to steam-carriages, to the last completed Steam Drag and Carriage attached; while the most material points of Mr. Gordon's views are fortified by a condensation of the evidence before the select committee of the House of Commons. All this and much more is accomplished within two hundred octavo pages, which a less economical and therefore less praiseworthy editor would have expanded into a costly quarto. Mr. Gordon's work has thus been planned and executed in the right spirit: he maintains national benefits which must arise from the adoption of steam carriages, and he seeks to place his views in the hands of all who are immediately interested in the subject by means as efficient as economical. We quote a few extracts, (the most interesting to the general reader,) from the first chapter, which aims at a cursory estimate of a few of the leading commercial, political, and moral advantages which will accrue to the community by the substitution of inanimate or steam power for animate or horse power, for locomotive purposes; leaving its spirit of fairness to the just appreciation of the reader.]

Economy of Conveyance

In a great commercial country like ours, extending its ramifications to every branch of natural and artificial produce, it is almost superfluous to remark that a vast capital is sunk annually in the mere transport of marketable commodities: and which is not only a loss to the seller as being an unproductive outlay, but entails a heavy increase of expense to the buyer also upon every article of daily consumption. Any means, therefore, that will accelerate the conveyance, and at the same time reduce materially the expense of carriage, bears upon its surface a great public gain.

Expeditious locomotion, to the commercial world more particularly, in every mercantile transaction, is equivalent to capital: and such is the vast importance of economy of time here, that no extra expense is considered as too great to accomplish the utmost speed. We have this practically illustrated in the preference which society gives to a complicated machinery put into motion at an enormous expense, to travelling by the winds of heaven which cost nothing.

To the merchant time gained is equal to money: for time occupied in travelling is just so much profitable employment lost. Time occupied in the transport of goods is equivalent to so much interest of capital spent: for a thousand pounds invested in merchandise is unproductive so many days as the transport is tedious. That part of the capital of an individual which is employed in the carrying of his goods to and from market, is so much abstracted from his means of producing more of the article in which he exerts his ingenuity and labour, whether it be in agriculture or manufacture.

Easy communication lessens the time occupied in the transport; and a saving of time lessens the distance, or our notion of distance. This effects a saving of money: and a saving of money permits of a greater employment of capital. The man who can only afford to keep one traveller soliciting orders for his goods, will thus be enabled to keep two; because the expense of travelling will be reduced a half. Or it may be, he will find it more advantageous to employ the saving in the production

of a more delicate and desirable article in the way of his trade. The increased traffic from place to place will give likewise an impulse to business, which, in the present stagnant times, is most desirable. The manufacturer in Scotland will find the London market more easily arrived at: and the merchant in the metropolis will be able to get his orders more rapidly given and executed. A conveyance which, in good management, would be a weekly one, is, in bad management, a monthly one: and the carrier is obliged to quadruple his charge for the transport. To meet this charge the merchant has to add to the cost of the article, and so on throughout the various gradations of mercantile transition, until the consumer pays the necessarily increased price. Hence, whatever reduces the price of transportation, reduces the price of the commodity transported. Whatever reduces the traveller's time, reduces his claim for compensation, and (competition being always at work) he is content with a smaller profit upon his merchandise. If a scarcity of any article occurs at one point of the kingdom, the monopolist there cannot continue his increased price for any duration of time. Commerce may, in this respect, be resembled to water, for, if not obstructed, it will always circulate till it finds its level. An opening or channel being furnished, an equalised supply will make its way wherever required.

Thus we see that the strength, wealth, and happiness of a nation, depend very much upon facility of communication. The ill-defended spot in the empire is alive to the reality, that subsidies having bad roads or a tedious navigation to pass may arrive too late to present an effectual resistance to a plundering enemy. The hard-working emigrant of a remote settlement, distant from a market, feels the difficulty and loss he sustains in bringing produce to the spot where merchants and dealers meet for the purposes of exchange. A spot uncommunicated with may be visited by the honors of famine, and no channel exist for conveying thither the food required. A grievous pestilence may sweep off an isolated people before the aid of the physician can arrive to arrest its progress.

Such facts are obvious to even the most indifferent observers of human society. Yet, nevertheless, there have been, and are, short-sighted individuals, in every gradation of it, with minds and views so warped and distorted by an ignorant selfishness, that they have opposed every improvement which tended to make the least change in their long-established habits. Such persons were they, who, during the last century, promoted petitions from counties in the neighbourhood of London, praying Parliament not to extend the turnpike-roads into remoter parts of the country, lest these remote districts, by means of a less expensive labour, should be able to sell their agricultural products in the London markets at a cheaper rate than themselves!--and such in our own day are the attempts made to put down steam conveyance. How short-sighted we are! Did we consult our own advantage we should see that those facilities of communication, against which we oppose ourselves, are the growing sinews of a greater fabric of wealth and prosperity.

Such are the numerous and important advantages, in a commercial point of view, which will result to society from the substitution of elementary for physical power. But even these, great though they be, are of trifling consideration when compared with the immense benefits which will result from the substitution when brought into operation as an economic principle.

Substitution of Steam for Horse Power.

[Mr. Gordon then refers to the conclusion of political economists "that the grand source of all our evils is redundancy of population; or in other words, an increase of animated life beyond the nourishment adequate to support it."]

The substitution of inanimate for animate power, if not the panacea which is to cure all the evils of our condition, is at least one that comes recommended as a matter of fact--easy of operation, and effectual in its result. If want of food, or, in other words, redundancy of population be the bane of the country, it does not propose to meet that evil by a visionary project, tending in its operation to unhinge society--tedious in its process, and ending at length in bitter disappointment--but it meets the evil directly, substantially, and effectually, by the substitution of food.

And how are all these immense advantages to be effected?--By the substitution of inanimate for animate power. At present, the animate power employed in the commercial transportations of this great kingdom is estimated to amount to two millions of horses: each horse consumes as much food as is necessary for the support of eight men. Hence the conversion of its consumption to purposes of human existence would, if carried to this practical extent, amount to a quantity of food equal to support sixteen millions of people.

Where the product is so enormous--so vastly beyond our immediate necessities--it is not requisite to go into any minutiae of detail. To calculate all the gains we will leave to the political economist, as also to bring the matter out in its fair proportions; but to establish the matter clearly within the bounds of a safe, an easy, and practical issue, we have merely to state, that a conversion of food from a physical to a moral purpose, adequate to the supply of one-fourth part of the above aggregate estimate, that is to say, to four millions, is amply sufficient to relieve us at the present moment from that pressure of pauperism which sits like an incubus upon the energies of the nation, and which will precipitate us, if not timely avoided, into speedy and irretrievable ruin.

Now the suppression of the stage-horses upon our principal thoroughfares, and of the dray-horses in the great commercial towns, may be calculated to economize a saving of food equivalent to the supply of the above number of human beings.

It is, perhaps, not superfluous to remark, that the amount of food, equal to the supply of the said four millions, is not the produce of an extended agriculture and proportionate outlay, but is just _that part_ of the annual produce of the country, subtracted from the whole, which is at present required for the mere purpose of _transportation_--i.e. to feed the animals used for draught,--and is consequently a dead loss as unproductive capital.

In addition to the evil arising from such a consumption of unproductive food, is also to be considered the very great loss consequent upon the heavy capital sunk in _horse_ purchase. Were this viewed, as properly it ought, as money withheld from other purposes of trade, and which might be more advantageously invested, our capitalists and men of science would not oppose the substitution of inanimate for animate power in the way they have done. Neither, did the landed interest maturely weigh the varied benefits it will produce in agriculture, would they view it in the light of an invasion upon their respective interests. They do not give a _quid_ without receiving a _quo_ every way as valuable. The reduction of farm consumption--the bugbear of the project--will be met and compensated by a steady and proportionate demand from other quarters. Whilst in the United Kingdom, the 8,100,000 acres of land now required to feed the horses, together with the capital sunk in their purchase, will, when both applied to other and general purposes, amply compensate for the exchange.

In order more readily to show one effect, let the horses be considered only 1,000; a smaller number may not make the argument so difficult. Let us reduce _this_ number, and the farmer may then turn his oat-ground

into wheat-ground; and instead of so much land being employed to furnish food for a thousand horses, the same land, when turned into tillage fit to sow wheat upon, will produce sufficient bread-corn to feed two thousand poor families.

Again, if instead of 20,000 horses, we keep 30,000 fat oxen, butchers' meat will be always cheap to the operative classes, whilst the quantity of tallow will of course make candles cheap: and so many hides lower the price of leather, and of shoes and all other articles made of leather. Or the same quantity of land may then keep thirty thousand cows, the milk of which will make both butter and cheese cheaper to the poor, as well as the labouring manufacturer; all which articles are very considerable, and of material moment in the prices of our manufacturers, as they, in a great measure, work their trade to rise and fall in price, according to the cheapness of their materials and the necessaries of life. The same may be said in favour of more sheep and woollen cloths.

(To be concluded in our next.)

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THE EXPECTED COMET.

The comet of Biela is approaching the earth's orbit with increasing velocity, and towards the end of the following month it will partially intersect the course which the earth traverses in its journey round the sun. Happily, the comet will be in advance of the earth, so that unless our globe augments its pace, or the anticipated visitant retards its journey, there will be no risk of any dangerous proximity, much less of a hostile collision. During this return, at least, it will always be more than two hundred times the moon's distance from us; and were it, at any future time, to approach very much nearer than the orbit of our satellite, its influence would be too inconsiderable to affect any of the elements of the earth's path.

This comet is about 40,000 miles in diameter, and of that class termed nebulous, having no tail, and probably no solid nucleus. The point where the comet's centre crosses the plane of the ecliptic is within and very near the curve which the earth describes,—so very near, that the outskirts of the nebulous matter of the comet might possibly, at some future visit, envelope our planet, and would thus enclose the earth, it is not unlikely, at its ensuing return, if it were about a month later than the time calculated, of its intersecting the plane of the earth's motion.

The presence of the moon during the past week has interfered with telescopic observations, or probably the comet might have been detected as a small round nebulosity, moving midway between the northern horn of Taurus and the bright star Capelle, towards Gemini. There are nebulae near its course for which it must not be mistaken.

J.T. BARKER.

Deptford.

Literary Gazette.

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NEW BOOKS.

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THE NEW GIL BLAS

[This is, in its way, a clever book with a very un-clever title. We expected better tact in its author, Mr. Inglis, than the adoption of the title of one of the most successful and least imitable fictions of modern times. The very title-page provokes a comparison between the Gil Blas of Le Sage, and a string of romantic adventures, by Mr. Inglis; we need not add, much to the disadvantage of the latter. It reminds us of an attempt to cover the sun with a wet blanket. At the same time, the merit of Mr. Inglis's Gil Blas must not be lowly rated. It abounds with lively incident, pleasant bits and scenes of travel, and world-knowledge very agreeably communicated, while its episodal narratives are of the most wonder-fraught character. It has all the glitter and gaiety of Spanish life and manners. The author discourses eloquently of "the charming Andaluz," and other *_intriguantes_*--absolute Dons of fathers and monsters of husbands--mingling "bloody-minded assassins," and hideous wretches, with the sweet emotions of dark eyes, jetty ringlets, and heaving bosoms. Limbs are lopped off, eyes put out, heads slivered, and blood spilled like water; and there are scenes in dark towers and visions of clanking chains in terrific abundance. One of the latter description we have abridged and adapted to our pages. The hero is convicted of murder, upon such evidence as this:--"We found the poor dead man dead at his feet, and the sword in his hand, covered with blood,--the murdered man lies in the ante-room run through and through." A pretty scene of justice ensues, the fact being that the murdered man was a noted robber who had attacked the hero, and became worsted in the affray. The sentence is solitary imprisonment for life:]

The unfortunate persons whose crimes have subjected them to the dreadful punishment of solitary imprisonment for life, in any of the southern parts of Spain, are most generally sent to Tarifa.[3] Along both sides of the port, there is a mole nearly half a mile in length; at the extremity of which on either side, and at the entrance of the harbour, stands a huge and ancient Moorish tower, about a hundred and sixty feet in height above the sea. In this tower, which contains six chambers, one above another, prisoners for life are confined; and thither I was accordingly conveyed. It is the policy of the Spanish laws, to render the punishment of criminals subservient to public utility; and this is in some degree effected even by solitary confinement. The prisoners confined in these towers are employed in turns, night by night, in trimming the lamps--which are a beacon to the vessels at sea. From each chamber, there is a separate ascent to the summit of the tower; so that the prisoners never see each other, and each in his turn is obliged to remain from night until day-break upon the summit,--part of his punishment for the destruction of human life, being thus made subservient to its preservation.

[3] A town in the straits of Gibraltar, the most southern point of the continent of Europe.

From these towers there are no visible means of escape: in the chambers, the windows are merely circular holes in walls at least six feet in thickness; and the outside walls being entirely smooth, there are no means of descent from the summit unless by a fearful leap of a hundred and sixty feet into the sea; for on the side towards the town, a wall of twenty feet high shuts out the prospect of land; serving at the same time as a hindrance to any communication, and as an aggravation of punishment, by shutting out from the eye of the prisoner, the cheerful lights of human

habitations, or perhaps even, it might be, the dim view of human forms. It only requires to be added to this description, that a ponderous iron chain stretches from one tower to the other, across the mouth of the port, depending from fastenings situated about two feet below the summit of each, but forming a curve by its own weight; and in the centre, reaching to within twenty or thirty feet of the surface of the water, from which point, other chains are attached, reaching horizontally to the towers on either side. It is needless to say, that during the day this great chain is lowered into the water when vessels desire to enter; but at night, it is again raised; and there being rumours of war at this period, no ships were admitted during the night,—the chain being a security against an enemy entering, and cutting out vessels under favour of the darkness.

[By aid of a telescope, he recognises on the opposite tower a fair prisoner, "the lovely Isabel," who had been confined there upwards of a year for conspiring to murder her first husband. The hero by aid of the chain, swings to Isabel's tower, where they concert an escape.]

As Isabel pressed closer to me, I felt, that, although far from agreeable to sojourn in such a place, even with Isabel, this would yet be greatly preferable to solitude. But to such a project, many serious difficulties presented themselves: I represented to Isabel, that if I did not reach the opposite tower that night, it would be discovered, when the food put into my cell remained untasted, that I was gone; and as the conclusion would necessarily be, that I had leaped into the sea, no more food would be put into my cell, and consequently, when I did return, I should die of hunger. "But," said Isabel, "why return ever? Providence seems to delight in throwing us together,—and if, as unhappily seems too true, the doom of both of us be to live and die in these towers, why should we not----"

"Live and die together, you would say;" and, in truth, there was reason in this proposal of Isabel. "Why, indeed, should we not?" said I; but in yielding so readily to this suggestion, I looked farther than Isabel did. Isabel had doubtless many charms,—and here, I should at least have nothing to fear from rivals; but that which weighed with me fully as much as the prospect of a honey-moon, was this,—that a man who is supposed to be dead, has greater facilities of escape,—and so, without at that time saying any thing upon this subject to Isabel, I acquiesced in the proposal of changing my quarters, and being her guest for the present.

"There cannot be a doubt," said Isabel, "that the Pope has long ago been applied to by my husband to dissolve our marriage."

"And that his holiness has granted the petition, too," said I. "And although ours be a new case, as it probably never happened before that the idea of marrying was entertained by persons in solitary imprisonment,—yet as there is here neither church nor priest, Heaven will, without doubt, accept our vows, and bless us:" and thus did I become all but the husband of Isabel.

Several days elapsed before it was again the turn of Isabel to watch on the summit; meantime the food that was intended for one, was made to suffice for two; we conversed in whispers, lest my embryo plan of escape should be frustrated by a premature discovery of my dwelling place; and even if I had looked to no ulterior advantages, from my change of quarters, the society of Isabel would have been a sufficient reward for the peril of my journey. But I had now concocted in my mind, a plan of escape, which I hastened to put in execution, after having first communicated it to Isabel, whose co-operation was necessary to ensure its success.

It may have been already gathered, that the characteristic of the punishment of solitary confinement in the towers of Tarifa, consisted in the rigidness with which it was enforced: once admitted there, and no human eye ever more rested upon the living form of the prisoner. The food

necessary for the preservation of life, and therefore, for the continuance of punishment, was placed, and removed, by unseen hands; nor was the sound of a human voice ever heard within these stone chambers. But to this, one exception was provided: although it was the policy of the law, to punish the living culprit thus severely, the church did not resign her claims to the care of his soul; once accordingly, in every month, a holy tread was heard along the secret passages, and an iron screen being thrown back, the confessor, a Franciscan friar, took his seat at a thick grating; behind which nothing could be seen, though the confession of the prisoner might pass to the ear of the holy man, and his counsel in return reach the ear, or it might be, the heart, of the solitary criminal. The door by which the prisoner first entered was never unbarred, until the hour when his coffin was carried in and out.

The day now approached, when the visit of the confessor might be expected, and I laid my plans accordingly, and executed them in the following manner:

"Isabel," said I, as the slow tread announced the approach of the confessor, "you must feign to be dead; spread the pallet opposite to the grating, and lay yourself upon it."

I found some difficulty in prevailing upon Isabel to mock the king of terrors; but, at length, I succeeded in persuading her,—by representing that it was easier to counterfeit death than to meet it; and that to do the one afforded the only chance of avoiding the other; and scarcely was Isabel extended upon the floor, when the screen was heard to open upon its harsh hinges, and the confessor to say, "erring daughter, approach."

"Father," said I, in a low sepulchral tone, at the same time advancing noiselessly towards the grating.

"Holy St. Francis," said the confessor, in a voice of terror, and making at the same time a retrograde movement from the grating, "'tis a man!"

"Father," said I, in the same unearthly tone, "fear nothing, it is no man that addresses thee; well thou knowest that no fleshly form can gain entrance here; it is not a man, but a spirit, with whom thou art communing." As I spoke thus, I could hear the Friar rapidly commending himself to the protection of the Holy Mother of God, and of all the Saints; and I continued, "She whom thou camest to confess, is now beyond the reach of thy counsel: her soul has gone to its heavy account, and her body lieth there;" said I, gliding aside, and knowing well, that although nothing could be seen from the cell through the grating, yet all within was visible from the other side. "I am the ghost of the murdered Jose Andrades;" (the husband of Isabel) and at the same time that I made this announcement, I threw back a part of the hood that covered my face, and the dim light from the circular hole falling upon the upper part of the countenance, showed a visage which fasting and confinement had already made more like the face of a dead than of a living man, and which I had taken care to besmear with blood.

A new exclamation of horror, and still more rapid prayers, followed this revelation.

"Here," continued I, again drawing the hood over my face, and approaching the grate—from which I could hear the Friar retreating; "here will I remain, in dread communion with the body of my murderer, until it be taken hence; delay not to let this be done, else I will speak with thee nearer anon."

The Friar being already as near to the ghost of a murdered man as he probably desired to be, and willing to prevent the execution of this threat of a nearer colloquy, swung the screen forward, which closed with a tremendous clank, and the rapid footsteps of the terrified confessor

speedily died away.

"Ah, Dios!" said Isabel, "I had scarcely courage to go through my part: when you spoke of my soul having gone to its account, I was on the point of rising, to convince myself that I was yet living."

"Surely," returned I, "you may find courage to personate a dead woman, when I have no hesitation in personating the ghost of a murdered man; the stratagem succeeds; you will have but once more to play your part; and I am much mistaken if we be not both outside of this tower before another day shall pass over our heads;" and animated by this hope, Isabel promised to obey my directions.

Now, it will easily be believed, that the confessor, upon leaving the tower, would immediately communicate to the civil and spiritual authorities, the particulars of the extraordinary interview that had taken place; and that although doubts might at first be entertained of the sanity of the narrator, yet, that his positive asseverations would at length so far weigh with the alcalde, and the bishop of Ronda, who then chanced to be making his yearly visitation to Tarifa, as to induce them to judge with their own eyes, of the truth of what had been told to them. I was prepared for this; and when in less than three hours, the iron screen was heard to fall back, Isabel was again stretched upon the ground, while I stood motionless by her side. Who were the persons that peered through the grate, I am unable to tell, but whoever they might be, they were quickly satisfied with their scrutiny; for when I glided towards the grate, at the same time allowing the hood to fall partially back, the screen was suddenly closed, and quick retiring footsteps announced the further success of the stratagem.

However extraordinary the thing might seem, and however hard of belief, no doubt could any longer rest upon the minds of those whom first duty, and then incredulity, had led to the tower, that something supernatural inhabited the chamber where lay the dead Isabel. Her, they had seen extended on the floor; and they had seen another being, which could not be a mortal, because well they were convinced no mortal could gain entrance there. That it was the ghost of him who had been murdered by the inmate of the cell, no one could doubt: and the sooner therefore the body of the wretched prisoner could be carried out, the sooner would this spirit cease to haunt the tower of Tarifa. It was in this manner therefore, that the affair was argued by the confessor, the bishop, and the alcalde, among whom the following colloquy took place:

"I suppose, gentlemen," said the confessor, "you are now sufficiently convinced that I have told you no tale."

"Sufficiently convinced," said the alcalde; yet breathless with fear.

"There is no doubt of it," said the bishop; panting from the rapidity of his descent from the tower.

"Why," rejoined the confessor, "I was as near to it as I am to you!" shuffling up close to the alcalde's nose.

"Ah, Dios!" said the alcalde, drawing involuntarily back.

"'Tis certainly," said the bishop, "a stain upon the sanctity of this catholic town, that a thing of this kind should have taken place; the quieter the affair is kept, the better: no doubt, senor alcalde, a coffin can be prepared to-night, to carry away the body; those who carry it, must know nothing of what we have seen; and you, as chief magistrate, will superintend the removal."

"Truly," said the alcalde, "'tis a duty I would rather avoid: I am a poor sinful man, ill fitted to grapple with the powers of darkness; whereas holy

men, like my lord bishop and the good friar, can have nothing to fear."

"I fear nothing," said the confessor.

"Oh, we fear nothing," said the bishop; "and it does seem to me, that the reverend father cannot well be excused taking a part in this duty, as he is in some sort under an engagement to the evil spirit (crossing himself) to see it executed."

"But," rejoined the friar, "would it not be felt by us all to be a great security, were we in this emergency to make use of the relics which are deposited in the church of San Salvador,—and which no one, save the bishop, is worthy to handle?"

"'Tis an excellent suggestion," said the alcalde.

Now the bishop, desirous no doubt of paying a compliment to the alcalde and the friar by intrusting these sacred relics to their care, in place of taking upon himself the honourable office of being their bearer, said:—"The relics are indeed efficacious in cases of this nature; and while handling them, the greatest sinner upon earth has nothing to fear from an interview with any spirit. I possess the power of delegating to whom I will, the high honour of bearing these relics,—and into your hands, gentlemen, I will jointly commit them; and while you are engaged in the performance of your duty, I will invoke for you the protection of our tutelary saint."

Such, I say, was the colloquy that took place between the bishop, the alcalde, and the friar,—and when this proposal was made by the bishop, there can be no question that the fears of the alcalde were greatly allayed; and that the qualms even of the friar were in some degree quieted—so great was the confidence placed in the virtues of the relics.

Meanwhile, the hours passed away, and night came. I entertained little doubt, that this very night the coffin would be sent for Isabel; trusting to the efficacy of the threat held out to the confessor; and I prepared accordingly. "You will have nothing to do, Isabel," said I, "but to follow close at my heels." In thus providing for the escape of Isabel, I confess it was chiefly a regard for my own safety that prompted me to this. A sojourn of between one and two weeks in the tower, upon half the miserable pittance of a prisoner, had greatly cooled the fever of my love; and I foresaw that a companion would, in no small degree, interfere with my projects of independence, and might even perhaps lessen the chances of my ultimate escape,—but then, if Isabel were left behind, or could be prevailed upon to allow herself to be put into her coffin, it was too much to expect of her, that she would permit it to be consigned to the earth without giving some audible demonstration of being alive; and if one part of the trick were detected, threats or punishment would soon discover all the other parts of it; and my recapture would no doubt be the consequence. Besides—for why should I conceal the virtuous movements of my mind—I felt a repugnance in leaving Isabel to perpetual imprisonment, or to the chance of being buried alive; but feeling at the same time, that if successful in delivering her from confinement, I should in that case have sufficiently acquitted myself of obligations, and satisfied my scruples, I resolved that upon the first favourable opportunity I would dispose of Isabel, and recover my independence.

And now, the crisis was at hand. Slow, heavy steps, as of persons carrying a burden, were heard approaching: other, and more hesitating steps, mingled with these. At length they reached the massive iron door, and the burden was put down. The thickness of the door was too great, to permit the words spoken without to be heard within; but for some time the monotonous sound of a voice continued—doubtless, a prayer of length and efficacy by the Franciscan. The voice ceased; the chains and bolts were one by one withdrawn; the door slowly swung back, and a glare of

flambeaux flashed into the cell. Isabel lay on the pallet, while I stood motionless in the middle of the floor--my face turned towards the door, and my hood partly thrown back. No sooner did the light reveal my figure, than the coffin-bearers, uttering an affrighted scream, made but one step from the top to the bottom of the staircase: for a moment the alcalde and the friar, who partly expected what they saw, and who partly trusted to the protection of the relics which they held in their hands, stood their ground; crossing themselves with great rapidity, and muttering prayers the while: but upon the first movement I made towards them, they followed the coffin-bearers with so much precipitancy, that in their eagerness which should be the first, both rolled down the stairs, and the flambeaux falling from their trembling hands, were extinguished.

"Now is the time," said I in a whisper; and I quickly descended the staircase, followed by Isabel. By the light of a smothered flambeau, I could perceive that the alcalde and the friar lay senseless, whether from fear or from wounds, I could not tell. The friar's habit had somehow slipped off his shoulders; and thinking it might be useful as a disguise, I picked it up, and stumbling also upon one of the boxes of relics, I hid it in my bosom: there was no obstacle to our escape--the doors all stood open; and in a few moments we found ourselves outside of the tower, while the retreating steps of the coffin-bearers were heard dying away in the distance. We lost not a moment's time, but immediately proceeded quickly along the mole, which we had all to ourselves; the terrified coffin-bearers had no doubt spread the alarm, for as we approached every post was in its turn abandoned; the alarmed sentinels throwing down their weapons, and flying before us; and I took care not to neglect the opportunity of arming myself against need, with a good sabre.

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THE NATURALIST.

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THE ORNITHORHYNCHUS PARADOXUS.

The following interesting fact in natural history was communicated by Dr. Weatherhead, to the committee of science of the Zoological Society, at their last meeting.

For the last five-and-twenty years naturalists in Europe have been striving to obtain the carcass of the impregnated female Ornithorhynchus paradoxus, for the purpose of ascertaining its mode of gestation, but without success; for it is by dissection alone that the hitherto doubtful and disputed point concerning the anomalous and paradoxical manner of bring forth and rearing its young can be satisfactorily demonstrated. This long-sought-for desideratum is at length attained. Through the kindness of his friend, Lieut. the honourable Lauderdale Maule, of the 39th regiment, Dr. Weatherhead has had the bodies of several ornithorynchi transmitted to him from New Holland, in one of which the ova preserved; establishing, along with other curious circumstances ascertained, the extraordinary fact, that this animal, which combines the bird and quadruped together in its outward form, lays eggs and hatches them like the one, and rears and suckles them like the other.--Proc. Zool. Soc.

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NOTES OF A READER.

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JUNOT AND NAPOLEON.

This soldier of fortune being one day, during the siege of Toulon, at his post at the battery of St. Culottes, an officer of artillery, who had recently come from Paris to direct the operations of the siege, asked from the officer who commanded the post for a young non-commissioned officer who had at once intelligence and boldness. The officer immediately called for Junot; the officer surveyed him with that eye which already began to take the measure of human capacity.

"You will change your dress," said the commander, "and you will go there to bear this order." He showed him with his hand a spot at a distance on the same side. The young sergeant blushed up to the eyes; his eyes kindled with fire. "I am not a spy," said he, "to execute their orders; seek another to bear them." "Do you refuse to obey?" said the superior officer; "do you know to what punishment you expose yourself in so doing?" "I am ready to obey," said Junot, "but I will go in my uniform, or not at all." The commander smiled, and looked at him attentively. "But if you do, they will kill you." "What does that signify?" said Junot; "you know me little to imagine I would be pained at such an occurrence, and, as for me, it is all one--come, I go as I am; is it not so?" And he set off singing.

After he was gone, the superior officer asked, "What is the name of that young man?" "Junot," replied the other. The commanding officer then wrote his name in his pocket-book. "He will make his way," he replied. This judgment was already of decisive importance to Junot, for the reader must readily have divined that the officer of artillery was Napoleon.

A few days after, being on his rounds at the same battery, Bonaparte asked for some one who could write well. Junot stepped out of the ranks and presented himself. Bonaparte recognised him as the sergeant who had already fixed his attention. He expressed his satisfaction at seeing him, and desired him to place himself so as to write under his dictation. Hardly was the letter done, when a bomb, projected from the English batteries, fell at the distance of ten yards, and, exploding, covered all present with gravel and dust. "Well," said Junot, laughing, "we shall at least not require sand to dry the ink."

Bonaparte fixed his eyes on the young sergeant; he was calm, and had not even quivered at the explosion. That event decided his fortune. He remained attached to the commander of artillery, and returned no more to his corps. At a subsequent time, when the town surrendered, and Bonaparte was appointed General, Junot asked no other recompense for his brave conduct during the siege, but to be named his aide-de-camp. He and Muiron were the first who served him in that capacity.--_Memoirs of the Duchess of Abrantes._

* * * * *

EFFECT OF DISEASE ON MEMORY.

Failure of memory takes place in a variety of ways. It is sometimes general, and extends to every subject; but it is frequently far more manifest on some subjects than on others. Salmuth mentions a case in which the affected person had forgotten to pronounce words, but could nevertheless write them. Mr. J. Hunter was suddenly attacked with a singular affection of this kind in December 1789, when on a visit at the house of a friend in town. "He did not know in what part of the house he was, not even the name of the street when told it, nor where his own house was: he had not a conception of any thing existing beyond the room he was in, and yet was perfectly conscious of the loss of memory. He was sensible of impressions of all kinds from the senses, and therefore looked out of the window, although rather dark, to see if he could be made sensible of the situation of the house. The loss of memory gradually went off, and in less than half an hour his memory was perfectly recovered." This might possibly be connected with a gouty habit to which Mr. Hunter was subject, though not at this time labouring under a paroxysm. The late Bishop of Landaff, Dr. Watson, gives a singular case of partial amnesia in his father, the result of an apoplectic attack. "I have heard him ask twenty times a-day," says Dr. Watson, "What is the name of the lad that is at college?" (my elder brother); and yet he was able to repeat, without a blunder, hundreds of lines out of classic authors. And hence, there is no reason for discrediting the story of a German statesman, a Mr. Von B. related in the seventh volume of the *Psychological Magazine*, who having called at a gentleman's house, the servants of which did not know him, was under the necessity of giving in his name; but unfortunately at that moment he had forgotten it, and excited no small laughter by turning round to a friend who accompanied him, and saying with great earnestness, "Pray tell me who I am, for I cannot recollect."

From severe suffering of the head in many fevers a great inroad is frequently made upon the memory, and it is long before the convalescent can rightly put together all the ideas of his past life. Such was one of the effects of the plague at Athens, as we learn from Thucydides; "and many, on recovery, still experienced such an extraordinary oblivion of all things that they knew neither themselves nor their friends." A few years ago a man with a brain-fever was taken into St. Thomas's Hospital, who as he grew better spoke to his attendants, but in a language they did not understand. A Welsh milk-woman going by accident into the ward, heard him, answered him and conversed with him. It was then found that the patient was by birth a Welshman, but had left his native land in his youth, forgotten his native dialect, and used English for the last thirty years. Yet, in consequence of this fever he had now forgotten the English tongue, and suddenly recovered the Welsh.

Boerhaave, however, gives a still more extraordinary instance of oblivion in the case of a Spanish tragic author who had composed many excellent pieces, but so completely lost his memory in consequence of an acute fever, that he forgot not only the languages he had formerly learnt, but even the alphabet; and was hence under the necessity of beginning to read again. His own poems and compositions were shown to him, but he could not be persuaded that they were his production. Afterwards, however, he began once more to compose verses; which had so striking a resemblance to his former writings that he at length became convinced of his being the author of them.-- *From the Doctor.*

* * * * *

READING COINS IN THE DARK.

(*From Sir David Brewster's Letters on Natural Magic.*)

Among the numerous experiments with which science astonishes and sometimes even strikes terror into the ignorant, there is none more

calculated to produce this effect than that of displaying to the eye in absolute darkness the legend or inscription upon a coin. To do this, take a silver coin, (I have always used an old one,) and after polishing the surface as much as possible, make the parts of it which are raised rough by the action of an acid, the parts not raised, or those which are to be rendered darkest, retaining their polish. If the coin thus prepared is placed upon a mass of red hot iron, and removed into a dark room, the inscription upon it will become less luminous than the rest, so that it may be distinctly read by the spectator. The mass of red hot iron should be concealed from the observer's eye, both for the purpose of rendering the eye fitter for observing the effect, and of removing all doubt that the inscription is really read in the dark, that is, without receiving any light, direct or reflected, from any other body. If, in place of polishing the depressed parts, and roughening its raised parts, we make the raised parts polished, and roughen the depressed parts, the inscription will now be less luminous than the depressed parts, and we shall still be able to read it, from its being as it were written in black letters on a white ground. The first time I made this experiment, without being aware of what would be the result, I used a French shilling of Louis XV. and I was not a little surprised to observe upon its surface in black letters the inscription BENEDICTUM SIT NOMEN DEI.

The most surprising form of this experiment is when we use a coin from which the inscription has been either wholly obliterated, or obliterated in such a degree as to be illegible. When such a coin is laid upon the red hot iron, the letters and figures become oxidated, and the film of oxide radiating more powerfully than the rest of the coin will be more luminous than the rest of the coin, and the illegible inscription may be now distinctly read to the great surprise of the observer, who had examined the blank surface of the coin previous to its being placed upon the hot iron.

In order to explain the cause of these remarkable effects, we must notice a method which has been long known, though never explained, of deciphering the inscriptions on worn out coins. This is done by merely placing the coin upon a hot iron: an oxidation takes place over the whole surface of the coin, the film of oxide changing its tint with the intensity or continuance of the heat. The parts, however, where the letters of the inscription had existed, oxidate at a different rate from the surrounding parts, so that these letters exhibit their shape, and become legible in consequence of the film of oxide which covers them having a different thickness, and therefore reflecting a different tint from that of the adjacent parts. The tints thus developed sometimes pass through many orders of brilliant colours, particularly pink and green, and settle in a bronze, and sometimes a black tint, resting upon the inscription alone. In some cases the tint left on the trace of the letters is so very faint that it can just be seen, and may be entirely removed by a slight rub of the finger.

When the experiment is often repeated with the same coin, and the oxidations successively removed after each experiment, the film of oxide continues to diminish, and at last ceases to make its appearance. It recovers the property however, in the course of time. When the coin is put upon the hot iron, and consequently when the oxidation is the greatest, a considerable smoke arises from the coin, and this diminishes like the film of oxide by frequent repetition. A coin which had ceased to emit this smoke, smoked slightly after having been exposed twelve hours to the air. I have found from numerous trials that it is always the raised parts of the coin, and in modern coins the elevated ledge round the inscription, that becomes first oxidated. In an English shilling of 1816 this ledge exhibited a brilliant yellow tint before it appeared on any other part of the coin.

If we use an uniform and homogeneous disc of silver that has never been

hammered or compressed, its surface will oxidate equally, provided all its parts are equally heated. In the process of converting this disc into a coin, the sunk parts have obviously been most compressed by the prominent parts of the die, and the elevated parts least compressed, the metal being in the latter left as it were in its natural state. The raised letters and figures on a coin have therefore less density than the other parts, and these parts oxiditate sooner or at a lower temperature. When the letters of the legend are worn off by friction, the parts immediately below them have also less density than the surrounding metal, and the site as it were of the letters therefore receive from heat a degree of oxidation, and a colour different from that of the surrounding surface. Hence we obtain an explanation of the revival of the invisible letters by oxidation.

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THE GATHERER.

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Locomotive Engines have been established on the rail-roads near Philadelphia. The distance of 16-1/2 miles was performed by one of them going in an hour and thirteen minutes, returning (laden both ways) in an hour and eight minutes. The last mile was done in three minutes.

Blacking.--Shoes, among the classical ancients, were cleaned by a sponge; in the middle ages, by washing. Oil, soap, and grease were the substitutes for blacking, which was at first made with soot, but shone with a gloss.

Cool Tankard.--The custom of the Lord Mayor drinking a "cool tankard" with the governor of Newgate, on his Lordship's way to proclaim Bartholomew Fair, is better known to our readers than the precise contents of the said tankard. In olden times the "cool tankard" was, or nearly coincided with, the wine mixed with Burrage, (so the translators call the herb) of Plutarch, and the Herbosum Vinum of Du Cange. In all probability, the "cool tankard" of our times implies a well-appointed dejeune a la fourchette.

Hanging.--though as a punishment for thieves, ascribed to the reign of Henry I., occurs in a charter of Edgar. In hanging for public spectacle, an iron hoop with a strong chain was put round the body; but the chain was longer than the halter, so that when the latter was cut, the hoop slipped to the ampits, and left them suspended. When criminals escaped, an image of them was often hung up for several days; whence our hanging in effigy.

Elections.--Bribery, treating, canvassing, processions of voters at the heels of the candidate, dancing attendance after the great, forming factions, and other electioneering arts, occur in the classic ages. Among us, the candidates were not always present at the day of election, and under-sheriffs observe, that they mean to return according to the number of votes, provided the sheriff does not direct otherwise. Lord Chancellor Jefferies went to Arundel on purpose to overawe the electors. The seats were as much sought formerly as now. The members received wages as low as Elizabeth's reign.

Lucretius.--A summary of that part of the system of Lucretius, in which he describes man emerging from barbarity, acquiring the use of language, and the knowledge of various useful and polite arts, is comprised in a few lines of a satire of Horace, lib. i. sat. iii. v. 97. It has been ingeniously paraphrased by Dr. Beattie:

"When men out of the earth of old,
A dumb and beastly vermin crawled,
For acorns first and holes of shelter,
They tooth and nail and helter-skelter,
Fought fist to fist; then with a club,
Each learned his brother brute to drub;
Till more experienced grown, these cattle
Forged fit accoutrements for battle.
At last (Lucretius says, and Creech)
They set their wits to work on speech;
And that their thoughts might all have marks
To make them known, these learned clerks
Left off the trade of cracking crowns,
And manufactured verbs and nouns."

H.H.

Every trade has its technicalities. The other day we overheard a lamplighter complain of a cunning fellow workman who tried to get all the straightforward work himself, and to leave the turnings to others.

A Physician's Advice to his Student.

"Dum aeger ait--Ah! ah!
Tu dicito--Du! du!"

A free translation is requested.

H.H.

* * * * *

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