

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction, Vol. 20, No. 582, Saturday, December 22, 1832

Various

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THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

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[Illustration: THE YORK COLUMN, (from St. James's Park.)]

THE YORK COLUMN.

Five years have now elapsed since the improvements in St. James's Park were commenced, by order of Government, for the gratification of the people. We were early in our congratulation, as well as illustration, of the prospective advantages of these plans for the public enjoyment, as will be seen on reference to our tenth volume; and, with respect to the re-disposal of St. James's Park, we believe the feeling of satisfaction has been nearly universal.

At the period to which we have just alluded, the removal of Carlton House, (for it scarcely deserved the name of Palace,) had been decided on. The walls were dismantled of their decorative finery, and their demolition commenced; the grounds were, to use a somewhat grandiloquent phrase, dis-afforested; and the upper end of "the sweet, shady side of Pall Mall" marked out for public instead of Royal occupation. Thus, within a century has risen and disappeared from this spot the splendid abode and its appurtenances; for, it was in the year 1732 that Frederic, Prince of Wales, first purchased the property from the Earl of Burlington; though it was not until 1788 that the erection of Carlton House was commenced for the late King, then Prince of Wales; so that the existence of the Palace must be restricted within forty years--a term reminding us of the duration of a pavilion, rather than of a kingly mansion.

Upon the precise site of the courtyard and part of Carlton House have been erected two mansions, of splendid character, appropriated to the United Service and Athenaeum Clubs: the first built from the designs of Mr. Nash, and the latter from those of Mr. Decimus Burton. They front Pall Mall West, or may be considered to terminate Waterloo Place.

The site of Carlton House Gardens is now occupied by palatial houses, which are disposed in two ranges, and front St. James's Park. The substructure, containing the kitchens and domestic offices, forms a terrace about 50 feet wide, adorned with pillars of the Paestum Doric Order, surmounted with a balustrade. The superstructure consists of three stories, ornamented with Corinthian columns. The houses at each extremity have elevated attics. Only small portions of these superb elevations are shown in the Engraving, with the Athenaeum Club House in the distance.

In the space between the two ranges, it was proposed to erect a fountain, formed of the eight column's of the portico of Carlton House, (which was in elaborate imitation of the Temple of Jupiter Stator, at Rome,[1]) to which eight on the same model were to be added. The balustraded terrace had been continued fronting the Park with a view to this embellishment. It however occurred to some guardian of the public

weal, that the above space presented an eligible opportunity for a grand public entrance from Pall Mall into the Park. The idea was mooted in Parliament; but some difficulties arose, from the leases already granted to the builders of the houses on the terrace, who had calculated on the _exclusive_ appropriation of the latter. The anxiety of the public for the improvement at length reached the present King; and it was the first popular act of his patriotic reign to command a grand triumphal[2] entrance to be formed, with all possible speed; the difficulties being then easily removed. The necessary portion of the terrace was accordingly removed, and the magnificent approach formed, as shown in the Engraving.

While these improvements were in progress, a monumental memorial had been projected by the British Army to their late commander-in-chief, the Duke of York; an expression of grateful sympathy which must be recorded to the honour of truly British hearts. The funds for this tribute were augmented by each individual of the above branch of the service contributing one day's pay. The design was furnished by Mr. Benjamin Wyatt, the architect of the superb mansion built for the Duke of York; and, after the execution was somewhat advanced, it was resolved to set up the tribute in the place it now occupies.

The monument consists of a plain Doric column, surmounted with a colossal statue of the Duke of York. The pedestal and shaft are of fine granite. The plinth, or base of the pedestal, is 22 feet square, and the pedestal 18 feet; the circumference of the shaft is 11 feet 6 inches, decreasing to 10 feet 2 inches at the top; the abacus is 13 feet 6 inches square. The interior of the column may be ascended by a winding staircase of 169 steps, lit by narrow loop-holes.

From the top stair a doorway opens to the exterior of the abacus, which will be enclosed with a massive iron railing, so as to form a prospect gallery. The iron-work is not yet completed; but, as we have enjoyed the view from two sides of the square, we can vouch for its commanding a fine _coup d'oeil_ of the whole metropolis, and certainly the finest view of its most embellished quarter. From this spot alone can the magnificence of Regent-street be duly appreciated, and above all the skill of the architect in effecting the junction of the lines by the classical introduction of the Quadrant.

That part of the structure which is, strictly speaking, upon the abacus of the column, has a domed roof, upon which will be placed the colossal statue, executed in bronze, by Mr. Westmacott. The Duke is represented in a flowing robe, with a sword in his right hand, and in the left, one of the insignia of the Order of the Garter. The height of the figure is 13 feet 6 inches. The total height of the column, exclusive of the statue, is 124 feet. The masonry, (executed by Mr. Nowell, of Pimlico,) deserves especial notice. Its neatness and finish are truly astonishing, and the solidity and massiveness of the material appear calculated "for all time."

We should mention that the embellishment about the upper part of the pedestal (as seen in the cut,) has not yet been placed on the original; nor has the statue yet been raised to the summit of the column.

[1] The above columns, with those of the handsome Ionic calonnade which screened the Palace from Pall Mall, are, we believe, the only remains of the building.

[2] The entrance deserves this epithet on more than one account.

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MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

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ANCIENT AND MODERN CHRISTMAS.

"Anciently there was in the king's house," says Stow, "wheresoever he lodged, at the feast of Christmas, a 'Lord of Misrule, or Master of Merry Disports;' and the like also was there in the house of every nobleman of honour or good worship, whether spiritual or temporal. Among these, the Mayor and Sheriffs of London had their several Lords of Misrule, ever contending, without quarrel or offence, who should make the rarest pastime to divert the beholders. These Lords began their rule, or rather misrule, on All Hallow's-eve, and continued the same until Candlemas-day, in which space there were fine and subtle disguisings, masques, and mummeries, with playing at cards for counters, nails, and points, in every house, more for pastime than for gain. Against this feast, the parish churches and every man's house were decked with holm, ivy, bay, and whatsoever the season of the year afforded that was green; and the conduits and standards in the streets were likewise garnished."

W.G.C.

Kent.

At Ramsgate they commence their Christmas festivities by the following ceremony:--A party of the youthful portion of the community having procured the head of a horse, it is affixed to a pole, about four feet in length; a string is attached to the lower jaw, a horse-cloth is tied round the extreme part of the head, beneath which one of the party is concealed, who, by repeated pulling and loosening the string, causes the jaw to rise and fall, and thus produces, by bringing the teeth in contact, a snapping noise, as he moves along; the rest of the party following in procession, grotesquely habited, and ringing hand-bells! In this order they proceed from house to house, singing carols and ringing their bells, and are generally remunerated for the amusement they occasion by a largess of money, or beer and cake. This ceremony is called "a hoodening." The figure which we have described is designated "a hooden," or wooden horse. The ceremony prevails in many parts of the Isle of Thanet, and may probably be traced as the relic of some religious ceremony practised in the early ages by our Saxon ancestors.

Norfolk.

The following account of a pageant which took place at Christmas, 1440, is from the records of Norwich:--"John Hadman, a wealthy citizen, made disport with his neighbours and friends, and was crowned King of

Christmas. He rode in state through the city, dressed forth in silks and tinsel, and preceded by twelve persons habited as the twelve months of the year, their costumes varying to represent the different seasons of the year. After King Christmas followed Lent, clothed in white garments trimmed with herring skins, on horseback, the horse being decorated with trappings of oyster-shells, being indicative that sadness and a holy time should follow Christmas revelling. In this way they rode through the city, accompanied by numbers in various grotesque dresses, making disport and merriment,--some clothed in armour, carrying staves, and occasionally engaging in martial combat; others, dressed as devils, chased the people, and sorely affrighted the women and children; others, wearing skin-dresses, and counterfeiting bears, wolves, lions, and other animals, and endeavouring to imitate the animals they represented, in roaring and raving, alarming the cowardly and appalling the stoutest hearts."

Dalmatia.

At Selenico, in Dalmatia, according to Fortis; they elect a king at Christmas, whose reign lasts only a fortnight; but notwithstanding the short duration of his authority, he enjoys several prerogatives of sovereignty: such, for example, as that of keeping the keys of the town, of having a distinguished place in the cathedral, and of deciding upon all the difficulties or disputes which arise among those who compose his court. The town is obliged to provide him with a house suitable to the dignity of his elevated situation. When he leaves his house, he is always compelled to wear a crown of wheat-ears, and he cannot appear in public without a robe of purple or scarlet cloth, and surrounded by a great number of officers. The governor, the bishops, and other dignitaries, are obliged to give him a feast; and all who meet him must salute him with respect. When the fortnight is at an end, the king quits his palace, strips off his crown and purple, dismisses his court, and returns to his hovel. For a length of time this pantomimical king was chosen from amongst the nobles, but at present it has devolved on the lowest of the people.

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NEW BOOKS.

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THE LITERARY SOUVENIR, FOR 1833,

[Is, in our estimation, a splendid failure. It lacks the variety which the Annual should possess for a family of readers; and its sameness is, moreover, of the saddest character in the whole region of romance. The stories are long, and lazily told; and they overflow with the most lugubrious monotony. There is scarcely a relief throughout the volume, from Wordsworth's "majestic sonnet" on Sir Walter Scott, to Autumn Flowers, by Agnes Strickland; we travel from one end to the other, and all is lead and leaden--dull, heavy, and sad, as old Burton could wish; and full of moping melancholy, unenlivened by quaintness, or humour of any cast. Not that we mean to condemn the pieces individually;

but, collectively, they are too much in the same vein: the Editor has studied too closely his text-motto:

"Fairy tale to lull the heir,
Goblin grim the maids to scare."

It is all shade, without a gleam of sunshine, if we except two or three of the most trifling of the papers. The best tale in the volume is the Marsh Maiden, by Leigh Ritchie; next is the Jacobite Exile and his Hound: Retrospections of Secundus Parnell, are an infliction upon the reader; and these, with two _mediocre_ tales, and a sketch or two, make up the prose contents. The poetry has greater merit, though almost in one unvaried strain. Mr. Watts has contributed but one lyric, and Mrs. Watts a stirring ballad of Spanish revenge; Mary Howitt has contributed a fairy ballad, pretty enough; and the Sin of Earl Walter, a tale of olden popish times in England, of some 60 or 70 verses. We quote two specimens from the poetry:]

SONNET ON SIR WALTER SCOTT'S QUITTING ABBOTSFORD FOR NAPLES.

By William Wordsworth.

A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain,
Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
Engendered, hangs o'er Eildun's triple height:
Spirits of Power assembled there complain
For kindred Power departing from their sight;
While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe strain,
Saddens his voice again and yet again.
Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners! for the might
Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes;
Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue
Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows,
Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true
Ye winds of ocean and the midland sea,
Wafting your charge to soft Parthenope!

THE SKELETON DANCE.

After the German of Goethe.

The warder looked out at the mid-hour of night,
Where the grave-hills all silently lay;
The moon-beams above gave so brilliant a light,
That the churchyard was clear as by day:
First one, then another, to open began;
Here came out a woman--there came out a man,--
Each clad in a shroud long and white.

And then for amusement--perchance it was cold--
In a circle they seemed to advance;
The poor and the rich, and the young and the old,--
But the grave-clothes impeded the dance:
And as no person thought about modesty there,
They flung off their garments, and stripped themselves bare,

And a shroud lay on each heap of mould.

They kicked up their heels, and they rattled their bones,
And the horrible din that they made
Went clickety-clackety--just like the tones
Of a castanet noisily played.
And the warder he laughed as he witnessed the cheer,
And he heard the Betrayer speak soft in his ear,
"Go and steal away one of their shrouds."

Swift as thought it was done--in an instant he fled
Behind the church portal to hide;
And brighter and brighter the moon-beam was shed,
As the dance they still shudderingly plied;--
But at last they began to grow tired of their fun,
And they put on their shrouds, and slipped off, one by one,
Beneath, to the homes of the dead.

But tapping at every grave-hill, there staid
One skeleton, tripping behind;
Though not by his comrades the trick had been played--
Now its odour he snuffed in the wind:
He rushed to the door--but fell back with a shock;
For well for the wight of the bell and the clock,
The sign of the cross it displayed.

But the shroud he must have--not a moment he stays;
Ere a man had begun but to think,
On the Gothic-work his fingers quickly he lays,
And climbs up its chain, link by link.
Now woe to the warder--for sure he must die--
To see, like a long-legged spider, draw nigh
The skeleton's clattering form:

And pale was his visage, and thick came his breath;
The garb, alas! why did he touch?
How sick grew his soul as the garment of death
The skeleton caught in his clutch--
The moon disappeared, and the skies changed to dun,
And louder than thunder the church-bell tolled one--
The spectre fell tumbling to bits!

[and one of the prose tales, abridged:]

BEATRICE ADONY AND JULIUS ALVINZI.

There is not in all Germany a more pleasant station for a regiment of horse than the city of Salzburg, capital of the province of that name, in the dominions of the House of Austria. Here, during the summer and autumn of 1795, lay the third regiment of Hungarian hussars. This corps had sustained a heavy loss during the campaign of the year previous in Flanders, and was sent into garrison to be recruited and organized anew. Count Zichy, who commanded it, was a noble of the highest rank, of princely fortune, and of lavish expenditure; and being of a cheerful and social turn of mind, he promoted all the amusements of the place, and

encouraged the gaiety of his officers.

The scenery around is grand and alpine. The narrow defiles and picturesque valleys are watered by mountain rivers; and, at an easy distance from the city, is the lone lake of Berchtolsgaden, lying beneath a lofty, inaccessible alp, of the most stern and majestic aspect. Need it be told how sweet upon that placid lake sounded the mellow horns of the Hungarian band; and may it not be left to fancy to image out, how these parties, these scenes, and these sensations, gave birth to some abiding, and to very many passing loves.

Among the fair women of Salzburgh, the palm of beauty was yielded readily by all to Beatrice Adony, the only daughter of a respected statesman, long favoured at court, and then resident upon a private estate in the neighbourhood. He had retired from public affairs a few years before, when under deep affliction from the loss of a beloved wife; and lived a life of fond parental devotion with this lovely Beatrice, who was the image of her departed mother. He had directed all her studies; and with such judgment, that he had imparted to her character a masculine strength, which elevated her above all the common dangers of that season of life when woman passes forth into society.

The Count Zichy was a relation of Count Adony, and a constant and welcome guest at his mansion; and Beatrice, therefore, attended many and most of the entertainments which the Count and his officers gave to the society of Salzburgh during their stay. As she smiled no encouragement upon the attentions which the Count seemed at first disposed to pay her, and as he was a cheerful, manly-hearted creature, and though made of penetrable stuff, by no means a person to lose either appetite, society, or life, for love, he bestowed his gallantries elsewhere. She liked him for this all the better; and gave him, in return, that free-hearted, sisterly friendship, which might be innocently suffered to grow out of their connexion and intimacy.

All the regular, conceited male coquettes were abashed and perplexed by manners so natural, that they could make nothing of her; while those more dangerous, but much to be blamed admirers, who stand apart with sighs and gazes, were baffled and made sad by the silent dignity of eyes serenely bright, that never looked upon their flattering worship with one ray of favour. Such was Beatrice Adony; all the fair girls were fond of her, and proud of her--because she was no one's rival. They looked on her as a being of a higher order; one whose thoughts were chaste as the unsunned Alps. She was admired by them, meditated upon--but never envied.

Most true it was, Beatrice was of another and a higher order. She was "among them, not of them." She took part in those amusements which belong to the customs of her country; and filled that place, and performed those customs, which her station in society demanded, with unaffected ease and grace. But while the trifles and pleasures of the passing day were to her companions everything, they were to her little and unsatisfying. For the last few years of her mother's life, whose habits were meditative and devotional, she had daily listened to the gracious lessons of divine truth, and the closet of Beatrice Adony was hallowed by the Eye that seeth in secret, and that often saw her there upon her knees.

It was on a fine day, in the early spring of 1796, that orders reached Salzburgh for the march of these Hungarian hussars. They were to

traverse the Tyrol, and to join the army of Italy. They were to march at sunrise on the following morning; and Count Adony, collecting all the acquaintances of the corps in the town and neighbourhood, gave the Hungarian officers a farewell banquet and ball; preparations for which, in anticipation of their early departure, Beatrice had already directed.

Beatrice was the radiant queen of this fair festival; and it was strange to think, that from the presence of such a being so many men were going to part without one lover's pang. Amiable, affable, natural, and full of grace, she presided over this little court of love--serene, unmoved, herself. Yet any thoughtful and suspicious observer would have said, that her heart was not quite at ease; for every now and then, as the night wore on, her eyes gave less attention to those who spoke with her, and her thoughts were evidently turning inwards with trouble. The supper was over--the tastefully decorated table was deserted--and the guests were again assembled in the ball-room. Fond partners that might never dance with each other again, stood side by side--hand locked in hand--and waited for the rising swell of the tender music, to which they were to dance their last waltz. Beatrice stood up with her cousin Count Zichy, and deadly pale she looked. The Count and all others thought she had a headach, and would have had her sit down; but she persisted, with a faint smile, in doing the last honours.

Just at this very moment a manly young officer, whose dress denoted that he had been on duty, and was ready again to mount and go forward, came in to make a report to the colonel.

As the first bars of the music were heard, he stood aside, his cap in his hand, and looked on. Already, however, a young brother officer had run from his partner's side, to renew to him, with all extravagance of gratitude, his thanks for having, by an exchange of duty, enabled him to enjoy a last, long parting with the girl he loved. The dance went forward, and Julius Alvinzi leaned cheerfully upon his sabre. Suddenly Count Zichy and his fair cousin broke out from the large circle, and setting to him, he was led off to the waltz movement before he had time to ungird his sword. This, however, even as he danced, he gracefully effected; and afterwards for one tour of waltzing, Beatrice Adony was the partner of Julius Alvinzi, quitting for the time her own.

This is a custom, in Germany, so common, and seemed so natural and so kind a courtesy to Julius, under the particular circumstances of his late and short appearance at the ball, that neither himself, nor any one in the room, attached to it any other character than that of a pretty and gentle compliment. But if the ear of Julius had been quickened by the faintest spark of sympathy, he might have heard the very heart of Beatrice beat.

"You are tired," said Julius, as the music suddenly ceased.

"Rather so," she replied.

He led her, faint, pale, and trembling, to a seat. Some colour returned to her cheek as she sat down; and, with an open and cheerful air, she put out her hand to him, and said, "Farewell, Captain Alvinzi; all honour, and all happiness go with you."

As he took her hand, he observed, for the first time, that pale-changing of the cheek which is so eloquent of love; and, looking into her eyes, he felt his heart sink with a sweeter emotion than he had ever known

before.

Thus silently they parted; and Julius went out from her presence sad, but happy. "Il est si doux aimer, et d'être aimé." He felt that he was beloved. In half an hour, the noble gateway at Salzburch, cut through the solid rock, rang to the loud echo of trampling hoofs; and Julius was riding under it with an advanced guard, and a few troop-sergeants, to prepare the quarters of the regiment, then mustering for their march.

In all the camps of Europe, a finer youth, or a nobler spirit, could no where have been found than Julius Alvinzi. Five years of military service--three of which had been spent in the toils, the watchings, and the combats of warfare--had accomplished and perfected him in all points, as the zealous and enterprising leader of a squadron. Glory was his idol--war his passion. His day-dreams over-leaped the long interval of years which, of necessity, separated him from high command; and, as he built up the castle of his future fame, many were the victories which he won "in the name of God, and the Kaiser!" With this, the gallant war-cry of Austria, he had already, in some few charges, led on his bold and bitter Hungarians; and two or three dashing affairs of outposts--a, daring and important reconnoissance, most skilfully conducted--and the surprise and capture of a French picquet--had already given him an established name for intelligence and enterprise. There was a manliness about him superior to low, sensual enjoyment; and the imagery and language of vulgar voluptuousness found no cell in a well-stored, well-principled, and masculine mind, to receive or retain them. He was a happy, handsome, hardy soldier; knowing his duty, loving it, and always performing it with honour. Such was the man whom Beatrice Adony, with a quick perception of true nobility of character, had silently observed during the stay of the Hungarians at Salzburch, and her love for him was a secret--

The only jewel of her speechless thoughts.

It was thus in the full lustihood of life, and in all the bloom of high hope and promise, that in one of those severe actions, which took place in the summer of 1796 on the plains of Mantua, Julius Alvinzi led his brave squadron into battle. The brigade to which he belonged was brought forward by the veteran Wurmser at a very anxious moment, and, by their devoted courage, saved a column of Austrian infantry from being enveloped and cut off by the French. The Hungarians charged with such vigour and success, that they not only overthrew the body of horse opposed to them, but they possessed themselves of a battery of field-pieces which endeavoured to cover their retreat, and which continued to vomit forth grape with a deadly fury till the horses' heads of the leading squadron, under Alvinzi, reached the very muzzles of the cannon.

The Austrians were, however, compelled finally to retreat, that same evening, from the ground which they had so resolutely contested--the movement was made in fine order, and they carried off all their wounded in safety. Upon a crowded wagon lay Julius Alvinzi; living, indeed, but a living wreck, and his recovery despaired of. He had been wounded in six places, and lay motionless and insensible; his servant walking by his side in silent trouble. As the remains of his regiment marched slowly back upon Mantua, and passed the convoy of the wounded close to the gates, you might have heard the name of Alvinzi singled out by the men for more deep and particular lamentation. He had been their friend, their pride, their example; and their eyes were turned upon the wagon on

which he lay with an expression of sadness too stern and severe for tears.

The news of this disastrous battle was communicated to Count Adony at Salzburgh in a letter from his cousin the Count Zichy. Beatrice and her father were sitting in his library after night-fall, each occupied with a book, under the calm, soft light of a lamp which hung a little above them, when this letter was brought in. He read it eagerly and rapidly to himself; and then, with a grateful exclamation for the safety of Zichy, and those officers with whom he was more especially acquainted, he again read it aloud to Beatrice. It ran as follows:--

"MY DEAR AND HONOURED COUSIN,

"We are all doing our best; but, I am sorry to say, we are losing everything except our honour. Fortune is with these Frenchmen. Of six hundred swords, with which I marched from Salzburgh ten weeks ago, only two hundred and twenty remain to me. We lost, in the battle of yesterday, nearly three hundred killed and wounded. I never saw our men fight better: the enemy opposed to us were fairly beaten at the sword's point; and we took a battery of twelve guns, which tried to cover their discomfiture; but we conquered only to retire. I have not a word to say against old Wurmser: he is a clear headed, tough-hearted veteran, but these French generals are too young for him. I am quite well, but had a narrow escape; two horses were killed under me, and a grape shot passed through my cap.

"Tell dear Beatrice, I have got that engraving of the Madonna del Rosario of Domenichino which she wanted. I picked it up at Verona; thanks to poor Alvinzi, by the way. Though you, neither of you, saw nor knew much of this youth, you have so often heard me speak of his worth, that you will be sorry for me when I tell you that I have lost him; and, in him, my best and most zealous officer. He is covered with wounds, and cannot live through the night;--the noble fellow was struck down within a yard of the enemy's guns. Of others, whom you may remember, Kreiner, Zetter, and Hartmann, are killed; and several are wounded: Kalmann and Hettinger very severely.--You shall hear from me again soon; but matters look very unpromising.

"Your faithful and loving cousin, CASIMIR ZICHY."

"Read the letter again, father," said Beatrice, with a tone such as he had never heard from her before; "read it again," she cried, "pray read it again!--'my best and most zealous officer,'--is it not so?--'covered with wounds, and cannot live through the night,'--is it not so?--Father, I loved this Alvinzi.--Ah! yes, I loved him well--now better than ever;--but I knew it would be thus the very day on which I first saw him:--read it again,--pray do?"--and, with a still-bewilderment of eye, she took it from her trembling father, and read it slowly to herself. "Give me this letter, father;" and she put it in her bosom: and there it lay,--there it lay through a long and nervous illness, which mercifully terminated in her death.

For a long time she was enabled to govern and controul her feelings, and was silent, and, to outward seeming, resigned. She often remarked to her father, that she could, and did, say daily upon her knees, "Thy will be done,"--but that tears always followed that sincere, but mournful, exercise. However her frame at last gave way--she sunk into great weakness of body, and her mind became affected.

Her father watched her with unceasing solicitude throughout her sufferings; but he was often driven from her chamber by the agony of his emotions, as she read over the fatal letter, or sung, which she did continually, that mournful song of Thecla.

The world it is empty, the heart will die,
There's nothing to wish for beneath the sky:
Thou Holy One, call Thy child away--
I've lived and loved; and that was to-day--
Make ready my grave-clothes to-morrow.

Such was the early and melancholy close of a young life of the loveliest promise. The severe and sudden horror struck hard upon her fine mind, and drove it mournfully astray. Her heart was so broken that she could not live on. But Julius Alvinzi did not then or so perish: for seventeen weeks he lay upon a hospital bed in Mantua, helpless as an infant; and finally recovered so much of health as gave him again the common promise of life. He was afterwards sent to pass the long period of his convalescence at Venice; but the Julius Alvinzi, who rode forth from Salzburgh, was no longer to be recognised: crippled in his limbs--his fine countenance disfigured by deep and unsightly scars--his complexion pale--his hair turned grey with suffering. He had already stepped on twenty years in as many weeks, and he was already, to the eye, a worn and broken-down officer of veterans. He could not stir a pace without crutches; and his hip had been so shattered and distorted that it was painful to see him move. It was well that Beatrice was in her grave. No doubt she would have exhibited the noble constancy of a pure, angelic, and true love;--but she was spared that longer and heavier trial.

Alvinzi, like a stricken deer, betook himself, with decayed hopes and an aching bosom, to a retired valley near Burgersdorf, about ten miles from Vienna. Here he took a small fishing cottage, near a lone and lovely stream, which flowed across a few velvet meadows, amid deep dells and still woods; and here he threw himself on the beautiful bosom of nature as on that of a mother. Here, for the first time, he was made acquainted, by a letter and a packet from the aged and desolate Adony, of the melancholy end of the lovely Beatrice. The packet contained a small cross which she had always worn, her miniature, and her psalter.

The traveller who may now wander into the little valley, near Burgersdorf, where Alvinzi dwelt, will find the cypress, planted upon his grave the day after his funeral, only three years' growth; and if he go and sit under the tree, beneath which Alvinzi reposed his withered and broken frame for thirty summers, will perhaps agree with the narrator of this mournful story, that mercy was mingled in his bitter cup, and that

Society is all but rude,
To that delicious solitude.

The peasants of that valley tell, with a superstitious awe, that Alvinzi was wont to discourse for hours together with departed spirits; and that they have stolen near his tree at sunset, and in the gloom of the evening, and by moonlight, and have distinctly heard him talking with some one whom he called "Beatrice."

[The Embellishments of the _Souvenir_ are nearly on a par with those of previous years, with a light sprinkling of originality in the subjects.]

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FINE ARTS.

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CROSSES.[3]

[Illustration: (_In Devonshire_,)]

The subjoined are two specimens of rude workmanship, in comparison with the ingenuity displayed in the Crosses already illustrated in our pages. They are engraved from a drawing made by Mr. Britton, about thirty years since. The first was in Devonshire, at the village of Alphington, about one mile west of Exeter, on the side of the road leading from that city to Plymouth. It represents the Calvary cross of heraldry, and consists of a block of granite, which has been cut in an octagon shape, and fixed in a large base.

[Illustration: (_In Cornwall_,)]

The second cross stood in Cornwall, on the wide waste of Caraton Down. It consists of one block with a rounded head, bearing the coupé cross. This solitary pillar, evidently a Christian monument, is situate near a Druidical temple called "the Hurlers." Crosses of this shape abound in Cornwall. One has been found in Burian churchyard, and another in Callington churchyard, bearing rude sculptures of the crucifixion; others have been found in the county with holes perforated near the top, and some with various ornaments on the shafts.

[3] We thank "an old Subscriber and a native of Holbeach" for his testimony to the accuracy of our Engraving of Holbeach Cross, at page 329 of the present volume. We shall feel further obliged to him for the view of Holbeach Church.

We may here remark that the Cross described at page 115, at Wheston, is now in the courtyard of Wheston Hall. Probably our Correspondent _E.T.B.A_. will oblige us with a drawing of that interesting structure.

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DOMESTIC HINTS.

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OLIVE OIL.

Few articles differ more in quality than olive oil; not that the different kinds are produced from different fruit, but in the different stages of the pressure of the olives. Thus, by means of gentle pressure, the best or virgin oil flows first; a second, and afterwards a third quality of oil is obtained, by moistening the residuum, breaking the kernels, &c. and increasing the pressure. When the fruit is not sufficiently ripe, the recent oil has a bitterish taste; and when too ripe it is fatty. After the oil has been drawn, it deposits a white, fibrous, and albuminous matter; but when this deposition has taken place, if it be put into clean flasks, it undergoes no further alteration. The common oil cannot, however, be preserved in casks above a year and a half or two years. The consumption of olive oil as food is not surprising if we remember, that it is the lightest and most delicate of all the fixed oils.

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CARDS.

Some misconception has arisen respecting the legality of Second-hand Cards. It appears, however, that they may be sold by any person, if sold without the wrapper of a licensed maker; and in packs containing not more than 52 cards, including an ace of spades duly stamped, and enclosed in a wrapper with the words "Second-hand Cards" printed or written in distinct characters on the outside: penalty for selling Second-hand Cards in any other manner, 20l.

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CINNAMON AND CASSIA.

Cassia bark resembles Cinnamon in appearance, smell, and taste, and is very often substituted for it; but it may be readily distinguished: it is thicker in substance, less quilled, breaks shorter, and is more pungent. It should be chosen in thin pieces: the best being that which approaches nearest to Cinnamon in flavour; but that which is small and broken should be rejected.

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COLOURING CHEESE.

The fine, bright, red colour of some Gloucester cheese has been fraudulently produced by red lead, which, we need scarcely observe, is a violent poison. The ingredient now employed for this purpose, (to the exclusion of every thing else) in Cheshire and Gloucestershire, is annatto, a dye prepared from the seeds of a tree of South America. It is perfectly harmless in the proportion in which it is used; an ounce of genuine annatto being sufficient to colour a hundred weight of cheese.

It may, however, be questioned whether annatto is not sometimes adulterated with red lead.

Gouda cheese, the best made in Holland, is prized for its soundness, which is referable to muriatic acid being used in curdling the milk instead of rennet. This renders it pungent, and preserves it from mites. Parmesan cheese, so called from Parma in Italy, where it is manufactured, and highly prized, is merely a skim-milk cheese, which owes its rich flavour to the fine herbage of the meadows along the Po, where the cows feed.

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BASKET SALT.

The finer salt sold under this denomination is made by placing the salt, after evaporation, in conical baskets, and passing through it a saturated solution of salt, which dissolves, and carries off the muriate of magnesia or lime. Pure salt should not become moist by exposure to the air.

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PETIT-OR.

The imitation of gold sold with this taking name is nothing more than the alloy formerly called Pinchbeck, and made by melting zinc, in a certain proportion, with copper and brass, so as in colour to approach that of gold.

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THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

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CHIPS OF TOM CRINGLE'S LOG.

[Our old friend Tom Cringle (of Blackwood,) occasionally spins or splits his _Log_ too small. The incidents are weakened in the drawing out, or exaggerated in the telling; but they are sometimes relieved by brilliant descriptive touches, such as the following, introduced to set off the fate of one of Tom's heroes at Santiago.]

The Butterfly, Chameleon, and Serpent.

Glancing bright in the sunshine, a most beautiful butterfly fluttered in the air, in the very middle of the open window. When we first saw it, it was flitting gaily and happily amongst the plants and flowers that were blooming in the balcony, but it gradually became more and more slow on the wing, and at last poised itself unusually steadily for an insect of

its class. Below it, on the window sill, near the wall, with head erect, and its little basilisk eyes upturned towards the lovely fly, crouched a chameleon lizard, its beautiful body, when I first looked at it, was a bright sea-green. It moved into the sunshine, a little away from the shade of the laurel bush, which grew on the side it first appeared on, and suddenly the back became transparent amber, the legs and belly continuing green. From its breast under the chin, it every now and then shot out a semicircular film of a bright scarlet colour, like a leaf of a tulip, stretched vertically, or the pectoral fin of a fish.

This was evidently a decoy, and the poor fly was gradually drawn down towards it, either under the impression of its being in reality a flower, or impelled by some impulse which it could not resist. It gradually fluttered nearer and more near, the reptile remaining all the while steady as a stone, until it made a sudden spring, and in the next moment the small mealy wings were quivering on each side of the chameleon's tiny jaws. While in the act of gorging its prey, a little fork, like a wire, was projected from the opposite corner of the window; presently a small round black snout, with a pair of little, fiery, blasting eyes, appeared, and a thin, black neck, glancing in the sun. The lizard saw it. I could fancy it trembled. Its body became of a dark blue, then ashy pale; the imitation of the flower, the gaudy fin was withdrawn, it appeared to shrink back as far as it could, but it was nailed or fascinated to the window sill, for its feet did not move. The head of the snake approached, with its long, forked tongue shooting out, and shortening, and with a low hissing noise. By this time about two feet of its body was visible, lying with its white belly on the wooden beam, moving forward with a small horizontal wavy motion, the head and six inches of the neck being a little raised. I shrunk back from the serpent, but no one else seemed to have any dread of it; indeed, I afterwards learned, that this kind being good mousers, and otherwise quite harmless, were, if any thing, encouraged about houses in the country. I looked again; its open mouth was now within an inch of the lizard, which by this time seemed utterly paralyzed and motionless; the next instant its head was drawn into the snake's mouth, and gradually the whole body disappeared, as the reptile gorged it, and I could perceive from the lump which gradually moved down the snake's neck, that it had been sucked into its stomach. Involuntary I raised my hand, when the whole suddenly disappeared.

[One of Tom's land-storms is still more graphic.]

A heavy cloud that had been overhanging the small valley the whole morning, had by this time spread out and covered the entire face of nature like a sable pall; the birds of the air flew low, and seemed to be perfectly gorged with the superabundance of flies, which were thickly betaking themselves for shelter under the evergreen leaves of the bushes. All the winged creation, great and small, were fast betaking themselves to the shelter of the leaves and branches of the trees. The cattle were speeding to the hollows under the impending rocks; negroes, men, women, and children, were hurrying with their hoes on their shoulders past the windows to their huts. Several large bloodhounds had ventured into the hall, and were crouching with a low whine at our feet. The large carrion crows were the only living things which seemed to brave the approaching chu-basco, and were soaring high up in the heavens, appearing to touch the black, agitated fringe of the lowering thunder clouds. All other kinds of winged creatures, parrots, and pigeons, and cranes, had vanished by this time under the thickest trees, and into the deepest coverts, and the wild ducks were shooting past in

long lines, piercing the thick air with outstretched neck and clanging wing.

Suddenly the wind fell, and the sound of the waterfall increased, and grew rough and loud, and the undefinable rushing noise that precedes a heavy fall of rain in the tropics, the voice of the wilderness, moaned through the high woods, until at length the clouds sank upon the valley in boiling mists, rolling halfway down the surrounding hills; and the water of the stream, whose scanty rill but an instant before hissed over the precipice in a small, transparent ribbon of clear grass-green, sprinkled with white foam, and then threaded its way round the large rocks in its capacious channel, like a silver eel twisting through a desert, now changed in a moment to a dark turgid chocolate colour; and even as we stood and looked, lo! a column of water from the mountains, pitched in thunder over the face of the precipice, making the earth tremble, and driving up from the rugged face of the everlasting rocks in smoke, and forcing the air into eddies and sudden blasts which tossed the branches of the trees that overhung it, as they were dimly seen through clouds of drizzle, as if they had been shaken by a tempest, although there was not a breath stirring elsewhere out of heaven; while little, wavering, spiral wreaths of mist rose up thick from the surface of the boiling pool at the bottom of the cataract, like miniature water-spouts, until they were dispersed by the agitation of the air above.

At length the swollen torrent rolled roaring down the narrow valley, filling the whole water-course, about fifty yards wide, and advancing with a solid front a fathom _high_--a fathom _deep_ does not convey the idea--like a stream of lava, or as one may conceive of the Red Sea, when, at the stretching forth of the hand of the prophet of the Lord, its mighty waters rolled back and stood heaped up as a wall to the host of Israel.

The channel of the stream, which but a minute before I could have leaped across, was the next instant filled and utterly impassable.

And the rain now began pattering in large drops, like scattering shots preceding an engagement, on the wooden shingles with which the house was roofed, gradually increasing to a loud rushing noise, which, as the rooms were not ceiled, prevented a word being heard.

At length the weather cleared, and the shutters having been opened, and with a suddenness which no one can comprehend who has not lived in these climates, the sun now shone brightly on the flowers and garden plants which grew in a range of pots on the balcony.

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THE DUCHESS DE BERRI.

(_From the New Monthly Magazine_.)

We have much pleasure in inserting these very curious anecdotes of an unfortunate Princess, though they come to us from one devoted to her cause, as well as sympathizing with her misfortunes.

Few heroines of ancient days have displayed more courage, self-devotion,

and firmness, than has this high-souled and heroic woman. It is not generally known in this country, that in an action in La Vendee, where the partizans of the Duchess were opposed to the regular troops, she headed her forces, and led the charges repeatedly. She had a horse shot dead under her, and having been disarmed in the fall, seized the arms of a fallen soldier next her, and again cheered on her followers. She was eleven hours in action, and escaped unhurt, with the exception of some contusions from the fall; and, when the battle was over, was seen administering to the wants of those around her, dressing their wounds with her own delicate hands; and whilst surrounded by the dead and dying, she appeared wholly regardless of self, though overcome by a fatigue and anxiety that few, even of the other sex, could have borne so well.

On another occasion, the Duchesse de Berri had, with much difficulty, procured a horse, and was mounted behind a faithful but humble adherent, pursuing her route to a distant quarter, when her guide was accosted by a peasant with whom he conversed some time in the patois of the country. On quitting the peasant, he observed to the Duchess, that the man was charged with a secret mission to a place at some distance, and was so fatigued that he feared he could not reach it. She instantly sprang from her seat, called after the peasant, and insisted on his taking the horse, declaring that she could reach her destination on foot. After walking for many hours, she arrived at a mountain stream that was swollen by the recent rain, and having learned that her enemies were in pursuit of her, she determined to cross it. Her guide, assisted by her, fastened a large branch of a tree to his person, and, being an expert swimmer, told her to hold by it, and that he hoped to get her over. They had advanced to the deepest part of the stream when the bough broke, and her guide gave her up for lost, when, to his surprise and joy, he saw her boldly clearing the water by his side, and they soon reached the bank in safety. During her visits to Dieppe, the Duchess had acquired a proficiency in swimming, and it has since frequently saved her in the hour of need. Overpowered by fatigue and hunger, and chilled by the cold of her dripping garments, this courageous woman felt that her physical powers were no longer capable of obeying her wishes, and that further exertion was impossible. Seeing a house at a distance, she declared her intention of throwing herself on the generosity of its owner, when her guide warned her of the danger of such a proceeding, as the owner of the house was a Liberal, and violently opposed to her party. All his representations were made in vain. She boldly entered the house, and, addressing the master of it, exclaimed--"You see before you the unhappy mother of your king; proscribed and pursued, half dead with fatigue, cold, wet, and hungry, you will not refuse her a morsel of your bread, a corner at your fire, and a bed to rest her weary limbs on." The master of the house threw himself at her feet, and, with tears streaming from his eyes, declared that his house, and all that was his, were at her service; and for some days, while the pursuit after her was the hottest, she remained unsuspected in this asylum, the politics of the master placing him out of suspicion; and when she left it, she was followed by the tears and prayers of the whole of the family and their dependents.

This heroic woman, nurtured in courts, and accustomed to all the luxury that such an exalted station as hers can give, has thought herself fortunate, during many a night of the last year, when she could have the shelter of the poorest hovel, with some brown bread and milk for food, and has partaken, at the same humble board, the frugal repast of the peasants who sheltered her. Her general attire has been the most common dress, of a materiel called buse, made of worsted, and worn by the

poorest of the peasantry. A mantle of the same coarse stuff, with a hood, completed her costume.

When one of the friends, who had seen her the pride and ornament of the gilded saloons in the Tuileries, expressed his grief at the dreadful hardships to which she was exposed, she pointed to a furze bush on the heath where they were conversing, and said--"I shall sleep on that spot to-night; and many nights I have had no better shelter than were afforded by a few wild shrubs or trees, and I never slept better at Rosny. If my mantle was long enough to allow of its covering my feet when I slept, I should have nothing to complain of, but then it might impede my flight, so I must be content."

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THE NATURALIST.

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DEPTH OF THE SEA.

As to the bottom of the basin of the sea, it seems to have inequalities similar to those which the surface of continents exhibits; if it were dried up, it would present mountains, valleys, and plains. It is inhabited almost throughout its whole extent by an immense quantity of testaceous animals, or covered with sand and gravel. It was thus that Donati found the bottom of the Adriatic sea; the bed of testaceous animals there, according to him, is several hundred feet in thickness. The celebrated diver Pescecola, whom the emperor Frederick II. employed to descend the strait of Messina, saw there with horror, enormous polypi attached to the rocks, the arms of which, being several yards long, were more than sufficient to strangle a man. In a great many places, the madrepores form a kind of petrified forest fixed at the bottom of the sea, and frequently, too, this bottom plainly presents different layers of rock and earth.

The granite rises up in sharp-pointed masses. Near Marseilles, marble is dug up from a submarine quarry. There are also bituminous springs, and even springs of fresh water, that spout up from the depths of the ocean; and in the Gulf of Spezia, a great spout or fountain of fresh water is seen to rise like a liquid hill. Similar springs furnish the inhabitants of the town of Aradus with their ordinary beverage.

On the southern coast of Cuba, to the southwest of the port of Batabano, in the bay of Xagua, at two or three miles from the land, springs of fresh water gush up with such force in the midst of the salt, that small boats cannot approach them with safety; the deeper you draw the water, the fresher you find it. It has been observed, that in the neighbourhood of steep coasts, the bottom of the sea also sinks down suddenly to a considerable depth; whilst near a low coast, and one of gentle declivity, it is only gradually that the sea deepens. There are some places in the sea where no bottom has yet been found. But we must not conclude that the sea is really bottomless; an idea, which, if not absurd, is, at least, by no means conformable to the analogies of

natural science. The mountains of continents seem to correspond with what are called the abysses of the sea; but now, the highest mountains do not rise to 20,000 feet. It is true that they have wasted down and lessened by the action of the elements; it may, therefore, be reasonably concluded, that the sea is not beyond 30,000 feet in depth; but it is impossible to find the bottom even at one-third of this depth, with our little instruments. The greatest depth that has been tried to be measured, is that found in the northern ocean by Lord Mulgrave; he heaved a very heavy sounding lead, and gave out with it cable rope to the length of 4,680 feet, without finding bottom.--_Blake's Encyclopedia_.

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NOTES OF A READER.

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CHARACTER OF CROMWELL.

(_From the Buccaneer.--By Mrs. S.C. Hall_.)

There are two things that to a marvellous degree bring people under subjection--moral and corporeal fear. The most dissolute are held in restraint by the influence of moral worth, and there are few who would engage in a quarrel if they were certain that defeat or death would be the consequence. Cromwell obtained, and we may add, maintained his ascendancy over the people of England, by his earnest and continually directed efforts towards these two important ends. His court was a rare example of irreproachable conduct, from which all debauchery and immorality were banished; while such was his deep and intimate though mysterious acquaintance with every occurrence throughout the commonwealth, its subjects had the certainty of knowing that, sooner or later, whatever crimes they committed would of a surety reach the ear of the protector. His natural abilities must always have been of the highest order, though in the early part of his career he discovered none of those extraordinary talents that afterwards gained him so much applause, and worked so upon the affections of the hearers and standers-by. His mind may be compared to one of those valuable manuscripts that had long been rolled up and kept hidden from vulgar eyes, but which exhibits some new proof of wisdom at each unfolding. It has been well said by a philosopher, whose equal the world has not known since his day, "that a place sheweth the man." Of a certainty Cromwell had no sooner possessed the opportunity so to do, than he showed to the whole world that he was destined to govern. "Some men achieve greatness, some men are born to greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." With Cromwell greatness was achieved. He was the architect of his own fortunes, owing little to what is called "chance," less to patronage, and still less to crime, if we except the one sad blot upon the page of his own history, as connected with that of his country. There appears in his character but a small portion of that which is evil, blended with much that is undoubtedly good. Although his public speeches were, for the most part, ambiguous--leaving others to pick out his meaning--or more frequently still, having no meaning to pick out,

being words, words, words--strung of mouldy sentences, scriptural phrases, foolish exclamations, and such-like: yet when necessary, he showed that he could sufficiently command his style, delivering himself with so much energy, pith, propriety, and strength of expression, that it was commonly said of him under such circumstances, "every word he spoke was a thing." But the strongest indication of his vast abilities was, the extraordinary tact with which he entered into, dissected, and scrutinized the nature of human kind. No man ever dived into the manners and minds of those around him with greater penetration, or more rapidly discovered their natural talents and tempers. If he chanced to hear of a person fit for his purpose, whether as a minister, a soldier, an artisan, a preacher, or a spy, no matter how previously obscure, he sent for him forthwith, and employed him in the way in which he could be made most useful, and answer best the purpose of his employer. Upon this most admirable system (a system in which, unhappily, he has had but few imitators among modern statesmen,) depended in a great degree his success. His devotion has been sneered at; but it has never been proved to have been insincere. With how much more show of justice may we consider it to have been founded upon a solid and upright basis, when we recollect that his whole outward deportment spoke its truth! Those who decry him as a fanatic, ought to bethink themselves that religion was the chivalry of the age in which he lived. Had Cromwell been born a few centuries earlier, he would have headed the crusades, with as much bravery, and far better results than our noble-hearted, but wrong-headed Coeur de Lion. It was no great compliment that was passed on him by the French minister, when he called the protector "the first captain of the age." His courage and conduct in the field were undoubtedly admirable: he had a dignity of soul which the greatest dangers and difficulties rather animated than discouraged, and his discipline and government of the army, in all respects, was the wonder of the world. It was no diminution of this part of his character, that he was wary in his conduct, and that, after he was declared protector, he wore a coat of mail concealed beneath his dress. Less caution than he made use of, in the place he held, and surrounded as he was by secret and open enemies, would have deserved the name of negligence. As to his political sincerity, which many think had nothing to do with his religious opinions, he was, to the full, as honest as the first or second Charles. Of a truth, that same sincerity, it would appear, is no kingly virtue! Cromwell loved justice as he loved his own life, and wherever he was compelled to be arbitrary, it was only where his authority was controverted, which, as things then were, it was not only right to establish for his own sake, but for the peace and security of the country over whose proud destinies he had been called to govern. "The dignity of the crown," to quote his own words, "was upon the account of the nation, of which the king was only the representative head, and therefore, the nation being still the same, he would have the same respect paid to his ministers as if he had been a king." England ought to write the name of Cromwell in letters of gold, when she remembers that, within a space of four or five years, he avenged all the insults that had been lavishly flung upon her by every country in Europe throughout a long, disastrous, and most perplexing civil war. Gloriously did he retrieve the credit that had been mouldering and decaying during two weak and discreditable reigns of nearly fifty years' continuance--gloriously did he establish and extend his country's authority and influence in remote nations--gloriously acquire the real mastery of the British Channel--gloriously send forth fleets that went and conquered, and never sullied the union flag by an act of dishonour or dissimulation. Not a single Briton, during the protectorate, but could demand and receive either reparation or revenge for injury,

whether it came from France, from Spain, from any open foe or treacherous ally; not an oppressed foreigner claimed his protection but it was immediately and effectually granted. Were things to be compared to this in the reign of either Charles? England may blush at the remembrance of the insults she sustained during the reigns of the first most amiable, yet most weak--of the second most admired, yet most contemptible--of these legal kings. What must she think of the treatment of the elector palatine, though he was son-in-law to king James? And let her ask herself how the Duke of Rohan was assisted in the Protestant war at Rochelle, notwithstanding the solemn engagement of king Charles under his own hand! But we are treading too fearlessly upon ground on which, in our humble capacity, we have scarcely the right to enter. Alas! alas! the page of history is but a sad one; and the Stuarts and the Cromwells, the roundheads and the cavaliers, the pennons and the drums, are but part and parcel of the same dust--the dust we, who are made of dust animated for a time by a living spirit, now tread upon! Their words, that wrestled with the winds and mounted on the air, have left no trace along that air whereon they sported:--the clouds in all their beauty cap our isle with their magnificence, as in those by-gone days; the rivers are as blue, the seas as salt; the flowers, those sweet things! remain fresh within our fields, as when God called them into existence in Paradise, and are bright as ever. But the change is over us, as it has been over them: we, too, are passing. O England! what should this teach? Even three things--wisdom, justice, and mercy. Wisdom to watch ourselves, and then our rulers, so that we neither do nor suffer wrong; justice to the memory of the mighty dead, whether born to thrones or footstools; mercy, inasmuch as we shall deeply need it from our successors.

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THE "WHY AND BECAUSE" OF CHRISTMAS.

[We can vouch for the abridgement and collation of the following facts, connected with this joyous season of old. Probably a few of the notes may have been discussed in the course of our twenty-volume career; but to omit such notices on the present occasion, would be to drop a link in the little chain:]

Why is the evening before Christmas-day celebrated?

Because Christmas-day, in the primitive Church, was always observed as the Sabbath-day, and, like it, preceded by an eve, or vigil.--_Brand._

It was once believed, that if we were to go into a cow-house, at twelve o'clock at night, all the cattle would be found kneeling. Many also firmly believed that bees sung in their hives on Christmas-eve, to welcome the approaching day.

Why is Christmas-day so called?

Because of its derivation from _Christi Missa_, the mass of Christ; and thence the Roman Catholic Liturgy is termed their _Missal_, or _Mass-book_. About the year 500 the observation of this day became general in the Catholic Church.

Why was the word _Yule_ formerly used to signify Christmas?

Because of its derivation from the word _ol_, ale, which was much used in the festivities and merry meetings of this period; and the _l_ in _lol_, _icol_. Cimb. as the _ze_ and _zi_ in _zehol_, zeol, ziol_, Sax. are premised only as intensives, to add a little to the signification, and make it more emphatical. _Ol_, or _Ale_, did not only signify the liquor then made use of, but gave denomination to the greatest festivals, as that of _zehol_, or _Yule_, at Midwinter; and as is yet plainly to be discovered in that custom of the Whitsun ale at the other great festival.

Why are certain initials affixed to crucifixes?

Because of their signifying the titular tributes paid to the Saviour of the world. Thus, I.N.R.I. are universally agreed to be the initials of the Latin words _Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum_; i.e. Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, a title which Pilot wrote and affixed to the cross.--See John, ch. xix. The initials I.H.C., appended to other crosses, are said to imply, _Jesus Humanitatis Consolator_, Jesus the Consoler of Mankind; and the I.H.S. imply _Jesus Hominum Salvator_, Jesus the Saviour of Men. The first-mentioned initials are, however, found on the most ancient crosses.

Why is a certain song called a carol?

Because of its derivation from _cantare_, to sing, and _rola_, an interjection of joy.--_Bourne_.

Bishop Taylor observes that the "Gloria in excelsis," the well-known hymn sung by the angels to the shepherds at our Lord's nativity, was the earliest Christmas carol. Bourne cites Durand to prove that in the earlier ages of the churches, the bishops were accustomed, on Christmas-day, to sing carols among their clergy. Fosbroke says--"It was usual, in ancient feasts, to single out a person, and place him in the midst, to sing a song to God." And Mr. Davies Gilbert, late President of the Royal Society, in a volume which he has edited on the subject, states, that till lately, in the West of England, on Christmas-eve, about seven or eight o'clock in the evening, festivities were commenced, and "the singing of carols begun, and continued late into the night. On Christmas-day, these carols took the place of psalms in all the churches, especially at afternoon service, the whole congregation joining; and at the end it was usual for the parish-clerk to declare, in a loud voice, his wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy new year to all the parishioners."

Mr. Hone observes, in his work on "Ancient Mysteries," that "the custom of singing carols at Christmas prevails in Ireland to the present time. In Scotland, where no church fasts have been kept since the days of John Knox, the custom is unknown. In Wales it is still preserved to a greater extent, perhaps, than in England: at a former period, the Welsh had carols adapted to most of the ecclesiastical festivals, and the four seasons of the year; but at this time they are limited to that of Christmas. After the turn of midnight, on Christmas-eve, service is performed in the churches, followed by singing carols to the harp. Whilst the Christmas holidays continue, they are sung in like manner in the houses; and there are carols especially adapted to be sung at the doors of the houses by visitors before they enter. _Lffyr Carolan_, or the Book of Carols, contains sixty-six for Christmas, and five summer carols. _Blodengerdd Cymrii_, or the Anthology of Wales, contains

forty-eight Christmas carols, nine summer carols, three May carols, one winter carol, one nightingale carol, and a carol to Cupid. On the Continent, the custom of carolling at Christmas is almost universal. During the last days of Advent, Calabrian minstrels enter Rome, and are to be seen in every street, saluting the shrines of the Virgin mother with their wild music, under the traditional notion of charming her labour pains on the approaching Christmas."

Why do the Christmas carols of the present day differ from the carols of earlier times?

Because the present carols were substituted, by those enemies of innocent mirth, the Puritans, for the original carols, which were festal chansons for enlivening the merriment of the Christmas celebrity; and not such religious songs as are current at this day, with the common people, under the same title.

Dr. Johnson, in a note on Hamlet, tells us, that the pious chansons, a kind of Christmas carol, containing some Scripture history, thrown into loose rhymes, were sung about the streets by the common people, when they went at that season to beg alms.--Brand.

Why is laurel used with other evergreens to deck houses at Christmas?

Because of its use among the ancient Romans, as the emblem of peace, joy, and victory. In the Christian sense, it may be applied to the victory gained over the powers of darkness by the coming of Christ.--Bourne.

Why is the mistletoe so called?

Because its seeds are said to be dropped by the mistle-thrush, which feeds on its berries.

Why was the mistletoe held sacred by the Druids?

Because they had an extraordinary reverence for the number three, and not only the berries, but the leaves of the mistletoe, grow in clusters of three united on one stalk. Its growing upon the oak, their sacred tree, was doubtless another cause of its veneration.

We read of a celebrated oak at Norwood near London, which bore mistletoe, "which some people cut for the gain of selling it to the apothecaries of London, leaving a branch of it to sprout out; but they proved unfortunate after it, for one of them fell lame, and others lost an eye. At length, in the year 1678, a certain man, notwithstanding he was warned against it, upon the account of what the others had suffered, adventured to cut the tree down, and he soon after broke his leg."--Camden.

Mr. Brand, however, thinks that mistletoe was never put up in churches but by mistake or ignorance of the sextons: it being a heathenish and profane plant, and therefore assigned to the kitchen. Mr. Brand made many diligent inquiries after the truth of this point. He learnt at Bath that it never came into churches there. An old Sexton at Teddington told him that mistletoe was once put up in the church there, but was by the clergyman immediately ordered to be taken away.

Why was the boar's head formerly a prime dish at Christmas?

Because fresh meats were then seldom eaten, and brawn was considered a great delicacy. Holinshed says, that "in the year 1170, upon the day of the young prince's coronation, King Henry I. served his sonne at table as server, bringing up the boar's head with trumpets before it, according to the manner." For this ceremony there was a special carol. Dugdale also tells us, that "at the inns of court, during Christmas, the usual dish at the first course at dinner was a large boar's head, upon a silver platter, with minstrelsaye." In one of the carols we read that the boar's head is "the rarest dish in all the londe, and that it has been provided in honour of the king of bliss."

* * * * *

THE RIVER SCHELDT.

In all former times, and centuries before the labour of Napoleon had added so immensely to its importance, the Scheldt had been the centre of the most important preparations for the invasion of England, and the spot on which military genius always fixed from whence to prepare a descent on this island. An immense expedition, rendered futile by the weakness and vacillation of the French monarch, was assembled in it in the fourteenth century; and sixty thousand men on the shore of the Scheldt awaited only the signal of Charles VI. to set sail for the shore of Kent. The greatest naval victory ever gained by the English arms was that at Sluys, 1340, when Philip of France lost 30,000 men and 230 ships of war in an engagement off the Flemish coast with Edward III., a triumph greater, though less noticed in history, than either that of Cressy or Poitiers. When the great Duke of Parma was commissioned by Philip II. of Spain to take steps for the invasion of England, he assembled the forces of the Low Countries at Antwerp; and the Spanish armada, had it proved successful, was to have wafted over that great commander from the banks of the Scheldt to the opposite shore of Essex, at the head of the veterans who had been trained in the Dutch war. In an evil hour, Charles II., bought by French gold and seduced by French mistresses, entered into alliance with Louis XIV. for the coercion of Holland; the Lillies and the Leopards, the navies of France and England, assembled together at Spithead, and made sail for the French coast, while the armies of the Grande Monarque advanced across the Rhine into the heart of the United Provinces; and the consequence was, such a prodigious addition to the power of France, as it took all the blood and treasure expended in the war of the Succession and all the victories of Marlborough, to reduce to a scale at all commensurate with the independence of the other European states.

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THE GATHERER.

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Fleurus is a village in France, in the department of the Sombre and Meuse, where the Austrians and the French fought a battle in the year

1794, in which the former were defeated. This victory is ascribed to the information obtained in consequence of reconnoitering the army of the enemy by the elevation of a balloon. The balloon employed on this occasion was called the Entrepreneur; and it was under the direction of M. Coutel, the captain of the aeronauts at Meudon, accompanied by an adjutant and a general. He ascended twice in the same day, to the height of 220 fathoms, for the purpose of observing the position and manoeuvres of the enemy. He continued each time four hours in the air, and corresponded with General Jourdan, who commanded the French army, by means of pre-concerted signals. The enterprise was discovered by the enemy; and a battery opened its fire against the ascending aeronauts, but they soon gained an elevation which was beyond the reach of their fire. This balloon was prepared under the direction of the Aerostatic Institute, for the use of the army of the north; as were also another, called Celeste, for the army of the Sambre and Meuse; and the Hercule and Intrepide, for the army of the Rhine and Moselle. Another, thirty feet in circumference, and weighing 160 lbs., was destined for the army of Italy. A new machine, invented by M. Coutel, the director of the Aerostatic Institute, was designed to aid the aeronauts in communicating intelligence, and denominated the Aerostatic Telegraph.

P.T.W.

Muscular Strength.--It is asserted by travellers, that a Turkish porter will run along carrying a weight of 600 lbs. Milo, of Crotona, is said to have lifted an ox, weighing upwards of 1,000 lbs. Haller mentions that he saw an instance of a man, whose finger being caught in a chain at the bottom of a mine, by keeping it forcibly bent, supported by that means the weight of his whole body, 150 lbs., till he was drawn up to the surface, a height of 600 feet. Augustus II., king of Poland, could with his fingers roll up a silver dish like a sheet of paper, and twist the strongest horse-shoe asunder. An account is given in the Philosophical Transactions, No. 310, of a lion who left the impression of his teeth upon a solid piece of iron. The most prodigious power of the muscles is exhibited by fish:--A whale moves with a velocity through the dense medium of water that would carry him, if he continued at the same rate, round the world in little more than a fortnight; and a sword-fish has been known to strike his weapon quite through the oak plank of a ship.

W.G.C.

Beauties of Chatsworth.--Marshal Tallard, who was entertained a few days at this place by the Duke of Devonshire, on leaving, made this declaration--"When I return," said he, "into my own country, and reckon up the days of my captivity, I shall leave out those which I spent at Chatsworth." And Quin once said that he had nearly broken his neck in coming to it, and he should break his heart on his return.

SWAINE.

Origin of the Discovery of Peru.--Balboa, the famous Spanish adventurer, in one of his expeditions, met with a young cazique, who expressed his astonishment at the high value which was set upon the gold, which the Spaniards were weighing and distributing. "Why do you

quarrel," said he, "about such a trifle? If you are so passionately fond of gold as to abandon your own country, and to disturb the tranquillity of distant nations, for its sake, I will conduct you to a region where the metal, which seems to be the chief object of your admiration and desire, is so common, that the meanest utensils are formed of it." Transported with the intelligence, Balboa eagerly inquired where this happy country lay, and how they might arrive at it. The cazique informed them, that at the distance of six suns, or six days' journey to the south, they would discover another ocean, near which this wealthy kingdom was situated; but if they intended to attack it, they must assemble forces far superior in number and strength to those which now attended them.--This was the first information which the Spaniards received concerning the great southern continent, known afterwards by the name of Peru.

P.T.W.

Cholera Morbus. --Dr. James Johnson, in his interesting book entitled, Change of Air, or Pursuits of Health, &c., says--"The cholera morbus ought to be denominated the high-police of scavengers. It has cleared away more filth, in Europe and England, than all the municipal edicts that ever issued from the constituted authorities. On this, and on some other accounts, it will save more lives than it has destroyed."

Patriotism. --When the Chancellor d'Auguesseau, who constantly resisted the encroachments of Louis XIV. on the liberties of the people, was sent for to Versailles by that monarch, he was thus encouraged by his amiable wife: "Go," said she, "forget in the king's presence your wife and your children,--sacrifice everything except your honour."

SWAINE.

His late Majesty, when Prince of Wales, was looking out of a window with Tom Sheridan, when the "Dart," with four grey horses passed by. "Is not that a handsome coach, Tom?" observed the Prince. "Yes, your highness," replied Tom, who was suffering under a headach from the champagne of the previous night, and was rather in a sombre and meditative humour, "it certainly is; but," continued he, pointing to a hearse going by at the same time, "that's the coach after all."

A Knowing Seaman. --A rough-hewn seaman being brought before a wise justice for some misdemeanour, was by him ordered to be sent to prison, and was refractory after he heard his doom, insomuch as he would not stir a foot from the place where he stood, saying it was better to stand where he was than go to a worse place.--Bacon.

P.T.W.

Expensive Fishing. --In 1609, the Dutch were compelled to pay a tribute for fishing on our coast; in 1683, they paid 30,000l. for liberty to fish. Welwood, in his answer to Grotius, says, "that the Scots obliged the Dutch, by treaty, to keep eighty miles from shore in fishing, and to pay a tribute at the port of Aberdeen, where a tower was erected for

that and other purposes; and the Dutch paid the tribute, even in the memory of our forefathers."

THOMAS GILL.

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