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AN AUTHOR'S MIND;

THE BOOK OF TITLE-PAGES:

"A BOOKFUL OF BOOKS," OR "THIRTY BOOKS IN ONE."

EDITED BY

M. F. TUPPER, ESQ., M. A.

"En un mot, mes amis, je n'ai entrepris de vous contenter tous en général; ainsi, une et autres en particulier; et par spécial, moymême."—PASQUIER.

HARTFORD:
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1851.

Transcriber's Note: Please note there is no Table of Contents for this book.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

BY THE EDITOR.

The writer of this strange book (a particular friend of mine) came to me a few mornings ago with a very happy face and a very blotty manuscript. "Congratulate me," he began, "on having dispersed an armada of head-aches hitherto invincible, on having exorcised my brain of its legionary spectres, and brushed away the swarming thoughts that used to persecute my solitude; I can now lie down as calmly as the lamb, and rise as gayly as the lark; instead of a writhing Laocoon, my just-found Harlequin's wand has changed me into infant Hercules brandishing his strangled snakes; I have mowed, for the nonce, the docks, mallows, hogweed, and wild-parsley of my rank field, and its smooth green carpet looks like a rich meadow; I am free, happy, well at ease: argal, an thou lovest me, congratulate."

Wider and wider still stared out my wonder, to hear my usually sober friend so voluble in words and so profuse of images: I saw at once it was a set speech, prepared for an impromptu occasion; nevertheless, as he was clearly in an enviable state of disenthraldom from thoughtfulness, I graciously accorded him a sympathetic smile. And then this more than Gregorian cure for the head-ache! here was an anodyne infinitely precious to one so brain-feverish as I: had all this pleasure and comfort arisen from such common-place remedials as a dear young lover's courtesy or a deceased old miser's codicil, I should long ago have heard all about it; for, between ourselves, my friend was never known to keep a secret. There was evidently more than this in the discovery; and when my curiosity, provoked by his laughing silence, was naturally enough exhibiting itself in a "What on earth——?" he broke out with the abruptness of an Abernethy, "Read my book."

Well, I did read it; and, in candid disparagement, as amicably bound, can readily believe what I was told afterwards, that, to except a very small portion of older material, it had been at chance intervals rapidly thrown off in a couple of months, (the old current-quill style,) chiefly with the view of relieving a too prolific brain: it appeared to me a mere idle overflowing of the brimful mind; an honest, indeed, but often useless exposure of multifarious fancies—some good, some bad, and not a few indifferent; an incautious uncalled-for confession of a thousand thoughts, little worth the printing, if the very writing were not indeed superfluous. Nevertheless, with all its faults, I thought the book a novelty, and liked it not the less for its off-hand fashion; it had something of the free, fresh, frank air of an old-school squire at Christmas-tide, suggestive as his misletoe, cheerful as his face, and careless as his hospitality. Knowing then that my friend had been more than once an author—indeed, he tells us so himself—and perceiving, from innumerable symptoms, that he meditated putting also this before the world, I thought kindly to anticipate his wishes by proposing its publication: but I was rather curtly answered with a "Did I suppose these gnats were intended to be shrined in amber? these mere minnows to be treated with the high consideration due only to potted char and white bait? these fleeting thoughts fixed in stone before that Gorgon-head, the public? these ephemeral fancies dropped into the true elixir of immortality, printer's-ink? these——" I stopped him, for this other mighty mouthful of images betrayed the hypocrite—"Yes, I did." An involuntary smile assured me he did too, and the cause proceeded thus: first, a promise not to burn the book; then a Bentley to the rescue, with accessory considerations; and then, the due administration of a little wholesome flattery: by this time we had obtained permission, after modest reluctance pretty well enacted, to transform the deformity of manuscript into the well-proportioned elegance of print. But, this much gained, our author would not yield to any argument we could urge upon the next point, viz: leave to produce the volume, duly fathered with his name. "Not he indeed; he loved quiet too well; he might, it was true, secretly like the bantling, but cared not to acknowledge it before a populous reading-world, every individual whereof esteems himself and herself competent to criticize!" Mr. Publisher, deeply disinterested, of course, bristled up at the notion of any thing anonymous; and the only alternative remaining was the stale expedient of an editor; that editor, in brief, to be none other than myself, a very palpable-obscure: and let this excuse my name upon the title-page.

Now, as editor, I have had to do—what seems, by the way, to be regarded by collective wisdom as the best thing possible—nothing: my author would not suffer the change of a syllable, for all his seeming carelessness about the THING, as he called it; so, I had no more for my part than humbly to act the Helot, and try to set decently upon the public tables a genuine mess of Spartan porridge.

M. F. T.

Albury, Guildford.

AN AUTHOR'S MIND:

THE

BOOK OF TITLE-PAGES.

A RAMBLE.

In these days of universal knowledge, schoolmaster and scholars all abroad together, quotation is voted pedantry, and to interpret is accounted an impertinence; yet will I boldly proclaim, as a mere fact, clear to the perceptions of all it may concern, "This book deserves richly of the Sosii." And that for the best of reasons: it is not only a book, but a book full of books; not merely a new book, but a little-library of new books; thirty books in one, a very harvest of epitomized authorship, the cream of a whole fairy dairy of quiescent post-octavos. It is not—O, mark ye this, my Sosii, (and by the way, gentle ladies, these were worshipful booksellers of old, the Murrays and the Bentleys of imperial Rome,)—it is not the dull concreted elongation of one isolated hackneyed idea—supposing in every work there *be one*, a charitable hypothesis—wire-drawn, and coaxed, and hammered through three regulation volumes; but the scarcely-more-than-hinted abstractions of some forty thousand flitting notions—hasty, yet meditative Hamlets; none of those lengthy, drawling emblems of Laertes—driven in flocks to the net of the fowler, and penned with difficult compression within these modest limits. So "goe forth, littel boke," and make thyself a friend among those good husbandmen, who tend the trees of knowledge, and bring their fruit to the world's market.

Now, reader, one little preliminary parley with you about myself: here beginneth the trouble of authorship, but it is a trouble causing ease; ease from thoughts—thoughts—thoughts, which never cease to make one's head ache till they are fixed on paper; ease from dreams by night and reveries by day, (thronging up in crowds behind, like Deucalion's children, or a serried host in front, like Jason's instant army,) harassing the brain, and struggling for birth, a separate existence, a definite life; ease, in a cessation of that continuous internal hum of aërial forget-me-nots, clamouring to be recorded. O, happy unimaginable vacancy of mind, to whistle as you walk for want of thought! O, mental holiday, now as impossible to me, as to take a true school-boy's interest in rounders and prisoner's base! An author's mind—and remember always, friend, I write in character, so judge not as egotistic vanity merely the well playing of my *rôle*—such a

mind is not a sheet of smooth wax, but a magic stone indented with fluttering inscriptions; no empty tenement, but a barn stored to bursting: it is a painful pressure, constraining to write for comfort's sake; an appetite craving to be satisfied, as well as a power to be exerted; an impetus that longs to get away, rather than a dormant dynamic: thrice have I (let me confess it) poured forth the alleviating volume as an author, a real author—real, because for very peace of mind, involuntarily; but still the vessel fills; still the indigenous crop springs up, choking a better harvest, seeds of foreign growth; still those Lernæan necks sprout again, claiming with many mouths to explain, amuse, suggest, and controvert—to publish invention, and proscribe error. Truly, it were enviable to be less apprehensive, less retentive; to be fitted with a colander-mind, like that penal cask which forty-nine Danaïdes might not keep from leaking; to be, sometimes at least, suffered for a holiday to ramble brainless in the paradise of fools. Memory, imagination, zeal, perceptions of men and things, equally with rank and riches, have often cost their full price, as many mad have known; they take too much out of a man—fret, wear, worry him; to be irritable, is the conditional tax laid of old upon an author's intellect; the crowd of internal imagery makes him hasty, quick, nervous as a haunted hunted man: minds of coarser web heed not how small a thorn rends one of so delicate a texture; they cannot estimate the wish that a duller sword were in a tougher scabbard; the river, not content with channel and restraining banks, overflows perpetually; the extortionate exacting armies of the Ideal and the Causal persecute MY spirit, and I would make a patriot stand at once to vanquish the invaders of my peace: I write these things only to be quit of them, and not to let the crowd increase; I have conceived a plan to destroy them all, as Jehu and Elijah with the priests of Baal; I feel Malthusian among my mental nurselings; a dire resolve has filled me to effect a premature destruction of the literary populace superfœtating in my brain—plays, novels, essays, tales, homilies, and rhythmicals; for ethics and poetics, politics and rhetorics, will I display no more mercy than sundry commentators of maltreated Aristotle: I will exhibit them in their state chaotic; I will addle the eggs, and the chicken shall not chirp; I will reveal, and secrets shall not waste me; I will write, and thoughts shall not batten on me.

The world is too full of books, and I yearn not causelessly to add more than this involuntary unit: bottles, bottles—invariable bottles—was the one idea of a most clever Head at Nieder-Selters; books, books—accumulating books—press upon my conscience in this literary London: despairing auctioneers hate the sound, ruined publishers dread it, surfeited readers grumble at it, and the very cheese-monger begins to be an epicure as to which grand work is next to be demolished. Friendships and loves tremble at the daily recurrence of "Have you read this?" and "Mind you buy that;" wise men shun a blue-belle, sure that she will recommend a book; and the yet wiser treat themselves to solitary confinement, that they may not have to meet the last new batch of authors, and be obliged to purchase, if not to peruse, their never-ending books. I fear to increase the plague, to be convicted an abettor of great evils, though by the measure of a little one. I am infected, and I know it: but for science-sake I break the quarantine, and in my magnanimity would be victimized unknown, consigning to a speedy grave this useless offspring, together with its too productive parent, and saving of a race so hopeless little else than their prëdetermined names—in fact, their title-pages.

But is that indeed little? Speak, authors with piles of ready-written copy, is not the theme (so often carried out beyond, or beside, or even against its original purpose) less perplexing than the after-thought thesis? Bear witness, readers, bit by a mysterious advertisement in the '*Morning Post*,' are names, indeed, not matters of much weight? Press forward, Sosii aforesaid, and answer me truly, is not a title-page the better part of many books? Cheap promises of stale pleasure, false hopes of dull interest, imprimaturs of deceived fancy, lying visions of the future unfulfilled, title-pages still do good service to the cause of—bookselling.

And, to commence, let me elucidate mine own—I mean the first, the head and front of this offending phalanx—mine own, *par excellence*, '*An Authors Mind*:' such in sooth it shall be found, for richer or poorer, for better or for worse; not of selfish, but of common application; not so much individually of mine own, as generically of authors; a medley of

crudities; an undigested mass, as any in the maw of Polypheme; a fermenting hotchpotch of half-formed things, illustrative, among other matters, of the Lucretian theory, those close-cohering atoms; a farrago of thoughts, and systems of thoughts, in most admired disorder, which would symbolize the Copernican astronomy, with its necessary clash of whirling orbs, about as well as the intangible chaos of Berkeleyan metaphysics.

So much then on the moment for the monosyllable "Mind;"—whereof followeth, indeed, all the more hereafter; but—"An author's?"—what author's? You would see my patent of such rank, my commission to wear such honourable uniform. Pr'ythee be content with simple assurance that it is so; consider the charm of unsatisfied curiosity, and pry not; let me sit unseen, a spectator; for this once I would go *in domino*. Heretofore, "credit me, fair Discretion, your Affability" hath achieved glory, and might Solomonize on its vanity at least as well as poor discomfited, discovered Sir Piercie Shafton: heretofore, I have stood forth in good causes, with helm unbarred, and due proclamation of name, style, and title, an avowed author; and might sermonize thus upon success, that a little censure loseth more friends than much praise winneth enemies. So now, with visor down, and a white shield, as a young knight-candidate unknown, it pleases my leisure to take my pastime in the tourney: and so long as in truthful prowess I bear me gallantly and gently, who is he that hath a right to unlatch my helmet, or where is the herald that may challenge my rank? Nevertheless, inquisitive, consider the mysteries that lie in the Turkish-looking *sobriquet* of "Mufti;" its vowels and its consonants are full of strict intention I never saw cause why the most charming of essayists hid himself in "Elia," but he may for all that have had pregnant reasons; even so, (but that slender wit could read my riddle,) you shall perhaps find fault with my Mussulman agnomen; still you and I equally participate in this shallow secret, and within so brief a word is concealed the key to unlock the casket that tempts your curiosity: however, the less said of so diaphanous a mystery, the better.

And let me remark this of the mode anonymous; a mode, indeed, to purposes of shame, and slander, and falsity of all kinds too often prostituted for the present, bear with it; sometimes it is well to go disguised, and the voice of one unseen lacks not eager listeners; we address your judgment, unbiased by the prejudice or sanction of a name: we put forth, lightly and negligently, those lesser matters which opportunity hath not yet matured; we escape the nervous pains, the literary perils of the hardier acknowledged. Only of this one thing be sure; we—(no, I; why should unregal, unhierarchal I affect pluralities?)—I hope to keep inviolate, as much when masked as when avowed, the laws of truth, charity, sincerity, and honour; and, although, among my many booklets, the grave and the gay will be found in near approximation, I trust—will it offend any to tell them that I pray?—to do no ill service at any time to the cause of that true religion which resents not the neighbourhood of innocent cheerfulness. I show you, friend, my honest mind.

I by itself, I; odious mono-literal; thinnest, feeblest, most insignificant of letters, I dread your egotistic influence as my bane; they will not suffer you, nor bear with a book so speckled with your presence. Still, world, hear me; mercifully spare a poor grammarian the penance of perpetual third persons; let an individual tender conscience escape censure for using the true singular in preference to that imposing lie, the plural. Suffer a humble unit to speak of himself as I, and, once for all, let me permissively disclaim intentional self-conceit in the needful usage of isolated I-ship.

These few preliminaries being settled, though I fear little to the satisfaction of either party concerned, let us proceed—further to preliminarize; for you will find, even to the end, as you may have found out already from the beginning, that your white knight is mounted rather on an ambling preambling palfrey, than on any determinate charger; curveting and prancing, and rambling and scrambling at his own unmanaged will: scorning the bit and bridle, too hot to bear the spur, careless of listing laws, and wishing rather playfully to show his paces, than to tilt against a foe.

An author's mind, *quà* author, is essentially a gossip; an oral, ocular, imaginative, common-place book: a *pot pourri* mixed from the *hortus siccus* of education, and the greener garden of internal thought that springs in fresh verdure about the heart's own fountain; a compound of many metals flowing from the mental crucible as one—perchance a base alloy, perchance new, and precious, and beautiful as the fine brass of Corinth; an accidental meeting in the same small chamber of many spiritual essences that combine, as by magnetism into some strange and novel substance; a mixture of appropriations, made lawfully a man's own by labour spent upon the raw material; corn-clad Egypt rescued from a burnt Africa by the richness of a swelling Nile—the black forest of pines changed into a laughing vineyard by skill, enterprise, and culture—the mechanism of Frankenstein's man of clay, energized at length by the spark Promethean.

And now, reader, do you begin to comprehend me, and my title? '*An Author's Mind*' is first in the field, and, as with root and fruit, must take precedence of its booklets; bear then, if you will, with this desultory anatomization of itself yet a little longer, and then in good time and moderate space you will come to the rudiments—bones, so to speak—of its many members, the frame-work on which its nerves and muscles hang, the names of its unborn children, the title-pages of its own unprinted books.

Philosophers and fools, separately or together, as the case may be—for folly and philosophy not seldom form one Janus-head, and Minerva's bird seems sometimes not ill-fitted with the face of Momus—these and their thousand intermediates have tried in all ages to define that quaint enigma, Man: and I wot not that any pundit of literature hath better succeeded than the nameless, fameless man—or woman, was it?—or haply some innocent shrewd child—who whilom did enunciate that MAN IS A WRITING ANIMAL: true as arithmetic, clear as the sunbeam, rational as Euclid, a discerning, just, exclusive definition. That he is "capable of laughter," is well enough even for thy deathless fame, O Stagyrite! but equally (so Buffon testifies) are apes and monkeys, horses and hyenas; whether perforce of tickling or sympathy, or native notions of the humorous, we will not stop to contend. That he actually is "an animal whose best wisdom is laughter," hath but little reason in it, Democrite, seeing there are such obvious anomalies among men as suicidal jesters and cachinating idiots; nevertheless, my punster of Abdera, thy whimsical fancy, surviving the wreck of dynasties, and too light to sink in the billows of oblivion, is now become the popular thought, the fashionable dress of heretofore moping wisdom: crow, an thou wilt, jolly old chanticleer, but remember thee thou crowest on a dunghill; man is not a mere merry-andrew. Neither is he exclusively "a weeping animal," lugubrious Heraclite, no better definer than thy laughter-loving foe: that man weeps, or ought to weep, the world within him and the world without him indeed bear testimony: but is he the only mourner in this valley of grief, this travailing creation? No, no; they walk lengthily in black procession: yet is this present writing not the fit season for enlarging upon sorrows; we must not now mourn and be desolate as a poor bird grieving for its pilfered young—is Macduff's lamentable cry for his lost little ones, "All—what, all?" more piteous?—we must now indulge in despondent fears, like yonder hard-run stag, with terror in his eye, and true tears coursing down his melancholy face: we must not now mourn over cruelty and ingratitude, like that poor old worn-out horse, crying—positively crying, and looking imploringly for merciful rest into man's iron face; we must not scream like the wounded hare, nor beat against our cage like the wild bird prisoned from its freedom. Moreover, Heraclite, even in thine own day thou mightest well have heard of the classic wailings of Philomel for Atys, or of consumptive Canens, that shadow of a voice, for her metamorphosed Pie, and have known that very crocodiles have tears: pass on, thy desolate definition hath not served for man.

With flippant tongue a mercantile cosmopolite, stable in statistics and learned in the leger, here interposes an erudite suggestion: "Man is a calculating animal." Surely, so he is, unless he be a spendthrift; but he still shares his quality with others; for the squirrel hoards his nuts, the aunt lays in her barley-corns, the moon knoweth her seasons, and the sun his going down: moreover, Chinese slates, multiplying rulers, and, as their aggregated wisdom, Babbage's machine, will stoutly contest so mechanical a fancy. Savoury steams, and those too smelling strongly of truth, assault the nostrils, as a Vitellite

—what a name of hungry omen for the imperial devourer!—plausibly insinuates man to be "a cooking animal." Who can gainsay it? and wherewithal, but with domesticated monkeys, does he share this happy attribute? It is true, the butcher-bird spits his prey on a thorn, the slow epicurean boa glazes his mashed antelope, the king of vultures quietly waits for a gamey taste and the rapid roasting of the tropics: but all this care, all this caloric, cannot be accounted culinary, and without a question, the kitchen *is* a sphere where the lord of creation reigns supreme: still, thou best of practical philosophers, caterer for daily dinners—man—MAN, I say, is not altogether a compact of edible commons, a Falstaff pudding-bag robbed of his seasoning wit, a mere congeries of food and pickles; moreover, honest Gingel of "fair" fame hath (or used to have, "in my warm youth, when George the Third was king,") automatons, [pray, observe, Sosii, I am not pedant or wiseacre enough to indite *automata*; we conquering Britons stole that word among many others from poor dead Greece, who couldn't want it; having made it ours in the singular, why be bashful about the plural! So also of memorandums, omnibuses, [you remember Farren's *omni*BI!] necropolises, gymnasiums, eukeirogeneions, and other unlegacied property of dear departed Rome and Greece. All this, as you see, is clearly parenthetical;] well, then, Gingel has automatons, that will serve you up all kinds of delicate viands, pleasant meats, and choice cates by clock-work, to say nothing of Jones' patent all-in-a-moment-any-thing-whatsoever cooking apparatus: no mine Apiciite, Heliogabalite, Sardanapalite, Seftonite, Udite, thou of extravagant ancestry and indifferent digestion; little, indeed, as you may credit me, man is not all stomach, nor altogether formed alone for feeding. Remember Æsop's parable, the belly and the members; and, above them all, do not overlook the head.

What think you then of "a featherless biped?" gravely suggests a rusty Plinyite. Absolute sir, and most obsolete Roman, doubtless you never had the luck to set eyes upon a turkey at Christmas; the poor bare *bipes implumis*, a forked creature, waiting to be forked supererogatively; ay, and *risibilis* to boot, if ever all concomitants of the hearty old festival were properly provocative of decent mirth. Thus then return we to our muttons, and time enough, quotha: literary pundit, (whose is the notable saying?) thy definition is bomb-proof, thy fancy unscaleable, thy thought too deep for undermining; that notion is at the head of the poll, a candidate approved of Truth's most open borough; for, in spite of secretary-birds with pens stuck clerk-like behind their ears (as useless an emblem of sinecure office as gold keys, silver, and coronation armour)—in spite of whole flights of geese, capable enough of saving capitols, but impotent to wield one of their own all-conquering quills—in spite, also, (keen-eyed categorists, be to my faults in ratiocination a little blind, for very cheerfulness,) in spite, I say, of copying presses, manifold inditers, and automaton artists, MAN IS A WRITING ANIMAL.

Wearily enough, you will think, have we disposed of this one definition: but recollect, and take me for a son of leisure, an amateur tourist of Parnassus, an idling gatherer of way-side flowers in the vale of Thessaly, a careless, unbusied, "contemplative man," recreating himself by gentle craft on the banks of much-poached Helicon; and if you, my casual friend, be neither like-minded in fancy nor like-fitted in leisure, courteously consider that we may not travel well together: at this station let us stop, freely forgiving each other for mutual misliking; to your books, to your business, to your fowling, to your feasting, to your mummery, to your nunnery—go: my track lays away from the highroad, in and out between yonder hills, among thickets, mossy rocks, green hollows, high fern, and the tangled hair of hiding river-gods; I meet not pedlers and bagsmen, but stumble upon fawns just dropped, and do not scare their doting mothers; I quench not my noonday thirst with fiery drams from a brazen tap, but, lying over the cold brook, drink to its musical Naiades; I walk no dusty roads of a working-day world, but flit upon the pleasant places of one made up of holidays.

A truce to this truancy, and method be my maxim: let us for a moment link our reasonings, and solder one stray rivet; man being a writing animal, there still remains the question, what is writing? Ah, there's the rub: a very comfortable definition would it be, if every pen-holder and pen-wiper could truly claim that kingship of the universe—that imagery of his Maker—that mystical, marvellous, immortal, intellectual, abstraction,

manhood: but, what then is WRITING? Ye tons of invoices, groaning shelves of incalculable legers, parchment abhorrences of rare Charles Lamb, we think not now of you; dreary piles of unhealthy-looking law-books, hypochondriacal heaps of medical experiences, plodding folios of industrious polemics, slow elaborations of learned dullness, we spare your native dust; letters unnumbered, in all stages of cacography, both physical and metaphysical, alack! most of you must slip through the meshes of our definition yet unwove; poor deciduous leaves of the forest, that, at your best, serve only —it is yet a good purpose—to dress the common soil of human kindness, without attaining to the praise of wreaths and chaplets ever hanging in the Muses' temple; flowers withered on the stalk, whose blooming beauty no lover's hand has dropped upon the sacred waters of Siloa, like the Hindoo's garland on her Ganges; prolix, vain, ephemeral letters (especially enveloped penny-posters)—and sparing only some few redolent of truth, wisdom, and affection—your bulky majority of flippant trash, staid advices, dunnings, hoaxings, lyings, and slanderings, degrade you to a lower rank than that we take on us to designate as "writing."

And what, O what—"how poor is he that hath not patience!"—shall we predicate of the average viscera of circulating libraries?—abominable viscera!—isn't that the word, my young Hippocrates?—A parley—a parley! and the terms of truce are these: If this present pastime of mine (for pastime it is, so spurn not at its logic,) be mercifully looked on by you, lady novelists and male dittoes—yet truly there are giants in your ranks, as Scott, and Ward, and Hugo, and Le Sage, towering above ten thousand pigmies—if I be spared your censures well-deserved, interchangeably as toward your authorships will I exercise the charitable wisdom of silence: a white flag or a white feather is my best alternative in soothing or avoiding so terrible a host; and verily, to speak kinder of those whose wit, and genius, and graphic powers have so smoothed this old world's wrinkled face of care, many brilliant, many clever, many well-intended caterers to public amusement, throng your ill-ordered ranks: still, there are numbered to your shame as followers of the fool's-cap standard, the huge corrupting mass of depraved moralists, meagre trash-inditers, treacherous scandal-mongers, men about town who immortalize their shame, and the dull, pernicious school of feather-brained Romancists: and take this sentence for a true one, a *verum-dictum*. But enough, there are others, and those not few, even far less veniable; ye priers into family secrets—fawning, false guests at the great man's open house, eagerly jotting down with paricidal pen the unguarded conversation of the hospitable board—shame on your treason, on its wages, and its fame! ye countless gatherers and disposers of other men's stuff; chiels amang us takin' notes, an' faith, to prent 'em too, perpetually, without mitigation or remorse; ye men of paste and scissors, who so often falsely, feebly, faithlessly, and tastelessly are patching into a Harlequin whole the *disjecta membra* of some great hacked-up reputation; can such as ye are tell me what it is to write? Writing is the concreted fruit of thinking, the original expression of new combinations of idea, the fresh chemical product of educational compounds long simmering in the mind, the possession of a sixth sense, distinguishing intelligence, and proclaiming it to the four winds; writing is not labour, but ease; not care, but happiness; not the petty pilferings of poverty, but the large overflowings of mental affluence; it begs not on the highway, but gives great largess, like a king; it preys not on a neighbour's wealth, but enriches him; it may light, indeed, a lamp, at another's candle, but pays him back with brilliancy; it may borrow fire from the common stock, but uses it for genial warmth and noble hospitality.

Remember well, good critic, (for verily bad there be,) my purposes in this odd volume—this queer, unsophisticate, uncultivated book: to empty my mind, to clear my brain of cobwebs, to lift off my head a porters's load of fancy articles; and as in a bottle of bad champaign, the first glass, leaping out hurryskurry, at a railroad pace boiling a gallop, carries off with it bits of cork and morsels of rosin, even such is the first ebullition of my thoughts: take them for what they are worth, and blame no one but your discontented self that they are no better. Do you suppose, keen sir, that I am not quite self-conscious of their shallowness, utter contempt of subordination and selection, their empty reasoning and pellucid vanity?—There I have saved you the labour of a sentence, and present you

with a killing verdict for myself. After a little, perhaps, your patience may find me otherwise; of clearer flow, but flatter flavour: these desultorinesses must first of all be immolated, for in their Ariel state they vex me, but I bind them down like slaving Calibans, by the magic of a pen; and glad shall I be to victimize my monsters, eager to dissipate my musquito-like tormentors; yea, I would "take up arms against a sea"—["Arms against a sea?" dearest Shakspeare, would that Theobald, or Johnson's stock-butt, "the Oxford Editor," had indeed interpolated that unconscionable image! It has been sapiently remarked by some hornet of criticism, that "Shakspeare was a clever man;" but cleverer far must that champion stand forth who wars with any prospect of success upon seas; perhaps Xerxes might have thought of it—or your Astley's brigand, who rushes sword in hand on an ocean of green baize. Who shall cure me of parentheses?]—well, "a sea of troubles, [thoughts trouble us more than things—I sin again; close it;] and by opposing, end them;" that is, by setting forth these troublous thoughts opposite, in stately black and white, I clip their wings, and make them peck among my poultry, and not swarm about my heaven. But soon must I be more continuous; turn over to my future title-pages, and spare your objurgation; a little more of this medley while the fit lasts, and afterward a staid course of better accustomed messes; a few further variations on this lawless theme of authorship, and then to try simpler tunes; briefly, and yet to be grandiloquent, as a last round of this giddy climax, after noisy clashing Chaos there shall roll out, "perfect, smooth, and round," green young worldlets, moving in quiet harmony, and moulded with systematic skill.

As an author, meanwhile, let man be most specifically characterized: a real author, voluntary in his motives, but involuntary as regards his acts authorial; full of matter, prolific of images and arguments, teeming, bursting, with something, much, too much, to say, and well witting how to say it: none of your poor devils compulsory from poverty—Plutus help them!—whose penury of pocket is (pardon me) too often equitably balanced by their emptiness of head; and far less one of the lady's-maid school, who will glory in describing a dish of cutlets at Calais, or an ill-trimmed bonnet, or the contents of an old maid's reticule, or of a young gentleman's portmanteau, or those rare occasions for sentimentality, moonlight, twilight, arbours, and cascades, in the moderate space of an hour by Shrewsbury clock: but a man who has it weightily upon his mind to explain himself and others, to insist, refute, enjoin: a man—frown not, fair helpmates; the controversial pen, as the controversial sword, be ours; we will leave your flower-beds and sweeter human nurseries, despotism over cooks and Penelobean penance upon carpet-work; nay, a trip to Margate prettily described, easy lessons and gentle hymns in behalf of those dear prattlers, and for the more cœrulean sort, "lyrics to the Lost one," or stanzas on a sickly geranium, miserably perishing in the mephitic atmosphere of routs—these we masculine tyrants, we Dionysii of literature, ill-naturedly have accounted your prerogatives of authorship. But who then are Sévigné and Somerville, Edgeworth and De Staël, Barbauld and Benger, and Aikin, and Jameson, Hemans, Landon, and a thousand more, not less learned, less accomplished, nor less useful? Forgive, great names, my half-repeated slander: riding with the self-conceited *cortège* of male critics, my boasted loyalty was well-nigh guilty of *lèze majesté*: but I repudiate the thought; my verdict shall have no reproach in it, as my championship no fear: how much has man to learn from woman! teach us still to look on humanity in love, on nature in thankfulness, on death without fear, on heaven without presumption; fairest, forgive those foolish and ungallant calumnies of my ruder sex, who boast themselves your teachers—making yet this wise use of the slander: never be so bold in authorship, as to hazard the loss of your sweet, retiring, modest, amiable, natural dependence: never stand out as champions on the arena of strife, but if you will, strew it with posies for the king of the tournament; it ill becomes you to be wrestlers, though a Lycurgus allowed it, and Atalanta, another Eve, was tripped up by an apple in the foot-race. So digressing, return we to our author; to wit, a man, *homo*—a human, as they say in the west—with news of actual value to communicate, and powers of pen competent to do so graphically, honestly, kindly, boldly.

Much as we may emulate Homer's wordy braggadocios in boasting ourselves far better than our fathers, still, great was the wisdom of our ancestors: and that time-tried wisdom

has given us three things that make a man; he must build a house, have a child, write a book: and of this triad of needfuls, who perceives not the superior and innate majesty of the last requisite?—"Build a house?" I humbly conceive, and steal my notion from the same ancestral source, that, in nine cases out of ten, fools build houses for wise men to live in; besides, if houses be made a test of supreme manhood, your modern wholesale runner-up of lath and plaster tenements, warranted to stand seven years—provided quadrilles be excluded, and no larger flock of guests *than six* be permitted to settle on one spot—such a jackal for surgeons, such a reprobate provider for accident-wards as this, would be among our heroes, a prize-man, the flower of the species. "Children" too?—very happy, beautiful, heart-gladdening creations—God bless them all, and scatter those who love them not!—but still for a proof of more than average humanity, somewhat common, somewhat overwhelming: rabbits beat us here, with all our fecundity, so offensive to Martineau and Malthus. But as to "books"—common enough, too, smirks gentle reader: pardon, courteous sir, most rare—at least in my sense; I speak not of flat current shillings, but the bold medallions of ancient Syracuse; I heed not the dull thousands of minted gold and silver, but the choice coin-sculptures of Larissa and Tarentum. There do indeed flow hourly, from an ever-welling press, rivers of words; there are indeed shoaling us up on all sides a throng of well-bound volumes—novels, histories, poems, plays, memoirs, and so forth—to all appearance, books: but if by "books" be intended originality of matter, independent arguments, water turned wine, by the miracle of right-thinking, and not a mere re-decantering of dregs from other vessels—these many masqueraded forms, these multiplied images of little-varied likenesses, these Protean herds, will not stay to be counted, nor abide judgment, nor brook scrutiny, but will merge and melt by thousands into the one, or the two, real, original, sterling books. We live in a monopolylogue of authorship: an idea goes forth to the world's market-place well dressed from the wardrobe of some master-mind; it greets the public with a captivating air, and straightway becomes the rage; it seems epidemical; it comes out simultaneously as a piece of political economy, a cookery-book, a tragedy, a farce, a novel, a religious experience, an abstract *ism*, or a concrete *ology*; till the poor worn-out, dissipated shadow of a thought looks so feeble, thin, fashionably affected and fashionably infected, that its honest, bluff old father, for very shame, disowns it. Thus has it come to pass, that one or two minds, in this golden age of scribbling, have, to speak radically, been the true originators of a million volumes, which haply shall have sprung from the seed of some singular book, or of books counted in the dual.

Indignant authors, be not merciless on my candour: I confess too much whereof I hold you guilty; I am one of yourselves, and I question not that few of you can beat me in a certain sort of—I will say, unintended, plagiarism; you are thieves—patience—I thieve from thieves; Diogenes cannot see me any more than you; you copy phrases, I am perpetually and unconsciously filching thoughts; my entomological netted-scissors, wherewith I catch those small fowl on the wing, are always within reach; you will never find me without well-tenanted pill-boxes in my pocket, and perhaps a buzzing captive or two stuck in spinning thraldom on my castor; you are petty larceners, I profess the like *métier* of intellectual abstractor; you pilfer among a crowd of volumes, manuscripts, rare editions, conflicting commentators, and your success depends upon rëusage of the old materials; whereas I sit alone and bookless in my dining-parlour, thinking over bygone fancies, rëconsidering exploded notions, appropriating all I find of lumber in the warehouse of my memory, and, if need be, without scruple, quietly digesting, as my special provender, the thoughts of others, originated ages ago.

Is it necessary to remind you—dropping this lightsome vein for a precious moment—that I am penning away my "crudites," off-hand, at the top of my speed? that my set intention is, if possible, to jot down instanter my heavy brainful, and feel for once light headed?—I stick to my title, '*An Author's Mind*,' and that with a laudable scorn of concealment, and an honest purpose not to pretend it better or wiser than it is; then let no one blame me on the score of my fashion of speech, or my sarcasms mingled with charity; for consistency with me were inconsistent.

Neither let me, poor innocent, be accused of giving license to what a palled public and dyspeptical reviewers will call for the thousandth time a *cacoethes*; word of cabalistic look, unknown to Dr. Dilworth. Truly, my masters, though disciple I be of venerable Martinus the Scribbler; though, for aught I know, himself in progress of transmigration; still, I submit, my cornucopia is not crammed with leaves and chopped straw; and if, in utter carelessness, the fruit is poured out pell-mell after this desultory fashion, yet, I wot, it *is* fruit, though whether ripe or crude, or rotten, my husbandry takes little thought: the mixture serves for my cider-press, and, fermentation over, the product will be clarified. Judge me too, am I not consecutive? I've shown man to be a writing animal; and writing, what it is and is not; and meanwhile have been routing recreatively at pen's point whims, and fancies, and ideas, and images, pulled in manfully by head and shoulders: and now—after an episode, quite relevant and quite Herodotean, concerning the consequences of a bit of successful authorship on a man's scheme of life, to illustrate yet more the "author's mind"—I shall proceed to tell all men how many books I might, could, should, or would have written, but for reiterated and legitimated *buts*, and how near of kin I must esteem myself to the illustrious J. of nursery rhymes, being, as he is or was, "Mister Joe Jenkins, who played on the fiddle, and began twenty tunes, but left off in the middle." Moreover, no one can be ignorant of the close consanguinity recognised in every age and every dictionary between I and J. But now for the episode:

If ever a toy were symbolical of life, that toy was a kaleidoscope: the showy bits of tinsel, coloured glass, silk, beads, and feathers, with here and there perchance a stray piece of iridescent ore or a pin, each, in its turn of ideal multiplication, filling successively the field of vision; the trifling touch that will disenchant the fairest patterns; the slightest change, as in chemical arithmetic, that will make the whole mixture a poison or a cordial. A man is vexed, the nerve of his equanimity thrillingly touched at the tender elbow, and forthwith his whole wholesome body writhes in pain; while, to speak morally, those useful reminders of life's frailty, the habitual side-thorns—spurs of diligence, incentives to better things—are exaggerated into sixfold spears, and terribly stop the way, like long-lanced Achæans: a careless fit succeeds to one of spleen, and vanity well spangled, pretty baubles, stars and trinkets and trifles, fill their cycle, to magnetize with folly that rolling world the brain: another twist, and love is lord paramount, a paltry bit of glass, casually rose-coloured, shedding its warm blush over all the reflective powers: suddenly an overcast, for that marplot, Disappointment, has obtruded a most vexatiously reiterated morsel of lamp-black: again Hope's little bit of blue paint makes azure rainbows all about the firmament of man's own inner world; and at last an atom of gold-dust specks all the glasses with its lurid yellow, and haply leaves the old miser to his master-passion. So, ever changing day by day, every man's life is but a kaleidoscope. Stay; this simile is somewhat of the longest, but the whim is upon me, and I must have my way; the fit possesses me to try a sonnet, and I shall look far for a fairer thesis; he that hates verse—and the Muses now-a-days are too old-maidish to look many lovers—may skip it, and no harm done; but one or two may like this stave on

LIFE.

I saw a child with a kaleidoscope,
  Turning at will the tesselated field;
  And straight my mental eye became unseal'd,
I learnt of life, and read its horoscope:
  Behold, how fitfully the patterns change!
The scene is azure now with hues of Hope;
  Now sobered gray by Disappointment strange;
With Love's own roses blushing, warm and bright;
  Black with Hate's heat, or white with Envy's cold;
Made glorious by Religion's purple light;
  Or sicklied o'er with yellow lust of Gold;
So, good or evil coming, peace or strife,

Zeal when in youth, and Avarice when old,
In changeful, chanceful phases passeth life.

It is well I was not stopped before my lawful fourteenth rhyme by yonder prosaic gentleman, humbly listening in front, who asks, with somewhat of malicious triumph, whereto does all this lead?—Categorically, sir, [there is no argument in the world equal to a word of six syllables,] categorically, sir, to this: of all life's turns and twists, few things produce more change to the daring *debutant* than successful authorship; it is as if, applying our simile, a fragment of printed bookishness among those kaleidoscopic morsels, having worked its way into the field of vision, had there got stereotyped by a photogenic process: in fact, it fixes on it a prëdestinated "author's mind."

An author's mind! what a subject for the lights and shadows of metaphysical portraiture! what a panorama of images! what a whirling scene of ever-changing incidents! what a store-house for thoughts! what a land of marvels! what untrodden heights, what unexplored depths of an ever-undiscovered country! That strange world hath a structure and a furniture all its own; its chalcedonic rocks are painted with rare creatures floating in their liquid-seeming hardness; forms of other spheres lie buried in its lias cliffs; seeds of unknown plants, relics of unlimnèd reptiles, fragments of an old creation, the ruins of a fanciful cosmogony, lie hid until the day of their requiral beneath its fertile soil: and then its lawless botany; flowers of glorious hue hung upon the trees of its forests; luscious fruits flung liberally among the mosses of its banks; air-plants sailing in its atmosphere; unanchored water-lilies dancing in its bright cascades; and this, too, a world, an inner secret world, peopled with unthought images, specimens of a peculiar creation; outlandish forms are started from its thickets, the dragon and the cherub are numbered with its winged inhabitants, and herds of uncouth shape pasture on its meadows. Who can sound its seas, deep calling unto deep? who can stand upon the hill-tops, height beckoning unto height? who can track its labyrinths? who can map its caverns? A limitless essence, an unfailing spring, an evergreen fruit-tree, a riddle unsolved, a quaint museum, a hot-bed of inventions, an over-mantling tankard, a whimsical motley, a bursting volcano, a full, independent, generous—a poor, fettered, jealous, Anomaly, such—bear witness—is an author's mind. O, theme of many topics! chaos of ill-sorted fancies! Let us come now to the jealousies, the real or imaginary wrongs of authorship: hereafter treat we this at lengthier; "for the time present"—I quote the facetious Lord Coke, when writing on that highly exhilerating topic, the common-law—"hereof let this little taste suffice." Is it not a wrong to be taken for a mere book-merchant, a mercenary purveyor of learning and invention, of religion and philosophy, of instruction, or even of amusements, for the sole consideration of value received, as one would use a stalking-horse for getting near a stag? this, too, when ten to one some cormorant on the tree of knowledge, some staid-looking publisher in decent mourning, is complacently pocketing the profits, and modestly charging you with loss? and this, moreover and more poignantly, when the flame of responsibility on some high subject is blazing at your heart, and the young Elihu, even if he would, cannot keep silence? Is it not a wrong to find pearls unprized, because many a modern, like his Celtic progenitors, (for I must not say like swine,) would sooner crush an acorn? to know your estimation among men ebbs and flows according to the accident of success, rather than the quality of merit? to be despised as an animal who must necessarily be living on his wits in some purlieu, answering to that antiquated reproach, a Grub-street attic; or suspected among gentler company in this most mercantile age for a pickpocket, a pauper, a *chevalier d'industrie*? And then those hounds upon the bleeding flanks of many a hunted author, those open-mouthed inexorable critics, (I allude to the Pariah class, not to the higher caste brethren,) how suddenly they rend one, and fear not! Only for others do I speak, and in no degree on account of having felt their fangs, as many have done, my betters; gentle and kind, as domesticated spaniels, have reviewers in general been to your humble confessor, and for such courtesies is he their debtor. But who can be ignorant how frequently some hapless writer is impaled alive on the stake of ridicule, that a flagging magazine may be served up with *sauce piquante*, and pander to the world for its waning popularity by the malice of a pungent article? who, while as a rule he may honour the bench of critics for patience,

talent, and impartiality, is not conusant of those exceptions, not seldom of occurence, where obvious rancour has caused the unkindly condemnation; where personal inveteracy aims from behind the Ajax shield of anonymous reviewing, and shoots, like a cowardly Teucer, the foe fair-exposed whom he dares not fight with?—But, as will be seen hereafter, I trespass on a title-page, and here will add no more than this: Is it not a wrong of double edge, that while the world makes no excuse for the writhing writer, on the reasonable ground that after all he may be innocent of what his critics blame him for, the same good-natured world, on almost every occasion of magazine applause, believes either that the author has written for himself the favourable notice, or that pecuniary bribes have made the honest editor his tool? Verily, my public, thou art not generous here; ay, and thou art grievously deceived, as well as sordid: for by careless praise, causeless censure, credit given for corrupt bribery, and no allowance made for unamiable criticisms, poor maltreated authors speak to many wrongs: and of them more anon.

What moreover shall we say of chilling friendships, near estrangements, heartless lovers loitering behind, shy acquaintance dropping off? Verily, there is a mighty sifting: you have dared to stand alone, have expounded your mind in imperishable print, have manifested wit enough to outface folly, sufficient moral courage to condemn vice, and more than is needful of good wisdom to shame the oracles of worldliness: and so some dread you, some hate, and many shun: the little selfish asterisks in that small sky fly from your constellatory glories: you are independent, a satellite of none: you have dared to think, write, print, in all ways contrary to many; and if wise men and good be loud in their applause, you arrive at the dignity of manifold hatreds; but if those and their inferiors condemn, you sink into the bathos of multiplied contempts. Of other wrongs somewhen and where, hereafter; meanwhile, a better prospect glows on the kaleidoscopic field—a flattering accession of new and ardent friends: "Sir," said an old priest to a young author, "you have made a soft pillow for your head when it comes to be as white as mine is;" a pretty saying of sweet charity, and such sink deep: as for the younger and the warmer, being mostly of the softer sex, some will profess admiring sensations that border not a little on idolatries; others, gayer, will appear in the dress of careless, unskillful admiration; not a few, both men and women, go indeed weakly along with the current stream of popularity, but, to say truth, look happiest when they find some stinging notice that may mortify the new bold candidate for glory; while, last and best, a fewer, a very much fewer, do handsomely the liberal part of friends, commending where they can, objecting where they must, sincere in sorrow for a fault, rejoicing without envy for a virtue.

Many like phenomena has authorship: a certain class of otherwise humanized and well-intentioned people begin to regard your scribe as a monster—not a so-called "lion" to be sought, but some strange creature to be dreaded: Perdition! what if he should be cogitating a novel or a play, and means to make free with our characters? what if that libellous cöpartnership of Saunders and Ottley is permitted to display our faults and foibles, flimsily disguised, before a mocking world? Disappointed maidens that hover on the verge of forty, and can sympathize with Jephtha's daughter in her lonely mournings, causelessly begin to fear that a mischievous author may appropriate their portraits; venerable bachelors, who have striven to earn some little local notoriety by the diligent use of an odd phrase, a quaint garment, or an eccentric fling in the peripatetic, dread a satirist's powers of retributive burlesque; table orators suddenly grow dumb, for they suspect such a caitiff intends cold-blooded plagiarisms from their eloquence; the twinkling stars of humble village spheres shun him for an ominous comet, whose very trail robs them of light, or as paling glow-worms hide away before some prying lantern; and all who have in one way or another prided themselves on some harmless peculiarity, avoid his penetrating glance as the eye of a basilisk. Then, again, those casual encounters of witlings in the world authorial, so anticipated by a hostess, so looked-forward-to by guests! In most cases, how forlorn they be! how dull; constrained, suspicious! like rival traders, with pockets instinctively buttoned up, and glaring each upon the other with most uncommunicative aspects; not brothers at a banquet, but combatants and wrestlers, watching for solecisms in the other's talk, or toiling to drag in some laboured witticism of

their own, after the classical precedent of Hercules and Cerberus: those feasts of reason, how vapid! those flows of soul, how icily congealing! those Attic nights, how dim and dismal! Once more; and, remember me, I speak in a personated character of the general, and not experimentally; so, flinging self aside, let me speak what I have seen: grant that the world-without crown a man with bays, and lead him to his Theban home with tokens of rejoicing; is the victor there set on high, chapleted, and honoured as Nemean heroes should be or does he not rather droop instantly again into the obscure unit among a level mass, only the less welcome for having stood up, a Saul or a Musæus, with his head above his fellows? Verily, no man is a proph—Enough, enough! for ours is a prerogative, a glorious calling, and the crown of barren leaves is costlier than his of Rabbah; enough, enough! sing we the praises, count we well the pleasures of fervent, overflowing authorship. There, in perfect shape before the eyes—there, well born in beauty—there perpetually (so your fondness hopes) to live—slumbers in her best white robe the mind's own fairest daughter; the Minerva has sprung in panoply from that parental aching head, and stands in her immortal independence; an Eve, his own heart's fruit, welcomes delighted Adam. You have made something, some good work, bodily; your communion has commenced with those of times to come; your mind has produced a witness to its individuality; there is a tablet sacred to its memory standing among men for ever.

A thinker is seldom great in conversation, and the glib talkers who have silenced such a one frequently in clamorous argument, founder in his deep thoughts, blundering, like Stephanos and Trinculos—(let Caliban be swamped;) such generous revenge is sweet: a writer often unexplained, because speaking little, and that little foolishly mayhap, and lightly for the holiday's sake of an unthoughful rest, finds his opportunities in printing, and gives the self-expounding that he needs; such heart-emptyings yield heart-ease: an author, who has done his good work well—for such a one alone we speak—while, privately, he scarce could have refreshed mankind by petty driblets—in the perpetuity, publicity, and universal acceptation of his high and honourable calling, does good by wholesale, irrigates countries, and gladdens largely the large heart of human society. And are not these unbounded pleasures, spreading over life, and comforting the struggles of a death-bed? Yes: rising as Ezekiel's river from ankle to knee, from knee to girdle, from girdle to the overflowing flood—far beyond those lowest joys, which many wise have trampled under foot, of praise, and triumph, and profit—the authorship of good, that has made men better; that has consoled sorrow, advanced knowledge, humbled arrogance, and blest humanity; that has sent the guilty to his prayers, and has gladdened the Christian in his praises—the authorship of good, that has shown God in his loveliness, and man in his dependence; that has aided the cause of charity, and shamed the face of sin—this high beneficence, this boundless good-doing, hath indeed a rich recompense, a glorious reward!

But we must speed on, and sear these hydra-necks, or we shall have as many heads to our discourse, and as puzzling, as any treatise of the Puritan divinity. Let us hasten to be practical; let us not so long forget the promised title-pages; let it at length satisfy to show, more than theoretically, how authorship stirs up the mind to daily-teeming projects, and then casts out its half-made progeny; how scraps of paper come to be covered with the cabala of half-written thoughts, thenceforward doomed to suffer the dispersion-fate of Sibylline leaves; how stores of mingled information gravitate into something of order, each seed herding with its fellows; and how every atom of mixed metal, educationally held in solution by the mind, is sought out by a keen precipitating test, gregariously building up in time its own true crystal.

Hereabouts, therefore, and hereafter, in as frank a fashion as heretofore, artlessly, too, and, but for crowding fancies, briefly shall follow a full and free confession of the embryo circulating library now in the book-case of my brain; only premising, for the last of all last times, that while I know it to be morally impossible that all should be pleased herewith, I feel it to be intellectually improbable that any one mind should equally be satisfied with each of the many parts of a performance so various, inconsistent, and unusual; premising, also, that wherein I may have stumbled upon other people's titles, it is unwittingly and unwillingly; for the age breeds books so quickly, that a man must read

harder than I do to peruse their very names; and premising this much farther, that I profess to be a sort of dog in the manger, neither using up my materials myself, nor letting any one else do so; and that, whether I shall happen or not, at any time future to amplify and perfect any of these matters, I still proclaim to all bookmakers and booksellers, STEAL NOT; for so surely as I catch any one thus behaving—and truly, my masters, the temptation is but small—I will stick a "*Sic vos, non vobis,*" on his brazen forehead.

Wait! there remaineth yet a moment in which to say out the remnant of my mind, "an author's mind," its last parting speech, its dying utterances before extreme unction. I owe all the world apologies; I would pray a catholic forgiveness. Authors and reviewers, critics, and the undiscriminating many, fair women, honest men, I cry your pardons universally! I do confess the learning of my mind to lie, strangely and Pisa-like, inveterately as at Welsh Caérphilli, out of the perpendicular of truth; it is my disposition to make the most of all things, for good or for evil; I write, speak, and think, as if I were but an unhallowed special pleader; I colour highly, and my outlines are too strong; I am guilty on all sides of unintentional misstatements, consequent on the powerful gusts of feeling that burst upon my irritable breast; my heart is no smooth Dead Sea, but the still vexed Bermoothes: therefore I would print my penitence; I would publish my confessions; I would not hide my humbleness; and it pleases me to pour out in sonnet-form my unconventional

APOLOGY TO ALL.

—For I have sinn'd; oh! grievously and often;
Exaggerated ill, and good denied;
Blacken'd the shadows only born to soften;
And Truth's own light unkindly misapplied:
Alas! for charities unloved, uncherish'd,
When some stern judgment, haply erring wide,
Hath sent my fancy forth, to dream and tell
Other men's deeds all evil! Oh, my heart!
Renew once more thy generous youth, half perish'd;
Be wiser, kindlier, better than thou art!
And first, in fitting meekness, offer well
All earnest, candid prayers, to be forgiven
For worldly, harsh, unjust, unlovable
Thoughts and suspicions against man and Heaven!

Friends all, let this be my best amendment: bear with the candour, homely though it may be, of your author's mind; and suffer its further revelations of unborn manuscript with charitable listening; for they would come forth in real order of time, the first having priority, and not the best, ungarnished, unweeded, uncared-for, humbly, and without any further flourish of trumpets.

Serjeant Ion—I beg his pardon, Talfourd—somewhere gives it as his opinion, that most people, in any way troubled with a mind, have at some time or other meditated a tragedy. Truly, too, it *is* a fine vehicle for poetical solemnities, a stout-built vessel for an author's graver thoughts; and the bare possibility of seeing one's own heart-stirring creation visually set before a crowded theatre, the preclusive echoes of anticipated thundering applause, the expected grilling silence attendant on a pet scene or sentiment, all the tangible, accessories of painting and music, clever acting and effective situation, and beyond and beside these the certain glories of the property-wardrobe, make most young minds press forward to the little-likely prize of successful tragedy. That at one weak period I was bitten, my honesty would scorn to deny; but fortunately for my peace of

mind, "Melpomene looked upon me with an aspect of little favour," and sturdy truth-telling Tacitus made me at last but lightly regardful of my subject. Moreover, my Pegasus was visited with a very abrupt pull-up from other causes; it has been my fatality more than once or twice, as you will ere long see, to drop upon other people's topics—for who can find any thing new under the sun?—and I had already been mentally delivered of divers fag-ends of speeches, stinging dialogues, and choice tit-bits of scenes, (all of which I will mercifully spare you,) when a chance peep into Johnson's '*Lives of the Poets*' showed me mine own fine subject as the work of some long-forgotten bard! This moral earthquake demolished in a moment my goodly aërial fabric; the fair plot burst like a meteor; and an after-recollection of a certain French tragedy-queen, Agrippina, showed me that the ground was still further preoccupied. But it is high time to tell the destined name of my abortive play; in four letters, then,

NERO;

A CLASSICAL TRAGEDY:

IN SEVEN SCENES.

And now, in pity to an afflicted parent, hear for a while his offspring's Roscian capabilities. First of all, however, (and you know how I rejoice in all things preliminary,) let me clear my road by explanations: we must pioneer away a titular objection, "in seven scenes," and an assumed merit, in the term "classical." I abhor scene-shifters; at least, their province lies more among pantomimes, farces, and comedies, than in the region of the solemn tragic muse; her incidents should rather partake of the sculpture-like dignity of *tableaux*. My unfashionable taste approves not of a serious story being cut up into a vast number of separate and shuffled sections; and the whistle and sliding panels detract still more from the completeness of illusion: I incline as much as is possible to the Classic unities of time, place, and circumstances, wishing, moreover, every act to be a scene, and every scene an act; with a comfortable green curtain, that cool resting-place for the haggard eye, to be the grass-like drop, mildly alternating with splendid crime and miserable innocence: away with those gaudy intermediates, and, still worse, some intruded ballet; bring back Garrick's baize, and crush the dynasty of head-aches.

But onward: let me further extenuate the term, seven scenes; the utterance seven "acts" would sound horrific, full of extremities of weariness; but my meaning actually is none other than seven acts of one scene each: for the number seven, there always have been decent reasons, and ours may best appear as we proceed, less than a brief seven seeming insufficient, and more, superfluous; again, so mystical a number has a staid propriety, and a due double climax of rise and fall. Now, as to our adjective "classical:" Why not, in heroic drama, have something a-kin to the old Greek chorus, with its running comment upon motives and moralities, somewhat as the mighty-master has set forth in his truly patriotic '*Henry the Fifth?*'—However, taking other grounds, the epithet is justified, both by the subject and the proposed unmodern method of its treatment: but of all this enough, for, on second thoughts, perhaps we may do without the chorus.

It is obvious that no historical play can strictly preserve the true unity of time; cause and effect move slower in the actual machinery of life, than the space of some three hours can allow for: we must unavoidably clump them closer; and so long as a circumstance might as well have happened at one time as at another, I consider that the poet is justified in crowding prior events as near as he may please towards the goal of their catastrophe. If then any slight inaccuracy as to dates arrests your critical ken, believe that it is not ignorantly careless, but learnedly needful. One other objection, and I have done. No man is an utter inexcusable, irremediable villain; there is a spot of light, however hidden, somewhere; and, notwithstanding the historian's picture, it may charitably be doubted whether we have made due allowance for his most reasonable prejudice even in Nero's case. Human nature has produced many monsters; but, amongst a thousand crimes, there

has proverbially lingered in each some one seedling of a virtue; and when we consider the corruption of manners in old Rome, the idolatrous flatteries hemming in the prince, the universal lie that hid all things from his better perceptions, we can fancy some slight extenuation for his mad career. Not that it ever was my aim, in modern fashion, to excuse villany, or to gild the brass brow of vice; and verily, I have not spared my odious hero; nevertheless, in selecting so unamiable a subject, (or rather emperor,) I wished not to conceal that even in the worst of men there is a soil for hope and charity; and that if despotism has high prerogatives, its wealth and state are desperate temptations, whose dangers mightily predominate, and whose necessary influences, if quite unbiased, tend to utter misery.

Now to introduce our *dramatis personæ*, with their "cast,"—for better effect—rather unreasonably presumed. *Nero*—(Macready, who would impersonate him grandly, and who, moreover, whether complimented or not by the likeness, wears a head the very counterpart of Nero's, as every Numismatist will vouch,)—a naturally noble spirit, warped by sensuality and pride into a very tyrant; liberal in gifts, yet selfish in passion; not incapable of a higher sort of love, yet liable to sudden changes, and at times tempestuously cruel. *Nattalis*—(say Vandenhoff,)—his favourite and evil genius, originally a Persian slave, and still wearing the Eastern costume: a sort of Iago, spiriting up the willing Nero to all varieties of wickedness, getting him deified, and otherwise mystifying the poor besotted prince with all kinds of pleasure and glory, to subserve certain selfish ends of rapine, power, and licentiousness, and to avenge, perhaps, the misfortunes of his own country on the chief of her destroyers. *Marcus Manlius*—(who better than Charles Kean?—supposing these artistic combinations not to be quite impossible,)—a fine young soldier, of course loving the heroine, captain of Nero's body-guard, chivalrous, honourable, noble, and faithful to his bad master amid conflicting trials. *Publius Dentatus*—(any *bould* speaker; besides, it would be rather too much to engage all the actors yet awhile;)—a worthy old Roman, father of the heroine. *Galba*, the chief mover in the catastrophe, as also the opener of its causes, an intriguing and fierce, but well-intentioned patriot, who ultimately becomes the next emperor. With *Curtius* a tribune, senators, conspirators, soldiers, priests, flamens, &c. And so, after the ungallant fashion of theatrical play-wrights, as to a class inferior to the very &c. of masculines—(of less intention withal than one of those &cs. of crabbed Littleton, like an old shoe fricasséed into savourings of all things by its inimitable Coke,)—come we to the women-kind. *Agrippina*, (one of the school of Siddons,) empress-mother, a strong-minded, Lady-Macbeth sort of woman, and the only person in the world who can awe her amiable son. *Lucia,* (*you* cannot be spared here, clever Helen Faucit)—the heroine, secretly a Christian affianced to Manlius; a character of martyr's daring and woman's love. *Rufa*, a haggard old sibyl, with both private and public reasons for detesting Nero and Nattalis: and all the fitting female attendants to conclude the list.

Each scene, in which each act will be included, should be pictorially, so to speak, a *tableau* in the commencement, and a *tableau* of situation in the end. Let us draw up upon scene *the first*. Back-ground, Rome burning; in front, ruins of fine Tuscan villa, still smoking; and a terminal altar in the garden. Plebs. running to and fro, full of conventional little speeches, with goods, parents, penates, and other lumber, rescued from the flames; till a tribune, (hight Curtius,) in a somewhat incendiary oration concerning poor men's calamities, and against the powers that be, sends them to the capital with a procession of flamines Diales and vestals, dirging solemnly a Roman hymn [some "*Ad Capitolium, Ad Jovis solium*," and so forth] to good music. At the end of the train come in Publius and Lucia, to whom from opposite hurriedly walks Galba, full of talk of omens, direful doings, patriotism, and old Rome's ruin. To these let there be added—to speak mathematically—open-hearted Manlius; and let there follow certain disceptatious converse about Nero, Manlius excusing him, extenuating his vices by his temptations, giving military anecdotes of his earlier virtues, and in fact striving to make the most of him, a very gentle monster: Galba throwing in, sarcastically, blacker shadows. After disputation, the father and lovers walk off, leaving Galba alone for a moment's soliloquy; and, from behind the terminal altar, unseen Sibyl hails him Cæsar; he, astonished at the

airy voice so coincident with his own feelings, thinks it ideal, chides his babbling thoughts, and so forth: then enter to him suddenly chance-met noble citizens, burnt out of house and home, who declaim furiously against Nero. Sibyl, still unseen from behind the altar, again hails Galba as future Cæsar; who, no longer doubting his ears, and all present taking the omen, they conspire at the altar with drawn swords, and as the Sibyl suddenly presides—*tableau*—and down drops the soft green baize. This first act, you perceive, is stirring, introductory of many characters; and the picture of the seven-hilled city, seen in a transparent blaze, might give the followers of Stanfield a triumph.

Second: The senate scene, producing another monstrous crime of Nero's, also inaccurately dated. In the full august assembly, Nero discovered enthroned, not unmajestic in deportment, yet effeminately chapleted, and holding a lyre: suppose him just returned from Elis, a pancratist, the world's acknowledged champion. Nattalis, ever foremost in flatteries, after praising the prince's exploits in Greece, avows that, like Paris in Troy, and Alexander at Persepolis, Nero *had* gloriously fired Rome; he found it wood, and wished to leave it marble; (so, the catafalque at the Invalides of the twice-buried Corsican;) in destroying, as well as blessing, he had asserted his divinity; any after due allusions to Phœnixes, and fire-kingships, and *coups-de-soliel* falling from the same Apollo so great upon the guitar, Nattalis moves that Nero should be worshipped, and calls on the priest of Jupiter to set a good example. None dare refuse, and the senate bend before him; whereupon enter, in clerical procession, augurs, and diviners, men at arms with pole-axes, and coronaled white bulls, paraded before sacrifice: all this pandering to present love of splendour and picturesque effect. In the midst of these classical preparations, enters, with a bevy of attendants, the haughty queen-like Agrippina, whom Nero, having sent for to complete his triumph, commands to bend too; but she stoutly refusing, and taking him fiercely to task, objurgating likewise Rome's degenerate gray-beards—great bustle—senate broken up hurriedly—and she, with a "*feri ventrem*," dragged off to be killed by her son's order. Nero alone with Nattalis by imperial command; his momentary compunction nullified by the wily Iago, who turns off the subject smoothly to a new object of desire: Publius was the only senator not in his place, and Publius has a daughter, the fairest in Rome, Lucia—had not the emperor noticed her among Agrippina's women? Nero, charmed with any scheme of novelty that may change remorseful thoughts, is induced, nothing loth, to attempt the subtle abduction of the heroine; a body-guard, headed as always by Manlius, ready in the vestibule to escort him, and exit. Nattalis, alone for a minute, betrays his own selfish schemes concerning Lucia, who had refused him before, and alludes to his secret reasons for urging on the maddened Nero to the worst excesses.

Third scene (or part, or *act*, if it must be so), expounds, in fitting contrast to the foregoing, the tender loves of Lucia and Manlius; a gentle home-scene, a villa and its terraced gardens: also, as Lucia is a Christian, we have, poetically, and not puritanically, an insight into her scruples of conscience as to the heathenism of her lover: and also into *his* consistent nobility of character, not willing to surrender the religion of his fathers unconvinced. To them rushes in Publius, who has been warned by friend Galba of the near approach of Nattalis and a guard, to seize Lucia for disreputable Nero: no possible escape, and all urge Lucia to imitate Virginia, Lucretia, and others of like Dian fame, by cowardly self-murder; she is high-principled, and won't: then they—the father and lover—request leave to kill her; conflicting passions and considerable stage effect; Lucia, who with calm courage derides the dastard sacrifice, standing unharmed between those loving thirsty swords: in a grand speech, she makes her quiet departure a test of Manlius' love, and her ultimate deliverance to be a proof to him that her God is the true God, the God who guards the innocent. Manlius, struck with her martyr-like constancy, professes that if indeed she is saved out of this great trouble, he will embrace her faith, renounce his own, and so break down the of wealth and rank, are alike thrown away upon Publius; at last, the prince promises; and when Publius, after a burst of earnest eloquence, proclaims the new pleasure to consist in *showing mercy*, Nero's utter wrath, his hurricane of hate, revoking that hasty promise, and hurrying away old Publius to die at the same stake with his daughter.

Seventh: the catastrophe scene lies in the Coliseum amphitheatre; (I mean the older one, anterior to Vespasian's:) bloody games pictured behind, and those "human torches" at fiery intervals. Nero, enthroned in side front, surrounded by a brilliant court, amongst whom are some of the conspirators: at other side Publius and Lucia, tied at one stake in white robes, back to back, to die before Nero's eyes, Manlius and soldiers guarding them: he, Manlius, having nobly resolved to test miraculous assistance to the last, but now tremblingly believing the chance of a Providence interfering, since Lucia's escape from Nero at the golden house. Just as the emperor, after a sarcastic speech, characteristically interlarded with courtier conversation, is commanding the fagot to be lighted, and Lucia's constant faith has bade Manlius *do it*—a rush of Nattalis with attendant conspirators and Rufa the Sibyl, up to Nero; Nattalis strikes him, but the sword breaks short off on the hidden armour; Nero's majestic rising for a moment, asserting himself Cæsar still, the inviolable majesty;—suddenly stopped by a centripetal rush of the conspirators; who kill him, (after he has vainly attempted in despair to kill himself,) and Galba sits on the throne, while Nero, unpitied and unhelped, gasps out in the middle his dying speech. Meanwhile, at the other side, Manlius has killed Nattalis for his treachery, cut the bonds of Publius and Lucia, and all ends in moral justice for the triumph of good, and the defeat of evil; Manlius and Lucia, hand in hand, Publius with white head and upraised hands blessing them, Nero, a mangled corpse, Nattalis in his dying agonies persecuted by the vindictive Rufa, and Galba hailed as Cæsar by the assembled Romans. So, upon a magnificent *tableau*, slowly falls the lawny curtain.

Patient reader, what think you of my long-winded tragedy? No quibbling about Nero having really died in a drain, four years after the murder of Aggrippina; no learned disquisitions, if you please, as to his innocence of Rome's fire, a counterpart to our slander on the Papacy in the matter of London's; spare me, I pray you, learned pundit, your suspicions about Galba's too probable *alibi* in Spain. Tell me rather this: do I falsify history in any thing more important than mere accidental anachronisms and anatopisms? do I make an untrue delineation of character, blackening the good, or white-washing the wicked? Do I not, by introducing Nero's three greatest crimes so near upon his assassination, merely accelerate the interval between causes and effect? And is not tragic dignity justified in varnishing, with other compost than the dregs of Rome, the exit of the last true Cæsar of the Augustan family? For all the rest, good manager, provide me actors, and I am even now uncertain—such is my weakness—whether this skeleton might not at some time be clad with flesh and skin, and a decent Roman toga. I fear it will yet haunt me as a '*Midsummer Night's Dream*,' destroying my quiet with involuntary shreds and patches of long-metred blank; the notion is still vivacious, albeit scotched: Alexandrine though the synopsis appear, it must not be thrown on the highroad as a dead snake; nay, let me cherish it yet on my hearth, and not hurl it away like a *bonum waviatum*; a little more boiling up of Roman messes in my brain, and my tragedy might flow forth spontaneously as lava. What if this book be, after all, a sort of pilot-balloon, to show my huge Nassau the way the wind blows—a feeler as to which and which may please? Whether or not this be so, I will still confess on, emptying my brain of booklets, and, if by happy possibility I can keep my secret, shall hear unsuspected, friend, *your* verdict.

I must rather hope, than expect, that my next bit of possible authorship is not like the last, a subject forestalled. Scribbling as I find myself for very listlessness in a dull country-house, there's not a publisher's index within thirty miles; so, for lack of evidence to the contrary, I may legitimately, for at least a brief period of self-delusion, imagine the intoxicating field my own. And yet so fertile, important, interesting a subject, cannot have been quite overlooked by the corps of professed literary labourer's: the very title-page would insure five thousand readers (especially with a Brunswicker death's-head and marrow-bones added underneath).

OPIUM;

standing alone in single blackiness: Opium, a magnificent theme, warranted to fill a huge octavo: and certain, from sheer variety of information, to lead into the captivity of admiring criticism minds of every calibre. Its natural history, with due details of all manner of poppies, their indigenous habitats, botanical characters, ratios of increase, and the like; its human history, discovery as a drug; how, when, where, and by whom cultivated; dissertations as to the possibility of Chaldean, Pharaonic, Grecian, or Roman opium eating, with most erudite extracts out of all sorts of scribes, from Sanchoniathon down to Juvenal, on these topics; its medicinal uses, properties, accidents, and abuses; as to whether it might not be used homœopathically or in infinitesimal doses, to infuse a love of the pleasures of imagination into clodpoles, lawyers' clerks, and country cousins; its intellectual possibilities of usefulness, stimulating the brain; its moral ditto, allaying irritability; together with a dreadful detail of its evils in excess, idiotizing, immoralizing, ruining soul and body. Plenty of stout unquestionable statistics, from all crannies of the globe, to corroborate all the above to the extreme satisfaction of practical men, with causes and consequences of its insane local popularity. All this, moreover, at present, with especial reference to China and the East; added to the moral bearings of the Opium-war, and our national responsibilities relative to that unlucky traffic. The metaphysical question stated and answered, whether or not prohibition of any thing does not lead to its desire; showing the increasing appetency of those sottish Serics for the forbidden vice, and illustrating Gay's fable of the foolish young cock, who ne'er had been in that condition, but for his mother's prohibition: moreover, how is it, that so captivating a form of intoxication is so little rife among our drunken journeymen? queries, however, as to this; and whether or not the humbug of teetotalism (a modern speculation, got up by and for the benefit of grocers and sugar-planters on the one side, schismatics and conspiring demagogues on the other,) has already substituted opium-eating, drinking, or smoking, for the wholesomer toddies, among factory folk and the finest pisantry. Millions of anecdotes regarding Eastern Rajahs, Western Locofocos, Southern Moors, and North-country Muscovites, as to the drug in its abuses: strange cures (if any) of strange ailments of mind or body by its prudent use: how to wean men and nations from those deleterious chewings and smokings; with true and particular accounts of such splendid self-conquests as Coleridge and De Quincey, and—shall I add another, a living name?—have attained to. Then, again, what a field for poetical vagaries, and madnesses of imagination, would be afforded by the subject of opium-dreams! Now, strictly speaking, in order to hallucinate honestly, your opium-writer ought to have had some practical knowledge of opium-eating: then could he descant with the authority of experience—yea, though he write himself thereby down an ass—on its effects upon mind and body; then could he tell of luxuries and torments in true Frenchified detail; then could he expound its pains and pleasures with all the eloquence of personal conviction. But, as to such real risk of poisoning myself, and of making I wot not how actual a mooncalf, of my present sound mind and body, I herein would reasonably demur: and, if I wanted dreams, would tax my fancy, and not my apothecary's bill. Dreams? I need not whiff opium, nor toss off laudanum negus, to imagine myself—a young Titan, sucking fiery milk from the paps of a volcano; a despot so limitless and magnificent, as to spurn such a petty realm as the Solar System, with Cassiopeia, Boötes, and his dog, to boot; an intellect, so ravished, that it feels all flame, or a mass of matter so inert, that it lies for ages in the silent depths of ocean, a lump of primeval metal: Madness, with the red-hot iron hissing in his brain: Murder, with the blood-hound ghost, over land, over sea, through crowds, deserts, woods, and happy fields, ever tracking silently in horrid calmness; the oppression of indefinite Guilt, with that Holy Eye still watching; the consciousness of instant danger, the sense of excruciating pain, the intolerable tyranny of vague wild fear, without will or power to escape: spurring for very life on a horse of marble: flying upward to meet the quick-falling skies—O, that universal crash!—greeted in a new-entered world with the execrations of the assembled dead—that hollow, far-echoing, malicious laughter—that hurricane-sound of clattering skulls; to be pent up, stifling like a toad, in a limestone rock for centuries; to be haunted, hunted, hooted; to eat off one's own head with its cruel madly crunching under-jaw; to—but enough of horrors: and as to delights, all that

Delacroix suggests of perfume, and Mahomet of Houris, and Gunter of cookery, and the German opera of music: all Camilla-like running unexertive, all that sea unicorns can effect in swift swimming, or storm-caught condors in things aërial; all the rapid travellings of Puck from star to star, system to system, all things beauteous, exhilarating, ecstatic—ages of all these things, warranted to last. Now, multiply all these several alls by forty-nine, and the product will serve for as exaggerated a statement as possible of opium pandering to pleasure; yes, by forty-nine, by seven times seven at the least, that we be not accused of extenuating so fatal an excitement; for it is competent to conceive one's self expanded into any unlimited number of bodies, seven sevens being the algebraic *n*, and if so, into their huge undefined aggregate; a giant's pains are throes indeed, a giant's pleasures indeed flood over. But, we may do harm to morality and truth, by falsely making much of a faint, fleeting, paltry, excitation. The brain waltzing intoxicated, the heart panting as in youth's earliest affection, the mind broad, and deep, and calm, a Pacific in the sunshine, the body lapped in downy rest, with every nerve ministering to its comfort; what more can one, merely and professedly of this world of sensualism—an opium-eater for instance—conceive of bliss? Such imaginative flights as these, with its pungent final interrogatory, suggestive to man's selfishness of joys as yet untried, might tempt to tamper with the dear delight; whereas the plain statement of the most that opium could minister to happiness, as contrasted with those false vain views of it, remind me of Tennyson's poetical '*Timbuctoo*,' gorgeous as a new Jerusalem in Apocalyptic glories, and the mean filth-obstructed kraals dotted on an arid plain, to which, for very truthfulness, his soaring fancy drops plumbdown, as the shot eagle in '*Der Freischutz*.'

Let this then serve as a meagre sketch of my defunct treatise on opium: think not that I love the subject, curious and fertile though it be; perhaps, philosophically regarded, it is not a better one than *gin*; but ears polite endure not the plebeian monosyllable, unless indeed with a rëduplicated *n*, as Mr. Lane *will* have it our whilom genie should be spelt: accordingly, I magnanimously give up the whole idea, and am liberal enough, in this my dying determination, to sign a codicil, bequeathing opium to my executors.

Novelism is a field so filled with copy-holders, so populously tenanted in common, that it requires no light investigation to find a site unoccupied, and a hero or heroine waiting to be hired. Nevertheless, I seem to myself to have lighted on a rich and little-cultivated corner; imagining that the subject is a good one, because still untouched, founded on facts, and with amplifiable variations that border on the probable. He that lionizes Stratford-on-Avon, will remember in one of the Shakspearian museums of that classic town, the pictured trance of hapless

CHARLOTTE CLOPTON,

as it was limned in death-seeming life. He will be shown the tombs of her ancient family in Stratford church, and the door of that fatal vault; he will hear something of her noble birth—her fine character—her fascinating beauty—her short, innocent, eventful life—her horrible death. Consider, too, the age and locality in which she lived, Elizabethan, Shakspeare's; the great contemporary characters that might be casually introduced; the mysterious suicide, in that dim dreadful pool at the end of the terraced walk among the cropped yews, of her poor only sister, Margaret; equalled only in the miserable interest by that of Charlotte herself. And then for a plot: some darkly hinted parricide of years agone, in the generation but one preceding, has dropt its curse upon the now guiltless, but, by the law of Providence, still-not-acquitted family; a parricide consequent on passionate love, differing religions, and the Montague-and-Capulet-school of hating feudal fathers—Theodore Clopton having been a Catholic, Alice Beauvoir a Protestant; an introductory recountal of old Beauvoir's withering curse on the Clopton family for Theodore's abduction of his daughter, followed by the tragic event of the father and son, Cloptons', mutual hatred, and the former found in his own park with the broken point of

his son's sword in him, the latter flying the realm: the curse has slept for a generation; and now two fair daughters are all that remain to the high-bred Sir Clement and his desponding lady, on whom the Beauvoir descendant, a bitterest enemy, takes care to remind them the hovering curse must burst. This Rowland Beauvoir is the villain of the story, whose sole aim it is, after the fulfilment of his own libertine wishes, to see the curse accomplished: and Charlotte's love for a certain young Saville, whom Beauvoir hates as his handsome rival in court patronage, as well as her pointed refusal of himself, gives new and present life to his ancestral grudge. The lovers are espoused, and to make Sir Clement's joy the greater, Saville has interest sufficient to meet the old knight's humour of keeping up the ancient family name, by getting it added to his own; so that the Beauvoir hatred and parricidal curse seem likely to be frustrated. But—the first hindrance to their union is poor sister Margaret's secret and infatuated love for that scheming villain Rowland, her then too probable seduction, melancholic madness, and suicide: successively upon this follow the last illnesses and deaths of the heart-broken old people, whom Rowland's dreadful ubiquity terrifies in their very chamber of disease; and as the too likely consequence of such accumulated sorrows on a creature of exquisite sensibility, Charlotte, the only remaining heiress of that ancient lineage, gradually, and with all the semblance of death, falls into her terrible trance. Rowland, who, through his intimacy with Margaret, knows all the secret passages and sliding panels of the old mansion, and who thereby gets mysterious admission whenever he pleases, comes into that silent chamber, and finds Saville mourning over his dead-seeming bride: she, all the while, though unable to move, in an agony of self-consciousness; and at last, when Rowland in fiendish triumph pronounces the curse complete, to the extreme horror of both, by an effort of tortured mind over apparently inanimate matter, rolls her glazed eyes, and gives an involuntary groan: having thus to all appearance confirmed the curse, she lies more marble-white, more corpse-like, more entranced than ever. Then, after long lingering, draws on the horrible catastrophe: a catastrophe, alas! as far at least as regards the heroine, *quite true*. Fully aware of all that is going on—the preparations for burial, the misery of her lover, the gratified malice of her foe—she is placed in the coffin: the rites proceed, her heart-stricken espoused takes his last long leave, she is carried to the grave, locked in the family vault under Stratford church, and there left alone, fearfully buried alive! And then, after a day or two, how shrieks and groans are heard in the church-yard by truant school-boys, and are placed to the account of the curse: how, at last, her despairing lover demands to have the vault opened; and the wretch Rowland—partly from curiosity, partly from malice—determined to be there to see. As they and some church-followers come near the door of the vault, they hear knockings, and desperate plunges within; Saville swoons away, the crowd falls back in terror, and the hardened Rowland alone dares unlock the door. Instantly, in her shroud, mad, starved, with the flesh gnawed from her own fair shoulders, rushes out the maniac Charlotte: in phrensied half-reason she has seized Rowland by the throat, with the strength of insanity has strangled him, and then falls dead upon the steps of the vault! Of Saville—who, as having swooned, is spared all this scene of horror, and who leaves the country for ever—little or nothing is more said: and Clopton Hall remains a ruin, tenanted by ghosts and bats.

> P.S. If thought fit, after the fashion of Parisian charcoal-burners in ill-ventilated bed-rooms, Charlotte may have recorded her experiences in the vault, by writing with a rusty nail on the coffin-plates.

Now, the gist of this Victor-Hugo tale of terror is its general truth: a true end of a truly-named family, in its own neighbourhood, and long since extinct: the house, now rëbuilt and rëstyled—the vault—the picture of that poor unfortunate, (how unsearchable in real life often are the ways of Providence! how frequently the innocent suffer for the guilty!)—the gloomy well—and something extant of the story—remains still, and are known to some at Stratford. To do the thing graphically, one should go there, and gain materials on the spot: and nothing could be easier than to mix with them fifteenth-and-sixteenth-century costumes, modes of thought, and historical allusions; accessories of the humorous, if the age demands it, might relieve the pathetic; Charlotte's own innocence

and piety might be made to soften her hard fate, with the assurance of a better life; Saville might become a wisely-resigned recluse; and while the sins of the fathers are not gently, though justly, visited on the children, the villain of the story meets his full reward.

Behold, then, hungry novel-monger, what grist is here for the mill! Behold, Sosii, what capabilities of orders from every library in the kingdom!—As doomed ones, and denounced ones, and undying ones, and unseen ones, seem to be such taking titles, what think you of the *Buried-alive-one*!—is it not new, thrilling, terrible? Who is he that would pander to the popular taste for details of dreadful, cruel, criminal, and useless abominations? "Should such a one as I?" In emptying my head of the notion, I have ministered too much already: but the sample of henbane is poured out, an offering to the infernal manes, and poisons no longer the current of my thoughts. Thy ghost, poor beautiful Charlotte! shall not be disturbed by me; thy misfortunes sleep with thee. Nevertheless, this tale about a more amiable Charlotte than Werter's, so naturally also falling into the orthodox three-volume measure, is capable of being fabricated into something of deep, romantic, tragical interest; such a character, in such circumstances, in such an age, and such a place: I commend it to those of the Anglo-Gallic school, who love the domestically horrible, and delight in unsunned sorrows: but, I throw not any one topic away as a waif, for the casual passer-by to pick up on the highway. Shadows, indeed, are flung upon the waters, but Phulax still holds the substance with tenacious teeth.

Stop awhile, my dog and shadow, and generously drop the world a morsel; be not quite so bold when no one thinks of robbing you, and spare your gasconade: the expediency of a sample has been cleverly suggested, and WE *ego et canis meus*, royal in munificence, do graciously accede. Will this serve the purpose, my ever-pensive public? At any rate, with some aid of intellect in readers, it is happily an extract which explains itself—the death of poor infatuated Margaret: we will suppose preliminaries, and hazard the abrupt.

"That bitter speech shot home; it had sped like an arrow to her brain: it had flown to her heart like the breath of pestilence: for Rowland to be rough, uncourteous, unkind, might cause indeed many a pang; but such conduct had long become a habit, and woman's charitable soul excused moroseness in him, whom she loved more than life itself, more than honour. But now, when the dread laugh of a seemingly more righteous world was daily, hourly, to be feared against her—when the cold finger of scorn was preparing to be pointed at her fading beauty, and her altered form—now, when indulgence is most due, and cruelty has a sting more scorpion than ever—to be taunted with that once-kind tongue with having rightfully inherited *a curse*—to be told, in a sort of fiendish triumph, that some ancient family grudge, forsooth, against her father's fame, certainly as much as the selfish motives of a libertine professed, had warped the will of Rowland to her ruin—to know, to hear, yea, from his own lips, that the oft-repented crime of her warm and credulous youth—of her too free, unsuspicious affection—had calmly been contrived by the heart she clung to for her first, her only love—here was misery, here was madness!

"Rowland, at the approach of footsteps, had hastily slunk away behind the accustomed panel, and alone in the chamber was left poor Margaret: his last sneering speech, the mockery of his sarcastic pity, were still haunting her ear with echoes full of wretchedness; and she had uttered one faint cry, and sunk swooning on a couch, when her sister entered.

"Charlotte, gentle Charlotte, had nothing of the hardness of a heroine; her mind, as her most fair body, was delicate, nervous, spiritualized; but the instinct of imperious duty ever gave her strength in the day of trial. Long with an elder sister's eye had she watched and feared for Margaret; she had palliated natural levity by evident warmth of disposition, and excused follies of the judgment by kindness of the heart. Charlotte was no child; in any other case, she had been keener of perception; but in that of a young,

generous, and most loving sister, suspicion had been felt as a wickedness, and had long been lulled asleep: now, however, it awaked in all its terrors; and, as Margaret lay fainting, the sorrowful condition of one soon to be a mother who never was a wife, was only too apparent. She touched her, sprinkled water on her pale face, and, as the fixed eyes opened suddenly, Charlotte started at their strange wild glare: they glittered with a freezing brilliancy, and stared around with the vacuity of an image. Could Margaret be mad? She bit her tender lips with sullen rage, and a gnashing desperation; her cheek was cold, white, and clammy as the cheek of a corpse; her hair, still woven with the strings of pearl she often wore, hung down loose and dishevelled, except that on her flushing brow the crisp curls stood on end, as a nest of snakes. And now a sudden thought seemed to strike the brain; her eyes were set in a steady horror; slowly, with dread determination, as if inspired by some fearful being, other than herself, uprose Margaret; and, while her frightened sister, shuddering, fell back, she glided, still gazing on vacancy, to the door: so, like a ghost through the dark corridor, down those old familiar stairs, and away through the Armory-hall; Charlotte now more calmly following, for her father's library, where his use was to study late, opened out of it, and surely the conscience-stricken Margaret was going in her penitence to him. But, see! she has silently passed by; her hand is on the lock of the hall-door; with one last look of despairing recklessness behind her, as taking an eternal leave of that awe-struck sister, the door turns upon its hinge, and she, still with slow solemnity, goes out. Whither, oh God!—whither? The night is black as pitch, rainy, tempestuous; the old knight's guests at Clopton Hall have gladly and right wisely preferred even such questionable accommodation as the blue chamber, the dreary white apartment looking on the moat—nay, the haunted room of the parricide himself—to encountering the dangers and darkness of a night-return so desperate; but Margaret, in her gayest evening attire, near upon so foul a midnight in November, stalks like a spectre down the splashy steps. Charlotte follows, calls, runs to her—but cannot rescue from some settled purpose, horribly suggested, that gentle fearful creature, now so changed. Suddenly in the dark she has lost her. Which way did the maniac turn?—whither in that desolate gloom shall Charlotte fly to find her? Guided by the taper still twinkling in her father's study, she rushes back in terror to the hall; and then—Help, help!—torches, torches! The household is roused, dull lanterns glance among the shrubberies; pine-lights, ill-shielded from wind and rain by cap or cloak, are seen dotting the park in every direction, and dance about through the darkness, like sportive wild-fires: Sir Clement in moody calmness looks prepared for any thing the worst, like a man who anticipates evil long-deserved; the broken-hearted mother is on her knees at the cold door-steps, striving to pierce the gloom with her eyes, and ejaculating distracted prayers: and so the live-long night—that night of doubt, and dread, and dreariness—through bitter hours of confusion and dismay, they sought poor Margaret—and found her not!

"But, with morning's light came the awful certainty. At the end of a terraced walk, mournfully shaded by high-cropped yews, stood an arbour, and behind it, half-hidden among rank weeds, was an old half-forgotten fountain; there, on many a sultry summer night, had Rowland met with Margaret, and there had she resolved in terrible remorse to perish. With the seeming fore-thought of reason, and the resolution of a phrensied fortitude, she had bound a quantity of matted weeds about her face, and twisted her hands in her fettering garments, that the shallow pool might not in cruel kindness fail to drown her; she lay scarcely half immersed in those waters of death; a few lazy tench floating sluggishly about, appeared to be curiously inspecting their ghastly, uninvited guest; and the fragments of an enamelled miniature, with some torn letters in the hand-writing of Rowland Beauvoir, were found scattered on the overflowing margin of the pool."

Well, unkindly whelp, if your bone has no pickings better than this, not a cur shall envy you the sorry banquet. Yet, had my genius been better educated in the science of French cookery, this might have been served up with higher seasoning as a savoury *ragout*: but you get it in simplicity, scarce grilled; and in sooth, good world, it is easier to sneer at a

novel than to imagine one; and far more self-complacency may be gained by manfully affecting to despise the novelist, than by adding to his honours in the compliment of humble imitation.

Things supernatural have every where and every when exercised mortal curiosity. Fear and credulity support the arms of superstition, fierce as city griffins, rampant as the lion and the unicorn; and forasmuch as no creature, Nelson not excepted, can truly boast of having never known fear, and no man also—from polite Voltaire, shrewd Hume, Leviathan Hobbes, and erudite Gibbon, down to the most stultified Van-Diemanite—can honestly swear himself free from the influence of some sort of faith, for thus much the marvellous and the terrible meet with universal popularity. Now, one or two curious matters connected with those "more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy," which have even occurred to mine own self, (whereof, to gratify you, shall be a little more anon), have heretofore induced me to touch upon sundry interesting points, which, like pikemen round their chief, throng about the topic of

THE MARVELLOUS.

A book, so simply titled, with haply underneath a gigantic note of admiration between two humble queries ?!? would positively, my worthy publisher, make your worship's fortune. For it should concern ghosts, dreams, omens, coincidences, good-and-bad luck, warnings, and true vaticinations: no childish collection, however, of unsupported trumpery, but authenticated cases staidly evidenced, and circumstantially detailed; no Mother Goose-cap's tales, no Dick the Ploughman's dreams, no stories from the '*Terrific Register*,' nor fancies of hysterical females in Adult asylums; even Merlin witch-finders, and Taliesins should be excluded: and, in lieu of all such common-places, I should propose an anecdotic treatise in the manner scientifical. Macnish's '*Philosophy of Sleep*,' Scott's '*Demonology*,' treatises on Apparitions, and many a rare black-letter alchemical pamphlet, might lend us here their aid; the British Museum is full of well-attested ghost-stories, and there are very few old ladies unable to add to the supply: then, this ghost department might be climaxed by the author's own experience; forasmuch as he is ready to avouch that a person's fetch was heard by many, and seen by some, in an old country-house, a hundred miles away from the place of death, at the instant of its happening.

As to omens, aforesaid witness deposes that the sceptre, ball, and cross were struck by lightning out of King John's hand, in the Schools quadrangle at Oxford, immediately on the accession of William the Reformer; and all the world is cognusant that York Minster, the Royal Exchange, and the Houses of Parliament were destroyed by fire near about the commencement of open hostility, among ruling powers, to our church, commerce, and constitution; and I myself can tell a tale of no less than eight remarkable warnings happening one day to a poor friend, who died on the next, which none could be expected to believe unless I delivered it on oath as having been an eye-witness to the facts. Dreams also—strange, vague, mysterious word; there is a gloomy look in it, a dreary intonation that makes the very flesh creep: the records of public justice will show many a murder revealed by them, as instance the Red Barn; more than one poor client, in the clutch of a "respectable" attorney, has been helped to his rights by their influence; from Agamemnon and Pilate, down to Napoleon, the oppressors of mankind have in those had kindly warning. Dreams—how many millions false and foolish, for the one proving to be true! —but that one, how clear, determinate, and lasting, as ministered by far other agency than imagination taking its sport while reason slumbers! Who has not tales to tell of dreams? A warning not to go on board such and such a ship—which founders; a strange unlikely scene fixed upon the mind, concerning friends and circumstances miles away, exactly in the manner and at the time of its occurrence; the fore-shown coming of an unexpected guest; the pourtrayed visage of a secret enemy: these, and others like these, many can attest, and I not least. And of other marvels, though here left unconsidered, yet might

much be said: truths so strange, that the pages of romance would not trench on such extravagance; combinations so unlikely, that thrice twelve cast successively by proper dice, were but probability to those. Thus, in authorial fashion, has the marvellous dwelt upon my mind; and thus would I suggest a hand-book thereof to catering booksellers and the insatiable public.

Against bears in a stage-coach, pointers in a drawing-room, lap dogs in a *vis-à-vis*, and monkeys in a lady's boudoir, my love of comfort and propriety enters strong protest; an emancipated parrot attracts my sympathy far less than bright-eyed children feeding their testy pet, for I dread the cannibal temptation of those soft fair fingers, when brought into collision with Polly's hook and eye; gigantic Newfoundlanders dragging their perpetual chains, larks and linnets trilling the faint song of liberty behind their prison bars, cold green snakes stewing in a school-boy's pocket, and dormice nestling in a lady's glove, summon my antipathies; a cargo of five hundred pigs, with whom I had once the honour of sailing from Cork to London, were far from pleasant as *compagnons de voyage*; neither can I sleep with kittens in the room. Nevertheless, no one can profess truer compassion, truer friendship (if you will) for the animal creation: often have I walked on in weariness, rather than increase the strain upon the Rosinantes of an omnibus; and my greatest school scrape was occasioned by thrashing the favoured scion of a noble house for cruelty to a cat. Such and such-like—for we learn from Æsop (Fable eighty-eight, to wit) that trumpeters deserve to be unpopular—is my physical zeal in the cause of poor dumb brutes: nor is my regard for them the less in matters metaphysical. Bishop Butler, we may all of us remember, in 'THE *Analogy*' argues that the objector against a man's immortality must show good cause why that which exists, should ever cease to exist; and, until that good cause be shown, the weight of probability is in favour of continual being. Now, for my part, I wish to be informed why this probability should not be extended to that innocent maltreated class, whom God's mercy made with equal skill, and sustains with equal care, as in the case of man, and—dare we add?—of angels. Doth He not feed the ravens? Do the young lions not gather what He giveth? Doth a sparrow fall to the ground without Our Father? and is not the unsinning multitude of Nineveh's young children climaxed with "much cattle?" It is true, there may be mighty difference between "the spirit of a man that goeth upward, and the spirit of a beast that goeth downward in the earth:" but mark this, there *is* a spirit in the beast; and as man's eternal heaven may lie in some superior sphere, so that temporarily designed for the lower animals may be seen in the renovated earth. It is also true, that St. Paul, arguing for the temporal livelihood of Christian ministers from the type of "not muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn," asks, "Doth God care for oxen?"—or, in effect, doth He legislate (I speak soberly, though the sublime treads on the ridiculous,) for a stable?—and the implication is, "To thy dutiful husbandry, O man! such lesser cares are left." Sorry, righteously sorry, would it make any good man's heart to think that the Creator had ceased to care for the meanest of his creatures: in a certain sense

> "He sees with equal eye, as God of all,
> A hero perish, or a sparrow fall;"

and, assured that carelessness in a just Creator of his poor dependent creatures must be impossible, I submit that, critically speaking, some laudable variation might be made in that text by the simple consideration that μελει is not so strictly rendered "care for" as κεδεται. Scripture, then, so far from militating against the possible truth, that animals have souls, would seem, by a side-long glance, to countenance the doctrine: and now let us for a passing moment turn and see what aid is given to us by moral philosophy.

No case can be conceived more hard or more unjust than that of a sentient creature (on the hypothesis of its having no soul, no conscience, necessarily quite innocent), thrown into a world of cruelty and tyranny, without the chance of compensation for sufferings undeserved. Neither can any good government be so partial, as (limiting the whole

existence of animals to an hour, a day, a year,) to allow one of a litter to be pampered with continual luxuries, and another to be tortured for all its little life by blows, famine, disease—and in its lingering death by the scientific scalpels of a critical Majendie or a cold-blooded Spallanzani. Remember, that in the so-called parallel case of partialities among men—the this-world's choice of a Jacob, the this-world's rejection of an Esau—the answer is obvious: there are two scales to the balance, there is yet another world. Far be it from us to think that all things are not then to be cleared up; that the innocent little ones of Kedar and the exterminated Canaanites will not then be heard one by one, and no longer be mingled up indiscriminately in an overwhelming national judgment; that the pleas of evil education and example, of hereditary taint and common usage, will be then thrown aside as vain excuse; and that eventual justice will not with facility explain every riddle in the moral government of God. But in the case of soulless extinguished animals, there is, there can be no compensation, no explanation; whether in pain or pleasure, they have lived and they have died forgotten by their Maker, and left to the casual kindness or cruelty of, towards them at least, irresponsible masters. How different the view opened to us by the possibility of soul being apportioned in various measure among the lower animals: there is a clue given "to justify the ways of God to"—brutes: we need not then consider, with a certain French abbé, that they are fallen angels, doing penance for their sins; we need not, with old Pythagoras and latter Brahmins, account them stationed lodges, homes of transmigration for the spirits of men in process of being purged from their offences: we need not regard them as Avatars of Vishnu, or incarnations of Apis, visible deities craving the idolatries of India and Egypt. The truth commends itself by mere simplicity: nakedness betrays its Eve-like innocence of guile or error: those living creatures whom we call brutes and beasts, have, in their degree, the breath of God within them, as well as His handiwork upon them. And, candid theologian, tell me why—in that Millenium so long looked-for, when, after a fiery purgation, this earth shall have its sabbath, and when those who for a time were "caught up into the air," descending again with their Lord and his ten thousand saints, shall bodily dwell with others risen in the flesh for that happy season on this renovated globe—tell me why there should not be some tithe of the animal creation made to rise again to minister in pleasure, as they once ministered in pain? And for the rest, the other nine, what hinders them from tenanting a thousand happy fields in other of the large domains of space? What hinders those poor dumb slaves from enjoying some emancipate existence—we need not perhaps accord them more of immortality than justice, demands for compensation—for a definite time, a millennium let us think, in scores of those million orbs that twinkle in the galaxy?

> Space stretches wide enough for every grain
> Of the broad sands that curb our swelling seas,
> Each separate in its sphere, to stand apart
> As far as sun from sun.

Shall I then say what hinders?—the littleness of man's mind, refusing possibility of room for those countless quadrillions; and the selfishness of his pride, scorning the more generous savage, whose doctrine (certainly too lax in liberality) raises the beast to a level with mankind, and

> "Who thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
> His faithful dog shall bear him company."

Truly, the Creator's justice, and mercy, and the majesty of his kingdom, give hope of after-life to all creation: Saint Antony of Padua did waste time in homilizing birds, beasts, and fishes; but may they not find blessings, though ignorant of priests?—And now, suffer me, in my current fashion, to glance at a few other considerations affecting this topic. It will be admitted, I suppose, that the lower animals possess, in their degree, similar cerebral or at least nervous mechanism with ourselves; in their degree, I say; for a zoöphyte and a caterpillar have brains, though not in the head; and to this day Waterton does not know whether he shot a man or a monkey, so closely is his nondescript linked with either hand to the grovelling Australian and the erect orang outang. Brutes are nerved as we are, and uncivilized man possesses instincts like them: all we can with any

show of reason deny them is moral sense, and in our arbitrary refusal of this, and our summary disposal of what we are pleased to term instinct, we take credit to ourselves for exclusive participation in that immaterial essence which is called Soul. But is it, in candour, true that brutes have no moral sense? Obviously, since moral sense is a growing thing, and ascending in the scale of being, and since man is its chief receptacle on earth, we ought to be able to take the best instances of animal morals from those creatures which have come most within the influence of human example; as pets of every kind, but mainly dogs. Does not a puppy, that has stolen a sweet morsel from some butcher's stall, fly, though none pursue him? Is a fox-hound not conscience-stricken for his harry of the sheep-fold? and who will deny some sense of duty, and no little strength of affection, in a shepherd's dog? Have not Cowper's now historic hares displayed an educated and unnatural confidence; and many a gray parrot, though limited in speech, said many a witty thing?—Again, read some common collection of canine anecdotes: What essential difference is there between the affectionate watch kept by man over his brother's bed of sickness, and that which has been known of more than one poor cur, whose solicitude has extended even to dying on his master's grave? The soldier's faithful poodle licks his wounds upon the stormy battle-field; and Landseer's colley-dog tears up the turf, and howls the shepherd's requiem. What real distinction can we make between a high sense of duty in the captain who is the last to leave his sinking ship, and that in the watchful terrier, whom neither tempting morsels nor menaced blows can induce to desert the ploughman's smock committed to his care? Once more: Who does not recognise individuality of character in animals? A dog, or a horse, or a tame deer, or, in fact, any domesticated creature, will act throughout life, in a certain course of disposition, at least as consistently as most masters: it will also have its whims and ways, likings and dislikings, habits, fears, joys, and sorrows; and, verily, in patience, courage, gratitude, and obedience, will put its monarch to the blush.

But upon this theme—meagre as the sketch may be, fanciful, illogical—my cursory notions have too long detained you. I had intended barely to have introduced a black-looking Greek composite, serving for name to an unwritten essay which we will imagine in existence as

PSYCHOTHERION,

AN INCONCLUSIVE ARGUMENT ON THE SOULS OF BRUTES;

And my thoughts have run on thus far so little conclusively (I humbly admit to you), that we will, to save trouble, leave the riddle as unsolved as ever, and gain no better advantage than thus having loosely adverted to another fancy of your author's mind.

Not yet is my mind a simple freeman, a private, unincumbered, individual self-possessor: its slaves are not yet all manumitted; I lack not subjects; I am no lord of depopulated regions; albeit my aim is indeed akin to that of old Rufus, and Goldsmith's tyrannical Squire of Auburn; I wish to clear my hunting-grounds, to make a solitude, and call it peace. Slowly, but still surely, am I working out that will. Meanwhile, however, there is no need to advertise for heroes; they are only too rife, clinging like bats to the curtains of my chambers of imagery, or with attendant satellites hanging in bunches, as swarming bees about their monarch, to the rafters of my brain. Selection is the hardest difficulty; here is the labour, here the toil; because for just selection there should be good reasons. Now, amongst other my multitudinous authorial projects, this perhaps is not the worst; namely, by a series of dissimilar novels, psychological rather than religious, and for interest's sake laid in diverse ages and countries, to illustrate separately the most rampant errors of the Papacy. For example, say that Lewis's '*Monk*' is a strong delineation of the evils consequent on constrained and unchosen celibacy; though its colouring be

meretricious, though its details offend the moralities of nature, still it is a book replete to thoughtful minds with terrible teaching—be not high-minded, but fear. In like manner, guilty thoughts dropped upon innocent young hearts in that foul corner,

THE CONFESSIONAL,

might make a stirring tale, or haply a series of them: the cowled hypocrite suggesting crime to those whose answer is all innocence; his schemes of ambition, or avarice, or lust, slowly elaborated by the fiend-like purposes to which he puts his ill-used knowledge of the human heart; his sacrilegious violation of the holy grievings made by mistaken penitence. History should bring its collateral assistance: the Medicean Queens, Venice, bloody Spain, hard-visaged monks calmly directing the engines of torture, the poison of anonymous calumny, and dread secrets more dreadfully betrayed, could furnish much of truthful precedent. The bad obstructions placed between the sinner and his God by selfish priestcraft; the souls that would return again, like Noah's weary dove, enticed by ravens to forsake the ark, mate with them, and feed on their banquet of corruption; the social, religious, philosophic, and eternal harms brought out in full detail; the progress of this world's misery in the lives of the confessing, and of studious crime in the heart of the absolver: a scene laid among the high Alps, and the sunny plains they topple over; the time, that of some murderous Simon de Montfort; the actors, Waldensian saints, and demon inquisitors; the prominent characters, a plausible intriguing friar, (as of old a monk of Cluni,) whose ambition is the popedom, and whose conscience has no scruple about means, bloody, bad, vindictive, atheistic; and then his victims, a youth that he trains from infancy to the sole end of poisoning, subtly and slowly, all who stand in his path; a girl who loves this youth, and who, flying from the foul friar in the day of temptation, betakes her to the mountains, and ultimately saves her lover from his terrible destination in guilt, by hiding him in her own haven of refuge, the persecuted little church; and with these materials to work upon, I need hardly detail to you an intricate plot and an obvious *dénouement*.

This class of theme, it is probable, has exercised the talents of many; but as the evils of confessing to deceitful man, and of blind trust in his deleterious advice, have not specifically met my eye, the subject is new to me, and may be so to others. Still, I stay not now further to enlarge upon it; I must press on; and will not cruelly encourage the birth of thoughts brought forth only to be destroyed, like father Saturn's babes—the anthropophagite.

A good reason for selection at last presents itself. Sundry collateral ancestors of mine [every body from Cain downwards must have had ancestors; so no quibbling, please, nor quarrelling about so exploded an absurdity as family-pride,] were lucky enough in days lang syne to appropriate to themselves, amongst other matters, a respectable allowance of forfeited monastic territory; and I know it by this token: that in yonder venerable chest of archives and muniments, rest in their own dust of ages, duly and clearly assorted, all those abbey deeds from the times of Henry Beauclerc. Here's a fine unlooked-for opportunity of making dull ancestral spots classic ground, famous among men; here's a chance of immortalizing the crumbling ruins of an obscure, but interesting, abbey-church; here's a fair field for dragging in all that one knows or does not know, all that parchments can prove, or fancy can invent, of redoubtable or reprobate progenitors, and investing the place of their possessions with a glory beyond heraldry. Much is on my mind of the desperate evils consequent on the Romish rule of idol-worship: and why not lay my scene on the wild banks of the Swale, among the bleak, rough moors that stand round Richmond, and the gullies that run between the Yorkshire hills? Why not talk about those names of gentle blood, familiar to the ear as household words, Uvedale and Scrope, Vavasour and Ratcliffe? Why not press into the service of instructive novelism truths stranger than fiction, among characters more marked, and names of higher note, than the whole hot-pressed family of the Fitzes?

All this might be accomplished, were it worth the worry, in

THE PRIOR OF MARRICK.

And now for a story of idolatry. It seems an absurdity, an insanity; it is one—both. But think it out. Is it quite impossible, quite incredible? Let me sketch the outline of so strange infatuation. Our prior was once a good man—an easy, kind, and amiable: he takes the cowl in early youth, partly because he is the younger son of an unfighting family, and must, partly because he is melancholy, and will. And wherefore melancholy? There was brought up with him, from the very nursery, a fair girl, the weeping orphan of a neighbouring squire, who had buckled on his harness, and fallen in the wars: they loved, of course, and the deeper, because secretly and without permission: they were too young to marry, and indeed had thought little of the matter; still, substance and shadow, body and soul, were scarcely more needful to each other, or more united. But—a hacking cough—a hectic cheek—a wasting frame, were to blue-eyed Mary the remorseless harbingers of death, and Eustace, standing on her early grave, was in heart a widower: henceforth he had no aim in life; the cloister was—so thought he, as many do—his best refuge, to dream upon the past, to soothe his present sorrows, and earn for a future world the pleasures lost in this. Time, the best anodyne short of what Eustace could not buy at Rome—true-healing godliness—alleviates his grief, and makes him less sad, but not wiser; years pass, the desire of prëeminence in his own small world has hitherto furnished incentives to existence, and he find himself a prior too soon; for he has nothing more to live for. Yes: there is an object; the turmoil of small ambition with its petty cares is past, and the now motiveless man lingers in yearning thought on the only white spot in his gloomy journey, the green oasis of his desert life, that dream of early love. He has long loved the fair, quiet image of our Lady of Marrick, unwittingly, for another Mary's sake; half-oblivious of the past in scheming for the present, he has knelt at midnight before that figure of the Virgin-mother, and knew not why he trembled; he thought it the ecstacy of devotion, the warm-gushing flood of calmness, which prayer confers upon care confessed. But now, he sees it, he knows it; there is, indeed, good cause: how miraculously the white marble face grows into resemblance with *hers!* the same sainted look of delicate unearthly beauty, the same white cheek, so still and unruffled even by a smile, the same turn of heavenly triumph on the lip, the same wild compassion in the eye! Great God—he loves again!—that staid, grave, melancholy man, loves with more than youthful fondness; the image is now dearer than the most sacred; there is a halo round it, like light from heaven: he adores its placid, eternal, changeless aspect; if it could move, the charm would half dissolve; he loves it—as an image! And then how rapturously joins he with the wondering choir of more stagnant worshippers, while they yield to this substantial form, this stone-transmigration of his love, this tangible, unpassionate, abiding, present deity, the holy hymns of praise, due only to the unseen God! How gladly he sings her titles, ascribing all excellence to her! How tenderly falls he at her feet, with eyes lighted as in youth! How earnestly he prays to his fixed image—*to* it, not *through* it, for his heart is *there*! How zealously he longs for her honour, her worship among men—hers, the presiding idol of that Gothic pile, the hallowed Lady, the goddess-queen of Marrick! Stop—can he do nothing for her, can he venture nothing in her service? Other shrines are rich, other images decked in gold and jewels; there is yet an object for his useless life, there are yet ends to be attained, ends—that can justify the means. He longs for wealth, he plots for it, he dares for it: he plans lying miracles, and thousands flock to the shrine; he waylays dying men, and, by threatened dread of torments of the damned, extortionizes conscience into unjust riches for himself; he accuses the innocent, and reaps the fine; he connives at the guilty, and fingers the bribe. So wealth flows in, and the altar of his idol is hung with cloth of gold, her diadem is alight with gems, costly offerings deck her temple, bending crowds kneel to her divinity. Is he not happy? Is he not content? Oh, no: an insatiate demon has possessed him; with more than Pygmalion's insanity, he loves that image; he dreams, he thinks of that one unchanging form. The marvelling brotherhood, credulous witnesses of such deep devotion, hold him for a saint; and Rome, at the wish of the world, sends him, as to a living St. Eustatius, the patent of canonization: they praise him, honour him, pray to him; but he contemptuously (and they take it for humility) spurns a gift which speaks of any other heaven than the presence of that one fair, beautiful, beloved statue. A thought fills him, and that with joy: he has heard

of sacrifices in old time, immolations, offerings up of self, as the highest act of a devout worshipper; he cares not for earth nor for heaven; and one night, in his enthusiastic vigils, the phrensy of idolatry arms that old man's own weak hand against himself, and he falls at the statue's feet, self-murdered, *its* martyr.

Here were scope for psychology; here were subtle unwindings of motive, trackings of reason, intricate anatomizations of the heart. All ages, before these last in which we live, have been worshippers, even to excess, of "unknown gods," "too superstitious:" we, upon whom the ends of the world are fallen, may be thought to be beyond a danger into which the wisest of old time were entrapped: we scarcely allow that the Brahmin may, notwithstanding, be a learned man and a shrewd, when we see him fall before his monster; we have not wits to understand how the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman dynasties could be so besotted. For this superior illumination of mind, let us thank not ourselves, but the Light of the world; and, warned by the history of ages, let us beware how we place created things to mediate between us and the most High; let us be shy of symbolic emblems—of pictures, images, observances—lest they grow into forms that engross the mind, and fill it with a swarm of substantial idols.

Now, this tale of the '*Prior of Marrick*' would, but for the present premature abortion, have seen daylight in the form of an auto-biography—the catastrophe, of course, being added by some brother-monk, who winds up all with his moral: and to get at this auto-biographical sketch—a thing of fragments and wild soliloquies, incidentally laying bare the heart's disease, and the poisonous breathings of idolatrous influence—I could easily, and after the true novelist fashion, fabricate a scheme, somewhat as follows: Let me go gayly to the Moors by rail, coach, or cart, say for a sportsman's pastime, a truant vicar's week, or an audit-clerk's holiday: I drop upon the ruined abbey, now indeed with scarcely a vestige of its former beauty remaining, but still used as a burial-place; being a bit of an antiquary, I rout up the sexton, (sexton, cobbler, and general huckster,) resolved to lionize the old desecrated precinct: I find the sexton a character, a humourist; he, cobbler-like, looks inquisitively at my caoutchouc shooting-shoes, and hints that he too is an artist in the water-proof line; then follows question as how, and rejoinder as thus. Our sexton has got a name among his neighbours for his capital double-leather brogues, warranted to carry you dry-shod through a river; and, warmed by my brandy-flask and *bonhomie*, considering me moreover little likely to set up a rival shop, cunningly communicates his secret: he puts parchment between the leathers—Parchment, my good man? where can you get your parchment hereabouts? I spoke innocently, for I thought only of ticketing some grouse for my friends southward: but the question staggered my sexton so sensibly, that I came to the uncharitable conclusion—he had stolen it. And then follows confession: how, among the rubbish in a vault, he had found a small oak chest—broke it open—no coins, no trinkets, "no nothing,"—except parchment; a lot of leaves tidily written, and—warranted to keep out the wet. A few shillings and a tankard make the treasure mine, I promising as extra to send a huge bundle of ancient indentures in place of the precious manuscript. Thus, in the way of Mackenzie's '*Man of Feeling*,' we become fragmentary where we fear to be tedious; and so, in a good historic epoch, among the wars of the Roses, surrounded by friars and nuns, outlaws and border-riders, chivalrous knights and sturdy bowyers, consign I to the oblivescent firm of Capulet and Co. my happily destroyed '*Prior of Marrick*.'

A crank boat needs ballast; and of happy fortune is it for a disposition towards natural levity, when educational gravity has helped to steady it. Upon the vivacious, let the reflective supervene: to the gay, suffer in its season the addition of the serious. Amongst other wholesome topics of of meditation—for wholesome it is to the healthy spirit, although of some little danger to the presumptuous and inflated—the study of the sure word of Prophecy has more than once excited the writing propensity of your author's mind. On most matters it has been my fate, rather from habits of incurable revery than from any want of opportunities, to think more than to read; and therefore it is, with very

due diffidence, that as far as others and their judgments are concerned, I can ever hope to claim originality or novelty. To my own conscience, however, these things are reversed; for contemplation has produced that as new to my own mind, which may be old to others deeper read, and has thought those ideas original, which are only so to its own fancy. Very little, then, must such as I reasonably hope to add on Prophetical Interpretation; the Universal Wisdom of two millenaries cannot be expected to gain any thing from the passing thought of a hodiernal unit: if any fancies in my brain are really new, and hitherto unbroached upon the subject, it can scarcely be doubted but that they are false; so very little reliance do principles of catholicity allow to be placed upon "private interpretations."

With thus much of apology to those alike who will find, and those who will not find, any thing of novelty in my notions, I still do not withhold them. By here a little and there a little, is the general mind instructed: it would be better for the world if every mighty tome really contributed its grain.

The prophecies of Holy Writ appear to me to have one great peculiarity, distinguishing them from all other prophecies, if any, real or pretended; and that peculiarity I deferentially conceive to be this: that, whereas all human prophecies profess to have but one fulfilment, the divine have avowedly many true fulfilments. The former may indeed light upon some one coincidence, and may exult in the accident as a proof of truth; the latter bounds as it were (like George Herbert's sabbaths) from one to another, and another, through some forty centuries, equally fulfilled in each case, but still looking forward with hope to some grander catastrophe: it is not that they are loosely suited, like the Delphic oracles, to whatever may turn up, but that they, by a felicitous adaptation, sit closely into each era which the Architect of Ages has arranged. Pythonic divination may be likened to a loose bag, which would hold and involve with equal ease almost any circumstance; biblical prophecy to an exact mould, into which alone, though not all similar in perfection, its own true casts will fit: or again, in another view of the matter, accept this similitude: let the All-seeing Eye be the centre of many concentric circles, beholding equally in perspective the circumference of each, and for accordance with human periods of time measuring off segments by converging radii: separately marked on each segment of the wheel within wheel, in the way of actual fulfilment, as well as type and antitype, will appear its satisfied word of prophecy, shining onward yet as it becomes more and more final, until time is melted in eternity. Thus, it is perhaps not impossible that every interpretation of wise and pious men may alike be right, and hold together; for different minds travel on the different peripheries. So our Lord (to take a familiar instance) speaks of his second advent in terms equally applicable to the destruction of one city, of the accumulated hosts at Armageddon, and of this material earth: Antiochus and Antichrist occur prospectively within the same pair of radii at differing distances; and, in like manner and varying degrees, may, for aught we can tell, such incarnations of the evil principle as papal Rome, or revolutionary Europe, or infidel Cosmopolitism; or, again, such heads of parties, such indexes of the general mind, as a Cæsar, an Attila, a Cromwell, a Napoleon, a—whoever be the next. So also of hours, days, years, eras; all may and do cöexist in harmonious and mutual relations. Good men, those who combine prayer with study, need not fear necessary difference of result, from holding different views; the grand error is too loosely generalizing; a little circle suits our finite ken; we cannot, as yet, mentally span the universe. These crude and cursory remarks may serve to introduce a likely-looking idea to which my thoughts have given entertainment, and which, with others of a similar sort, were once to have come forth in an essay-form, headed

THE SEVEN CHURCHES;

moreover, for aught that has come across my reading, to be additionally styled '*A New Interpretation, for these Latter Days*.' Without desiring to do other than quite confirm the literal view, as having related primarily to those local churches of old times, geographically in Asia Minor; without attempting to dispute that they may have an

individual reference to varieties of personal character, and probably of different Christian sects; I imagine that we may discover, in the Apocalyptic prospect of these seven churches, an historical view of Christianity, from the earliest ages to the last: beginning as it did, purely, warmly, and laboriously, with the apostolic emblematic Ephesus, and to end with the "shall He find faith on earth" of lukewarm Laodicea: thus Smyrna would symbolize the state of the church under Diocletian, the "tribulation ten days:" Pergamus, perhaps the Byzantine age, "where Satan's seat is" the Balaam and Balak of empire and priesthood; Thyatira, the avowed commencement of the Papacy, "Jezebel," &c.; Sardis, the dreary void of the dark ages, the "ready to die;" Philadelphia, the rise of Protestantism, "an open door, a little strength;" and Laodicea, (the riches of civilization choking the plant of Christianity,) its decline, and, but for the Founder's second coming, its fall; if, indeed, this were possible.

The elucidation of these several hints might show some striking confirmations of the notion; which, as every thing else in this book, would humbly claim your indulgence, reader, for my sketches must be rapid, and their descriptions brief. Concurrently, however, with this, (which I know not whether any prophetic scholiasts have mentioned or not,) there may be deduced a still further interpretation, equally, as far as I am concerned, underived from the lucubrations of others. This other interpretation involves a typical view of the general characteristics of Christendom's seven true churches, as they are to be found standing at the coming of their Lord; the Asiatic seven may be assimilated, in their religious peculiarities, with the national Protestant churches of modern Europe: what order should be preserved in this assimilation, unless indeed it be that of eldership, it might be difficult to decide; but, excluding those communities which idol-worship has unchurched, and leaving out of view such anomalies as America presents, having no national religion, we shall find seven true churches now existing, between which and the Asiatics many curious parallels might be run: the seven are, those of England, Scotland, Holland, Prussia, perhaps Switzerland, Sweden, and Germany. Without professing to be quite confident as to the list, the idea remains the same: it is but a light hint on a weighty subject, demanding more investigation than my slender powers can at present compass. It is merely thrown out as undigested matter; a crude notion let it rest: if ever I aspire to the dignity and dogmatism of a theological teacher, it must be after more and deeper inquiry of the Newtons, Faber, Frere, Croly, Keith, and other learned interpreters, than it is possible or proper to make in a hurry: volumes have been, and volumes might be again, written for and against any prophecy unfulfilled; it is dangerous to teach speculations; for, if found false, they tend to bring holy truths into disrepute. Let me then put upon the shelf, as a humble layman should, my hitherto unaccomplished prophetical treatise; and receive its mention for little more than my true revelation of another phase of authorship.

And many like attempts have been hazarded by me in the mode theological; though, from some cause or other, they have mostly fallen abortive. Were mention here made of the more completed efforts of your author's mind, in this walk of literature, or of others, it might too evidently lay bare the mystery of my mask; a piece of secret information intended not as yet to be bestowed. But this book—purporting to be the medley of my mind, the *bonâ fide* emptying of its multifarious fancies—must of necessity, if honest, pourtray all the wanings and waxings of an ever-changing lunar disposition: so, haply you shall turn from a play to a sermon, from a novel to a moral treatise, from a satire or an epigram to a religious essay. Such and so inconsistent is authorial man. Here then, in somewhat of order, should have followed lengthily various other writings of serious import, half-fashioned, and from conflicting reasons left—perhaps for ever—half-finished. But considering the crude and apparently careless nature of this present book, and taking into account the solemn and responsible manner in which such high topics ought invariably to be treated, I have struck out, without remorse or mercy, all except a mere mention of the subjects alluded to. The contiguity of lighter matter demands this

sacrifice; not that I am one of those who deem a cheerful face and a prayerful heart incongruous: there is danger in a man, however religious, when his brow lowers, and his cheek is stern; so did Cromwell murder Charles; so did Mary (though bigoted, sincere,) consign Cranmer to the flames and Jane to the scaffold: innocence and mirth are near of kin, and the tear of penitence is no stranger to the laughter-loving eye. But I ramble as usual. Let it suffice to say, that in accordance with common prejudices, I suffer my mind to be shorn of its consecrated rays; for albeit my moral censor has spared the prophetical ideas, and one or two other serious sobrieties, on the ground that, although they are mere hints, they are at all events hints of good, still more experimental and more hazardous pieces of biblical criticism have been not unwisely immolated. The full cause of this will appear in the mere title of the first of these half-attempted essays, viz:

THE WISDOM OF REVISION;

whereof my predication shall be simply and strictly *nil*.

The next piece of serious study, as yet little more than a root in my mind, was to have fructified in the form of

HOMELY EXPOSITIONS,

or domestic readings in Scripture for daily use in family worship, with an easy, sensible, useful sort of commentary; a book calculated expressly for the understandings, wants, vices, temptations, and peculiarities of household servants, and quite opposed to the usual plans of injuriously raising doubts to lay them, of insisting upon obsolete Judaisms, of strict theological controversy, of enlarging to satiety on the meaning of passages too obvious to require explanation, and ingeniously slurring over those which really need it; indeed, of pursuing the courses generally adopted by the mass of commentators.

A further notion extended to

LAY SERMONS,

whereof are many written: their principal peculiarities consist in being each of a quarter-hour length, as little as possible regarding Jews and their didactic histories, and, as much as might be, crowding ideas, and images, and out-of-the-way knowledge of all sorts, into the good service of illustrating Gospel truths.

Another religious essay has been relinquished, although to a great degree effected, from the apprehension that it may suggest matter fanciful or false: also, in part, from the material being perhaps of too slender a character to insist upon. Its name stood thus,

SCRIPTURAL PHYSICS;

being an attempt to vindicate the wisdom of Holy Writ in matters of natural science; for example, cosmogony, geology, the probable centre of the earth, the vitality and circulation of the blood, hints of magnetism and electricity, a solar system, a plurality of worlds, the earth's shape, inclined axis, situation in space, and connection with other spheres, the separate existence of disembodied life, the laws of optics, much of recondite natural history:—all these can be easily proved to be alluded to in detached, or ingeniously compared, passages of the Hebrew Scriptures. It is very likely, however, that Huntington has anticipated some of this, although I have never met with his writings; and a great deal more of it is mentioned in notes and sermons which many have read or heard. Until, therefore, I become surer of neither invading the provinces of others, nor of detracting from their wisdom, let those ill-written fancies still lie dormant in my desk.

A fifth tractate on things theological, still in the egg state, was to have been indued with the rather startling appellation of

AN APOLOGY FOR HEATHENISM;

especially as contrasted with practical atheism, which, truth to tell, is the contradictory sort of religion most universally professed among the moderns: working out the idea, that any-how it is better to have many objects of veneration than none, and that, although idol-worship is a dreadful sin, still it is not so utterly hopeless as actual ungodliness. That, among the heathens, temporal judgment ever vindicated the true Divinity; whereas the consummation of the more modern unworshiping world will be an eternal one: so, by the difference in punishments comparing that of their criminalities. Showing also that, however corrupted afterwards by impure rites and fatuous iniquities, heathenism was, in its most ancient form, little more than the hieroglyphic dress of truth: this exemplified by Moses and the brazen serpent, by interpretations of Grecian mythology, shown, after the manner of perhaps too ingenious Lord Bacon, to be consistent with philosophy and religion; by the way, in which Egyptian priests satisfied so good and shrewd, though credulous, a mind as that of Herodotus; by Hesiod's '*Theogony*;' by the practical testimony of the whole educated world in earliest times to the deep meaning involved in idolatrous rites; by the mysteries of Eleusis in particular; by the characters of all most enlightened heathens—as Cicero, Socrates, and Plato—(half-convinced of the Godhead's unity, and still afraid to disavow His plurality,) contrasted with those of the school of Pyrrho, and Lucretius, and the later Epicureans. The possibility of early allusions to the Trinity, as "Let us make man," *etc*., having led to the idea of more than one God; and if so, in some sort, its veniality.

All the above might be applied with some force, and, if so, with no little value, to modern false semblances of religion, and non-religion; to Roman Catholicism, with its images, its services in an unknown tongue, its symbols, its adoption of heathen festivals, its actual placing of many Gods in the throne of One; to Mammonism, as practically a religion as if the golden calf of Babylon were standard at Cornhill; to Voluptatism—if I may fabricate a name for pleasure-hunters, following still, with Corybantic fury, the orgic revels of Osiris or Astarte: in brief, to all the shades of human heresy, on this side or on that of the golden mean, the worship of one true God, as revealed to us in His three mysterious characters.

But, query? Has not all this, and the very title, for any thing I know, been done already by another, by a wiser? and, if so, by whom?—Speak, some friend: it is the misfortune of mere thinkers (and this present amygdaloid mass, this breccia book, exemplifies it well) to stumble frequently upon fancies too good not to have been long ago appropriated by others like-minded. A read, or heard, hint may be the unerring clue, and we vainly imagine some old labyrinth to be our new discovery: education renders up the master-key, and we come to regard ancient treasuries as wealth of our own amassing, from which we deem it our right to filch as recklessly as he from the mint of Crœsus, who so filled his pockets—ay, his mouth—that we read he ἐβεβυστο. Who, in this age of literature, can be fully condemned, or heartily acquitted of plagiarism? An age—and none so little in advance or in arrear of it as I—of easy writing and discursive reading, of ideas unpatented, and books that have outlived copy-right. But this has detained us long enough: for the present, my brain is quit of its heathenish exculpations: let us pass on; many regiments are yet to be reviewed; their uniforms [*Hibernicè*] are various, but their flag is one.

A last serious subject—(they grow tedious)—is a fair field for ingenious explanation and Oriental poetry,

THE SIMILES OF SCRIPTURE:

(of course "similes" is an English word: the author of a recent '*Essay on Magna Charta*' has been *learned* enough to write it "similæ," for which original piece of Latinity let him be congratulated; I safely follow Johnson, who would have roared like a lion at "similia;" and, though Shakspeare does write it "similies," it may stoutly be contended that this is of

mixed metal, and that Matthew Prior's "similes" is the purer sample: all the above being a praiseworthy parenthesis.)

The similes of Scripture, then, were to have been demonstrated apt and happy: for there is indeed both majesty, and loveliness, and propriety, and strict resemblance in them. "As a rolling thing before the whirlwind,"—"as when a standard-bearer fainteth"—"as the rushing of mighty waters,"—"as gleaning grapes when the vintage is done,"—"as a dream,"—"as the morning dew,"—"as"—but the whole book is a garden of similitudes; they are "like the sand upon the sea-shore for multitude." It is, however, too true, that often-times the baldness of translation deprives poetry, Eastern especially, of its fervour, its glow, its gush, and blush of beauty: to quote Aristotle's example, it too frequently converts the rosy-fingered Morn into the red-fisted; and so the poetry of dawning-day, with its dew-dropped flowers, its healthy refreshment, its "rosy-fingers" drawing aside the star-spangled curtain of night, falls at once into the low notion of a foggy morning, and is suggestive only of red-fisted Abigails struggling continuously with the deposits of a London atmosphere. In like manner, (for all this has not been an episode beside the purpose,) many a roughly rendered similitude of Scripture might be advantageously vindicated; local diversities and Orientalisms might be explained in such a treatise: for example, in the '*Canticles*,' the "beloved among the sons," is compared with an apple-tree among the trees of the wood:" now, amongst us, an apple-tree is stunted and unsightly, and always degenerates in a wood; whereas the Eastern apple-tree, probably one of the citron class, (to be more correct,) may be a magnificent monarch of the forest. "Camphire," to a Western mind, is not suggestive of the sweetest perfume, and perhaps the word may be amended into the marginal "cypress," or cedar, or some other: as "a bottle in the smoke," loses its propriety for an image, until shown to be a wine-skin. "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, like pillars of smoke?"—probably intending the swiftly-rushing columns of *sand* flying on the wings of the whirlwind. "Thine eyes are like the fish-pools in Heshbon," might well be softened into fountains—tearful, calm, resplendent, and rejoicing; and in showing the poetic fitness of comparing the bride to a landscape, it might clearly be set out how emblematic of Jewish millennial prosperity and of Christian universality, that bride was; while comparisons of a like un-European imagery might be taken from other Eastern poets, who will not scruple to compare that rare beauty, a straight Grecian nose, with a tower, and admire above all things the Cleopatra-coloured hair which they call purple, and we auburn. Very much might be done in this vein of literature, but it must be by a man at once an Oriental scholar and a natural poet: the idioms of ancient and modern times should be more considered, and something of apologetic explanation offered to an English ear for phrases such as "the mountains skipping like rams," "the horse swallowing the ground with fierceness," and represented as being afraid as a grasshopper." A thousand like instances could be displayed with little searching; let the above be taken as they are meant, for good, and as of zeal for showing the best of books to the best advantage: but it will appear that this essay trenches on the former one so slenderly hinted at, as '*The Wisdom of Revision*,' therefore has been stated too much at length already. Let it then rest on the shelf till a better season. For this time, good reader, I, following up the object of self-relieving, thank you for your patience, and will turn to other themes of a more sublunary aspect.

One of the most natural and indigenous productions of a true author's mind, is, by common consent, an epic poem: verily, a wearisome, unnecessary, unfashionable bit of writing. Nevertheless, let my candour humbly acknowledge that, for the larger canticle of two mortal days, I was brooding over, and diligently brewing up, a right happy, capital, and noble-minded thesis, no other than

HOME.

Alas, for the epidemy to which, few can doubt, ideas are subject! Alas, for the conflict of prolific geniuses, wherewith the world's quiet is disturbed! not impossibly, this very book now in progress of inditing will come to be classed as a "Patch-work," an "Olla Podrida," a "Book without a name," or some other such like *rechauffée* publication; whereas I protest its idea to be exclusively mine own, and conceived long before its seeming congeners saw the light in definite advertisements—at least to my beholding. And similarly went it with my poor epic: scarcely had a general plan suggested itself to my musings, and divers particular morsels thereof assumed "their unpremeditative lay;" scarcely had I jotted down a staid synopsis, and a goodly array of metrical specimens; when some intrusive newspaper displayed to me in black and white a good-natured notice of somebody else's '*Home, an Epic*.' So, as in the case of '*Nero*,' and haply of other subjects, had it come to pass, that my high-mettled racer had made another false start; that my just-discovered island, so gladly to have been self-appropriated, was found to have, sticking on one corner of it, the flag of another king; that the havoc of my brain, subsiding calmly into the pendulum regularities of metre, was much ado about nothing; and all those pretty fancies were the catalogued property of another. Such a subject, too! intrinsically worthy of a niche in the temple of Fame, besides Hope, Memory, and Imagination, *if* only one could manage it well enough to be named in the same breath with Campbell, Rogers, and Akenside. Well, it was a mental mortification; for I am full of moral land-marks, and would not (poetically speaking) for the world move rooted termini into other people's grounds. Whether the field has been well or ill preoccupied I wot not, having neither seen the poem nor heard its maker's name: therefore shall my charity hope well of it, and mourn over the unmerited oblivion which generally greets modern poetry —yea, upon its very natal-day. Nevertheless, as an upright man will never wish barefacedly to steal from others, so does he determine at all times to claim independently his own: to be robbed, and not resent it (I speak foolishly), is the next mean thing after pilfering itself; and rash will be thy daring, O literary larcener! (can such things be?) if thou art found unpermissively appropriating even such sorry spoil as these poor seedlings of still possible volumes.

Prose and verse are allowed to have some disguising differences, at least in termination; and as we must not—so hints the public taste—spoil honest prose, bad as it may be, with too much intermixture of worse verse, it will be prudent in me to be sparing of my specimens. Yet, who will endure so *staccato* a page of jerking sentences as a confirmed synopsis?—"Well, any thing rather than poetry," says the world; so, for better or worse, I will jot down prosaically a few of my all but impromptu imaginings on Home.

After some general propositions, it would be proper to indulge the orthodoxy of invocation; not to Muses, however, but to the subject itself; for now-a-days, in lieu of definite deities, our worship has regard to theories, doctrines, and other abstract idolisms: and thereafter should follow at length an historical retrospect of domestic life, from the savage to the transition states of hunters and warriors; Nimrods and New Zealanders; Actæons and Avanese, Attilas, Roderics, and all the Ercles' vein or that of mad Cambyses, Hindoos and Fuegians, Greece, Egypt, Etruria, and Troy, in those old days when funds and taxes were not invented, but people had to fight for their dinner, and be their own police: so in a due course of circumconsideration to more modern conditions, from ourselves as central civilization, to Cochin China, and extreme Mexico, to Archangel and Polynesia.

Divers national peculiarities of the *physique* of homes; as, Tartars' tents, Esquimaux snow-pits, Caffre kraals, Steppe huts, South-sea palm-thatch, tree-villages, caves, log-cabins, and so forth. Then, a wide view of the homes of higher society, first Continental, afterwards British through all the different phases of comfort to be found in heath-hovels, cottages, ornées, villas, parsonage-houses, squirealities, seats, town mansions, and royal palaces. Thus, with a contrastive peep or two about the feverish neighbourhood of a factory, up this musty alley, and down that winding lane, we should have considered briefly all the external accidents of home. The miserable condition of the homeless, whether rich or poor; an oak with its tap-root broken, a house on wheels, a boat without a compass, and all that sort of thing: together with due declamation about soldiers spending

twenty years in India, shipwrecked Robinson Crusoes far from native Hull, cadets going out hopelessly forever, emigrants, convicts, missionaries, and all other absentees, voluntary or involuntary. Tirades upon abject poverty, wanton affluence, poor laws, mendicancy, and Ireland; not omitting some thrilling cases of barbaric destitution.

Now come we lawfully to descant upon matters more mental and sentimental—the *metaphysique* of the subject—the pleasures and pains of Home. As thus, most cursorily: the nursery, with its dear innocent joys; the school-boy, holiday feelings and scholastic cruelties; the desk-abhorring clerk; the over-worked milliner; the starving family of fac tory children, and of agricultural labourers, and of workers in coal mines and iron furnaces, with earnest exhortations to the rich to pour their horns of plenty on the poor. England, once a safer and a happier land, under the law of charity: now fast verging into a despotic centralized system, kept together by bayonets and constables' staves. Home a refuge for all; for queens and princes from their cumbrous state, as well as for clowns from their hedging and ditching. The home of love, and its thousand blessings, founded on mutual confidence, religion, open-heartedness, communion of interest, absence of selfishness, and so on: the honoured father, due subordination, and results; the loving wife, obedient children, and cheerful servants. Absolute, though most kind, monarchy the best government for a home; with digressions about Austria and China, and such laudable paternal rule; and *contra*, bitter castigation of republican misrule, its evils and their results, for which see Old Athens and New York, and certain spots half-way between them.

The pains of home: most various indeed, caused by all sorts of opposite harms—too much constraint or too little, open bad example or impossible good example, omissions and commissions, duty relaxed by indulgence, and duty tightened into tyranny; but mainly and generally attributable to the non-assertion or other abuse of parental authority. The spoiled child, and his progress of indulgence, unchecked passions, dissipation, crime, and ruin. Interested interlopers, as former friends, relatives, flatterers, and busy parasites, undermining that bond of confidence without which home falls to pieces; the gloomy spirit of reserve, discouraging every thing like generous open-heartedness; menial influences lowering their subject to their own base level; discords, religious, political, and social; the harmful consequence of over-expenditure to ape the hobbies or grandeur of the wealthier; foolish education beyond one's sphere, as the baker's daughter taking lessons in Italian, and opera-stricken butcher's-boys strumming the guitar; immoral tendencies, gambling, drinking, and other dissipations; and the aggregate of discomforts, of every sort and kind; with cures for all these evils; and to end finally by a grand climax of supplication, invocation, imprecation, resignation, and beatification, in the regular crash of a stout-expiring overture.

It's all very well, objects reader, and very easy to consider this done; but the difficulty is —not so much to do it, answers writer, as to escape the bother of prolixity by proving how much has been done, and how speedily all might be even completed, had poor poesy in these ticketing times only a fair field and no disfavour; for there is at hand good grist, ready ground, baked and caked, and waiting for its eaters. But in this age of prose-devouring and verse-despising, hardy indeed should I be, if I adventured to bore the poor, much-abused, uncomplaining public with hundreds of lines out of a dormant epic; the very phrase is a lullaby; it's as catching as a yawn; well will it be for me if my thread-bare domino conceals me, for whose better fame could brook the scandal of having fathered or fostered so slumbering an embryo?—Let then a few shreds and patches suffice—a brick or two for the house: and verily I know they will, be they never so scanty; for what man of education does not now entertain a just abhorrence of the Muses, the nine antiquated maiden aunts destined for ever to be pensioned on that money-making nice young man, Mammon's great heir-at-law, Prose Prose, Esq.?

With humblest fear, then, and infinite apology, behold, in all sober seriousness, what the labour of such a file as I am might betimes work into a respectable commencement; I don't pretend it *is* one; but *valeat quantum*, take it as it stands, unweeded, unpruned, uncared-for, unaltered,

Home, happy word, dear England's ancient boast,
Thou strongest castle on her sea-girt coast,
Thou full fair name for comfort, love, and rest,
Haven of refuge found and peace possest,
Oasis in the desert, star of light
Spangling the dreary dark of this world's night,
All-hallowed spot of angel-trodden ground
Where Jacob's ladder plants its lowest round,
Imperial realm amid the slavish world,
Where Freedom's banner ever floats unfurl'd,
Fair island of the blest, earth's richest wealth,
Her plague-struck body's little all of health,
Home, gentle name, I woo thee to my song,
To thee my praise, to thee my prayers belong:
Inspire me with thy beauty, bid me teem
With gracious musings worthy of my theme:
Spirit of Love, the soul of Home thou art,
Fan with divinest thoughts my kindling heart;
Spirit of Power, in pray'rs thine aid I ask,
Uphold me, bless me to my holy task;
Spirit of Truth, guide thou my wayward wing;
Love, Power, and Truth, be with me while I sing.

V'la: my consolation is that somewhere may be read, in hot-pressed print, too, many worse poeticals than these, which, however, nine readers out of ten will have had the worldly wisdom to skip; and the tenth is soon satiated: yet a tithe is something, at least so think the modern Levites; so, then, on second thoughts, a victim who is so good a listener must not be let off quite so cheaply. However, to vary a little this melancholy musing, and to gild the compulsory pill, Reserve shall be served up sonnet-wise. (P. S. I love the sonnet, maligned as it is both by ill-attempting friend and semi-sneering foe: of course, in our epic, Reserve ambles not about in this uncertain rhyme, but duly stalks abroad in the uniform dress; iambically still, though extricated from those involutions, time out of mind the requisite of sonnets.) Stand forth to be chastised, unpopular

RESERVE.

Thou chilling, freezing fiend, Love's mortal bane,
  Lethargic poison of the moral sense,
Killing those high-soul'd children of the brain,
  Warm Enterprise and noble Confidence,
  Fly from the threshold, traitor—get thee hence!
Without thee, we are open, cheerful, kind;
Mistrusting none but self, injurious self,
  Of and to others wishing only good;
With thee, suspicions crowd the gloomy mind,
  Suggesting all the world a viperous brood
That acts a base bad part in hope of pelf:
  Virtue stands shamed, Truth mute misunderstood,
Honour unhonoured, Courage lacking nerve,
Beneath thy dull domestic curse, Reserve.

Without professing much tendency to the uxorious, all may blamelessly confess that they see exceeding beauty in a good wife; and we need never apologize for the unexpected company of ladies: at off-hand then let this one sit for her portrait. Enduring listener, will the following serve our purpose in striving worthily to apostrophize

THE WIFE.

Behold, how fair of eye, and mild of mien,
Walks forth of marriage yonder gentle queen:
What chaste sobriety whene'er she speaks,
What glad content sits smiling on her cheeks,
What plans of goodness in that bosom glow,
What prudent care is throned upon her brow,
What tender truth in all she does or says,
What pleasantness and peace in all her ways!
For ever blooming on that cheerful face
Home's best affections grow divine in grace;
Her eyes are ray'd with love, serene and bright;
Charity wreathes her lips with smiles of light;
Her kindly voice hath music in its notes;
And heav'n's own atmosphere around her floats!

Thus, wife-like, for better or worse, is the above *portrait charmant* consigned to the dingy digits of an unidistinguishing printer's-devil; so doth Cæsar's dust come to stop a bung-hole. One morsel more, about children, blessed children, and for this bout I shall have tilted sufficiently in the Muses' court; or, if it must be so said, unhandsome critic, stilted to satiety in false heroics: stay—not false; judge me, my heart. Suppose then an imaginary parent thus to speak about his

INFANT DAUGHTERS.

Oh ye, my beauteous nest of snow-white doves,
What wealth could price for me your guileless loves?
My earthly cherubim, my precious pearls,
My pretty flock of loving little girls,
My stores of happiness with least alloy,
My treasuries of hope and trembling joy!
Yon toothless darling, nestled soft and warm
On a young yearning mother's cradling arm;
The soft angelic smiles of natural grace
Tinting with love that other little face;
And the sweet budding of this sinless mind
In winning ways, that round my heart-strings wind,
Dear winning ways—dear nameless winning ways,
That send me joyous to my God in praise.

Enough! not heartlessly, but to shame the heartlessness of YOUR *ennui*, let me veil those holiest affections; yes, even at the risk of leaving nominatives widowed of their faithful verbs, will I, until required, epicise no more. Let these mauled bits be intimations of what a little care might have made a little better. Gladly will I keep all the remainder in a state quiescent, even to doubling Horace's wholesome prescription of nine years: for it is impossible but that your fervent poet, in the heat of inspiration, (credit me, lack-wits, there is such a thing,) should blurt out many an unpalatable bit of advice, rebuke, or virtuous indignation against homes in general, for the which sundry conscience-stricken particulars might uncharitably arraign him. But divers other notions are crowding into the retina of my mind's-eye: I must leave my epic as you see it, and bid farewell, a long farewell, to '*Home*.' Still shall my egotism have to appear for many weary pages a most impartial and universal friend to the world of bibliopolists; I cater multifariously for all varieties of the literary profession: booksellers at least must own me as their friend, though the lucky purse of Fortunatus saves me from being impaled upon the point of poor Goldsmith's epigram, and I leave to [——] the questionable praise of being their hack. For Bentley and Hatchard, alike with Rivington and Frazer, for Colburn and Nisbet, as well as Knight, Tilt, Tyas, Moxon, and Murray, I seem to be gratuitously pouring out in equal measure my versatile meditations; at this sign all customers may be suited; only,

shop-lifters will be visited with the utmost rigour of that obnoxious monosyllable.—Well, poor Epic, good night to you, and my benison on those who love you.

To any one, much in the habit of thoughtful revery, how very unsatisfactory those notions look in writing. He can't half unravel the chaotic cobwebs of his mind; as he plods along penning it, a thousand fancies flit about him too intangibly for fixed words, and his ever-teeming hot imagination cannot away with the slow process of concreted composition. For me, I must write impromptu, or not at all; none of your conventional impromptus, toils of half-a-day, as little instantaneous as sundry patent lights; no working-up of laborious epigrams, sedulously sharpened antitheses, or scintillative trifles, diligently filed and polished; but the positive impromptu of longing to be an adept at shorthand-writing, by way of catching as they fly those swift-winged thoughts; not quick enough by half; most of those bright colours unfixed; most of those fair semi-notions unrecorded. To say nothing of reasons of time, there being other things to do, and reasons of space, there being other things to write. And thus, good friend, affectionately believe the best of these crude intimations of things intellectual, which the husbandry of good diligence, and the golden shower of Danæ's enamoured, and the smiles of the Sun of encouragement might heretofore have ripened into authorship; nay, more, perhaps may still: believe, generously, that if I could coil off quietly, like unwrapped cocoons, all these epics, tragics, theologies, pathetics, analytics, and didactics, they would show in fairer forms, and better-defined proportions: believe, also, truly, that I could, if I would, and that I would, if the game were worth its candle.

But, sooth to say, the over-gorged public may well regard that small-tomed author with most favourable eye, who condenses himself within the narrowest limits; a *diable boiteux*, not the huge spirit of the Hartz; concentrated meat-lozenges, not *soup maigre*; pocket-pistols of literature, not lumbering parks of its artillery. Verily, there is a mightier mass of typography than of readers; and the reading world, from very brevity of life, must rush, at a Bedouin pace, over the illimitable plains of newspaper publication, while the pyramids of dusty folio are left to stand in solitary proud neglect. The cursory railroad spirit is abroad: we abhor that old painful ploughing through axle-deep ruts: the friend who will skate with us, is welcomer than he who holds us freezing by the button; and the teacher, who suggestively bounds in his balloon on the tops of a chain of arguments, is more popular in lecturing than he of the old school, who must duteously and laboriously struggle up and down those airy promontories.

I love an avenue, though, like Lord Ashburton's magnificent mile of yew-trees, it may lead to nothing, and therefore have not expunged this unnecessary preface: rather, will I bluntly come upon a next subject, another work in my unseen circulating library,

THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF GRECIAN WISDOM,

ILLUSTRATED IN SEVEN TALES.

Cordially may this theme be commended to the more illuminating booksellers: well would it be greeted by the picture-loving public. It might come out from time to time as a periodical, in a classical wrapper: might be decorated with the sages' physiognomies, copied from antique gems, with the fancied passage in each one's life that provoked the saying, and with specific illustrations of the exemplifying story. There should be a brilliant preface, introducing the seven sages to each other and the reader, after the ensample of Plutarch, and exhausting all the antiquarianism, all the memoirism, and all the varia-lectionism of the subject. The different tales should be of different countries and ages of the world, to insure variety, and give an easier exit to *ennui*. As thus: Solon's "Know thyself" might be fitted to an Eastern favourite raised suddenly to power, or a poor and honest Glasgow weaver all upon a day served as heir to a Scotch barony, when

he forthwith falls into fashionable vices. Chilo's "Note the end of life" might concern the merriment of the drunkard's career, and its end—delirium tremens, or spontaneous combustion: better, perhaps, as less vulgarian, the grandeur and assassination of some Milanese ducal tyrant. The "Watch your opportunity" of Pittacus could be shown in the fortunes of some Whittington of trade, some Washington of peace, or some Napoleon of war. Bias's uncharitable bias, believing the worst of the world, might seem to some a truism, to others a falsehood, according as their fellows have served them well or ill; but a brief history of some hypocrite's life, some misanthrope's experience, or some Arabian Stylobatist's resolve to be perched above this black earth on a column like a stork, might help to prove that "the majority are wicked." As for Periander's aphorism, that "to industry all things are possible," pyramid-building old Egypt, or the Druids of Stonehenge, or Scottish proverbial perseverance in Australian sheep rearing and Canadian timber clearing, will carry the point by acclamation. Cleobulus, praising "moderation in all things," would glorify a moral warning of universal application, as to pleasures, riches, and rank; or especially perhaps as preferring true temperance before its modern tee-total false pretences; or lauding some Richard Cromwell's choice of a quiet country life, before the turbulent honours of a proffered Protectorate; while Thales, with his all but old English proverb of "more haste, less speed," would apply admirably to Sultan Mahmoud's ruinous reforms; or to the actual injury gulled Britain has done to the condition of negroes in general by a vastly too precipitate abolition of the slave-trade: a vile evil, indeed, but a cancer of too long creeping to be cured in a day, a rottenness too deeply seated in the frame-work of the world to be extirpated by such caustic surgery as fire and sword; or to be quacked into health by patent gold-salve.

Seven such tales, shrewdly setting out their several aims, and illustrative of good moral maxims which wise heathens live by, would (I trow and trust) be somewhat better, more original—ay, and more entertaining, too—than the common run of magazine adventures. It may not here be fair to particularize further than in the way of avowing my unmitigated contempt for the exploits of highwaymen, swindlers, men about town, and ladies of the *pavé*. I protest against gilding crimes, and palliating follies. Serve the public tables with better food, good Pandarus. Those commentators on the Newgate calendar, those bringers-into-fashion of the mysteries of vice, must not be quite acquitted of the evils they have caused: brilliancy of dialogue, and graphic power of delineation, are only weapons in a madman's hand, if the moral be corrupting and profane. To cheerful, hearty, care-dispelling humour, to such merry faces as Pickwick and Co.—inimitable Pickwick —hail, all hail! but triumphs of burglary, and escapes of murderers, aroint ye!

Why then should I throw this cargo overboard?—Friend, my ship is too full; *if* I could only do one thing at a time, and could finish it within the limits of its originating fit, these things all might be less abortive. But I doubt if my glorification of Greek aphorisms ever reaches any higher apotheosis than the airy castles sketchily built above.

Similar in idea with these last tales, but essentially more sacred as to character, would be an illustrative elucidation of the seven last sayings of our Blessed Lord, when dying in the crucifixion. The Romish Church, in some of her imposing ceremonies, has caused the sayings to be exhibited on seven banners, which are occasionally carried before the holy cross: from this I probably derived the idea of detaching these sentences from the frame-work of their contexts, and regarding them in some sort as aphorisms. For a name, not to be tautologous, should be proposed a Græco-Anglicism,

THE HEPTALOGIA;

OUR SAVIOUR'S SEVEN LAST SAYINGS.

The addition of "hagia" might be rather too Attic for English ears; and I know not whether "the Sacred Heptalogia" would not also be too mystical. This series of tales is capable of like illustration with the last, except in the matter of portraits, unless indeed some eminent fathers of the church, or some authenticated enamels, gems, or coins, (if any,) displaying our Lord's likeness, served the purpose; and of course the character of the stories should not be much in dissonance with the sacredness of the text. The first might well enforce forgiveness of enemies, especially if their hatred springs from misapprehension. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do:" many a true story of religious persecution, as of Inquisitorial torture, exacted by sincere bigotry, and endured by equally sincere conviction, would illustrate the prayer, and the scene might be laid among Waldensian saints and the friars of Madrid. The second tale might enlarge upon a promised Paradise, the assurance of pardon, and the efficacy of repentance: the certainty of hope and life being co-extensive, so that it might still be said of the seeming worst, the brigand and the blasphemer, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise;" a story to check presumption, while it encourages the humility of pentitent hope; the details of a prodigal's career and his return, say a falsely philosophizing German student, or the excesses of some not ungenerous outburst of youthful wantonness; haply, a fair and passionate Neapolitan. The third might well regard filial piety: "Behold thy son—behold thy mother:" illustrated perhaps by a slave scene in Morocco, or the last adieus between a Maccabæan mother, and her noble children rushing on duteous death; or the dangers of a son, during the Reign of Terror, protecting his proscribed parents; or allusive to the case of many razed and fired homes in the Irish rebellion. The fourth, necessarily a tale of overwhelming calamity ultimately triumphant, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—the confidence of *my* God still, even in His recognised judgments trusted in as merciful: the history of many an unrecorded Job; a parent bereaved of his fair dear children; an aged merchant beggared by the roguery of others, and his very name blamelessly dishonoured; the extremity of a martyr's sufferings; or some hunted soul's temptation. The fifth, "I thirst;" which might be commented on, either morally only, as referring to a thirst after religion, virtue, and knowledge—or physically also, in some story of well-endured miseries at sea on a wrecking craft; or of Christian resignation even to the horrible death of drought among the torrid sands of Africa; or some noble act, like that of Sir Philip Sidney on the battle-field, or David's libation of that desired draught from the well of Bethlehem. I need not remark that all these sayings might primarily be applied to their Good Utterer, if it seemed more advisable to shape the publication into seven sermons: but this, it will at once be perceived, is not the present object; the word "sermons" has to most men a repulsive sound, and a tale, similar in disguised motive, may win, where an orderly discourse might unhappily repel: a teacher's best influences are the indirect: like the conquering troops at Culloden, his charge will be oblique; his weapon will strike the unguarded flank, and not the opposing target. The sixth, "It is finished;" perhaps, not only as a fact on the true, the necessary value of the Christian scheme of redemption being so completed; but, more generally, to display the evils and dangers of leaving mental, spiritual, or even worldly good designs unfinished: a tale of natural procrastination conquered, difficulties overcome, prejudices broken down, and gigantic good effected: a Russian Peter, a literary Johnson, a missionary Neff, a Wesley, or a Henry Martyn. The seventh, descanting upon noble patience, and agonies vanquished by faith, the death and glorious expectance of a martyr, the end of one of Fox's heroes; "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." Of necessity in these Christian tales there would be more of sameness than in those heathen; because it would be improper and impolitic, with such theses, to enter much into the lower human passions and the common events of life. But my intentions of further proceeding in this matter have, as at present, very sensibly subsided; for many wise and many good might reasonably object to making those holy last dying words mere pegs to hang moral tales upon. The idea might please one little sect, and anger half the world; I care not to behold it accomplished, and question my own capabilities; only, as it has been an authorial project heretofore conceived by me, suffer it to boast this brief existence.

It is scandalously reported of some folks that they are not musical, a calumny that has been whispered of myself: and, though against my own convictions, (who will confess he "has not music in his soul?") I partly acquiesce; that is to say—for, of such a charge, self-defence claims to explain a little—although I *am* charmed with all manner of music, still for choice I prefer a German chorus to an Italian solo, and an English glee to a French jig. Accordingly the operatic world have every reason to despise my taste: especially if I add that Welsh songs, and Scotch and Irish national melodies—[where are our English gone?]—rejoice my heart beyond Mozart and Rossini. And now this next little notion is scarcely of substance sufficient to assume the garb of authorship: it is little more than a passing whim, but I choose for the very notion's sake to make it better known. Except in a very few instances—as Haydn's '*Seasons*,' e.g.—Oratorios, from some conventional idea of Lent, we may suppose, seem obligated to concern matters sacred. Of course, every body is aware of the prayerful meaning of the name; but we know also that a madrigal has long ago put off its monkish robe of a hymn to the Virgin, and worn the more laic habit of a love song. Now, it is a fact, that very many good men who delight in Handel's melody, and of course cannot object to psalms and anthems, entertain conscientious objections to hearing the Bible set to music in a concert-room; and sure may we all be, that, unless the whole thing be regarded as a religious service, (in a mixed gay company who think of sound more than sense, not very easy,) the warbling of sacred phrases, and variations on the summoning trumpet, and imitated angelic praise, and the unfelt expressions of musical repentance, and unfearing despondency of guilt in recitative, are any thing but congenial to a mind properly attuned. I hope I am neither prudish, nor squeamish, nor splenetic, but speak only what many feel, and few care to express. Now, the cure in future for all this would be very simple: Why not have some lay oratorios? Protestants have appropriated the madrigal, and listen, delighted with its melody, without the needless offence of seeming to countenance idolatry; why should they not have solemn music, new or ancient as may be adapted, administering to their patriotism, or their tragic interests, or historic recollections, without grating against their feelings of religious veneration?—To be specific, let me suggest a subject, and show, for the benefit of any Pindar of this day, its musical capabilities: we are, or ought to be as Englishmen, all stirred at the name of

ALFRED;

and he would minister as well to the harmonies of an oratorio as Abel, or Jephtha, Moses, or St. Paul—nay, as the Messiah, or the last dread Judgment. Remember, our Alfred was a proficient himself, and spied the Danish forces in the character of a harper. What scope were here for gentle airs, and stirring Saxon songs! He harangues his patriot band, and a manly Phillips would personify with admirable taste the truly royal bard: he leaves Athelswitha his wife, and a fair flock of children in sanctuary, while he rushes to the battle-field: the churchmen might receive their queenly charge with music: the Danes riot in their unguarded camp with drinking-snatches, and old-country-staves: a storm might occur, with elemental crash: the succeeding silence of nature, and distant coming on of the patriot troops at midnight; their war-songs and marches nearer and nearer; the invaders surprised in their camp and in their cups; the hurlyburly of the fight—a hail-stone chorus of arrows, a clash of thousand swords, trumpets, drums, and clattering horse-hoofs; a silent interval, to introduce a single combat between Alfred and Hubba the Dane, with Homeric challenges, tenor and bass; the routed foe, in clamorous and discordant staccato; the conquerors pressing on in steady overwhelming concord; how are the mighty fallen—and praise to the God of battles!

Most briefly, then, thus: there is religion enough to keep it solemn, without being so experimental as to intrude upon personal prejudice. The notion is too slight, and too slenderly worked out, even for admission here, if I were not still, my shrewd and mindful reader, sedulously endeavouring to get rid of all my brain-oppressing fancies: and this, happening to come uppermost as I write, finds itself caught, to my comfort. It is commended, if worth any thing, to the musical proficient: for I might as well think of adding a note to the gamut as of trying to compose an oratorio.

The authorial mind is infinitely versatile: books and book-making are indeed its special privilege, forte, and distinguishing peculiarity; but still its thoughts and regards are ever cast towards originality of idea, though unwritten and unprinted, in all the multitudinous departments of science and of art. Thus, mechanical invention, chemical discovery, music as above, painting as elsewhere, sculpture as below, give it exercise continually. The authorial mind never is at rest, but always to be seen mounted and careering on one hobby-horse or other out of its untiring stud. If the coin of some rude Parthian, or the fragments of some old Ephesian frieze, serve not as a scope for its present ingenuities, it will break out in a new method of grafting raspberries on a rosebush, in the comfortable cut of a pilot-coat, or the safest machinery for a steamer. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam* is a rule of moderation it repudiates; incessant energy provokes unabated meddling, and its intuitive qualities of penetration, adaptation, and concentration, are only hindered by the accidents of life from carrying any one thing out to the point at least of respectable attainment. Look at Michael Angelo; poet, painter, sculptor, architect, and author: and if indeed we are not told of Milton having modeled, or Horace having built up other monuments than his own imperishable fame, still nothing but manual habit and the world's encouragement were wanting to perfect, in the concrete, the conceptions of those plastic minds. Who will deny that Hogarth was a novelist and play-wright, if not indeed a heart-rending tragedian? Who will refuse to those nameless monastic architects who planned and fashioned the fretted towers of Gloucester, the stern solidity of Durham, the fairy steeple of Strasburg, or the delicate pinnacles of Milan, the praise due to them of being genuine poets of the immortal Epic? Phidas and Praxiteles, Canova and Thorswaldsen, are in this view real authors, as undoubtedly as Homer or Dante, Sallust or Racine; and to rise highest in this argument, the heavens and the earth are but mighty scrolls of an Omniscient Author, fairly written in a universal tongue of grandeur and beauty, of skill, poetry, philosophy, and love.

But let me not seem to prove too much, and so leap over my horse instead of vaulting into the saddle: though authorship may claim thus extensively every master-mind, from the Adorable Former of all things down to the humblest potter at his wheel fashioning the difficult ellipse; still, in human parlance, must we limit it to common acceptations, and think of little more than scribe, in the name of author. Nevertheless, let such seeds of thought as here are carelessly flung out, nurtured in the good soil of charity, and not unkindly forced into foolish accusations of my own conceit, whereas their meaning is general, (as if forsooth selfishly dibbled in with vain particularity, and not liberally broadcast that he may run that reads,)—let such crude considerations excuse my own weak and uninjurious invasion of the provinces of other men. The wisdom for social purposes of infinitesimal division of labour, may be proved good by working well; but its lowering influences on the individual mind cannot be doubted: that an intelligent man should for a life-time be doomed to watch a valve, or twist pin-heads, or wind cotton, or lacquer coffin-nails, cannot be improving; and while I grant great evil in my desultory excesses, still I may make some use of that argument in the converse, and plead that it is good to exercise the mind on all things. Thus, in my assumed métier of authorship, let notions be extenuated that popularly concern it little, and yield admittance to any thought that may lead to that Athenian desideratum, "some new thing."

While the echoes of the name of Alfred still linger on the mind, and our patriotism looks back with gratitude on his thousand virtues unsullied by a fault, (at least that History, seldom so indulgent, has recorded,)—while we reflect that in him were combined the wise king, the victorious general, the enlightened scholar, the humble Christian, the learned author, the excellent father, the admirable MAN in all public and private relations, in domestic alike with social duties, I cannot help wishing that forgetful England had raised some architectural trophy, as a worthy testimonial of Alfred the noble and the good. Whether Oxford, his pet child—or Westminster Hall, as mindful of the code he gave us—or Greenwich, as the evening resting-place of those sons of thunder whom the genius of Alfred first raised up to man our wooden walls—should be the site of some great national memorial, might admit of question; but there can be none that

something of the kind has been owing now near upon a thousand years, and that it will well become us to claim boastingly for England so true, so glorious a hero. With a view to expedite this object, and strictly to bear upon the topic in author-fashion, it has come into my thought how much we want a

LIFE OF ALFRED:

my little reading knows of none, beyond what dictionaries have gathered from popular history and vague tradition, rather than manuscripts of old time, and Asser, the original biographer. Of this last work, written originally in Saxon, and since translated into Latin, I submit that a popular English version is imperatively called for; a translation from a translation being never advisable, (compare Smollett's Anglo-Gallified dilution of '*Don Quixote*,') the primary source should be again consulted; and seeing that profound ignorance of the ancient Saxon coupled with, as now, total indifference about its acquisition, place me in the list of incapables, I leave the good suggestion to be used by pundits of the Camden or Roxburghe or other book-learned society. If it may have been already done by some neglected scribe, bring it to the light, and let us see the bright example set to all future ages by that early Crichton; if never yet accomplished, my zeal is over-paid should the hint be ever acted on; and if, which is still possible, an English version of the life of Alfred should be positively rife and common among the reading public, your humble ignoramus has nothing for it but to pray pardon of its author for not having known him, and to walk softly with the world for writing so much before he reads.

But this is an accessory—an episode; I plead for a statue to King Alfred: and—(now for another episode; is there *no* cure for these desperate parentheses?)—*apropos* of statues, let me, in the simple untaught light of nature, suggest a word or two with regard to some recent under-takings. Notwithstanding classical precedents, whereof more presently, it does seem ridiculous to common sense, to set a man like a scavenger-bird at Calcutta, or a stork at Athens, or a sonorous Muezzin, or a sun-dried Simeon Stylites, on the top of a column a hundred feet high: sculpture imitates life, and who would not shudder at such an unguarded elevation? sculpture imitates life, and who can recognise a countenance so much among the clouds? Again for the precedents: I presume that Pompey's pillar, (which, indeed, perhaps never had any thing on its summit except some Egyptian emblem, as the cap and throne of higher and lower Egypt, or a key of the Nile as likely as any thing,) is the most notable, if not the first, of solitary columns: now, Pompey, or, as some prefer, Diocletian, and others Alexander Severus, had that fine pillar ferried over from the quarries of Lycian Xanthus; at least, this is a good idea, seeing that near that place still lie three or four other columns of like gigantic dimensions, unfinished, and believed to have been intended to support the triglyph of some new temple. Pompey's idea was to fix the pillar up as a sea-mark, for either entering the harbour of Alexandria, or to denote shallows, anchorage, or the like; but apart from this actual utility, and apart also from its acknowledged ornament as a sentinel on that flat strand, I take it to be an architectural absurdity to erect a regular-made column with little or nothing to support: an obelisk now, or a naval trophy, or a tower decorated with shields, or a huge stele or cippus, or a globe, or a pyramid, or a Waltham-cross sort of edifice, (of course all these supporting nothing on their apices,) in fact, *any thing but* a Corinthian or Tuscan, or other regular pillar, seems to be permissable; but for base, shaft, and capital to have nothing to do but lift a telescopic man from earth's maternal surface, does look not a little unreasonable; and therefore as much out of taste, as for the marble arch at Buckingham Palace to spend its energies in supporting a flag-staff.

The magnificent column of Trajan is exempted from this hasty bit of criticism, (as also of course is its modern counterpart, Napoleon's,) because it is, both from decoration and proportions, out of the recognised orders of architecture; it partakes rather of the character of a triumphal tower, than of one among many pillars separated chiefly from the rest; the man is a superlative accessory, a climax to his positive exploits; he does not stand a-top, as if dropt from a balloon, but like a gallant climber treading on his

conquests: and, as to Phocas's column at Rome, I shall only say, that it illustrates my meaning, except in so far as an immense base to the super-imposed statuere deems it from the jockey imputation of carrying too light a weight. Now, with respect to the Nelson memorial, your meddlesome scribe had an unexhibited notion of his own. Mehemet Ali is understood to have given certain two obelisks respectively to the French and English nations: the Parisians appropriated theirs, and have set it up, thorn-like, in their midst, perhaps as an emblem of what African conquest has been in the heartside of France; but we English, less imaginative, and therefore less antiquarian, have permitted our *petit cadeau* to lie among its ruins of Luxor or Karnac, unclaimed and unconsidered.

Nelson of the Nile might have had this consecrated to his honour: and if, as is probable, it be of insufficient elevation, I should have proposed a high flight of steps and a base, screened all round by shallow Egyptian entrances, with an Etruscan sarcophagus just within the principal one, (Egypt and Etruria were cousins germane,) and an alto-relievo of Nelson dying, but victorious, recumbent on the lid: the globe and wings, emblems alike of Nelson's rapidity, his universal fame, and his now-emaciated spirit, might be sculptured over each entrance; a sphinx, or a Prudhoe lion, being allusive to England as well as Egypt, should sit guardiant at each corner of the steps; and the three remaining doorways would be represented closed, and carved externally with some allegorical personations of Nelson's career, of the Nile, Copenhagen, and Trafalgar. This, then, had it been strictly in my métier, (a happy métier mine of literary leisure,) should have been my limnèd outline for the Nelson testimonial: the real interesting antique needle, rising from the midst of its solid Egyptian architecture, and pointing to the skies; not a steeple, however, but merely the obelisk raised upon a heavy base, only hollowed far enough to admit of an interior alto-relievo.

It is probable that the exhibition of designs, which an *alibi* prevented me from seeing, included several obelisks; but the peculiarities I should have insisted on, would have been first to make good use of the real thing, the rarely carved old Egypt's porphyry; and, next, to have had our hero's likeness within reasonable distance of the eye.

But to return from this other desperate digression: Alfred, the great and wise, deserves his Saxon cross; or let him lie enshrined in a grove of florid Gothic pinnacles, a fretted roof on clustered columns reverently keeping off the rain; or, best of all, let him stand majestic in his own-time costume, colossal bronze on a cube of granite, and so put to shame the elegancies of a Windsor uniform, and the absurdity of sticking heroes, as at St. George's, Bloomsbury, and elsewhere, on the summit of a steeple. So, friend, let all this tirade serve to introduce a most unlikely and chaotic treatise on

NATIONAL MEMORIALS.

Politics are a sore temptation to any writer, and of dalliance with a Delilah so seductive it is futile to declare that I am innocent. My principles positively are known to myself; which is a measure of self-knowledge, in these any-thing-arian days, of that cabinet coin-climax the "8th degree of rarity;" and that those choice principles may not be concealed from so kind an eye as yours, friend reader, hear me profess myself honestly—if you approve, or shamelessly—if you *will* so think it—"a rabid Tory!" At least, by such a nomenclature sundry veracious journals, daily leaders of the public opinion, would call me, were such a groundling as I prominent enough to attract their indignation; and, from all that can be gathered from their condemnatory clauses against others like minded, I have no little reason to be proud of the title. For, on collation of such clauses with their causes, I find, and therefore take (under correction always) the rabid Tory to be—a temperate lover of order, whom his mother has taught to "fear God," his father to "honour the king," and his pastor to "meddle not with them who are given to change." A rabid Tory, in matters of national expenditure, remembers to have heard an old unexploded proverb, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth what is

due, but it tendeth to poverty;" and he is by no means sure that a certain mismanaged nation is not immolating her prosperity to what actuaries would call economical principles. A rabid Tory is bigoted enough to entertain a ridiculous fear of that generation abstraction, Catholic Rome, whom further he is sufficiently vulgar-minded to consider as a lady of easy virtue arrayed in the colours of a cardinal: he thinks one Luther to be somewhat more than a renegade monk; and is childish enough to venerate, when a man, the same Liturgy which his grandmother had taught him when a boy. For other matters, the higher born, the better bred, the more classically educated, and the more extensively possessed of moneys and lands our honest-spoken Tory may be, ten to one the more is he afflicted with this rabbies: and his mad propensities become positively criminal, when, as a magistrate or a captain of dragoons, he thinks himself bound in honourable duty to quell the enthusiasm of some disinterested patriots, whose innocent wishes rise no higher than to subvert the existing order of things, to secure for themselves a reasonable share of parks, palaces, and pocket-money, and (as the very justifiable means for so happy an end) manfully to sacrifice in the temple of Freedom the rogues who would object to being robbed, and the tyrants who would be bloody enough to fight for life and liberty.

A rabid Tory—you see it is a pet name of mine—feels no little contempt for a squeezable character; and he is well assured, from history as well as on his own conviction, that the noble army of martyrs lived and died upon his principles: whereas the retrograde regiment of cowards, whom the wisdom of providing for personal safety has in battle induced to run away, *relictis non bene parmulis*—the clamorous cohort of bullies, whom the necessities of impending castigation have sensibly induced to eat their words—the volunteer company of light-heeled swindlers, whom nature instructs that they must live, and honesty has neglected to inform how—every one, in short, whose grand maxim (*quocunque modo rem*) is temporizing expediency, and with whom the cogent argument "you shall" has more force than the silly conscience-whisper of "you ought,"—contributes to swell the band which the professor of Toryism, the abstracted follower of principles and not of men, has the honour of beholding in the angle of his diagram, inscribed "contradictory." Not that your true Tory believes so ill of *all* his adversaries; there are some few geese among the cranes; an Abdiel here and there, who has long felt irksome in the host, but for false shame is there still; sundry men, having ambitious or illuminated wives, and too amiable, or too prudent, to attempt a breach of peace at home; some thronging the opposite benches, because their fathers and grandfathers topographically occupied those same seats—a decent reason, supposing similarity of places and names, to insure similarity of principles and practice; and some—I dislike them not for honesty—confessing and upholding the republican extremes, upon a belief that all short of these are but an unsatisfactory part of a great and glorious experiment. Now, the rabid Tory prefers an open foe to a false friend; but your go-between, your midway sneak, your shuttlecock, your perjured miser who will swear to any thing for an extra per centage—all these are his detestation: and although he will readily acknowledge some good and some wise in the adversary's ranks, still he recognises that tri-coloured banner as the one under which all naturally fight, who are poor in both worlds—- with neither money nor religion. Thus much of my reasonable rabies.

One may hate principles without hating men; and for this sentiment we have the Highest Example. Things are either right or wrong; if right, do; if wrong, forbear: nothing can be absolutely indifferent, and to do a little actual evil in order to compass great hypothetical good, is false morality, and, therefore bad government. Why should not honesty and plain-dealing be as inviolable publicly as privately? Why be guilty of such mean self-stultification as to say one thing and do another? It is criminal in rulers to give a helping hand to the evil which they deem unavoidable; let them, in preference, cease to rule, and imitate the noble threat of that king for half a century whose conscience bade him abdicate rather than do wrong.

But to come abruptly on a title-page: often-times, in reading deleterious leading articles in wrong-sided newspapers, have I longed to set before the world of faction

A MANUAL OF GOOD POLITICS,

which indeed has already been half-done, if decently begun be synonymous. With this view has my author's mind heretofore thought over many scriptural texts, characters, doctrines, and usages; yet, let me freely confess the upshot of those efforts to be little satisfactory: for I fear much, that though there be grounds enough to go upon for one who is already fixed in right political principle, [orthodoxy being, as is common among arguers, *my* doxy,] there may not be sufficient so to reason from as to convince the thousands, ready and willing to gainsay them: and Locke's utter annihilation of poor ridiculous well-intentioned Filmer, makes one wary, of taking up and defending a position so little tenable, as, for instance, Adam's primary grant for the foundation of absolute monarchy, or of attempting to nullify natural freedom by the dubious succession of patriarchal power. At the same time, (competency for so great a task being conceded—no small supposition, by the way,) much remains to be done in this field of discourse; as, the fearful example made of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, for conduct very analogous with numberless instances of modern Liberalism; the rights of rulers, as well as of the governed; of kings, as well as people; the connexion subsisting now, as through all former ages, between church and state—well indeed and deeply argued out already by such great minds as Coleridge and Gladstone, but perhaps, for general usefulness, requiring a more brief and popular discourse; the question of passive obedience; the true though unfashionable doctrine of man's general depravity invalidating the consignment of power to the masses; and so forth. There are, however, if Scripture is to be held a constitutional guide, some examples to a certain extent contrary to the argument: as, elective monarchy in the case of Saul; non-legitimate succession in families even where election is omitted, as in the case of Solomon; and, honestly to say it, many other difficulties of a like nature. In fact, upon the whole, this distinction might be drawn; that although the Bible at large favours what we may, for shortness' sake, term Conservative politics, still it would not be easy to deduce from its page as code of rules, so necessarily of a social, temporary, and accidental nature: The principle is given, but little of the practice; the seed of true and undefiled religion produces among other good fruit what we will call Conservatism, but we must be very microscopic to detect that fruit in the seed: of this admission let my *Liberal* adversary make—as indeed he will—the most; but let him remember that truth has always been most economically distributed. It is a material too costly to be broadcast before swine; and in slender evidence lurks more of moral test, than in stout arguments and open miracles. At any rate, as unfitted for the task, I leave it. For any thing mine un-book-learned ignorance can tell, the very title may be as old as Christianity itself; it is a good name, and a fair field.

This manual was commenced in the form of familiar letters to a radical acquaintance, whom I had resolved to convert triumphantly; but John Locke disarmed me, without, however, having gained a convert: he made me drop my weapon as Prospero with Ferdinand; but the fault lay with Ferdinand, for want of equal power in the magic art.

"MEASURES, NOT MEN" is, as we have hinted already, the ground-work of a true Tory's political creed; and measures themselves only in so far as they expound and are consistent with principles. A man may fail; the stoutest partisan become a renegado; and the pet measure of a doughtiest champion may after all prove traitorous, unwise, unworthy: but principle is eternally an unerring guide, a master to whose words it is safe to swear, a leader whose flag is never lowered in compromise, nor sullied by defeat. Defalcations of the generally upright, derelictions of duty by the usually noble-minded, shake not that man's faith which is founded on principle: for the cowardice, or rashness, or dishonesty of some individual captain, he may feel shame, but never for the *cause* in which such hold commissions; he may often find much fault with *soi-disant* Tories, but never with the 'ism they profess. We over-step their follies; we disclaim their corruptions; we date above their faults; we wash our hands of their abuses. An abstracted student in his chamber, building up his faith from the foundations, and trying every stone of the edifice, takes little heed of who is for him, and who against him, so Conscience is the

architect, and the Master of the house looks on approving. A man's mind is but one whole; be it palace or hovel, feudal stronghold or Italian villa, it is all of a piece: a duly subordinated spirit bears no superstructure of the Radical, and the friable soil of discontented Liberalism, is too sandy a foundation for ponderous fanes of the religious.

I rejoice in being accounted one of those unheroic, and therefore more useful, members of society, who profess to be by no means ambitious of reigning. A plain country gentleman, with a mind (thank Heaven!) well at ease, and things generally, both external and internal, being in his case consentaneous with happiness, would appear to have reached the acme of human felicity; and no one but a fool cares, in any world, to exemplify the dog's preference for the shadow. Unenvious, therefore, of royalty, and fully crediting that *never-quoted* sentiment of Shakspeare's "Uneasy," &c., my motto, within the legitimate limits of right reason, and in common with that of some ridiculed philosopher of Roundhead times, is the prudent saying, "Whoever's king, I'll be subject!"—ay, and for the masculine I place the epicene. While, however, in sober practice of right subordination, and under existing circumstances of just rule, we gladly would amplify the maxim, (as in courtesy, gallantry, loyalty, and honest kind feeling strongly bound,) still in mere speculation, and irrespectively of things as they are, our abstract musings tended to approve the original word in its unextended gender. Every one of Edmund Burke's school would honour the ensign of Divine vice-regency wherever he found it; but, apart from this uninquisitive respect, he will claim to be reasonably patriotic, patriotically rational; habit encourages to practice one thing, but theory may induce to think another. Now, little credence as so unenlightened so illiberal an integer as I give to an equalization in the rights of man, certainly on many accounts my blindness gives less to the rights of women with man, and very far less to those rights over man: it might be inconvenient to be specific as to reason; but the working of an ultra-republican scheme, in which females should ballot as well as males, would briefly illustrate my meaning. Barbarism makes gentle woman our slave; right civilization raises her into a loving helpmate; but what kind of wisdom exalts her into mastery?

Readily, however, shall sleep in dull suppression sundry comments on a certain Rhenish law, whereof my author's mind had at one time studiously cogitated a grave and wholesome homily. For our censor of the press, one strait-laced Mr. Better Judgment, has, "with his abhorred shears," clipped off the more eloquent and spirited portion of a trenchant argument concerning—the revealed doctrine of a superior sex, the social evils of female domination, church-headships considered as to type and antitype, improper influences, necessary hindrances, anomalous example, feminine infirmities, and an infinitude more such various objections springing out of this fertile subject. Thereafter might have come the historical view, evils and perils, for the majority of instances, following in the wake of such mastery. However, to leave these questionable matters quiescent, the principles of passive obedience mildly interpose, forbidding to stir the waters of commotion, although with healing objects, for the sake of an abstract theory; there is ill-meant change enough afloat, without any call for well-intentioned meddlers to launch more. So, judicious after-thought resolves rather to strengthen too-much-weakened authority, in these ungovernable times, than attempt to prove its weaknesses inherent; to look obstinately at the golden side only of the double-wielded shield: instead of picking away at a soft stone in constitutional foundations, our feeble wish magnanimously prefers to prop it and plaster it, flinging away that injurious pick-axe. The title of this once-considered lucubration is far too suggestive to carping minds of more than the much that it means, to be without objection: nevertheless, I did begin, and therefore, always under shelter of a domino, and protesting against any who would move my mask, I confess to

WOMAN, A SUBJECT:

it was a mere speculative argument; a flock of fancies now roaming unregarded in some cloudy limbo. Let them fly into oblivion—"black, white, and gray, with all their trumpery."

Notwithstanding these present hostile argumentations, politics are to me what they doubtless are to many others, subjects and disquisitions little short of hateful; perpetual mulligatawney; curried capsicums; a very heating, unsatisfactory, unwholesome sort of food. How many pleasant dinner-parties have been abruptly broken up by the introduction of this dish! How many white waistcoats unblanched by projectile wine-glasses on account of this impetuous theme! How many little-civil wars produced from the pips of this apple of contention! Yes, I hate it; and for this cause, good readers, (who may chance to have been used scurvily, some six pages back, in respect of your opinions, honest as my own, though fixed in full hostility—and so, courteously be entreated for your pardons,) for this cause of hate, I beseech you to regard me as sacrificing my present inclination to my future quiet. We have heard of women marrying men they may detest, in order to get rid of them: even with such an object is here indited the last I ever intend to say about politics. The shadows of notions fixed upon this page will cease to haunt my brain; and let no one doubt but that after relief from these pent-up humours, I shall walk forth less intolerant, less unamiable, less indignant than as heretofore. But, meanwhile, suffer with all brevity that I say out this small say, and deliver my patriotic conscience; for many a head-ache has obfuscated your author's mind in consequence of other abortive bits of political common-place. Every successive measure of small triumphant Whiggery, every piece of what my view of the case would designate non-government or mis-government, has pinched, vexed, bruised, and stung my fervent country's love day by day, session after session. Like thousands of others, I have been a greyhound in the leash, a bolt in the bow, longing to take my turn on the arena: eager as any Shrovetide 'prentice for a fling at negligence, peculation and injustice, and other the long black catalogue of British injuries. Socialism, Chartism, Ribandism; Spain, Canada, China; freed criminals, and imprisoned poverty; penny wisdom, and pound folly; the universal centralizing system, corrupting all generous individualities: patriotism ridiculed, and questionable loyalty patted on the back; vice in full patronage, and virtue out of countenance; Protestantism discouraged, Popery taken by the hand; Dissent of *any* kind preferred to sober Orthodoxy; and, fitting climax, all this done under pretences of perfect wisdom, and most exquisite devotion to the crown and the constitution:—these things have made me too often sympathize in Colonel Crockett's humour, tiger-like, with a dash of the alligator. Accordingly let me not deny having once attempted a bitter diatribe, in petto, surnamed

FALSE STEPS;

BRITAIN'S HIGHROAD TO RUIN;

a production of the pamphlet class, and, like its confraternity, destined at longest to the life ephemeral. But, to say truth, I found all that sort of thing done so much better, spicier, cleverer, in numberless newspaper articles, than my lack of the particular knowledge requisite, and my little practice in controversy, could have managed, that I wisely drew in my horns, sheathed my toasting-iron, and decided upon not proceeding political pamphleteer, till, on awaking some fine morning, I find myself returned to parliament for an immaculate constituency.

Patient reader, of whatever creed, do not hate me for my politics, nor despise the foolish candour of confession. Henceforth, I will not trouble you, but abjure the subject; except, indeed, my sturdy friend "the Squire," soon to be introduced to you, insists upon his after-dinner topic: but we will cut him short; for, in fact, nothing can be more provoking, tedious, useless, and causative of ill-blood, than this perpetual intermeddling of private ignoramuses, like him and me, with matters they do not understand, nor can possibly ameliorate.

A poet is born a poet, as all the world is well aware; and your thorough-paced lawyer is not less born a lawyer; while the junction of these two most militant incompatibles clearly bears out the hackneyed quotation as above, with the final misfit, that is, "*non fit*." Your poetaster at the bar is that grotesque ideal, which Flaccus thought so funny that his friends *must* laugh; (although really, Romans, it *is* possible to contemplate a sort of sphinx figure, "a human head to a horse's neck," and so on, varied plumes and all, without much chance of a guffaw;) and yonder sickly-looking clerk, perched upon his high stool, penning "stanzas while he should engross," is the lugubrious caricature of Apollo on his Pegassus, with Helicon for inkstand.

It may be nothing extraordinary that, jostled in so wide a theatre as ours of the world, chance-comers should not, at once or at all, comfortably find their proper places; but that wise-looking chaperons, having with prospective caution duly taken a box, should by malice prepense thrust all the big people in front, and all the little folks behind, is rather hard upon the latter, and not a little foolish in itself. Even so in life: who does not wish a thousand times he could help some people to change places? Look at this long fellow, fit for Frederick of Prussia's regiment of giants: his parents and guardians have bent him double, broken his spirit, and spoiled his paces, by cramming him, a giraffe in the stable, between that frigate's gun-decks as a middy: while yonder martial little bantam, by dint of exaggerated heels, and exalted bear-skin, peeps about among his grenadiers, much as Brutus and Cassius did with their collossal Cæsar. So also of minds: look at brilliant Burns, the exciseman; and quaintly versatile Lamb, the common city clerk: Look at—had you only patience, you should have examples by the gross; but, to make a shorter tale of it, (I presume this shows the etymology of cur-tail,) just think over the pack of your acquaintance, and see if you could not shuffle those kings, queens—yes, and knaves too—more to your satisfaction, and their own advantage: at least, so most folks imagine, silly meddlers as they are; for, after all, what with human versatility, and the fact of a probationary state, and the influence of habit, and the drudging example set by others, things work so kindly as they are, that, notwithstanding misfits, the wiser few must be of Pope's mind, "whatever is, is right;"—ay, that it is.

A year or two ago—if your author is little better than one of the foolish now, what in charity must he have been then?—I took it upon me to indite an innocent, stingless satire, whereof for samples take the following. Skip them one and all; you will, if you are wise, for they bear the ban of rhyme, are peevish, dull, ill-reasoned; but if you are not wise, (and, strange to say, malicious people tell me there are many such,) you may wish to see in print a metred inconclusive grumble. Take it, then, if you will, as I do, merely for a change; at any rate, your manciple has furnished this buttery of yours with ample choice of viands; and omnivoracious as man may be—gormandizing, with gusto, fat moths in Australia, cockchafers at Florence, frogs in France, and snails in Switzerland, equally as all less objectionable meats, drinks, fruits, roots, composites, and simples—still, in reason, no one can be expected or expect himself to like every thing: have charity, for what suits not one man's taste may please the palate of another; so hear me complacently turn

"KING'S EVIDENCE,"

and give heed to certain confessions, extorted under the *peine forte et dure* of a whilom state legal. Yet, when I come to consider of this, (*mihi cogitanti*, as school themes invariably commenced,) it strikes my memory that all confessions, short of the last dying one, are weak and foolish impertinence; whether Jean Jacques or Mr. Adams thought so, or caused others to think so, are separate topics beside the question: for myself, I will spare you a satire dotted with as many I's as an Argus pheasant; and, without exacting upon good-nature by troublesome contributions, will hazard a few couplets concerning Blackstone's cast-off mistress, the Law. One word more though: undoubting of thine amiability, friend that hast walked with me hitherto in peace, I will be tame as a purring cat, and sheathe my talons; therefore are you still unteased by divers sly speeches and sarcastic hints, of and concerning innumerable black sheep that crowd about a woolsack;

especially of certain "highly respectables," whom the omnipotence of parliament (no less power presumably being competent) commands to be accounted "gentlemen." Should then my meagre sketches seem but little spiteful, accord me credit for tolerance at the expense of wit, (yea, in mine own garbled satire, hear it Juvenal!) and view them kindly in the same light as you would sundry emasculated extracts from a discreet Family Shakspeare. Indignation ever speaks in short sharp queries; and it is well for the printer's pocket that the self-experience hereof was considered inadmissible, for a new fount of notes of interrogation must have been procured: as it is, we are sailing quietly on the Didactic Ocean, and have, I fear, been engaged some time upon topics actionable on a charge of *scandalum magnatum*. Hereof then just a little sample: let us call it '*A Judgment in the Rolls Court*;' or in any other; I care not.

> Precedent's slave, this mountebank decides
> As great Authority, not Reason, guides.
> "'Tis not for him, degenerate wight, to say
> Faults can be mended at this time of day,
> For Coke himself declared—no matter what—
> Can Justice suffer what Lord Coke would not?
> And if 1 Siderfin, p. 10, you scan,
> Lord Hoax has fixed the rule, that learned man:
> I cannot, dare not, if I would, be just,
> My hands are tied, and follow Hoax I must;
> That *very* learned Lord could not be wrong.
> Besides, in fact, it has been settled long,
> For the great case of Hitchcock versus Bundy
> Decided—(Cro. Eliz. per Justice Grundy),
> That [black was white];—and so, what can I say?
> Landmarks are things must not be moved away:
> I cannot put the clock of Wisdom back,
> And solemnly pronounce that black *is* black.
> Though plaintiff has the right, I grant it clear,
> I must be ruled by Hoax and Hitchcock here:
> Equity follows, does not mend the laws:
> Therefore declare, defendant gains the cause."

Then, as virtuously bound, Indignation interrogates sundry ejaculations; or, if you like it better, ejaculates sundry interrogations: as thus, take a brace:

> If right and reason both combine in one,
> Why, in God's name, should justice not be done?
> If law be not a lie, and judgments jokes,
> Why not *be just*, and cut adrift Lord Hoax?

After a vast deal more in this vein of literature—for you perceive my present purpose is dissection in part of this ancient rhyme—we arrive at a magnanimous—

> No! Right shall have his own, put off no longer
> By rule of Former, or by whim of Stronger;
> Nor, because Jack goes tumbling down the hill,
> Shall precedent create a tumbling Jill.
> Public opinion soon shall change the scene,
> And wash the Law's Augæan stable clean;
> Sweep out the Temple, drive the sellers thence,
> And lead, in novel triumph, Common Sense.

Verily, this is of the dullest, but it is brief: endure it, and pray you consider the deadliness of the topic, and the barbarous cruelty wherewith courtesy has clipped the wings of my poor spite. Let us turn to other title-pages; assuring all the world that no specific mountebank has been here intended, and that nothing more is meant than a nerveless blow against legal cant, quainter than Quarles's, and against that well-known species of

Equity, which must have been so titled from like antiquated reasons with those that induced Numa and his company to call a dark grove, lucus.

How many foes, in this utilitarian era, has that very unwarrantable vice, called Poetry! All who despise love and love-making, all who prefer billiards to meditation, all who value hard cash above mental riches, feel privileged to hate it; while really, typographers, the illegible diamond print in which you generally set it up, whether in book, or newspaper, or handbill, or magazine, induces many an indifferent peruser to skip the poem for the sake of his eye-sight. I presume that the monosyllable, rhyme, comprehends pretty nearly all that the world at large intends by poetry; and, in the same manner as certain critics have sneered at Livy—no, it was Tacitus—for commencing his work with a bad hexameter, so many a reader will now-a-days condemn a whole book, because it is somewhere found guilty of harbouring a distich. But poetry, friend World, means far other than rhyme; its etymology would yield "creation," or "fabrication," of sense as well as sound, and of melody for the eye as well as melody for the ear. So did [*epoiese*] Milton; and so did not—— Well, I myself, if you will. Yet, in fact, there are fifty other kinds of poetries, beside the poetry of words: as the poetry of life—affection, honour, and hope, and generosity; the poetry of beauty—never mind what features decorate the Dulcinea, for this species of poetry is felt and seen almost only in first love; the poetry of motion, as first-rates majestically sailing, furiously scudding waves, bending corn-fields, and, briefly, all things moveable but railway-trains; the poetry of rest, as pyramids, a tropical calm, an arctic winter, and generally all things quiescent but a slumbering alderman; the poetry of music, heard oftener in a country milkmaid's evening song, than in many a concert-room; the poetry of elegance, more natural to weeping willows, unbroken colts, flames, swans, ivy-clad arches, greyhounds, yea, to young donkeys, than to those *pirouette*-ing and *very* active *danseuses* of the opera; the poetry of nature, as mountains, waterfalls, storms, summer evenings, and all manner of landscapes, except Holland and Siberia; the poetry of art, acqueducts, minarets, Raphael's colouring, and Poussin's intricate designs; the poetry of ugliness, well seen in monkeys and Skye terriers; and the poetry of awkwardness, whereof the brightest example is Mr. trans-Atlantic Rice. And, verily, many other poetries there be, as of impudence (for which consult the experience of swindlers); of prose, (for which see Addison); of energy, of sleep, of battle and of peace: for it is an easy-seeming artfulness, the most fascinating manner of doing as of saying, complication simplified, and every thing effected to its bravest advantage. Poetry wants a champion in these days, who will save her from her friends: O, namby-pamby "lovers of the Nine!" your innumerous dull lyrics—ay, and mine—your unnatural heroics—I too have sinned thus—your up-hill sonnets—that labour of folly have I known as well—in brief, your misnamed poetry, hath done grievous damage to the cause you toil for. Yet I would avow thus much, for I believe it: as an average, we have beaten our ancestors; seldom can we take up a paper or a periodical which does not show us verses worthy of great names; the age is full of highly respectable, if not superlative poetry; and truly may we consider that the very abundance of good versification has lowered the price of poets, and therefore, in this marketing world, has robbed them of proper estimation. Doubtless, there have been mighty men of song higher in rank, as earlier in time, than any now who dare to try a chirrup: but there are also many of our anonymous minstrels, with whom the greater number of the so-called old English poets could not with advantage to the ancients justly be compared. Look at '*Johnson's Lives*.' Who can read the book, and the specimens it glorifies, without rejoicing in his prose, and thoroughly despising their poetry?—With a few brilliant exceptions, of course, (for ill-used Milton, Pope—and shall we in the same sentence put Dryden?—are there,) a more wretched set of halfpenny-a-liners never stormed mob-trodden Parnassus. The poetry of Queen Anne's time and thereabouts, I judge to have been at the lowest bathos of badness; all satyrs, and swains, fulsome flattery of titles, and foolish adoration of painted shepherdesses: poor weak hobbling lines, eked out by 'eds and expletives, often terminated by false rhymes, and made lamer by triplets and dreary

Alexandrines; ill-selected subjects, laboured, indelicate, or impossible similes, passions frigid as Diana, wit's weapons dull as lead. Yet these (many exceptions doubtless there were, and many redeeming *morceaux* even in the worst, charitable reader, but as of the rule we speak not falsely), these are the poets of England, the men our great grandfathers delighted to honour, the feared, the praised, the pensioned, and those whom we their children still denominate—the poets! Praise, praise your stars, ye lucky imps of Fame! who could tolerate you now-a-days?—You lived in golden times, when Dorset, Harley, Bolingbroke, Halifax, and Company, gave away places of a thousand a-year, as but justly due to any man who could pen a roaring song, fabricate a fulsome sonnet, or bewail in meagre elegiacs the still-resisting virtue of some persecuted Stella! Happy fellows, easy conquisitors of wealth and fame, autocrats of coffee-houses, feted and favoured by town-bred dames! In those good old times for the fashionable Nine, an epic was sure to lead to a Ministry-of-State, and even an epigram produced its pension: to be a poet, or reputed so, was to be—eligible for all things; and the fortunate possessor of a rhyming dictionary might have governed Europe with his metrical protocols. But these halcyon times are of the past—and so, verily, are their heroes. Farewell, a long farewell, children of oblivion! farewell, Spratt, Smith, Duke, Hughes, King, Pomfret, Phillips, and Blackmore: ye who, in that day of very small things, just rose, as your Leviathan biographer so often testifies, "to a degree of merit above mediocrity:" ye who—but (Candor and good Charity, I thank you for the hint,) limited indeed is my knowledge of your writings, ye long-departed poets, whom I thus am base enough to pilfer of your bays; and therefore, if any man among you penned aught of equal praise with "*My Mind to me a Kingdom is*," or "*No Glory I covet, no Riches I want*," humbly do I cry that good man's pardon. Believe that I have only seen the château of your fame, but never the rock on which it rested; and therefore candidly consider, if I might not with reason have accounted it a castle in the air?

Now, after this wholesale species of poetical massacre, this rifling of old Etruscan tombs of their honourable spoil, a very pleasant ninny would that poetaster stand forth, whose inanely conceited daring exhibited specimens from his own mint, as medals in fit contrast with those slandered "things of base alloy." No, as with politics, so with poetry; in public I abjure and do renounce the minx: and although privately my author's mind is so silly as to doat right lovingly on such an ancient mistress, and has wasted much time and paper in her praise or service, still that mind is sufficiently self-possessed in worldly prudence, as to set seemingly little store on the worth of an acquaintance so little in the fashion. Therefore I disown and disclaim

A VOLUME OF POETICS,

ill-fated offspring of a foolish father; miscellaneous collection of occasionals and fugitives, longer or shorter, as the army of Bombastes. Poetical as in verity I must confess to have been, (using the word "poetical" as most men use it, and the words "have been" in the sense of Troy's existence,) there must have lingered in me, even at that hallucinating period, some little remnant of prosaic wisdom; for it is now long since that I consigned to the most voracious of elements all the more love-sick rhythmicals, and all the more hateful satiricals. Now, I will maintain that act of incremation to be one of true heroism, nearly equal to the judgment of Brutus; nor less is it matter of righteous boasting to have immolated (warned by Charles Lamb's ghost) divers albuminous preparations, which to have to do, were, Clio knows, little pleasure, and to have done, we all know, as little praise. Such light follies are like skeins of cotton, or adjectives, or babies, unfit to stand alone; haply, well enough, times and things considered, but totally unworthy to be dragged out of their contexts into the imperishability of print; it is to take flies out of treacle, and embalm them in clear amber. As to sonnets, what real author's mind will not, if honest, confess to the almost daily recurrence of that symptom of his disease? With mine, at least, they have increased, and are increasing; yea, more—as a certain statesman suggested of Ireland's multitudinous *pisantry*, or as tavern patriots declare of the power of the crown—they ought to be diminished. Nevertheless, resolutely do I hope that some of these at least are little worthy of the days of good Queen Anne.

In matters of the sacred muse, lengthily as others have I trespassed heretofore; the most protracted *fytte*, however, made a respectable inroad on a new metrical version of the '*Psalms*,' attempting at any rate closer accuracy from the Hebrew than Brady's, and juster rhymes than Sternhold's: but this has since been better done by another bard. On the whole budget of exploded poeticals is now legibly inscribed "to be kept till called for," a period rather more indefinite than the promise of a spendthrift's payment. Let them rest in peace, those unfortunate poetics!

There are also in the bundle, if I rightly do remember me, sundry metricals of the humorous sort, which may be considered as really *waste-failures* as any tainted hams that ever were yclept Westphalias. For of all dreary and lugubrious perpetrations in print, nothing can be more desolate than laboured witticism. A pun is a momentary spark dropt upon the tinder-box of social intercourse; and to detach such a sentence from its producing circumstances, is about as efficacious a method of producing laughter, as the scintillatory flint and steel struck upon wet grass would be of generating light. Few things are less digestible than abortive efforts at the humorous; the stream of conversation instantly freezes up; the disconcerted punster wears the look of his well-known kinsman, the detected pickpocket; and a scribe, so mercilessly suicidal as regards his better fame, deserves, when a plain blunt jury comes to sit upon the body, to be found in mystical Latin, *felo de se*, or in plain English "a fellow deceased."

"There shall come in the last days, scoffers;" those same last days in which "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." It is true that these phrases (quoted with the deepest reverence, though found in lighter company) are forcibly taken from their context; but still, the judgment of many wise among us will agree that they present a remarkable coincidence: in this view of the case, and it is a most serious one, the concurrent notoriety of humour having just arisen like a phoenix from its ashes, of railroads and steamboats having partially annihilated space, and of the strides which education, if not intellect, has made upon the highroad of human improvement, assumes an importance greater than the things themselves deserve. To a truly philosophic ken, there is no such thing as a trifle; the ridiculous is but skin-deep, papillæ on the surface of society; cut a little deeper, you will find the veins and arteries of wisdom. Therefore will a sober man not deride the notion that comic almanacs, comic Latin grammars, comic hand-books of sciences and arts, and the great prevalence of comicality in popular views taken of life and of death, of incident and of character, of evil and of good, are, in reality, signs of the times. These straws, so thick upon the wind, and so injuriously mote-like to the visual organs, are flying forward before a storm. As symptoms of changing nationality, and of a disposition to make fun of all things ancient and honourable, and wise, and mighty, and religious, they serve to evidence a state of the universal mind degenerated and diseased. Still, let us not be too severe; and, as to individual confessions, let not me play the hypocrite. Like every thing else, good in its good use, and evil only in abuse of its excesses, humour is capable of filling, and has filled, no lightly-estimable part in the comedy of temporal happiness. What a good thing it is to raise an innocent and cheerful laugh; to inoculate moroseness with hearty merriment; to hunt away misbelieving care, if not with better prayers, at the lowest with a pack of yelping cachinations; to make pain forget his head-ache by the anodyne of mirth! Truly, humour has its laudable and kindly uses: it is the mind's play-time after office-drudgery—an easy recreation from thought, anxiety, or study. Only when it usurps, or foolishly attempts to usurp, the office of more than a temporary alleviation; when it affects to set up as an atheistic panacea; when it professes to walk as an abiding companion, lighting you on your way with injurious gleams (as that dreadful figure in Dante, who lanterns his path by the glaring eyes of his own truncated head); and when it ceases to become merely the casual scintillation, the flitting *ignus fatuus* of a summer evening—then only is wit to be condemned. Often, for mine own poor part in this most mirthful age, have I had

HEARTY LAUGHS,

but take no thought of preserving their echoes, or of shrining them in the eternal basalt of print, like to the oft-repeated cries of Lurley's hunted in-dweller. The humorous infection caught also me, as a thing inevitable; but the case, I wot, proved an unfavourable one: and who dare enter the arena of contention with these mighty men of Momus, these acknowledged sages of laughter, (pardon me for omitting some fifty more,) so familiar to the tickled ear, as Boz, and Sam Slick, Ingoldsby, and Peter Plymley, Titmarsh, Hood, Hook; not to mention—(but that artists are authors)—laughter-loving Leech, Pickwickian Phiz, and inimitable Cruikshank? Nevertheless, let a tender conscience penitently ask, is it quite an innocent matter to lend a hand in rendering the age more careless than perchance, but for such ministrations, it would cease to be? Is it quite wise in a writer, by following in that wake, to be reputed at once to help in doing harm, and help to do harm to his own reputation? There are professors enough in this quadrangle of the college of amusement, popular and extant in flourishing obesity, without so dull a volunteer as Mr. Self intruding his humours on the world: and surely the far-echoing voices of a couple of cannons, thundering their mirth throughout Europe from the jolly quarters of St. Paul's, may well frighten into silence a poor solitary pop-gun, which, as the frog with the bull, might burst in an attempt at competition, or, like Bottom's Numidian lion, could imitate the mighty roar only as gently as your sucking-dove.

Grapho-mania, or the love of scribbling, is clearly the great distinguishing characteristic of an author's mind; pen and ink are to it, what bread and butter are to its lodging-house the body: observe, we do not hazard a remark so false as that the one produces the other —their relations are far from being mutual; but we only suggest that the mind, as well as the body, hobbles like a three-legged Œdipus, resting on its proper staff of life. And what can be more provocative of scribbling than travel? How eagerly we hasten to describe unheard-of adventures, how anxiously record exaggerated marvels! to prove some printed hand-book *quite wrong* in the number of steps up a round-tower: or to crush, as a wicked vender of execrable wines, the once fair fame of some over-charging inn-keeper! Then, again, how pleasant to immortalize the holiday, and read in after-years the story of that happy trip langsyne; how pleasant to gladden the kind eyes of friends, that must stay at home, with those wonder-telling journals, and to taste the dulcet joys of those first essays at authorship. A great charm is there in jotting down the day's tour, and in describing the mountains and museums, the lakes and lazzaroni, the dishes and disasters that have made it memorable: moreover, for fixing scenery on the mental retina, as well as for comparison of notes as to an *alibi*, for duly remembering things heard and seen, as well as for being humbled in having (as a matter inevitable) left unseen just the best lion of the whole tour, journals are a most praiseworthy pastime, and usually rank among the earliest efforts of an embryo author's mind.

It is a thing of commonest course, that, in this age of inveterate locomotion, your present humble friend, now talking in this candid fashion with your readership, has been every where, seen every thing, and done his touristic devoirs like every body else about him: also, as a like circumstance of etymological triviality, that he has severally, and from time to time, recorded for self-amusement and the edification of others all such matters as holiday-making school-boys and boarding-misses, and government-clerks in their swift-speeding vacation, and elderly gentlemen vainly striving to enjoy their first fretful continental trip, usually think proper to descant upon. Of such manuscripts the world is clearly full; no catacomb of mummies more fertile of papyri; no traveller so poor but he has by him a packet of precious notes, whereon he sets much store: every tourist thinks he can reasonably emulate clever Basil Hall, in his eloquent fragments of voyages and travels; and I, for my part, a truth-teller to my own detriment, am ashamed to confess the existence of

which of olden time my *cacoethes* produced as regularly as recurred the summer solstice. Unlike that of Livy's, I am satisfied that this poor Decade be irrevocably lost; but, for dear recollection's sake of days gone by, intend it at least to be spared from malicious incremation. Records of roamings in romantic youth, witnesses of wayward way-side wanderings, gayly with alliterative titles might your contents, *à la Roscoe*, be set forth. But—what conceivable news can be told at this time of day about the trampled Continent, and the crowded British isles? Had my luck led me to Lapland or Formosa, to Mexico or Timbuctoo, to the top of Egyptian pyramids or the bottom of Polish salt-mines, my authorship would long since have publicly declared, in common with many a monkey, that it had "seen the world." As things are, to Bruce, Buckingham, Belzoni, and that glorious anomaly, the blind brave Holman, let us leave the harvest of praise, worthy to be reaped as their own by modern travellers.

More, yet more, most exemplary of listeners; and a web or webs of very various texture. Let any man tell truths of himself, and seem to be consistent, if he can. From grave to gay, from simple to severe, is the line most expressive of such foolish versatility as mine; *varium et mutabile semper*, to one thing constant never. I have heard, or read, among the experiences of a popular preacher, that one of his most vexatious petty temptations, was the rise of humorous notions in his mind the moment he stepped into the pulpit; and it is well known that many a comic actor has been afflicted with the blackest melancholy while supporting right facetiously his best, because most ludicrous character. Let such thoughts then as these, of the frailties incident to man, serve to excuse the present juxtaposition of fancies in themselves diametrically opposite.

It is proper to preamble somewhat of apology before announcing the next presumptuous tractate; presumptuous, because affecting to advise some thousands of men whose office alike and average character are sacred, and just, and excellent. Why then intrude such unrequired counsel? Read the next five pages, and take your answer. Zealously inflamed for the cause of truth, if not also charitably wroth against sundry lukewarm cumber-earth incumbents, and certainly more in love with the Church-of-England prayer-book than with her no-ways-extenuated evils of omission or commission, I wrote, not long since, [and truly, not long since, for few things in this book can boast of higher antiquity than a most modern existence, some things being the birth of an hour, some of a day, a week, or a month; and not more than one or two above a twelve month's age.—Alas, for Horace's forgotten counsels!—alas, for Pope's and Boileau's reiterated prescription of revisal for—*morbleu et parbleu*—nine years!] I wrote then a good cantle of an essay addressed to the clergy on some matters of judicious amelioration, which we will call, if you please—and if the word hints be not objectionable—

LAY HINTS.

Now, as to the unclerical authorship of this, it is wise that it be done out of métier. Laymen are more likely to gain attention in these matters, from the very fact of their influence being an indirect one, speaking as they do rather from the social arm-chair, the high-stool of the counting-house, or the benches of whilom St. Stephen's, than *ex cathedrâ* as of office and of duty.

It would be a fair exemplification of the stolid prowess of a Quixote tilting against, yea, stouter foes than wind-mills, were I to have commenced with an attack upon external church architecture: this topic let us leave to the fraternity of builders; only asking by what rule of taste an obelisk-like spire, is so often stuck upon the roof of a Grecian temple, and by what rule of convenience gigantic columns so commonly and resolutely sentinel the narrowest of exits and entrances. Let us be more commonly contented, as

well we may, with our grand, appropriate, and impressive indigenous kind of architecture —Gothic, Norman, and Saxon: the temple of Ephesus was not suitable to be fitted up with galleries, nor was the Parthenon meant to be surmounted by a steeple. But all this is useless gossip.

Similarly Quixotic would be any tirade against pews, those pet strongholds of snug exclusive selfishness; bad in principle, as perpetually separating within wooden walls members of the same communion; unwholesome in practice, confining in those antre-like parallelograms the close-pent air; unsightly in appearance, as any one will testify, whose soul is exalted above the iron beauties of a plain conventicle; expensive in their original formation, their fittings and repairs; and, when finished, occupying perhaps one-fourth of the area of a church already ten times too small for its neighbouring population. Fixed benches, or a strong muster of chairs, or such modes of congregational accommodation as public meeting-rooms and ordinary lecture-rooms present, seems to me more consistent and more convenient. But all this again is vain talking—a very empty expenditure of words; we must be satisfied with churches as they are; and, after all, let me readily admit that steeples are imposing in the distance, and of use as belfries; (probably of like intent were the strange columnar towers of Ireland;) and with regard to pews, let me confess that practice finds perfect what theory condemns as wrong, so—let these things pass.

Nevertheless, let me begin upon the threshold with the extortionate and abominable race of pew-women, beadles, clerks, vergers, bell-ringers, and other fee-hungry ravens hovering around and about almost every hallowed precinct: pray you, reform all that, and copy railroad companies in forbidding those begrudged gratuities to mendicant and ever-grumbling menials. Next, give more sublunary heed, we beseech you, to the comforts or discomforts incidental to doors, windows, stoves, paint, dust, dirt, and general ventilation; consider the cold, fevers, lumbagos, rheums, life-long aches, and fatal pains too often caught helplessly and needlessly by the devout worshipper in a town or country church. Look to your organist, that he wot something of the value of time and the mysteries of tune; or, if a country parson, drill cleverly that insubordinate phalanx of *soi-disant* musicians, a rustic orchestra; and exclude from the latter, at all mortal hazards, the huntsman's horn, the volunteer fiddle, and the shrill squeaking of the wry-necked pipe. Much is being now done for congregational psalmody; but when will country folks give up their murderous execution of the fugue-full anthem, and when will London congregations understand that the singing-psalms are not set apart exclusively for charity-children? When shall Bishop Kenn's '*Awake my soul*,' cease to be our noonday exhortation; and a literal invocation for sweet sleep to close our eye-lids no longer be the ill-considered prelude to an afternoon discourse? Take some trouble to improve and educate, or get rid of, if possible, your generally vulgar, illiterate, ill-conditioned clerk; insist upon his v's and h's: let him shut up his shoe-stall; and raise in the scale of society one of the leaders of its worship: as, at present, these stagnant, recreant, ignorant clerks are sad stumbling-blocks; no help to the congregation, and a nuisance to its minister. In reading—suffer this foolishness, my masters—fight against the too frequent style of dogged, dormant, dull formality; we take you for earnest living guides to our devotion, not mere dead organs of an oft-repeated service; quicken us by your manner; a psalm so spoken is better than the sermon. In more fitting places has your author long ago delivered his mind concerning matters of a character more directly sacred than shall here find room; as, the sacrament with its holy mysteries, and the many things amendable in ordinary preachments; but for these my unseasonable Wisdom shrouds itself in Silence: therefore, to do away with details, and apply a general rule, above all things, and in all things, strive by judicious acquiescence with human wants, and likings, and failings too, if conscientiously you can, as well as by spirited and true devotion, to break down the sluggish mounds of needful uniformity, and to build up round the church a rampart of good sense: and so, Heaven bless your labours! A word more: if it be possible, take no fees at a baptism, and let it not be thought, by either rich or poor, that an entrance into Christ's fold must be paid for; no, nor at a burial; but let the service for the Christian dead be accorded freely, without money and without price. To a wedding, the same ideas are

not perhaps so closely applicable; therefore we will generously suffer that you keep your customs there; but on the introduction of a little one to the bosom of the church, or restoring the body of a saint to Him who made it of the dust, nothing can be more repulsive to right religious feelings than to be bothered by a fee-seeking clerk, thrusting in your face an itching palm: to the poor, these things are more than a mere annoyance; they amount to a hardship and a hindrance; for such demands at such seasons are often nothing less than a bitter extortion upon the self-denial of conscientious duty.

More might be added; but enough, too much has been alluded to. Nothing would strengthen the bulwarks of our Zion more than such easy reforms as these: recent happy revivals in our church would thus be more solidified; and where, as now, many have been lulled to slumber, many grieved, many become disgusted or Dissenters, our sons and our daughters would grow up as the polished corners of the temple, and crowds would throng the courts of our holy and beautiful House.

Suffer thus far, clerical and lay, these crude hints: in all things have I studied brevity, throughout this little bookful; therefore are you spared a perusal of my reasons, and so be indulgent for their absence. I "touch your ears" but lightly; be you for charity, as in old Rome, my favourable witnesses.

My before-mentioned Censor of the press had a very considerable mind to dock all mention of the following intended *brochure*. But I answered, Really, Mr. Judgment, (better or worse, as occasion may register your Agnomen,) you must not weigh trifles in gold-assaying scales; be not so particular as to the polish of a thumb-nail; endure a little incoherent pastime; count not the several stems of hay, straw, stubble—but suffer them to be pitch-forked *en masse*, and unconsidered: it is their privilege, in common with that of certain others—lightnesses that froth upon the surface of society. Moreover, let me remind your worship's classicality that no one of mortals is sapient at all times. Item, that if friend Flaccus be not a calumniator, even the rigid virtue of the antiquer Cato delighted in so stimulant a vanity as wine hot. So give the colt his head, and let it go: remembering always that this same colt, as straying without a responsible rider, is indeed liable to be impounded by any who can catch him; but still, if he be found to have done great damage to his master's character, or to a neighbour's fences, the estray shall rather be abandoned than acknowledged. Let then this unequal work, this ill-assorted bundle of dry book-plants, this undirected parcel of literary stuff, be accounted much in the same situation as that of the wanton caitiff-colt, so likely to bait a-pound, and afterwards to be sold for payment of expenses, in true bailiff-sense of justice. And let thus much serve as discursive prolegomena to a notion, scarcely worth recording, but for the wonder, that no professed writer (at least to my small knowledge) has entered on so common-sense a field. Paris, I remember, some years ago was inundated with copies of a treatise on the important art of tying the cravat; every shop-window displayed the mystic diagrams, and every stiff neck proclaimed its popularity. This was my yesterday's-conceived precedent for entertaining the bright hope of illuminating London on the subject of shaving:

ANTI-XURION;

A CRUSADE AGAINST RAZORS,

should have been my taking title; and perchance the learned treatise might have been characteristically illustrated with steel cuts. Shaving is a wider topic than most people think for; it is a species of insanity that has afflicted man in all ages, deprived him of nature's best adornment in every country under heaven. So contradictorily too; as thus: the Spanish friar shaves all but a rim round his head, which rim alone sundry North American aborigines determine to extirpate; John Chinaman nourishes exclusively a long cue, just on that same inch of crown-land which the P.P. sedulously keeps as bare as his

palm: all the Orientals shave the head, and cherish the beard; all the Occidentals immolate the beard, and leave the honours of the head untouched. Then, again, the strange successive fashions in this same unnatural, unneedful depilation; look at the vagaries of young France: not to descend also to savage men, and their clumsy shell-scrapings; and to devote but little time to the voluminous topic of wigs, male and female, cavalier and caxon, Marlborough and monstrous maccaroni—from the plaited Absalom-looking periwig of a Pharaoh in the British Museum, to Truefitt's last patent self-adjuster. Of all these follies, and their root a razor, might we show the manifest absurdity: we might argue upon Eastern stupidity as caused by thickness of the skull, such thickness being the substitute for thatchy hair suggested by kind ill-used Nature as the hot brain's best protection: we might reason upon the average sheepishness of this peaceful West, as due to having shorn the lion of his mane, Phœbus of his glory, man of his majestic beard. Then the martyrdom it is to many! who stoically, day after day, persist in scratching to the quick their irritable chins, and after all to little better end than the diligent earning of tooth-aches, ear-aches, colds, sore throats, and unbecoming blank faces. Habit, it is true, makes us deem that a comfort, and our better halves (or those we would fain have so) think that a beauty, which our forerunners of old time would have held a plague, a disgrace, a deformity, a mortification: prisoned paupers in the Union think it an insufferable hardship to go bearded, and King David's ambassadors would have given their right eyes *not* to have been shaved; so much are we the slaves of custom: Sheffield also, it is equally true, is a town that humane men would not wish to ruin; by razors they of Sheffield live, and shaving is their substance. But, as in the case of the smoother and softer sex, we are convinced that the wand of fashion would presently convert their heterodox anti-barbal prejudices: so, in the case of harder-ware Sheffield, while we hope to live to see razors regarded as antiquarian rarities, (even as a watchman's rattle, or the many-caped coats of the semi-extinct class *Welleria coachmanensis* are now some time become,) still we desire all possible multiplication to the tribe of trimming scissors. Like Ireland, we shout for long-denied justice; give us our beards. That reasonable indulgence shall never be abused; our Catholic emancipation of moustache and imperial, whisker and the rest, shall not be a pretence for lion's manes, or the fringe of goats and monkeys: we would not so far follow unsophisticated nature as to relapse into barbarous wild men; but diligently squaring, pointing, combing, and perfuming those natural manly decorations, after the most approved modes of Raleigh, Walsingham, and Shakspeare, and heroical Edward the Black Prince, and venerable apostolic Bede, we will encroach little further than to discard our comfortless starched collars and strangling stocks, to adopt once more in lieu thereof open necks and vandyke borders.

Of course, (here, priest-like, we take our ell,) there must follow upon this a grand and glorious revolution in male attire. This present close-fitting, undignified set of habiliments, which no chisel dare imitate—this cumbersome, unbecoming garb—might, should, ought to be, and would be, superseded by slashed gay jerkins, and picturesque nether garments: cap and feather throwing into shade the modern hat, ugliest of all imaginable head-dresses; and in lieu of the smock-frock Macintosh, or coarse-featured bear-skin, Ciceronian mantles flowing from the shoulders, or lighter capes of the elegant olden-time Venitian. By way of distinguishing the now confused classes of society, my radical reform in dress would go to recommend that nobles and gentry wear their own heraldic colours and livery buttons; and humbler domesticated creatures walk, as modest gentlefolks do now, in what sundry have presumed to call "Mufti." To be briefer; in dress, if nothing more, let us sensibly retrograde to the days of good Queen Bess: I will not say, copy a Sir Piercie Shafton, who boasts of having "danced the salvage man at the mummery of Clerkenwell, in a suit of flesh-coloured silk, trimmed with fur;" neither, under these dingy skies, would I care to walk abroad with Sir Philip Sidney in satin boots, or with Oliver Goldsmith in a peach-coloured doublet: but still, for very comfort's sake, let us break our bonds of cloth and buckram, and, in so far as adornment is concerned, let us exchange this staid funeral monotony for the gallant garb of our ancestors, the brave costumes of our Edwards and the bluff King Hal.

Behold, too scornful friend, how my Tory rabies reaches to the wardrobe. The modern dress of illuminated Europe has, in my humble opinion, gone far to weaken the old empire of the Porte, to denationalize Egypt, to degenerate the Jews, to mammonize once generous Greece, and carry republican equality into the great prairies of America: it is the undistinguishing, humiliating, unchivalrous livery of our cold cosmopolites. But enough of this: pews and spires are to my Quixotism not more unextinguishable foes, than coats, cravats, waistcoats, and unnameables.

And now an honest word at parting, about such trivialities of authorship. Why should a poor shepherd of the Landes for ever wear his stilts? Or a tragic actor, like some mortified La Trapist, never be allowed to laugh? Or Mr. Green be denied any other carriage than the wicker car of his balloon? Even so, dear reader, pr'ythee suffer a serious sort of author sometimes to take off his wig and spectacles, and condescend to think of such minor matters as the toilet and its still-recurring duties. And, if you *should* find out the veritable name of your weak confessing scribe, think not the less kindly of his graver volumes; this one is his pastime, his holiday laugh, his purposely truant, lawless, desultory recreance: impute not folly to the face of cheerfulness; be charitable to such mixtures of alternate gayety and soberness as in thine own mind, if thou searchest, thou shall find; let me laugh with those that laugh, as well as sympathize with weepers; and cavil not at those inconsistencies, which of a verity are man's right attributes.

Ideas lie round about us, thick as daisies in a summer meadow. For my own part, I know not what a walk, or a talk, or a peep into a book may lead me to. Brunel hit upon the notion of a tunnel-shield, from the casual sight of a certain water-beetle, to whom the God of Nature had given a protecting buckler for its head. Newton found out gravitation, by reasoning on the fall of an apple from the tree. Almost every invention has been the suggestion of an accident. Even so, to descend from great things to small, did a solitary stroll in most-English Devonshire hint to me the next fair topic. It was while wandering about the Pyrenean neighbourhood of Linton and Ly'mouth not many months ago, that my reveries became concentrated for divers hallucinating hours on a very pretty book, with a very pretty title. And here let me remark episodically, that I pride myself on titles; what compositors call "monkeyfying the title-page" is known to be a talent of itself, and one moreover to which in these days of advertisements and superficialities many a meagre book has owed its popular acceptance. The titles of generations back seemed not to have been regarded honest, if they did not exhibit on their face a true and particular table of contents; whereas in these sad times, (with many, not with me,) mystery is a good rule, but falsehood is a better. Again, those honest-speaking authors of the past scrupled not to designate their writings as '*A Most Erudite Treatise*' on so-and-so, or a '*A Right Ingenious Handling of the Mysteries*' of such-and-such, whereas modern hypocrisy aims at under-rating its own pet work; and more than one book has been ruined in the market, for having been carelessly titled by the definite THE; as if, forsooth, it were the world's arbiter of that one topic, self-constituted pundit of, e.g., title-pages. And this word brings me back: consider the truly English music of this one:

THE SQUIRE,

AND HIS BEAUTIFUL HOME,

a fine old country gentleman, pleasantly located, affluent, noble-minded, wise, and patriotic. This was to have been shown forth, in wish at least, as somewhat akin to, or congenerous with '*The Doctor*, &c.,'—that rambling wonder of strange and multifarious reading: or '*The Rectory of Valehead*,' or '*Vicar of Wakefield*,' or '*The Family Robinson Crusoe*,' still unwrecked; or many another hearty, cheerful or pathetic tale of home, sweet home: and yet as to design and execution strictly original and unplagiaristic. The first

chapters (simple healthy writing, redolent of green pastures, and linchened rocks, and dew-dropt mountains,) might introduce localities; the beautiful home itself, an Elizabethan mansion, with its park, lake, hill and valley scenery; a peep at the blue mile-off sea, brawling brooks, oak-woods, conservatories, rookery, and all such pleasant adjuncts of that most fortunate of pleasure-hunters, a country squire, with a princely rent-roll. Then should be detailed, circumstantially, the lord of the beautiful home, a picture of the hospitable virtues; the wife of the beautiful home, a portraiture of happy domesticity, admirable also as a mother, a nurse, a neighbour, and the poor's best friend: children must abound, of course, or the home is a heaven uninhabited; and shrewd hints might hereabouts be dropped as to the judicious or injudicious in matters educational: servants, too, both old and young, with discussions on their modern treatment, and on that better class of bygones, whom kindness made not familiar, and the right assertion of authority provoked not into insolence; whose interest for the dear old family was never merged in their own, and whose honesty was as unsuspected as that of young master himself, or sweet little mistress Alice.

After all this, might we descant upon the squire's characteristics. Take him as a politician: liberal, that is to say, (for his frown is on me at a phrase so doubtful,) generous, tolerant, kind, and manly; but none of your low-bred slanderers of that noble name, so generally tyrants at home and cowardly abroad—mean agitating fellows, the scum of disgorging society, raised by turbulence and recklessness from the bottom to the surface: oh no, none of these; but, for all his just liberality, an honest, honourable, loyal, church-going, uncompromising Tory: with a detail of his reasons, notions, and practices thereabouts, inclusive of his conduct at elections, his wholesome influence over an otherwise unguided or ill-guided tenantry, and as concerning other miscalled corruptions: his open argumentation of the representative doctrine, that it ought to stop short as soon as ever the religion, the learning, and the wealth of a country are fairly represented; that in fact the poor man thinks little of his vote, unless indeed in worse cases looking for a bribe; and that the principle is pushed into ruinous absurdities when the destitution, the crime, and the ignorance of a nation demand their proper representatives; that, almost as a consequence of human average depravity, the greater the franchise's extension, the worse in all ways become those who impersonate the enfranchised; and so, after due condemnation of Whiggery, to stultify Chartism, and that demoralizing lie, the ballot. Then as to the squire's religion; and certain confabulations with his parson, his household, his harvest-home tenantry, and local preachers of dissent and schism; his creed, practice, and favourable samples of daily life. Moreover, our squire should have somewhat to tell of personal history and adventures; a youth of poor dependence on a miser uncle; a storm-tost early manhood, consequent on his high uncompromising principles; then the miser's death, without the base injustice of that cruel will, which an eleventh-hour penitence destroyed: the squire comes to his property, marries his one old flame, effects reformations, attains popularity, happiness, and other due prosperities. Anecdotes of particular passages, as in affliction or in joy; his son lamed for life, or his house half burnt down, his attack by highwaymen, or election for parliament. The squire's general confidence in man, sympathy with frailties, and success in regenerating long-lost characters. His discourse on field sports, displaying the amiable intellectuality of a Gilbert White as opposed to the blood-thirsty Nimrodism and Ramrodism of a mad Mytton. A marriage; a funeral; a disputed legacy of some eccentric relative; with its agreeable concomitants of heartless selfish strife, rebuked by the squire's noble example: the conventicle gently put down by dint of gradual desertions, and church-going as tenderly extended; vestry demagogues and parochial incendiaries chastised by our squire; and divers other adventures, conversations, situations, and conditions, illustrative of that grand character, a fine old English gentleman, all of the olden time.

Altogether, if well managed, a book like this would be calculated to do substantial good in these days of no principle or bad principle. A captivating example well applied—witness the uses of biography—is infectious among the well-inclined and well-informed. But—but—but—I fancy there may exist, and do exist already, admirable books of just this character. I have heard of, but not seen, '*The Portrait of a Christian Gentleman*,' and

another '*of a Churchman*:' doubtless, these, combined with a sort of Mr. Dovedale in that clever impossible '*Floreston*,' or an equally unnatural and charming Sir Charles Grandison, with a dash of scenery and a sprinkle of anecdote, would make up, far better than I could fabricate, the fair fine character that once I thought to sketch. Moreover, to a plain gentleman, living in the country, of perfectly identical ideas with those of the squire on all imaginable topics, gifted too (we will not say with quite his princely rent-roll, but at any rate) with sundry like advantages in the way of decent affluence, pleasant scenery, an old house, a good wife, and fair children—with plenty of similar adventures and circumstantials—and the necessary proportion of highwaymen, radicals, rascals, and schismatics dotted all about his neighbourhood, the idea would seem, to say the least, somewhat egotistic. But why may not humble individualities be generalized in grander shapes? why not glorify the picture of a cottage with colouring of Turner's most imaginative palette? An author, like an artist, seldom does his work well unless he has nature before him: exalted and idealized, the Roman beggar goes forth a Jupiter, and country wenches help a Howard to his Naiads. Nevertheless, let the Squire and his train pass us by, indefinite as Banquo's progeny: let his beautiful home be sublimely indistinct; even such are Martin's ætherial cities: the thought shall rest unfructified at present—a mummied, vital seed. The review is over, and the Squire's troop of yeomanry not required: so let them wait till next year's muster.

Few novelties are more called for, in this halcyon age of authorship, this summer season for the Sosii, this every-day-a-birth-day for some five-and-twenty books, than the establishment of a recognised literary tribunal, some judgment-hall of master spirits, from whose calm, unhurried, unbiased verdict, there should be no appeal. Far, very far be it from me to arraign modern reviewers either of partialities or incapacity; indeed, it is probable that few men of high talent, character, and station, have not, at some time or other, temporarily at least contributed to swell their ranks: moreover, from one they have treated so magnanimously, they shall not get the wages of ingratitude; they have been kind to my dear book-children, and I—*don't be so curious*—thank them for their courtesy with all a father's feeling toward the liberal friends of his sons and daughters. Speaking generally, (for, not to flatter any class of men, truly there are rogues in all,) I am bold to call them candid, honest, clever men; quite superior, as a body, to every thing like bribery and corruption, and, with human limitations, little influenced by motives, either of prejudice or favour. For indefatigable industry, unexampled patience, and powers of mind very far above what are commonly attributed to them, I, for my humble judgment, would give our periodical journalists their honourable due: I am playing no Aberdeenshire game of mutual scratching; I am too hardened now in the ways of print to be much more than indifferent as to common praise or censure; that honey-moon is over with me, when a laudatory article in some kindly magazine sent a thrill from eye to heart, from heart to shoe-sole understanding: I no longer feel rancorous with inveterate wrath against a poor editor whose faint praise, impotent to d—-, has yet abundant force to induce a hearty return of the compliment: like some case-hardened rock, so little while ago but soft young coral, the surges may lash me, but leave no mark; the sun may shine, but cannot melt me. Argal, as the clown says, is my verdict honest: and further now to prove it so, shall come the limitations.

With all my gratitude and right good feeling to our diurnal and hebdomadal amusers and instructors, I cannot but consider that gazette and newspaper reviewers are insufficient and unsatisfactory judges of literature, if not indeed sometimes erring guides to the public taste; the main cause of this consisting in the essential rapidity of their composition. There is not—from the multiplicity of business to be got through, there cannot be—adequate time allowed for any thing like justice to the claims of each author. Periodicals that appear at longer intervals are in all reason more or less excepted from this objection; but by the daily and weekly majority, the labours of a life-time are cursorily glanced at, hastily judged from some isolated passage, summarily found laudable or guilty; and this

weak opinion, strongly enough expressed as some compensation in solid superstructure for the sandiness of its foundations, is circulated by thousands over all corners of the habitable world. To say that the public (those so-called reviewers of reviews, but wiser to be looked on only as perusers,) balance all such false verdicts, might indeed be true in the long run, but unfortunately it is not: for first, no run at all, far less a long one, is permitted to the persecuted production; and next, it is notorious, that people think very much as they are told to think. Now, I have already stated at too much length that I have no personalities to complain of, no self-interests to serve: for the past I have been well entreated; and for the future, supposing such an unlikelihood as more hypothetical books, I am hard, bold, sanguine, stoical; while, as for the present, though I refuse not my gauntlet to any man, my visor shall be raised by none. But I enter the list for others, my kinsmen in composing. Authors, to speak it generally, are an ill-used race, because judged hastily, often superciliously, for evil or for good. It is impossible for the poor public, (who, besides having to earn daily bread, have to wade through all the daily papers,) from mere lack of hours in the day, to entertain any opinions of their own about a book or books: the money to buy them is one objection, the time to read them another; to say less of the capacity, the patience, and the will. Without question, they are guided by their teachers; and the grand fault of these is, their everlasting hurry.

At another necessary failing of reviewers I would only delicately hint. The royal We is very imposing; for example, the king of magazines, No. 134, (need I name it?) informs us, p. 373, "We happen to have now in wear a good long coat of imperial gray," &c.; and some fifteen lines lower down, "We are now mending our pen with a small knife," and so forth: now all this grandiloquence serves to conceal the individual; and to reduce my other great objection to a single letter, let us only recollect that this powerful, this despotic We, is, being interpreted, nothing but an I by itself, a simple scribe, a single and plebeian number one. A mere unit, an anonymous, irresponsible unit, dissects in a quarter of an hour the grand result of some ten years; and this momentary influence on one man's mind, (perhaps wearied, or piqued, or biased, or haply unskilled in the point at issue, but at all events inevitably in a hurry to jump at a conclusion,) this light accidental impression is sounded forth to the ends of the earth, and leads public opinion in a verdict of thunder. And as for yon impertinent parenthesis—or pertinent, as some will say—give me grace thus blandly to suggest a possibility. The mighty editorial We, upon whose authoritative tones the world's opinion will probably be pivoted—whose pen by casual ridicule or as casual admiration makes or mars the fortune of some pains-taking literary labourer—whose dictum carelessly dispenses local honour or disgrace, and has before now by sharp sarcasms, speaking daggers though using none, even killed more than one over-sensitive Keats—this monarchic We is but a frail mortal, liable at least to "some of the imperfections of our common nature, gentlemen," as, for example, to be morose, impatient, splenetic, and the more if over-worked. Neither should I waive in this place, in this my rostrum of blunt, plain speech, the many censurable cases, unhappily too well authenticated, where personal enmity has envenomed the reviewing pen against a writer, and stabs in the dark have wounded good men's fame. Neither, again, those other instances where reviewers, not being omniscient, (yet is their knowledge most various and brilliant,) having been from want of specific information incompetent to judge of the matters in question, have striven to shroud their ignorance of the greater topic in clamorous attacks of its minor incidents; burrowing into a mound if they cannot force a breach through the rampart; and mystifying things so cleverly with doubts, that we cannot see the blessed sun himself for very fog.

Now really, good folk, all this should be amended: would that the WE were actually plural; would that we had a well-selected bench of literary judges; would that some higher sort of Stationers' Hall or Athenæum were erected into an acknowledged tribunal of an author's merits or demerits; would that, to wish the very least, the wholesome practice of a well-considered imprimatur were revived! Let famous men, whose reputation is firm-fixed—our Wordsworths, Hallams, Campbells, Crolys, Wilsons, Bulwers, and the like—decide in the case of at least all who desire such decision. I suppose, as no one in these selfish times will take trouble without pay, that either the

judges should be numbered among state pensioners, or that each work so calmly examined must produce its regular fee: but these are after-considerations; and be sure no writer will grudge a guinea for calm, unbought, unsuspected justice bestowed upon his brain-child. Let all those members of the tribunal, deciding by ballot, (here in an assembly where all are good, great, and honest, I shrink not from that word of evil omen,) judge, as far as possible, together and not separately, of all kinds of literature: I would not have poets sentencing all the poetry, historians all the history, novelists all the novels, and theologists all the works upon religion; for humanity is at the best infirm, and motives little searchable; but let all judge equally in a sort of open court. The machinery might be difficult, and I cannot show its workings in so slight an essay; but surely it is a strange thing in civilization, and a stranger when we consider what literature does for us, blessing our world or banning it—it is a wonder and a shame that books of whatever tendency are so cast forth upon the waters to sink or swim at hazard. I acknowledge, friend, your present muttering, Utopian! Arcadian! Formosan! to be not ill-founded: the sketch is a hasty one; but though it may have somewhat in common with the vagaries of Sir Thomas More, Sir Philip Sidney, and that king in impudence, George Psalmanazar, still I stand upon this ground, that many an ill-used author wants protection, and that society, for its own sake as well as his, ought to supply a court for literary reputation. Some poor man the other day, and in a reputable journal too, had five new-born tragedies strangled and mangled in as many lines: we need not suppose him a Shakspeare, but he might have been one for aught of evidence given to the contrary; at any rate, five at once, five mortal tragedies, (so puppy-fashion born and drowned,) must, however carelessly executed, have been the offspring of no common mind. Again, how often is not a laborious historiographer, particularly if of contrary politics, dismissed with immediate contempt, because, perchance, in his three full volumes, he has admitted two false dates, or haply mistakes the christened name of some Spanish admiral! Once more, how continually are not critical judgments falsified by the very extracts on which they rest! how often the pet passage of one review is the stock butt of another! Here you will say is cure and malady together, like viper's fat and fang: I trow not; mainly because not one man in a thousand takes the trouble to judge for himself. But it is needless to enumerate such instances; every man's conscience or his memory will supply examples wholesale: therefore, maltreated authors, bear witness to your own wrongs: jealously regarded by a struggling brotherhood, cruelly baited by self-constituted critics, the rejected of publishers, the victimized by booksellers, the garbled in statement, misinterpreted in meaning, suspected of friends, persecuted by foes—"O that mine enemy would write a book!" It is to put a neck into a noose, to lie quietly in the grove of Dr. Guillot's humane prescription: or, if not quite so tragical as this, it is at least to sit voluntarily in the stocks with Sir Hudibras, and dare the world's contempt; while fashionable—or unfashionable idiots, who are scarcely capable of a grammatical answer to a dinner invitation, (those formidably confounded he's and him's!)—think themselves privileged to join some inane laugh against a clever, but not yet famous, author, because, forsooth, one character in his novel may be an old acquaintance, or one epithet in a long poem may be weak, indelicate, tasteless, or foolish, or one philosophical fact in an essay is misstated, or one statistical conclusion seems to be exaggerated. It is perfectly paltry to behold stupid fellows, whose intellects against your most ordinary scribe vary from a rush-light to a "long four," as compared with a roasting, roaring kitchen-fire, affecting contemptuously to look down upon some unjustly neglected or mercilessly castigated labourer in the brick-fields of literature, for not being—can he help it?—a first-rate author, or because one reviewer in seven thinks he might have done his subject better justice. Take my word for it—if indeed I can be a fair witness—the man who has written a book, is above the unwriting average, and, as such, should be ranked mentally above them: no light research, and tact, and industry, and head-and-hand labour, are sufficient for a volume; even certain stolid performances in print do not shake my judgment; for arrant blockheads as sundry authors undoubtedly are, the average (mark, not all men, but the average) unwriting man is an author's intellectual inferior. All men, however well capable, have not perchance the appetite, nor the industry, nor the opportunity to fabricate a volume; nor, supposing these requisites, the moral courage (for moral courage, if not physical, must form part of an author's mind,) to publish the lucubration: but "I magnify mine office" above the

unnumbered host of unwriting, uninformed, loose, unlettered gentry, who (as full of leisure as a cabbage, and as overflowing with redundant impudence as any Radical mob,) mainly tend to form by their masses the average penless animal-man, who could not hold a candle to any the most mediocre of the Marsyas-used authors of haply this week's journals. Spare them, victorious Apollos, spare! if libels that diminish wealth be punishable, is there no moral guilt in those legalized libels that do their utmost to destroy a character for wisdom, wit, learning, industry, and invention?—Critical flayer, try thou to write a book; learn experimentally how difficult, yet relieving; how nervous, yet gladdening; how ungracious, yet very sweet; how worldly-foolish, yet most wise; how conversant with scorn, yet how noble and ennobling an attribute of man, is—authorship.

All this rhetoric, impatient friend—and be a friend still, whether writer, reviewer, or unauthorial—serves at my most expeditious pace, opposing notions considered, to introduce what is (till to-morrow, or perhaps the next coming minute, but at any rate for this flitting instant of time,) my last notion of possible, but not probable, authorship: a rhodomontade oration, rather than an essay, after my own desultory and yet determinate fashion, to have been entituled—so is it spelled by act of parliament, and therefore let us in charity hope rightly—to have been entituled then,

THE AUTHOR'S TRIBUNAL;

A COURT OF APPEAL AGAINST AMATEUR AND CONNOISSEUR CRITICISMS:

and (the present being the next minute whereof I spake above) there has just hopped into my mind another taking title, which I generously present to any smarting scribe who may meditate a prose version of '*English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*'—*videlicet*,

ZOILOMASTRIX.

At length then have I liberty to yawn—a freedom whereof doubtless my readers have long been liverymen: I have written myself and my inkstand dry as Rosamond's pond; my brain is relieved, recreated, emptied; I go no longer heavily, as one that mourneth; and with gleeful face can I assure you that your author's mind is once again as light as his heart: but when crowding fancies come thick upon it, they bow it, and break it, and weary it, as clouds of pigeons settling gregariously on a trans-Atlantic forest; and when those thronging thoughts are comfortably fixed on paper, one feels, as an apple-tree may be supposed to feel, all the difference between the heavy down-dragging crop of autumn and the winged aërial blossom of sweet spring-tide. An involuntary author, just eased for the time of ever-exacting and accumulating notions, can sympathize with holiday-making Atlas, chuckling over a chance so lucky as the transfer of his pack to Hercules; and can comprehend the relief it must have been to that foolish sage in Rasselas, when assured that he no longer was afflicted with the care of governing a galaxy of worlds.

Some people are born to talk, with an incessant tongue illustrating perpetuity of motion in the much-abused mouth; some to indite solid continuous prose, with a labour-loving pen ever tenanting the hand; but I clearly was born a zoölogical anomaly, *with a pen in my mouth*, a sort of serpent-tongue. Heaven give it wisdom, and put away its poison!

Such being my character from birth, a paper-gossip, a writer from the cradle, I ought not demurely to apologize for nature's handicraft, nor excuse this light affliction of chattering in print.—Who asks you to read it?—Neither let me cast reflections on your temper or your intellect by too humble exculpation of this book of many themes; or must I then

regard you as those sullen children in the market-place, whom piping cannot please, and sorrow cannot soften?

And now, friend, I've done. Require not, however shrewd your guess, my acknowledgment of this brain-child; forgive all unintended harms; supply what is lacking in my charities; politically, socially, authorially, think that I bigotize in theoretic fun, but am incarnate Tolerance for practical earnest. And so, giving your character fairer credit than if I feared you as one of those captious cautious people who make a man offender for an ill-considered word; commending to the cordial warmth of Humanity my unhatched score and more of book-eggs, to perfect which I need an Eccaleobion of literature; and scorning, as heartily as any Sioux chief, to prolong palaver, when I have nothing more to say; suffer me thus courteously to take of you my leave. And forasmuch as Lord Chesterfield recommends an exit to be heralded by a pungent speech, let me steal from quaint old Norris the last word wherewith I trouble you: "These are my thoughts; I might have spun them out into a greater length, but that I think a little plot of ground, thick-sown, is better than a great field, which for the most part of it lieth fallow."

APPENDIX.

AN AFTER-THOUGHT.

It will be quite in keeping with your author's mind, and consistently characteristic of his desultory indoles—(not indolence, pray you, good Anglican, albeit thereunto akin,)—if after having thus formally taken his *congé* with the help of a Petronius so redoubtable as Chesterfield, he just steps back again to induce you to have another last ramble. Now, the wherefore of this might sentimentally be veiled, were I but little honest, in professed attachment for my amiable reader, as though with Romeo I cried, "Parting in such sweet sorrow, that I could say farewell till it be morrow;" or it might be extenuated cacoethically, as though a new crop of fancies were sprung up already, an after-math rank and wild, before the gladdening shower of commendation has yet freshened-up my brown hay-field: or it might be disguised falsely, as if a parcel of precious MSS. had been lost by penny-postage, or stolen in the purlieus of Shoe-lane; but, instead of all these unworthy subterfuges, the truth shall be told plainly; we are yet too short by a sheet (so hints our publishing Procrustes) of the marketable volume. Accordingly, whether or not in this booklet your readership has already found seed sufficient for cyclopædias, I am free to admit that the expectant butter-man at least has not his legitimate post-octavo allowance of three hundred pages; and to fill this aching void as cleverly and quickly as I can, is my first object in so rapid a return. That honesty is the best policy, deny who dare?

Still it is competent for me to confess worthier objects, (although, in point of their arising, they were secondary,) as further illustrative of my '*Author's Mind*' shown in other specimens; for example, a linsey-woolsey tapestry of many colours shall be hung upon the end of this arcade; the last few trees in this poor avenue shall bear the flowers of poetry as well as the fruit of prose; my swan (O, dub it not a goose!) would, like a *prima-donna*, go off this theatre of fancy, singing. And again, suffer me, good friend, to think your charity still willing to be pleased: many weary pages back, I offered you to part with me in peace, if you felt small sympathies with a rambler so whimsical and lawless; surely, having walked together kindly until now, we shall not quarrel at the last.

Empty, however—empty, and rejoicing in its unthoughtful emptiness—have I boasted this my head but a page or two ago; and that boast, for all the critic's sneer, that no one will deny it, shall not be taken from me by renewal of determined meditations; now that my house is swept and garnished, I would not beckon back those old inhabitants. Neither let me heed so lightly of your intellect, as to hope to satisfy its reading with the scanty harvest of a *soil effete*; this license of writing up to measure shall not show me sterile,

any more than that emancipation shall, by indulgence of thought, be disenchanted. And now to solve the problem: not to think, for my mind is in a regimen of truancy; not to fail in pleasing, if it be possible, the great world's implacable palate, therefore to eschew dilution of good liquor; and yet to render up in fair array the fitting tale of pages: well, if I may not metaphysically draw upon internal resources, I can at least externally and physically resort to yonder—desk; (drawer would have savoured of the Punic, which Scipio and I blot out with equal hate;) for therein lie *perdus* divers poeticals I fain would see in print; yea, start not at "poeticals," carp not at the threatening sound, for verily, even as carp—so called from *carpere*, to catch if you can, and the Saxon capp, to cavil, because when caught they don't pay for mastication—even as carp, a muddy fish, difficult to hook, and provocate of hostile criticism, conceals its lack of savour in the flavour of port-wine—even so shall strong prose-sauce be served up with my poor dozen of sonnets: and ye who would uncharitably breathe that they taste stronger of Lethe's mud than of Helicon's sweet water, treat me to a better dish, or carp not at my fishing.

Imagination, as I need not tell psychologists by this time, is my tyrant; I cannot sleep, nor sit out a sermon, nor remember yesterday, nor read in peace, (how calm in blessed quiet people seem to read!) without the distraction of a thousand fancies: I hold this an infirmity, not an accomplishment; a thing to be conquered, not to be coveted: and still I love it, suffering those chains of gossamer to wind about me, that seductive honey-jar yet again to trap me, like some poor insect; thus then my foolish idolatry heretofore hath hailed

IMAGINATION.

My fond first love, sweet mistress of my mind,
  Thy beautiful sublimity hath long
  Charm'd mine affections, and entranced my song,
Thou spirit-queen, that sit'st enthroned, enshrined
Within this suppliant heart; by day and night
  My brain is full of thee: ages of dreams,
Thoughts of a thousand worlds in visions bright,
  Fear's dim terrific train, Guilt's midnight schemes,
Strange peeping eyes, soft smiling fairy faces,
  Dark consciousness of fallen angels nigh,
Sad converse with the dead, or headlong races
  Down the straight cliffs, or clinging on a shelf
  Of brittle shale, or hunted thro' the sky!—
O, God of mind, I shudder at myself!

Now, friend reader, you have accustomed yourself to think that every thing in rhyme, *i. e.*, poetry, as you somewhat scornfully call it, must be false: and I am sorry to be obliged to grant you that a leaning towards plain matter-of-fact, is no wise characteristic of metrical enthusiasts. But believe me for a truth-teller; that sonnet (did you read it?) hints at some fearful verities; and that you may further apprehend this sweet ideal mistress of your author's mind, suffer me to introduce to your acquaintance

IMAGINATION PERSONIFIED.

Dread Monarch-maid, I see thee now before me,
  Searching my soul with those mysterious eyes,
Spell-bound I stand, thy presence stealing o'er me,
  While all unnerved my trembling spirit dies:
  Oh, what a world of untold wonder lies
Within thy silent lips! how rare a light
  Of conquer'd joys and ecstasies repress'd
  Beneath thy dimpled cheek shines half-confess'd!
In what luxuriant masses, glossy bright,

Those raven locks fall shadowing thy fair breast!
And, lo! that bursting brow, with gorgeous wings,
And vague young forms of beauty coyly hiding
In thy crisp curls, like cherubs there abiding—
Charmer, to thee my heart enamour'd springs.

Such, then, and of me so well beloved, is that abstracted Platonism. But verily the fear of imagination would far outbalance any love of it, if crime had peopled for a man that viewless world with spectres, and the Medusa-head of Justice were shaking her snakes in his face. And, by way of a parergon observation, how terrible, most terrible, to the guilty soul must be the solitary silent system now so popular among those cold legislative schemers, who have ground the poor man to starvation, and would hunt the criminal to madness! How false is that political philosophy which seeks to reform character by leaving conscience caged up in loneliness for months, to gnaw into its diseased self, rather than surrounding it with the wholesome counsels of better living minds. It is not often good for man to be alone: and yet in its true season, (parsimoniously used, not prodigally abused,) solitude does fair service, rendering also to the comparatively innocent mind precious pleasures: religion prësupposed, and a judgment strong enough of muscle to rein-in the coursers of Imagination's car, I judge it good advice to prescribe for most men an occasional course of

SOLITUDE.

Therefore delight thy soul in solitude,
Feeding on peace; if solitude it be
To feel that million creatures, fair and good,
With gracious influences circle thee;
To hear the mind's own music; and to see
God's glorious world with eyes of gratitude,
Unwatch'd by vain intruders. Let me shrink
From crowds, and prying faces, and the noise
Of men and merchandise; far nobler joys
Than chill Society's false hand hath given,
Attend me when I'm left alone to think.
To think—alone?—Ah, no, not quite alone;
Save me from that—cast out from earth and heaven,
A friendless, Godless, isolated ONE!

But of these higher metaphysicals, these fancy-bred extravagations, perhaps somewhat too much: you will dub me dreamer, if not proser—or rather, poet, as the more modern reproach. Let us then, by way of clearing our mind at once of these hallucinations, go forth quickly into the fresh green fields, and expatiate with glad hearts on these full-blown glories of

SUMMER.

Warm summer! Yes, the very word is warm;
The hum of bees is in it, and the sight
Of sunny fountains glancing silver light,
And the rejoicing world, and every charm
Of happy nature in her hour of love,
Fruits, flowers, and flies, in rainbow-glory bright:
The smile of God glows graciously above,
And genial earth is grateful; day by day
Old faces come again with blossoms gay,
Gemming in gladness meadow, garden, grove:
Haste with thy harvest, then, my softened heart,
Awake thy better hopes of better days,

Bring in thy fruits and flowers of thanks and praise,
And in creation's pæan take thy part.

How different in sterner beauty was the landscape not long since! The energies of universal life prisoned up in temporary obstruction; every black hedge-row tufted with woolly snow, like some Egyptian mother mourning for her children; shrubs and plants fettered up in glittering chains, motionless as those stone-struck feasters before the head of Gorgon; and the dark-green fir-trees swathed in heavy curtains of iridescent whiteness. Contrast is ever pleasurable; therefore we need scarcely apologize for an ice in the dog-days—I mean for this present unseasonable introduction of dead

WINTER.

As some fair statue, white and hard and cold,
Smiling in marble, rigid, yet at rest,
Or like some gentle child of beauteous mould,
Whose placid face and softly swelling breast
Are fixed in death, and on them bear imprest
His magic seal of peace—so, frozen, lies
The loveliness of nature: every tree
Stands hung with lace against the clear blue skies;
The hills are giant waves of glistering snow;
Rare and northern fowl, now strangely tame to see,
With ruffling plumage cluster on the bough,
And tempt the murderous gun; mouse-like, the wren
Hides in the new-cut hedge; and all things now
Fear starving Winter more than cruel men.

Ay, "cruel men:" that truest epithet for monarch-man must be the tangent from which my Pegasus shall strike his hoof for the next flight. Who does not writhe while reading details of cruelty, and who would not rejoice to find even there somewhat of

CONSOLATION?

Scholar of Reason, Grace, and Providence,
Restrain thy bursting and indignant tears;
With tenderest might unerring Wisdom steers
Through those mad seas the bark of Innocence.
Doth thy heart burn for vengeance on the deed—
Some barbarous deed wrought out by cruelty
On woman, or on famish'd childhood's need,
Yea, on these fond dumb dogs—doth thy heart bleed
For pity, child of sensibility?
Those tears are gracious, and thy wrath most right
Yet patience, patience; there is comfort still;
The Judge is just; a world of love and light
Remains to counterpoise the load of ill,
And the poor victim's cup with angel's food to fill.

For, as my Psycotherion has long ago informed you, I hope there is some sort of heaven yet in reserve for the brute creation: if otherwise, in respect of costermongers' donkeys, Kamskatdales' gaunt starved dogs, the Guacho's horse, spurred deep with three-inch rowels, the angler's worm, Strasburgh geese, and poor footsore curs harnessed to ill-balanced trucks—for all these and many more I, for one, sadly stand in need of consolation. Meanwhile, let us change the subject. After a dose of cruel cogitations, and this corrupting converse with Phalaris and Domitian, what better sweetener of thoughts than an "olive-branch" in the waters of Marah? Spend a moment in the nursery; it is happily fashionable now, as well as pleasurable, to sport awhile with Nature's prettiest

playthings; the praises of children are always at the tip of my—pen, that is, tongue, you remember, and often have I told the world, in all the pride of print, of my fond infantile predilections: then let this little Chanson be added to the rest; we will call it

MARGARET.

A song of gratitude and cheerful prayer
  Still shall go forth my pretty babes to greet,
As on life's firmament, serenely fair,
  Their little stars arise, with aspects sweet
Of mild successive radiance: that small pair,
  Ellen and Mary, having gone before
In this affection's welcome, the dear debt
Here shall be paid to gentle Margaret:
  Be thou indeed a pearl—in pureness, more
Than beauty, praise, or price; full be thy cup,
  Mantling with grace, and truth with mercy met,
  With warm and generous charities flowing o'er;
And when the Great King makes his jewels up,
  Shine forth, child-angel, in His coronet!

And while hovering about this fairy-land of sweet-home scenery, and confessing thankfully to these domestic affections, your author knows one heart at least that will be gladdened, one face that will be brightened by the following

BIRTH-DAY PRAYER.

Mother, dear mother, no unmeaning rhyme,
  No mere ingenious compliment of words,
My heart pours forth at this auspicious time:
  I know a simple honest prayer affords
  More music on affection's thrilling cords,
More joy, than can be measured or express'd
  In song most sweet, or eloquence sublime.
Mother, I bless thee! God doth bless thee too!
In these thy children's children thou *art* blest,
  With dear old pleasures springing up anew:
And blessings wait upon thee still, my mother!
  Blessings to come, this many a happy year;
For, losing thee, where could we find another
  So kind, so true, so tender, and—so dear?

Is it an impertinence—I speak etymologically—to have dropped that sonnet here?—Be it as you will, my Zoilus; let me stand convicted of honesty and love: I ask no higher praise in this than to have pleased my mother.

Penman as I am, have been, and shall be, innumerable letters have grown beneath my goose-quill. Who cannot say the same indeed? For in these patriotic days, for mere country's love and post-office prosperity, every body writes to every body about every thing, or, as oftener happens, about nothing. Nevertheless, I wish some kind pundit would invent a corrosive ink, warranted to consume a letter within a week after it had been read and answered: then should we have fewer of those ephemeral documents treasured up in pigeon-holes, and docketed correspondence for possible publication. Not Byron, nor Lamb, nor West, nor Gray, with all their epistolary charms, avail to persuade my prejudice that it is honest to publish a private letter: if written with that view, the author is

a hypocrite in his friendships; if not so, the decent veil of privacy is torn from social life, confidence is rebuked, betrayed, destroyed; and the suspicion of eaves-droppings and casual scribblings to be posthumously printed, makes silence truly wisdom, and grim reserve a virtue. This public appetite for secret information, and, if possible, for hinted scandal—this unhallowed spirit of outward curiosity trespassing upon the sacred precincts of a man's own circle—is to the real author's mind a thing to be feared, if he is weak—to be circumspectly watched, if he is wise. Such is the present hunger for this kind of reading, that it would be diffidence, not presumption, in the merest school-boy to dread the future publication of his holiday letters; who knows—I may jump scathless from the Monument, or in these Popish times become excommunicated by special bull, or fly round the world in a balloon, or attain to the authorship of forty volumes, or be half-smothered by a valet-de-place, or get indicted for inveterate Toryism, or any how, I may—notwithstanding all present obscurities that intervene—wake one of these fine mornings, and find myself famous: and what then? The odds at Tattersall's would be twelve to one that sundry busy-bodies, booksellers or otherwise, would scrape together with malice prepense, and keep *câchet* for future print, a multitude of careless scrawls that should have been burnt within an hour of the reading. Now, is not this a thing to be exclaimed against? And, utterly improbable on the ground of any merit in themselves as I should judge their publication (but for certain stolidities of the same sort, that often-times have wearied me in print), I choose to let my author's mind here enter its eternal protest against any such treachery regarding private

LETTERS.

Tear, scatter, burn, destroy—but keep them not;
I hate, I dread those living witnesses
Of varying self, of good or ill forgot,
Of altered hopes, and withered kindnesses.
Oh! call not up those shadows of the dead,
Those visions of the past, that idly blot
The present with regret for blessings fled:
This hand that wrote, this ever-teeming head,
This flickering heart is full of chance and change;
I would not have you watch my weaknesses,
Nor how my foolish likings roam and range,
Nor how the mushroom friendships of a day
Hastened in hot-bed ripeness to decay,
Nor how to mine own self I grow so strange.

So anathema to editors, maranatha to publishers of all such hypothetical post-obits!

Every one can comprehend something of an author's ease, when he sees his manuscript in print: it is safe; no longer a treasure uninsurable, no longer a locked-up care: it is emancipated, glorified, incapable of real extermination; it has reached a changeless condition; the chrysalis of illegible cacography has burst its bonds, and flies living through the world on the wings of those true Dædali, Faust, and Gutenberg: the transition-state is passed: henceforth for his brain-child set free from that nervous slumber, its parent calmly can expect the oblivion of no more than a death-like sleep, if he be not indeed buoyed up with certain hope of immortality. "'Tis pleasant sure to see one's self in print," is the adequate cause for ninety books out of a hundred; and, though zeal might be the ostentatious stalking-horse, my candour shall give no better excuse for the fourteen lines that follow; they require but this preface: a most venerable chapel of old time, picturesque and full of interest, is dropping to decay, within a mile of me; where it is, and whose the fault, are askings improper to be answered: nevertheless, I cast upon the waters this meagre morsel of

APPEAL.

Shame on thee, Christian, cold and covetous one!
The laws (I praise them not for this) declare
That ancient, loved, deserted house of prayer
As money's worth a layman landlord's own.
Then use it as thine own; thy mansion there
Beneath the shadow of this ruinous church
Stands new and decorate; thine every shed
And barn is neat and proper; I might search
Thy comfortable farms, and well despair
Of finding dangerous ruin overhead,
And damp unwholesome mildew on the walls:
Arouse thy better self: restore it; see,
Through thy neglect the holy fabric falls!
Fear, lest that crushing guilt should fall on thee.

I fear much, poor book, this finale of jingling singing will jar upon the public ear; all men must shrink from a lengthy snake with a rattle in its tail: and this ballast a-stern of over-ponderous poetry may chance to swamp so frail a skiff. But I have promised a dozen sonnets in this after-thought Appendix; yea, and I will keep that promise at all mortal hazards, even to the superadded unit proverbial of dispensing Fornarinas. Ten have been told off fairly, and now we come upon the gay court-cards. After so much of villanous political ferment, society returns at length to its every-day routine, heedful of other oratory than harangues from the hustings, and glad of other reading than figurative party-speeches. Yet am I bold to recur, just for a thought or two, to my whilom patriotic hopes and fears: fears indeed came first upon me, but hopes finally out-voted them: briefly, then, begin upon the worst, and endure, with what patience you possess, this creaky stave of bitter

POLITICS.

Chill'd is the patriot's hope, the poet's prayer:
Alas for England, and her tarnish'd crown,
Her sun of ancient glory going down,
Her foes triumphant in her friends' despair:
What wonder should the billows overwhelm
A bark so mann'd by Comus and his crew,
"Youth at the prow, and pleasure at the helm?"
Yet, no!—we will not fear; the loathing realm
At length has burst its chains; a motley few,
The pseudo-saint, the boasting infidel,
The demagogue, and courtier, hand in hand
No more besiege our Zion's citadel:
But high in hope comes on this nobler band
For God, the sovereign, and our father-land.

That last card, you may remember, must reckon as the knave; and therefore is consistently regarding an ominous trisyllable, which rhymes to "knavish tricks" in the national anthem; our suit now leads us in regular succession to the queen, a topic (it were Milesian to say a subject) whereon now, as heretofore, my loyalty shall never be found lacking. In old Rome's better antiquity, a slave was commissioned to whisper counsel in the ear of triumphant generals or emperors; and, in old England's less enlightened youth, a baubled fool was privileged to blurt out verities, which bearded wisdom dared not hint at. Now, I boast myself free, a citizen of no mean city—my commission signed by duty—my counsel guarantied by truth: and if, O still intruding Zoilus, the liberality of your nature provokes you to class me truly in the family of fools, let your antiquarian ignorance of those licensed Gothamites blush at its abortive malice; the arrow of your

sarcasm bounds from my target blunted; pick up again the harmless reed: for, not to insist upon the prevalence of knaves, and their moral postponement to mere lack-wits, let me tell you that wise men, and good men, and shrewd men, were those ancient baubled fools: therefore would I gladly be thought of their fraternity.

But our twelfth sonnet is waiting, save the mark! Stay: there ought to intervene a solemn pause; for your author's mind, on the spur of the occasion, pours forth an unpremeditated song of free-spoken, uncompromising, patriotic counsel; let its fervency atone for its presumption

Bold in my freedom, yet with homage meek,
  As duty prompts and loyalty commands,
To thee, O, queen of empires! would I speak.
  Behold, the most high God hath giv'n to thee
  Kingdoms and glories, might and majesty,
  Setting thee ruler over many lands;
Him first to serve, O monarch, wisely seek:
And many people, nations, languages,
  Have laid their welfare in thy sovereign hands;
Them next to bless, to prosper and to please,
Nobly forget thyself, and thine own ease:
  Rebuke ill-counsel; rally round thy state
  The scattered good, and true, and wise, and great:
So Heav'n upon thee shed sweet influences!

And now for my Raffaellesque disguise of a vulgar baker's twelve, the largess muffin of Mistress Fornarina: thirteen cards to a suit, and thirteen to the dozen, are proverbially the correct thing; but, as in regular succession I have come upon the king card, I am free to confess—(pen, why will you repeat again such a foolish, stale Joe-Millerism?)—the subject a dilemma. Natheless, my good nature shall give a royal chance to criticism most malign: whether candour acknowledge it or not, doubtless the author's mind reigns dominant in the author's book; and, notwithstanding the self-silence of blind Mæonides, (a right notable exception,) it holds good as a rule that the majority of original writings, directly or indirectly, concern a man's own self; his whims and his crotchets, his knowledge and his ignorance, wisdom and folly, experiences and suspicions, therein find a place prepared for them. Scott's life naturally produced his earlier novels; in the '*Corsair*,' the '*Childe*,' and the '*Don*,' no one can mistake the hero-author; Southey's works, Shelley's, and Wordsworth's, are full of adventure, feeling, and fancy, personal to the writers, at least equally with the sonnets of Petrarch or of Shakspeare. And as with instances illustrious as those, so with all humbler followers, the skiffs, pinnaces, and heavy barges in the wake of those gallant ships: an author's library, and his friends, his hobbies and amusements, business and pleasure, fears and wishes, accidents of life, and qualities of soul, all mingle in his writings with a harmonizing individuality; nay, the very countenance and hand-writing, alike with choice of subject and style and method of their treatment, illustrate, in one word, the author's mind. These things being so, what hinders it from occupying, as in honesty it does, the king's place in this pack of sonnets? Nevertheless, forasmuch as by such occupancy an ill-tempered sarcasm might charge it with conceit; know then that my humbler meaning here is to put it lowest and last, even in the place of wooden-spoon; for this also (being mindful of the twelve apostle-spoons from old time antecedent) is a legitimate thirteener: and so, while in extricating my muse from the folly of serenading a non-existent king, I have candidly avowed the general selfishness of printing, believe that, in this avowal, I take the lowest seat, so well befitting one of whom it may ungraciously be asked, Where do fools buy their logic?

List, then, oh list! while generically, not individually I claim for authorship

THE CATHEDRAL MIND.

Temple of truths most eloquently spoken,
Shrine of sweet thoughts veiled round with words of power,
The '*Author's Mind*,' in all its hallowed riches,
Stands a cathedral: full of precious things;
Tastefully built in harmonies unbroken,
Cloister, and aisle, dark crypt, and aëry tower:
Long-treasured relics in the fretted niches,
And secret stores, and heap'd-up offerings,
Art's noblest gems, with every fruit and flower,
Paintings and sculpture, choice imaginings,
Its plenitude of wealth and praise betoken:
An ever-burning lamp portrays the soul;
Deep music all around enchantment flings;
And God's great Presence consecrates the whole.

Now at length, in all verity, I have said out my say: nor publisher nor printer shall get more copy from me: neither, indeed, would it before have been the case, for all that Damastic argument, were it not that many beginnings—and you remember my proverbial preliminarizing—should, for mere antithesis' sake, be endowed with a counterpoise of many endings. So, in this second parting, let me humbly suggest to gentle reader these: that nothing is at once more plebeian and unphilosophical than—censure, in a world where nothing can be perfect, and where apathy is held to be good-breeding; *item*, (I am quoting Scott,) that "it is much more easy to destroy than to build, to criticise than to compose;" *item*, (Sir Walter again, *ipsissima verba*, in a letter to Miss Seward,) that there are certain literary "gentlemen who appear to be a sort of tinkers, who, unable to *make* pots and pans, set up for *menders* of them, and often make two holes in patching one;" *item*, that in such possible cases as "exercise" for "exorcise," "repeat" for "repent," "depreciate" for "deprecate," and the like, an indifferent scribe is always at the mercy of compositors; and lastly, that if it is, by very far, easier to read a book than to write one, it is also, by at least as much, worthier of a noble mind to give credit for good intentions, rather than for bad, or indifferent, or none at all, even where hyper-criticism may appear to prove that the effort itself has been a failure.

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