RAMBLES IN BOOK-LAND

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Short Essays on Literary Subjects

BY

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ENCOURAGED by the kind reception accorded, on both sides of the Atlantic, to his 'By-Ways in Book-Land,' the author has ventured to prepare another volume—similar in aim, character, size, and appearance—in the hope that it may meet with similar good fortune. Here, as in the former case, the aim is unambitious. The writer deals lightly, briefly, and therefore not exhaustively, with some literary topics which have interested him, and which, he trusts, will prove not less acceptable to the reader.

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THE TREATMENT OF BOOKS.

THIS may seem to some a simple matter, and one on which there is scarcely need of advice or exhortation. Everybody, it may be said, knows how to treat books. 'What is there of mystery about it? What is there to learn? You cut a book open, you read it, and you lay it down. What more is necessary?' One can imagine these questions being put, but they are heart-breaking to a bibliomaniac. What indifference, what frivolity, what lack of reverence! To the book-worshipper it seems terrible that the subject should be approached so flippantly. How to treat books

—why, it is an art in itself; a method which comes, no doubt, by nature to the true believer, but which the most careless can acquire in time if they will but give their minds to it.

Of course the method applies only to the books which are really books—to those which, in exterior as well as internally, have a right to claim the privileges of preservation. From this point of view there are publications, commonly called books, which do not count; new volumes in paper-covers, for example. They are very excellent, no doubt, in the matter of letter-press (especially when they are French); but what is to be done with them? How are they to be treated? It is fair to assume that they are meant either not to last or to be bound. Their corners turn up at the edges, and their pages come unstitched. It is impossible to regard them with respect. They are fit only for the base uses of the smoking-room or the easy-chair. They can be dog's-eared, or pencilled, or what not, without shame coming on the dog's-earer or the penciller. Till

they are attired in cloth, or in something even more permanent than that, they are hardly books at all, and cannot hope or expect to be dealt with as such.

Nor, indeed, can the ordinary 'railway-novel' of everyday commerce look for much more respectful or more kindly treatment. Compassionate or avaricious people do indeed set store by these yellow, 'decorated' emanations; ranging them, when read, in a dingy, dilapidated row along a melancholy bookshelf. But such persons are not bibliophiles of the true kind. The genuine book-lover may peruse the florin 'shocker,' but either he leaves it in the railway-carriage in which it has been read, or, if perchance he takes it home, he relegates it to some obscure cupboard where it ranks, not as a book, but as mere lumber. He is even disposed to be discourteous to the rich relation of the florin 'shocker,' the two-volume or three-volume novel. This, to be sure, goes into the best houses of the best people, and, for the time, basks in the sunlight of prosperity. But it

is, nevertheless, an ephemeral thing. It has its day, and then ceases to be—so far as the two- or the three-volume form is concerned. In that shape it descends at last to the seaside circulating library, and thence passes quietly out of existence. No one knows exactly what becomes of the two- or the three-volume fictions. They fade, somehow, out of life, and revive only, when they revive at all, in the one-volume shape—the shape in which they find their way into the private libraries. Then, and then only, do they become the object of the bibliophile's attention. They are on their way to be classics, and may rank as books indeed.

For the book which is really a book, only 'the most distinguished consideration' should be possible. To begin with, it should be taken up and held in hands which are wholly spotless, and, moreover, absolutely dry. These precautions neglected, the results to the fair cover of the volume may be truly sad. Then comes the question of the cutting open, the severing of the leaves. Now,

this is one of the things which everybody fancies he can do, like the driving of a dog-cart, the managing of a theatre, and the editing of a newspaper. They all seem so easy to achieve, and especially the manipulation of the paper-knife. It looks a harmless instrument, this last; but what ravages it has committed in its time—what page-murders, what book-slaughters, what jags, what gashes! In the grasp of an incompetent person, it is a dreadful weapon. As if the cutting open of a book were not an enterprise to approach with fear and trembling! The most accomplished cutter may well give himself pause ere he begins. He has to consider, first, the way in which the paper in the book is folded, and, secondly, its quality and texture. The unlearned will insert the knife in each interstice formed by the folding: the instructed, having studied the folding, will open up several pages at a time. And he will handle his instrument according to the strength of the paper with which he has to do. If it be thin and soft,

great will be his danger, many the obstacles to be overcome. And he will make sure also, when running along the top edge of the pages, that he cuts close up to the back-stitching. Unskilful persons will, on occasion, neglect this obvious duty, and slits and tears will be the result. A well-cut volume is, indeed, an object to be admired, for the era of its usefulness has then been well begun, and bright is the promise of the future.

Next comes the actual reading, with the modes thereof. And, on this point, the preliminary words must necessarily be of warning. First, as to the way in which books must not be read. They must not be read by the fireside—unless, indeed, they be books to which the reader attaches no value. One can understand a devotee of the fender and the hearthrug keeping near his hand a volume or two concerning whose fate he is not anxious, and ever and anon revelling therein. But no book for which the owner or custodian has the faintest atom of respect should be exposed to the cer-

tainty of having its covers curled up and otherwise distorted by the action of the heat. Nor, obviously, ought any but the lepers and pariahs among books to be perused at meal-times. This is a device of the forlorn bachelor or spinster, whom one would be sorry to deprive of any consolation. No one says it is not pleasant to read at table. It is pleasant; we have all indulged in it, and probably we shall all go on indulging in it. But it ought not to be permitted, for all that. It is bad, to begin with, for the digestion: worse than that, it may by chance be bad for the book. One may take all possible care, as one thinks, and yet disaster may follow. The grease demon is cunning and ubiquitous. Though the white cloth may seem innocent of stain, yet stain may come. Though the book be placed or held well away from the potables and edibles, yet it may happen that one or other may make, on one page or more, a mark which not even the anguish of the book-lover will erase.

And, in truth, what anguish is his who

recognises that, through his own folly, he has defaced, however slightly, a work of the printer's and the binder's art! Alas, there are dangers for books even when the table is destitute of potential grease. It is dangerous to set them down within reach of a flower-vase. The vase may be upset, and the book's cover stained irreparably. Evil lurks in the tablecloth, wherever found. If it be not damp, it may be dusty. There be those who enclose their books in paper what time they read: it is a sign of carefulness, and preserves the covers from soiling. But a paper-covered book is, nevertheless, a most unlovely object, and one would be glad to avoid it if one could. There be those, again, who torture their volumes into book-rests, thereby trying the binding too severely, and haply going away and leaving the pages open to the dusty air. This, to be sure, is more—though not much more—seemly, than placing the open book, pages downwards, on the table (with cloth or without it): only the profane do that.

Grave indeed are the trials through which our poor books go. Of dog's-earing and pencilling something has been said. They are the inventions of the Evil One. They can never be wholly eradicated, and they bring with them everlasting disgrace to the reckless perpetrator. Of such things no true book-lover would be guilty. He would spread his book out fair and square where no dust was, make his notes on separate paper, keep his 'place' with a marker, and by-and-by store away the volume where it cannot be abraded. That is the way in which to treat books, and no other is possible to the entirely well-regulated mind.

INITIALS.

NOT very long ago a sort of quasi-claim was put in, by a well-known writer, to the more or less exclusive use of the letter 'Q.' as a literary pseudonym. He had written in daily and weekly papers, and published a volume, under that appellation; and he was a little sore that the letter should have been adopted for the same purpose by another writer. As a matter of fact, the authors of 'Troy Town' and 'Dramatists of the Day' are not the only 'men of the time' who have utilized 'Q.' in this fashion. Mr. Edmund Yates, I believe, signed himself in this way when contributing a series of articles to a London evening paper now defunct. And it may be noted that it had occurred to a lady, Jane Taylor to wit, to

make use of the letter doubled, thus — 'Q.Q.' — in certain contributions to the magazines.

It must be confessed that the adoption of a single letter, whether an initial or not, as a *nom de guerre*, is always accompanied by chances of muddlement. Who shall hope to keep one letter all to himself? The thing is obviously impossible. The number of those entitled to append it to their work is multitudinous. At the time, certainly, there is every possibility, not to say probability, of confusion between persons. By-and-by the chaff gets sifted from the wheat, and, while the one is thrown away, the other remains. Thus initials become historical. Take 'A.,' for example. In the realms of poetry it belongs *par excellence* to Matthew Arnold, who issued more than one volume of verse without any other means of identification than the solitary letter. Pope was known as 'A.' in the 'Memoirs of the Society of Grub Street,' Mrs. Southey appended it to some fugitive contributions, and Keble can be recognised

by it in the 'Tracts for the Times;' but, so far as celebrity goes, Arnold has the greatest right to it. With him it was really an initial; with the others it was a pseudonym only.

Certain other members of the alphabet have been not less, but even more, distinguished in their day. In our own time, a noble and legal correspondent of the *Times* has acquired a species of prescriptive right to 'B.'; 'D.,' in the Greek form, stood both for D. M. Moir and Benjamin Disraeli; 'E.' was sometime the simple signature of Thomas, Lord Erskine; 'M.' was used by Gerard Moultrie, in the 'People's Hymnal,' and by Hugh Miller in some letters on the herring fishery; while 'T.' was the modest sign added by Lord Tennyson to his verses on 'The War,' when he published them originally in the *Times* of 1859. All these were instances of the utilization of initials. Of letters adapted to the purposes of pseudonymity the examples are not less numerous. 'B.' in the 'Microcosm' was Canning; in the *Literary Gazette* it was Bryan Waller

Procter. 'C.' in the 'Tracts for the Times' was Dr. Pusey, and Lord Palmerston sometimes wrote as 'E.' Still more notable in the history of literature are 'L.,' 'U.,' and 'V.,' for it was as 'V.' that Mrs. Archer Clive, the author of 'Paul Ferroll,' published all her poems; 'U.' is the letter which indicates Julius C. Hare's contributions to the 'Guesses at Truth,' and it was as 'L.' that Miss Catherine Swanwick issued all her books of verse.

It might be thought that, when two initials were given, the likelihood of securing them for one's self would be increased. But it is not so. Who shall say whether 'A. B.' conceals Alexander Brome or Andrew Borde; whether 'A. G.' hides Agnes Giberne or Alfred Gatty; whether 'E. S.' means Edward Stillingfleet or Elkanah Settle? The two letters are not sufficient for identification. Nor is such identification certain even in the case of three initials, though the chances are considerably improved. In some cases such triplets are as famous as any name in literary

history. Look at 'L. E. L.,' for example; it is much better known than the baptismal appellation that it indicates. 'L. E. L.' has admirers where Letitia Elizabeth Landon, perhaps, is scarcely thought of. For years C. S. Calverley was spoken and written of only as 'C. S. C.,' and a contemporary writer of familiar verse is hardly to be recognised otherwise than as 'C. C. R.' How dear 'H. A. L.' once was to the readers of works on sport or travel, and how often 'S. G. O.' used to pose in the pages of the 'Thunderer,' I need not say. It was not then by any means a matter of notoriety that the one was Major H. A. Leveson and the other Lord Sidney Godolphin Osborne. But perhaps the most curious use ever made of initials was that to which the American writer, Eliza Brown Chase, appropriated hers—the 'E. B. C.' being indicated by the corresponding notes on the treble stave.

On the history of four initials in one group I need not dwell. It is more or less remarkably illustrated in the popularity ac-

corded to the stories of 'A. L. O. E.' and the essays of 'A. K. H. B.' In the former case they have meant, vaguely, 'A Lady of England;' in the latter, as most people know, they are the genuine initials of an actual name—that of the Rev. A. K. H. Boyd, of St. Andrews. More interesting is it to notice the variations which have been introduced from time to time by different people in the use of initial letters. Sometimes the single letter has been followed by a dash, as in 'J—— S——,' standing for Joseph Spence, or 'D—— G.,' standing for George Daniel. Sometimes dots or asterisks have been used, as in 'Lord B.....' for Lord Brougham. At other times, again, both initials and finals have been pressed into the service, as in 'R——d S——le,' for Richard Steele; and so on. But in such cases, probably, the desire of the writer was rather to be discovered than to hide himself. In other instances, the users of initials have added to those of their names those of their occupations; and thus 'H. K. B. C.' has meant

Henry King, Bishop of Chichester, while 'T.R.D.J.S.D.O.P.I.I.' has stood for The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Swift, Dean of Patrick's in Ireland. Once upon a time Mr. Owen Manning published a book on 'The Several Species of Ratiocination,' under the *nom de guerre* of 'A.G.O.T.U.O.C.' (a Gentleman of the University of Cambridge); while Dr. A. A. Sykes beat even this record by appearing on the title-page of a work on New Testament 'demoniacks' as 'T.P.A.P.O.A.B.I.T.C.O.S.' (the Precentor and Prebendary of Alton-Borealis in the Church of Sarum).

But, in truth, the amount of ingenuity expended upon the use of initial letters has been practically unlimited. They have taken all sorts of forms, from 'A. A. A.' (Baroness Blaze de Bury) to 'A. B. C. D. E. F. G.,' and from 'F. A. C. T.' to 'Q. E. D.,' etc. When Halhed and Sheridan published their 'Love Epistles of Aristænetus,' they put their initials together and figured as 'H. S.;' while Beaumont and Fletcher issued 'The Bloody Brothers' under the disguise of 'B. F. J.'

Other authors have been represented in print by a combination of letters which afforded no clue to the actual initials of their names, as Dean Swift by 'C. B.,' Bishop Ken by 'H. D.,' Daniel Defoe by 'L. M.,' Richard Bentley by 'P. D.,' and so on *ad infinitum.* Nor is it likely that the employment of initials in this way and others will ever cease. It is a natural resource of the modest and mystifying penman. Very early in life we are taught to describe ourselves as 'M. or N.,' and the directions then given to us sink deep into the literary character.

FOOD FOR JEST.

WHEN one of our countrymen, whose French was that of Stratford-atte-Bow, was asked by a Parisian danseuse whereabouts in the theatre he was sitting, he replied, 'Mademoiselle, dans une loge rôtie' (meaning 'grillée'). 'Ces diables d'Anglais,' observed the lady, 'pensent toujours à leur Rosbif.' And it must be admitted that they do think of it pretty frequently, and, moreover, without being ashamed of the fact. 'What is an Englishman made of?' asked Shirley Brooks, an age ago, in *Punch;* afterwards supplying his own answer:

> 'Roast beef and jam-tart,
> And a pint of good clar't;
> That's what an Englishman's made of.'

There can be no question that the subject

of eating, not to say of drinking, figures largely in our everyday talk, and, naturally, is fully represented in our literature—especially in that part of it which is inspired by wit and humour. 'No man can be wise on an empty stomach,' says Bartle Massey in the story; and, accordingly, the topics of palate and provender have greatly commended themselves to our lighter bards and prosemen, as well as to our *diseurs de bons mots*. The presence of a pyramid *à la Macédoine* suggested to George Croly the quip that it was intended to give a *fillip* to the appetite; and it was by his appetite, it will be remembered, that the mother, in William Sawyer's Tennysonian parody, was able to recognise the strange visitor as her son.

> 'Seared is, of course, my heart; but unsubdued
> Is, and shall be, my appetite for food'—

so wrote Calverley; and the remark is typical of many such epigrammatic contrasts between the eatable and the sentimental. Byron, especially, was fond of putting the

two in opposition. No one, he said, liked to be disturbed 'at meals or love,' and he records — though, I should say, without sympathetic feeling — that Candide found life most tolerable after taking food.

Byron himself suffered from indigestion, and, though he called the dinner-bell 'the tocsin of the soul,' he also conceded that, when dinner has oppressed one, the result is something more distressing than a mere *mauvais quart d'heure.* Of his Don Juan he relates how, on one occasion, poring on the leaves and on the flowers,

> 'He miss'd the pathway, he forgot the hours,
> And when he look'd upon his watch again,
> He found how much old Time had been a winner—
> He also found that he had lost his dinner.'

Luttrell once said to Planché that the man who professed not to like a good dinner was either a fool or a liar. Horace Smith would not have come within the limits of this censure, for did he not make the meal the subject of a 'love-song,' in which he asked:

> 'Who can display such varied art,
> To suit the taste of saint and sinner,

Who go so near to touch their heart,
As you, my darling dainty dinner?'

James Smith, masquerading as 'Horace in London,' sang the praises of economy in dining, ordering a sirloin instead of venison, and asserting that

'Who dines at a guinea a head
Will ne'er by his head get a guinea.'

Mr. Alfred Austin has even dwelt upon the moral influence of a 'good square meal':

'What is the spell that 'twixt a saint and sinner
The diff'rence makes?—A sermon? Bah—a dinner!'

The concomitants of the chief meal of the day have not lacked the most varied celebration. 'Beautiful soup' is the topic and refrain of one of Mr. Lewis Carroll's most diverting travesties.

'Who would not give all else for two p-
Ennyworth only of beautiful soup?'—

such is the enthusiastic inquiry which he puts into the mouth of one of the characters in 'Alice.' Did he not also write the ballad of the walrus, the carpenter, and the oysters, of which it is difficult not to think whenever

one partakes of the 'delicious bivalve'? The salmon figures gloriously in Bon Gaultier's 'Lay of the Love-Lorn,' where, as usual, it is accepted as explaining all the symptoms which might otherwise have been attributed to the claret. 'All the *soles* that are, were *four feet* once,' quoted a lively Shakespearean scholar at a festive gathering; and the humble flounder, which is for less dignified tables than those frequented by the sole, has nevertheless been made the point of a jest directed against an awkward orator at a Fishmongers' banquet. When we come to 'the birds,' and turn our attention to the pheasant before us, we think, involuntarily, of the wit who, observing a lady feed her pheasants in the morning with crumbs and milk, exclaimed, 'Ah! I see—your ladyship is preparing them *here*, for bread-sauce *hereafter!*'

James Smith, in the verses already quoted from, declared in favour of roast beef. Thackeray, in his free-and-easy version of the 'Persicos Odi,' discoursed *con amore* of

a leg of mutton. 'A plain leg of mutton' he exhorted Lucy to bring him—one which should be

> 'Smoking and tender and juicy,
> And what better meat can there be?'

Well, there might be, for instance, a leg of pork; though, let us hope, not, in one respect, like that in which a certain host looked vainly for the stuffing, inducing Poole the dramatist to suggest that perhaps the article was in 'the other leg'! It was, by the way, to something better than beef or pork—to a haunch of venison, in fact—that the Sir George Warrender of former times sat down on the day which will always be famous in the literature of anecdote. Sir George would seem to have been a valiant trencherman, for when he observed to the butler, in the course of his meal, 'John, this will make a capital hash to-morrow,' the servant replied, 'Yes, Sir George, if you leave off now!'

After meat, pudding—the mention of which suggests the well-known epigram addressed to an accomplished lady:

'Your dressing, dancing, gadding, where's the good in?
Tell me, sweet lady, can you make a pudding?'

The subject of fruit in general was made the peg for one of the cleverest passages written by Charles Dudley Warner, the American humourist; while the name of a special kind of pear—the 'Marie Louise'—gave to Sir George Rose the idea of one of the happiest compliments ever paid to women. Dudley Warner, again, has penned some sprightly sentences about lettuce; and who does not remember, not only Sydney Smith's, but the late Mortimer Collins's, rhythmical recipe for a salad?

Perhaps the most notable tea of recent times was that to which the characters of 'The Sorcerer' were summoned in the well-known chorus:

'Now for the tea of our host,
Now for the rollicking bun,
Now for the muffin and toast,
Now for the gay Sally Lunn!'

Talking of muffins, one thinks of the man in 'The Hunting of the Snark,' who, however,

was 'roused,' not only with muffins, and mustard and cress, and jam, but with ice and judicious advice, which obviously have nothing to do with tea-time. Ice has had the honour of being poetically distinguished by Dr. Wendell Holmes, who, in his verses called 'Contentment,' has told us that

> 'Plain food is quite enough for me;
> Three courses are as good as ten;
> If Nature can subsist on three,
> Thank Heaven for three—Amen!
> I always thought cold victual nice—
> My *choice* would be vanilla-ice."

Of supper, as a meal, less has been sung than might have been expected from the *bons vivants* of Parnassus; in fact, for one of the most amusing references to it we have to go to the pages of Mr. Burnand's 'Happy Thoughts,' where Miss Pellingle's most vigorous 'variation' upon Rousseau's 'Dream' suggests to the 'happy thinker' Rousseau after a heavy supper.

BARDS AND THE BOTTLE.

IF the subject of food has from time to time been discussed with lightness and brightness by the wits in prose and verse, that of 'drink,' both in general and in particular, has assuredly not attracted less attention. Numerous as have been the serious celebrations of 'the bottle' —whether it be of beer, or wine, or spirits— the jesting treatment of the topic has been at least equally elaborate and much more entertaining. Lord Neaves went so far as to hold and to argue that man himself, in his rudimentary condition, had been 'a leather bottèl,' which sufficiently accounted, in his view, for the human propensity for liquor. 'The bottle,' indeed, has had inspiration for many a rhymer, both before and after Horace

Smith, who, professing to address 'a bright-eyed nymph of sloping shoulders,' cried :

> 'Oh ! when thy lips to mine are pressed,
> What transports titillate my throttle !
> My love can find new life and zest
> In thee, and thee alone, my bottle !'

Various are the ways in which the matter has been regarded by various authorities. Dr. Wendell Holmes once wrote an 'Ode for a Social Meeting,' to which he appended what he called 'slight alterations by a tee-totaler,' after the following fashion :

> Then a scowl smile, and a howl glass, and a scoff toast, and a sneer cheer,
> strychnine and whisky, and ratsbane and beer !
> For all the good wine, and we've some of it here !
> In cellar, in pantry, in attic, in hall,
> Down, down, with the tyrant that masters us all !
> Long live the gay servant that laughs for us all !

It is to be feared that the scribe who could make such emendations would scarcely have approved of the Indians described by Artemus Ward, who 'drink with impunity, or anybody who invites them.' Bret Harte, again, has drawn a genial picture of one Johnson—a

Yankee, to be sure—whose particular failing (if it be one!) was

'A wild desire to treat
Every able male white citizen he met upon the street.'

Another hero of Mr. Harte's delightful rhymes was prevented, it will be remembered, from being so generous, in this way, as he could wish, by reason of the legend which he found posted up over the bar counter—'All liquors must be paid for on leaving the room.' On one point, certainly, all drinkers are likely to agree—that drinking should be 'fair.' It was to enforce this dictum, one may assume, that John Heywood, the Elizabethan, wrote the following epigram:

'I drink to thee, Tom.' 'Nay, thou drinkest *from* me, John,
For when thou drinkest *to* me, drink thou leavest none.'

When one descends from the general to the particular, and turns first to the subject of wine, one finds one's self in the presence

of a cloud of witnesses. Byron, with characteristic cynicism, declared in favour of

> 'Wine and women, mirth and laughter—
> Sermons and soda-water the day after.'

Hook, just as characteristically, observed to one who had allowed a bibliopolist friend to take more than was good for him, that he appeared to have emptied his wine-cellar into his book-seller. James Smith, again, has told us how he adapted his wine-drinking to the time of year:

> 'My glass I to each season shape,
> Nor keep, in either, Lent;
> My drink, when winter frowns, is Cape,
> My summer beverage Tent.'

Our contemporaries, let us be thankful, have exerted their influence in a very wholesome manner. Thus, Mr. Cholmondely-Pennell has declared:

> '*In vino veritas!*—which means
> A man's a very ass in liquor;
> The "thief that slowly steals our brains"
> Makes nothing but the temper quicker.
> Next morning brings a train of woes,
> But finds the passions much sedater.
> Who was it, now, that pulled my nose?—
> I'd better go and ask the waiter.'

Equally good in tendency is the remark of the narrator in 'Happy Thoughts' about that friend of his who has slapped him on the back and evidently has stopped too long in the wine-cellar—'A little tasting is a dangerous thing.' Professor Blackie has shown, in an admirable song, that the absorption by a man of the liquor which he swallows is a proof that 'the subject and object are one'—a metaphysic subtlety into which, perhaps, it might be dangerous to enter.

'Give me champagne, and contentment be mine!' sings one of Whyte-Melville's characters in 'Tilbury Nogo,' and a very spirited argument he makes of it. 'Lord Elgin's dry champagne' was celebrated by Sir George Trevelyan in one of his rhythmical squibs, and Mr. Edmund Yates still remains the acknowledged laureate of Pommery and Gréno:

'At the beaker's brim,
Beading brittle bubbles,
Sea in which to swim,
And cast away all troubles,
Sea, where sorrow sinks,
Ne'er to rise again—oh,

Blessedest of drinks,
Welcome, Pommery Gréno !'

'My dear curate,' says the Professor in Mr. Mallock's 'New Paul and Virginia,' 'what I am enjoying is the champagne that you drink, and what you are enjoying is the champagne that I drink. This is altruism—this is benevolence.' The curate sees the logic of it, and replies rapturously, 'I will drink another bottle for your sake.' Sherry has found fewer celebrants. It is to be feared, indeed, that when the man in the 'Bab Ballads,' addressing the lively confectioner, said,

'Why so very, very merry?
Is it purity of conscience, or your one-and-seven sherry?,

the intention was to reflect injuriously upon that species of libation. Port lives in the story told of Hook, who, commenting on an antique specimen, said, 'There is food and drink in this wine—port, with a crust.' More sardonic was Douglas Jerrold's request for 'some old port—not *elder* port.' Curaçoa supplies the point of an epigram by Luttrell, and it was H. S. Leigh who

said of a man that he had had so much *hoc* he could only say *hic.* As for the different kinds of spirituous liquor, rum has had its anything-but-*sacer vates* in Lord Byron, who had the shockingly bad taste to rank it with 'true religion' as a spirit-calmer. Brandy, again, figures for ever in a clever couplet written by the other Byron—to wit, H. J.:

> 'The least drop in the world I do not mind:
> Cognac's a noun I never yet declined.'

Lord Neaves has written about getting 'dismally drunk upon whisky,' and that potent liquid has had many other bards, including the American John Hay.

Beer, as a beverage, has had numerous eulogists. Barry Cornwall speaks of

> 'Brains made clear
> By the irresistible strength of beer.'

The authors of 'Bon Gaultier' made Bulwer Lytton say of 'Old England's fine time-hallowed drink' that

> 'This makes strong hearts—strong heads attest its charm—
> This nerves the might that sleeps in Britain's brawny arm!'

C. S. Calverley declares:

'Such power hath Beer. The heart which grief hath canker'd
Hath one unfailing remedy—the tankard.'

It was for a pot of beer, drawn mild, that the Queen of the May languished, in the disrespectful parody. Even lager-beer has found immortality, of a kind, in the pages of the 'Breitmann Ballads.' 'Take him for half-and-half,' said Thackeray, on a familiar occasion, 'we ne'er shall look upon his like again.' In the same way, 'He is always ale-ing,' was said by Luttrell of a bibulous servant. Just as Calverley has told us that

'The prima donna, smiling herself out,
Recruits her flagging powers with bottled stout,'

so C. S. Cayley has sounded the praises of 'Brisk bottled stout in pewters creamy-crowned.' Once more: while the former rhymer has dwelt upon the value of 'draught Allsopp' to one who would 'petrify his tutor,' Mr. Savile Clarke has extolled the beauties of 'Bass,' 'Bon Gaultier' having long ago done the same for 'Perkins's Entire.'

'CHARLES, HIS FRIEND.'

HIS name is not always Charles, frequently as it is so. Often he figures under quite a different appellation. He is Careless in 'The Double-dealer,' Lovelace in 'Three Weeks after Marriage,' Rovewell in 'The Upholsterer,' Scandal in 'Love for Love,' Younger in 'The Patron,' and so on, and so on. Truly Protean is he in the designations he assumes; and yet, whatever the baptismal adornment, he is always the same person—always the same Charles—always 'his friend.' He is the lineal descendant of the ancient Pythias, for ever finding a Damon on whom to bestow his loving acquaintance. The playwrights have never been tired of him. He dates from the beginnings of the drama. He is

called Horatio in 'Hamlet' and Caleb in 'Two Roses.' He is the utility man of the stage. Wherever there is a hero, there you may behold 'Charles, his friend,' beside him.

It is not, on the whole, a very dignified position to occupy. Charles is usually of no account personally; his business is to play second fiddle. How many people take any interest in Horatio? His *raison d'être* is to be confided in by the princely Dane, to be leaned upon in moments of sadness or abstraction, to be talked at, and occasionally to be slapped upon the shoulder by way of tardy and condescending recognition. Hamlet has all the 'fat,' as the players call it, Horatio all the lean. He comes on and goes off, as he is wanted. No 'points' or 'situations' for him —Hamlet has them all. And this is the badge of all the tribe of Charles—servitude, more or less, to the men whom they call 'friend.' It is their duty simply to 'play up to' their principal. If they have a 'speech' to themselves, it is only to lead up to an 'entrance' by the 'star.' One could fancy

that, if Charles were not so persistently labelled 'his friend,' he might often be inclined to feel like 'his enemy.' 'How hard it is,' says Orlando, 'to look at happiness through another man's eyes!' How hard it must be, one can imagine, for Charles to see all the honours carried off by the man whose 'friend' it is his sole distinction to be!

And if it be fanciful to attribute such sensations to Charles himself, it is scarcely so to conceive that they exist in the person of his interpreters. Of these there are two classes: the young actors, who play the part while they are acquiring capacity for higher things; and the older performers, who have never been able to gain that capacity, and who go on assuming the *rôle*, in some form or other, all through their career. The novice envies the 'leading man' who takes all the *kudos* and the applause; but his envy is mitigated by the hope which springs from youth and ambition. Some day he, too, may have any number of Charleses to be his 'friends,' and the thought prevents his envy from deepen-

ing to bitterness. But for the men who perpetually play Hastings to Marlow, and the like, there is no such future, and therefore no such consolation. For them the dream is over, and for them there is nothing but chronic discontent or easy indifference. Let us hope that the latter state of mind is more often reached than is generally supposed. It is weary work reflecting on past visions and scowling at the men who 'take the cake.' Let us trust that the most disappointed Charles gets tired of bemoaning the unkindness of fate, and learns to accept with philosophy the position accorded him.

After all, the *rôle* of friend to the hero is not wholly without its compensations. If it does nothing else, it brings one into good company. There is, at least, some second-hand glory in the situation. Horatio might reflect that it is something to be the confidant of princes, to be the repository of their thoughts and their emotions, to be constantly on the stage with them, and therefore always in immediate contact with the observed of

all observers. There is even something in being, as the eighteenth-century Charles was, the hail-fellow-well-met of the young beau of the drama, intimately associated with him in his intrigues, his discomfitures, his successes. There are modest men who would be contented with this, and who would take credit to themselves that, if they were not the rose, at least they dwelt in its neighbourhood. And then, Charles has often had some love-business of his own, not so important or so attractive to the spectator as 'his friend's,' but, still, important to himself, and occupying public attention for at least a casual moment or two. It is worth while, perhaps, to be rushed through five acts of a comedy, if at the end you do but hold the audience for a space while you pair off with the lady of your choice. Even when Marlow and Kate Hardcastle are on the boards, Hastings and Miss Neville are not quite forgotten.

And the representatives of Charles may take this comfort to their souls, that the subordination of Charles to 'his friend' is

wholly in accordance with life and nature. The *rôle* exists, and somebody must fill it. Some of the most admirable people whom the world has seen have prided themselves mainly upon being the friend of someone else. It is a surrender of individuality, no doubt. But how many are perfectly willing thus to efface themselves! Every day we meet with men who are merely 'Charles, his friend' to somebody, and who, moreover, are wholly happy in the situation. In ordinary life Charles is proud to be the confidant of his superior in brains or monetary resources. 'He called me "my friend,"' thinks he, in ecstasy, and is more than ever confirmed in his devotion. He does well to be so confirmed, for the 'Charles, his friend,' both of the stage and of life, differs from other friends in this respect, that he is never very badly treated by the man he serves. The hero makes use of him, but is loyal to him, and does not borrow money of him. He does not make love to his sweetheart, or in any way seek to supplant him. Nor can

he be said strictly to bore him, for ' Charles, his friend,' is always very willing to listen to whatever is addressed to him, whether by prince or by beau.

DISJECTA MEMBRA POETÆ.

A NEW volume of poems by the Laureate has of late years had a double attraction for the most devoted of his admirers. It has been not only the prospect of fresh work by him that has pleased them—though that, of course, has been the chief source of their satisfaction; there has been the curiosity they have felt as to what, if anything, he would reproduce of the matter which he had published formerly but had not since reprinted. The current volume of the Laureate's 'Works,' fairly bulky as it is, does not, it need scarcely be said, by any means embody all that he has given to the world. From time to time he has included in his later books selections from his earlier ones, and welcome, in most cases, have those reprints been; but

there still remains much which even a *difficile* criticism would be glad to see comprised in forthcoming editions of the 'Works.'

From the volume published jointly by Alfred and Charles Tennyson in 1827, it is to be assumed that nothing will ever be reprinted, though Tennysonians would be delighted if the Laureate would but identify those portions of it which were the products of his pen. A good deal of the book is worth resuscitating, but Lord Tennyson has probably discarded definitely the verse that he wrote before he was eighteen years of age. 'Timbuctoo,' the Cambridge prize poem of 1829, is also probably rejected as a whole. And as a whole, of course, it is immature and unequal. There are fine passages in it, such as the description of the visionary city itself, which is almost Miltonic in its sonority; such, too, as the pictures of the moon's 'white cities' and the rest—of the days

> 'When full-voiced Winter roofs
> The headland with inviolate white snow'—

of

> 'Gold-sanded bays
> Blown round with happy airs of odorous winds'—

and so on. But by the side of these there are occasional descents into bathos and triviality, which, unfortunately, mar the general excellence of the work. The poet has reproduced three or four lines from 'Timbuctoo' in the course of the 'Ode to Memory'—those about

> 'Listening the lordly music flowing from
> The illimitable years;'

but he is not likely to draw upon the former poem again, and he is still less likely, one may say, to republish it in full.

When we come to the volume of 1830 the position of affairs is different. From that publication the Laureate has, at various times, taken such pieces as the 'Elegiacs,' the 'Supposed Confessions,' the 'Nothing will die,' the 'All things will die,' the 'Kraken,' and 'We are free.' Why should he not go further and take more? Why should

we not have another sonnet or two? especially that one on Love, beginning,

> 'To know thee is all wisdom, and old age
> Is but to know thee: dimly we behold thee
> Athwart the veils of evil which infold thee;'

and including the powerful line—

> 'Hollowed in awful chasms of wheeling gloom.'

Why should we not have 'Every day hath its night,' and 'Hero and Leander,' and the 'Chorus in an Unpublished Drama,' and, in particular, the 'English War Song' and the 'National Song,' if only to make better known to posterity the rough swing and vigour which the Laureate has sometimes put into his work? Not very poetical, perhaps, but full of earnest feeling, are such utterances as these, in the song last named:

> 'There is no land like England
> Where'er the light of day be;
> There are no hearts like English hearts,
> Such hearts of oak as they be.
> There is no land like England
> Where'er the light of day be;
> There are no men like Englishmen,
> So tall and bold as they be.'

And, again :

> 'Our glory is our freedom,
> We lord it o'er the sea ;
> We are the sons of freedom,
> We are free.'

In the same way with the volume of 1833. Five of the sonnets in it, which were formerly omitted from the 'Works,' have gradually been included in them ; as has also 'My life is full of weary days.' But why has the Laureate so persistently relegated to obscurity that truly passionate quatorzain, beginning,

> 'O beauty, passing beauty ! sweetest Sweet !
> How can'st thou let me waste my youth in sighs !
> I only ask to sit beside thy feet.
> Thou knowest I dare not look into thine eyes ;'

and ending,

> 'Methinks if I should kiss thee, no control
> Within the thrilling brain could keep afloat
> The subtle spirit. Even while I spoke,
> The bare word KISS hath made my inner soul
> To tremble like a lute-string, ere the note
> Hath melted in the silence that it broke.

This is the volume which includes 'The

Hesperides,' with its many felicities of imagery and expression; as, for example—

'Wandering waters unto wandering waters call:
Let them clash together, foam and fall.
Out of watchings, out of wiles,
Comes the bliss of secret smiles.
All things are not told to all.
Half-round the mantling night is drawn,
Purple fringed with even and dawn.
Hesper hateth Phosphor, evening hateth morn.'

Here, also, is the spirited tribute to 'Kate,' for whom, the poet says,

'I would pierce
The blackest files of clanging fight,
And strongly strike to left and right,
In dreaming of my lady's eyes'—

a tribute which surely is as well 'worth preserving' as the address to 'Rosalind,' which now finds a place among the 'Works.'

Then there are the numerous fugitive poems, commencing with 1831, in which year the poet contributed three pieces to 'The Gem.' Of these, the 'Anacreontics,' though a trifle, might well be perpetuated; as might also the sonnet published in 'Friend-

ship's Offering,' in 1833, wherein the reader is exhorted to

> 'Give up wholly
> Thy spirit to mild-minded melancholy,'

and wherein we are told that,

> 'In the middle of the sombre valley,
> The crispèd waters whisper musically.'

'The New Timon and the poets' (which belongs to 1846) will, of course, never be reprinted, because the quarrel to which it owed its birth was afterwards closed; but it is so full of admirable passages that it must always remain one of the jewels of our satiric treasury. The pictures of 'The old Timon with his noble heart,' and of 'The padded man that wears the stays,' must ever linger, with other lines, in the memory of the student. So, too, with the sonnet to Macready (1851). How comes it that this is not to be found in the collected 'Works'? What could be better than the references to Shakespeare's 'bland and universal eye,' and to

> 'Brainless pantomime,
> And those gilt gauds men-children swarm to see'?

The sonnet is given in Macready's 'Life,' but it ought to receive both house-room and honour in the authorised editions of 'Tennyson.'

Nor does the list of desirable reproductions by any means end here. The Laureate has rescued from decay 'The Third of February, 1852,' and the first verse of 'Hands All Round' (of the same year), adding to the latter a couple of new verses; but he has ignored 'Britons, Guard your Own' (also of 1852), and has left 'Riflemen, form!' (1859), —or 'The War,' as it was called—to find a resting-place where best it can. Yet would one plead for the re-issue of 'Britons, Guard your Own!' if only for the sake of such lines as—

> 'God save the Nation,
> The toleration,
> And the free speech that makes a Briton known;'

and for the reproduction of 'The War,' if only for the sake of such stirring quatrains as—

> 'Let your reforms for a moment go,
> Look to your butts and take good aims.

Better a rotten borough or so,
Than a rotten fleet or a city in flames!'

Moreover, who can fail to regret the omission, from 'Hands All Round,' of so vigorous an appeal as this:

'Gigantic daughter of the West,
We drink to thee across the flood;
We know thee and we love thee best,
For art thou not of British blood?
Should war's mad blast again be blown,
Permit not thou the tyrant powers
To fight thy mother here alone,
But let thy broadsides roar with ours.'

But I need not go further with the catalogue. It will be seen that, coming no further down than 1859, there are neglected poems of Tennyson which, if reprinted—as they deserve to be, and should be, for the advantage of the public—would make up a goodly volume by themselves. And it is to be hoped that, if they do not all figure in forthcoming volumes issued by the poet, they may eventually be put within reach of others than those fortunate persons who possess the earlier editions of his poems.

POPULAR HISTORY.

THE writer of a recent monograph on Henry V. confesses to the impossibility of drawing a portrait of that monarch which, however historically accurate, should have any chance of being accepted in preference to that which was sketched so long ago by Shakespeare. The poet's Prince Hal is, as Mr. Church, the writer in question, says, 'one of those creations of genius which, be they true to history or untrue, never lose their hold on the minds of men.' While, therefore, Mr. Church shows there is everything to prove that Henry was not the young roysterer depicted by the dramatist, and that the Judge Gascoigne incident, for example, in all probability never took place, it is not to be hoped—or feared—that the Prince Hal

of Shakespeare will ever be eradicated from the popular mind. Mr. Church may give an exposition of the facts; but what are the facts of actuality compared with those of the imagination? We forget or falsify the one; we have an abiding memory of the other.

The worst of it—if there be any 'worst' about it—is that this matter of Prince Hal is only one among very many. Not only in this one crucial case does Shakespeare's fantasy influence the thoughts of men. It is remarkable how long and broad a tract of English history is dominated for all time by the genius of Shakespeare. For Englishmen, almost the whole Middle Age is coloured by the working of his intellect. John, Richard II., the fourth, fifth and sixth Henrys, the fourth and fifth Edwards, Richard III. and Henry VIII.—all these monarchs are central figures of plays by him, and they are surrounded by a crowd of subsidiary persons, every one of them lifelike, and every one of them duly impressed upon the mental retina of the people. And the impression is felt

not only directly, but in the form of a mass of tradition handed down through three centuries. Not only through reading and public representation, but through heredity, have Englishmen gained their ideas of the English worthies and unworthies whom Shakespeare has put upon his canvas. The genius of our great actors and the general vividness of dramatic performance have taught history after a fashion which many know to be untrustworthy, but which all recognise as fascinating and irresistible.

The glamour of the footlights is not to be repelled. There are many now living for whom the Philip and Mary of Lord Tennyson, as enacted by Mr. Irving and Miss Bateman, will remain the only Philip and Mary they know. The Laureate's 'Harold' has never been represented, but portions of his 'Becket' have been seen, and, for those who saw them, his Archbishop and his Henry, his Eleanor and his Rosamond, will no doubt always be more or less real. So with the Charles I. and Cromwell of Mr. Wills, and the William III.

of Tom Taylor. Was there ever a more striking caricature than Mr. Wills's Lord Protector? Does anyone recognise in Taylor's William the actual little Dutchman of historic record? It is not worth while answering the questions. The Princess Elizabeth of 'Twixt Axe and Crown,' and the Queen Elizabeth of Giacometti, are alike mere creatures of the intellect; but they live and move in the memories of playgoers.

Even more powerful in its effect upon the public is the prose fiction which is dubbed historical. While the play has its thousands of votaries, the novel has its hundreds of thousands. One begins to read the latter long before one is permitted to see the former; romance has stored our minds with its seductive imaginings long before the stage has bodied forth to us the men and women of the past. Of chronological necessity we all had mastered Bulwer's 'Harold' before Tennyson's drama was available for perusal. Of late years, too, how many have received their most vivid impressions of the times of

William the Norman from the pages of 'Hereward the Wake'—pages so much more alluring than any which Mr. Freeman, vigorous as is his style, has ever penned, or is ever likely to pen. To whom, again, does the public owe the greater debt in the matter of enlightenment as to the tone and colour of Elizabethan England—to Mr. Froude, or to the romancist who wrote not only 'Hereward,' but 'Westward Ho!'? Mr. Froude has had his popular successes; he has induced many excellent people to modify their conception of Henry VIII., so far as to conceive that he may not have been quite so black as he was painted. But the Elizabethan England of popular belief is that which Kingsley drew, not that which Mr. Froude has attempted to portray.

From Bulwer, again, the public has received, in 'The Last of the Barons,' sketches of England under the later Plantagenets only less attractive, in the general opinion, than those obtained from the more inspired page of Shakespeare. For them, at any rate, the King-maker

of Bulwer is practically the only King-maker they have ever known. Even Harrison Ainsworth, man of mere talent as he was, contrived, by dint of a certain picturesqueness, to sway the fancy of the British boy and youth in favour of his views of more than one character in English history. For very many, Thackeray's 'Esmond' is responsible for all they know or think of the historical personages who figure in that work of genius. The Gordon Riots live in 'Barnaby Rudge'; while, in the field of fiction, Sir Walter Scott has long held, as a teacher of history, the position which Shakespeare has for 300 years held in the field of the drama. Our Richard I., our James I., and many more, are, in effect, those of Scott, and of Scott only—distinct altogether from the actual men of actual life.

Moreover, the public has, in its time, been subjected to influences more powerful even than novels and the stage—the influences which surrounded it in its infancy and its youth; the influences of the cheap school-

book and the sentimental rhymes. On these all popular history has been and is still based. The average person, when he thinks of earlier English history, thinks of Alfred and the cakes, of Canute and the rising tide, of Rufus and Sir Walter Tyrell, of Henry and the lampreys (tempered by the tale which tells us how, after the loss of his son by drowning, he 'never smiled again'), of Queen Eleanor and the bowl of poison, of Cœur de Lion and Blondel—in a word, of all the old picturesque legends, put before us just because they were picturesque, and remembered by us now for the same reason. If we want our children to be wiser than their fathers, we must reform the school manuals, and put away Cowper, and Mrs. Hemans, and other gentle souls who made twaddle out of unhistorical anecdote. We must take care that the former are founded upon positive and undoubted fact, and that the latter are not read until the youthful scholar has had time to acquire the information which shall make them not misleading.

On the other hand, why take the trouble to do either of these things?

> ' " Old things need not be therefore true "—
> O brother men, nor yet the new.'

Suppose that the 'history' of our boyhood were a mass of insubstantial fable—suppose even that, in Walpole's phrase, it were 'all lies'? Suppose that Richard III. was really a statesman, and Henry VIII. really a respectable person; that Elizabeth was not so 'good' as we have fancied, nor her sister so bad; suppose, indeed, that all the latest discoveries are true. What then? What should we gain by banishing the good old stories, and putting nothing in their place save some irrefragable commonplaces? Moreover, the end is not yet. The personages who have of late been whitewashed may, by-and-by, be smirched again; some record may leap to light by which they shall once more be shamed. We live in times of revolution, literary as well as political, and it seems scarcely worth while to take formal note of every turn of the wheel.

AMENITIES OF AUTHORS.

SCARCELY a week passes nowadays but some author accuses another of plagiarism, either from the former's own works, or from those of other people. This is now the commonest form that literary jealousy assumes. That it was always more or less prevalent need scarcely be said. When a writer brought out a book, the handiest thing possible was to accuse him of having 'conveyed' it from somebody. The literature of satire is full of such aspersions. There is, for example, that quatrain upon 'modest Moore,' who, we are told, 'always smiles whenever he recites';

> 'He smiles, you think, approving what he writes;
> And yet in this no vanity is shown—
> A modest man may like what's not his own.'

So with the lines which Peter Pindar is said to

have written about the dramatist O'Keefe, who was declared to have stolen half his thunder:

> 'I say, O'Keefe, thou art no thief;
> Such stuff was never writ before.'

But whereas the literary gibes of to-day rarely go beyond this accusation of pilfering, tempered and varied by the occasional ascription of sheer ignorance, former generations of authors were wont to indulge in a much more miscellaneous series of satiric charges. Great ingenuity was shown by them in the mode of their assaults. Nothing was too sacred to be touched upon. They sped their darts wherever they saw a chink in the enemy's armour. They would begin, for instance, with their victim's real name or *nom de guerre*, as in Byron's *jeu d'esprit* on Tom Moore and his pseudonym, 'Thomas Little;' or they would let fly at the popular designation of a whole body of bards, as in the case of the Lake poets:

> 'They came from the Lakes—an appropriate quarter
> For poems diluted with plenty of water.'

Sometimes they would be content with poking

fun at the titles of books, as in the anonymous couplet on some verses called 'Trifles':

> 'Paul, I have read your book, and, though you write ill,
> I needs must praise your most judicious title.'

It was written of Tom Paine's 'Age of Reason' that ''Tis treason he means, and he's right to a T.' Of Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound' Hook declared that the poem was likely always to be styled so,

> 'For surely an age would be spent in the finding
> A reader so weak as to pay for the binding!'

Of Scott's dull poem, 'The field of Waterloo,' Lord Erskine said that 'On Waterloo's ensanguined plain'

> 'None, by sabre or by shot,
> Fell half so flat as Walter Scott.'

And it was in very much the same spirit that Lady Blessington, pronouncing on Rogers's finely illustrated 'Italy,' suggested that the work would surely have been *dished* had it not been for the *plates*.

Although, however, all this was personal enough, it is as nothing compared with the lengths to which some critics have gone in satirizing their opponents or their rivals. They have passed beyond their names and books, and made much out of the private employments of their unhappy victims. Everybody knows what fun used to be derived from Sir John Hill's dual position as physician and dramatist. Garrick's line, 'His farces are physic, his physic a farce is,' is familiar in our minds and mouths. Not so well known is the player-rhymer's quatrain on the same fruitful subject :

> 'Thou essence of dock, and valerian, and sage,
> At once the disgrace and the pest of your age,
> The worst that we wish thee, for all thy sad crimes,
> Is to take thine own physic and read thine own rhymes.'

This, again, was capped by another satirist, who suggested that if Sir John took his physic first he would never read his rhymes. Sir Richard Blackmore, physician and poet, met with just the same unkind fate in his own day—and later, for it was Tom Moore

who described him as passing his time betwixt death and epics, 'scribbling and killing all day long.' In like manner it was considered eminently discreditable to Stephen Duck, author of 'The Shunamite' and other poems, that he had been originally a thresher. In due time he entered the Church, and was appointed by the Queen to an army chaplaincy; whereupon Swift wrote:

'The thresher Duck could o'er the Queen prevail;
The proverb says, "No fence against a flail."
From threshing corn he turns to thresh his brains,
For which Her Majesty allows him grains:
Though 'tis confest, that those who ever saw
His poems think them all not worth a straw.'

Kelly, the dramatist, was at one time a corset-maker, and so an anonymous writer, addressing Goldsmith, observed that if Kelly found fault with the shape of 'Noll's Muse,' and thought that it played too loosely, he would surely never refuse to present it with a new pair of stays!

Worse than this, however, remains behind. The satirists have not stopped here; they have gone beyond the occupations of authors

to their individual dispositions and private characteristics generally. Ben Jonson twitted John Marston with personal cowardice. John Lilburn, the pamphleteer, was said to be so quarrelsome that if John and Lilburn were buried together they would have a set-to in their grave! Sir John Denham chaffed Cowley about his dull conversation, and Killigrew about his dull plays. Dryden was attacked by his brother-scribes for what they called his apostasy. Warren, the novelist, was laughed at by Sir George Rose for his vanity. When there was nothing else to be done, authors have been favoured with vague abuse, implying for the most part that they are fools. When George II. made Cibber his Court poet, he was charged by Pope with making a favourite of an ass. Johnson said, more politely, that Nature formed the poet for the King; while an anonymous writer intimated that, though in the old times a monarch would have both a poet and a fool, King George, more frugal, had secured both in one. So much for Cibber, who, as a

matter of fact, was as able a man as any of his assailants. Byron's cousin, Lord Carlisle, was not, it may be admitted, a great man of letters; yet he was hardly deserving of the cruel things written about him both by Byron and by Lord Holland, the former of whom characterized him bluntly as 'a bore.' There was more urbanity of phrase in the lines on one of M. P. Andrews' plays:

> 'Andrews, 'tis said, a comedy has writ,
> Replete with novelty, replete with wit;
> If wit it has, to both I will agree,
> For wit from Andrews must be novelty.'

But even this amounts, practically, to calling the playwright a dull man.

Among the more famous attacks of author upon author are those by Byron on Southey and Cobbett, by James Smith on Byron, by Sneyd on Moore, and so on, and so on; but among the most delightful of literary amenities are the onslaughts by authors upon critics, translators, memoir-writers, and other natural enemies. Very bitter indeed was Pope on Bentley, and very amusing was

Tom Moore on Jeffrey; while anonymous writers made themselves keenly felt in their strictures upon Dr. Parr and Lewis Theobald. In Carthy's edition of Horace the original text is given on one page, and the translation on the opposite page; whereupon Swift made Carthy say:

> 'This I may boast, which few e'er could,
> Half of my book at least is good.'

Burns called Elphinston's version of Martial 'murder,' and the same comment was made on Trapp's translation of Virgil. The plague of diarists and 'recollections'-writers is very much greater nowadays than formerly; still, it is not peculiar to these times, and Thomas Hood could write thus, half a century ago, of Lady Charlotte Bury's 'Diary Illustrative of the Times of George IV.':

> 'That flesh is grass is now as clear as day
> To any but the merest purblind pup;
> Death cuts it down, and then, to make her hay,
> My Lady Bury comes and rakes it up.'

THE REIGN OF ROMANCE.

ATTENTION is frequently called to the fact that the most popular fictions of to-day belong to the region of the fanciful. Romance, it is pointed out, reigns triumphant at the circulating libraries. And no doubt, for the moment, that is so. Nor is the fact so very remarkable as it is sometimes thought. It would have been strange indeed if there had not speedily been a reaction against the species of story-telling which has so long been paramount among us. For a considerable period the 'bread and butter' and 'blood and thunder' schools have had things very much their own way. Of late the so-called realistic school has had an occasional innings, but, for the most part, the field has been

occupied by the 'domestic' and the 'sensational'—the story of the stable and the still-room, the tale of the tremendous and the terrible. The readers of fiction have alternated, in the main, between these two literary *genres*, and it was to be expected that there would be a rebound from work so theatrical on the one hand and so namby-pamby on the other. The need for something more genuinely imaginative was too clamant to remain long unsupplied.

But, in truth, there has always been, and always will be, a demand for the romantic in prose narrative. It may be more obvious or persistent at one time than at another, but it always exists to some extent. Among the young it never expires altogether, and it grows in earnestness with the growth of the mind. The boy who has been fed on 'Robinson Crusoe' and 'Gulliver's Travels' insists upon having their modern equivalents, and the production of stories of hairbreadth 'scapes by flood and field keeps the pens of a dozen or more writers perpetually at work.

Probably no boys' books of recent years have been so highly esteemed as those of Jules Verne; and they, we all know, are romantic in the extreme, soaring to heights of fancy to which the Aimards, the Mayne Reids, the Edgars, and the Kingstons of the past, never by any possibility aspired. The feminine mind is even more imaginative than the male, and girls in their teens absorb at every pore the most fantastic narratives on which they can lay their hands. The adult intellect, naturally, is more balanced; but, probably, the older that one gets, the more prone one is to put aside the realistic representations of life in favour of the fanciful. The more keenly we feel that the romance is going out of our own existence, the more desirous we are to seek it and enjoy it in the realm of fiction.

It is extremely likely that hundreds of very excellent people are devoted to literature of this sort without knowing it. They read an infinitude of what they, and others, call simply 'novels,' without stopping to dis-

tinguish what kind of stories they are. And yet the difference between the novel and the romance ought to be readily discernible. There is nothing in common between the two except that they are the products of the invention. The kinds of invention employed are obviously distinct. The novelist takes the characters and events of every day, and invents new combinations for them. He does not supply his own material: that is furnished for him by nature. All he has to do is to present it to the reader in fresh forms. To a certain extent he is a photographer; his art consists in the skill with which he arranges the details. This much is certain—that he must not go outside the bounds of the possible or the probable. And therein lies his limited sphere as compared with that of the romancist, to whose imaginative flights no bounds are placed. The romancist is the 'chartered libertine' of fiction. Like the British army he can go anywhere and do anything. He can soar into the heavens above or dive into

the earth beneath. While the novelist is chained to the surface of society, the romancist can, if he chooses, descend with his fascinated readers into 'the waters that are under the earth.'

Broadly speaking, romance may be divided into tales of adventure and tales of fantasy. Sometimes, indeed, the adventure and the fantasy are combined, as in the story of that Peter Wilkins who wandered into the land of the flying men and women, and took one of the latter to wife. Similar elements are to be found in the immortal 'Gulliver,' though in that case the fantasy has a satiric origin as well as a satiric moral. There is, as everybody remembers, a *soupçon* of the supernatural in 'The Castle of Otranto.' There is much more than a suspicion of it in the oft-mentioned 'Frankenstein,' whose creation of a mechanical human monster is clearly abnormal. In 'Vathek' the inventive quality is of the 'Arabian Nights' order; in 'Zanoni' it is of the vaguely mystic kind, which reappears, intensified and even more

effective, in the 'Strange Story' of the same author. In 'Elsie Venner' we have the prototype of many 'creepy' fictions, in which there is much more fantasy than adventure. Of fantasy, pure and simple, there could hardly be better examples than are furnished by the 'Phantastes' of Mr. George MacDonald, and the speculative narratives (such as 'The Little Pilgrim') of Mrs. Oliphant. In the latter stories the writer may be said to have given freër rein to her fancy, in the attempted exploration of the unseen and the unknown, than even the boldest of her contemporaries.

The romance of adventure has always obtained in England—from the days of 'Amadis de Gaul' and 'Ogier le Danois' until now. It became native and literary in the time of Elizabeth, to which we owe not only the 'Arcadia,' but such works as Lyly's 'Rosalynde' (the origin of 'As You Like It') and Greene's 'Pandosto' (the germ of 'The Winter's Tale'), all of them partaking somewhat of the 'pastoral' tone. With Mrs.

Behn's 'Oronooko' the romance took a new departure and a broader scope; and by-and-by came 'Robinson Crusoe,' in all its wonderful freshness, as the precursor of 'The Hermit' (Philip Quarll), and innumerable other tales of life in solitude. The story of mystery and blood was luridly introduced in 'The Romance of the Forest' and 'The Monk;' and then arrived the era of the historical fiction, made illustrious by Scott, distinguished by Lytton and by Kingsley, and interesting, if not notable, by Miss Porter, G. P. R. James, Harrison Ainsworth, and the like. The romance of the sea flourished under the auspices of Marryat and Cooper, and that of the battle-field under the *régime* of Lever and Maxwell. Peacock, Thackeray, Dickens, and Disraeli all contributed something to romantic story; so did Charles Reade; and so have Ouida, Mr. Wilkie Collins, Mr. Blackmore, Mr. Shorthouse, and the authors of 'Treasure Island' and 'She.'

Nor is it likely that there will ever be a lack of romantic fiction. The tales of adventure

may become fewer and fewer as the remoter parts of the world become more and more familiar and common, but as yet we are very far from any such consummation. There is still plenty of room, both by land and by sea, for narratives of pluck and hardship. And as for the tales of fantasy, there can never be a limit to their tether. The imagination cannot be tied down, and Campbell's 'last man,' surrounded by the wreck of worlds, could still weave into narrative the conceptions of his brain. Probably, as the material for novels grows more difficult to obtain, romances will be more frequently essayed; and, in particular, those that are born of the fancy will increase and flourish.

CUPID IN COMEDY.

THE British dramatist has at least one incurable tendency. Over and over again that not-always-imaginative person has fallen back, for subject, upon what may be called the primary passion—the passion of love. There are other human sentiments and qualities which playwrights have dealt with from time to time; but on none have they dwelt so often and so lovingly as on this. Pride, vanity, avarice, curiosity, lying, misanthropy, and a hundred other characteristics have been made the basis of comedy; but Cupid has outdone them all. He is irrepressible, and practically dominates the stage.

Sometimes he has done so in his own proper person. Apart from the recent comedy,

'That Doctor Cupid,' one remembers at least a couple of modern burlesques in which Cupid is the central figure, and half a dozen or more in which he is an individual of 'leading,' if not of 'light.' One remembers, too, how one comic writer has drawn him as he appeared 'in Camp,' and how another—Blanchard Jerrold—has pictured his behaviour 'in Waiting.' His 'Revenge,' limned tragically by Beaumont and Fletcher, was portrayed in the 'musical pastoral' manner by an eighteenth-century writer, and he is to be traced in other woods and pastures of the drama. Usually, however, he figures not so much in his own form as in the abstract quality which he represents. As 'Love' he rules not only the court, the camp, and the grove, but the footlights. One bold dramatist—Sheridan Knowles—had the assurance to lay violent hands upon him and claim him wholly as his own. 'Love' was the simple but sufficient, not to say ambitious, name which Knowles gave to a play produced by him at Covent Garden just half a century

ago. Therein he showed how affection levels all, in this case throwing a noble lady into the arms of a low-born secretary. 'Love,' nevertheless, was rather a comprehensive title for a play which did not propose to exhaust the inexhaustible feeling after which it was named.

So far as can be ascertained, Knowles stands alone in the sublimity of his self-confidence in christening a work by this significant monosyllable. None of his predecessors appear to have had the temerity to monopolize 'Love,' and of course none of his successors have done so. The boldest of them has been content to associate love with some other quality or faculty, impressive or humorous. 'Love and Honour,' for instance, has been a favourite collocation. It has given a title to a tragi-comedy by Davenant, to an operatic piece of the last century, and, in our own times, to an adaptation from the French of Dumas fils. 'Love and War,' again, has been the appellation bestowed on a tragedy by one writer and a musical piece by another,

and, in like manner, there have been a tragedy and a ballad-opera both called 'Love and Revenge.' Love has been coupled, dramatically, with Charity, Duty, Fortune, Friendship, Glory, Liberty, Loyalty, Money, and Magic, among serious things; while, in the purely comic vein, it has been connected with such various matters as 'a Bottle' (as in Farquhar's piece), Folly, Gout, Half-pence (a French notion), Hunger (by Maddison Morton), Rain, and the Toothache, to say nothing of Law and Physic, as in the farce by Kenney.

But the ingenuity of the playwrights has not ended here. Recognising love as the sheet-anchor of their craft, they have clung to it under all sorts of circumstances, manifesting the greatest cleverness in the choice and exploitation of its multitudinous phases. While, on the one hand, the serious dramatists have celebrated 'Love's Martyrdom' (portrayed by no fewer than three of them within the last thirty-five years), 'Love's Sacrifice' (illustrated both by John Ford and G. W. Lovell),

'Love's Cruelty,' 'Love's Victim,' and 'Love's Triumph,' the more irresponsible writers have turned their attention to the softer and more diverting aspects of the passion—its Adventures, its Cunning, its Contrivances, its Disguises, and the like. Cibber wrote a piece descriptive of 'Love's Last Shift.' 'Love's Young Dream' has naturally been illustrated on the stage; and the Alarms, the Cure, the Dominion, the Frailties, the Ordeal of Love have also engaged the attention of the dramatist. There is, indeed, no characteristic, no aspect of the passion which that worthy has not, at some time or other, set himself to exhibit as best he may. He has displayed it under all conceivable circumstances—as 'Betrayed,' 'Dragooned,' 'Without Interest,' 'Restored,' 'Freed from Ignorance and Folly,' 'At a Loss,' and 'Among the Roses.' This last is rather a favourable position in which to find it. Etherege pictures it 'in a Tub,' Benjamin Griffin 'in a Sack,' and an anonymous writer 'in a Puddle.' It has been presented both 'in a Blaze,' and

'in the Dark.' It has been seen 'in a Mist' and 'in a Hurry,' 'in a Convent' and 'in a Camp,' 'in a Forest' and 'in a Wood,' 'in a Village' and 'in the City,' 'in Disguise,' 'in a Riddle,' and 'in Limbo.' Mr. Boucicault and the late Charles Mathews both presented it to the public 'in a Maze.' And these include by no means all the situations in which it has been brought before the reader or spectator.

There could be no more convincing testimony to the infinite variety of the sentiment to which playwrights have devoted so much of their time and ability. It seems inexhaustible. There is ever some new point of view from which to regard it. Insuperable is its power. 'Love is Blind,' says Gilbert à Beckett; but, *en revanche*, 'Love Wins,' say Messrs. Savile Clarke and Du Terreaux; it 'Laughs at Locksmiths,' cry Colman Jun. and Kelly; it 'Makes a Man,' asserts Cibber; it 'Crowns the End,' declares Tatham; and it 'Will Find out the Way,' proclaims more than one authority. After this, who cares though someone assert that 'Love's a

Jest,' or that 'Love's a Lottery and a Woman the Prize'? Though it be, in one view, 'a Leveller,' in another it is 'the Best Physician' possible (an idea taken from Molière). Though there be 'Cupboard Love,' there is yet 'Loyal Love'; though 'First Love,' yet 'Second Love.' Love has been painted at different times as 'Heroic,' as 'Eccentric,' as 'Fatal,' as 'Secret,' as 'Platonic.' While D'Urfey has preached 'Love for Money,' Congreve has offered 'Love for Love'; and if Shakespeare held that 'Love's Labour's Lost,' Lover has assured us that 'True Love can ne'er Forget.' Other things connected with love — 'the Love Charm,' 'the Love Chase,' 'the Love Lock,' 'the Love Match,' and 'the Love Test'— have all been duly celebrated either in comedy or in drama. We have been told of 'the Family of Love,' 'the Game of Love,' and 'the Play of Love.' A living dramatist has written of 'the Love Story' as if there were only one in the world. 'Loved and Lost' is the title of one play, 'For Love and

Money' of another. 'The Love-sick King' has been a topic for tragic, as 'The Love-sick Court' has been for comic, treatment. A last-century dramatist supplied a picture of 'Loving Enemies,' while one of yesterday engaged to limn for us 'The Loving Woman.'

There is a whole dramatic literature about lovers. Cibber Jun. discoursed of 'the Lover' *par excellence;* Mrs. Manley showed him 'Lost'; while a less notable writer depicted him as 'His Own Rival.' The 'Lover by Proxy' has been seen, and we have been introduced of late years to 'A Lyrical Lover.' We have further been asked to interest ourselves in a lover's 'Luck,' his 'Melancholy,' his 'Prayers,' his 'Quarrels,' his 'Watch,' and what not; while more generally our sympathy has been solicited for 'Lovers' Amazements,' their 'Resolutions,' their 'Vows,' and other belongings of theirs. There are, in fact, no bounds to the fascinating subject. Love's facets are practically illimitable. Turn the gem how we will, it shines with undiminished lustre.

BARDS IN THE BALL-ROOM.

SOME time ago there was a strenuous discussion in the newspapers and elsewhere as to the exact locality of the famous 'dance' which preceded the Battle of Waterloo, and which Byron has immortalized in a too-well-known passage.

Somehow or other, balls have a knack of becoming historical. All sorts of notable things have happened in connection with them. Kings have been assassinated at them: they are notable in the record of love and intrigue. Landor, for instance, has poetized the brilliant entertainments at which,

> 'Starchly mild,
> Upon her high-heel'd Essex smiled
> The brave Queen Bess.'

In the same way, Gray—the poet of the 'Elegy'—has given distinction to that master of deportment, Sir Christopher Hatton, telling how

> 'The grave Lord Keeper led the brawls—
> The seals and maces danced before him.'

Sir Christopher, it may be remembered, figures likewise in the 'Ingoldsby Legends,' where we are told how he organized a grand 'house-warming,' and, at the ball which formed a portion of it, entertained a bad angel unawares. It might, indeed, be possible to trace the development of dancing in the products of the poets. In the slim volume which contains the verse of Catherine Fanshawe may be read an elegy on the 'Final Subversion of the Minuet;' while the rise of the waltz into popularity was made, as everybody knows, the occasion of a fulmination by the scandalized author of 'Don Juan.'

Certain it is that balls and ball-rooms have a place, permanent and firmly fixed, in English literature. We meet with them at every turn. Some fictitious 'revels' are as

real to us as anything which actually happened. There is, for instance, that 'old-accustomed feast' at which Romeo and Juliet first met and loved. Who, again, can ever forget that wedding festivity—described for us by Suckling—at which the bride so graciously distinguished herself, dancing in such a way that

> 'No sun upon an Easter Day
> Was half so fine a sight'?

By the side of that delightful ceremony may not improperly be placed that other wedding—the wedding of Shon Maclean—of whose saltatory glories Mr. Robert Buchanan has sung, in strains as humorous as they are vivid. In the interval, Matthew Prior told the story of that Lady Kitty Hyde (afterwards Duchess of Queensberry) who complained that, at balls, her sister Lady Jane (afterwards Countess of Essex) 'made all the rout, bringing home hearts by dozens,' while she (Lady Kitty) was not allowed any such favourable chances. It was to a ball, it will be recollected, that Apollo, in Leigh Hunt's

'Feast of the Violets,' invited all the blue-stockings of the poet's day. The dances at which Praed met his famous 'Belle' and equally famous 'Partner' are as actual as anything in life; and who could fail to remember 'Mr. Moloney's Account of the Ball given to the Nepaulese Ambassador,' as related in Thackeray's best Irish lingo?

> 'With flags and shawls for these Nepauls
> They hung the room of Willis up,
> And decked the walls, and stairs, and halls
> With roses and with lilies up;
> And Jullien's band it tuck its stand
> So sweetly in the middle there,
> And soft bassoons played heavenly chunes,
> And violins did fiddle there.'

Remembering this, one thinks at once—such is the association of ideas—of 'the flute, violin, bassoon' which the roses heard all night in Lord Tennyson's poem, on the memorable occasion when 'the music clash'd in the hall,' and when Maud's lover was not so very far gone that he could not note how,

> 'Low on the sand and loud on the stone,
> The last wheel echoed away.'

Praed had much to say in praise of the dancing both of his 'Belle' and of his 'Partner.' But in that respect he has at least been equalled by his brother bards. The example was set, no doubt, in Florizel's exquisite eulogy of Perdita's capacity as a dancer. Coventry Patmore, in 'The Angel of the House,' says of his lady-love that 'Her motion the pensive soul of tune express'd,' while her ball-dress seemed

> 'a breathing mist
> From the fair form exhaled and shed.'

Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell declared of his Lady Bell's feet that they 'looked as if they dreamed a valse;' and while Mr. Hamilton Aidé remarks, concerning his Beauty Clare, 'What perfection in your waltzing!' Mr. W. W. Story likewise asserts of the lady he unkindly characterized as 'a musical box,' that 'She's perfect to whirl with in a waltz.'

Other poets have approached the ball-room in a different spirit. Some have seen in it only a social mart in which the feminine 'goods' are disposed of to the highest bidder.

That is Mr. Alfred Austin's point of view in a vigorous passage in 'The Season.' Mortimer Collins tells also how his 'Little Laurette' waltzed one night with Sir Evelyn Vere, and how she 'made up her mind in that very dance' that 'she'd like to be Lady Vere.' Where there are disturbing passions to be raised, the ball-room raises them. In Mr. Austin Dobson's 'Idyll of the Conservatory,' Nellie shows herself as jealous of 'odious Miss M'Tavish' as Frank is of 'smoke-consuming Puffer.' There is sentiment amid the dances, but it is often false, as Mr. Dobson shows again in 'The Romaunt of the Rose'—the story of the flower which Edith gave to Cyril, and which, by-and-by, Cyril, 'lighting up his cynical cigar, tossed downward, scorning.' There can even be boredom in the ball-room, as exhibited by that Transatlantic singer who, though he went into supper with 'a silken wonder' by his side, thought the winter wind not so cold as the smiles he won from her,

> 'Nor the host's oldest wine so old
> As our poor gabble sour and thin.'

Ball-room triumphs are not for everybody —especially not for the physically slow or heavy. Mr. Edmund Yates's hero, 'aged forty,' finds, when he is introduced to Miss Minnie Blair, 'on waltzing purposes bent,' that she regards him with mingled pity and astonishment, and promptly proclaims herself 'engaged.' Landor recognised in time that through gallopade he could not swing 'the entangling blooms of Beauty's spring,' and admitted that he could not 'say the tender thing, be't true or false.' A more recent bard has shown that time must likewise disable the feminine devotee of the dance—taking for example a Miss Thomson, whose 'Seasons,' four in number, come to a close without the landing of a connubial fish :

'Miss Thomson's Season Number Four is gone ;
It brought experience she thought unpleasant ;
Miss Thomson, proud but beautiful, is on
The hooks at present.'

Of the arts by which young ladies have sought to make themselves agreeable to

their partners, Thomas Haynes Bayly is the laureate. Says one of his creations :

> 'I know quite well what I should say
> To partners at a ball ;
> I've got a pretty speech or two,
> And they would serve for all.'

The other sex, however, has not been spared, and there is much well-deserved satire in Professor Rankine's portrait of 'The Handsomest Man in the Room.' For the rest, the county ball has been sung not only by Praed, but by 'C.C.R.,' and the regimental ball has been sketched for us by Thomas Hood. No more brilliant 'Good-bye' to the ball-room has been written than the familiar one by Edward Fitzgerald ; while its 'Alphabet' has been compiled, once for all, by C. S. Calverley, in such lines as these :

> O is the Olga (just then in its prime) :
> P is the Partner who would not keep time :
> Q's the Quadrille put instead of the Lancers :
> R the Remonstrances made by the dancers :
> S is the Supper, where all went in pairs :
> T is the Twaddle they talked on the stairs.

POCKET BOOKS.

NOT 'pocket-books,' with a hyphen—(so much significance can a hyphen convey !) — not those eminently useful but usually bulky pieces of manufacture in which the commercial and the betting man find a solace. I do not mean anything so prosaic—so dry, so literal. I recognise, as one needs must, the practical service done by the pocket-book of ordinary commerce, wherein men enter their engagements and enclose their documents. There are people who would not be complete without impedimenta of the sort—who certainly would not be comfortable without them, and who, destitute of them, would be a sight for gods and men. A pocket-book means business, or seems to do so. The stage tradesman or

the stage lawyer would fare badly who could not produce it with a flourish at the proper moment. It is at once property and a 'property.' It is indispensable to many people. But it is not what I mean—namely, a 'book for the pocket;' a book which is printed, and therefore really a book—a book which can be carried about with ease and pleasure.

Let it be admitted that the number of those who patronize portable literature is small. Those who rejoice in the possession of pocket libraries are doubtless few. Such things are certainly available; one, very charming at once in subject-matter, type, and binding was but lately in course of publication. But it is not often, nevertheless, that one sees a man bring a volume 'forth from his breast and read it through'—or anything like it. Only now and then do we come upon a studious person—in cab or omnibus, in tramcar or railway carriage—who is rejoicing in the perusal of a pocket classic. And there are reasons why this should be so.

Reading 'from home' is not usually an easy process. The motion of the vehicle, whatever it may be, is apt to be disturbing. Your cab oscillates to and fro; your omnibus groans and shakes distressingly; in car or carriage you are liable to constant interruption. Then, the light is often insufficient; on railways the aim of the lamp-porters is to give you just enough illumination *not* to read by. And so with omnibuses after dark—even when you have managed craftily to get close to the flickering flame, reading is often a penance, or impossible.

And then, moralists will tell you not only that you should be careful of your eyesight, but that, when you are abroad, you should look about you and study your fellow-creatures, men and women. You should be on the *qui vive* for 'character.' Moreover, you should give your brain some rest. But suppose a man has studied character till he is tired, and suppose it does not take long to exhaust the psychological possibilities of people in tramcars or omnibuses? Suppose

the brain is too active to be still, and suppose the capacity for boredom is infinitely great? Suppose, further, the newspaper has been exhausted? Is it not well to be able to grope in a certain favourite pocket, and thence to abstract an equally favourite tome? Well is it, perhaps, for those who can sleep *en voyage*, if they have no fear of pickpockets, or worse. But if one cannot doze, and would otherwise be dull, how delightful to be in a position to divert the mind by quiet reading! How many are the hours we pass every year in going from place to place; how little we do with those hours, and yet how much we might do with them! We might acquire in the course of them a liberal education, if we did but set about it properly.

It is, of course, of the essence of a pocket book that it should go into the pocket. That is the first and most important of the *sine qua nons*. And that, perhaps, is one of the reasons why one sees so little casual reading undertaken. The feminine pocket, as a rule, is not capacious, or, if it be, it is

so fitted with feminine treasures of a varied kind that there is practically no room for the most concentrated literature. And your 'natty' man, who thinks not unduly—I dare say—of his 'appearance,' does not care to impair the perfect outline of his closely-buttoned coat by breaking it with the superficies of a printed volume, however diminutive it be. No; your casual book reader must either be fortunate in his supply of bijou literature, or else sufficiently enthusiastic not to be affected by the destruction of the lines of beauty described by his attire. It were pleasant, I believe, for many, if the supply of books fitted in size for the pocket were greater than it is, and if, at the same time, the type most often used for this purpose were not so small. It does not follow, because the page is short and narrow, that the letterpress should not be both clearly and distinctly printed.

And then, granted that your pocket book is right in size, it must be right in contents. That, surely, is a vital matter. Not everything is suited for occasional perusal. In

this respect a pocket book is very like a bedside book. What is wanted is something which can be both read and grasped in a brief space of time. There are those who try to read novels or tales in the odd moments snatched while on the way from one point to another. As well seek to read a philosophical treatise or a historical disquisition. Nothing which requires sustained attention can properly be perused in snatches and at random. Attempt to compass a story in this way, and you will make a most inglorious jumble of the characters and incidents. Treat a logician after the same fashion, and you will fail to follow his argument. No; the books for the pocket are the books which are scrappy—which deal in short lyrics, or epigrams, or maxims, or anecdotes, or briefly-stated facts that can be perused and mastered in a moment. This is the only species of literary fare which can, either pleasantly or usefully, be consumed under the peculiar circumstances.

And, of course, the contents of one's

favourite pocket books will be governed by the idiosyncrasy of the individual. The lover of poetry will patronize collections of varied verse, or selections from favourite authors, or those rhymers with whom brevity has been the soul of wit—such as Herrick and other cultivators of the 'epigraph.' The student of human nature will turn to such specimens of literary Liebig's Extract as the maxims and 'sentences' which I discuss elsewhere — always supposing that they are accessible in the required shape. The printed table talk of famous men is also eminently calculated to delight the spare minutes of the thoughtful wayfarer. All these things are to be acquired almost at a glance, and they have, as a rule, the great merit of being suggestive. They not only give pleasure at the time, but set one thinking. They supply just the stimulus which is wanting, and thus enlighten and enliven many a journey which might otherwise be tedious.

PERSONAL SATIRE.

A FEW members of the Lower Chamber have, during recent sessions, stooped to that very abject weapon —the calling of names, the affixing of opprobrious epithets. There is but one step further in the *descensus Averni*, and that is in the direction of alluding to personal appearance. This is the extremest deep. It is bad enough to insinuate that your adversary is a fool or a liar, but that is as nothing to making a reflection upon his face and figure. The *spretæ injuria formæ* is the most poignant of all wrongs, and neither men nor women ever forget or forgive it. An aspersion of conduct or of motive—that is pardonable, though hard to bear. But a reference to physical peculiarity—that is dreadful.

And it is so, mainly, because it is impossible to repel it or ignore it. One may fancy one's self clever and even wise; one may plume one's self on mental endowments, or phases of character, which one does not possess; but to singularities of person one cannot easily be blind. A squint, a broken nose, unusual thinness, or phenomenal obesity —these are things which their possessors cannot overlook unless they be absolutely fatuous. And, indeed, they are not allowed to overlook them. They are forced to be cognisant of them. No boy can go to school without having his physical shortcomings made very clear to him; they are not permitted to pass unnoticed when he goes to college; and when he grows to man's estate there is always some genial good-natured friend to make mild game of them.

It is baldness, apparently, which most strikes the casual eye—save, of course, when the victim's misfortune is hidden by his hat. A man hairless as to his pate is dubbed 'a polished gentleman,' and the groundlings roar. This has been so, history tells us, from

the earliest times. More than two centuries ago a sufferer in this respect was told that

> 'If by your hairs your vices numbered be,
> Angels in heaven are not more pure than thee.'

Then, descending from the scalp, we come first to the eyes, which, if they show a tendency to regard each other, are at once remarked upon. The unkindest things have been, and are, said about those unfortunate persons who have an obliquity of vision. Everybody remembers Tom Moore's sneer at a squinting poetess, who was said to confine her gaze to no one Muse, but to have an eye to all the Nine at once. And this may be capped by an anonymous quatrain, arguing that

> 'If ancient poets Argus prize,
> Who boasted of a hundred eyes,
> Sure greater praise to her is due,
> Who looks a hundred ways with two.'

Then, again, there was that couplet—not written, but quoted, by Moore—about a doctor who, in addition to squinting, had a large nasal organ :

> 'The reason why Doctor Dash squints, I suppose,
> Is because his two eyes are afraid of his nose.'

Alas, poor nose !—what fun has been poked at you when you have not been of normal size, length, and general contour ! The tip-tilted variety has had the glamour of poetry cast over it, but not so that which glories in nothing but its length. That has been persecuted from the remotest periods. Cowper adapted from the Greek the following onslaught on a (no doubt) inoffensive person—inoffensive, that is, save for his nose :

> 'Beware, my friend, of crystal brook
> Or fountain, lest that hideous hook,
> Thy nose, thou chance to see ;
> Narcissus' fate would then be thine,
> And self-detested thou wouldst pine,
> As self-enamoured he.'

Then, in another quatrain from the same classical source, we are shown at least two of the disadvantages of noses too extensive :

> 'Dick cannot blow his nose whene'er he pleases,
> His nose so long is, and his arm so short ;
> Nor ever cries, "God bless me !" when he sneezes—
> He cannot hear so distant a report.'

It was not to be expected that the colour of the nose should escape notice and remark,

especially when it has happened to be rubicund. And so we find a satirist asking how it is that in Clara's face the lily only has a place, and suggesting that the absent rose has gone to paint her husband's nose.

Such things will be. And, indeed, there is no bound to the world's cruelty in these matters. It is often said of a certain class of countenance that it would make an admirable design for a door-knocker; but unkinder things than that, even, have been uttered. Take, for instance, this, which one is sorry to see attributed to an Imperial pen:

> 'With nose so long, and mouth so wide,
> And those twelve grinders side by side,
> Dick, with very little trial,
> Would make an excellent sun-dial.'

And the ladies have been as hardly treated as the gentlemen. In this respect chivalry has been cast to the winds. A Greek satirist wrote of a woman of his day:

> 'Gallia, your mirror's false; you could not bear,
> If it were true, to see your image there!'

And the German Lessing was guilty of this scarcely less uncomplimentary performance :

> 'A long way off, Lucinda strikes the men ;
> As she draws near,
> And one sees clear,
> A long way off one wishes her again.'

To an English writer are attributed some lines 'On an Ill-favoured Woman,' in which he remarks upon the number of the patches she wears, admits that they are necessary and acceptable, but suggests that it would be still better if she wore one big enough to hide her face completely.

Stature and substance are two other points on which the world is apt to insist invidiously, reviling at once the extremes of height and shortness, and those of thinness and rotundity. Sydney Smith sketched Lord Jeffrey as

> 'Short, though not as fat, as Bacchus,
> Riding on a little jackass ;'

and it was in reference to that 'tall dull man,' Sir Thomas Robinson, that Chesterfield said of his song that it should be witty and should not be long. But fatness or leanness come in

for the largest amount of chaffing comment. There was an Oxford Fellow, named Tadlow, whose obesity inspired countless epigrams:

'Ten thousand tailors, with their length of line,
Strove, though in vain, his compass to confine;
At length, bewailing their exhausted store,
Their packthread ceas'd, and parchment was no more.'

It was said, again, that

'When Tadlow walks the streets the paviours cry,
"God bless you, sir!" and lay their rammers by.'

Of another very fat man it was asserted, very similarly, that the paviours blessed his steps where'er they came, while chair-men, dismayed, fled the impending doom. Of a stout elderly lady, who had asked for a definition of 'space' and 'time,' a satirist said, very rudely, that if her ladyship would look at her form and her face, she would gain excellent notions of time and of space. But this vein of humour, if humour it be, has been exhausted. Of 'a very thin metaphysician' it was once written:

'Thy face, in hieroglyphic style,
Seems just mark'd out; thy waist a span;

Thou sketch! thou outline! thou profile!
Thou bas-relievo of a man!'

But perhaps the happiest bit of persiflage directed against very attenuated people was the following, of which the authorship is anonymous:

'St. Paul has declared that when persons, tho' twain,
Are in wedlock united, one flesh they remain;
But had he been by when, like Pharoah's kine pairing,
Dr. Douglas of Barnet espoused Miss Mainwaring,
The Apostle, no doubt, would have altered his tone,
And have said, "These two splinters shall now make one bone."'

THE STAGE HANDKERCHIEF.

IT has been noted that Mr. Irving, towards the close of his performance as Robert Macaire, introduces a bit of expressive and suggestive 'business.' He has just become aware of the presence of his son, and is about to grasp him by the hand; but, before doing so, conscious of the crimes which his own hand has committed, he takes care to cover it with his handkerchief before it meets the honest palm of his innocent offspring. This avoidance of physical contact is a happy idea, and has its due effect. It is, I need scarcely say, only one of very many stage incidents in which a handkerchief has played an important part. Mr. Irving, during his long career, and in the course of his numerous impersonations,

must often have made theatrical use of this familiar article. And, in truth, what would the stage be without its handkerchiefs, carried by so many people and applied to so many purposes? The *mouchoir*, in its various forms, may be said to wave triumphantly throughout the drama.

In some respects it is historical. One thinks at once of Desdemona, and of the 'napkin,' spotted with strawberries, which was her first remembrance from the Moor, and her loss of which gave Iago so fine an opportunity. It was a wondrous handkerchief, if all that Othello said of it be true. An Egyptian charmer gave it to his mother; it was to have power, so long as she possessed it, to preserve her husband's affection to her, and when she lost it, that affection was to be lost; a sibyl, in her prophetic fury, sewed the work, the worms were hallowed that did breed the silk, and it was dyed in mummy conserved by the skilful from maidens' hearts. Surely this was the most marvellous of handkerchiefs in dramatic literature. We know

what effect it had on Desdemona's fate; we know how it dominates the third act of the tragedy, and what occasions it gives to Iago for impressive by-play. Then there is the 'bloody napkin,' dyed in Orlando's blood, which that sensational young man despatches to Rosalind by means of Oliver, and which causes that making-believe young lady to counterfeit a faint so very successfully. And, talking of Mr. Irving, one is reminded of his speech, as Digby Grant, in reply to the presentation made to him in the last act of 'Two Roses,' and of the handkerchief which he spreads over the head of Our Mr. Jenkins, what time he addresses the little crowd before him. This piece of 'business' is not quite worthy of the dignity of Digby Grant, but Mr. Jenkins makes some capital out of it, and so the incident is retained. What Graves's handkerchiefs are to him in his memorable interview with Lady Franklin, everyone who has seen 'Money' is aware. Could any impersonator of the melancholy widower be induced to part with articles

whose successive appearances induce so many laughs? The contrast between the white and the coloured emblems of sorrow and emancipation is too 'fetching' to be surrendered without a struggle.

The truth is, the comedian, whether high or 'low,' knows only too well how valuable to him is the handkerchief with which he can make comic play. The article is of more practical utility to him than to any of his masculine coadjutors, for all of whom, however, it has some attractions. The tragedian does not largely sport it; it is not altogether an aid to sentiment in the purposes to which it is usually put, and so it is concealed within the folds of the little bag which your highly-strung hero carries suspended from his waist. That gentleman has been seen to retire to the back of the stage and there blow his nose in a manner delightfully surreptitious, the hope being that the audience does not notice so very unromantic a proceeding. With the young lover of modern drama or old comedy the thing is different. In the former case,

the spotless white, perchance silk, handkerchief is used to decorate the left breast of the coat. In the latter, the embroidered piece of cambric is an important adjunct to the general costume. Where would your beaux be without its aid—your 'sparks' of Congreve or Sheridan, whose 'nice conduct' of it is a part of the character and inseparable from it? No Wildair or Mirabell who respected himself would dream of disappointing the public in the matter of that piece of cambric. But it is the comedian, and especially the low comedian, who derives most professional benefit from his pocket-handkerchief. The listless swell will make a solemn point of the wiping of his eyeglass, while the 'first old man' will with equal deliberation make the most of cleaning his spectacles. Thereby the playgoer is kept on the tenter-hooks of expectation, and the actor 'scores' the while. But happiest of all is the comic personage whom custom compels to come upon the stage with a very gorgeous handkerchief trailing out of his coat-tail pocket. There

are comedians for whom this is the very soul of humour. It may have been funny once, when the world was young; but the world is now old and cynical, and that trailing piece of vivid colour is productive, alas! only of indifference or irritation.

A certain amount of conventionality must, however, be allowed. There are some things we cannot, and ought not to, alter. We cannot possibly interfere with the manipulation of the delicate square-inch of lace which the *prima donna* holds between her finger and her thumb, while warbling the woes of Lucia or Amina *et hoc genus omne*. It would be cruel to strike at a tradition which the public respects and to which the *prima donna* herself so tenderly clings. After all, there is no harm in that tiny whiff of lace. Nor can we deprive the ordinary heroine of comedy or drama of one of the most cherished of her perquisites. The attractive young lady must still be allowed to drop her handkerchief, merely that the attractive young man may pick it up and return it;

she must still be permitted to hang it out—somehow or other — as a signal to her expectant lover; and she must still be tolerated while she buries her face in the indispensable 'napkin' and sobs out the agony of her little heart. The handkerchief with which she does all this, and more, must ever be sacred—as sacred as that other one, saturated, of course, in chloroform, with which the 'villyun' stupefies the virtuous man or maiden, previous to perpetrating an abduction, a murder, or a robbery. The stage would be nothing without its handkerchiefs. They figure in nearly every situation, and the right treatment of them is one of the essentials of the histrionic art.

POETIC ECCENTRICS.

AN unsympathetic critic has been making game, of late, of the poet who wrote some lines 'On a Fair Infant dying of a Cough.' The unregenerate soul failed to see or to acknowledge that the most delightful things can be written, by those capable of them, on the most unpromising topics. 'The Dean could write beautifully about a broomstick,' said the proud and jealous lady of Doctor Jonathan Swift. And certainly the world's rhymers have never been deterred, by an inconvenient sense of humour, from bestowing on their verses titles of dangerous simplicity and sometimes of peculiar length.

Even so modern a poet as Wordsworth could pen an 'Address to my Infant Daughter, on being reminded that she was a Month

Old on that day.' He could also find it in his heart to print lines 'Written with a Slate Pencil upon a Stone, the largest of a Heap lying near a deserted Quarry upon one of the Islands at Rydal.' It was no doubt in malice prepense that Leigh Hunt perpetrated 'Politics and Poetics; or, the Desperate Situation of a Journalist unhappily smitten with the Love of Rhyme.' And, talking of journalism, one remembers that Burns once produced some verses to which he gave this heading: 'The following Poem was written to a gentleman who had sent him a newspaper and offered to continue it free of expense.' Shenstone, it will be recollected, was guilty of 'A Poem on the Temper and Studies of the Author, and how great a misfortune it is for a man of small estate to have much taste,' which may appropriately be coupled with what Cowley called 'The Author's Epitaph, upon himself alive, but withdrawn from the busy world to a country life; to be supposed written in his house.' After this, one thinks but little of Tickell's

'Poem in Praise of the Horn-book, written under a Fit of the Gout,' and still less of Lord Roscommon's lines, 'On a Young Lady who sang finely, and was afraid of a Cold,' though, to be sure, his lordship was evidently very much in earnest, exclaiming :

> 'Let no ungentle cold destroy
> All taste we have of heavenly joy !'

Sometimes the title of a poem is the very last thing by which the public would recognise it, as, for instance, Lord Dorset's 'Song, Written at Sea, in the first Dutch War, 1665, the Night before the Engagement,' in which not everybody will recognise the well-known sprightly verses, 'To all you ladies now on land——' and so on. To Crashaw we owe some observations, excellent *per se*, 'On a Foul Morning, being then to take a journey'—surely a not usually inspiring subject ; while Dryden favoured the readers of his time with an attractive piece of work called 'Song of a Scholar and his Mistress, who, being crossed by their Friends, fell mad for one another, and now first meet

in Bedlam.' There was, one need hardly say, no limit to the attentions paid by the old gallants to the ladies, and so we find Sir John Suckling making a 'Dialogue upon the Lady Carlisle's walking in Hampton Court Garden,' while Drayton discovered ample material for discourse in the simple fact 'Of his lady's not coming to London.' The fifteenth-century bard was often not only lengthy, but lachrymose, in his poem-headings; and thus, while Lord Surrey supplied the world with a 'Description of the restless state of a Lover, with Sute to his Lady, to rue in his dieng hart,' Sir Thomas Wyatt has told us how 'The Lover, unhappy, biddeth happy lovers rejoice in May, while he wayleth that month to him most unluckely.'

Everybody knows, of course, that the poets have never wearied of celebrating the most insignificant trifles that they have been able to associate with the other sex. Gay's poem on 'The Fan' was but typical of a whole literature of the sort, and Waller's

lines 'On a Girdle' find a judicious pendant in those by Carew 'Upon a Ribband.' Suckling had no difficulty in dwelling poetically 'Upon the black Spots worn by my Lady,' declaring:

> 'They're your mourning-weeds for hearts forlorn,
> Which, though you must not love, you could not scorn.'

The dress both of women and of men has secured its laureates—from Bramston, who asked, 'Without black velvet breeches, what is man?' to Leigh Hunt, who did not hesitate to make verses 'On a full-flowing Peruke.' The poetry of games of all kinds is illustrated in Gay's 'Ballad on Quadrille;' while dancing was idealized and etherealized by the ingenious author of 'Orchestra; or, a Poem expressing the antiquity and excellence' of that pastime.

Even the unheroic topic of cooking has had its fascinations for the muse. William King, it is well known, devoted a whole poem to the 'Art' of it, inditing, for example, the following passage:

'At Christmas-time, be careful of your fame. . . .
Then, if you would send up the brawner's head,
Sweet rosemary and bays around it spread ;
His foaming tusks let some large pippin grace,
Or midst those thundering spears an orange place ;
Sauce like himself, offensive to its foes,
The roguish mustard, dangerous to the nose ;
Sack and the well-spic'd hippocras the wine,
Wassail the bowl with ancient ribbands fine,
Porridge with plums, and turkeys with the chine.'

The same author descended still further, to explain 'The Art of Making Puddings;' Gay wrote a 'Receipt for Stewing Veal,' and Cowper purred prettily about 'The High Price of Fish.' So, while Waller sang 'Of Tea,' Phillips penned a poem to 'Cider.' And, as between edibles and potables and the family doctor there is an obvious connection, we may note that Armstrong did not consider it below the poetic dignity to illustrate 'The Art of Preserving Health,' Garth to distinguish 'The Dispensary,' and Whitehead to urge the claims of exercise in 'The Gymnasiad.'

There is practically no end to the prosaic matters which the bards have been willing to dignify (or otherwise) in their verse. Our

writers, and especially those of the last century and its predecessor, deserve praise for the ingenuity displayed by them in this particular. Waller was not ashamed to discourse of 'A Tree Cut in Paper;' and Congreve was equally complacent in his observations 'To a Candle'—

> 'Thou faithful witness of my secret pain,
> To whom alone I venture to complain.'

Somerville wrote an 'Address to an Elbow Chair,' Shenstone an 'Ode to Indolence,' Parnell some lines 'On the Number Three,' Burns an 'Address to the Toothache,' and Leigh Hunt some rhythmical remarks on 'Sudden Fine Weather.' Everybody has heard of Lord Rochester's poem 'Upon Nothing' and of Gay's 'Art of Walking the Streets.' Among Cowley's works will be found some verses 'Written in juice of lemon'—an ingenious notion. But the lowest deep yet reached by the worshipful company of singers has been that in which they have consented to warble about the noxious sort of insects. One can under-

stand Aaron Hill's writing about 'The Gnat,' and is not surprised that both Prior and Parnell should have taken the race of flies for topic: Carew managed to chatter quite charmingly concerning 'A Fly that flew into my Mistress's Eye'—'there scorched in flames and drown'd in dew.' But one draws the line at Burns's 'To a Louse' and Wolcot's 'Lousiad,' and is even more shocked to find that both Donne and Drummond could be inspired by—a flea! And yet the latter poet could congratulate his subject upon having been destroyed by a lady:

> 'Poor flea, then thou didst die;
> Yet by so fair a hand,
> That thus to die was destiny to command.'

MAXIMS.

THE hero of 'Locksley Hall,' it will be remembered, had a vision of his Amy, 'his no more,' as she would probably turn out as a matron—'with a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.' But the gentleman was out of temper at the time, and in his calmer moments—if he ever had any—would probably have spoken very differently of maxims. Few things, indeed, deserve to be treated more respectfully. They are a very great power in the world. Not many are the people who are unaffected by them. Most of us own allegiance to them in some form or other. Some accept and carry out in their daily lives the maxims handed down to them from their ancestors or impressed upon

them by their pastors and masters. Others, as their experience of existence grows, invent their maxims for themselves, and act up to them or not, according to temperament or circumstances. But the influence is there. Most people have a tendency to crystallize their views of society into a few handy sentences, which are more or less present with them in every thought or action of their lives.

And, in truth, a good maxim is doubly acceptable, both from the social and from the literary point of view. It has, to be sure, its limitations. The man who is bound hand and foot to his own 'wise saws' is to be pitied indeed. They are not always to be received as embodying the whole available truth. They do not necessarily fit into every situation. It is possible to imagine the very best of them landing us in dire misfortune, if we did not recognise the times when they were inappropriate or inadequate. That is the one drawback of the wise or witty sentence—that it

usually requires some qualification in reference to particular individuals or events. All wisdom cannot very well be crammed into a brief utterance, however concise and concentrated it may be. But then, no thoughtful person expects from the maxim more than it can give. Its value lies, not in its bare meaning only, but in its suggestiveness, in the ideas it originates in the mind. In its most successful shape it is delightful and useful as an *aperçu*—a flash of intellectual limelight upon life. Exception may be taken to its mere literal meaning, but one is conscious of its having brought with it some mental illumination.

Unfortunately, maxims of the first class are not very numerous. It is not everybody who can compose them. The names of the masters in this line of art can be counted on the fingers of one hand. There is, of course, no lack of pregnant sayings in the world. Literature is full of them—our own literature as full as any. The compilers of 'Gems of Thought' and the like are not distressed by

the want of material; rather are they overwhelmed by its superabundance. Our prose and poetry alike gleam with those 'jewels, five words long'—or more!—'which, on the stretched forefinger of all Time, sparkle for ever.' But embedded sentences, however admirable in themselves, are not maxims in the literary sense. Mrs. Poyser, for example, is full of worldly wisdom, exquisitely phrased; but, nevertheless, George Eliot is not among the maxim-writers. Nor, strictly speaking, can we include in the list those very able men whose 'table-talk,' as preserved for us by careful listeners, abounds in happy *pronunciamientos* upon men and things. There is wisdom and there is wit galore in the recorded chit-chat of Selden, Coleridge, Rogers, Sydney Smith, and others; but those utterances are no more maxims, in the proper acceptation of the word, than are those clever definitions which make bright the 'Tin Trumpet' of Horace Smith, and accompany the 'Poems and Music' of Anne Evans.

There is only one model for the maxim, and that is the French. Only in the pages of Pascal and Larochefoucauld, Chamfort and Vauvenargues, do we find the supreme type of the *genre.* Probably the perfection of maxim-writing is possible only to the Frenchman, with his pellucid style and his keen sense of form. The average Englishman is apt to be diffuse, both in his ideas and in his method of expression. He does not take kindly to the one rounded, polished sentence, containing a philosophy in essence, which is the perfection of the maxim. On the other hand, the maxim, both in its brevity and its finish, is highly congenial to the Gallic artist, and receives its most fortunate treatment at his hands. What Larochefoucauld was and wrote, most Englishmen are aware of; his 'Reflections' have been more than once translated. Something is known, too, of Pascal's 'Pensées,' though probably there are many who would be surprised to find in him the author of a saying so cynical as this: that 'Curiosity

is but vanity; most frequently we want to know about a thing only in order that we may talk about it.' Of Vauvenargues and Chamfort still less is known among us, selections only from their maxims having obtained currency, and a translation of the whole being still a literary labour which no one has come forward to perform.

And yet there are respects in which the sentences of Vauvenargues and Chamfort are preferable to those of Larochefoucauld, familiar and popular as they are. Larochefoucauld's, after all, are but multitudinous variations upon a single theme. The cynical Duc plays on one string only—the innate selfishness of man; a fertile subject, which he deals with searchingly, but which has about it a certain measure of monotony. His two great rivals have equal keenness and polish, and more variety. They take a wider view, an ampler range of topics. They are, indeed, almost inexhaustible in their versatility. And of the two Chamfort is even more varied than Vauvenargues. 'Love

is like all the epidemics: the more afraid one is of it, the more likely one is to catch it.' 'Society is made up of two classes: those who have more dinner than appetite, and those who have more appetite than dinner.' 'He who has no individuality is not a man; he is a thing.' 'Of all days the most wasted is that on which we have not laughed.' Such are a few of his most pregnant observations. But Vauvenargues' are pregnant too. 'The art of pleasing is that of deceiving.' 'Constancy is the chimera of love.' 'If men did not flatter each other, we should hardly have any society.' 'The enmity of the feeble is not so dangerous as their friendship.' Nothing could well be more suggestive than such sayings as these.

The roll of the English maxim-writers is a short one, and contains no name which can for a moment be placed in the same rank with those of the distinguished Frenchmen. Swift, Pope, and Chesterfield all left a few prose 'Thoughts' behind them, but they

are so few as scarcely to be worth considering. 'It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles: the less they have in them the more noise they make in pouring out.' That is a specimen of Pope. 'We have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love, one another.' That is a specimen of Swift. 'A man of business should always have his eyes open, but must often seem to have them shut.' That is a specimen of Chesterfield. But still better and more legitimate are the best of the sentences to be found in Shenstone's 'Essays,' Hazlitt's 'Characteristics,' the Hares' 'Guesses at Truth,' Helps' 'Thoughts in the Cloister and the Crowd,' and Buxton's 'Notes of Thought.' These, as the phrase goes, will all 'repay perusal,' most of all the work of Hazlitt. That includes a larger number of good maxims—good in idea and in phrase—than any other English production of the kind. But, as I have said, for the highest type of maxim, whether of the cynical or of the earnest kind,

we must go, not to our own writers, but to the French. Pascal and Larochefoucauld, Chamfort and Vauvenargues—these remain, as ever, the great masters of the *genre.*

SHOP.

FEW people have been more unmercifully chaffed by the satiric than those who have engaged in trade pursuits. Lawyers, doctors, and other professional men, have been treated to an immense amount of conventional sarcasm; but the commercial element of society has by no means escaped the notice or efforts of the wits. 'A nation of shopkeepers,' we have, nevertheless, freely satirized the 'shop'—not usually in very good taste, but generally with a certain rude effectiveness which has claimed pardon for the offence.

The purveyors of articles of attire have, naturally perhaps, come in for a large share of this popular fun-making. The tailors, for instance—the old joke about the ninth part

of a man is but a sample of the indignities to which they have been liable. One of the most refined bits of quizzing of which they have been the topic is, of course, Dr. Wendell Holmes' comic 'piece,' called 'Evening,' in which a tailor is supposed to discourse of Nature in truly 'shoppy' terms:

'Day hath put on his jacket, and around
His burning bosom buttoned it with stars. . .
Ah me! how lovely is the golden braid
That binds the skirt of night's descending robe!
The thin leaves, quivering on their silken threads,
Do make a music like to rustling satin,
As the light breezes smoothe their downy nap.'

As the poetical Snip says, further on:

'The vulgar know not all the hidden pockets
Where Nature stows away her loveliness.'

It is recorded of a fashionable tailor that, when asked by a ducal customer what sort of a gun he shot with, he replied: 'A double-breasted one, your grace;' but though the story is vouched for by clerical authority, it is a little difficult to believe.

Turning for a moment to the dress-providers for the gentler sex, we find James

Smith making a familiar phrase the point of an epigram. Speaking to a lady, and referring to a certain bit of 'stuff' for a gown, he says:

> 'Should you quarrel with the dress,
> You'll never *make it up*.'

The hat-making industry once suggested to Luttrell one of the best of his puns. Some one observing of a whilom hatmaker that he looked as if the dye of his old trade had got into his face, 'Yes,' said Luttrell, 'like darkness that may be *felt*.' It has been a standing gibe against the shoemakers that, when one of the fraternity put up over his door 'Mens conscia recti,' a rival at once capped the announcement with 'Men's and Women's conscia recti;' but the latter worthy is not to be taken as representative of his class. A more distinguished spokesman is to be found in the great Hoby, to whom Sir John Shelley complained that some top-boots made by him had split in several places. 'How did it happen, Sir John?' 'Why, walking to my stable.' 'Walking to your stable!' was the

reply; 'I made the boots for riding, not for walking.'

Everybody has heard of Horne Tooke's euphemism for a poulterer—'a Turkey merchant.' With fishmongers has often been associated the uncomplimentary and obvious idea of 'flounder'-ing—the point of one of Lord Erskine's *jeux d'esprit.* James Smith, in one of his comicalities, makes an actor comment upon the fact that he sees nothing in a fishmonger's shop but turbot and eels:

> 'I find in your house not a *plaice* to be had,
> And yet not a *sole* to be seen.'

It is told of a famous fashionable confectioner that, riding one day in company with Lord Midleton, he observed: 'My horse is so hot, my lord, that I don't know what to do with him.' 'Ice him, Gunter; ice him,' was the happy but not very courteous reply. Much more complimentary was James Smith's tribute to a wealthy vinegar merchant:

> 'Let Hannibal boast of his conquering sway,
> Thy liquid achievements spread wider and quicker;
> By vinegar he through the Alps made his way,
> But you through the world by the very same liquor.'

And, talking of liquor, everyone remembers Hook's epigram on 'Twining, the tea merchant, who lives in the Strand,' and 'would be whining if robbed of his T.' Strictly speaking, perhaps, an innkeeper cannot be said to keep a shop, but he is at least a tradesman, and, as a type, has received much attention from the satirists. Of a drunken Boniface it was once written:

'Landlord, with thee now even is the wine,
For thou hast pierced his hogshead, and he thine.'

Of the inn at Inverary, Burns, it will be remembered, wrote that it contained

'Nothing but Highland pride,
And Highland scab and hunger,'

adding that, if Providence had sent him there, it must have been in anger. Less pungent but more comic is the couplet on a public-house of unknown locality:

'Of this establishment how can we speak?
Its cheese is *mity*, and its ale is *weak*.'

Of an actor who had left the stage and become a wine merchant, Jerrold remarked: 'I am told that his wine off the stage is better

than his whine on it.' Martial had long before satirized a member of the trade in some bitter lines, which have been thus translated:

'The vilest of compounds while Balderdash vends,
And brews his dear poison for all his good friends,
No wonder they never can get him to dine—
He's afraid they'll oblige him to drink his own wine.'

Adverting to some of the more miscellaneous trades, we find Curran basing a happy pun upon a word used in connection with the coal wharf. A country squire disputed a collier's bill, and was told by the lively barrister that, though he had had the coals, his payment had been 'slack.' It was Curran also, I need scarcely say, who suggested, as a motto for the crest on a tobacconist's carriage, 'Quid rides.' Akin to this quip was one which was perpetrated at the expense of a Bermondsey tanner, who was overheard discussing with his wife what name should be given to their villa:

'A neighbour, thus hearing the skin-dresser talk,
Stole out, half an hour after dark,
Picked up on the roadway a fragment of chalk,
And wrote on the palings—"*Hide* Park"!'

To the sixteenth century belongs the following distich on a drunken smith:

'I heard that Smug, the smith, for ale and spice
Sold all his tools, and yet he kept his *vice*.'

This, of course, belongs to the category of self-evident sarcasm. There was equal truth to nature, as well as much more wit, in Thackeray's remark upon the public announcement of a 'Mutual Loan Office.' Asked what it meant, he said he could not explain, unless it was that two men, having nothing, had agreed to lend it to each other.

Probably no set of men has ever been more freely peppered with verbal shot than the undertakers, who, in that respect, have been almost as ill-treated as the doctors. Here, for example, is a quatrain, written some time before 1727, 'On the Death of an Undertaker':

'Subdu'd by Death, here Death's great herald lies,
And adds a trophy to his victories;
Yet sure he was prepar'd, who, while he'd breath,
Made it his business still to look for death.'

Not so conventional are the terms of a repartee recorded of Sir George Rose, the

distinguished lawyer. Present at a funeral on a bitterly cold day, he had his attention drawn by a friend to the forlorn appearance of the men with scarves and staves who accompanied the cortége. 'Poor fellows, they look as if they were frozen.' 'Frozen, my dear friend?' said Sir George; 'they are *mutes*, not *liquids*.'

THE REALM OF ROSES.

IT is no wonder that the Shah of Persia spoke of this as 'the land of roses': he must have seen millions of them during his recent stay among us—in ladies' bouquets, on ladies' dresses, on the banquet-table as forms of decoration, and, in their native state, in such gardens as he visited. It was a very carnival of roses: they rained and reigned in every quarter, the supply of them and the worship of them culminating in a 'feast of roses,' on the model of a familiar Continental custom.

Ours is, in truth, the land of roses. The rose is our national emblem, and has figured long and prominently in our history and our literature. The white rose and the red (the title, by the way, of one of Mr. Buchanan's

poems) have been the badges of rival dynasties among us, and have typified opposing factions in a state of war. The Scotch poet, Dunbar, sang of 'The Thrissil and the Rose,' and 'The Romaunt of the Rose' has been attributed, rightly or wrongly, to the English Chaucer. In the former case, the thrissil or thistle had its human counterpart in James IV. of Scotland; while the rose had hers in Margaret, daughter of our Henry VII. The rose has always stood for England, just as the thistle has stood for Scotland, the shamrock for Ireland—and the leek for Wales! It is in England that the flower grows in its most exquisite charm and most expansive profusion —in England that it reigns most potently in the hearts and imaginations of the people.

Due mention has, of course, been made in literature of the connection between the rose and its thorns. That would naturally receive celebration. 'Sweet is the rose,' cries Spenser, 'but grows upon a brere.' 'All my loveliness,' Miss Rossetti makes the rose say, 'is born upon a thorn.' 'I cared not for the thorns,'

declares Tennyson; 'the thorns were there.' And, on the whole, too much insistance has not been made upon this drawback. Much more has been said about the brief existence, the short glory, of the rose. That has struck the universal imagination. 'Rose, elle a vecu ce que vivent les roses—l'espace d'un matin;' that, perhaps, is the most exquisite line ever written by a Frenchman. And it has found an echo in the breasts of multitudinous English writers, notably in that of the lady above quoted, who, speaking of a rose-bud, says:

> 'It opened at the matin-hour,
> And fell at even-song.'

It was impossible that the poetic heart should not be touched by the brevity of the rose's reign. 'Her barèd bosom she doth broad display,' observes Spenser; 'Lo! see soon after how she fades and falls away.' 'Sweet rose, fair flower, untimely plucked, soon faded,' cries Shakespeare; and in the same vein Sir Robert Ayton declares that

> 'Pluck'd and strain'd through ruder hands,
> Her sweets no longer with her dwell.'

'Gather, then, the rose,' advises Giles Fletcher, 'or it you lose.' Herrick's exhortation to the same effect is only too familiar. Herbert pointed out that the root of the rose was in the grave, and it must die. Waller told his ladylove to note in the swift death of the flower 'the common fate of all things rare.' 'Blown in the morning,' said Sir Richard Fanshawe to the rose, 'thou shalt fade ere noon.' 'Read what those buds disclose,' declaimed Mrs. Hemans, '"Passing away."' And so with the rhymers of a later day. Bryant has written of 'the rose that lives its little hour;' 'Pass, falling rose,' is the refrain of well-known lines by Bennett; 'The year of the rose is brief,' asserts Mr. Swinburne; and Mrs. Webster points out that, despite the aspiration of the rose to live through the rain and feel her sweetness in the sun,

> 'When the dawn sparkled through unclouded air,
> She was not there.'

So much by way of tempering the rose's pride. But the shortness of the blossom's life is, in general, lost sight of in the perfection

of its being, so long as that being lasts. No flower has ever had so many to praise it, has been so praised by the praised, has been praised so beautifully. Its simple grace, its delicious perfume, have conquered all dispositions. Spenser called it 'the glory of the day.' Others, more enthusiastic still, have asserted its superiority to all its sisters. 'Of all flowers,' says one of Beaumont and Fletcher's characters, 'methinks the rose is best.' William Browne thought it the fairest blossom of the garden, and Quarles declared that it 'passed all the rest.' 'What is fairer than a rose?' asked Herrick; 'what is sweeter?' Thomson (of 'The Seasons') considered the bashful rose the queen of all the flowers; and the reflection has been often echoed—by Cowper, for instance, who held the rose to be 'the regent of them all;' by Mrs. Hemans, who addresses it as 'Thou crowned one of all flowers;' and by Hood, who protested that, of all the floral beauties, the rose is the queen—'fairest of all is she.' After that, one is not surprised by the tribute

of Burns to 'the first o' flowers;' by Southey's description of the rose as 'the freshest, sweetest flower that blooms;' or by Aubrey De Vere's reference to 'the red, all-conquering rose.' A dozen other poets might be called as witnesses to the rose's magnetic influence. Raleigh thought that the 'radiance bright' of 'vermillion roses' would put to shame 'the rich adornèd rays of roseate rising morn;' and, much in the same spirit, Cowley has told us how he once saw a rosebud open, and how he could swear that the blushing morning opened not more fair. 'Rose!' cried Tom Moore,

> 'Thou art the sweetest flower
> That ever drank the amber shower.'

Leigh Hunt held that

> 'Whatsoe'er of beauty
> Yearns and yet reposes,
> Blush, and bosom, and sweet breath,
> Took a shape in roses.'

''Tis said the rose is Love's own flower, its blush so bright,' wrote Peacock; and, as for the sweet scent of the rose, who shall even

enumerate those who have paid testimony to its delicacy? Shakespeare, Herrick, Tom Moore, Byron, Landor—these are only a few among many.

The poets, however, have done more than lament the transitoriness of the rose, and celebrate its scent and beauty. They have found in it many a lesson for themselves and others.

> 'Is there any moral shut
> Within the bosom of the rose?'

I should think there was! Cowper, in rather maudlin fashion, regretted that he had handled so rudely the rose 'which Mary to Anna conveyed;' had he shaken it less, he said, it might have bloomed for its owner awhile; as it was, the incident taught him that

> 'A tear that is wiped with a little address
> May be followed, perhaps, by a smile.'

Scott's stanza is equally familiar:

> 'The rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
> And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
> The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
> And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.'

Mrs. Radcliffe had said very much the same some time before, when, *à propos* of the rose, and of 'the dews that bend the blushing flower,' enriching its scent and reviving its glow, she declared that

> 'So Love's sweet tears exalt his power,
> So bliss more brightly shines by woe!'

Everybody remembers Shelley's lovely lines on rose-leaves (which, by the way, have also found a celebrant in Mr. Austin Dobson); while, in our own day, Mr. Theophile Marzials has delivered himself of this reflection:

> 'For love is like the China rose,
> That leafs so quickly from the tree;—
> And life, though all the honey goes,
> Lasts ever, like the pot-pourri.'

A PHILOSOPHICAL CRUSOE.

OF all the fictions—and they were many—suggested, more or less, by the success of 'Robinson Crusoe,' none, perhaps, was more curious, or, on the whole, more original, than that which was published in 1745 by one John Kirkby, with a title characteristically long and self-explanatory:

'The Capacity and Extent of the Human Understanding: exemplified in the Extraordinary Case of Automathes; a Young Nobleman, who was Accidentally left in his Infancy, upon a desolate Island, and continued Nineteen Years in that Solitary State, separate from all Human Society. A Narrative abounding with many surprising Occurrences, both Useful and Entertaining to the Reader.'

Kirkby had the distinction of being at one time domestic tutor to Gibbon, who, in his

autobiography, devotes some sentences to the work. He cannot praise it, he says, either for 'depth of thought or elegance of style,' but it is 'not devoid,' he thinks, 'of entertainment and instruction.'

The particulars in which Automathes differs from Crusoe are sufficiently well marked. Crusoe, before he is wrecked upon his island, has arrived at years of (more or less) discretion, and has secured some knowledge of the world. Automathes, when stranded with his father and mother upon an unknown shore, is 'some twelve months old,' and before another year has elapsed is left alone to battle for existence. It is from this fact that the freshness and interest of the work are derived. In 'Robinson Crusoe' there is but little psychology, conscious or unconscious. In Kirkby's narrative, the psychology, such as it is, is everything, or almost everything. Automathes' 'case' is described, in order that the author may, by means of it, exemplify 'the capacity and extent of the human understanding.'

Unfortunately for the conscientious reader, the excellent Kirkby does not plunge at once *in medias res.* He first of all tells us how, while a curate in Cumberland, he was one day sitting by the sea-shore, when his attention was attracted by the appearance in the water of 'a small cylindrical trunk, about a foot long,' with a key tied to its handle. Inside this trunk he finds a roll of manuscript, bearing within it the proofs of being the composition of an English priest, of the Order of St. Benedict, 'as long ago as the year 1614.' This ecclesiastic, expelled with other missionaries from Japan, had set sail for Panama, but had been wrecked 'within sight of an unknown country, in Latitude 39 degrees, 15 Minutes North, and about 176 degrees West Longitude from London.' The country, it turned out, was called Soteria, and its inhabitants were found to be 'not only a civilized white People, but a Nation of Christians,' rejoicing in a Church which steadily adhered to 'the Apostolical Doctrine and Discipline in their original purity.'

The priest and his companions are one day conversing with a Bishop of this Church, when they are suddenly introduced to 'a Nobleman named Automathes,' who invites the party to accompany him on a visit to his father. They observe his 'graceful Appearance,' which 'seems to command esteem and bespeak something extraordinary to be concealed under it;' and they are duly informed by the Bishop that Automathes is really as remarkable as he looks, inasmuch as, after about nineteen years' continuance in solitude, he had, when brought into human society, discovered himself to be more like a philosopher than a savage. It is suggested that he may be persuaded to tell them the whole story of his adventures. Of course he is persuaded, and then we get at the pith and marrow of the volume.

The father of Automathes had been accused, years before, of treason to the State, and, though innocent, had been despoiled of his possessions and sent out of the kingdom. On the way to his destination, the ship which

carried him struck upon a rock; the crew, crowding into a boat, were drowned, and the father, with Automathes and his mother, was thrown upon an uninhabited island—a sort of Earthly Paradise, where there were multitudes of deer, goats, and fowls of various kinds, but no noxious animals, or venomous creatures, or birds or beasts of prey. However, after seven months' experience of banishment, the mother died, and the child happily found sustenance in the milk of a hind. Very soon the father grew restless and discontented, and set off in a boat (rescued from the wreck) to explore some adjacent shore, of which glimpses were to be obtained from the island. Alas! he was blown out to sea, and, though at length he set foot upon *terra firma* not far from where his little son lay, it was nineteen years before he saw Automathes again.

Of these nineteen years Automathes does not profess to give a consecutive account; but he mentions, in an order as chronological as his memory will allow, the incidents which

made most impression upon his mind. At first he fed himself (he was then about two years old) with roots and fruit, following, he says, the example of the fowls of the air. His only companion was a dog, which followed him everywhere, and looked after his safety. For a long period, naturally, his 'rational faculty lay quite dormant,' and the first thing, apparently, which gave him pause was the sudden discovery that he possessed a shadow. This alarmed him for the moment, but in the end it induced him to ask himself, 'What am I? How came I here?'—questions on which he became so intent that he would often stumble and fall over whatever came in his way. By-and-by he remarked his own reflection in the water, and 'this, as it were, surprised me' (he says) 'into a Notion of other Creatures of my own Species.' He reflected that the animals around him brought forth after their kind, and he concluded, therefore, that there were others, somewhere, like unto himself.

After this he began to make a study of

Nature, and to note how the ground produced its fruits—how the trees, grass, and flowers grew—and how the successive renewals of Nature exactly corresponded with the motions of the sun.

'I marked the Agreement between the Moon and Tide, and the Revolutions of the lesser heavenly Luminaries were the Subject of my nocturnal Contemplations. . . . I considered the admirable Structure of the Bodies of every Species of Animals within my Observation; and . . . was everywhere surprised with an apparently wise Design, where the least Design of all was expected.'

Thus, 'from the Works of Nature and of Providence,' he was 'naturally led to the Knowledge of the *First Mover*. For,' as he says,

'Beauty and Fitness are, as it were, the Signatures of Reason impressed upon Matter; and wherever these are brought to our Observation, we are necessarily constrained to acknowledge them for the Work of some *Intelligent Agent*.'

At this time he still credited animals with having the same thinking powers as himself, and he had yet to argue himself into an understanding of the causes of light and darkness, to make acquaintance with the

power of water when in violent motion, and, by way of descending into bathos, to realize what it is to be overcome by intoxicating liquor. He found among the wreckage two bottles, one of which, having been broken, emitted a pleasing odour. This tempted him to taste some of the liquid within it,

'and, being transported with the delightful Relish of the bewitching Juice, I found a Way to open the other Bottle, of which I quaffed so largely that I perceived the Effects of it in my Brain, before I was aware. At first I wondered what should be the matter with me, being in such a Condition as I had never before experienced. The Ground on which I stood seemed to rock from Side to Side, and everything around appeared in a swimming Motion, so that I could scarce stand upom my Feet.'

Later on came the death of Automathes' dog from the fall of a tree, and with it, the young philosopher's first reflections upon the arrest of the current of existence. He tells us what he thought of the first books which he handled, but which he could not read, though he could grasp the meaning of the diagrams and figures. Striking a hatchet against a stone, he saw the sparks emitted, and, repeating the action, was the means of

setting fire to a coppice, which was soon a mass of flame. Then Automathes bethought him of the injury he might have done by this to animal life, and began to feel the first intimations of his possession of a conscience. This, by the way, is the passage which Gibbon, in his autobiography, singles out for special approbation. Thereafter comes a description of the solitary's first performance on a hand-organ (another relic of the wreck), and, finally, we are told how, at length, his father happily returned to the island, not expecting, but rejoicing, to see Automathes alive, and recognising him as his son by various little corroborative incidents. Those who accompanied the father amused themselves by killing a number of deer, and Automathes' horror at what he regarded as murder will recall to many the similar feelings entertained by Mr. Gilbert's Galatea when she first saw the dead fawn in the hands of Leucippe.

It is notable that Automathes did not ascribe the progress he had made in self-

culture to the strength of his own natural faculties. On the contrary, he argues that

> 'The Education I received from my Parents, how little soever it may seem, was some Advantage in setting my Thoughts in Work, and awaking my Attention to what was about me.'

Of even more importance than this, however, were the 'secret Hints and Intimations' of which he was the recipient, and which he attributed to the 'communications of some separate intelligent Being—generally, if not always, the Spirit of my deceased Mother.' For if there is one thing more than another which John Kirkby appears to have been anxious to expound in this story, it is the opinion that all knowledge came originally from the Creator, that it has been renewed from time to time by his prophets, and that, in these our days, 'Man depends upon the Care and Instruction of others to bring him to act agreeably to his rational Character.'

POETS AT THE PLAY.

IT is not surprising that the stage has at all times found celebrants in rhyme. If it has such powerful attraction for the average man, how much more may it fairly possess for the man of imagination and insight, the man of poetic feeling and expression! There must always be much, both in its past and in its present, to impress the sympathetic mind. Its past, especially, must ever appeal vividly to the fancy. The most ephemeral of all the arts, it has for professors the most rapidly forgotten of all artists, because at best they leave behind them but a name. 'Where,' says a contemporary bard, discoursing 'Of Dead Actors'—

> 'Where are the passions they essayed,
> And where the tears they made to flow?

Where the wild humours they portrayed
For laughing worlds to see and know?
Othello's wrath and Juliet's woe?
Sir Peter's whims and Timon's gall?
And Millamant and Romeo?
Into the night go one and all.'

Thus Mr. W. E. Henley: and, even more lately, Mr. Justin McCarthy, jun., has asked much the same question about 'the ladies of old time'—'the actresses of long ago.'

The spectacle of a veteran artist lagging more or less superfluous on the boards has also had power to move the poet's heart, and in 'The Old Player' we have one of the most touching of Dr. Wendell Holmes's effusions. An element of pathos has been found, besides, in the indifference with which an audience regards the minor members of a company. It summons the 'principals,' but the humbler players are ignored. 'Think,' says Mr. Austin Dobson—

'Think what a crowd whom none recall,
Unsung—unpraised—unpitied;—
Women for whom no bouquets fall,
And men whose names no galleries bawl,
The Great un-Benefit-ed!'

Thackeray long ago drew attention to the

fact that the life of the actor is very far from being 'all beer and skittles.' 'When he has laughed and said his say,' wrote the kindly humorist,

> 'He shows, as he removes the mask,
> A face that's anything but gay.'

The actor's art, as an ordered system, has been analyzed by Charles Lloyd in a composition which contains much sense but little poetry. Mr. Robert Buchanan has sketched, in the history of 'Kitty Kemble,' the career of a typical actress of our time; and while, on the one hand, H. S. Leigh, recording what had been told him, as a boy, about the heroics of the footlights, says :—

> 'The fairies I believed so fair,
> Were not by any means
> The kind of people one would care
> To meet behind the scenes,'

Mr. Gilbert, in one of his 'Bab Ballads,' admits, concerning the 'dancing-girl' whom he describes, that,

> 'Hung from the "flies" in air,
> She acts a palpable lie,
> She's as little a fairy there
> As unpoetical I;'

yet, seen at home, going about her household duties, 'she's a fairy truly, then.' Elsewhere, Mr. Gilbert has made excellent fun of 'the haughty actor' who will not accept a part he thinks too small for him; and in 'The Pantomime "Super" to his Mask,' he has contrived to illustrate something of the drudgery of the super's life. Who, again, does not remember H. J. Byron's comic portrayal of 'The Villain at the Vic.'? 'The 'Clown's Lament' for the decay of pantomime has been sung in feeling terms by Mr. Clement Scott; but that Christmas extravaganza still has some charms, even for the middle-aged among us, has been shown by 'C. C. R.' in some graphic and genial stanzas.

Individual actors have, of course, been made the subject of many a poetic celebration, whether in praise or in blame. Ben Jonson wrote in eulogy of Edward Alleyne, founder of Dulwich College; and Richard Burbage survives, not only in the song of Flecknoe and of Middleton, but in that of

Mr. Dobson, who has told us how the play-goers of the time

> 'Thrilled through all changes of despair,
> Hope, anger, fear, delight, and doubt,
> When Burbage played !'

Nell Gwynne found an enthusiastic laureate in the Earl of Rochester, who declared that, on the stage, 'in full lustre did her glories shine.' In 'The Rosciad,' we have, of course, a review of all the leading actors of the author's day—from Tom Davies, whose chief distinction it was that he had 'a pretty wife,' and Henry Mossop, who 'in mono-syllables his thunders rolled,' to Garrick and his rival Barry, and the few others of whose representations the Rev. Charles Churchill condescended to approve. Garrick will always live in the 'Retaliation' of Goldsmith —the most successful poetic repartee ever made. Mrs. Oldfield is consecrated in the pages of Pope, as also is Barton Booth; while Quin had Garrick himself, and James Thomson, for his literary immortalizers. Horace Walpole sung the charms of Cathe-

rine Clive and Frances Abington; and Peg Woffington secured a strenuous and tuneful trumpeter in the person of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams.

Lower, to be sure, than 'The Rosciad,' must be ranked 'The Histrionade' (1802), which discoursed, among others, about G. F. Cooke, and 'The Thespiad' (1809), wherein are embalmed the memories (for instance) of stately J. P. Kemble, laughter-moving Munden, Liston, and Charles Mathews, manly Mayne Young, and joyous Mrs. Jordan. Of J. P. Kemble we all remember how eloquently Thomas Campbell wrote, saluting him as 'Pride of the British stage,' and asserting that

> 'His was the spell o'er hearts,
> Which only Acting lends.'

Charles Kemble's graces had a celebrant in J. H. Reynolds, and those of Adelaide Kemble in Mr. Justice Talfourd. The great Siddons inspired a sonnet by Charles Lamb, and a couplet by Lord Byron; and while the former bard dedicated a couple of quatorzains

to Miss Kelly, the latter supplied a fitting tribute to Edmund Kean. Talfourd and Barry Cornwall, as well as Tennyson, poetized on the merits of Macready; James Smith had some well-turned stanzas about Miss Farren, Miss Brunton, and Miss Stephens; Lalor Shiel went into rhythmical raptures over the O'Neil; and John Quincy Adams indulged in hyperbole over Ellen Tree.

Coming down to the players of our own day, it is pleasant to find the strain of eulogy maintained. The actors and actresses of these so-called degenerate times have not lacked the hearty appreciation of their rhyme-making contemporaries. The late Adelaide Neilson has had eloquent elegiasts in Messrs. William Winter and Clement Scott, the former of whom has mourned that

> 'Night has sealed her glorious eyes,
> And silence hushed her heavenly tones.'

H. S. Leigh, going to Mr. Buckstone's play-house, saw there 'a rare and radiant maiden,' whose slightest utterance was music, and who, his neighbour told him, was 'Nelly

Moore.' Mr. Winter, by the way, has sung about the late John Brougham, and Mr. Scott about the late George Belford. For epigraphs on Buckstone, Webster, Charles James Mathews, and others, *vide* the kindly pages of *Mr. Punch.* Miss Fanny Kemble, still happily spared to us, stirred to melody the muse of Longfellow; and Helen Faucit has received the poetic homage, very gracefully expressed, not only of her husband, Sir Theodore Martin, but of Macready and of Mr. Browning.

As for our working players, they have been satirized in the pages of Mr. Alfred Austin ('The Season') and Mr. G. F. Armstrong ('Mephistopheles in Broadcloth'); but, in recompense, they have received high compliments indeed. Mr. Irving has been addressed by Mr. Oscar Wilde as 'Thou trumpet set for Shakespeare's lips to blow,' and, while commended as Fabian dei Franchi, has been exhorted to play Lear:

> 'Frenzied Lear
> Should at thy bidding wander on the heath,
> With the shrill fool to mock him.'

In like manner, Mr. Wilde, though delighted with Miss Ellen Terry's Henrietta Maria, and her Camma, has suggested to her the *rôle* of Cleopatra. Mr. Justin McCarthy, jun., has been, perhaps, Miss Terry's most enthusiastic poet. Mrs. Kendal has had more than one sonnet tendered to her. Mr. Toole and the Bancrofts have been celebrated respectively by Mr. Winter and Mr. Clement Scott. Of Continental and American actors and actresses I have no space to speak; suffice it that they, too, have not been without their recognition in rhythm and rhyme.

WINTER READING.

WINTER is, *par excellence*, the time of year for reading. The invitations to pleasant study are then all round us. The publishers' advertisements of their wares stare us luringly in the face. The booksellers' windows and counters are resplendent with volumes of the most varied size and hue. The railway bookstalls threaten to collapse beneath their weight of literary woe. The very hoardings remind us that, if the season is one at which bodily fare usurps a large portion of our attention, it is also one at which we are expected to draw up an ample *menu* for the mind.

One is quite willing to admit the appropriateness of all this demonstration. This bookish atmosphere is well in accordance

with the period of the year. Let us grant that summer also has its fascinations for the lover of book or magazine. Pleasant it is as Mr. Longfellow has said before us, when woods are green, and winds are soft and low, to lie amid some sylvan scene, where, undisturbed by loudly-protesting babes or street-vendors' strident 'calls,' one can devote one's self to the study of a favourite author. But how much and how long do we study? Let every man answer for himself. Do our eyes not soon and often wander from the page, to rest upon the beauties of the surrounding landscape, or, if it is very hot, to close in sleep? It is not so certain that leafy June, for example, is altogether the best friend of the Muses, so far as the perusal of their product goes. We stroll, say, into Kensington Gardens, with Matthew Arnold's poems in our pocket, and very soon are deep in that always fresh and always delightful piece of description:

'Birds here make song, each bird has his,
Across the girdling city's hum.
How green under the boughs it is!
How thick the tremulous sheep-cries come!

'Sometimes a child will cross the glade
To take his nurse his broken toy;
Sometimes a thrush flit overhead
Deep in her unknown day's employ.'

But the worst of it is that we look up at the birds, and look round at the children, and note for ourselves how green the leaves are; and then perchance we lie back in our chair or on the grass, and resign ourselves peacefully to slumber, what time 'the breezes blow—likewise the flowers.'

So, upon the whole, we ought—some of us—to be ready to admit that the soft, sunny hours are not specially conducive to the sway of Polite Letters. The dull gray mornings, the long dark evenings, are much more friendly to the books, and other printed things, of the old days and of these. And if winter is, in particular, the time for reading, it is, no doubt, to a large extent, the time for a particular kind of reading. One is conscious of being in the presence, not only of a large amount of intellectual fare, but of intellectual fare of a peculiar complexion. It is the carnival of the fictionists; they fill the air

with their triumph. The essayist has no chance, no following; the poet is in little favour, save he be a venerable singer, of more than three-score years and ten, who (like Lord Tennyson the other day) chooses this moment of all others to give to the world his latest reflections and his newest prophecy. For the rest, the storytellers have it all their way, as they have had it a hundred times before; and while the young people revel once more in narratives of hair-breadth 'scapes and maidens' miseries, their elders sit them down placidly, as of yore, to scan the tales of family ghosts and Christmas love-makings, of faces in the fire and mysterious footprints in the snow.

And why not, messieurs and mesdames? Let us have no more cheap and nasty cynicism. Everybody knows that these ghosts and love-makings, faces and footprints, have been 'done before,' over and over again, even (in some instances) to nauseousness. Admitted; they are ancient and conventional. But as Constable, the painter, after charac-

terizing a certain 'sky' as 'putty,' averred that he 'liked putty,' so may many of us assert, laying our hands upon such hearts as we have, that we like the conventional and the ancient—in its place. We like everything, indeed, that goes with the season. It is no argument to say that such and such is stale, is not absolutely new. Goose and turkey are not new; nor are plum-puddings and mince-pies; yet do we return to them with a certain kindliness, if not with the old zest. Let us have, with the fogs and the frost and the ice, the mental pabulum that accords with them. Let us have whatever is in stock—whether it be vegetables or the virtuous heroine, game or the golden-haired princess who eventually espouses the doughty knight. There are, as the Latins say, whom it delights to spurn and to asperse the hoary midwinter story. Let those of us who believe in taking things in due succession, take this, as we have taken it yearly in the past.

But, assuredly, there is something to be said upon another count. There is no reason

why this rule of the seasonable should be carried too far. There is no reason why the winter reader should not have, when he pleases, the agreeable effect of contrast. The time comes, probably, when the *pro re natâ* literature is exhausted; when the Numbers and Annuals are all 'cut,' and the books of the season all run through; and when one finds one's self compelled to rest upon one's own resources. Then, perchance, one turns one's back upon the snow or the sleet outside, and draws the window curtains, and pokes the fire (or, alas! 'turns on' the gas-stove of the Victorian era), and, taking up a poet or an essayist, in his printed guise, is straightway transported to verdant lawns, and blossoming trees, and budding flowers, and blue skies, and delicious breezes, all the more delightful because of the cold and wet outside. This, in truth, should be one of the greatest charms of the dull days and the long nights—that of rising superior to 'environment,' of forgetting goloshes and pocket-handkerchiefs, great-coats and respirators,

and bathing the spirit in all the fancied, far-off exquisiteness of summer-days. 'Remembering happier things' is not always 'a sorrow's crown of sorrow.' When the wind blows hard against the window-panes, and seems to shake the chimneys, all the more welcome is the rhymer or the proser who transforms it for us into a July zephyr, redolent of the perfume of the roses.

THE MARRIED MUSE.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD has brought together, and published, those of his verses which were directly inspired by his lately deceased wife; and they make up a volume of a hundred and forty pages, all of them written 'In My Lady's Praise,' and 'now collected for her memory.' The tribute is one of which any wife might well be proud. Not only is there in the book a whole series of poems based on the gems suggested by each letter of Lady Arnold's name—Fanny Maria Adelaide; but side by side with these are lines written shortly after marriage, others addressed to her on various occasions, and others suggested, finally, by her death, the last-named

being full of tenderness and pathos. Says the poet:

> 'Dying has grown dear,
> Now you are dead who turned all things to grace;'

and his last words are:

> 'God, making her, must love her—that's most certain.
> So—she was weary, and He drew her curtain.'

It is not often, one may grant, that a votary of the Muse thus consecrates the affection subsisting between himself and his married-life's companion. And the fact may, and possibly will, tend to sharpen the tongue and point the wit of those who are accustomed not only to rail at matrimony, but to deplore especially its effects upon the man of song. It must be confessed that the history of poets presents episodes not altogether favourable to their entry into the 'united state.' There are certain familiar examples which the profane delight to bring forward whenever the opportunity occurs. Milton's first matrimonial experience, for instance, was notoriously unsuccessful, and should have its lessons for all bards similarly situated. An

epigrammatist ventured to put the husband's dissatisfaction into words and rhyme. The lady had been called 'a rose':

'"I am no judge of flowers, but, indeed," cried the poet,
"If she be a rose, by the thorns I may know it."'

Dryden did more than this. He did not leave it to a brother penman to give tongue to his feelings; he relieved the latter by composing for his spouse the well-known epitaph:

'Here lies my wife; here let her
Now she's at rest, and so am I!'

This, naturally, has formed a model for multitudinous efforts of the kind, one writer expanding the couplet in the following fashion:

'Here lies my wife: poor Molly, let her lie;
She's found repose at last, and so have I.'

Poets, it is to be feared, have often quarrelled with their helpmates, but fortunately they have not always celebrated the fact in verse. Byron did so, but then he loved to write about himself and his. Everybody remembers his rhythmical endorsement of the

deed of separation between himself and Lady Byron :

> 'A year ago you swore, fond she !
> "To love, to honour," and so forth ;
> Such was the vow you pledged to me,
> And here's exactly what it's worth.'

There is evidence of strong feeling in the 'Lines on hearing that Lady Byron was Ill,' written a few months after the deed was signed ; but it was hardly in his character of poet that Byron arrived at his matrimonial misadventures.

The instances in which bards have lived happily with their wives are at least as numerous as those in which they have done the contrary. Spenser wrote his splendid 'Epithalamion' before marriage, but there is no reason to believe that he was ever anxious to withdraw or to suppress it. Even Milton, though he had trouble with Mary Powell, could pen a fervid sonnet to the memory of his second wife, telling how he dreamed that his 'late espousèd saint' came back to him, 'vested all in white, pure as her mind'—her

face veiled; yet, to his fancied sight, 'love, sweetness, goodness in her person shined.' Shelley, too—he, if anybody ever had, had grounds for doubting whether marriage was precisely the chief joy of existence. Nevertheless, he could find it in his heart to write very charming things about both his respective spouses, telling Harriett Shelley that she was his 'purer mind,' the inspiration of his song. 'Thine,' he said, in the preface to his 'Juvenilia'—

> 'Thine are these early wilding flowers,
> Though garlanded by me.'

So, with happy impartiality, he could write to Mary Shelley:

> 'Mary, dear, come to me soon,
> I am not well whilst thou art far.
> As sunset to the spherèd moon,
> As twilight to the western star,
> Thou, beloved, art to me,'

and so on. We know that Wordsworth was eminently fortunate in his matrimonial relations, and that Mrs. Wordsworth sat for the delightful picture of 'a perfect woman, nobly planned,' besides inspiring, through her por-

trait, a couple of equally fine sonnets. How happy Moore was with his 'Bessy' is not less notorious: she had been an actress, he was a poet and a diner-out, and yet in their little nest they did agree. Leigh Hunt has a sonnet to his wife ('On Modelling my Bust') the tone of which is, in its tender sweetness, all that could be wished. Hood wrote some playful lines about a 'trouble all his own'—'a wife who preaches in her gown, and lectures in her night-dress;' but we get at his true, deep-seated sentiment in the verses, addressed to Mrs. Hood, which thus conclude:

> 'So, love, however time may flow,
> Fresh hours pursuing those that flee,
> One constant image still shall show
> My tide of life is true to thee.'

Of the late Mortimer Collins it may be truly said that much, if not most, of what was best in his verse was the direct result of his married happiness. Not only his books of lyrics, but his novels, overrun with rhythmical testimonies to the success of his

second matrimonial venture. To a birthday letter, penned to 'Frances' in 1875, he adds this postscript :

'I often think, my only love,
The world would be more true,
If half the ladies in the world
Were half as good as you.

'And don't you think, my only love,
'Twere merrier 'neath the sky,
If half the men in half the world
Could love as well as I?'

On the present-day proofs of my thesis there is no call to dwell, for everybody knows what the Laureate and Mr. Browning have written in praise of marriage;· and poets like Mr. Locker and Mr. Gerald Massey (to name no others) have been not less earnest in their celebration of the felicity which the married state has brought to them. Mr. Massey has written :

'One so fair—none so fair.
Oh, my bosom-guest,
Love ne'er smiled a happier pair
To the bridal-nest.

'One so fair—none so fair.
Lean on me, sweet Wife ;
Light will be the load we bear,
Two hearts in one life.'

No doubt the poetic temperament is peculiar, and not every lady is fitted by nature to be a poet's spouse. Yet all that is wanted is a genuine affection on both sides, and on the wife's a certain sympathy with the husband's point of view. Nor is even the last named absolutely necessary in all cases, for not every poet desires that his helpmate shall also be his fervent applauder. That love should be present is, however, indispensable. And is it not also indispensable for the happiness of other couples than those of whom one unit is a poet?

FAUST IN ENGLAND.

TO the subject of Faust a peculiar interest attaches. It is one which has attracted Europe for several centuries—from the Middle Ages, in which the legend took its rise, to the days of Spohr and Berlioz, Gounod, Boito, and the rest. The story is one of the few which may be said to be almost world-wide in reputation —ranking with those of Vanderdecken, Don Giovanni, Don Quixote, and other popular heroes, round each of whom a voluminous literature has grown up.

Every civilized person, probably, has heard something about Faust. It would be curious to inquire into the extent to which, in each community, the details of his story are generally known. In regard to our own

country, for example—what, one may ask, is the precise amount of knowledge of the legend possessed by the average man or woman? Putting aside the specialists, whose business it is to be acquainted with these matters, and the students, who make a point of investigating them as they come to the fore, what has the English public in its mind in reference to Faust? When it thinks of him, what does it think of him? In what light does it regard him? Is its Faust the Faust of history, or the Faust of legend, or the Faust of Goethe? Who or what is responsible, in short, for the conception of Faust which exists, when it exists at all, in the ordinary British household of to-day?

The story of Faust was first treated in England by Marlowe, whose 'Dr. Faustus,' now nearly 300 years old, is to be read in extant editions of the author's works. But what does the average reader know about 'Dr. Faustus?' Has he ever dipped into its pages? Did he ever know anyone who had? There is a couplet in the drama—

'Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air,
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars,'

—which has got, somehow or other, into the quotation-books; but there's an end. Not one in a hundred thousand, probably, could stand examination even in the plot of the play—is aware, for example, that no Margaret figures in it, or, again, has noted Marlowe's spelling of the word 'Mephistophilis.' And while but little, if anything, is known of 'Dr. Faustus,' we may be tolerably certain that nothing whatever is known nowadays of the farces and pantomimes, on the subject of 'Faustus,' which amused or bored the British playgoer during the two centuries between Elizabeth and George IV. That anyone should be wholly ignorant of those productions is not to be counted greatly to his disadvantage.

Equally may a man be forgiven for having his mind blank on the subject of a 'romantic musical drama,' called 'Faustus,' produced at Drury Lane at the end of the first quarter of this century. Some of the Nestors among

living playgoers may have seen that piece, and had their conception of the legend coloured by it; but those who can claim so long an experience of the stage, must, I imagine, be few and far between, and cannot be regarded as perceptibly leavening the great mass of their countrymen. Nor, probably, has the existing public mind been much impressed by the English versions of Goethe's poem which made their appearance about fifty years ago. There were Leveson-Gower's, and Hayward's, and Blackie's, and Anster's, and Filmore's, to name no others; but of these only Hayward's has had any special vogue, and even that, one may suspect, is not much read. Educated people have it on their shelves, but they do not, probably, often take it down. The versions of Sir Theodore Martin and of Bayard Taylor, now nearly twenty years old, have, to a large extent, superseded Hayward's; but even they, one may surmise, are familiar only to the cultivated few.

We are, however, anticipating somewhat,

for, eighteen years before Sir Theodore Martin published his translation, Charles Kean had produced in London a play (by Robertson) called 'Faust and Marguerite,' which no doubt has done a good deal towards moulding opinion in England on the subject of the Faust story. A good many playgoers can look back thirty years, and conjure up recollections, not only of the Mephistopheles of Kean, but of the Marguerite of Miss Carlotta Leclercq. Moreover, 'Faust and Marguerite' has been revived more than once, not only in London but in the provinces. Nevertheless, the piece is antiquated as we reckon time nowadays, and to the younger portion of this generation is but slightly known. It was of French origin, though the French author had adapted, of course, from Goethe's work, rejecting everything but the compact with Mephistopheles and the ruin of Margaret. It was from this play, certainly, that the British public of to-day, taken as a whole, obtained its first idea of Faust—an idea which has not

been materially modified by succeeding dramas. Bayle Bernard's 'Faust,' though dating back only twenty odd years, is, one may assume, virtually forgotten; while Mr. Gilbert's 'Gretchen,' which differed considerably from the Goethean narrative—making Faust (here called 'Faustus' again) a disillusioned young man who has turned monk, abolishing Valentine, and introducing one Gottfried as a friend of Faust and the lover of Gretchen—had but a brief career in London, and has had no perceptible influence on playgoers generally. Mr. Wills's 'Faust,' again, covered much the same ground as the 'Faust and Marguerite' produced by Kean, though it introduced the witches' kitchen and the Brocken scene, and has thus served to familiarize the public with those features of Goethe's work.

The list of stage versions is, however, not yet ended. Was there not, some fifteen years since, a 'Little Faust,' of French extraction, which had at least its foundation in the accepted story? Was there not, more

recently, a 'Little Dr. Faust,' by H. J. Byron, in which the spirit of extravaganza was wholly rampant? Was there not a 'Mefistofele II.' in which Faust once more figured, and in which 'Mefistofele' was curtailed to flippant 'Mefisto'? There has been more than one travestie of the operatic 'Faust' from the witty pen of Mr. F. C. Burnand, and, more lately, Messrs. G. R. Sims and Henry Pettitt have brought the burlesque view of the subject 'up to date.' No doubt all these pieces have tended, more or less, to impress upon the public the version of the legend first made known to English people in 'Faust and Marguerite.'

But whence has the story of the two lovers derived the greater portion of its present popularity in this country? What was the work which fixed that story, once for all, upon the tablets of the people's memory? On this point, I imagine, there can be little hesitation. When English people think of Faust, they think, for the most part, of the Faust brought before them in Gounod's opera. It

is Gounod—not Goethe, or Marlowe, or anyone else—who has made Faust, and his compact, and his love, well-known to the bulk of English men and women. The opera was first heard here rather more than twenty-five years ago, and since that time has maintained its vogue unimpaired. It has never cloyed upon the public palate. Audiences go to see it whenever they have the chance of doing so, and show no signs of tiring. Boito's 'Mefistofele' has, during the last few years, done something to confuse the public on the subject, by reproducing from Goethe not only the witches' scene, but the prologue in heaven and the episode of Helen. But, so far as the majority are concerned, the earlier opera holds its own, and it is to Gounod's hero that the thoughts of the unlearned turn when the name of Faust is mentioned.

Gounod's work, of course, was inspired, in effect, by Goethe's poem. And, in regard to the great German poet, there is always this, in particular, to be remembered—that

if Faust, as a dramatic character, was really created or moulded by Marlowe, to whom Goethe was largely indebted, it is to Goethe alone that we owe the conception of the Margaret episode. Nearly everything else in 'Faust' existed at one time in the shape of solid fact or floating legend, but it was reserved for Goethe to conceive the tragic love-story which the music of Gounod has enforced so powerfully on the mind and heart of this generation.

SCIENCE AND SARCASM.

THE publication of a volume of verse of which the best, if not the main, portion consists of clever mockery of scientific theories, is a sign of the times, but by no means an unfamiliar one. Ever since Darwin published his 'Descent of Man,' the literature of the period has teemed with persiflage on the subject. In some cases the motive power was the scorn born of incredulity. Because the savants said this or that, it did not follow that it was all gospel. On the other hand, there have been those who, without accepting or denying scientific results, have contented themselves with cynical badinage concerning them—reducing them, in their view, to absurdity, and then laughing at the picture they themselves have drawn.

Sometimes the satire is general in its application, as in Miss May Kendall's portrait of 'Education's Martyr,' who 'owned the scenery was grand,' but objected to cliffs because they were Laurentian and not Pleistocene, while, as for flowers,

> 'Primroses by the river's brim
> Dicotyledons were to him,
> And they were nothing more.'

This type of savant reminds one of Miss Constance Naden's scientific wooer, who said that his suit, 'with Optics well begun,' should by Magnetism be won, and 'closed at last in Chemic union!' He proposed to sing his lady-love 'a deep Darwinian lay,' and was no doubt identical with the evolutionary lover, also described by Miss Naden, who, when cut out by a more attractive man, saw in the fact one more proof of the theory of natural selection:

> 'Shall I rage as they whirl in the valse?
> Shall I sneer as they carol and woo?
> Oh no! for since Chloe is false,
> I'm certain that Darwin is true!'

It is Darwin, indeed, who has all along

come in for the hardest of satiric knocks. The unkind treatment began with Lord Neaves, whose 'Origin of Species' and 'Leather Bottèl,' are, in their way, quite as historical as 'The Descent of Man,' which suggested them. In the one we learn how 'all living things from a Monad have sprung,' and are shown, with delightful humour, the stages by which that Monad became man; in the other, the 'marine animal,' resembling the existing Ascidian, from which humanity, we are told, took rise, has special celebration. Mr. Andrew Lang, too, has sung 'the Ascidian tadpole, young and gay,' who 'doth Life with one bright eye survey,' and has declared that

> 'He's sensitive to grief and pain,
> Has tail and spine, and bears a brain;'

adding, by way of moral, that his descendant, man, has a habit of degenerating from his high estate, and 'reverting to the Ascidian.'

Miss Naden, writing more recently, goes further back than the 'bag of leather,' and

makes a Solomon of to-day say to his Queen of Sheba,

> 'We were a soft Amœba
> In ages past and gone,'

till the lady

> 'incurred the odium
> Of fissure and divorce,'

and then, 'a severed pseudopodium,' she 'strayed her lonely course.' Lord Neaves, it will be remembered, related in 'The Origin of Species' how

> 'An Ape with a pliable thumb and big brain,
> When the gift of the gab he had managed to gain,
> As a lord of creation established his reign.'

Mortimer Collins, in his 'British Birds,' adopted the notion, and turned it to a special purpose, telling how

> 'There was an Ape in the days that were earlier;
> Centuries passed, and his hair became curlier;
> Centuries more gave a turn to his wrist—
> Then he was Man, and a Positivist.'

Still more lately, Mr. Cotsford Dick, in a 'Ballade of Belief,' has made Mr. Frederic Harrison patronize the Darwinian theory,

but still adhere to his worship of humanity:

> 'Though from stock that is Simian hight,
> He may trace out a pure pedigree,
> Yet to Man will I anthems recite,
> And that's the religion for me.'

The teachings of geology have always had a great attraction for the humourists, and it is now some years since Bret Harte penned a 'geological address' to 'a pliocene skull,' which turned out to be that of one Bowers of Calaveras County, and by no means contemporaneous with Lycopodiacea or Pterodactyls. About equally long is it since the same sarcastic writer described the break-up of 'The Society upon the Stanislaus,' caused by Jones's identification of 'a lot of fossil bones' (from which Brown had reconstructed, theoretically, 'an animal that was extremely rare') as those of one of his lost mules. As Miss Naden made her scientific wooer suggest a Darwinian lay, so Bret Harte makes one of his creations sing to his sweetheart 'A Geological Madrigal,' in the course of which he promises to present her with 'a

perfect Cystedian shell' and 'a whole holocephalic fish'—if he can find them. Professor J. S. Blackie once wrote 'A Song of Geology,' in which, among other things, he pictured an ichthyosaurus, 'with a big goggle-eye and a very small brain;' and, in like manner, Miss Kendall devotes one of her lyrics to the complaint of an ichthyosaurus that his 'brain was never a patch on his eye!' It was, he says, 'shallow and simple and plain'—very different from that of Aryan man, which, to be sure,

> 'Explodes at high pressure
> Of some overwhelming demand,
> But, plied in unmerciful measure,
> 'Tis wonderful what it will stand!'

To Miss Kendall we owe, further, an introduction to an ancient trilobite, who discourses so pleasantly of his agreeable immunity from modern ills that the poetess is fain to wish that evolution had stopped at that period:

> 'For, oh, it was a happy plight,
> Of liberty and ease,
> To be a simple Trilobite
> In the Silurian seas!'

Unfortunately, science does not busy itself only with the past of Man, but concerns itself with his future, respecting which it has quite as many theories, in their way even more marvellous than those about his 'origin and progress.' To some of these fantasies the satirists were bound to draw attention; and so, while Mortimer Collins penned a caricature which he called 'Sewing Machine, Esq.,' Miss Kendall diverts us by imagining a time when humanity will consist of so many perfect mechanical contrivances:

> 'Volition vain will fret no more
> The Automatic Soul;
> Emotion then will fail to score,
> While reflex action takes the floor,
> And dominates the whole!'

The same lady, discussing the conception of a Nirvana, humorously describes what will happen when 'each individual soul will in a general soul be blended':

> 'Critics no longer we shall flee;
> Nor care how base the things they say are.
> They will be we, and we shall be
> The critics, just as much as they are.'

Finally, most people remember Mortimer Collins's delicious 'chaff' of Professor Tyndall's 'particle' theory; while, in more recent days, Mr. Cotsford Dick, in the ballade already mentioned, has given witty expression to Mr. Herbert Spencer's large satisfaction with 'Infinite Energy.'

SHAKESPEARE IN OPERA.

'THE Bard' has lately been a good deal in evidence upon our operatic boards. A new setting of 'Othello' has been introduced to us, and Gounod's 'Roméo et Juliette' has been performed in England for the first time with a French libretto. The production of Verdi's 'Otello' was an event of much artistic importance, presenting us with an Iago whose acting placed him in the front rank of interpreters of the character. Then, we have had representations of 'Macbeth' and of 'The Merry Wives of Windsor,' with elaborate musical illustrations by Sir Arthur Sullivan; those in the former case being new, while those in the latter have been in existence for the past fifteen years. All these things,

occurring so close together, must have led many to reflect upon the extent to which the works of Shakespeare have been taken as at least the foundation of operas or operatic dramas.

Shakespeare has been used very largely for both purposes. Nor is the fact surprising. There are certain of his pieces which lend themselves very readily and obviously to musical treatment. Indeed, Morris Barnett (of 'Serious Family' fame), writing on the subject some forty years ago, gave it as his opinion that Shakespeare would himself, in some instances, have been only too glad to avail himself of musical aid, if such aid had been forthcoming. He would have turned into operas more than one of the pieces which have so long figured as dramas pure and simple. Take, for example, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'The Tempest.' In each there is a supernatural, a fairy element, which undoubtedly can best be made impressive by the employment of musical accompaniments. These, happily,

have been provided for 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' by the genius of Mendelssohn, whose delicate and delicious work has stood the test of nearly half a century. As for 'The Tempest,' there is every reason to believe that its peculiar suitability for melodic treatment has been recognised and acted upon, more or less, every time that it has been brought out 'for a run.' From the time of Robert Johnson to that of Arthur Sullivan many notable musicians have been employed upon it—Lock, Purcell, Arne, and others. When Garrick revived it he endowed it with melodies written for the occasion by a composer bearing the unromantic name of Smith. And then, just forty-nine years ago, came its appearance in Italian form as a full-blown opera, written by Halévy on the basis of a 'book' provided by the adroit but irreverent Scribe. Here we have a typical instance of what Shakespeare has had to suffer from the vagaries of adapters. The story of 'The Tempest,' as told by its author, was not good enough for the French librettist, who, among

other 'improvements,' made Miranda, wrought upon by the lies of Sycorax, meditate the slaughter of her lover Ferdinand.

Other Shakespearian plays than those just mentioned have had to endure the tortures of the adapter and composer. There is, for instance, 'The Merry Wives.' That was brought out, in the first quarter of the century, as an 'opera' both at the Haymarket and at Drury Lane, where Braham, as Fenton, was good enough to introduce 'Blow, blow, thou winter wind.' 'Opera,' however, is not a term which can be applied to such mere musical adaptations as these, though it is appropriate in the case of the two works called 'Falstaff,' performed in London in 1838 and 1864 respectively. The first of these was composed by Balfe, on the foundation of a version of 'The Merry Wives' written by an Italian author. In this Lablache was the Falstaff and Mdme. Grisi the Mrs. Ford, supported by Rubini, Tamburini, and Mdlle. Albertazzi. The other 'Falstaff' was the 'Lustige Weiber von Windsor' of Nicolai,

which had first seen the light at Berlin fifteen years before, and, in its English form, is tolerably familiar to English amateurs. Of the other comedies of Shakespeare which have been turned into operas, one thinks at once of 'The Taming of the Shrew,' by Goetz, and of 'The Merchant of Venice,' which has been set to music by an Italian *maestro* of our day. Of these the former, as adapted by Herr Widmann, is fairly well known in England. For the 'Merchant' Sir Arthur Sullivan wrote music which was first heard at Manchester some eighteen years ago.

But it is to the tragedies of Shakespeare that composers generally have devoted most attention, and to 'Romeo and Juliet' in particular. This has been the prime favourite of them all, attracting men of different nationalities, and, in most cases, successfully inspiring them. Of Gounod's effort something has already been said. Of its rivals, the most popular on the Continent has been that of Zingarelli, which is only seven years short of a century old. It was written, they say, in

less than ten days, and had the distinction of being specially liked by the First Napoleon. It had been preceded, by a few years, by Steibelt's opera on the same subject, and was followed by Vaccaj's and Bellini's, both of which were heard in London in 'the thirties.' Berlioz's work is, of course, a 'dramatic symphony,' not an opera, though it has a prologue in recitative, solos, and choruses. The operatic writers showed some ingenuity in ringing the changes upon the title of the tragedy. Steibelt and Gounod both called their compositions 'Roméo et Juliette.' Zingarelli and Vaccaj, by way of variety, reversed this, and gave the *pas* to the heroine—'Giulietta e Romeo'; while Bellini, taking a broader view of the scope of the tragic tale, named his work 'I Capuletti ed i Montecchi.' Of 'Macbeth' there have been only two full operatic settings—that by Chelard, also heard in London in 'the thirties,' and that by Verdi, which is now forty-two years old. Beethoven sketched out an overture and a chorus, while Von Collin produced a whole first act for an

opera on the subject of 'Macbeth.' Meanwhile, three English composers had preceded Sir Arthur Sullivan in supplying incidental music for representations of the tragedy—Matthew Lock, Eccles, and Leveridge—the first of these for a production which, under the auspices of Sir William Davenant, had the character of an opera rather than of a drama. It was 'dressed,' as Downes, the prompter, tells us,

> 'in all its finery, as new clothes, new scenes, machines, as flying for the witches, with all the singing and dancing in it . . . it being all excellently performed, being in the nature of an Opera.'

Here, again, the poor bard fared badly at the hands of his adapter, who was much less respectful in his treatment of the text than Boito, for example, has shown himself in his version of 'Othello.' There we get much that is genuinely Shakespearean. The 'Otello' of Rossini may be said to have been permanently displaced by that of Verdi, which is certainly the more powerfully dramatic. The 'Hamlet' of M. Ambroise Thomas we all know, having heard Mr. Santley and

Mdme. Nilsson in it; let us hope that, some day, English amateurs may have the pleasure of making acquaintance with the 'Hamlet' which Signor Boito adapted and Signor Faccio composed — a combination which must surely have been productive of good results.

WIT IN QUOTATION.

THERE is, perhaps, no phase of wit more agreeable to those who understand it, than that which consists in *à propos* quotation. It is, of course, thrown away upon those who have little or no literary culture. Obviously, it is of no use citing a passage if the person to whom it is cited has never met with it before. A quotation which is not comprehended is apt to confuse, and even to annoy, rather than impress. People, it may be said in general terms, do not altogether care for the wit which they are unable to fathom. Not only do they dislike being reminded of their unacquaintance with the *belles lettres*, but they have a kind of suspicion that they are being laughed at.

Probably this is very far from the intention, but the unpleasant idea is entertained. And, no doubt, it is genuinely irritating to find other people amused by a quotation which conveys no meaning to one's own intelligence. On the other hand, the very fact that a quotation is caviare to the general enhances its charm for those who can recognise the happiness of the application. For many, there is nothing more delightful than the wit which lurks in the reproduction of some line or lines by a classic or a modern author.

The least acceptable, certainly, of all witty quotation is that which is made from the pages of the Bible. I do not say that the citation is not sometimes amusing in its way. Jekyll, for example, made a lucky hit when, hearing that a stupid person had gone to Greece, he recalled the phrase: 'To the Greeks, foolishness.' And Mr. Trevelyan tells of Macaulay, when a child, a story which one may be permitted to reproduce. The future historian, who appears to have been

much exercised by the threats and terrors of the law, had a little plot of ground at the back of his father's house, marked out as his own by a row of oyster shells. These shells a maid-servant one day threw away as rubbish : whereupon the boy went straight to the drawing-room, where his mother was receiving visitors, and solemnly observed : 'Cursed be Sally ; for it is written, "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark."' Here, of course, the fun was unconscious and unintended. Where it is both intended and conscious there is, unquestionably, the risk of offending the susceptibilities of those who hold, very rightly, that the text of Scripture ought not to be applied to the purposes of wit. Moreover, there is the feeling that, in most cases, the witty application of Biblical passages is not a very difficult operation. It is, indeed, so easily performed that, even on that ground alone, it cannot afford much pleasure.

Quotation from the Greek and Latin, whether it be in the form of poetry or

proverb, or mere conventional expression, is, it will be admitted, open to the objection above-named—it is apt to be unintelligible, and, therefore, so far a failure. There are, however, a few phrases which the least cultivated must recognise when used. Thus, when Jekyll, by dining with the judges instead of at Lansdowne House, escaped the falling of a ceiling there, he described the affair by saying that he had been asked to *Ruat cœlum*, but had dined with *Fiat justitia.* Dr. Donaldson, again, made a truly obvious *bon mot* when, requested to explain what a 'sound divine' was, he replied that he was *vox et præterea nihil.* Of Keller, the lawyer, we read that he and some friends were supping one evening at a friend's when it was announced that the lady of the house had just added to the population. It was proposed that the party should adjourn to an hotel opposite. 'Oh, certainly,' said Keller—'*pro re natâ.*' This, again, is obvious to the slenderest classic. Other recorded *mots* are not so readily discerned

by the 'vulgar,' and are, therefore, no doubt, all the more dear to the educated. Take, for instance, Sydney Smith's picture of a dinner at Longman's, with Rees, his partner, carving—*plerumque secat res.* Note, too, the Canon's suggestion for a motto for Bishop Burgess, whose brother was famous for his sauces—*Gravi jamdudum saucia curâ.* One may recall, by the way, the translation proposed by the Canon's brother, 'Bobus,' for the motto, *Libertas sub rege pio*—'The pious king has got liberty under!'

Luttrell is responsible for one very neat classical quotation. Moore was telling him of an old lady who, he thought, was crying at one of his songs, but who was, it seemed, only putting up her hands to settle her spectacles. 'Ah,' said Luttrell, 'you thought it was *nocte pluit totâ*, instead of which it was only *redeunt spectacula.*' Not less neat was Jekyll's remark when he heard that Logier taught thorough-bass in three lessons. He said it quite contradicted the old saying, *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus.* One of the

cleverest quotations ever made was probably that which was applied to a man named Park, who was a very regular church-goer, and was accordingly nicknamed, after Horace, *Parcus deorum cultor*. Horace, again, suggested to Sir George Rose a truly charming compliment. Sir George had met his old friend, Archdeacon Robinson, walking deep in thought in the neighbourhood of the Temple, and had asked him the subject of his reverie. 'Oh,' said the Archdeacon, 'I was *nescio quid meditans nugarum*.' 'But then,' said Sir George, 'with you, dear friend, it is always in the *Via sacra*.' It would be easy to multiply such examples. Curran, of course, would furnish several, and of other Irish lawyers some clever *mots* are recorded, but these would require rather more explanatory detail than I have space for.

Shakespeare has naturally been largely drawn upon by the wits. As we all know, Sydney Smith, when asked for a motto for a dog called Spot, went of necessity to 'Macbeth,' and produced 'Out, damned

Spot!' As a motto for a chapter on 'Crows and Rooks,' James Smith, just as inevitably, proposed 'The *cause*, my soul, the *cause!*' Most people remember Thackeray's comment on a clever man who was remarkably fond of beer—'Take him for half-and-half, we shall not look upon his like again.' But perhaps the two happiest quotations ever made from Shakespeare were the work of John Hamilton Reynolds, who remarked of some beef that he was eating that it would have been very good indeed if 'damned custom had not *brazed* it so.' It was Reynolds, also, who represented himself as taking leave of a hostess 'under the shade of melancholy *bows*.' Luttrell, speaking of Daniel O'Connell, made a happy adaptation from Dryden:

> 'Through all the compass of the notes he ran,
> The diapason closing full in *Dan*.'

A line by Pope suggested to Charles Lamb one of the most admirable of his jokes. Crabb Robinson was speaking to him about the first brief he had received. 'Did you not exclaim,' said Lamb, '"Thou great first

cause, least understood"?' Brindal, the actor, slightly altering two lines of Pope, made them apply amusingly to Mrs. Nisbett:

> 'If to her share some female errors fall,
> Look in her face—and you'll *believe* them all.'

But probably the most audacious quotation ever attempted was that which greeted Lord (then Mr.) Tennyson when he appeared, with locks dishevelled, in the Oxford Theatre, to receive the degree of D.C.L.—'Did your mother call you early, dear?'

Much might be said of the part played by witty quotation in the annals of Parliament. A famous instance of the kind was O'Connell's reference to the 'Derby Dilly, carrying six insides.' This is not likely to be forgotten. For sheer readiness, however, it would be difficult to surpass Peel's sly suggestion, after Shiel had several times begun a sentence with the word 'Necessity'—'is not *always* the mother of invention.' That was an 'impromptu' indeed.

WIT IN ALLUSION.

IF wit can be displayed in a happy quotation, it can be exhibited, even more notably, in an apt allusion. Quotation, no doubt, has the more obvious and more general effect; it is the more readily detected, and, therefore, the more readily approved. But that, possibly, is the very reason why allusion is, to those who can appreciate its force, the more acceptable. It is the more flattering to our vanity. There are those to whom quotation and allusion are alike unintelligible; and therein lies one of the dangers, indeed the greatest danger, of allusiveness. It is open to misconception and misunderstanding. But for those to whom a clever allusion is palpable, how enjoyable it is! how much

more delightful even than the *à propos* citation —how considerably more charming even than the apposite anecdote! There is something about the very slyness of a successful allusion which gratifies those who can detect it. It steals suddenly upon the senses, and excites instant inward laughter. It does not arouse the loud cachinnation that follows the more marked and obvious joke. The reader or listener is titillated rather than shaken, tickled rather than smitten under the ribs.

To the range of allusion there is, of course, no limit. All that is asked of it is that it shall be pointed and to the purpose. If it has those qualities, its extensive view may stretch, like Dr. Johnson's 'observation,' from China to Peru. And it is, perhaps, inevitable, in respect of the universal study of the sacred volume, that a certain amount of the most impressive allusion should be to matters Scriptural. It is not, however, inevitable that such references should be indecorous. There was no great harm done, for example, when, hearing that a certain

person had crossed the Channel in order to evade his creditors, Selwyn remarked that it was a pass-over which would not be relished by the Jews. Nor, again, can Jekyll be said to have sinned very grievously against good taste when he declared that the farther he went West the more convinced he was that the wise men came from the East. Both these *mots* have a Biblical flavour, but it is not too pronounced. Then, again, there is Sydney Smith's humorous remark, when Mrs. Marcet expressed her admiration of a ham of his—'Oh, our hams are the only true hams; yours are Shems and Japhets.' That, surely is innocent enough. Burns and Samuel Beazley are also credited with Scriptural allusions which may at least be regarded with indulgence. Beazley's was in reply to the suggestion that a melancholy letter he had written shortly before his decease was 'like the first chapter of Jeremiah.' 'You are mistaken,' he said sadly, but admirably; 'it is the last chapter of Samuel.' Burns once gave as a toast 'The last verse of the

last chapter of the last Book of Kings,' and it was sagely surmised that the reference boded no friendliness to the monarchy. But the verse speaks of 'a continual allowance given him of the King,' and the poet may possibly have had a pension in his mind's eye.

There can be no objection, at any rate, to historical allusion, and of that, of course, there has been plenty. Theodore Hook, in all probability, was not much of a student of the past, and there is certainly a little haziness about his recorded reference to an old English worthy. Hogg, the poet, had inquired in company, 'What is mother-of-pearl?' to which Hook replied that he 'didn't know, unless it was the Venerable Bede.' This is not so clear as might be wished, but it will 'repay perusal.' Talleyrand is credited with some of the 'most unkindest cuts' of which allusion of this sort could be susceptible. It was he who said of the members of the French Academy that it was possible that they might some day do something remarkable, because a flock of geese had once

saved the capitol of Rome ; a jest which may well be bracketed with Hannay's lines—equally historical in basis—upon a Radical reformer :

> 'Tomkins will clear the land, they say,
> Of every foul abuse ;
> So chimneys in the olden time
> Were cleansèd by a goose.'

Again, it was Talleyrand who, rallied by Louis XVIII. on his desire to leave Paris as soon as Mdme. Talleyrand had entered it, retorted, 'Yes, your Majesty, it is my 20th of March;' a suggestion which must have been as unpalatable to the monarch as the same wit's brutal response to Charles X.'s assertion that there was no middle course between the throne and the scaffold—'Your Majesty forgets the post-chaise.'

Literary allusion has naturally flourished among literary people. Wit is apt to be of the shop, shoppy ; and men of letters have been no exception to the rule. It was Charles Lamb who, invited to dinner, and told that there would be a hare,

promptly asked, 'And many friends?' in happy recollection of the familiar fable. Again, it was Sydney Smith who suggested to a young lady who disliked gravy, that they should 'swear an eternal friendship,' though probably the maiden did not recognise the reference to the passage in 'The Rovers.' Jekyll, who was not a literary man, certainly made a literary, albeit an obscure, allusion when he hinted, concerning the author of a book on Rome, that his room (Rome!) was better than his company. 'Locke on the Human Understanding' has, in its time, been made the foundation of a couple of *jeux de mots* not particularly brilliant. One Dr. Drake, we are told, objected to close glass bookcases, because he never could stand a 'lock on the human understanding.' Similarly the Earl of Buchan, putting his head beneath the lock of a door, delivered himself of the identical witticism, which was very properly crushed by Erskine's observation that what he saw was 'rather a poor edition' of the work. And, talking of pro-

fessional allusion, how guilty have the clever lawyers been in this respect! How they have revelled in jests based upon the jargon of the courts! Old Lord Norbury hoped, concerning a writ which had been swallowed, that it had not been made 'returnable' to his court; while Sir George Rose, on another occasion, referring to the fact that he had daily prayers at home, trusted that 'service at the house would be deemed good service.'

In discussing the various phases of allusive wit, one must not forget the proverbial, illustrated by Macaulay's famous exclamation of 'All my eye and Hetty Martineau!' or the personal, as embodied in Holmes's answer to the haberdasher and M.P., who asked if he could get 'a pair' that evening: 'Of what? Gloves or stockings?' But, as I have said, the empire of allusion is boundless; it extends in all directions, and every one can bear sway in it who has adequate knowledge and sufficient perception of the witty.

TWO OLD FRIENDS.

EVERYBODY has heard of Mrs. Grundy. She may be described as 'our neighbours' personified; as an incarnation of 'the world' in general, or, at any rate, of the spirit of 'respectability' in the world. For long she has been the unseen but all-powerful arbiter of manners and morals. 'What will Mrs. Grundy say?' has been the speech or thought of millions at many crises of their lives. Thousands have ruled their conduct wholly by what they have believed to be her unwritten but unmistakable laws. Never was there so potent a deterrent. 'Many,' says Mr. Frederick Locker, 'are afraid of God, and more of Mrs. Grundy.' An important personage, truly; yet how came she to ac-

quire all this vogue and this value? To paraphrase a familiar query, 'Who gave her that name?' Whence came she? Who first uttered the inquiry, fraught with so much curiosity, not to say anxiety: 'What will Mrs. Grundy say?'

It is a curious testimony to the impression made on a people by the acting and printed drama, that the incarnation and personification of the spirit of respectability should owe its christening and its popularity to a comedy-drama, and to one, moreover, which long ago dropped out of the everyday theatrical repertory. 'What will Mrs. Grundy say?' was first asked by one of the *personæ* in 'Speed the Plough,' a play by Thomas Morton (father of Mr. John Maddison Morton), which dates from the last years of the last century. The speaker was Dame Ashfield, wife of Farmer Ashfield—these two supplying the comic relief in a piece of which the main interest is melodramatic. The worthy couple pervade the drama, which they open with the conversation that has made Mrs. Grundy prac-

tically immortal. This good woman is the wife of a farmer in the same locality as that inhabited by the Ashfields, and has aroused the jealousy of Dame Ashfield, because of her superior prosperity. 'Farmer Grundy's wheat brought five shillings a quarter more than ours did,' says the Dame in the dialogue I refer to; adding that Dame Grundy's butter was 'the crack of the market.' Farmer Ashfield does not share his wife's envy of the Grundys' good fortune, and evidently has grown tired of the constant iteration of their name. 'Be quiet, wool ye,' cries the excellent agriculturist; 'always ding, dinging Dame Grundy into my ears. "What will Mrs. Grundy zay?" "What will Mrs. Grundy think?" Can't thee be quiet, let me aloane, and behave thyself pratty?' The Dame protests, of course, that she does *not* envy Mrs. Grundy. 'Why dan't thee letten her aloane, then? I do verily think when thee goest to t'other world, the vurst question thee'll ax 'll be if Mrs. Grundy's there.'

But the farmer's taunts and protests are of

no avail. His better hal has the Grundys on the brain. 'Oh, Tummus,' she cries, 'had you seen how Mrs. Grundy looked'—when Dame Ashfield was presented with a letter by 'a handsome young gentleman, dressed all in lace.' When the Dame hears that her former servant Nelly has married a baronet, her first thought and utterance is: 'I wonder, Tummas, what Mrs. Grundy will say?' And again, when she fears that her daughter has formed an unfortunate attachment — 'If shame should come to the poor child, I say, Tummus, what would Mrs. Grundy say then?' *En revanche*, the news that her daughter is to be married to an aristocratic and wealthy lover at once suggests to her the opportunity of triumphing over Mrs. Grundy. 'When we come out of church, Mrs. Grundy will be standing about there. . . . Then I will just look at her in this manner. . . . Then, with a kind of half-curtsey, I shall——' Here she is interrupted. Even the Misses Grundy are included in the Dame's resentment. She opines, concerning a young man

in the play, that 'the Miss Grundys, genteel as they think themselves, would be glad to snap at him.'

It is easy to understand that a strongly-marked character like the Dame's, fitted with a sort of oft-recurring catch-phrase, would have great effect upon the minds of contemporary playgoers and readers, and bring about, in time, a wider and more philosophical application of the question: 'What will Mrs. Grundy say?' It so happens that we owe to another play by Thomas Morton the creation of yet another fictitious personage, not by any means so largely or familiarly known as Mrs. Grundy, and yet very often mentioned by us in public and in private talk. I refer to that notable man, Sir Hubert Stanley, whose 'approbation' has for so many years been regarded as 'praise indeed.' Who was Sir Hubert, and why should his approval be so peculiarly welcome?

A reference to the source of the saying reveals the answer to these queries. Sir Hubert Stanley is one of the characters in 'A

Cure for the Heartache,' a comedy brought out by Morton within a year or two of the production of 'Speed the Plough.' This is the play in which Old and Young Rapid figure : 'good characters,' Genest pronounced them ; but he thought the rest of the piece 'poor stuff.' It is hardly that, however ; while the extent to which the work gratified the playgoers of the time is proved by the survival of Sir Hubert in our common speech. Dame Ashfield may be taken as a type of the farmer's wife of the period ; Sir Hubert is a type of the country gentleman of the time. 'I've been,' he says, 'the patriarch of my tribe—the scourge of the aggressor—the protector of the injur'd.' His hospitality is a by-word and a glory. The servant of the *nouveau riche* in the piece (old Vortex) says : 'Really the Baronet's house is horrid vulgar. . . . I peep'd through my glass into the old hall, and beheld fifty paupers at dinner, such wretches, and the Baronet himself walking round the table to see them properly fed.'

When Heartley warns Sir Hubert that he is going beyond his income, the squire admits that his head has long acknowledged the truth of his steward's arithmetic; 'but my head could never teach my heart.' Alas! it is this very open-handedness which, by crippling his resources, has compelled him to mortgage his estate. A large sum has been advanced, and the position of the baronet is critical. At length the mortgagee (Old Rapid) is persuaded by Vortex to foreclose; and Vortex, who hates Sir Hubert, makes an offer for the property; when, by the agency of Young Rapid, it is discovered that Vortex has acquired his wealth dishonestly. It belongs in reality to Ellen Vortex, his niece, who is ready to bestow her hand and fortune upon Charles Stanley, 'of virtuous father virtuous son.' It is immediately after young Rapid has effected this *coup* that Sir Hubert, turning to him, says: 'Mr. Rapid, by asserting your character as a man of honour you command my praise; for bestowing happiness upon my dear

Charles, receive an old man's blessing.' And it is in reply to this benignant declaration that young Rapid makes the sententious and now famous observation : ' Approbation from Sir Hubert Stanley is praise indeed.'

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