

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction

Various

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THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

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[Illustration: CASTLE OF VINCENNES.]

CASTLE OF VINCENNES.

Every reader at all conversant with the history of the present century,

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or the past year, will appreciate our choice of the above Engraving. Its pictorial and historical interest will not bear comparison; unless it be in the strong contrast which the gloomy, wretched-looking building affords with the beautiful paysage of the scene. The spectator may perhaps reflect on the damning deeds which the cruelty and ambition of man have perpetrated in the Castle, then turn for relief to the gaiety--nay, the dancing life and bustle of other portions of the picture--and lastly confess that the composition, slight as it is, abounds with lights and shadows that strike forcibly on every beholder.

To be more explicit--the Castle of Vincennes was formerly a royal palace of the French court: it then dwindled to a state-prison; in its fosse, March 21, 1804, the Duke d'Enghien was murdered, the grave in the ditch on the left being where the body of the ill-starred victim was thrown immediately after being shot. The reader knows this act as one of the bloody deeds--the damned spots--of Bonaparte's career; that, subsequently, by order of the Bourbons, the remains of the duke were disinterred, and removed to the chapel of the Castle; and that the place has since become interesting as the prison of Prince Polignac and the Ex-ministers of Charles X. previous to their trial after the revolution in Paris, July, 1830.

Before proceeding further, we ought to acknowledge the original of the above print. In 1816, a few days after the removal of the bones of the Duke d'Enghien, an ingenious gentleman, Mr. G. Shepherd, was on the spot, and made a drawing for his portfolio. He was interrupted in his task by the guard, and notwithstanding the explanation of his harmless motive, was removed within the Castle: for those were days of political jealousy and suspicion. The Governor of the prison chanced to be acquainted with a friend who accompanied the artist; an explanation was given, and instead of a dreary lodging in one of the cells of the Castle, the "arrested" partook of a substantial dejeune in one of its best apartments. Mr. Shepherd brought the sketch with him to England, and, upon the frequent mention of the Castle of Vincennes during the recent affair of the French ministry, he caused the drawing to be lithographed by Mr. W. Day. As this has not been done with a view to profit, we may mention that the drawing is to be purchased at a cheap rate, of the printsellers. Our copy has been made by permission of the artist, and we take this method of thanking him, as well as distinguishing his praiseworthy enthusiasm. By the way, there is a print of the Castle of Vincennes and the Execution of the Duke d'Enghien, in the Life of Napoleon, in the Family Library. The Castle, as there represented, is about as like that of Mr. Shepherd's drawing as the publisher's house in Albemarle-street. This hint may probably not be lost upon the editor of the "Family" Life in his next edition.

The History of the Castle deserves detail; and we copy it from the last edition of our friend Galignani's Picture of Paris:--

Vincennes is a large village about four miles east of Paris, famous for its forest, called the Bois de Vincennes, and its ancient royal chateau. The forest appears to have existed long before the chateau, and to have been much more extensive than at present. Philip Augustus surrounded it with strong and thick walls in 1283, when Henry III. of England, presented to him a great number of stags, deer, wild boars, and other animals for the sports of the chase. That monarch, taking pleasure in sporting, built a country seat at Vincennes, which was known by the name of Regale manerium, or the royal manor. Louis IX. often visited Vincennes, and used to sit under an oak in the forest to

administer justice. In 1337, Philippe de Valois demolished the ancient building, and laid the foundations of that which still exists, and which was completed by his royal successors. The chateau forms a parallelogram of large dimensions; round it were formerly nine towers, of which eight were demolished to the level of the wall in 1814. That which remains, called the *_tour de l'Horloge_*, is a lofty square tower which forms the entrance. The Donjon is a detached building on the side towards Paris, and has a parapet for its defence. Deep ditches lined with stone surround the chateau. The chapel called *_la Sainte Chapelle_*, built by Charles V. stands in the second court to the right. It is a beautiful specimen of Gothic architecture. The interior is remarkable for its windows of coloured glass, by Cousin, after the designs of Raphael. They formerly were numerous, but only seven now remain. The high altar is entirely detached and consists of four Gothic columns of white marble; its front is ornamented with small figures. The balustrade which separates the choir is also Gothic, and of white marble. To the left of the altar is a monument, after the designs of Deseine, to the memory of the unfortunate Duke d'Enghien. It consists of four erect full length statues in beautiful white marble. The prince appears supported by religion. The other figures represent, the one, France in tears, having at her feet a globe enriched with *_fleurs de lis_*, and holding in her hand a broken sceptre; and the other fanaticism armed with a dagger, and in the attitude of striking her victim. The statue of the prince is replete with dignity and expression; that of religion is remarkably fine; near her is a gilt cross, and upon her head is a golden crown. A trophy, in bronze, formed of the arms of the prince and the *_ecu_* of the house of Conde fills up the interval between the figures of the foreground.

Henry V. King of England, the hero of Agincourt, died at Vincennes, in 1422.

Louis XI. enlarged and embellished the chateau, which he made his favourite residence. It was in the reign of that cruel and superstitious prince, about the year 1472, that the Donjon of Vincennes became a state prison.

Charles IX. died at this chateau in 1574.

In the reign of Louis XIII. Mary de Medicis, his mother, built the magnificent gallery still in existence; and Louis XIII. commenced the two large buildings to the south, which were finished by Louis XIV.

In 1661, Cardinal Mazarin died at Vincennes. The Duke of Orleans, when regent of the kingdom, continued to live in the Palais Royal; and therefore, in order to have the young king, Louis XV. near him, he fixed his majesty's residence, in the first year of his reign (1715) at Vincennes, till the palace of the Tuileries could be prepared for him. In 1731, the trees in the forest of Vincennes being decayed with age, were felled, and acorns were sown in a regular manner through the park, from which have sprung the oaks which now form one of the most shady and agreeable woods in the neighbourhood of Paris.

Vincennes, though no longer a royal residence, continued to be a state-prison. Here the celebrated Mirabeau was confined from 1777 to 1780; and wrote, during that time, besides other works, his *_Lettres a Sophie_*. This prison having become nearly useless, during the reign of the unfortunate Louis XVI., it was thrown open to the public in 1784. During the early stages of the revolution, Vincennes was used as a place

of confinement for disorderly women.

Under Bonaparte, it again became a state prison; and a more horrible despotism appears to have been exercised within its walls than at any former period. The unfortunate Duke d'Enghien, who was arrested in Germany on the 15th of March, 1804, having been conducted to Vincennes on the 20th, at five in the evening, was condemned to death the same night by a military commission, and shot at half-past four on the following morning, in one of the ditches of the castle. His body was interred on the spot where he fell. On the 20th of March, 1816, the eve of the anniversary of his death, a search having been made for his remains, by order of Louis XVIII., they were discovered, and placed with religious care in a coffin, which was transported into the same room of the chateau in which the council of war condemned him to death, where it remained till the Gothic chapel was repaired and a monument erected to receive it. On the coffin is this inscription.--_Ici est le corps du tres-haut, tres-puissant prince, Louis Antoine Henri de Bourbon, Duc d'Enghien, Prince du Sang, Pair de France. Mort a Vincennes, le 21 Mars, 1804, a l'age de 31 ans, 7 mois, 18 jours_.

Beyond this descriptive notice of the last-mentioned event, little need be said. The reader who wishes to pursue the subject further may with advantage consult Sir Walter Scott's _Life of Napoleon_, vol. v., and No. 5 of the Appendix to that work. The political worshippers of Napoleon have set up, or rather attempted, many points of defence. That the Duke's grave was dug before the judgment was pronounced, has been denied by Savary. Sir Walter Scott in a note says, "This is not of much consequence. The illegal arrest--the precipitation of the mock-trial--the disconformity of the sentence from the proof--the hurry of the execution--all prove the unfortunate prince was doomed to die long before he was brought before the military commission." The affair is similarly regarded in the Life of Napoleon in the _Family Library_, where the writer emphatically says, "If ever man was murdered, it was the Duke d'Enghien." Fouche's remark on this act has even passed into a proverb: "It was worse than a crime--it was a blunder." Lastly, although many pages have been written on Napoleon's conduct, his anxiety to justify or clear up his conduct on this occasion is not less worthy of attention.

We pass from this atrocious incident in the history of the prison-house to its last eventful scene, which is closely associated with the political mischief of the past year in France--the imprisonment of the ministers of Charles X. which has been too recently described in the journals of the day to render necessary its repetition.

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ANECDOTE GALLERY

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PETRARCH AND DANTE.

(_For the Mirror._)

Petrarch had a gay and captivating exterior: his complexion was fair, with sparkling blue eyes, and a ready smile. He was very amusing on the subject of his own coxcombry; and tells us how cautiously he used to turn the corner of a street, lest the wind should disorder the elaborate curls of his fine hair! Dante, too, was in his youth eminently handsome, but in a style of beauty that was characteristic of his mind: his eyes were large and intensely black; his nose aquiline; his complexion of a dark olive; his hair and beard very much curled; his step slow and measured; and the habitual expression of his countenance grave, with a tinge of melancholy abstraction. When Petrarch walked the streets of Avignon, the women smiled, and said, "There goes the lover of Laura!" The impression which Dante left, on those who beheld him was far different. In allusion to his own personal appearance, he used to relate an incident that once occurred to him. When years of persecution and exile had added to the natural sternness of his countenance, the deep lines left by grief, and the brooding spirit of vengeance; he happened to be at Verona, where, since the publication of his *_Inferno_*, he was well known. Passing one day by a portico, wherein several women were seated, one of them whispered, with a look of awe; "Do you see that man? that is he who goes down to Hell whenever he pleases, and brings us back tidings of the sinners below."

"Ay, indeed!" replied her companion; "very likely; see how his face is scarred with fire and brimstone, and blackened with smoke, and how his hair and beard have been singed and curled in the flames!"

BETA.

* * * * *

CHESS.

(_For the Mirror._)

Colonel Stewart used frequently to play at chess with Lord Stair, who was very fond of the game; but an unexpected checkmate used to put his lordship into such a passion, that he was ready to throw a candlestick or any thing else that was near him, at his adversary; for which reason the colonel always took care to be on his feet, to fly to the farthest corner of the room, where he said, "checkmate, my lord."

Tamerlane the Great.

The game of chess has been generally practised by the greatest warriors and generals; and some have even supposed that it was necessary to be well skilled in it. Tamerlane the Great was engaged in a game during the very time of the decisive battle with Bajazet, the Turkish emperor, who was defeated and taken prisoner.

Al Amin, the Khalif of Bagdad.

It is related of Al Amin, the Khalif of Bagdad, that he was engaged at chess with his freedman Kuthar, at the time when Al Manim's forces were carrying on the siege of that city, with so much vigour, that it was on the point of being carried by assault. The Khalif, when warned of his danger, cried out, "Let me alone, for I see Checkmate against Kuthar."

King John.

Was engaged at chess when the deputies from Rouen came to acquaint him that their city was besieged by Philip Augustus; but he would not hear them until he had finished the game.

Ferrand Count of Flanders

Having been accustomed to amuse himself at chess with his wife, and being constantly beaten by her, a mutual hatred took place, which came to such a height, that when the count was taken prisoner at Bovines, she suffered him to remain a long time in prison, though she could easily have procured his release.

Boi, the Syracusan

Was a very famous player at chess, and very much considered in the court of Spain, under King Philip II. He received many fine presents from that prince. Having the misfortune to be taken by the corsairs, and to see himself reduced to slavery, he found means to make those Turkish and savage men tractable, by his skill at chess. They admired him for it, treated him civilly, and exacted no other ransom from him than the lessons he gave them for some time in that game.

Two Persians had engaged in such deep play, that the whole fortune of one was gained by his opponent. He who played the white was the ruined man, and, made desperate by his loss, offered his favourite wife as his last stake. The game was carried on until he would have been check-mated by his adversary's next move. The lady, who had observed the game from the window above, cried out to her husband, "to sacrifice his castle and save his wife_."

Situation of the Game.

White.

W. King at its Rook,
4th square.

W. Bishop at W. King's,
4th square.

W. Rook at W. Queen's Rook,
2nd square.

Two White Pawns, one at
B. Queen's Bishop's
3rd square,
the other at its
Knight's 3rd square.

Black.

B. King at the B. Queen's
Knight's square.

B. Queen at the King's
Knight's 2nd square.

B. Rook at King's Knight's square.
2nd square.

B. Rook at the W. Queen's Knight's
2nd square.

White

1st Rook to the B. Queen's
Rook's square checking.

2nd The Pawn at the B. Queen's
Bishop's 3rd square,

Black

1. B. King takes the Rook.

which discovers check-mate.

J.H.L.

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SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

* * * * *

EARLY RISING.

I had the pleasure of spending the last Christmas holidays, very agreeably, with a family at Bristol. I am aware that those who have heard nothing of the Bristolians, save through George Frederick Cooke's satire on them,[1] will be amazed at any one's venturing to bring together, in the same sentence, three such words as "agreeably," "Bristol," and "pleasure;" but I declare it, on my own knowledge, that there is in that city one family, which for good sense, good humour, pleasantry, and kindness, is not to be out-done by any in Great Britain. "The blood of an African," indeed! There is not one amongst them, not excepting the ladies--no, nor even excepting Miss Adelaide herself (albeit she sweeten her coffee after the French fashion), who would not relinquish the use of sugar for ever, rather than connive at the suffering of one poor negro. The family I allude to are the Norringtons. As a rigid recorder, I speak only to what I positively know: there may be others of equal value.

Having an appointment of some importance, for the eighth of January, in London, I had settled that my visit should terminate on Twelfth-night. On the morning of that festive occasion I had not yet resolved on any particular mode of conveyance to town: when, walking along Broad-street, my attention was brought to the subject by the various coach-advertisements which were posted on the walls. The "Highflyer" announced its departure at three in the afternoon--a rational hour; the "Magnet" at ten in the morning--somewhat of the earliest; whilst the "Wonder" was advertised to start every morning at five precisely!!!--a glaring impossibility. We know that in our enterprising country adventures are sometimes undertaken, in the spirit of competition, which are entirely out of the common course of things: thus, one man will sell a bottle of blacking for ninepence with the charitable intention of ruining his neighbour (so think the worthy public) who has the audacity to charge his at a shilling--the intrinsic value of the commodity being in either case, a fraction less than five farthings. Such a manoeuvre, however, is tolerable; but the attempt to ruin a respectable vehicle, professing to set out on its journey at the reputable hour of three in the afternoon, by pretending to start a coach at five o'clock in the morning, was an imposition "tolerable" only in Dogberry's sense of the word--it was "not to be endured." And then, the downright absurdity of the undertaking! for admitting that the proprietors might prevail on some poor idiot to act as coachman, where were they to entrap a dozen mad people for passengers? We often experience an irresistible impulse to interfere, in some matter, simply because it happens to be no business of ours; and the case in question being, clearly, no affair of mine, I resolved to

inquire into it. I went into the coach-office, expecting to be told, in answer to my very first question, that the advertisement was altogether a _ruse de guerre_.

"So, sir," said I to the book-keeper, "you start a coach, to London, at five in the morning?"

"Yes, sir," replied he--and with the most perfect _nonchalance_!

"You understand me? At _five_?--in the MORNING?" rejoined I, with an emphasis sufficiently expressive of doubt.

"Yes, sir; five to a minute--two minutes later you'll lose your place."

This exceeded all my notions of human impudence. It was evident I had here an extraordinary mine to work, so I determined upon digging into it a few fathoms deeper.

"And would you, now, venture to _book_ a place for me?"

"Let you know directly, sir. (Hand down the Wonder Lunnun-book, there.) When for, sir?"

I stood aghast at the fellow's coolness.--"To-morrow."

"Full outside, sir; just one place vacant, _in_."

The very word, "outside," bringing forcibly to my mind the idea of ten or a dozen shivering creatures being induced, by any possible means, to perch themselves on the top of a coach, on a dark, dull, dingy, drizzling morning in January, confirmed me in my belief that the whole affair was, what is vulgarly called, a "take-in."

"So you _will_ venture then to _book_ a place for me?"

"Yes, sir, if you please."

"And, perhaps, you will go so far as to receive half my fare?"

"If you please, sir--one-pound-two."

"Well, you are an extraordinary person! Perhaps, now--pray be attentive--perhaps, now, you will carry on the thing so far as to receive the whole?"

"If you please, sir--two-pound-four."

I paid him the money: observing at the same time, and in a tone calculated to impress his imagination with a vivid picture of attorneys, counsel, judge, and jury--"You shall hear from me again."

"If you please, sir; to-morrow morning, at five _punctual_--start to a minute, sir--thank'ee, sir--good morning, sir." And this he uttered without a blush.

"To what expedients," thought I, as I left the office, "will men resort, for the purpose of injuring their neighbours. Here is one who exposes himself to the consequences of an action at law, or, at least, to the expense of sending me to town, in a chaise and four, at a reasonable

hour of the day; and all for so paltry an advantage as that of preventing my paying a trifling sum to a rival proprietor--and on the preposterous pretence, too, of sending me off at five in the morning!"

The first person I met was my friend Mark Norrington, and--Even now, though months have since rolled over my head, I shudder at the recollection of the agonies I suffered; when assured by him of the frightful fact, that I had, really and truly, engaged myself to travel in a coach, which, really and truly, did start at five in the morning. But as the novel-writers of the good old Minerva school used, in similar cases, to say, "in pity to my sympathising reader's feelings, I must draw the mysterious veil of concealment over my, oh! too acute sufferings!" These, I must own, were, in no little degree, aggravated by the manner of my friend. Mark, as a sort of foil to his many excellent qualities, has one terrible failing: it is a knack of laughing at one's misfortunes; or, to use his own palliating phrase, he has a habit of

looking at the ridiculous side of things. Ridiculous! Heavens! as if any one possessing a spark of humanity could perceive anything to excite his mirth in the circumstance of a fellow-creature's being forced out of his bed at such an hour! After exhibiting many contortions of the mouth, produced by a decent desire to maintain a gravity suitable to the occasion, he, at length, burst into a loud laugh; and exclaiming (with a want of feeling I shall never entirely forget) "Well, I wish you joy of your journey--_you must be UP at four!_"--away he went. It may be asked why I did not forfeit my forty-four shillings, and thus escape the calamity. No; the laugh would have been too much against me: so, resolving to put a bold face on the matter, I--I will not say I walked--positively _swaggered_ about the streets of Bristol, for an hour or two, with all the self-importance of one who has already performed some extraordinary exploit, and is conscious that the wondering gaze of the multitude is directed towards him. Being condemned to the miseries, it was but fair that I should enjoy the honours of the undertaking. To every person I met, with whom I had the slightest acquaintance, I said aloud, "I start at five to-morrow morning!" at the same time adjusting my cravat and pulling up my collar: and I went into three or four shops, and purchased trifles, for which I had no earthly occasion, for the pure gratification of my vain-glory, in saying--"Be sure you send them to-night, for I start at five in the morning!" But beneath all this show of gallantry, my heart like that of many another hero on equally desperate occasions--my heart was ill at ease. I have often thought that my feelings, for the whole of that distressing afternoon, must have been very like those of a person about to go, for the first time, up in a balloon. I returned to Reeves' Hotel, College-green, where I was lodging. "I'll pack my portmanteau (the contents of which were scattered about in the drawers, on the tables, and on the chairs)--that will be so much gained on the enemy," thought I; but on looking at my watch, I found I had barely time to dress for dinner; the Norrington's, with whom I was engaged, being punctual people. "No matter; I'll pack it to-night." 'Twas well I came to that determination; for the instant I entered the drawing-room, Mrs. Norrington rang the bell, and just said to the servant who appeared at its summons--"Dinner:" a dissyllable which, when so uttered, timed, and accompanied, is a polite hint that the dinner has not been improved by your late arrival.

My story, however, had arrived there before me; and I must do my friends the justice to say, that all that kindness could do for me, under the circumstances, was done. Two or three times, indeed, Mark looked at me

full in the face, and laughed outright, without any apparent cause for such a manifestation of mirth; and once when, after a few glasses of wine, I had almost ceased to think of the fate that awaited me, Miss Adelaide suddenly inquired, "Do you really start at five?--isn't that rather early?"--"Rather," replied I, with all the composure I could assume. But for a smile, and a sly look at her papa, I might have attributed the distressing question to thoughtlessness, rather than a deliberate desire to inflict pain. To parody a well-known line, I may say that, upon the whole--

"To me this Twelfth-night was no night of mirth."

Before twelve o'clock, I left a pleasant circle, revelling in all the delights of Twelfth-cake, pam-loo, king-and-queen, and forfeits, to pack my portmanteau,

"And inly ruminate the morning's danger!"

The individual who, at this time, so ably filled the important office of "Boots," at the hotel, was a character. Be it remembered that, in his youth, he had been discharged from his place for omitting to call a gentleman, who was to go by one of the morning coaches, and who, thereby, missed his journey. This misfortune made a lasting impression on the intelligent mind of Mr. Boots.

"Boots," said I in a mournful tone, "you must call me at four o'clock."

"Do'ee want to get up, zur?" inquired he, with a broad Somersetshire twang.

"Want indeed! no; but I must."

"Well, zur, I'll carl 'ee; but will 'ee get up when I do carl?"

"Why, to be sure I will."

"That be all very well to zay over-night, zur; but it bean't at all the zame thing when marnen do come. I knoa that of old, zur. Gemmen doan't like it, zur, when the time do come--that I tell 'ee."

"Like it! who imagines they should?"

"Well, zur, if you be as sure to get up as I be to carl 'ee, you'll not knoa what two minutes arter vore means in your bed. Sure as ever clock strikes, I'll have 'ee out, dang'd if I doan't! Good night, zur;" and exit Boots.

"And now I'll pack my portmanteau."

It was a bitter cold night, and my bed-room fire had gone out. Except the rush-candle, in a pierced tin box, I had nothing to cheer the gloom of a very large apartment--the walls of which (now dotted all over by the melancholy rays of the rush-light, as they struggled through the holes of the box) were of dark-brown wainscoat--but one solitary wax taper. There lay coats, trousers, linen, books, papers, dressing-materials, in dire confusion, about the room. In despair I set

me down at the foot of the bed, and contemplated the chaos around me. My energies were paralyzed by the scene. Had it been to gain a kingdom, I could not have thrown a glove into the portmanteau; so, resolving to defer the packing till the morrow, I got into bed.

My slumbers were fitful--disturbed. Horrible dreams assailed me. Series of watches, each pointing to the hour of FOUR, passed slowly before me--then, time-pieces--dials, of a larger size--and at last, enormous steeple-clocks, all pointing to FOUR, FOUR, FOUR. "A change came o'er the spirit of my dream," and endless processions of watchmen moved along, each mournfully dinning in my ears, "Past four o'clock." At length I was attacked by night-mare. Methought I was an hourglass--old Father Time bestrode me--he pressed upon me with unendurable weight--fearfully and threateningly did wave his scythe above my head--he grinned at me, struck three blows, audible blows, with the handle of his scythe, on my breast, stooped his huge head, and shrieked in my ear--

"Vore o'clock, zur; I zay it be vore o'clock."

"Well, I hear you."

"But I doan't hear you. Vore o'clock, zur."

"Very well, very well, that'll do."

"Beggin' your pardon, but it woan't do, zur. 'Ee must get up--past vore zur."

"The devil take you! will you--"

"If you please, zur; but 'ee must get up. It be a good deal past vore--no use for 'ee to grumble, zur; nobody do like gettin' up at vore o'clock as can help it; but 'ee toald I to carl 'ee, and it bean't my duty to go till I hear 'ee stirrin' about the room. Good deal past vore, 'tis I assure 'ee, zur." And here he thundered away at the door; nor did he cease knocking till I was fairly up, and had shown myself to him, in order to satisfy him of the fact. "That'll do, zur; 'ee toald I to carl 'ee, and I hope I ha' carld 'ee proper_ly_."

I lit my taper at the rush-light. On opening a window-shutter I was regaled with the sight of a fog, which London itself, on one of its most perfect November days, could scarcely have excelled. A dirty, drizzling rain was falling; my heart sank within me. It was now twenty minutes past four. I was master of no more than forty disposable minutes, and, in that brief space, what had I not to do! The duties of the toilet were indispensable--the portmanteau _must_ be packed--and, run as fast as I might, I could not get to the coach-office in less than ten minutes. Hot water was a luxury not to be procured: at that villanous hour not a human being in the house (nor, do I believe, in the universe entire), had risen--my unfortunate self, and my companion in wretchedness, poor Boots, excepted. The water in the jug was frozen; but, by dint of hammering upon it with the handle of the poker, I succeeded in enticing out about as much as would have filled a tea-cup. Two towels, which had been left wet in the room, were standing on a chair bolt upright, as stiff as the poker itself, which you might, almost as easily, have bent. The tooth-brushes were rivetted to the glass, of which (in my haste to disengage them from their strong hold) they carried away a fragment; the soap was cemented to the dish; my shaving-brush was a mass of

ice. In shape more appalling Discomfort had never appeared on earth. I approached the looking-glass. Even had all the materials for the operation been tolerably thawed, it was impossible to use a razor by such a light.--"Who's there?"

"Now, if 'ee please, zur; no time to lose; only twenty-five minutes to live."

I lost my self-possession--I have often wondered _that_ morning did not unsettle my mind!

There was no time for the performance of any thing like a comfortable toilet. I resolved therefore to defer it altogether till the coach should stop to breakfast.

"I'll pack my portmanteau: that _must_ be done." _In_ went whatever happened to come first to hand. In my haste, I had thrust in, amongst my own things, one of mine host's frozen towels. Every thing must come out again. "Who's there?"

"Now, zur; 'ee'll be too late, zur!"

"Coming!"--Every thing was now gathered together;--the portmanteau would not lock. No matter, it must be content to travel to town in a _deshabille_ of straps. Where were my boots? In my hurry, I had packed away both pair. It was impossible to travel to London, on such a day, in slippers. Again was every thing to be undone.

"Now, zur, coach be going."

The most unpleasant part of the ceremony of hanging (scarcely excepting the closing act) must be the hourly notice given to the culprit, of the exact length of time he has yet to live. Could any circumstance have added much to the miseries of my situation, most assuredly it would have been those unfeeling reminders. "I'm coming," groaned I; "I have only to pull on my boots." They were both left-footed! Then must I open the rascally portmanteau again.

"What in the name of the--do you want now."

"Coach be gone, please zur."

"Gone! Is there a chance of my overtaking it?"

"Bless 'ee, no, zur; not as Jem Robbins do droive. He be five mile off be now."

"You are certain of that?"

"I warrant 'ee, zur."

At this assurance I felt a throb of joy, which was almost a compensation for all my sufferings past. "Boots," said I, "you are a kind-hearted creature, and I will give you an additional half-crown. Let the house be kept perfectly quiet, and desire the chambermaid to call me--"

"At what o'clock, zur?"

"This day three months, at the earliest."

P--.

New Monthly Magazine.

[***] A welcome re-action seems to have taken place in the conduct of the _New Monthly Magazine_. The present is an auspicious New-year's Number. It is, moreover, embellished with a fine Bust Engraving of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.

[1] "There are not two bricks in your accursed town," said the tragedian, "but are cemented with the blood of an African."

* * * * *

THE PENITENT'S RETURN.

By Mrs. Hemans.

Can guilt or misery ever enter here?
All! no, the spirit of domestic peace,
Though calm and gentle as the brooding dove,
And ever murmuring forth a quiet song,
Guards, powerful as the sword of Cherubim,
The hallow'd Porch. She hath a heavenly smile,
That sinks into the sullen soul of vice,
And wins him o'er to virtue.

WILSON.

My father's house once more,
In its own moonlight beauty! Yet around,
Something, amidst the dewy calm profound,
Broods, never mark'd before.

Is it the brooding night?
Is it the shivery creeping on the air,
That makes the home, so tranquil and so fair,
O'erwhelming to my sight?

All solemnized it seems,
And still'd and darken'd in each time-worn hue,
Since the rich clustering roses met my view,
As now, by starry gleams.

And this high elm, where last
I stood and linger'd--where my sisters made
Our mother's bower--I deem'd not that it cast
So far and dark a shade.

How spirit-like a tone
Sighs through yon tree! My father's place was there
At evening-hours, while soft winds waved his hair:
Now those grey locks are gone.

My soul grows faint with fear,--

Even as if angel-steps had mark'd the sod.
I tremble where I move--the voice of God
Is in the foliage here.

Is it indeed the night
That makes my home so awful? Faithless hearted!
'Tis that from thine own bosom hath departed
The in-born gladdening light.

No outward thing is changed;
Only the joy of purity is fled,
And, long from Nature's melodies estranged,
Thou hear'st their tones with dread.

Therefore, the calm abode
By thy dark spirit is o'erhung with shade,
And, therefore, in the leaves, the voice of God
Makes thy sick heart afraid.

The night-flowers round that door
Still breathe pure fragrance on the untainted air;
Thou, thou alone, art worthy now no more
To pass, and rest thee there.

And must I turn away?
Hark, hark!--it is my mother's voice I hear,
Sadder than once it seem'd--yet soft and clear--
Doth she not seem to pray?

My name!--I caught the sound!
Oh! blessed tone of love--the deep, the mild--
Mother, my mother! Now receive thy child,
Take back the Lost and Found!

Blackwood's Magazine.

* * * * *

[Illustration: AUBERGE ON THE GRIMSEL.]

AUBERGE ON THE GRIMSEL.

(_For the Mirror._)

The Grimsel is one of the stupendous mountains of Switzerland, 5,220 feet in height, as marked on Keller's admirable map of that country. It is situated within the Canton of Berne, but bordering on that of the Valais, and not far from Uri. The auberge represented in the sketch, although not quite upon the very summit of the mountain, is almost above the limit of vegetation, and far remote from any other dwelling. Indeed, excepting a few _chalets_, used as summer shelter for the attendants upon the mountain cattle, but deserted in winter, there is no human habitation for many miles round; and it is one of the very few spots where the traveller has an opportunity of reposing for the night, under a comfortable roof, in so lofty a region of the atmosphere, amidst

scenes of Alpine desolation--or rather, the primitive elements of Nature, "the naked bones of the earth waiting to be clothed."

The proprietor of this simple, but agreeable, auberge, is what Jeannie Deans called her father, "a man of substance," and amongst other sources of wealth possesses about three hundred goats, which contrive to pick up their living from the scanty verdure of the surrounding hills.

Three times a-day they regularly assemble in front of the auberge to be milked, affording the raw material for a considerable manufacture of cheese. While we were lounging about before dinner, admiring the beautiful shapes of the rocky peaks, which even in the beginning of September were blanched with the previous night's snow, we were pleasantly surprised by the sound of a cheerful bleating, which was echoed on every side; and one after another the graceful creatures, as small and playful as our kids, popped up amongst the fragments of rocks from all quarters until the "gathering" was complete, and our meal was enlivened by the treble of their voices as the milking proceeded. When the operation was over, off they scampered again, "the _hills_ before them were to choose"--again to return in due season with their bounteous store for the benefit of man. "This is not solitude." The milk is rich, but tastes rather too strong of the goat to be agreeable to every one at first, although probably we should soon have thought cow's milk comparatively insipid. On the day's journey we had seen some of these goats at a considerable distance from the auberge, and a young man who carried our luggage, after giving chase to several, at length caught one, and in spite of her remonstrances, milked her by main force into the cup of a pocket flask, that we might enjoy a draught of the beverage. Still holding the animal, he then filled the vessel more than once for himself, and it was amusing to see the _gusto_ with which he drank it off. We afterwards had the milk with coffee; indeed both here and on the Righi it was "Hobson's choice," goat's milk or none at all.

This auberge has been built on the Grimsel of late years for the accommodation of travellers across the mountain passes; and it forms a convenient night's resting place in a two day's journey on foot or horseback (the only modes of threading these Alpine paths) between the valley of Meyringen and that of Urseren. It may be useful briefly to notice this route, in which the traveller will be charmed with a succession of scenery on Nature's grandest scale. After leaving Meyringen and its beautiful valley, called the Vale of Hasli, he looks down from the top of a mountain pass upon a small compact, oval-shaped valley, named, we believe Hasligrund, into which he descends, and then climbs the mountains on the opposite side. Proceeding onward, he reaches a small place, Handek, formed of a few wood chalets, and giving its name to one of the finest waterfalls in Switzerland. The accessories of the sublimest scenery give additional interest to the beauty of the fall, at which our traveller will feel inclined to linger; he should endeavour to be there about noon, when the sun irradiates the spray like dancing rainbows. The rest of the day's route is, in general, ascending, and partly across splendid sweeps of bare granite, until his eyes are gladdened with the sight of the auberge.

On the second morning he crosses the remaining summit of the mountain, and rises to cross the Furca, passing beside the Glacier of the Rhone; perhaps the finest in all the Alps, which looks like a vast torrent suddenly frozen in its course while tossing its waves into the most fantastic forms. The traveller afterwards descends into the Valley of Urseren, which extends straight before him for the distance of perhaps

twelve miles, with the Reuss winding through it, and the neat town of Andermatt shining out from the opposite extremity. He passes through the singular village of Realp, where he may refresh himself with a draught of delicious Italian red wine, and afterwards arrives at the little bleak town of Hospital, situated at the foot of the St. Gothard, over which a new carriage-road into Italy has lately been made, with galleries winding up the mountain as far as the eye can reach. He may either take up his quarters for the night at Hospital, or proceed about a mile farther to Andermatt, where the road turns off at right angles, and where he may hire a car, if he wishes to go on the same evening across the romantic Devil's Bridge to Amstag, a pretty village in the bend of the splendid valley of the Reuss, whence the road leads on to Altorf and Fluellen, on the bank of the lake of the Four Cantons, the scene of the heroic exploits of William Tell.

Connecting the above sketch with one of the Fall of the Staubbach, in the Valley of Lauterbrun, in a former Mirror, (No. 403,) we may add, that the distance between the latter and Meyringen may also be performed in two days, amidst scenes, if possible, of sublimer character than the journey now described. From Lauterbrun across the Wengern Alp to the Valley of Grindenwald is the first day, the route passing in front of the Jungfrau, which throws up its magnificent ice-covered summits with more enchanting effect than the imagination can conceive. From Grindenwald, with its two fine glaciers, the path proceeds across the great Scheideck, by the baths of Rosenlauri, one of the most beautiful spots on this beautiful earth; and by the fall or rather falls, of the Rippenbach, (for there are no less than eleven in succession beneath each other,) to Meyringen.

We have thus pointed attention to a journey of four days, comprising the chief points in the Oberland, or Highlands, through this region of romantic wonders.

W.G.

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THE SELECTOR; AND LITERARY NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

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THE EMPEROR'S ROUT.

Who does not remember the Butterfly's Ball and the Grasshopper's Feast in the halcyon days of their childhood? These toyful trifles, "light as air," doubtless suggested the Emperor's Rout. Do not start, expectant reader; this is no downfall of a royal dynasty, no burning of palaces, or muster of rebel ranks--no scamper "all on the road from Moscow"--or sauve qui peut at Waterloo; but a pleasant, little verse tale of the Emperor Moth inviting the haut ton of the Moths to a splendid rout--with notes intended as a tempting introduction to the fascinating study of entomology.

There are four Engravings: 1.--The Invitation, with the Emperor and the Empress, and the Buff-tip Moth writing the Cards.--2. The Dance, with

the Sphinx Hippophaes, the Pease Blossom, the Mouse, the Seraph, Satellite, Magpie, Gold Spangle, Foresters, Cleap Wings, &c.--3. The Alarm.--4. The Death's Head Moth. These are beautifully lithographed by Gauci. Their colouring, after Nature, is delightfully executed: the finish, too, of the gold-spangle is good, and the winged brilliancy of the company are exquisite pieces of pains-taking--sparkling as they are beneath a trellis-work rotunda, garlanded with roses, and lit with a pine-pattern lustre of perfumed wax. What a close simile could we draw of life from these dozen dancing creatures in their rainbow hues--their holiday and every-day robes--flitting through life's summer, and then forgotten. Yet how fares it with us in the stream of life!

By the way, this trifle, though so prettily coloured, is in price what was once called "a trifle"--yet what kings and queens have often quarrelled for--half-a-crown.

* * * * *

SATAN IN SEARCH OF A WIFE

Is a little Poem, with much of the grotesque in its half-dozen Embellishments, and some tripping work in its lines. "The End," with "Who danced at the Wedding?" and the tail-piece--a devil-bantling, rocked by imps, and the cradle lit by torches--is droll enough.

Here is an invitation that promises a warm reception:

Merrily, merrily, ring the bells
From each Pandemonian steeple;
For the Devil hath gotten his beautiful bride,
And a Wedding Dinner he will provide,
To feast all kinds of people.

* * * * *

THE FAMILY CABINET ATLAS

Has reached its Ninth part, and unlike some of its periodical contemporaries, without any falling-off in its progress. The Nine Parts contain thirty-six Maps, all beautifully perspicuous. The colouring of one series is delicately executed.

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MOORE'S LIFE OF BYRON. VOL. II.

Letter to Mr. Murray.

Bologna, June 7th, 1819.

* * * * *"I have been picture-gazing this morning at the famous Domenichino and Guido, both of which are superlative. I afterwards went to the beautiful cemetery of Bologna, beyond the walls, and found, besides the superb burial ground, an original of a Custode, who reminded one of the grave-digger in Hamlet. He has a collection of capuchins'

skulls, labelled on the forehead, and taking down one of them, said, 'This was Brother Desiderio Berro, who died at forty--one of my best friends. I begged his head of his brethren after his decease, and they gave it me. I put it in lime, and then boiled it. Here it is, teeth and all, in excellent preservation. He was the merriest, cleverest fellow I ever knew. Wherever he went, he brought joy; and whenever any one was melancholy, the sight of him was enough to make him cheerful again. He walked so actively, you might have taken him for a dancer--he joked--he laughed--oh! he was such a Frate as I never saw before, nor ever shall again!'

"He told me that he had himself planted all the cypresses in the cemetery; that he had the greatest attachment to them and to his dead people; that since 1801 they had buried fifty-three thousand persons. In showing some older monuments, there was that of a Roman girl of twenty, with a bust by Bernini. She was a princess Barlorini, dead two centuries ago: he said that, on opening her grave, they had found her hair complete, and 'as yellow as gold.' Some of the epitaphs at Ferrar pleased me more than the more splendid monuments at Bologna; for instance--

'Martini Lugi
Implora pace!
'Lucrezia Picini
Implora eterna quiete.'

Can any thing be more full of pathos? Those few words say all that can be said or sought: the dead had had enough of life; all they wanted was rest, and this they _implore_! There is all the helplessness, and humble hope, and death-like prayer, that can arise from the grave--'implora pace'[2] I hope whoever may survive me, and shall see me put in the foreigners' burying-ground at the Lido, within the fortress by the Adriatic, will see those two words, and no more put over me. I trust they won't think of 'pickling and bringing me home to Clod or Blunderbuss Hall.' I am sure my bones would not rest in an English grave, or my clay mix with the earth of that country. I believe the thought would drive me mad on my death-bed, could I suppose that any of my friends would be base enough to convey my carcass back to your soil.--I would not even feed your worms, if I could help it.

"So, as Shakspeare says of Mowbray, the banished Duke of Norfolk, who died at Venice, (see Richard II.) that he, after fighting

Against black Pagans, Turks, and Saracens,
And toil'd with works of war, retired himself
To Italy, and there, at _Venice_, gave
His body to that _pleasant_ country's earth,
And his pure soul unto his captain, Christ,
Under whose colours he had fought so long.

"Before I left Venice, I had returned to you your late, and Mr. Hobhouse's, sheets of Juan. Don't wait for further answers from me, but address yours to Venice, as usual. I know nothing of my own movements; I may return there in a few days, or not for some time. All this depends on circumstances. I left Mr. Hoppner very well. My daughter Allegra was well too, and is growing pretty; her hair is growing darker, and her eyes are blue. Her temper and her ways, Mr. Hoppner says, are like mine,

as well as her features; she will make, in that case, a manageable young lady.

"I have never heard anything of Ada, the little Electra of my Mycenae.
* * * But there will come a day of reckoning, even if I should not live to see it. I have at least, seen ----- shivered, who was one of my assassins. When that man was doing his worst to uproot my whole family, tree, branch, and blossoms--when, after taking my retainer, he went over to them--when he was bringing desolation on my hearth, and destruction on my household gods--did he think that, in less than three years, a natural event--a severe domestic, but an expected and common calamity--would lay his carcass in a cross-road, or stamp his name in a Verdict of Lunacy! Did he (who in his sexagenary * * *) reflect or consider what my feeling must have been, when wife, and child, and sister, and name, and fame, and country, were to be my sacrifice on his legal altar--and this at a moment when my health was declining, my fortune embarrassed, and my mind had been shaken by many kinds of disappointment--while I was yet young, and might have reformed what might be wrong in my conduct, and retrieved what was perplexing in my affairs! But he is in his grave, and * * * What a long letter I have scribbled!"

(Here is a random string of poetical gems:)--

So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright;
For the sword out-wears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And Love itself have rest.
Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story.
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is wrinkled?
'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew besprinkled.
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary!
What care I for the wreaths that can _only_ give glory?

Oh, Fame! if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear One discover
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee--_there_ only I found thee;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

TO THE COUNTESS OF B----.

You have asked for a verse,--the request
In a rhymers 'twere strange to deny,
But my Hippocrene was but my breast,
And my feelings (its fountain) are dry.

Were I now as I was, I had sung
What Lawrence has painted so well;
But the strain would expire on my tongue,
And the theme is too soft for my shell.

I am ashes where once I was fire,
And the bard in my bosom is dead;
What I loved I _now_ merely admire,
And my heart is as grey as my head.

My Life is not dated by years--
There are _moments_ which act as a plough,
And there is not a furrow appears
But is deep in my soul as my brow.

Let the young and brilliant aspire
To sing what I gaze on in vain;
For sorrow has torn from my lyre
The string which was worthy the strain.

[2] Though Lord Byron, like most other persons, in writing to different friends, was some times led to repeat the same circumstances and thoughts, there is, from the ever ready fertility of his mind, much less repetition in his correspondence than in that, perhaps, of any other multifarious letter-writer; and, in the instance before us, where the same facts and reflections are, for the second time, introduced, it is with such new touches, both of thought and expression, as render them, even a second time, interesting; what is wanting in the novelty of the matter being made up by the new aspect given to it.

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DISCOURSE ON THE STUDY OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

(_Cabinet Cyclopaedia_. Vol. xiv.)

The arrangement of Dr. Lardner's Cyclopaedia, as it becomes more and more developed, will be proportionally appreciated. Its _system_ is a marked contrast with the heterogeneous lists of the Family and National Libraries, which, as books of reference and authority, are little worth.

The _Cyclopaedia_ plan is to form a series of _Cabinets_ of the principal departments of human knowledge. Those already commenced are History, Biography, Natural Philosophy, Geography, and the Useful Arts. Each of these divisions is to be preceded by a prefatory discourse on

"the objects and advantages" of the branch of knowledge which is treated of in the series or cabinet. Thus, the work before us is such a volume for the Cabinet of Natural Philosophy; that for History is promised by Sir James Mackintosh; and that for the Useful Arts, by the Baron Charles Dupin. The present Discourse is by J.F.W. Herschel, Esq., A.M. It is divided into three parts:--1. On the general nature and advantages of the study of Physics. 2. The rules and principles of Physical Science, with illustrations of their influence, in the history of its progress. 3. The subdivision of Physics. These parts are divided into chapters, and these chapters again divided into sectional illustrations, of which latter there are nearly four hundred. Such an arrangement can hardly fail to attract the listless reader. The style is lucid and popular, and the writer's reasonings and bearings are brought out with much point and vigour. Even a drawing-room reader must be caught by their attractions, and no better means was probably ever devised for bringing superficial readers into the way of knowledge, and setting forth its pleasantness. It has been said that such works as the present satisfy the reader, and disqualify him for the study of science. This opinion is hardly worth controverting: since that mind must be weak indeed which would not be stimulated as well as gratified in this case; and it is still more improbable that the great truths of science should at once take root in such a barren soil without any preparation for their reception.

We conclude with a few specimen extracts. The how, the why, the wherefore, and the because, of such wonders as they relate to, belong rather to the treatises themselves.

Mechanical Power of Coals.

It is well known to modern engineers, that there is virtue in a bushel of coals properly consumed, to raise seventy millions of pounds weight a foot high. This is actually the average effect of an engine at this moment working in Cornwall.

The ascent of Mont Blanc from the Valley of Chamouni is considered, and with justice, as the most toilsome feat that a strong man can execute in two days. The combustion of two pounds of coal would place him on the summit.

The Wonders of Physics.

What mere assertion will make any man believe that in one second of time, in one beat of the pendulum of a clock, a ray of light travels over 192,000 miles, and would therefore perform the tour of the world in about the same time that it requires to wink with our eyelids, and in much less than a swift runner occupies in taking a single stride? What mortal can be made to believe, without demonstration, that the sun is almost a million times larger than the earth? and that, although so remote from us, that a cannon ball shot directly towards it, and maintaining its full speed, would be twenty years in reaching it, it yet affects the earth by its attraction in an inappreciable instant of time?--Who would not ask for demonstration, when told that a gnat's wing, in its ordinary flight, beats many hundred times in a second? or that there exist animated and regularly organised beings, many thousands of whose bodies laid close together would not extend an inch? But what are these to the astonishing truths which modern optical inquiries have

disclosed, which teach us that every point of a medium through which a ray of light passes is affected with a succession of periodical movements, regularly recurring at equal intervals, no less than 500 millions of millions of times in a single second! that it is by such movements, communicated to the nerves of our eyes, that we see--nay more, that it is the difference in the frequency of their recurrence which affects us with the sense of the diversity of colour; that, for instance, in acquiring the sensation of redness our eyes are affected 482 millions of millions of times; of yellowness, 542 millions of millions of times; and of violet, 707 millions of millions of times per second. Do not such things sound more like the ravings of madmen, than the sober conclusions of people in their waking senses? They are, nevertheless, conclusions to which any one may most certainly arrive, who will only be at the trouble of examining the chain of reasoning by which they have been obtained.

Extraordinary Property of Shadows

An eminent living geometer had proved by calculations, founded on strict optical principles, that in the centre of the shadow of a small circular plate of metal, exposed in a dark room to a beam of light emanating from a very small brilliant point, there ought to be no darkness,--in fact, no shadow at that place; but, on the contrary, a degree of illumination precisely as bright as if the metal plate were away. Strange and even impossible as this conclusion may seem, it has been put to the trial, and found perfectly correct.

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THE NATURALIST.

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RAINING TREES.

(By John Murray, Esq. F.S.A. &c.)

The secretions of trees form a curious part of their physiology, but the influence of vegetation on the atmosphere seems to have been entirely overlooked, at least as far as it regards its meteorology.

In the case of that curious genus of plants the Sarracen_ia, in which the S. adunca is most conspicuous, the foliaceous pouch is a mere reservoir, or cistern, to catch and retain the falling dew or rain. In the N_epenthes distillatoria, or pitcher plant, the case is different; and analysis proves it to be an evident secretion from the plant itself, independent altogether of the fact that it is found in the pitcher before the lid has yet opened. I may here state, en passant, that the results, I obtained from a chemical examination of this liquid differ materially from those of Dr. Edward Turner. The C_ornus mascula is very remarkable for the amount of fluid matter which evolves from its leaves, and the willow and poplar, when grouped more especially, exhibit the phenomenon in the form of a gentle shower. Prince Maximilian, in his Travels in the Brazils, informs us that

the natives in these districts are well acquainted with the peculiar property of those hollow leaves that act as recipients of the condensed vapours of the atmosphere; and, doubtless, these are sources where many tropical animals, as well as the wandering savage, sate their thirst "in a weary land." The *Tillandsia* exhibits a watery feature of a different complexion: here the entire interior is charged with such a supply of liquid, that, when cut, it affords a copious and refreshing beverage to man. That these extraordinary sources of "living springs of water" are not unknown to inferior creation, is a fact interestingly confirmed to us in the happy incidents detailed by Mr. Campbell, in his *Travels in South Africa*, where a species of mouse is described to us, as storing up supplies of water contained in the berries of particular plants; and, in Ceylon, animals of the *Simia* tribe are said to be well acquainted with the *Nepenthes distillatoria*, and to have frequent recourse to its pitcher. The mechanism of the "rose of Jericho" (*Anastatica hierochuntina*) shows the susceptibility of plants to moisture in a very remarkable manner; and I have submitted some experiments made with this extraordinary exotic, the inhabitant of an arid sandy soil, to the Horticultural Society of London. That succulents should be found clothing in patches the surface of the burning desert is a phenomenon not the least wonderful in the geographical history of vegetation.

In Cockburn's *Voyages* we find an interesting account of a tree in South America, which yielded a plentiful supply of water by a kind of distillatory process: this tree was met with near the mountainous district of Vera Paz. The party were attracted to it from a distance, the ground appearing wet around it; and the peculiarity was the more striking, as no rain had fallen for six months previous. "At last," says he, "to our great astonishment, as well as joy, we saw water dropping, or, as it were, distilling fast from the end of every leaf of this wonderful tree; at least it was so with us, who had been labouring four days through extreme heat without receiving the least moisture, and were now almost expiring for want of it." The testimony of travellers is too often enshrined among the fabulous; and their credentials either altogether rejected by some, or at least received "cum grano salis." Bruce of Kinnaird forms the most remarkable example of this kind, and the caricature of Baron Munchausen consigned the whole to sarcasm and ridicule; and yet the time is come when the more remarkable circumstances and phenomena mentioned by this traveller, verified by Lord Valentia, Mr. Salt, &c. are received as well accredited facts. The curious phenomenon mentioned by Cockburn finds an interesting and beautiful counterpart in two plants--namely, the *Calla Aethiopica* and *Agapanthus umbellatus*, in both of which, after a copious watering, the water will be seen to drop from the tips of the leaves; a phenomenon, as far as I know, not hitherto recorded.

The great rivers of the continent of Europe have their source of supply in the glaciers; but many of the rivers in the New World owe their origin to the extensive forests of America, and their destruction might dry up many a rivulet, and thus again convert the luxuriant valley into an arid and sterile waste; carried farther, the principle extends to the great features of the globe. What the glaciers effect among the higher regions of the Alps, the *Pinus Cembra* and *Larix communis* accomplish at lower elevations; and many a mountain rivulet owes its existence to their influence. It rains often in the woodlands when it rains no where else; and it is thus that trees and woods modify the hygrometric character of a country; and I doubt not but, by a judicious disposal of trees of particular kinds, many lands now parched up with

drought--as, for example, in some of the Leeward Islands--might be reclaimed from that sterility to which they are unhappily doomed.

In Glass' 'History of the Canary Islands' we have the description of a peculiar tree in the Island of Hierro, which is the means of supplying the inhabitants, man as well as inferior animals, with water; an island which, but for this marvellous adjunct, would be uninhabitable and abandoned. The tree is called 'Til' by the people of the island, and has attached to it the epithet 'garse', or 'sacred'. It is situated on the top of a rock, terminating the district called 'Tigulatre', which leads from the shore. A cloud of vapour, which seems to rise from the sea, is impelled towards it; and being condensed by the foliage of the tree, the rain falls into a large tank, from which it is measured out by individuals set apart for that purpose by the authorities of the island.

In confirmation of a circumstance 'prima facie' so incredible, I have here to record a phenomenon, witnessed by myself, equally extraordinary. I had frequently observed, in avenues of trees, that the entire ground engrossed by their shady foliage was completely saturated with moisture; and that during the prevalence of a fog, when the ground without their pale was completely parched, the wet which fell from their branches more resembled a gentle shower than anything else; and in investigating the phenomenon which I am disposed to consider entirely 'electrical', I think the 'elm' exhibits this feature more remarkably than any other tree of the forest. I never, however, was more astonished than I was in the month of September last, on witnessing a very striking example of this description. I had taken an early walk, on the road leading from Stafford to Lichfield: a dense fog prevailed, but the 'road was dry and dusty', while it was quite otherwise with the line of a few 'Lombardy poplars'; for from them it rained so plentifully, and so fast, that any one of them might have been used as an admirable shower bath, and the constant stream of water supplied by the aggregate would (had it been directed into a proper channel) have been found quite sufficient to turn an ordinary mill.--'Mag. Nat. Hist.'

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THE GATHERER.

A snapper of unconsidered trifles.
SHAKSPEARE.

* * * * *

HUMAN TIMEPIECE.

J.D. Chevalley, a native of Switzerland, has arrived at an astonishing degree of perfection in reckoning time by an internal movement. In his youth he was accustomed to pay great attention to the ringing of bells and vibrations of pendulums, and by degrees he acquired the power of continuing a succession of intervals exactly equal to those which the vibrations or sounds produced.--Being on board a vessel, on the Lake of Geneva, he engaged to indicate to the crowd about him the lapse of a

quarter of an hour, or as many minutes and seconds as any one chose to name, and this during a conversation the most diversified with those standing by; and farther, to indicate by the voice the moment when the hand passed over the quarter minutes, or half minutes, or any other sub-division previously stipulated, during the whole course of the experiment. This he did without mistake, notwithstanding the exertions of those about him to distract his attention, and clapped his hands at the conclusion of the time fixed. His own account of it is thus given:--"I have acquired, by imitation, labour, and patience, a movement which neither thoughts, nor labour, nor any thing can stop: it is similar to that of a pendulum, which at each motion of going and returning gives me the space of three seconds, so that twenty of them make a minute--and these I add to others continually."

* * * * *

HISTORICAL FACT.

During the troubles in the reign of Charles I., a country girl came to London, in search of a situation; but not succeeding, she applied to be allowed to carry out beer from a brewhouse. These females were then called "tub-women." The brewer observing her to be a very good-looking girl, took her out of this low situation into his house, and afterwards married her. He died, however, while she was yet a very young woman, and left her a large fortune. She was recommended, on giving up the brewery, to Mr. Hyde, a most able lawyer, to settle her husband's affairs; he, in process of time, married the widow, and was afterwards made Earl of Clarendon. Of this marriage there was a daughter, who was afterwards wife to James II. and mother of Mary and Anne, queens of England.

ZANGA.

* * * * *

LAWYERS.

In 1454, an Act of Parliament notices, "that there had used formerly six or eight attorneys only, for Suffolk, Norfolk, and Norwich together; that this number was now increased to more than eighty, most of whom being not of sufficient knowledge, came to fairs, &c. inciting the people to suits for small trespasses, &c. wherefore there shall be hereafter but six for Suffolk, six for Norfolk, and two for the city of Norwich."

H.B.A.

* * * * *

THE DYERS.

Inscription on a Tombstone in a Churchyard at Truro, Cornwall.

A dyer born, a dyer bred,
Lies numbered here among the dead;
Dyers, like mortals doomed to die,

Alike fit food for worms supply.
 Josephus Dyer was his name;
 By dyeing he acquired fame;
 'Twas in his forty-second year
 His neighbours kind did him inter.
 Josephus Dyer, his first son,
 Doth also lie beneath this stone;
 So likewise doth his second boy,
 Who was his parents' hope and joy.
 His handywork all did admire,
 For never was a better dyer.
 Both youths were in their fairest prime,
 Ripe fruitage of a healthful clime;
 But nought can check Death's lawless aim,
 Whosoever' life he choose to claim:
 It was God's edict from his throne,
 "My will shall upon earth be done."
 Then did the active mother's skill
 The vacancy with credit fill
 Till she grew old, and weak, and blind,
 And this last wish dwelt on her mind--
 That she, when dead, should buried be
 With her loved spouse and family.
 At last Death's arm her strength defied;
 Thus all the dyeing Dyers died!

* * * * *

HALCYON DAYS.

Halcyon-days denote a time of peace and tranquillity. The expression takes its rise from a sea-fowl, called among naturalists _halcyon_, or _alcyon_, which is said to build its nest about the winter solstice, when the weather is usually observed to be still and calm. Aristotle and Pliny tell us that this bird is most common in the seas of Sicily, that it sat only a few days, and those in the depth of winter, and during that period the mariner might sail in full security; for which reason they were styled _Halcyon-days_.

P.T.W.

* * * * *

USE OF TIME.

Dr. Cotton Mather, who was a man of uncommon dispatch and activity in the management of his numerous affairs, and improved every minute of his time, that he might not suffer by silly, impertinent, and tedious visitors, wrote over his study-door, in large letters, "Be short."

Ursinus, a professor in the University of Heidelburgh, and a diligent scholar, to prevent gossips and idlers from interrupting him in his hours of study, wrote over the door of his library the following lines--"Friend, whoever thou art that comest hither, dispatch thy business or begone."

The learned Scaliger placed the following sentence over the doors of his study--"Tempus meum est ager meus," "My time is my field or estate." And it is frequently the only valuable field which the labourer, in body or mind, possesses.

Ever hold time too precious to be spent
With babblers.--_Shakspeare._

"Friends," says Lord Bacon, "are robbers of our time."

H.B.A.

* * * * *

EPITAPH ON A POTTER.

How frail is man--how short life's longest day!
Here lies the worthy Potter, turned to clay!
Whose forming hand, and whose reforming care,
Has left us lull of flaws. Vile earthenware!

H.S.G.

* * * * *

LENGTHENING OF THE DAYS.

Selden, in his _Table Talk_, says "The lengthening of days is not suddenly perceived till they are grown a pretty deal longer, because the sun, though it be in a circle, yet it seems for awhile to go in a straight line. For take a segment of a great circle especially, and you shall doubt whether it be straight or no. But when the sun has got past that line, then you presently perceive the days are lengthened. Thus it runs in the winter and summer solstice, which is indeed the true reason of them."

* * * * *

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