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## THE PREMATURE BURIAL.

There are certain themes of which the interest is all-absorbing, but which are too entirely horrible for the purposes of legitimate fiction. These the mere romanticist must eschew, if he do not wish to offend, or to disgust. They are with propriety handled, only when the severity and majesty of Truth sanctify and sustain them. We thrill, for example, with the most intense of "pleasurable pain," over the accounts of the Passage of the Beresina, of the Earthquake at Lisbon, of the Plague at London, of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, or of the stifling of the hundred and twenty-three prisoners in the Black Hole at Calcutta. But, in these accounts, it is the fact—it is the reality—it is the history which excites. As inventions, we should regard them with simple abhorrence.

I have mentioned some few of the more prominent and august calamities on record; but, in these, it is the extent, not less than the character of the calamity, which so vividly impresses the fancy. I need not remind the reader that, from the long and wierd catalogue of human miseries, I might have selected many individual instances more replete with essential suffering than any of these vast generalities of disaster. The true wretchedness, indeed—the ultimate woe—is particular, not diffuse. That the ghastly extremes of agony are endured by man the unit, and never by man the mass—for this let us thank a merciful God!

To be buried while alive, is, beyond question, the most terrific of these extremes which has ever fallen to the lot of mere mortality. That it has frequently, very frequently, so fallen, will scarcely be denied by those who think. The boundaries which divide Life from Death, are at best shadowy and vague. Who shall say where the one ends, and where the other begins? We know that there are diseases in which occur total cessations of all the apparent functions of vitality, and yet in which these cessations are merely suspensions, properly so called. They are only temporary pauses in the incomprehensible mechanism. A certain period elapses, and some unseen mysterious principle again sets in motion the magic pinions and the wizard wheels. The silver cord was not forever loosed, nor the golden bowl irreparably broken. But where, meantime, was the soul?

Apart, however, from the inevitable conclusion, *à priori*, that such causes must produce such effects—that the well known occurrence of such cases of suspended animation must naturally give rise, now and then, to premature interments—apart from this consideration, we have the direct testimony of medical and ordinary experience, to prove that a vast number of such interments have actually taken place. I might refer at once, if necessary, to a hundred well authenticated instances. One of very remarkable character, and of which the circumstances may be fresh in the memory of some of my readers, occurred, not very long ago, in the neighboring city of Baltimore, where it occasioned a painful, intense, and widely extended excitement. The wife of one of the most respectable citizens—a lawyer of eminence and a member of Congress—was seized with a sudden and unaccountable illness, which completely baffled the skill of her physicians. After much suf-

ferring she died, or was supposed to die. No one suspected, indeed, or had reason to suspect, that she was not actually dead. She presented all the ordinary appearances of death. The face assumed the usual pinched and sunken outline. The lips were of the usual marble pallor. The eyes were lustreless. There was no warmth. Pulsation had ceased. For three days the body was preserved unburied, during which it had acquired a stony rigidity. The funeral, in short, was hastened, on account of the rapid advance of what was supposed to be decomposition.

The lady was deposited in her family vault, which, for three subsequent years, was undisturbed. At the expiration of this term, it was opened for the reception of a sarcophagus;—but, alas! how fearful a shock awaited the husband, who, personally, threw open the door. As its portals swung outwardly back, some white-apparelled object fell rattling within his arms. It was the skeleton of his wife in her yet unmouldered shroud.

A careful investigation rendered it evident that she had revived within two days after her entombment—that her struggles within the coffin had caused it to fall from a ledge, or shelf, to the floor, where it was so broken as to permit her escape. A lamp which had been accidentally left, full of oil, within the tomb, was found empty; it might have been exhausted, however, by evaporation. On the uppermost of the steps which led down into the dread chamber, was a large fragment of the coffin, with which it seemed that she had endeavored to arrest attention, by striking the iron door. While thus occupied, she probably swooned, or possibly died, through sheer terror; and, in falling, her shroud became entangled in some iron-work which projected interiorly. Thus she remained, and thus she rotted, erect.

In the year 1810, a case of living inhumation happened in France, attended with circumstances which go far to warrant the assertion that truth is, indeed, stranger than fiction. The heroine of the story was a Mademoiselle Victorine Lafourcade, a young girl of illustrious family, of wealth, and of great personal beauty. Among her numerous suitors was Julien Bossuet, a poor *littérateur*, or journalist, of Paris. His talents and general amiability had recommended him to the notice of the heiress, by whom he seems to have been truly beloved; but her pride of birth decided her, finally, to reject him, and to wed a Monsieur Rénelle, a banker, and a diplomatist of some eminence. After marriage, however, this gentleman neglected, and, perhaps, even more positively ill-treated her. Having passed with him some wretched years, she died,—at least her condition so closely resembled death as to deceive every one who saw her. She was buried—not in a vault—but in an ordinary grave in the village of her nativity. Filled with despair, and still inflamed by the memory of a profound attachment, the lover journeys from the capital to the remote province in which the village lies, with the romantic purpose of disinterring the corpse, and possessing himself of its luxuriant tresses. He reaches the grave. At midnight he unearths the coffin, opens it, and is in the act of detaching the hair, when he is arrested by the unclosing of the beloved eyes. In fact, the lady had been buried alive. Vitality had not altogether departed;

and she was aroused, by the caresses of her lover, from the lethargy which had been mistaken for death. He bore her frantically to his lodgings in the village. He employed certain powerful restoratives suggested by no little medical learning. In fine, she revived. She recognized her preserver. She remained with him until, by slow degrees, she fully recovered her original health. Her woman's heart was not adamant, and this last lesson of love sufficed to soften it. She bestowed it upon Bossuet. She returned no more to her husband, but concealing from him her resurrection, fled with her lover to America. Twenty years afterwards, the two returned to France, in the persuasion that time had so greatly altered the lady's appearance that her friends would be unable to recognize her. They were mistaken, however; for, at the first meeting, Monsieur Rénelle did actually recognize and make claim to his wife. This claim she resisted; and a judicial tribunal sustained her in her resistance; deciding that the peculiar circumstances, with the long lapse of years, had extinguished, not only equitably but legally, the authority of the husband.

The "Chirurgical Journal" of Leipsic—a periodical, of high authority and merit, which some American bookseller would do well to translate and republish—records, in a late number, a very distressing event of the character in question.

An officer of artillery, a man of gigantic stature and of robust health, being thrown from an unmanageable horse, received a very severe contusion upon the head, which rendered him insensible at once; the skull was slightly fractured; but no immediate danger was apprehended. Trepanning was accomplished successfully. He was bled, and many other of the ordinary means of relief were adopted. Gradually, however, he fell into a more and more hopeless state of stupor; and, finally, it was thought that he died.

The weather was warm; and he was buried, with indecent haste, in one of the public cemeteries. His funeral took place on Thursday. On the Sunday following, the grounds of the cemetery were, as usual, much thronged with visitors; and, about noon, an intense excitement was created by the declaration of a peasant that, while sitting upon the grave of the officer, he had distinctly felt a commotion of the earth, as if occasioned by some one struggling beneath. At first little attention was paid to the man's asseveration; but his evident terror, and the dogged obstinacy with which he persisted in his story, had, at length, their natural effect upon the crowd. Spades were hurriedly procured, and the grave, which was shamefully shallow, was, in a few minutes, so far thrown open that the head of its occupant appeared. He was then, seemingly, dead; but he sat nearly erect within his coffin, the lid of which, in his furious struggles, he had partially uplifted.

He was forthwith conveyed to the nearest Hospital, and there pronounced to be still living, although in an asphytic condition. After some hours he revived, recognized individuals of his acquaintance, and, in broken sentences, spoke of his agonies in the grave.

From what he related, it was clear that he must have been conscious of life for more than an hour, while inhumed, before lapsing into insensibility. The grave was carelessly and loosely filled with an exceedingly porous soil; and thus some air was necessarily admitted. He heard the footsteps of the crowd overhead, and endeavored to make himself heard in turn. It was the tumult within the grounds of the cemetery, he said, which appeared to awaken him from a deep sleep—but no sooner was he awake than he became fully aware of the awful horrors of his position.

This patient, it is recorded, was doing well, and seemed to be in a fair way of ultimate recovery, but fell a victim to the quackeries of medical experiment. The galvanic battery was

applied; and he suddenly expired in one of those ecstatic paroxysms which, occasionally, it superinduces.

The mention of the galvanic battery, nevertheless, recalls to my memory a well known and very extraordinary case in point, where its action proved the means of restoring to animation a young attorney of London who had been interred for two days. This occurred in 1831, and created, at the time, a very profound sensation wherever it was made the subject of converse.

The patient, Mr. Edward Stapleton, had died, apparently, of typhus fever, accompanied with some anomalous symptoms which had excited the curiosity of his medical attendants. Upon his seeming decease, his friends were requested to sanction a *post mortem* examination, but declined to permit it. As often happens when such refusals are made, the practitioners resolved to disinter the body and dissect it at leisure, in private. Arrangements were easily effected with some of the numerous corps of body-snatchers with which London abounds; and, upon the third night after the funeral, the supposed corpse was unearthed from a grave eight feet deep, and deposited in the operating chamber of one of the private hospitals.

An incision of some extent had been actually made in the abdomen, when the fresh and undecayed appearance of the subject suggested an application of the battery. One experiment succeeded another, and the customary effects supervened, with nothing to characterize them in any respect, except, upon one or two occasions, a more than ordinary degree of life-likeness in the convulsive action.

It grew late. The day was about to dawn; and it was thought expedient, at length, to proceed at once to the dissection. A student, however, was especially desirous of testing a theory of his own, and insisted upon applying the battery to one of the pectoral muscles. A rough gash was made, and a wire hastily brought in contact; when the patient, with a hurried but quite unconvulsive movement, arose from the table, stepped into the middle of the floor, gazed about him uneasily for a few seconds, and then—spoke. What he said was unintelligible; but words were uttered; the syllabification was distinct. Having spoken, he fell heavily to the floor.

For some moments all were paralyzed with awe—but the urgency of the case soon restored them their presence of mind. It was seen that Mr. Stapleton was alive, although in a swoon. Upon exhibition of ether he revived and was rapidly restored to health, and to the society of his friends—from whom, however, all knowledge of his resuscitation was withheld, until a relapse was no longer to be apprehended. Their wonder—their rapturous astonishment—may be conceived.

The most thrilling peculiarity of this incident, nevertheless, is involved in what Mr. S. himself asserts. He declares that at no period was he altogether insensible—that, dully and confusedly, he was aware of every thing which happened to him, from the moment in which he was pronounced *dead* by his physicians, to that in which he fell swooning to the floor of the Hospital. "I am alive" were the uncomprehended words which, upon recognizing the locality of the dissecting-room, he had endeavored, in his extremity, to utter.

It were an easy matter to multiply such histories as these—but I forbear—for, indeed, we have no need of such to establish the fact that premature interments occur. When we reflect how very rarely, from the nature of the case, we have it in our power to detect them, we must admit that they may frequently occur without our cognizance. Scarcely, in truth, is a graveyard ever encroached upon, for any purpose, to any great extent, that skeletons are not found in postures which suggest the most fearful of suspicions.

Fearful indeed the suspicion—but more fearful the doom! It may be asserted, without hesitation, that *no* event is so ter-

ribly well adapted to inspire the supremeness of bodily and of mental distress, as is burial before death. The unendurable oppression of the lungs—the stifling fumes from the damp earth—the clinging of the death garments—the rigid embrace of the narrow house—the blackness of the absolute Night—the silence like a sea that overwhelms—the unseen but palpable presence of the Conqueror Worm—these things, with thoughts of the air and grass above, with memory of dear friends who would fly to save us if but informed of our fate, and with consciousness that of this fate they can *never* be informed—that our hopeless portion is that of the really dead—these considerations, I say, carry into the heart, which still palpitates, a degree of appalling and intolerable horror from which the most daring imagination must recoil. We know of nothing so agonizing upon Earth—we can dream of nothing half so hideous in the realms of the nethermost Hell. And thus all narratives upon this topic have an interest profound; an interest, nevertheless, which, through the sacred awe of the topic itself, very properly and very peculiarly depends upon our conviction of the *truth* of the matter narrated. What I have now to tell, is of my own actual knowledge—of my own positive and personal experience.

For several years I had been subject to attacks of the singular disorder which physicians have agreed to term catalepsy, in default of a more definitive title. Although both the immediate and the predisposing causes, and even the actual diagnosis, of this disease, are still mysteries, its obvious and apparent character is sufficiently well understood. Its variations seem to be chiefly of degree. Sometimes the patient lies, for a day only, or even for a shorter period, in a species of exaggerated lethargy. He is senseless and externally motionless; but the pulsation of the heart is still faintly perceptible; some traces of warmth remain; a slight color lingers within the centre of the cheek; and, upon application of a mirror to the lips, we can detect a torpid, unequal, and vacillating action of the lungs. Then again the duration of the trance is for weeks—even for months; while the closest scrutiny, and the most rigorous medical tests, fail to establish any material distinction between the state of the sufferer and what we conceive of absolute death. Very usually, he is saved from premature interment solely by the knowledge of his friends that he has been previously subject to catalepsy, by the consequent suspicion excited, and, above all, by the non-appearance of decay. The advances of the malady are, luckily, gradual. The first manifestations, although marked, are unequivocal. The fits grow successively more and more distinctive, and endure each for a longer term than the preceding. In this lies the principal security from inhumation. The unfortunate whose *first* attack should be of the extreme character which is occasionally seen, would almost inevitably be consigned alive to the tomb.

My own case differed in no important particular from those mentioned in medical books. Sometimes, without any apparent cause, I sank, little by little, into a condition of hemi-syncope, or half swoon; and, in this condition, without pain, without ability to stir, or, strictly speaking, to think, but with a dull lethargic consciousness of life and of the presence of those who surrounded my bed, I remained, until the crisis of the disease restored me, suddenly, to perfect sensation. At other times I was quickly and impetuously smitten. I grew sick, and numb, and chilly, and dizzy, and so fell prostrate at once. Then, for weeks, all was void, and black, and silent, and Nothing became the universe. Total annihilation could be no more. From these latter attacks I awoke, however, with a gradation slow in proportion to the suddenness of the seizure. Just as the day dawns to the friendless and houseless beggar who roams the streets throughout the long deso-

late winter night—just so tardily—just so wearily—just so cheerily came back the light of the Soul to me.

Apart from the tendency to trance, however, my general health appeared to be good; nor could I perceive that it was at all affected by the one prevalent malady—unless, indeed, an idiosyncrasy in my ordinary sleep may be looked upon as superinduced. Upon awaking from slumber, I could never gain, at once, thorough possession of my senses, and always remained, for many minutes, in much bewilderment and perplexity;—the mental faculties in general, but the memory in especial, being in a condition of absolute abeyance.

In all that I endured there was no physical suffering, but of moral distress an infinitude. My fancy grew chthonian. I talked “of worms, of tombs and epitaphs.” I was lost in reveries of death, and the idea of premature burial held continual possession of my brain. The ghastly Danger to which I was subjected, haunted me day and night. In the former, the torture of meditation was excessive—in the latter, supreme. When the grim Darkness overspread the Earth, then, with very horror of thought, I shook—shook as the quivering plumes upon the hearse. When Nature could endure wakefulness no longer, it was with a struggle that I consented to sleep—for I shuddered to reflect that, upon awaking, I might find myself the tenant of a grave. And when, finally, I sank into slumber, it was only to rush at once into a world of phantasms, above which, with vast, sable, overshadowing wings, hovered, predominant, the one sepulchral Idea.

From the innumerable images of gloom which thus oppressed me in dreams, I select for record but a solitary vision. Methought I was immersed in a cataleptic trance of more than usual duration and profundity. Suddenly there came an icy hand upon my forehead, and an impatient, gibbering voice whispered the word “Arise!” within my ear.

I sat erect. The darkness was total. I could not see the figure of him who had aroused me. I could call to mind neither the period at which I had fallen into the trance, nor the locality in which I then lay. While I remained motionless, and busied in endeavors to collect my thoughts, the cold hand grasped me fiercely by the wrist, shaking it petulantly, while the gibbering voice said again :

“ Arise! did I not bid thee arise ?”

“ And who,” I demanded, “ art thou ?”

“ I have no name in the regions which I inhabit,” replied the voice mournfully; “ I was mortal, but am fiend. I was merciless, but am pitiful. Thou dost feel that I shudder.—My teeth chatter as I speak, yet it is not with the chilliness of the night—of the night without end. But this hideousness is insufferable. How canst thou tranquilly sleep? I cannot rest for the cry of these great agonies. These sights are more than I can bear. Get thee up! Come with me into the outer Night, and let me unfold to thee the graves. Is not this a spectacle of woe?—Behold !”

I looked; and the unseen figure, which still grasped me by the wrist, had caused to be thrown open the graves of all mankind; and from each issued the faint phosphoric radiance of decay; so that I could see into the innermost recesses, and there view the shrouded bodies in their sad and solemn slumbers with the worm. But, alas! the real sleepers were fewer, by many millions, than those who slumbered not at all; and there was a feeble struggling; and there was a general sad unrest; and from out the depths of the countless pits there came a melancholy rustling from the garments of the buried. And, of those who seemed tranquilly to repose, I saw that a vast number had changed, in a greater or less degree, the rigid and uneasy position in which they had originally been entombed. And the voice again said to me, as I gazed :

"Is it not—oh, is it *not* a pitiful sight?"—but, before I could find words to reply, the figure had ceased to grasp my wrist, the phosphoric lights expired, and the graves were closed with a sudden violence, while from out them arose a tumult of despairing cries, saying again—"Is it not—oh, God! is it *not* a very pitiful sight?"

Phantasies such as these, presenting themselves at night, extended their terrific influence far into my waking hours.—My nerves became thoroughly unstrung, and I fell a prey to perpetual horror. I hesitated to ride, or to walk, or to indulge in any exercise that would carry me from home. In fact I no longer dared trust myself out of the immediate presence of those who were aware of my proneness to catalepsy, lest, falling into one of my usual fits, I should be buried before my real condition could be ascertained. I doubted the care, the fidelity of my dearest friends. I dreaded that, in some trance of more than customary duration, they might be prevailed upon to regard me as irrecoverable. I even went so far as to fear that, as I occasioned much trouble, they might be glad to consider any very protracted attack as sufficient excuse for getting rid of me altogether. It was in vain they endeavored to reassure me by the most solemn promises. I exacted the most sacred oaths, that under no circumstances they would bury me until decomposition had so materially advanced as to render farther preservation impossible. And, even then, my mortal terrors would listen to no reason—would accept no consolation. I entered into a series of elaborate precautions. Among other things, I had the family vault so remodelled as to admit of being readily opened from within. The slightest pressure upon a long lever that extended far into the tomb would cause the iron portals to fly back. There were arrangements also for the free admission of air and light, and convenient receptacles for food and water, within immediate reach of the coffin intended for my reception. This coffin was warmly and softly padded, and was provided with a lid, fashioned upon the principle of the vault-door, with the addition of springs so contrived that the feeblest movement of the body would be sufficient to set it at liberty. Besides all this, there was suspended from the roof of the tomb, a large bell, the rope of which, it was designed, should extend through a hole in the coffin, and so be fastened to one of the hands of the corpse. But, alas! what avails the vigilance against the Destiny of man? Not even these well contrived securities sufficed to save from the uttermost agonies of living inhumation, a wretch to these agonies foredoomed!

There arrived an epoch—as often before there had arrived—in which I found myself emerging from total unconsciousness into the first feeble and indefinite sense of existence.—Slowly—with a tortoise gradation—approached the faint gray dawn of the psychal day. A torpid uneasiness. An apathetic endurance of dull pain. No care—no hope—no effort. Then, after long interval, a ringing in the ears; then, after a lapse still longer, a pricking or tingling sensation in the extremities; then a seemingly eternal period of pleasurable quiescence, during which the awakening feelings are struggling into thought; then a brief re-sinking into non-entity; then a sudden recovery. At length the slight quivering of an eyelid, and immediately thereupon, an electric shock of a terror, deadly and indefinite, which sends the blood in torrents from the temples to the heart. And now the first positive effort to think. And now the first endeavor to remember. And now a partial and evanescent success. And now the memory has so far regained its dominion that, in some measure, I am cognizant of my state. I feel that I am not awaking from ordinary sleep. I recollect that I have been subject to catalep-

sy. And now, at last, as if by the rush of an ocean, my shuddering spirit is overwhelmed by the one grim Danger—by the one spectral and ever-prevalent Idea.

For some minutes after this fancy possessed me, I remained without motion. And why? I could not summon courage to move. I dared not make the effort which was to satisfy me of my fate—and yet there was something at my heart which whispered me *it was sure*. Despair—such as no other species of wretchedness ever calls into being—despair alone urged me, after long irresolution, to uplift the heavy lids of my eyes. I uplifted them. It was dark—all dark. I knew that the fit was over. I knew that the crisis of my disorder had long passed. I knew that I had now fully recovered the use of my visual faculties—and yet it was dark—all dark—the intense and utter raylessness of the Night that endureth for evermore.

I endeavored to shriek; and my lips and my parched tongue moved convulsively together in the attempt—but no voice issued from the cavernous lungs, which, oppressed as if by the weight of some incumbent mountain, gasped and palpitated, with the heart, at every elaborate and struggling inspiration.

The movement of the jaws, in this effort to cry aloud, showed me that they were bound up, as is usual with the dead. I felt, too, that I lay upon some hard substance; and by something similar my sides were, also, closely compressed. So far, I had not ventured to stir any of my limbs—but now I violently threw up my arms, which had been lying at length, with the wrists crossed. They struck a solid wooden substance, which extended above my person at an elevation of not more than six inches from my face. I could no longer doubt that I reposed within a coffin at last.

And now, amid all my infinite miseries, came sweetly the cherub Hope—for I thought of my precautions. I writhed, and made spasmotic exertions to force open the lid: it would not move. I felt my wrists for the bell-rope: it was not to be found. And now the Comforter fled forever, and a still sterner Despair reigned triumphant; for I could not help perceiving the absence of the paddings which I had so carefully prepared—and then, too, there came suddenly to my nostrils the strong peculiar odor of moist earth. The conclusion was irresistible. I was *not* within the vault. I had fallen into a trance while absent from home—while among strangers—when, or how, I could not remember—and it was they who had buried me as a dog—nailed up in some common coffin—and thrust, deep, deep, and forever, into some ordinary and nameless grave.

As this awful conviction forced itself, thus, into the innermost chambers of my soul, I once again struggled to cry aloud. And in this second endeavor I succeeded. A long, wild, and continuous shriek, or yell, of agony, resounded through the realms of the subterranean Night.

"Hello! hello, there!" said a gruff voice in reply.

"What the devil's the matter now?" said a second.

"Get out o' that!" said a third.

"What do you mean by yowling in that ere kind of style, like a cattymount?" said a fourth; and hereupon I was seized and shaken without ceremony, for several minutes, by a junto of very rough-looking individuals. They did not arouse me from my slumber—for I was wide awake when I screamed—but they restored me to the full possession of my memory.

This adventure occurred near Richmond, in Virginia. Accompanied by a friend, I had proceeded, upon a gunning expedition, some miles down the banks of James River. Night approached, and we were overtaken by a storm. The cabin of a small sloop lying at anchor in the stream, and laden with garden mould, afforded us the only available shelter. We made the best of it, and passed the night on board. I slept in

one of the only two berths in the vessel—and the berths of a sloop of sixty or seventy tons, need scarcely be described. That which I occupied had no bedding of any kind. Its extreme width was eighteen inches. The distance of its bottom from the deck overhead, was precisely the same. I found it a matter of exceeding difficulty to squeeze myself in. Nevertheless, I slept soundly; and the whole of my vision—for it was no dream, and no nightmare—arose naturally from the circumstances of my position—from my ordinary bias of thought—and from the difficulty, to which I have alluded, of collecting my senses, and especially of regaining my memory, for a long time after awaking from slumber. The men who shook me were the crew of the sloop, and some laborers engaged to unload it. From the load itself came the earthy smell. The bandage about the jaws was a silk handkerchief in which I had bound up my head, in default of my customary nightcap.

The tortures endured, however, were indubitably quite equal, for the time, to those of actual sepulture. They were fearfully—they were inconceivably hideous; but out of Evil proceeded Good; for their very excess wrought in my spirit an inevitable revulsion. My soul acquired tone—acquired temper. I went abroad. I took vigorous exercise. I breathed the free air of Heaven. I thought upon other subjects than Death. I discarded my medical books. "Buchan" I burned. I read no "Night Thoughts"—no fustian about churchyards—no bugaboo tales—such as this. In short, I became a new man, and lived a man's life. From that memorable night, I dismissed forever my charnal apprehensions, and with them vanished the cataleptic disorder, of which, perhaps, they had been less the consequence than the cause.

There are moments when, even to the sober eye of Reason, the world of our sad Humanity may assume the semblance of a Hell—but the imagination of man is no Carathis, to explore with impunity its every cavern. Alas! the grim legion of sepulchral terrors cannot be regarded as altogether fanciful—but, like the Demons in whose company Afrasiab made his voyage down the Oxus, they must sleep, or they will devour us—they must be suffered to slumber, or we perish.

EDGAR A. POE.

#### LETTER TO THE BROADWAY JOURNAL.

MY DEAR JOURNAL,

You know my boy Bob! I mean that great double jointed fellow whose countenance is concealed in a matting of beard and whiskers; the same of whom somebody remarked that he seemed to place great confidence in capillary attraction. He is gone. Like Absalom his own hair has ruined him—and like Absalom's father, I can exclaim, "my son! my son!"

The circumstances are these. For a long time he has been nursing his beard, and kept a small Dutch looking-glass before him, which, when no customer claimed his attention, he was ever combing, brushing, and making the most extraordinary serio-ludicrous faces that can be imagined. A little drawer under the counter was constantly supplied with candle-ends—not gathered, as I in my simplicity supposed from motives of economy; but to grease his whiskers withal.

At length, matters began to grow serious. He could not be induced to give attention to any but the female customers. The men bought their wares elsewhere; and even the women seemed to think him dangerous. Miss Sally Jones said he was a good likeness of Orson—and Mrs. Gollyhoggin, being in an interesting state of health, and entering the shop just as Bobby was turning around towards the counter, was so much alarmed that the major threatened to sue me for damages.

Resolved to bear this no longer, I ordered him to shave.

The next morning he did not appear in the shop, and upon inquiry I found that he was gone. In the hope of finding some clew to the place of his retreat, I examined his chamber and found various books and papers belonging to a set of fellows calling themselves Barbati, or some such outlandish name, of whom my poor deluded boy was, it seems, the secretary.

It appears by the record of their proceedings, which were deemed of sufficient importance to be noted in a journal, that they had a Constitution; and I send you a copy of it, word for word.

"Since the known paths to distinction have become crowded to such a degree that those who toil up the dangerous steep are almost all, sooner or later, precipitated into the abyss of oblivion, which every where opes its unsatiate jaws for its prey; it is the part of the wise to hew out some new road that may lead to glory with less labor and with less hazard.

Moved by these considerations, we have maturely pondered the interesting theme. We have considered the great in their eminence—we have seen every eye upturned to admire them, and every hand eagerly outstretched to catch what might fall from them—we have seen even the intellectual *immunditiae* of these demigods garnered as treasures and preserved as holy things—we have seen exhibited as reliques of inestimable value, the absurdities of Demosthenes—the coxcombry of Alexander the truisms of Franklin—and the bloodguiltiness of Draco, the more deserving of execration that it was entailed upon posterity. Nay, we have known even the insane ravings of our own most contemptible political Jehus, to be listened to with all the reverence formerly paid to the paltering trivialities of a Delphic oracle. We are taught to admire the King of Macedon as a groom—to read with intense interest that one great man delighted in crumpets, and another luxuriated on cauliflowers—that one was born with teeth, and another had a hitch in his gait.

We have considered all these things and determined to be great—not, however, by toiling up the rugged steep. We will rise to notoriety by an easy, well graduated road. Spencer, Petersham, Nash and Brummel have built themselves monuments of wearing apparel; and Stultz has achieved nobility by the same easy path. Mesmer, Dee, Nostradamus, Law, Perkins, Gall, Lavater,\* still live as the fathers, grandfathers and great grandfathers of quackery—and Sam Patch is not dead—he who suggested the startling proposition that "some things can be done as well as other things"—and died to prove it—whereby he liveth.

We too, will become great; and by a simple and easy process—we will, by our beards! FIAT.

We do therefore combine and unite ourselves into a Society to be intituled

CAPRICORNORUM BARBATORUM SOCIETAS† which name is never to be known but to the initiate; the letters C. B. S. alone being given to the admiring world.

On public occasions, and at all meetings of the C. B. S. each member shall wear a broad ribbon at his left button-hole, whereon shall be plainly embroidered the letters S. B. C. S. meaning *Socius Barbatus Capricornorum Societatis*,‡ which shall be known to the members only.

The beards of all the members shall be of one length and fashion, to be fixed by law.

The President, by way of distinction, shall wear no beard.

At the meetings it shall be the duty of the society first to debate on the subject of beards, their antiquity, history, ex-

\* Of course we do not father the opinions of our correspondent.

EDS. B. J.

† The society of bearded goats.

‡ Bearded members of the society of He goats.

pression, cultivation, and their influence, physical and moral, on society in general—2nd. To eat stewed oysters."

"Resolved that the thanks of this society be presented to Athanasius Wollop, Esq. the high-minded honorable Principal of Appletree Academy for his unparalleled exertions in preparing this Constitution, and that the members of this society take every means of recommending his school to the public."

It appears by the record of these proceedings, that a warm contest arose on that part of the Constitution which relates to the President's beard. The leader of one party alleged that to prevent the President from wearing a beard would invest him with a power fraught with danger to the permanence of the institution. Another objected to the proposed regulation on the ground that it was a vested right and therefore unconstitutional.

Here five members sprang to their feet, and the chairman caught the eye of Mr. Wiggles—

Mr. Wiggles wished to know what gentlemen meant by a vested right. If it meant a right to wear a vest, then all men except savages and brutes, were entitled to it. Indeed he himself, simple and unpretending as he stood there, had seen a monkey wear a vest—yes—and a coat—and even a pair of breeches! He would maintain this right to the utmost of his poor abilities. "What sir," said Mr. Wiggles, "deprive a man of a right to wear a vest!"

Major Peter Perks rose to say that the able and eloquent harangue made by the honorable gentleman who spoke last, was predicated—

Interrupted by Mr. Wiggles who denied that his remarks had been predicated. He would consider it personal if such a thing were insinuated in regard to him.

Mr. Perks would pass over the language used by the gentleman, because it was founded upon a misapprehension. He meant to say that a vested right was *not* a right to wear a vest. It was a right which every man had to do what he likes with his own property. For example, said Mr. P. if a man chooses to invest his money in stocks, or cravats, or collars, has he not a right to do so, and then to burn them if he thinks proper?—The first named article is bought and sold; for people buy and sell stocks by thousands of pounds worth at a time; and who will be so bold as to deny their right. Now, sir, though it is clear that every man has a right to his vested rights, yet this must not be understood as applying to the case of a President. It is well known that man is prone to abuse power; and as so high an officer as a President is more obnoxious to this vice than any one else, so it should not only be denied to him, but he should also be deprived of his rights—nay, more sir, of his vested rights. I am, sir, a people's man—a friend of the people—and therefore opposed to giving any power to any body—and if it should ever happen that I have the honor to be elected President of the United States, I'll let the people see what my views are. If any man should propose to give me or any one else any power, I'll hang him, sir." [Loud cheers.

The resolution was finally adopted.

Mr. Tips proposed that all beards should be perfumed; but it was rejected on the ground that the natural odour was the best. Mr. Tiberius Gracchus Riggs—*puer emunctæ naris*—rose in behalf of those whose beards had not yet grown. He thought it unreasonable that they should be fined for not wearing a beard; provided due diligence was shown to be used in shaving and oiling.

Mr. Tiffy thought that the question "whether a beard could or could not be made to grow on a gentleman's chin," was not to be discussed here. It would be unjust to make a law that did not apply alike to all. Every member must have a beard, whether he could or not. It was democratic.

Mr. Riggs thought this a very absurd proposition—and said that he would not pay the fine; nor would he withdraw from the society. He had as much right to membership as any body; and he would render inoperative (so far as it concerned himself,) all laws which did not suit him; and take the benefit of these which were agreeable to him.

When he (Mr. Riggs) joined the society, he did it with the purpose and with the expectation of deriving from it the greatest possible advantage—but this end would not be attained if he was to be subjected to any inconveniences. He intended to gain—not to lose. If the society were to resolve itself into a committee of the whole and attempt to levy the fine, he (Mr. R.) would boldly enter into the contest, and do such deeds of noble daring, that the raging tempest would pause to hear the tale and the whole earth would tremble at his name.

These extracts will suffice to exhibit the character and designs of the Society. I trust, sir, that you will give them to the public, with such observations of your own as may tend to bring to their senses the *Socii Capricornorum Barbatorum Soc.*

Yours,

PATER HÆDI.

#### WOMAN—THE HAREEM.

Thus in the ever-closed hareem,  
As in the open Western home,  
Sheds womanhood her starry gleam  
Over our being's busy foam.  
Through latitudes of varying faith,  
Thus trace we still her mission sure,  
To lighten life, to sweeten death,  
And all for others to endure.

R. M. MILNES.

On entering a strange country, its women are the first objects of interest to the moralist as well as to the epicurean; to the former, because the education of a people, and the framework of its society, depend mainly upon maternal and domestic character; to the latter, because almost every grace and charm of daily life is owing to her influence, or interwoven with her being—"On a dit, qu'il y a de la femme dans tout ce qu'on aime."

Among the lower classes of all nations, especially in the country, the life and habits of women approximate more or less to that of men in an inverse proportion to their civilisation. As they share with the ruder sex their labors, hardships, and daily occupation, among savage tribes almost the only distinction between the sexes is physical. It is of the Moslem woman of the middle and upper classes that I am now about to speak, and I do so with a diffidence proportioned to such mysterious matters.

Difficult a study as woman presents in all countries, that difficulty deepens almost into an impossibility in a land where even to look upon her is a matter of danger or of death. The seclusion of the hareem is preserved in the very streets by means of an impenetrable veil; the well-bred Egyptian averts his eyes as she passes by; she is ever to remain an object of mystery; and the most intimate acquaintance never inquires after the wife of his friend, or affects to know of her existence.\* This very mystery, however, piques the often-baffled inquirer; and between Europeans, who have become almost Egyptian, and Egyptians who have become almost European, one is able to obtain some information even on this delicate subject.

The Eastern woman seems as happy in her lot as her European sister, notwithstanding the plurality of wives in which her lord indulges, or ventures upon. In her "public opinion's law" there is no more disparagement in occupying the second place as a wife, than there is in Europe as a daughter. The manners of patriarchal ages remain in Egypt as unchanged as its monuments; and the people of Cairo think as little of objecting to a man's marrying a second wife, as those of Memphis of questioning the legitimacy of Joseph. The Koran, following the example of the Jewish doctors, only allows four wives to each Mussulman, and even of this limited allowance they seldom avail themselves to its fullest extent. Some hareems

\* If alluded to at all by other lips than those of her proprietor, or written to, it is as "the guarded lady,"—"the concealed jewel."—LANE.

contain two hundred females including wives, mothers-in-law, concubines, and the various slaves belonging to each; but these feminine barracks seem very different from what such establishments would be in Europe. In the harem there is as much order and decorum as in an English quaker's home: it is guarded as the tiger guards his young; but its inmates consider this as a compliment, and fancy themselves neglected if not closely watched. This cause for complaint seldom occurs, for the Egyptian has no blind confidence in the strength of woman's character, or woman's love. He holds to the aphorism of Mahomet in this matter, "if you set butter in the sun it will surely melt;" and considers it safer, if not more glorious, to keep her out of the reach of temptation, than to run the chance of her overcoming it when exposed to its encounter.

Born and brought up in the harem, women never seem to pine at its imprisonment: like cage-born birds, they sing among their bars, and discover in their aviaries a thousand little pleasures invisible to eyes that have a wider range. To them, in their calm seclusion, the strifes of the battling world come softened and almost hushed; they only hear the far-off murmur of life's stormy sea, and, if their human lot dooms them to their cares, they are as transient as those of childhood.

Passing through the secluded suburbs of Cairo, I once found myself near one of the principal hareems; I paused by the dull, dark wall, over which the palm-tree waved, and the scent of flowers and the bubbling of fountains stole; and there I listened to the sweet laughter of the Odalisques within. This was broken by snatches of untaught song, to which the merry unseen band joined chorus, and kept time by clapping hands, on which their jewelled bracelets tinkled. It was a music of most merry mirth; and as I pictured to myself the gay group within, I wondered whether they deserved all that pity from their European sisters which they so little appreciate. An English lady, visiting an Odalisque, inquired what pleasure her profusion of rich ornaments could afford, as no person except her husband was ever to behold them: "and for whom," replied the fair barbarian, "do you adorn yourself? is it for other men?"

I have conversed with several European ladies who had visited hareems, and they have all confessed their inability to convince the Eastern wives of the unhappiness or hardship of their state. It is true that the inmate of the harem knows nothing of the advantages of the wild liberty (as it seems to her) that the European woman enjoys: she has never witnessed the domestic happiness that crowns a fashionable life, or the peace of mind and purity of heart that reward the labors of a London season; and what can *she* know of the disinterested affection and changeless constancy of ball-room belles, in the land where woman is all free. Let them laugh on in their happy ignorance of a better lot, while round them is gathered all that their lord can command of luxury and pleasantness: his wealth is hoarded for them alone; he permits himself no ostentation, except the respectable one of arms and horses; and the time is weary that he passes apart from his home and his harem. The sternest tyrants are gentle there; Mehemet Ali never refused a woman's prayer; and even Ali Pasha was partly humanized by his love for Emineh. In the time of the Mamelukes, criminals were led to execution blindfolded, because if they had met a woman and could touch her garment, they were saved, whatever was their crime. Thus idolized, watched, and guarded, the Egyptian woman's life is, nevertheless, entirely in the power of her lord, and her death is the inevitable penalty of his dishonor. No piquant case of *crim. con.* ever amuses the Egyptian public: the injured husband is his own judge and jury; his only "gentlemen of the long robe" are his eunuchs; and the dagger or the Nile the only damages. The law never interferes in these little domestic arrangements.

Poor Fatima! shrined as she was in the palace of a tyrant, the fame of her beauty stole abroad through Cairo. She was one amongst a hundred in the harem of Abbas Pasha, a man stained with every foul and loathsome vice; and who can wonder, though many may condemn, if she listened to a daring young Albanian, who risked his life to obtain but a sight of her? Whether she *did* listen or not, none can ever know, but the eunuchs saw the glitter o' the Arnaut's arms, as he leapt from her terrace into the Nile and vanished in the darkness. The following night, a merry English party dined together on board of Lord E—'s boat, as it lay moored off the Isle of Rhoda; conversation had sunk into silence, as the calm night came on; a faint breeze floated perfumes from the gardens over the star-

lit Nile, and scarcely moved the clouds that rose from the chibouque; a dreamy languor seemed to pervade all nature, and even the city lay hushed in deep repose—when suddenly a boat, crowded with dark figures among which arms gleamed, shot out from one of the arches of the palace; it paused under the opposite bank, where the water rushed deep and gloomily along, and for a moment a white figure glimmered amongst the boat's dark crew; there was a slight movement, and a faint splash—and then the river flowed on as merrily as if poor Fatima still sang her Georgian song to the murmur of its waters.

I was riding one evening along the banks of the Mareotis; the low land, half swamp, half desert, was level as the lake; there was no sound except the ripple of the waves along the far extended shore, and the heavy flapping of the pelican's wings, as she rose from the water's edge. Not a palm-tree raised its plump head; not a shrub crept along the ground; the sun was low, but there was nothing to cast a shadow over the monotonous waste, except a few Moslem tombs with their sculptured turbans: these stood apart from every sign of life, and even of their kindred dead, like those upon the Lido at Venice. As I paused to contemplate this scene of desolation, an Egyptian hurried past me with a bloody knife in his hand; his dress was mean and ragged, but his countenance was one that the father of Don Carlos might have worn; he never raised his eyes as he rushed by; and my groom, who just then came up, told me he had slain his wife, and was going to her father's village to denounce her.

My boat was moored in the little harbor of Assouan, the old Syene, the boundary between Egypt and Ethiopia; opposite, lies Elephantina, the "isle of flowers," strewed with ruins, and shaded by magnificent palm-trees; the last eddies of the cataract of the Nile foam round dark red granite cliffs, which rise precipitously from the river, and are piled into a mountain crowned by a ruined Saracenic castle. A forest of palm-trees divides the village from the quiet shore on whose silvery sands my tent was pitched. A man in an Egyptian dress saluted me in Italian, and in a few moments was smoking my chibouque, and sipping coffee by my side: he was very handsome; but his faded cheek and sunken eye showed hardship and suffering, and he spoke in a low and humble voice. In reply to my question, as to how a person of his appearance came into this remote region, he told me that he had been lately practising as a surgeon in Alexandria; he had married a Levantine girl, whose beauty was to him as "la faccia del cielo:" he had been absent from his home, and she had betrayed him. On his return, he met her with a smiling countenance; in the evening he accompanied her to a deep well, whither she went to draw water, and, as she leant over it, he threw her in. As he said this, he paused, and placed his hands upon his ears, as if he still heard her dying shriek. He then continued: "I have fled from Alexandria till the affair is blown over: I was robbed near Siout, and have supported myself miserably ever since, by giving medical advice to the poor country people: I shall soon return, and all will be forgotten. If I had not avenged myself, her own family, you know, must have done so." And so this woman-murderer smoked on, and continued talking in a low and gentle voice till the moon was high; then he went his way, and I saw him no more.

*From the Crescent and the Cross.*

NIBLO'S GARDEN.—This favorite and delightful place of amusement opened last week. The performances are of a light and pleasing character, in admirable accordance with the genius of the place. The company is good, numbering among its members Messrs. Chippendale, Sefton, &c., &c.—Miss Taylor, Miss Mathews, Mrs. Watts and others. In the dancing department, Miss Partington and Celeste are well known and highly popular, while too young débutantes, Misses Deloriel and Nathalie are striving for popular favor. They are singularly pretty, light, graceful and well-formed; they dress beautifully, and give promise in their style of dancing, of much future excellence. The band is excellent; Mr. Marks wielding the baton with his accustomed firmness and grace.

The house has been well filled every night, and if novelties are produced, we feel sure that this will prove a profitable season to Mr. Niblo.

Mr. Barton, the well-known flutist, has arrived in this city, after a tour of extraordinary success through the Southern States.

## REVIEWS.

AN ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF DOMESTIC ECONOMY, No. 4: *Harper & Brothers.*

Though the present number of this excellent work is less profusely illustrated with cuts than those that have preceded it, it is the most valuable of all, being occupied chiefly with the subject of food, of which it treats very fully and discreetly. Something like thirty pages of the two last numbers are occupied by matter relating to domestic servants, which is mainly calculated to produce more harm than good in this country. The author of this department of the Encyclopædia has entered into the ethics and aesthetics of servitude with great gravity, and a marvellously elevated tone of thought. He begins his essay, paragraph 1432, in this impressive manner :

*Domestic servants are a class in society no less essential to its welfare and convenience than the equivalent in subsistence and money which, for service done, that class receives, is essential to the well-being of each individual belonging to it.*

We doubt whether this has been written by a gentleman who has ever had the honor, personally, to officiate as a domestic servant of any kind, although in his description of what a servant should be, he manifests a very minute acquaintance with the duties of a foot-boy, scullion, &c. His picture of a nurse is particularly edifying; he has drawn the character of a more perfect monster than can be found in any novel :

*In person* a nurse should have no striking peculiarity or deformity ; no habitual tricks with the features, such as squinting or grimaces ; no defect in the articulation, such as lisping and stammering ; no singularity or vulgarity in the tone or accent ; for such peculiarities always brings into exercise the imitative propensities of childhood. *In stature* the middle size is, for a nurse, preferable to either extreme of tall or short ; the one often causing deficiency in activity, the other in muscular power. *The constitution* of a nurse maid should be sound. Tendencies to humors of any kind, to consumption, to rheumatism, or even being liable to frequent headaches, would detract from the personal fitness of an individual for the duties of the nursery. *In age* the nurse should be neither very old, nor very young ; were she old, she might possibly be very deficient in activity and temper ; were she too young, she might want consideration and judgment. *In disposition*, she should be cheerful even to liveliness, yet, withal, gentle. Boisterous gayety in the nurse would be almost as injurious to her infant charges as a temper of irritability and violence. In the situation and duties of a nurse there is much to try the temper ; and it is not reasonable to expect that it should be always unruffled : still, no one is fit for the charge of children who cannot control in herself any violent expression of irritation.

*In personal habits* the nurse should be scrupulously correct. Cleanliness and neatness are not to be dispensed with in the individual who is to lay the foundation of good habits in the objects of her superintendence. Deficiency in such habits can, in her, only arise from indolence ; and if this defect be inculcated in childhood, by the force of her example, it may, being the parent of so many other vices, blight the promise given in the first years of life of the exercise of future mental vigor.

But, after all, no personal nor acquired qualification in the nurse can be put in competition with the all-important requisite of vigorous, effective, and virtuous principles.

Here is a greater amount of high qualities required in a nurse than would be exacted from a Prime Minister, or a Chief Justice. Turning to the table of wages, we find that the pay of such an angel as is described above, varies from twenty to thirty pounds per annum, while the dress required for such an admirable form, every article of which is particularly named, (petticoats 12s, body linen 6s, &c. &c.,) amounts to £7.8.0 sterling per annum.

The duties of each servant are very fully detailed ; we select the article on a "footman," as a sample, from which it will be seen that his office is by no means a sinecure.

*He must rise early*, and endeavor to get some of the roughest part of his work done before his breakfast, and before he is re-

quired to appear in the breakfast-room. In order to preserve the cleanliness of his clothes, he should be provided with a complete overall suit, made of materials that will easily brush clean or bear washing. Covered over with these, he brushes the clothes of the gentlemen of the family, then cleans and polishes their boots and shoes, which the night before, if wet or damp, he had placed at a proper distance from the fire, to dry them gradually : an attention which enables him afterwards to give them a finer polish. These done and set ready to convey to their owners, he then cleans the knives and forks, wipes them, and puts them away till wanted. After this he washes and cleans himself previously to the preparations for the family breakfast table. *After laying the cloth and placing the required number of cups, saucers, plates, &c.*, he puts the heater into the kitchen fire, sees that water is boiling, and the supplies of bread, butter, &c. ready, and then is prepared for the summons for the urn. His own breakfast time is regulated by that of the family, the footman in some houses taking breakfast with the other servants, and in others in his own pantry on the remains of the family breakfast.

After the footman has himself breakfasted, washed and replaced in the china closet whatever has been used of china at the breakfast table, together with the plate, waiters and trays, he must direct his attention to the cleaning of candlesticks (see "Cleaning"), trimming of lamps, (see "Artificial Illumination,"), putting them in right places in his pantry till they are wanted.—The mahogany furniture in the dining-room or library he must rub daily, and twice weekly he ought to wash away any spots it may have acquired, restoring afterward the polish it may have lost, by any of the means mentioned under "Cleaning." Some of the windows he should clean weekly, availing himself of periods of the day when the occupants of the rooms are absent from them. Afterward returning to the pantry, he should set himself to prepare something or other for the dinner table ; either to rub the plate, to wipe the glass, &c., until it be time to prepare for the luncheon. During this part of the day he should be in such a dress as is not inconsistent with his employments, nor yet unfit for him to appear in if summoned by bells to the parlor or to the hall door. A colored cotton or plain cloth jacket and white linen apron are usually worn by footmen while engaged as above described. *The parlor luncheon* being generally called for about one o'clock, he must have the tray set ready ; when carried into the parlor, and properly arranged, he will usually be at liberty to get his own dinner, which is generally ready at this period of the day. When his mistress requires it, the footman should be ready to attend her, either with the carriage, or to follow her if she walks out. For this latter part of his morning's duty, he should be neatly dressed ; his clothes and hat should be well brushed ; his shoes and stockings and gloves clean. A dirty-looking footman is a disgrace rather than a credit to a family. In giving directions to the coachman he should be quick and accurate ; nor is it altogether needless to remark that, even in his announcing rap at the doors of the parties on whom his lady calls, there is a propriety to be observed as to its measure and degree ; if too loud and long, it disturbs a whole neighborhood ; if too insignificant, it may be deficient in respect to his lady. In following her during her walks, he should preserve a steady decorum of manner, and be observant and ready in case any emergency should make his aid necessary to her.

*Waiting at table* is one of the most important parts of his employments, and requires more skill and attention from him, if unaided by others, than when he is one among many attendants. Here, any neglect of his other duties will be apparent, and the censure must fall on him alone. Knives, forks, plate, and glass will all tell of his industry or of his negligence.

The general deportment of a footman, while waiting at dinner, should be quiet and quick, but not hurried or bustling : he should tread lightly, change plates, knives, &c. without clatter, and should speak as little as possible, and never in a raised tone of voice, unless it be necessary in answering questions. He should hand everything with the left hand, and to the left of the person he is assisting to anything. The tablecloth, in removing, should have each side and ends lightly thrown together, and be carried out of the room, and laid aside until a convenient opportunity for shaking it and folding it up. On formal occasions, the tablecloth is left, and long slips down each side are used, and removed when dinner is over. It should be wrapt up in the folds previously made, and placed carefully in the table-linen press. Dinner over, and the dessert and wine properly placed on the table, the footman retires to his own pantry to wash glasses, &c., and to put everything once more in its right

place. Then he prepares for taking up coffee and tea; puts the urn heater into the fire; places teacups, &c., on the board; and sets cakes, bread and butter, milk, &c. on his waiter, ready to carry to the drawing-room when required. At night he closes all window-shutters and locks up doors; carries up bed candles; takes the slippers to his master; and, lastly, collects, as far as he can, all small articles of plate, such as teaspoons, which are in constant dispersion during the day in most houses; counts all over; locks it up or places it in security—and thus closes his daily business.

To place candles properly in the candlesticks, though not strictly a branch of cleaning generally, completes this part of the footman's work. Candles should be placed perfectly straight in the candlestick; any inclination from the perpendicular being not only disagreeable to the eye, but causing the tallow or wax to run wastefully down the sides, because the heat of the flame acts more powerfully on one side of the candle than on the other. The same effect is produced by dirt or soil on the surface of the candle, as also causing an irregular action of the heat. If the nozzle of the candlestick be too large for the candle, a small fold of paper must be put round the candle, not so wide as to be visible when the candle is placed in it. The wick of the candles, if they have not been previously lighted, should be just set fire to and blown out. For this, when they are wanted, they will light the more easily.

In trimming candles which have been previously in use, it is desirable to pare off the top, so far as to form again the conical shape into which they had been originally moulded. The object of this is to prevent that surplus of melted tallow, caused by the heating of so large a circumference of tallow, and which the wick cannot at first consume, from flowing down the sides of candles, wasting as well as disfiguring them.

Candle ends, mould as well as wax, ought to be used upon save-alls by the servants, and not put into the box of scrapings, to add to the perquisites of those whose office it is to clean the candlesticks.

For these trifling services and every day accomplishments, the footman receives from 10 to 25 pounds per annum, which will not be considered too much when it is seen that he must have the nanners of a perfect gentleman, and the gallantry of an old chevalier, besides being six feet in his stockings, and the owner of good teeth and broad shoulders.

But the most interesting of all to a great part of American readers, will be the description and list of duties assigned to a "maid of all work," that kind of servant being the most common in American families.

First, she must be an early riser; before her mistress gets up, her kitchen, parlor, and hall should be properly cleaned (see art. "Cleaning,"), and she herself washed and neatly dressed, ready to attend on her mistress and prepare her breakfast, taking her own also about the same time. After breakfast, and after washing and putting away the breakfast things, and receiving her mistress's orders for the day, she should repair to the bedrooms, and proceed to clean and arrange them, as described above (see "Household Duties"). From these employments it is probable that she may be occasionally called away to answer bells; and, on such occasions, she should look to her kitchen fire now and then, to keep it in readiness for the cooking, to which she will, in a short time, have to attend. When up-stairs work is done, she must return to her kitchen, and set about preparing the dinner. In some cases, the mistress may, perhaps, assist her. It will be an advantage to the servant to have such an assistant and instructress who may be clever in the art of cooking.

Before dinner is served she should again wash her hands and change her apron, making her dress as seemly as the nature of her employments permit. In a service such as the one now described, the family usually dine first, and the servant afterward, on the remains of the dinner. As she brings it from table she should put it near the fire to keep it warm until she has time to sit down to it. If she does her duty to her employer, she may conscientiously attend to any little circumstances that may promote her own comfort.

Her dinner over, the clearing away, scouring saucepans, washing dishes, with every other necessary act of cleanliness, will occupy some part of the afternoon, in the course of which she must find time to make up the kitchen fire, set on the tea-kettle, and sweep up the kitchen hearth. Her work completed, she again washes herself and changes her dress; she is then

ready to wait upon her mistress at tea, and to attend in any other way to her comfort.

The evening is occupied with closing doors and windows, and arranging the bedrooms for the night.

Besides the daily routine, she must contrive to bring into each day some portion of the weekly cleaning. Her kitchen should be scoured twice a week, on Wednesday and Saturday; the parlour swept every other morning; the hall washed; bedrooms swept, and carpets taken up and shaken on Tuesday and Friday; plate cleaned on Wednesday and Saturday; block tin kitchen utensils, plated candlesticks, and brass work on Thursday (see "Cleaning"). Once a fortnight or once in three weeks, the floors of bedrooms should be scoured (see "Scouring").) marks on painted wainscots washed off, windows cleaned, &c.

If the washing be done in the house, the above routine will be occasionally broken into for a few days, though probably she will be allowed some assistance at the washtub, and will find her mistress ready to take on herself some portion of the lighter business of starching and getting up the fine linen.

The young lady who performs these duties well, and is moreover virtuous, cheerful and good looking, may hope for seven pounds per annum, and tea and sugar.

The whole of the article on domestic servants is very pleasant reading, if not very profitable on this side of the Atlantic, and the description of a gentleman's household reads like a chapter from a fashionable novel.

**AN EXPLANATORY AND PHONOGRAPHIC PRONOUNCING DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE:** To which is added a Vocabulary of Greek, Latin, Scripture, Christian, and Geographical Names, with their Pronunciation; together with a Collection of Words and Phrases from Foreign Languages, often met with in the Works of English Writers, with their Signification. Edited by William Bolles. New London. Published by Bolles & Williams.

A work such as Mr. Bolles has here given us, was certainly much needed—that is to say, a complete English Vocabulary with each word properly defined and its pronunciation distinctly exhibited. Walker's Sheridan has been long objectionable, of course; for during the last fifty years the advance of literature, and more especially of science, has introduced into the language a vast number of words which had no existence at the period of the compilation of that work. It contains only about 33,000 words, and the Dictionary now before us includes no less than 85,000—"20,000 more than were ever offered to the American public in any one work"—this, too, exclusive of more than 20,000, Greek, Latin, Scripture, Christian, and Geographical proper names. Walker's volume, moreover, was essentially defective in its pronunciation, from a similar reason—that is to say, from the lapse of time since its composition, and the important changes sanctioned by usage during the interval. The 100,000 words furnished by Mr. Bolles, are divided into syllables, with the pronunciation of each given phonographically according to Sheridan's rules, but with an absolutely rigorous application of them. Where the usage is settled, it has been scrupulously followed: where not, resort has been had to analogy and classical authority.

Sheridan's rules were as follows:

No character should be set down in any word which is not pronounced. Every distinct simple sound should have a distinct character to mark it, for which it should uniformly stand. The same character should never be set down as the representative of two different sounds. All compound sounds should be marked only by such characters as will naturally and necessarily produce those sounds, upon their being pronounced according to their names in the alphabet.

These rules are theoretically perfect, but the pronouncing dictionaries in use have invariably failed in carrying them into practice. Sheridan and Walker make no scruple, for example, of presenting to the eye letters for which no sound is heard. Mr. Bolles, in his Preface, furnishes us with some specimens of this error. The pronunciation of the word *courteous*, is, in Sheridan, kur'-tshus—in Walker, kur'-tshe-us—and in Bolles,

kórt-yus. The last is indisputably the truest both as regards the phonographical distinctness with which the intended sounds are conveyed, and the more modern and polished pronunciation of the word itself.

The orthography of Dr. Johnson has been followed, in our opinion very properly, throughout; except "in cases where custom has decidedly sanctioned a change for the better, as in the omission of *u* in the termination *our* and of final *k*, preceded by *c*, in words derived from the learned languages, etc. etc." We quote this last passage from Mr. Bolles, because we fully agree with him that custom *has* sufficiently established the orthographies in question, however much we may be inclined to dispute, in many cases, the justice or propriety of the custom.

Mr. Bolles has admitted obsolete words when they are to be found in authors not obsolete, "or when they have any form or beauty that may deserve revival." His reason for admitting them when found in authors not obsolete is, with some modification, unanswerable. "Indeed," he says, "the vocabulary of an explanatory English Dictionary would be exceedingly defective, in which one should look in vain for words occurring in such authors as Bacon, Boyle, Shakspeare, Milton, &c., while their works constitute a portion of the standard literature of the language." It should be observed, however, that it is *only* in the case of such as Bacon, Boyle, Shakspeare and Milton, that the lexicographist is justifiable in applying this rule. Innumerable obsolete words may be found "in authors not obsolete," which words, nevertheless, it would be folly to attempt resuscitating. We mean to say that Mr. Bolles' proposition is, in his Preface, too loosely or too generally stated. In fact, that is to say in the body of his work, we perceive that he has confined his revivals within the proper limits—confined them to such authors as are emphatically standard. He has included, however, a vast number of words now regarded as obsolete—although we by no means think he has improperly included them. He promises an abridgment in which they will be omitted.

In regard to *rules of pronunciation*, we cannot do better than quote the author's own words, with which in the main, we heartily agree.

"These rules are so multitudinous, and the exceptions to almost all of them so numerous, that it is believed that in a work of this nature they tend more to embarrass than to aid the inquirer, and that however useful these troublesome appendages may be in works where the pronunciation is omitted or loosely given, they are rendered useless by the plan of this dictionary, in which the pronunciation of any word can be much more readily and certainly ascertained by a bare inspection than by a reference to rules almost smothered amid their own anomalies."

With these judicious views Mr. Bolles has contented himself with an introductory exposition of the principles on which Human Speech is founded—(a well written and altogether valuable paper)—some Directions to Foreigners (particularly the French)—and a few rules to be observed by the natives of Ireland and Wales, in order to attain a just pronunciation of English.

If, upon the whole, we cannot regard this work as the most profound (a vague word often vaguely applied) we are at least disposed to consider it the most comprehensive, the most accurate, and by far the most practical—that is to say the most useful of its class.

Its typographical execution is excellent. It is for sale, we understand, at the exceedingly moderate price of three dollars,

We are informed that Mr. Cornelius Matthews is not the author of the article in the North American Review which recently appeared in Simms' Magazine. It was signed with the initials of Mr. M., but Simms was himself the author.

THE DRAMATIC AUTHORS OF AMERICA. By James Rees. Philadelphia: G. B. Tilber & Co., 1845.

This is a very curious and a highly profitable little work for the student of American literature. It is probable that no other man in the country has sufficient love for the Drama to enable him to gather together so many forgotten facts in relation to this subject as Mr. Rees has done in this little book. The Dramatic Authors of America! How many could the most learned man among us enumerate? Perhaps a dozen. Very many American scholars would doubtless have to think a while before naming even one. Yet Mr. Rees has mustered a regiment here of no less than one hundred and eighty-eight, thirty-four of them being anonymous. Some of these authors have produced as many plays as Shakspeare, while a good many have produced but one. And yet, among the whole of their Dramas, there are not more than three or four that keep their place upon the stage. A literary gentleman remarked the other day that he did not know any body who had not written a word; after looking over Mr. Rees's catalogue of Dramatists we could not readily remember any body who had not written a play. Mr. Rees evidently undertook his task *con amore*, and doubtless made his list as complete as he could, but he has made four omissions within our knowledge, and doubtless many beyond it. So that we may safely estimate the Dramatic Authors of the United States, or of Alleghania, at two hundred, and giving them three plays a piece, which must be within the mark, the Alleghanian Drama must amount to at least six hundred plays. John Neal is the author of a five act tragedy called Otheo. Mr. Edward S. Gould is the author of a tragedy founded on the history of Richard Cour de Lyon, which was successfully represented at the Park theatre about fifteen years since, and Cornelius Matthews is the author of a five act comedy called the Politicians, which we believe has never been produced at any theatre. Mr. Rees has not included either of these dramatic authors in his catalogue. Probably Mr. Griswold will include these and many more of whom the country has never heard, in his forth-coming book on American prose writers.

Notwithstanding the complaints that we hear continually from the denizens of the theatre, about the decline of the legitimate drama, there seems to be a very decided love for dramatic compositions among our educated men as well as among the lower classes, from whom the theatre derives its principal support.

The wife of a popular tragedian in New York says, that they always tremble when the door bell rings; expecting the apparition of a dramatic author with a manuscript tragedy to follow as a matter of course. She says that they have had a large chest constructed in their garret for the express purpose of keeping manuscript tragedies. Where there is so much smoke it would not be unreasonable to expect some fire; but the American Drama does not appear to promise sufficient heat to produce combustion. Mrs. Mowatt has recently "fired up," to a certain extent; but whether she has produced a real flame or only an ignis fatuus remains to be seen. One thing is very certain, that no art can flourish in a country when it is not countenanced by the better classes of society, and it cannot be denied that the theatre derives no aid, with us, from the learned, the wealthy, or the professedly religious. All classes of society read the Wandering Jew, and everything that comes from Dickens; doctors of law, divinity and medicine read such works and place them in their libraries; but these people never visit the theatre let the attraction be what it may. Let half-a-dozen D. Ds be seen in the pit of the Park Theatre, and we should not only see their congregations following them, but we should see our men and women of genius

exerting their talents for the amusement and instruction of such fit audiences. One of the last things that we could ever do would be to recommend, or countenance idle and vicious amusements, but no amusement which requires so great a variety of artistic excellence as the drama, ever could be vicious or injurious if it were countenanced by those who assume the office of public teachers.

Whether the theatre be a disreputable place, as conducted at present, is not a point which we need debate about; the theatre exists and is likely to exist, and to exert an extensive influence of some kind in the community, and the only consideration should be, with good men, whether it would be better to leave it to grow in its enormities, or by giving it their countenance, convert it into a blessing instead of a curse to the people. There is no objection among good people to pictures, none to music, none to wit and humor, none to rhetoric; but the drama is nothing more than these united. Instead of going on separate nights to witness each department of art by itself, in the theatre they may see them happily assembled to produce an effect. The fault of the false position which the drama holds does not lie so much with the better classes of society, as with the managers of theatres themselves; if these will make brothels and drinking houses of their theatres they have no right to complain when respectable people refuse to patronise them. The reform must begin in the theatre, and when that has been effected, we have no doubt that it will extend to those without. The appearance of so respectable a person as Mrs. Mowatt on the stage, we trust, will not be without a purifying effect upon the atmosphere of the play-house.

#### NEW WORKS LATELY RECEIVED.

*Vathek.* With a Biographical Sketch of the Author. No. 1 of the New Series of the Mirror Library. Published by Morris, Willis & Fuller. pp. 50. Price 25 cents.

We are very glad to see a new series of the Mirror Library, and to welcome Vathek in No. 1. The "biographical sketch of the author" however, is a misnomer; the gossiping recollections of Mr. Redding by no means form a biography, and we would be glad to see some of the productions of Beckford substituted in their place; the Memoirs of the Old Painters for instance. The biography of Beckford is a good subject for a philosophical or a fanciful writer, and it is a matter of surprise that none of his countrymen have yet made an attempt on his "life." Mr. Redding's recollections are very agreeable reading for hot weather, but he was too much impressed by the externals which surrounded Vathek to be able to form a cool judgment of his character. The book is neatly got up, of a size to correspond with the first series of the Mirror Library.

*Cecil.* By the Author of "Cecil." New York: Harper & Brothers.

"Cecil" was one of the most popular novels ever published in England, and produced, on its first appearance, scarcely less sensation than "Vivian Grey," or "Pelham," to both which, however, it has a strong family resemblance. It has more spirit—more dash—more abandon—and infinitely more impudence than either: taking qualities, all of these, with the public. Its learning, too, was seemingly prodigious, and it was difficult (for this and other reasons) to believe it the work of a woman. Mrs. Gore was, nevertheless, well understood to be the author—although it has been asserted that she received aid, in the bespicing of the book with scraps of pedantry, from a well-known scholar and *littérateur* of London. This we do

not believe—nor is there any sufficient reason for believing it. In the first place, had any such aid been given, it must have been given *after* the composition by Mrs. Gore, and traces of interpolation would have *inevitably* remained:—none such are apparent. In the second place, all the former productions of the authoress evince the same species of apparent erudition—an erudition which is *only* apparent, and carefully introduced to serve a purpose. True erudition is only certainly discoverable in its entire *results*. There is nothing in anything written by Mrs. Gore, which is not within the reach of any decently educated person of ingenuity, having access to the large libraries of London. The same thing may be said even of that remarkable work, "The Doctor," and of a great many other similar publications.

"Self" has all the principal traits of "Cecil," and is, perhaps, a more entertaining book upon the whole—although its subject does not offer so many facilities. We recommend it heartily to all persons troubled with *ennui*.

*The Waverly Novels*, by Sir Walter Scott: with the author's latest corrections and additions. Complete in five volumes (3340 pages) for two dollars and fifty cents. Philadelphia: Carey & Hart.

The general title of this work, as we give it above, includes all necessary information respecting it. A greater amount of valuable and interesting reading was never furnished for the same money. The contents of the second volume (just issued) are The Heart of Mid-Lothian; The Bride of Lammermoor; The Legend of Montrose; Ivanhoe; The Monastery; and The Abbott. The New York agents are Burgess, Stringer & Co., W. H. Graham, and Saxton & Miles.

*Veronica; or The Free Court of Aaran.* Translated from the German of Zschokke, by the Author of Giasfar Al Barmeki.

This is number 51 of Harper's "Library of Select Novels." Zschokke, of late, has become popular in America, to an extent which neither his intrinsic merit nor his foreign reputation would appear to justify. We would not undervalue his genius, (if genius it can be called,) but we mean to say that there are numerous Germans whose works might be translated to better purpose. "Veronica" is not the least interesting of his novels—but the author of "Giasfar Al Barmeki" has himself written a far better original thing, and we would urgently advise him to leave the task of translation to those who have no capacity for anything else.

#### TRANSLATION OF AN ODE OF SAPPHO.

Blest as the immortal gods is he  
On whom each day thy glances shine;  
Who hears thy voice of melody,  
And meets thy smile so all divine.

Oh, when I list thine accents low  
How thrills my breast with tender pain—  
Fire seems through every vein to glow,  
And strange confusion whelms my brain.

My sight grows dim beneath the glance  
Whose ardent rays I may not meet,  
While swift and wild my pulses dance,  
Then cease all suddenly to beat.

And o'er my cheek with rapid gush,  
I feel the burning life-tide dart;  
Then backward like a torrent rush  
All icy cold upon my heart.

And I am motionless and pale,  
And silent as an unstrung lyre;  
And feel, while thus each sense doth fail,  
Doomed in thy presence to expire.

MARY E. HEWITT.

### THE NEW OPERA AT PHILADELPHIA.

According to our expressed intention we visited Philadelphia for the purpose of being present at the performance of Mr. Fry's "Leonora." The production of a grand Opera, composed by a resident American, was an event which, we believe, fully warranted some extraordinary outlay upon our part, in order to present to our readers a faithful account of the character of the work. Fully aware of all the difficulties attendant upon the production of a new Opera by a new hand, we went prepared for all the annoyances on the stage and in the orchestra, consequent upon a first performance, or rather a last dress rehearsal.

The Chesnut Theatre was crowded in every part; the boxes presented an array of beauty and fashion but rarely congregated together at one time; and if the fair ladies of our sister city are to be judged by the various specimens then before us, we should say that a feeling of "brotherly love" towards them would prove a dangerous experiment.

The plot of the Opera is no other than Bulwer's Lady of Lyons. Most of our readers are familiar with the action of that play. One or two characters are omitted, and Claude's mother in the play, is changed to Julia's sister in the Opera. No other material alteration is made, if we except the change in the locality and the time, which are transferred from Lyons to Spain—from the eighteenth to the sixteenth century. The reader will, however, bear the first of these changes in mind, as the entire truthfulness and fitness of the music turns upon it. The characters are as follows: Leonora, daughter of Valdor, Mrs. Seguin; Mariana, sister of Julio, Miss F. Ince; Julio, a peasant, Mr. Frazer; Montalao, a gentleman of rank, Mr. Seguin; Valdor, a rich merchant, Mr. Richings; Alferez, a gentleman, Mr. Brunton. The overture consists of a maestoso movement, an agitato, and we believe, an andante movement with the usual repetitions. No one portion of the overture was striking either for its originality or its beauty. We listened in vain for some phrase which should develope a thought or suggest an idea; it was simply a succession of motivi, as applicable to one thing as to another. Much blame must be laid to the very defective instrumentation; no one subject came out clearly; the brass and wood instruments were used injudiciously; effects were sought after by violent and repeated contrasts, by phrases given to the full brass and echoed by the wood, headed by the piccolo-flute—now the whole subject would be full to repletion, and now thin to attenuation. We did not hear a single point in which the character of one of the orchestral instruments was developed. The violincelli were used as common basses; the violas as common fiddles; and the fagotti did only general work. Such is the general character of the instrumentation throughout the Opera.

The opening chorus is a bold and spirited melody and will in all probability, from its familiar character, be whistled about the streets. Montalao's first song is "*King Death was a rare old fellow.*" This song as composed by Chevalier Newkomm is universally known, and what could have induced Mr. Fry to introduce it into his Opera, unless to suggest comparison, we are at a loss to conceive. Comparisons will be drawn and to his disadvantage, for the first phrases of his version prove, beyond a doubt, that Newkomm's fine song was fresh in his memory, and suggested, if not supplied, the thought. The introduction of the chorus is, however, cleverly managed and exceedingly effective. The air "*No Haughty Maiden,*" has a most charming florid accompaniment, and is without doubt, the most pleasingly instrumented piece in the Opera.

In the second scene, the first scena is chiefly remarkable for the very bad effect produced by the accompaniments of the

stringed instruments with mutes (con Sordini.) The air "Grant me one only hour" is nothing, if not Bellini.

The Recitative and Air, "Ah canst thou bid me smother," is certainly a very charming composition. The melody partakes somewhat of the Spanish character and is sad and impassioned. This air is the most natural burst of genuine feeling in the opera. It was chastely and expressively sung by Mr. Frazer. The oboe solo which preceded the song was played in a most masterly and exquisite manner by Mr. Kellner. We must compliment this gentlemen upon his performance throughout; it was the only thing worthy to be remembered amidst the vast orchestral chaos. Mr. Kellner would do credit to any orchestra.

The next point of consequence we arrive at, is the chorus—"Who can be this youthful stranger?" The subject is decidedly clever, but it is elaborated to an absurd extent, and the changes towards the close are vexatious and unmeaning—a striving hard for something, and nothing thereby achieved.

Julio's following recitative is good and the aria is pleasing, but it is spun out to a ridiculous extent—the subject being repeated, with intervening symphonies, three times. This is exceeding his Italian model with a vengeance.

The finale to the first act "Oh! moment too enchanting" is marked Bolero, to which it bears as much resemblance as a Tyrolean movement can bear to a Spanish Bolero. It is very florid, and afforded Mrs. Seguin every opportunity for a full display of her executive power.

The bridesmaid's chorus which opens the second act is a very pretty Tyrolean. The melody is flowing, and seemed to catch the ear of the audience for it was warmly applauded. The duett between Julio and Leonora is so long, and consists of so many movements, that it is impossible to speak as positively of it as we could wish. The first movement we noted as exceedingly good—a succeeding movement as borrowed without reserve, and another as clever in the extreme. The remainder of the scene presents but little worthy of particular notice, if we except the voluntary upon the Scraphine which was remarkable only for its utter want of thought and ingenuity, and for the pumping effects with the pedal.

The ballad by Mariana which opens the second scene is a very pleasing little trifle and was very well received. Miss Ince, though lacking a musical education, possesses a pleasing voice and natural simplicity of manner, which take well with the public.

There are several pleasing melodies, and one or two creditable concerted pieces, in the remainder of this act, and in the last act, but, though we would willingly notice them separately, want of space compels us to draw this notice to a close.

To bring our remarks into a small compass we should say that although there are some very pleasing morceaux in the Opera, it is, beyond a doubt, wanting in originality of thought, is deficient in profundity, and possesses very little, if any, dramatic action. As a Spanish Opera it must be considered an irredeemable failure, as the composer never knew, or entirely mistook the characteristics of the Spanish school. We wish to be correctly understood. It is generally conceded that the great emotions which agitate the human heart—love, hatred, jealousy and revenge, demand no conventional mode of expression—they owe to no rule their intensity of feeling; they speak in a language which is universal, and whether it be the Spaniard or the Englishman, the Italian or the German, these emotions spring right up from the heart and are dependent for the truthfulness of expression upon the genius or inspiration of the composer. John Barnett, to be sure, in the *Mountain Sylph* and Boildieu, in *La Dame Blanche*, have succeeded

in imparting to the larger portion of the music of these operas, the distinctive characteristics of the music of the land in which the action of the libretto is laid. But the rule is not absolute. There is a rule, however, which is never departed from by composers of any talent—a rule so natural that it must suggest itself to every reflecting mind. It is, that all ballads, dances and simple chorusses, should be purely and entirely national. The national music of every country is faithfully portrayed in its ballads and dances, and if these do not partake of the national character, the scene might as well be laid in Russia as in France, or in China as in Spain. Mr. Fry has, therefore, in this important feature, entirely failed. The music of Leonora has, indeed, no distinctive character—no idiosyncrasy—it is simply music without relevancy to time or place. There is another and a fatal fault to be noticed; a fault which Mr. Fry, knowing the voices he had to write for, should not have fallen into.

The music is too high both for the soprano and tenor. Both Mrs. Seguin and Mr. Frazer are taxed beyond their power and compass, and the effect throughout is strained and painful. The music, if published as written, would be beyond the compass of all but operatic singers. The Instrumentation is still the weakest part of the composition. We should have judged it to have been a very early attempt of a young writer. Want of clearness in design, outré effects and injudicious combinations, with a general poverty of conception, are the leading characteristics presented by the partition. We feel certain that the composer never imagined such effects as came out in the orchestra. A man may be an admirable theorist in the art of scoring, but if he has not had years of practical experience, his theories are not worth a jot—he may write a score that will look well, but looks go for nothing when it comes into the orchestra. A man never feels so childlike and helpless as when he hears his first important score performed, and finds his beauties upon paper, different in every way from what he expected. In short, books are worthless except for general principles, and though Mr. Fry may have written a thousand scores which he has never heard, we are sure that the fact of hearing one of these, would have done more for his improvement than years of blind labor.

In conclusion, while commanding the perseverance which he has exhibited, we can only regret that he has so misapplied his labors. If, instead of following a hackneyed model which has laid him open—and justly, too—to the charge of wholesale plagiarism, he had bestowed the same amount of time in working out a style of his own, something worthy of the labor might have resulted therefrom; but now, even allowing that Leonora becomes popular, the composer will owe at least one half to the school which he adopts, for in the servile imitations of any school, striking similarities are entirely unavoidable, and these similarities are almost certain to recall the prominent and popular beauties of the school or composer followed, and the public willingly receive the counterfeit for the sake of the real.

We hoped that Leonora would have been the foundation of an American school, but it is simply a weak copy of an original which is itself too weak to bear diluting. If Mr. Fry is to become anything in the future, he must look with doubt upon those who say, that this work ranks him with the greatest composers of Europe. It is ignorant flattery or something worse. We thought it injudicious in Mr. Fry, to say the least of it, to inform the audience that the same amount of mental labor, study, &c., &c., was given to the production of Leonora, as the greatest composers of Europe usually bestowed upon their productions. Mr. Fry doubtless worked hard, and all the credit due him should be awarded; it should, however, be remembered that the dwarf labors, in proportion, as hard as the

giant, but the *result* of that labor is also in proportion. Of the performance it would not be fair to judge hardly, for the rehearsals were altogether inadequate. Mrs. Seguin was, however, quite perfect, and her promptitude and steadiness frequently retrieved the music from inextricable confusion. Mr. Frazer has been harshly spoken of. This is unjust, as he endeavored to delay the performance of the Opera that he might perfect himself in his part. The only wonder is, how he got on as well as he did. His music was of immense length and great difficulty;—a man cannot study by steam, and therefore the errors of Mr. Frazer should fall upon those who hurried the Opera out.

The performance of the orchestra was bad beyond belief; it would have been bad even for sight playing, but for a performance after having rehearsed the music, we cannot condemn it too severely.

The getting up, scenery, dresses, &c., &c., was highly creditable to the liberality of the managers.

We shall recur to this Opera again, probably in our next, as we are now compelled to close abruptly from want of space.

## MISCELLANIES.

**THE OLD MASTERS IN ENGLAND.**—There were imported into England, in the last five years, seventy thousand ancient paintings. The sales at auction average over one thousand a month of undoubted originals. During the months of April and May, 1820 old masters were sold at the regular auction marts. From these facts it is very evident that all the old masters do not find their way, as some people suppose, into the auction room of Mr. Levy.

**A PASSIONATE LOVER OF FLOWERS.**—“We want no better evidence of a good heart than the passionate love of flowers,” says the good-hearted Major Noah in his last *Messenger*; but we do. In passing a very beautiful flower-garden in the neighborhood of New York, a week or two since, we made a similar remark to a lady, who replied, “it’s all stuff; I was passing by this garden a few days since, and seeing the owner of it trimming her flowers, I asked her to give me a pink out of her border of carnations. ‘I never give away my flowers,’ was the ‘good-hearted’ response of this passionate lover of flowers.”

We stated last week, on the authority of the *Knickerbocker’s* correspondent at Constantinople, that the author of *Eothen* was a gentleman named White: we had previously stated on the authority of a London newspaper that his name was Trevilian, we now learn from the author of the “Crescent and the Cross,” that the author of *Eothen* is a gentleman bearing the handsome name of Kinglake. It is a new name and a good one, and we shall not contend with it until the arrival of the next steamer, when we shall probably hear of another one.

**THE PROFITS OF NOVELS.**—During the last few years the Parisian daily press had run down so low in circulation that the plan of giving a novel in the feuilleton was adopted to attract purchasers; when the united energies of political writers and critics failed to interest the Parisian public, the aid of the novelist was invoked, and successfully, to save them from bankruptcy. In 1828, Lafitte bought one of the fifteen shares of the *Constitutionnel*, for Messrs. Cauchoir, Lemaire and Thiers, for which he paid one hundred thousand francs, and three years ago the whole paper was sold for five thousand pounds sterling, to Veron, a compeer of Thiers. The “*Presse*” adopted the plan of giving a novel, which succeeded,

and then the "Constitutionnel" engaged Eugene Sue, at the enormous price of one hundred thousand francs. *Le Juif Errant* was begun, and the sales of the paper rose to ten thousand copies daily at once.

**IMPROVEMENTS IN BROADWAY.**—There is considerable tearing down and building up going on in our beautiful thoroughfare, but the only alterations that we notice likely to prove an improvement, are extensive excavations for the foundation of a hotel next to Wiley & Putnam's, to be kept by the famous Rathbone, of Buffalo, and the beginning of a club-house and rackets-court, building by Mr. Carman, opposite to St. Thomas' Church, on the shady side of Broadway. This novel building will extend through to Crosby-street in the rear. The entrance to the Rev. Mr. Bellows' church will be a handsome addition in that part of the street. It is of red sand-stone, of the fashionable Gothic order.

Among the places worth visiting in Broadway, is the shop of George Chester, at 392, who has some of the most beautiful specimens of stained glass that we have seen in any of our decorative warehouses.

**THE POETRY OF EUROPE.**—*By Longfellow.*—The first volume of this collection of poetry has just been issued. It is a very large book, neatly printed, with a portrait of Schiller, and a very indifferent ornamental title page. It includes none of the poetry of England, and but little of the poetry of France. The translations are from a great variety of sources, British and American. We hear that the professor receives three thousand dollars for editing the work.

**THE SPREAD OF ALLEGHANIANISM.**—A new sign has recently been hung out in the upper part of Broadway, bearing this startling inscription:—"THE ALLEGHANIAN. Best of Liquors 3 cents per glass." This is the most encouraging sign for the Alleghanians that we have met with. An Alleghanian "smasher" for 3 cents is cheap enough. The proprietor will reckon, as a matter of course, on the entire patronage of the amateurs in national nomenclature.

The French Company also open at the Park next week. It is unusually strong in every respect. The opening Opera will be *La Juive*, by Helevy.

M Huber, a violincellist of reputation, recently from Paris, is at present in the city, and will give a concert as soon as the weather moderates its coldity.

Mr. Tryon opens the New Bowery Theatre on Monday, with a vaudeville company.

#### OBITUARY.

##### J. R. BLECKER.

We are pained to record the death of this promising young painter, at the early age of 26. He died on the 5th inst., after a protracted illness, of consumption. His loss is mourned by a large circle of friends, who admired his genius, and loved him for his generous and manly qualities. A kinder hearted man or a warmer friend never lived. Most sincerely do we sympathize with his afflicted family in their bereavement. Mr. Blecker was an amateur, but he has left works of a high order of merit, which give evidence of talents that would have placed his name among the first of American painters. His paintings are admirable for great delicacy of color, and beauty of conception, and for bold and original treatment. He had a true perception of the picturesque and humorous in character, and some of his efforts at their delineation were exceedingly happy. One of his last pictures, a very beautiful touch of melancholy nature, representing a scene in October, when the sky is growing cold, the clouds heavy, and the earth bare, is hung

in the exhibition of the National Academy. He was a true lover of nature, and we shall look at his modest sketches with melancholy interest, now that his hand is cold in death.

R.

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