
LIBRARY
ADCTUM PRETIOSA FACIT
Presented in 1878

DREAMS AND REVERIES

OF

A QUIET MAN;

CONSISTING OF

THE LITTLE GENIUS,

AND

OTHER ESSAYS.

By one of the Editors of the New-York Mirror.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

NEW YORK:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY J. & J. HARPER,
NO. 82 CLIFF STREET,
AND FOR SALE BY THE PRINCIPAL BOOKSELLERS THROUGHOUT
THE UNITED STATES.

1832.

CONTENTS.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

THE POOR AUTHOR.

I WAS once, during a walk out of town, much struck with the appearance of an odd looking vagabond of a fellow. He was a stout, prim, middle aged, miserably dressed, broken down gentleman, who wore an air of deplorable drollery and ludicrous want entirely irresistable. His coat had once been of handsome black cloth, but its charms had vanished "like fairy gifts fading away"—many winters had scattered their snows upon the shoulder blades and elbows, from the pinnacles of the latter of which peeped something not *very* white, concerning which I had my own peculiar calculation. The collar, (I mean of his coat, for that of his shirt had long since retired to the dignity of private life, beneath the complicated folds of his slovenly cravat,) by, long acquaintance with the rim of a hat, venerable on account of its antiquity, had assumed a gloss which was by no means the gloss of novelty, and a dark brown waistcoat was buttoned carelessly around a body that seemed emptier than the head upon which it had depended for support. His pantaloons,

"Weak, but intrepid—sad, but unsubdued,"

were shrivelled tightly over a brace of spindle shanks, withered, weary, and forlorn. Uncleaned pumps covered every part of his feet but the toes, which came forth to enjoy the fresh summer breezes, shoes and stockings to the contrary notwithstanding. A pair of tattered white kid gloves faintly fluttered about his hands,

so that it was difficult immediately to discover whether the glove held the hand or the hand the glove.

But it was not the dress which gained him so many broad stares and oblique glances, for our city annually receives a great increase of literary inhabitants, but the air—the "*Je ne sais quoi*"—the nameless something—dignity in rags, and self-importance with holes at the elbow. It was the quintessence of drollery which sat upon his thin, smirking lip—which was visible on his crooked, copper tinged, and snuff bedaubed organ of smelling, and existed in the small eyes of piercing gray.

As I love to study human nature in person, and have always believed the world was the best book to read, I formed a determination to become acquainted with him of the laughable aspect, and proceeded to act in conformity thereto. I was striving to hit upon some plausible method of entering into conversation with him, when fate being in a singularly good humor, took it into her whimsical head to favor my design. As I walked near the termination of the pavement, where the multitude were by no means so numerous, and their place was supplied by the warbling birds, the bleating lambs, and all those sounds which constitute the melody of country breezes, with a slight inclination of his pericranium he turned toward me and spoke.

"Pray, sir, can you favor me with the hour?"

"It is four o'clock," answered I, "I believe—but am not sure; walk on with me, and we will inquire of yonder gentleman."

"You are excessively good," said he, with a smile, which threw much more expression into his face—"I am afraid I give you an infinite degree of trouble; you are enjoying rural felicity, poetically correct—pray, do not let me interrupt you."

As he spoke the clock struck.

"Fortune favors the deserving," I remarked, as a continuation of the converse so happily commenced.

He spoke with more familiarity—"Upon my honor, sir, you are very complimentary: if every body thought of me as you do, or at least, if they thought as well of my productions, I flatter myself I should have had a watch for myself."

"I'll warrant," I replied, "many have the means of

ascertaining time better than yourself, who know not how to use it half so well."

"Sir," said he, with a bow, "if you will buckle fortune to my back—but you don't flatter me—no, no. My excellent, good friend, you have much more penetration than people in general. Sir, I have been abused—vilely, wretchedly, da——, but I won't swear—I don't follow the fashions so much as to make a fool of myself; but on the honor of a perfect gentleman, I do assure you, sir, I have been very strangely used, and abused too."

"I have no doubt, sir," observed I, "but that your biography would be interesting."

"My biography—you've hit the mark; I wish I had a biographer—a Dunlap, a Boswell, a Virgil, or a Homer—he should begin his book with the line

'Multum ille et terris, jactatus et alto,
Vi superum.'

I have been a very football, sir, for the gods to play with."

"Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?"

said I, willing to humor the pedantry which I already began to discover, "but the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."

"A-ha! sir," he exclaimed, with a gentle squeeze of my hand. "I know what you are—some kindred spirit—one of those kind, high beings who come upon this world 'like angel visits, few and far between.' I see it, sir, in your eye," continued he, with a gesture that from the stage, would have convulsed the audience.

"I see it in your eye—charity, benevolence, affection, philosophy, and science. Ah! my dear sir, I know you are better than the rest of mankind; you've done a great deal of good in the world, and will do a great deal more—

'You portioned maids—apprenticed orphans blest—
The old who labor, and the young who rest;
Is there a contest? enter but your door,
Balked are the courts, and contest is no more;
Despairing quacks, with curses fled the place,
And vile attornies, now an useless race.'

"Sir?" ejaculated I, not very well pleased with this last slash at my beloved profession—

—"Or, perhaps," continued he with increased rapidity of speech, "you are a lawyer, my dear sir,—the grand path to political glory—sweet occupation; to put out the strong arm, and save drowning innocence; to hurl the thunderbolt of eloquence against proud and wealthy oppression; to weave a charm of safety around defenceless beauty; and catch clumsy, and otherwise unconquerable, power in your mazy net of law—Pray, sir, can you lend me a shilling?"

I handed him the money, and he turned to be off, when I seized him by the arm, and asked him where he was going. He laid one hand upon his receptacle for food, and with the other pointed to a tavern, before which hung the sign, "Entertainment for Man and Horse."

"My dinner—my dinner—my dinner!" said he, "I haven't eaten a particle these three weeks; poverty and poetry, sir, go arm in arm, sworn friends and companions, through this vale of tears; one starves the body, and the other rarifies the soul—my way has been rough and rugged as the Rockaway turnpike road, and misfortune jerks me along as if life went upon badly made cog wheels. Will you be so kind as to lend me another shilling? I want a dinner for once in my life—beef steaks and onions, butter, gravy, and potatoes—

'*Hæc olim meminisse juvabit.*'

It will be a grand era in my poetical career."

There was something so exquisitely whimsical in the fellow's demeanor, that I determined to spend the afternoon in his company. I never shall forget the look and squeeze which he bestowed upon me when I proposed that we should adjourn to the inn, and dine together at my expense. He seized hold of my hand, and drew himself up erect in all the enthusiasm of poetic madness—

"Sir," said he, informing me that he could not speak, with a rapidity of pronunciation which reminded me of a horse running away—"Sir, Mr. a—a—a—my dear, dear friend—my tongue falters—I can't speak—I am

dumb—gratitude has shut up the sluices of my heart; and the cataract of my oratorial powers is dried up—*pro tem.* But it will come directly—stop till I get into the house—

'*Arma virumque cano.*'

that is to say, I'll tell you my history; but just at this moment," continued he, smacking his lips, and his little eyes dilating with the eager anticipation of epicurean delights yet to come—"just at this crisis,

'Oh! guide me from this horrid scene,
These high arched walks, and alleys green',

then with a slight pause and smile,

"'Let's run the race—he be the winner
Who gets there first, and eats his dinner.'"

As he spoke, he pulled me forcibly by the arm, and I found myself in a neat, clean room, with the happy poet fastened close to my side.

Though no spirit is so lofty but that starvation can bend it, yet in the tranquillity of our replenished bodies we are always wicked enough to enjoy the extravagant emotions which agitate authors and other hungry individuals, when, by any strange variety of life, they happen to get a good dinner.

My friend, who had delighted me with his volubility of speech, no sooner perceived that the preparations were ended, than he fell upon his defenceless prize like a lion on his prey. Poetry and prose, fanciful quotations and lofty ideas, for a time, were banished from his busy brain. Our conversation, the whole burthen of which had at first been borne by him, was now lost in the superior fascinations of beef steak and onions; and a few unintelligible monosyllables, uttered from a mouth crammed full of various articles, were the only attempts made towards an interchange of soul.

The enthusiasm of his attack began at length to abate, and the fire of anticipated delight to give way to an expression less anxious and fluctuating. The discomfited steak lay before him mangled and in ruins.

The onions shed a fainter perfume from the half cleared dish—and the potatoes were done in the strictest sense of the word. The sated author threw himself back in his chair, and exclaimed, "The deed is done—the dinner is eaten—*Fidus Achates*—my beloved friend—I feel I know not how—A strange combination of various sensations gives me a new confidence to brave the storms of life, and to look back upon the dangers already passed. And now, that I am comparatively composed, and have time to think, will you do me the favor to answer me, what in the name of all that's beautiful in prose, poetry, or real life, induced you to give this strange conclusion to a hungry day?"

"Because," replied I, "your face pleased me more than all the others which I saw—there was talent and taste in your very dress."

"Ah, come," said he, casting a slight glance upon his well worn garments, "that won't do—I am perfectly aware that my external appearance is by no means prepossessing, but what of that? 'She must marry *me* and not my clothes.' I cannot help it, if fate, in her unequal distribution of mortal effects, gives you a pair of breeches whose use is to come—and me one whose value has passed—I don't feel ashamed of what a superior power has done for me. It is the mark of merit to be poor. Homer was poor—Johnson was poor—and I am poor. Beside, a rich man cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven—that's flat."

"If poverty," said I, "is a passport through the happy gates, then——"

"Then," interrupted he, "I should have been there as soon as I commenced my literary life, for though self praise is no recommendation, I flatter myself I am as poor as any man in New York, and what's more, I confess it—I am proud of it"—

"*After* dinner," said I.

"O you're a wag—but rich or poor, I've had my hopes and disappointments as well as the rest of mankind. Sunshine and shadow have chased each other over my path—and now, by your kindness, I am warming myself in the rays of benevolence and friendship. Ah, it is a treat for me, I do assure you, to find the true feeling of generosity—the real genuine virtue cleansed

from the ore of vanity and ostentation, and so unlike the pompous charity of the common world,

> 'Not to the skies in useless columns tost,
> Or in proud falls magnificently lost,
> But clear and artless, pouring through the plain,
> Health to the sick and solace to the swain.'

"You are the man of my mind, and to you I will speak my sorrows, although my parched lips almost refuse them utterance"—And he cast a sidelong glance at an empty bottle which stood near us on a table. I took the hint, and called for wine. He swallowed a glass full, smacking his lips, and assuming a serious and important air, thus commenced the narrative of his literary horrors.

"Sir, my name is William Lackwit, Esquire. I am an author whose greatest failure has been in not getting his works into notice, but a fatal oblivion seemed always to ingulf my productions into its Lethean stream—and fate, I do sincerely believe, has been trying upon me some philosophical experiment, to see how many privations human nature could bear. I have been tossed about, sir, like a juggler's ball—and in all the poetical labyrinths in which I have been lost, memory cannot behold—

> One solitary resting place,
> Nor bring me back one branch of grace.

"I was cast upon the world when about seventeen years of age, and possessing a vast share of vanity, which, by the bye, is the staff of an author's life, I determined to write for a living. Animated by the fame of great men who had lived before me, I plunged deeply into literary madness, and fell a victim to the present prevailing epidemic, the *cacoethes scribendi*, which is now sweeping many young gentlemen from professional existence. I wrote for the newspapers, but made no noise—heard no approbation—and 'last but not least,' received no pay. Sometimes, perchance, a very particularly complaisant friend would laud the little offsprings of my pen; but it did not gain me bread and butter, and could not satisfy the cravings of hungry na-

ture. With a full heart and an empty stomach, I relinquished my attempt, and bade farewell to my sweet lyre, in a manner that, I thought, could not fail of attracting universal sympathy. I walked out the next morning, expecting to meet many a softened heart and friendly hand, but the bell man heaved his unaltered cry as he did the day before; the carts rattled along with their usual thundering rapidity; the busy crowd shuffled by me as if I were not in existence; and the sun shone upon the earth, and the changing clouds floated through the air, exactly as they were wont to do before I determined to shed no more music upon an unfeeling world.

"At length I recovered from my disappointment, and issued a little paper of my own; but it dropped dead from the press, as silently as falls the unnoticed flake of snow: no buzz of admiration followed me as I went; no pretty black eyed girl whispered '*that's he*, as I passed; and if any applause was elicited by my effort, it was so still, and so slyly managed, that one would scarcely have supposed it existed.

"Something must be done, thought I—while the great reward of literary fame played far off before my imagination, a glorious prize, to reach which, no exertion would be too great—I walked to my little room, where a remnant of my family's possessions enabled me to keep my chin above the ocean of life. In the solitary silence of my tattered and ill furnished apartment, I sat down upon a broken bench, and lost myself in 'rumination sad' as to what course I should next pursue. Suddenly, and like a flash of lightning, an idea struck me with almost force enough to knock me down—I'll write a novel—I'll take the public whether they will or not—'*fortuna favet integros*,'—and if fame won't come to me, I'll go to fame. I don't wonder that I did not succeed before. The public want something sublime, and I'll give it to them by wholesale. I'll come upon them by surprise; I'll combine the beauties of Addison with the satire of Swift, Goldsmith's sweetness and Pope's fire. I'll have darkness and storm, battle, treachery, murder, thunder and lightning: It *must* take. The author of a novel like this will make an immense fortune. Old ivy grown castles, moonlight landscapes, Spanish feathers, and Italian serenades

floated in brilliant confusion through my enamoured fancy. Daggers and despair, eloquence, passion, and fire, mingled in a delightful cloud of imagination, and heaved and changed in the dim and dreary distance like a magnificent vision of enchantment, which only wanted the breath of my genius to fan it into shape and exquisite beauty.

"At it I went, 'tooth and nail,' and watched over my young offspring with as much fondness as the mother bends over the cradle that contains her only boy. Already I began to hold up my head and think how differently people would look at me if they only knew who I was, and what I was about to do. The splendid dresses, the ten dollar beaver hats turned upside down in a basin of water, the handsome canes, and polished Wellington boots, which daily obtruded themselves upon my eager sight, as if in mockery of my miserable apparel, I began to look upon as objects already my own. Was I thirsty and hungry while musing on the variety of macaronies and cream tarts, cocoa nut cakes, and coffee, in a confectioner's shop? 'Only wait,' thought I to myself, 'only wait till I get out my new novel.' Was my coat thread bare and my hat old, only wait for my new novel. Did a coach and four dash by me, footman taking his ease behind, and driver with new hat and white top boots? Drive away coachee, thought I, drive away, but only wait for my new novel. Extreme impatience kept me on pins and needles till my work was done. 'Twas indeed 'a consummation devoutly to be wished.' A kind of restless anticipation kept me in continual excitement till the developement of my greatness, or what was the same thing, the publication of my work.

At length it was finished, and off it went, two volumes duodecimo, with a modest blue cover, and its name on the back. Long enough, thought I, have I labored in obscurity, but now——I pulled up my collar (it was a long time ago) and I walked majestically along in all the pride of greatness incog.

Alas! alas! 'twas but a dagger to the mind. It dazzled for a moment before my enraptured sight, and left me again to descend into the nothingness from which, in fancy, I had risen. Although it was printed

and published, with a preface artfully acknowledging it to be unworthy public patronage; although I wrote a puff myself—(do you know what a puff is?) "an author's opinion of his own works expressed in a daily paper by himself or friends." I answered—"Right," continued he, "although I wrote a puff myself, informing the public that rumors were afloat that the new novel which created such a sensation both abroad and at home, was from the well known pen of the celebrated William Lackwit, esq. poet, editor, orator, and author in general. Although I paid the editor of one of our most fashionable evening papers six shillings for reading it himself, and six and sixpence for recommending it to the perusal of his subscribers, "*miserabile dictu*'—it 'went dead,' as the Irishman says; a newspaper squib, a little pop gun of a thing, first brought it into disrepute, and a few would-be critics ridiculed it to death. Herbert and Rogers, merchant tailors, lost a customer, and I a fortune, and my unhappy book was used to carry greasy sausages and bad butter to the illiterate herd who took more care of their stomachs than of their heads, and liked meat better than mind. Oh! that ever I was an author: I have chased the rainbow reputation over crag and cliff. I have waded through rivers of distress, and braved storms of poverty and scorn, to get one grasp at the beautiful vision; and though I see it yet, as lovely and as bright as ever, yet still it is as cheating and still as far from my reach. My next trial was of a higher nature, which, after we have again partaken of your excellent Maderia, I will relate to you—"

My eccentric companion proceeded in his story, gathering new animation as he recapitulated the battles which he had fought, and the victories which he might have won.

"For a long time, sir, after the melancholy catastrophe of my novel, I was completely discouraged. I felt an indifference toward the world. I had soared so high upon the wings of hope that the fall almost broke my heart; but soon the disappointment began to lose its bitterness, and I received a consolation (which, wicked as it was, I could not repress,) in discovering that hundreds of unsuccessful authors were exactly in my con-

dition: then I remembered, that as great fame, once acquired, would be everlasting, I could not expect to acquire it without immense trouble and assiduous application. Gradually I shook off the hateful fetters of gloomy despair, and, like some deluded slave to a false woman's charms, I allowed cheating hope to lead me captive again. My brain began to effervesce with the exuberance of imagination, and gave promise of something more exquisite still. Novel writing was out of the question. I had manufactured one, and if the public did not like it, they might let it alone; and so they did —the more shame for them.

"I felt proud as Lucifer in my defeat, and was resolved never to compliment with another the world who had used my last so villainously. No, thought I, I'll write a play, and give Shakspeare and Otway a little rest. If I cannot get in the great temple one way, I'll try another; and, with increasing avidity, I went at it again. It was not long before I began to entertain the idea that my mind was peculiarly adapted for dramatic writing. I was not formed to wade through the dull drudgery of novel descriptions—to expatiate upon little rivulets, tinkling among big rocks—and amorous breezes making love to sentimental green trees. In my present avocation, the azure heavens, the frowning mountain, the broad ocean, the shadowy forest, and "all that sort of thing," would fall beneath the painter's care. Skies would be manufactured to give light to my heroes, and cities would sprout up, in which they could act their adventures. My play would present a great field for triumph, and 'young, blushing Merit, and neglected Worth,' must be seen, and consequently admired. Now would the embodied visions of my fancy go to the hearts of the public through their ears, as well as their eyes, and genius would wing its sparkling way amid the thundering acclamations of thousands of admiring spectators. 'Now,' said I to myself, 'I have the eel of glory by the tail, and it shall not escape me, slippery as it is.'

"With a perseverance which elicited praise from myself, if from nobody else, I mounted my Pegasus, and jogged along this newly-discovered road to immortality. The external and common world melted from my mind when I sat down to my task, and, although it was evanes-

cent as poets' pleasures generally are, few men enjoyed more happiness than I—as the tattered trappings of my poor garret seemed dipped in the enchanting magnificence of my dreams, and I rioted in visions of white paper snow storms, and dramatic thunder and lightning. I sought every opportunity for stage effect—to have trap doors, and dungeons, unexpected assassinations, and resurrections, more unexpected still.

"My undertaking seemed very easy at first, but I soon found myself bewildered amid difficulties seriously alarming. At one time I brought a whole army of soldiers on the stage, and made them fight a prodigious battle, without discovering, till half the poor fellows were slain, that the whole affair had taken place in a lady's chamber! This was easily remedied, but I experienced infinitely more trouble with the next. I had formed a hero, in whom were concentrated all the virtues, beauties, and accomplishments of the human kind: a real Sir William Wallace—gigantic in person and mind—who never opened his lips but to speak blank verse—who did not know that there was such a person as Fear on the face of the globe, and could put a whole army to flight by just offering to draw his sword. ' It was my design artfully to lead him into the greatest extremes of danger, and then artfully to lead him out again; but in the paroxysm of enthusiasm, I at length got him into a scrape, from which neither I nor any other human power could possibly extricate him.

"His enemies, determined not to give so terrible a fellow the slightest chance of escape, had confined him in a tremendous dungeon, deep, and walled around on all sides by lofty rocks and mountains, totally impenetrable. To this dreadful abode there was only one little entrance, which was strictly guarded by a whole band of soldiers, who were ordered never to take their eyes off the door, and always to keep their guns cocked. Now here was a predicament, and I knew not what to do. The whole of the preceding was so beautifully managed, that to cut it out would be impossible. Yet there he was, poor youth, without the slenderest hope of freedom, cooped up among everlasting mountains, beneath which Atlas himself might have groaned in vain. What was I to do? He must be released. The audience

would expect it, as a common civility, that I would not murder him before their eyes. It would have been ungenteel, to a degree. At length I hit it, after having conceived almost inconceivable plans, and vainly attempted to manage ponderous ideas, which were too heavy for me to use. I proposed to introduce a ghost —a spirit, which would at once please the pit, and be a powerful friend to the imprisoned soldier.

"At the dead of the night, when he sat ruminating on the vicissitudes of life, and spouting extemporaneous blank-verse soliloquies, (at which I had spent many midnight hours,) the genius of the mountain comes down in a thunder cloud, and thus addresses the pensive hero. You will be pleased to observe the rude and natural dignity of the language, which it was a great point with me to preserve.

Genius. Hero of earth, thine eyes look red with weeping.
Hero, (*laying his hand upon his sword.*) Who says he e'er saw
Bamaloosa weep?
Gen. Nay, hold thy tongue, and shut thy wide-oped jaw:
I come to save thee, if thou wilt be saved.
Hero. I will not perish, if I help it can;
But who will cleave these cursed rocks apart,
And give me leave to leave this cursed place,
Where lizards crawl athwart my shrinking flesh,
And bull-frogs jump, and toads do leap about?
Gen. I—I can do whate'er I have a mind:
I am the genius of this lonesome place,
And I do think you might more manners have
Than thus to speak to him who is your host.
Hero. If thou art really what thou seem'st to be,
Just let me out of this infernal hole.
Oh! my dear fellow, take me hence away—
'My soul's in arms, impatient for the fray!'
Take me from deeds I've often thought upon,
Down deep in dreadful dungeons darkly done!

"The alliteration in the last line melts the tender heart of the genius: he waves his hand in the air; his cloudy throne streams thunder and lightning from every side; instantaneously a convulsion ensues; the stage becomes a scene of general conflagration; a number of small imps and little devils, fiery-breathed dragons and red-nosed salamanders, are seen sporting about in the confusion, till the whole explodes, and out walks my man through a prodigious crack in the mountain, which heals up after him, as he goes along. The consterna-

tion of the guards may be imagined, but unless I had the MS. here, I could not attempt to describe it.

"At length it was written, rehearsed, and advertised, and its name, in great capitals, stared from every brick wall and wooden fence in the city.

"Delightful anticipations of immortality began to throng upon my mind, and I could almost hear the various theatre-cries of 'bravo,' 'encore,' and 'author.' With some trouble I had prepared a very handsome speech, to be spoken when I should be called out, and practised bowing before a looking-glass with great success. Indeed, by the time the evening of representation arrived, I was prepared for every triumph fate could have in store; and I had vowed an unalterable determination not to lose my firmness of mind in the heaviest flood of prosperity that could possibly pour in upon me.

"The evening arrived—a fine, cool, moon-light night. The stars twinkled upon me as I hastened to the theatre, as if congratulating me from their lofty stations in the sky, and the most refreshing breezes played around my head, methought whispering soft nonsense in my ear. I walked with a proud step to the door, entered majestically, and took my seat modestly.

"The house was already thronged with ladies and gentlemen, with their various appendages of quizzing-glasses and bamboo canes; and frequent murmurs of impatience buzzed around, by which I felt extremely flattered. The end of my troubles seemed already at hand, and I thought fame, on her adamantine tablet, had already written 'William Lackwit, Esquire, author in general,' in letters too indelible for time itself to erase. Fear faded away in the dazzling brilliancy of that smiling multitude, and my soul floated about in its delicious element of triumphant hope, with a sensation such as arises from a good dose of exhilarating gas.

"Alas! 'twas but a dream!' I soon perceived that fortune frowned on my efforts, and had taken the most undisguised method of blasting my hopes. A diabolical influenza had for some time raged in the city, which on this very evening seemed at its height. A convulsion of coughing kept the whole audience in incessant confusion; and, with the most harrowing appre-

hensions, I listened to noises of every description, from the faint, sneeze-like effusion of some little girl's throat, to the deep-toned and far-sounding bellow of the portly alderman. Beside this, I had the pleasure to observe some of my most devoted enemies scattered, as if intentionally, through the critical pit, scowling in tenfold blackness upon the scene, and apparently waiting, in composed hatred, an opportunity to give me 'the goose.' Meditation raged high, as I observed these significant and threatening appearances, and I could scarcely have been in greater trepidation if I had been attacked with the hydrophobia itself.

"The curtain rose soon, and my first characters appeared; but, fire and fury! I did not recognise them myself.

"The play proceeded, and a scene ensued which gentlest moderation might denominate 'murder most foul.' My dear sir, you can have no idea of it. They had cut out my most beautiful sentiments. The very identical remarks which I had intended should bring the house down, were gone and 'left not a trace behind.' One recited a speech which was intended to have been spoken by another, and he spouted one that should not have been spoken at all. My finest specimens of rhetoric failed from their clumsy manner of delivery, and all my wit missed fire. Oh! if you could have seen them, like a pack of wild bulls in a garden of flowers, breaking rudely over all those delicate bushes of poetry, and trampling down the sweetest roses in the field of literature. The prettily turned expressions, which should have been carefully breathed upon the audience, with a softened voice and pensive eye, were bawled out in an unvaried, monotonous tone of voice, and a face as passionless as a barber's block. The whole play was destroyed.

"'There was nip, and snip, and cut, and slish, and slash,' till the first act ended, and then was a slight hiss. 'Cold drops of sweat stood on my trembling flesh;' but I pulled my hat fiercely over my beating brow, and, angry and desperate, prepared for the brooding storm. On my mountain scene I laid my principal dependence, and if that failed me, 'then welcome despair.' At last it came: there was the dungeon, and a man in it, with

a wig, which covered the greatest part of his real hair, and a face sublimely cut and slashed over with a piece of coal. Instead of the beautiful countenance which had gleamed upon me in my poetic vision, there was a thin, hump-backed, little fellow, with a tremendous pair of red whiskers, and a pug nose!—my fac-simile of Sir William Wallace with red whiskers and a pug nose! Sir, it threw me into one of the most violent fevers I ever had. Beside all these, 'his face was dirty and his hands unwashed;' and he proceeded to give such a bombastic flourish of his arm, and his voice rose to such a high pitch, that he was hailed with loud laughter, and shouts of 'make a bow, Johnny—make a bow,' till my head reeled in delirious despair.

"But the language and stage effect might redeem the errors of the actor, and I remained in a delightful agony for the result. Lazy time at length brought it upon the stage; but oh, ye gods! what a fall was there! As the thunder cloud and genius were floating gracefully down, one of the ropes cracked, and the enchanter of the cavern hurt his nose against the floor, notwithstanding a huge pair of pasteboard wings, which spread themselves at his shoulders. He got up, however, and went on till the explosion was to have taken place: then he waved his wand, with an air which was not intended to have been resisted; but, dreadful to relate! the crack would not open, and Bamaloosa trotted off by one of the side scenes, amid hoots of derision from every part of the house.

"The green curtain fell. A universal hiss, from 'the many headed monster of the pit,' rung heavily in my ears. I had seen my poor play murdered and damned in one night, and it was enough to quench all future hopes of literary eminence. I rushed, desperate, from the spot, not choosing to stay for the farce; and, in the confusion of unsuccessful genius, I kicked two little red headed fellows into the gutter for asking of me a check.

"In the anguish of my disappointment, I dreamed a combination of every thing horrible, to tantalize and terrify my poor, tired brain; and I arose with a head ache and a heart ache, and no very great opinion of any one in the world, but myself.

"You have convinced me that generosity has not

taken French leave of every bosom, and I shall always look back upon the moments I have spent with you as bright exceptions to those of my past life. And now," continued he, pocketing the remaining bone, putting a couple of potatoes in his bosom, and taking a long draught of wine—"and now, I trust, we are square; you have provided me a dinner, and I have treated you to 'a feast of reason and a flow of soul.' If I see you again, 'I shall remember you were bountiful;' if not, God bless you and yours." He gave me a hearty shake by the hand, and dashed from the room. I caught a glimpse of his figure as he passed the window—and saw the poor author no more.

AFFECTATION.

I AM inclined to attribute to the female sex a vast deal of affectation, which it would scarcely be just to ascribe to individuals. The decrees of fashion must be obeyed, and no individual therefore can be censured for not rendering herself an object of notice by dressing with any marked difference from the prevailing mode. It is a strange state of affairs, but it is the true one, that a young lady who would now presume to dress with simplicity and natural grace, would become an object of absolute ridicule. They laugh sometimes at the style of apparel among their grandmothers; but I am very certain the time will come when the dress which is now considered a model of elegant fashion, would set the world in a roar. Perhaps the effect upon persons unaccustomed to it might be in a measure estimated by the degree of notice which a gentleman would now attract by indulging in the same species of eccentricity. Fancy a company seated gravely together, and a youth entering with a pair of sleeves to his coat resembling two inflated balloons, and magnifying his arms into several times the dimensions of his body. Suppose the same taste which led him to extend the size of his arms, should induce him to diminish that of his waist, as

if resolved to metamorphose himself into a shape as unlike as possible that bestowed upon him by nature. Then let him decorate his ears with jewels, hang a diamond upon the centre of his forehead, and build up his hair a foot or two above his real stature. I am half afraid to be set down as a dull, silly proser, but however erroneous my ideas may be, I must candidly confess that I could never persuade myself to think any thing in the world sweeter than woman's face and form, as nature created them, to look upon every fashion which tends to distort them as something impertinent and offensive; and when I have caught myself admiring a female the most, it has invariably been when she had made the least apparent effort to excite my admiration by any affectation of charms not her own. There is to me something exceedingly repulsive in any glare and gaudiness in dress. I cannot admire a woman for that which she only put on perhaps a few hours ago, and will take off again presently. Beside, I think a woman of delicate feeling and real good sense always betrays them by a kind of chasteness in apparel, even when she is in the fashion. There are always prevailing pieces of display which you will not find in her. There is visible to a nice eye a kind of restraint upon herself, so that the eccentricity of fashion is subdued by her own modesty and taste. I love to detect that elegant gentility in a female. It is better than beauty. It tells favorably of the mind, and wins upon me more than an accomplishment. If one of ordinary person is so much benefitted by this, how fine is its effect in one whom nature has created lovely? There is something noble in seing a girl put aside, as unworthy of her, the silly decorations which can only attract the superficial, and depend merely upon the force of her native qualities. I noticed this once when a young belle, who had turned the hearts of whole crowds of dandies, and caused the wasting of more sad sighs, moonlight walks, and real Havana cigars than I am sure ever her innocent bosom dreamed of, was caught, at last, by a noble fellow, and a number of select friends were invited to attend the ceremony. Such a host of brilliant head dresses might have graced the court of the gayest of emperors—such a flashing, and rustling, and nodding—feathers, diamonds, and all

sorts of nameless magnificence. There was a great deal of surmise respecting what would be the appearance of the bride, and expectation was on tiptoe to discover how she would be able to overtop all the lofty splendors of the blooming young beauties who awaited her coming in the brilliantly lighted apartments of her wealthy father's mansion. For my part I was almost afraid to see her enter when the reverend gentleman arrived and every thing was ready for her appearance. I am afraid of women when they are fixed up so. They always look to me as if they had too much to do in superintending their own concerns to think of others. How I wronged thy good sense and exquisite taste, beautiful Fanny! The opened door presented to the eye of the admiring company a head that some sculptor seemed to have formed to make a statue of. The Venus is not more simple. A single beautiful rose, just taken from the dews of heaven, blushed above her forehead, made her appear the most bewitching of women, and confirmed my hatred of those ugly fashions for ever.

I should be taking a very contracted view of my subject, however, were I to confine the influence of affectation only to dress and manner. There is much of it in the mind. We affect a thousand virtues that we have not. I know an honest gentleman who always affects charity and humility. It is curious also to see that he himself is deceived as well as several of his friends, and really believes himself to be meek and philanthropic. In a debate he will say the most bitter things, but in a soft, gentle way, and show you that he thinks you a liar or a fool, "as far as he is able to understand," and "according to his humble opinion." I fear some day he will knock his antagonist down, telling him at the same time "he should be very sorry to offend him."

NEWSPAPERS.

FOREIGNERS laugh at the Americans for being fond of news. There is something delightful in a newspaper, with a quiet breakfast, even to him who, dwelling in the city, must necessarily soon learn from other sources whatever may have occurred of uncommon interest. To rise from your slumbers refreshed—to have a spare hour before you plunge again into the clash and whirl of business—to unfold the damp sheet before a cheerful fire, while the fragrant coffee is sipped at leisure, and to know that busy men have been on the watch all night while you slept—that swift boats have been ploughing the dark deep—that the mails have been urged unceasingly almost with winged speed, and all to let you know, most accurately and immediately, every thing that can amuse or surprise or interest you,—it is pleasant, gentle reader, is it not? It furnishes a constant theme for reflection—it is the great arena of the world, reduced by a wonderful process into a miniature picture—as the landscape of an extended country is thrown in, with living beauty and precision, upon the narrow plate of a *camera obscura*, and you have waves washing, vessels sailing, trees waving, clouds melting and floating, and all the innumerable goings on of nature, produced on a space no larger than your table. But if you really wish to enjoy the luxury of a newspaper, you must live awhile in the country, after having mingled in the city din. If you can get into some remote, obscure, tedious village, so much the better. You should pine a week or two to learn what people can be doing in your familiar places; and then, when some attentive friend, knowing your eager anxieties, encloses you a journal—one for instance "for the country," with three sides covered with precious items—there's a luxury better than eating, drinking, or sleeping. With what a tremulous curiosity, on such delectable occasions, you hang over the prolific columns! How you swallow the littleb its of paragraphs

commencing "we understand that," and "we are requested to state;" the "new discoveries," the "interesting trials," the "singular rumors,"—with what an insatiable appetite they are all devoured. Even the "dreadful murders," the "melancholy accidents," the "distressing fires;" things which at home you do not read at all, are all magnified into an unnatural importance. I have, at such times, waded even through the "ship news," the "New York markets," and the "commercial" head. I have even experienced a tender regret that there had been "nothing doing in ashes during the past week," and stroked my chin with self satisfaction on learning that "a parcel of Cuba white bees' wax had been disposed of at thirty-eight cents, short price." I read the "passengers" in the ships, the "auction sales," the "court calendar," and all the heterogeneous medley to be met with in a briskly conducted gazette; and once I trudged through six columns of congressional proceedings—I did, upon my word—speeches and all; but then it was raining, and I was tremendously at a loss for something to do.

Newspapers! dear newspapers! friends to liberty—to man! many a delightful surprise I owe to you! many a hearty laugh—but, also, many a soft regret—as, for instance, it was but the other day, in casually casting my eyes over one of them, they fell upon the stunning item, uninteresting to all the world—to me, alas, how eloquent—how sad! "On Thursday evening last, by the Reverend A. B., Mr. John Grimmer, to Miss Henrietta L."—the very being I had selected for myself, and intended to take as soon as I got a little settled in business. Then, Mr. John Grimmer—who was Mr. John Grimmer? How dim all the surrounding matter appeared to those two magic lines. They shone out like a star in a midnight sky. This, I confess, is an objection to newspapers. They are so cold hearted: under the very words that nipped my budding passion so unceremoniously, it told me that United States bank stock was one hundred and twenty-five, and that the schooner Porpoise, captain Herring, was in, thirty-five days from Malaga. What did I care for the schooner Porpoise? what did I care for the United States bank

stock? I, who loved, and was treated in such a shameful style.

Yes; newspapers are like men of the world. They march steadily on through misery and joy, without turning to the right or left, or if ever they do grieve, ten chances to one it is for some event that no one cares a farthing for in reality. They tell you your mistress is married; your friend is dead, and recommend you to go to the theatre without fail, and hear the splendid new opera. They describe the fall of a nation in a tone that would make you believe they would end their existence from mere grief and indignation, and you stumble out of a scene of awful oppression and gory massacre into a merry drinking party or a smart repartee. One the other day really aroused my feelings on a subject of a pathetic nature, and just as my imagination was elevated and inspired, and a thrilling sense of compassion was spreading itself through my veins, it assured me that a capital shaving soap might be obtained within a few doors of its office:

Beside the elegance of the style, comes the immense importance of the paragraphs which are sometimes served up for the astonishment of the world. I have made a list of some of these, culled indiscriminately from various papers, and hasten to give them to the public.

"We take great pleasure in informing our readers that Mr. Jacob Brown reached this city yesterday morning on his way to Connecticut; Mr. Brown's private affairs demanding his presence in that section of our great and growing country. Connecticut was the scene of several interesting events during the revolution. Mr. Brown is well, as also are Mrs. Brown and little Peter. It is said that in consequence of a scarcity of sausages in the market he was compelled to breakfast on eggs and bread and butter. Rumors are afloat that he could have been abundantly supplied with buckwheat cakes, but his extraordinary and well known repugnance to that article prevented the possibility of setting them before him. We trust the appearance of our city will strike Mr. Brown in a favorable point of view, as after having transacted his business in Connecticut, he will

immediately set off on his voyage to London, where his opinion of us will be much regarded. We are delighted in being able to contradict the assertion made in one of our leading contemporaries, that he had hit his nose against a pump handle on returning from his visit to the court house. On hearing the report we instantly dispatched a courier extraordinary to ascertain the truth, who assures us that it is altogether fabulous, the nose of the illustrious foreigner being in a state of perfect preservation. We shall resume this subject tomorrow, as want of space must be our apology to an impatient public for not dwelling upon it at this time."—*Independent Watchman.*

"As a young lady, daughter to Colonel Flap, of the militia, was going out yesterday morning to purchase some blue sewing silk, and some other little articles, which at present we do not feel ourselves at liberty to disclose, she was startled by an ill looking dog, who placed himself directly in her way at the south west corner of Gooseberry lane and Madison street. Fortunately the dog went away immediately without any other consequence than an alarm to Miss F., who with a presence of mind that cannot be too highly praised, proceeded on her errand and made the intended purchases in perfect composure and safety."—*North American Advertiser.*

"The conduct of the Russians to the Poles we consider as disreputable to the former as men. A distinguished gentleman, and one well known to the public, yesterday observed in our presence that he considered it 'worthy of a *barbarous nation in a Gothic age.*'"—*Brood's Daily Reporter.*

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT.

JUNE.—I *am* awake. I am—I am. **** There! I have wept. *I* who have been the fiercest in anger, the haughtiest in principle, the merriest or the boldest in all adventures, have wept child-like tears, and sobbed bitterly, and wished my heart would break while I thought it was breaking. It is an incomprehensible creation, this human soul. I am happier now here, in this small stone cell, with only yonder single stream of light falling from that narrow aperture, suffering the realization of my worst forebodings—I am less miserable than I have been for months, months before. The suspense is ended. I had rather be broken on the wheel at once than live in that suspense; beside, these tears have relieved me. Yet even now my mind is thronged with images—the court-room, the vast heaving crowd, the faces all gazing, the hum and murmur of multitudes, the voices of the contending parties, the judge, the hushed silence, the condemnation, the strange eyes fastened on me—my brain teems with them all yet, with dreadful vividness and reality. I cannot close my eyes against them. I cannot drive them from my imagination. Sleep itself affords me no cessation, for they pass all with exaggerated importance into my dreams, and so haunt me. Wonderful images of the outward world, that world which I am never to see again. Never—never. ****

JUNE.—Two nights have passed since I wrote the above. I have been too wretched; my reflections have been too excruciating to admit of writing. Sometimes I have paced up and down my cage. I must have exercise or I die, so I walked and leaped and stamped, to put my blood in motion. Then I laid down for hours, and thought. My past life has been all in review before me. I have slept, too, and dreamed—not of the *faces* —oh no! a sweet, *sweet* vision of early youth—of my *mother*. While I write, the big tears are bursting out from my swollen eyes, and coursing each other down my cheeks. They fall, like the heavy drops of a shower, on the paper. Well, let them. It is fitting it should be

stained with tears. Some one when I am dead and mouldered, even here where I am now sitting, will see the sheet; will know of the anguish that now heaves and swells my bosom, and blinds my eyes; will regard the heap of ashes at his feet, and breathe a sigh of commiseration at my dreadful fate. How wonderfully are we human beings bound together, that the pity even of strangers, people whom I shall never see—nay more, that the hope, the dim possibility of it, should soften the rugged horrors by which I am encompassed, and shoot a momentary ray of cheerful feeling through the passages of my crushed and dreary heart. If we *are* thus knit together by mysterious ties, what a fate is mine! Solitude! ****

Deep, utter, eternal, unchangeable solitude; perpetual shadow and confinement. Never again to see the human face, to hear the human voice; never again to look on nature; never to see the sky, to feel the breeze, to tread on the elastic grass, to lean my ear to the rustle of leaves, to watch the rippling of brooks, and be lulled by the warbling of birds. It is *impossible*. It cannot be that any one, even if I had been guilty of the charge alleged against me, it cannot be that they will *really* doom me to this fate, *till death*. Ah see! night is coming on. I have already become familiar with all the little variations perceptible in this dim sepulchre. I can detect the change of light. The shadows will now thicken rapidly. My invisible keeper will presently send in my pittance of food and drink. These shadows have now darkened many times, and wrapped me in complete gloom. See how dimly the bleak rough walls look already. Ah, now the magnificent sun is verging toward the western horizon, signing millions of weary and grateful laborers to leave their toil. The eyes of my happy fellow creatures are turned on him from the land and the sea. His disc is broad and round; half the heavens is overflowed with rosy waves, and reflects its subdued splendors down upon the earth, kissing fragrant flowers, and painting velvet grass with the lengthened shadows of a thousand peaceful and lovely objects. In some places silver waves are washing up gently, and breaking on the sparkling beach; in others the cottager—happy, happy man—is returning to his

simple home; his affectionate wife, his dear and beautiful children. Gradually the twilight steals over the scene, and then the round moon and many stars commence their still courses in the ascending heavens, hushing all to silence, and touching every thing with quiet lustre; and lovers rove through paths perfumed with flowers, while *I*—these gushing tears—will their source never be dry? It grows darker and darker. I will lie down and hide my face. God of the innocent assist me. Thou canst humble the proud, thou canst lift up the penitent—calm the anguish of my thoughts. If I must drink this bitter cup to the dregs, cheer me in my affliction with thoughts of thee. ****

Days have passed. Dreadful, still, lonely; a monstrous monotony. My greatest joy is to watch for the first sign of morning. I always wake before it approaches, and am almost happy when I discover it. Oh, if the direct sunbeams could visit this dark chamber! If I might once more see his lucid touch on the wall. But no, the light which comes to me must be reflected from some other wall. I cannot see from the high window, if window it may be called. *I shall never see sunshine again!* ****

I have found a new amusement. I refrain from eating till I am more than usually hungry, and my scanty meal then affords me a sort of temptation, against which to struggle.

I have made a list of all the books I ever read, and put down every thing I can remember concerning them. This I have committed to memory. ****

I believe I shall be released from these horrors, at least I often reason myself into that opinion. It makes me very happy. I used to be exceedingly fond of singing. I have sung all my old songs over and over again. This I do till I am fatigued, fatigue begets the want of sleep, and rest gives me refreshment and new strength. ****

It is unusually dark today, and I am certain I heard thunder, so there is a storm without. How strange to feel that it is nothing whatever to me, unless it would roll these stupendous towers from their base, and restore a poor wretch to the blessed, blessed light of day. It is extremely distressing, but I cannot at this moment

remember where I am. I was conveyed here in a carriage, nearly delirious with horror, and I neglected to observe the way. It would be something of a consolation for me to know where I am, that I might fancy what is passing without the walls. ****

I have been delighted—strange word to use in such a place—but nevertheless I have been delighted with the plan, which suddenly struck me, of composing new words to all the old songs with which I am acquainted. What an amusement! I shall confine myself to one in three days, so as to vary the employment with others of a different kind. ****

The shadows of night have often darkened on the walls since the above. I have produced many songs. I compose them aloud, without the pen. I think several of them are good. If ever I get free, with what emotions I shall recollect them. ****

Time rolls on. I am yet in this solitary dungeon. No tears come to me now. I have no more impulses of feeling. The current of my sensibilities is stagnant. My soul is *benumbed.* I had a presentiment last night that I was to be released. I watched all night to hear the slightest sound, leaning my ear down against the bottom of the door. Father of heaven, will they *never* come?

What strange reflections I have had lately. The incidents of my early life seem uppermost in my mind. Ten years ago!—it seems but yesterday—ten years ago I was a happy glowing boy. God! if I had been told, while I stood on the hill side, looking down into my native valley, that in ten fleeting years I should be doomed to perpetual, solitary confinement, what horror would have seized my faculties! I can see, absolutely *see* before me the forms of those with whom I then used to associate. My father, my mother, my brother. Where are they now? Are they at all? Sometimes I think they never had existence, except in my own brain, that I have never been outside this cavern, that nature placed me here, and that all the remembrances of mankind, which crowd on me sometimes, are only dreams; at least they are no more to *me.* I shall never see them, never hear them, or know any thing of them again. Suppose they are all destroyed—well, *I* am in all respects the same. They live to me only in idea. They are phantoms—beautiful, dear, beloved—but still

phantoms. Perhaps they never did live. Perhaps they once lived, but are now ashes; or they are yet living, loving, and rejoicing. They have mourned me as dead; they have talked of me, and regretted me, and now their grief is quelled, and they are happy again, because I am forgotten. Oh! could I hear the voice of but *one* creature I loved, even for a single moment, though it was not addressed to me, I, too, should be happy, exquisitely happy. But I never *shall* hear it. I am the most crushed and wretched of all beings. I have the horrors of death, without its peace. I am *buried alive*. The future—awful reflection. In this existence a blank, an utter waste of precious life, of great capacity and energies. My faculties are losing their keenness, and becoming rusty. I am growing to be something different from other human beings. Could these massive walls be suddenly rent apart, and I appear to some festive assembly, what a sight of horror I should present. My gaunt, emaciated face and shrivelled limbs, my masses of knotted and shaggy hair, my long beard, my hollow eyes and blighted form. Oh! beautiful, happy boyhood; dream of delight; when my limbs were round, and full of health and strength; when my cheeks glowed with crimson, and my lips were bright of joy; when my playful sister parted the glossy curls of hair from my forehead, to kiss that forehead with her sweet mouth; even herself would start away and shrink at this hideous, filthy, loathsome reptile—this ghostly and blasted creature—this—****

If I *am* never to revisit the world, what is to be the manner of my death? How will this *life*, this mysterious consciousness, this power by which I remember and suffer, how will it leave me? Will my enemies come in, tired at length of feeding me, and give me poison, or stab me, or strangle me? It would be easy and safe for them to do either, and they may well think it would be merciful. Horror of horrors! They surely *will* massacre me. Who would know, who would care? Whose hand would be stretched out to protect me? Let me turn from so agonizing a reflection. Yet which way shall I turn? Suppose they have no such design, what, then, will be my fate? I must wait the slow hand of time. Years and years may drag on, perchance, till some execrable disease, engendered in darkness and

filth, shall steal over my limbs, and corrupt my feeble body. When it comes I must meet it alone and unaided. No kind hand to touch my feverish forehead; no dear eyes to watch while I sleep; no friendly voice to cheer me; no beloved bosom, on which sinking nature may breathe its last sigh of affection, and receive its parting caress. No—no—no—madness—darkness—cold stones. Merciful God!

Fool—fool. I *have* been ill; how long I know not, but I am better, and firmer, and calmer. So far from *fearing* death, I court it, and defy it. I am regardless in what form it may come. Men have died before, and will again; ay, and to all those now in the midst of riot and joy, to *all* the time will come. There is no one of them but death must grapple with, and bear down with him into his unknown gulf. He will stretch out his hand to the triumphant palace, and drag down the proud and noble; he will glide to the sweet cottage, and take the father from his helpless family. Beauty, too, radiant glowing beauty; lips of coral, eyes of light; voice rich with silvery music; how his skeleton hand will blast their warm perfections into motionless and haggard marble! He will touch the child's innocent head, and the lover in his hopes, and the hero, and the poet, and they shall all go to the land of shadows. Why shall *I* shrink? I fear *nothing* but bodily pain. The rest—feeling, affection, hope—are all fancy. Is it not better to be thus here, sitting in peace, than writhing and quivering on the dreadful rack? ****

A calm has stolen over me. I feel no more *yearnings* to leave this dungeon vault. My senses are clear, my mind is full of easy, and I believe rational thoughts. I know perfectly where I am, and what I am. Yes, yes—my name is Walter Hubert. I have been imprisoned a long, *long* time, in a solitary dungeon, for a crime of which I am entirely innocent. My spirit has at length sunk under the weight of torture. I have been sick, wretched, mad, mad, mad—but now my senses are returned, and I am *dying*. God prepare me, and bless those I love. [redacted]ould—the pen—I can scarcely hold it—and the l[redacted]ight from my window is beginning to be darkened—Oh for one parting look. ****

THE SICK STUDENT.

"Look at me. Why, the winds sigh through my bones,
And children jeer me; and the boughs that wave
And whisper loosely in the summer air,
Shake their green leaves in mockery, as to say,
'These are the longer livers.'"—*Proctor.*

Monday, JUNE.—Every day forces upon me a stronger conviction that my existence is almost at an end. I am thin, and pale, and weak, and my nerves are in a frightful state. The slightest agitation makes me tremble. My mind is also harrassed. Certain circumstances haunt me like demons. I am continually oppressed with a dark sense of danger and hopelessness. I cannot depict the prostrating power of this thought, when it has become perpetual. When I am alone at night it affects me the most. I often wish my task was done.

Wednesday.—I overheard a conversation last night, which affected me strongly. I had been in the early part of the evening complaining of the toothache, and had received a visit from a physician. When he took his leave I followed him down stairs, without being observed, to ask him a question, when this brief colloquy arrested me on the steps:

"Well, doctor," said my friend, "can you do any thing for his teeth?"

"Nothing," was the reply.

"They are decaying very rapidly. They will not last long."

There was a moment's pause. Then the cold voice again.

"They'll last long enough for *his* use. They're poor, white, sickly things, and have the true consumptive look."

"Do you think him so ill?"

"I think he *may* last the summer, but the first cold will sweep him off."

"And travelling, doctor, would not that have some effect?"

"Well, I don't know; perhaps yes. A summer voyage, and a residence in the south of France, might assist him in *lingering out;* but it would be only a reprieve. *He must die soon.*"

Then the street door opened.

"Ah! it's a fine mild evening."

"You'll have a pleasant walk, doctor?"

"Very. Good night."

"Good night."

The door was closed. I stole back to my room, breathless, not with terror, but with the intense nature of the feelings and thoughts which were concentrated and crowded together in that moment. "*He must die soon.*" The words rang in my ears. I looked down at my long white fingers. I listened to the beating of my heart, and thought how certainly they must soon be mouldered and still. Strange as it may seem, a feeling of delight and exhiliration crept over me. A spirit of calm defiance against all the miseries which had weighed me down to the dust. Life to me had been no friend, death was no enemy. I stood upon the awful edge of a sublime precipice, from which I was not to be hurled with violence and horror, but I was about to glide off like an eagle floating on expanded wings, leaving anguish and despair behind. I went to the window. The stars were shining, and the serene blue sky was most delicately stained with a few transparent clouds, floating like fairy barks on that azure tide. I had been fascinated with the study of astronomy, and there was not a planet, and scarcely a star, which was not familiar to me, and enriched in my gaze with some pure and happy association. At certain periods of my life I had consulted them with that kind of capricious and feigned superstition in which sanguine and solitary young people often indulge. Some, too, were hallowed by their connection with particular events, I had watched them with persons dear to me; they had been the themes of my contemplation in times of health and hope. There they were, b[illegible] in their immortal beauty, and all these I was [illegible], to leave them with all their lucid glory—*for* [illegible]thers would gaze on them when the grass sho[illegible] growing over my cold, dead bosom. The unive[illegible] hush and mellow lustre of night would

come down again on the breathing earth; the rich flowers would burst again from their verdant mass of leaves; and the lulling murmur of waters would charm the lonely wood. Every thing I admired, every thing I loved—I must be torn from all—then I was overcome, and I *wept*.

A new feeling grew up in me, opening to my mind like the dawn of morning. A new existence—endless, careless! There is nothing so stupendous as the thought of a hereafter. The tears ceased coursing each other down my cheeks. I was lost, bewildered in wonder. Its exciting nature took from me the power of further reflection, and I slept. The last idea in my mind was that I had the consumption—and even when my heavy eyelids closed and slumber sealed them, the same dark consciousness went into my wild vague dreams. I wandered through pathless wilds with an arrow in my side; often striving to extract it, but in vain. Then I came to a fair city. The crowd were everywhere seeking pleasures in the gayest trifles. Now in the dance. Then in the sunny promenade, listening to laughter and music—but *always the arrow was in my side*, and I had no voice to claim assistance, or make known my awful situation. Then a lovely child, one dear to me in my waking moments, came to me and kissed me, and offered to relieve my suffering by drawing out the fatal dart, but a monstrous gigantic serpent seized her even from my side, and enveloped her tender form in his loathsome green folds. I cannot go on, although it was but a dream, nor dwell on the sight from which I fled—and wherever I fled, the dragon pursuing me, and my convulsive, yet fruitless exertions to fasten doors after me, which *would* open and leave me exposed. I awoke, and wiped the cold drops from my forehead.

Saturday.—I have been reading to day. How calm I am! Can it result from philosophy? I could spend an existence in reading. My impressions are almost as vivid as reality. To sit in a still room with the summer morning air blowing in [redacted] my forehead gently—what can life afford better? [redacted]an passions can be called up in me by a book. [redacted] am metamorphosed into a different being. [redacted] moment I really dreamed myself a healthy vigorou[redacted]n. I had

become the character I was perusing, when the sight of my skeleton hand shocked me, and recalled my wandering imagination. I no longer feel pleasure in the prospect of death. At first it was a novelty—but I have become too familiar with it. I shrink and tremble. Even now a cold shuddering ran over my frame. I would give the *world* for health. Compared with it, what is fame? What is money? I start when I reflect sometimes that to gain each of these, men have flung it away. Grant me but *health*, Fortune, I ask no more. No matter in what lowly station my lot may be cast. No matter how blighted my fame—how poor—how insignificant. All are unworthy a thought to him who can stride free and strong over the green fields, and simply breathe the air of heaven. Free me from disease, and wreck me on a deserted island. I would live on fruits and lie all day in the sun—I would herd with the beasts and be happy in the joy of physical strength—I would be a dunce—an idiot—any thing but the dying wretch I am. The thought is too dreadful for endurance.

Monday.—The doctor said I might be cured by a voyage. I have been striving to raise the means necessary to go to France. It is impossible. Because I am poor I must die. Some around me waste thousands on the most worthless pleasures. Oh, mysterious world!

Tuesday.—I learned today that but for this disease I might have obtained a most lucrative situation with****.

Tuesday.—It is two weeks since I wrote last in this book. I have been confined to my bed, but am better—much better. My pains are mostly gone, and my spirits much raised. Oh, if I should recover after all!

Thursday.—I am in a fine glee today. My health is rapidly improving. What a stupid fellow is that doctor who said I *must* die. To be sure I must die—so must we all—but I hope for many a bright year yet. I took a little walk this morning. How strangely beautiful eve[redacted]g looks out [redacted]. I never was so happy. T[redacted]warmed my chilled limbs. I only want a litt[redacted]d exercise to be a well man.

Frida[redacted]n the recovery. Indeed, I am getting quite [redacted] again. How kind every body in the

house is to me. I am continually receiving little relishes and flowers as presents. How delightful! I shall certainly regret to leave these excellent people, but I am resolved to spend the next winter at the south.

Monday.—Every pain is passing away. I rambled yesterday through a little garden and wood at the seat of my friend, whither he had conveyed me in a carriage. It was delightful to feel the perceptible return of vigor and health. I inhaled the breath of the flowers. I reposed beneath the shady trees. I sat by the murmuring streams, and looked down into its transparent depths. How beautiful—how wonderfully and exquisitely beautiful—how beautiful all nature is, could men but spare time from the common interests and low passions of life to regard it as it deserves. When any one can so far overcome these influences as to give up his soul to the contemplation of nature, he becomes a poet, a painter, an orator—something great, pure, glowing, and elevated—something full of living fire and glory—and why may not *I* be one? I will—I will. Temperance shall, hereafter, be my aim to insure my health. I will brace up these great and growing energies which I feel stirring within me. I will no more despond, but cope with those who have gone before me in a track of brightness, and whose works have made them immortal. What would *Burns* have been if, instead of being abandoned to the drifting currents of adversity, like a wretched ship tossed on the black sea, he had been in early youth placed in a counting-house, where mere *business* had occupied all his time? He would have been lost to the world; and so thousands must be because they do not strive—they do not seek to labor up the dazzling steep, but are content to repose in inglorious indolence at the base. I will breathe out the fire that is in me. My future years shall be——.

Here the student dropped his journal, being seized with a cough, which left him a corpse.

It is an awful, and yet a consoling symptom of the dreadful disease of which he fell the victim, that frequently, in proportion as the sufferer approaches the crisis, he deems himself retreating from the brink. I watched the gleaming up of his spirit, and listened to his confident plans for the future with almost pecu-

liarly melancholy emotions. Often I nearly resolved to reveal to him the certainty of his almost immediate dissolution. But it seemed like a ruthless sacrilege to break with a word the deceitful but soothing spell which now kept him constantly peaceful and happy. Beside, since nature had given it to him, why should I take it away? If death, the loathed monster, approached with his hideous features covered, why should I tear off the veil and disclose the sight of horror?

For a long time his face had assumed an expression of unusual intellectuality. The brightness of his eyes reminded me of the fine description by Proctor:

> "Look in my eye, and mark how true the tale
> I've told you. On its glassy surface lies
> Death, my Sylvestra. It is nature's last
> And beautiful effort to bequeath the fire
> To that bright ball on which the spirit sate
> Through life; and looked out, in its various moods,
> Of gentleness and joy, and love and hope,
> And gained this flesh frail credit in the world.
> It is the channel of the soul; its glance
> Draws and reveals that subtle power that doth
> Redeem us from our gross mortality."

I followed my poor friend to the grave, one soft summer afternoon, with a heavy heart, and have since perused this little picture of his latest visions with a sad pleasure. If, as the reader follows them to their last dreary termination, he is induced to examine his own calculations for the future, my melancholy task will not have been accomplished in vain.

CONVERSATION.

I BELIEVE my friend, old Henderson, would talk you to death if you would let him. He has neither sense nor taste, but his memory is awful. I have seen him hold a large company enchained, not by the fascination of wit and eloquence, but by a downright overbearing determination to monopolize the whole conversation,

and without the ingenuity to perceive that instead of admiring, one half of his auditors are laughing at him and the other meditating upon the most respectful means of escape. I can excuse, and even sympathize with an old sailor or soldier who has risked his life a thousand times in the dangers of sea or battle, for dwelling with enthusiasm, which he imagines must be shared by all, upon those scenes and events where the chords of his noblest feelings have been struck, but protect me from the sturdy energy of veteran prosers whose zeal and prejudices are all based on vanity and conceit.

"My dear friend," said Henderson to me one day as I was hurrying home to dinner a few minutes after the time; "listen to me one word more. I am old now, and may venture to state that my experience is not small. I have travelled, sir, travelled all over the United States, and a part of Great Britain; and I kept a note book, wherein I set down all the remarkable events—don't be in such a hurry, my dear fellow, I'm never in a hurry."

"Doubtless, doubtless, Mr. Henderson, but just at this moment—"

"Tush, man—you don't get an opportunity of hearing me every day."

"Thank heaven for that," thought I.

"In this note book," he continued, "I set down, as I said before, all the remarkable things I heard and saw with all my apposite moral reflections. Thus, sir, I have accumulated a mass of the most valuable notes, thoughts, opinions, sketches of character, anecdotes, &c., &c., &c. You shall read them, my young friend. They will give you more insight into—"

"With pleasure, sir, but—"

"Why now there's your cousin Bob, as fine a fellow, sir, as ever trod shoe leather, he knows my friend Stamford who travelled with me half—no, not half—yes—I think I may say half of the way. Stamford married a Miss Dunlap, at Plymouth. Her father was a doctor, as clever a fellow as ever—well—I remember it as well as if it were but yesterday. It was on the sixteenth day of April, 1799, and the next morning, says he to me, says he—"

But enough of this, lest the reader should grow as tired of him as I was. I should almost as cheerfully submit to the necessity of listening to another talking friend of mine, who has the misfortune to be an author. Long habits of writing, to which he has concentrated all the faculties of his mind, have made it impossible for him to give birth to a single idea before he has arranged it in a regular sentence, with suitable branches and a flowing period. Ask him how he does, and he reads you a homily on the state of his system—the causes of his diseases, and the method he has laid down for himself to accomplish a cure, with the swelling pomposity of Dr. Johnson. He'll quote Greek upon a tea kettle. When he gives his well known preliminary "*hem*," as he clears his throat for an attack, I wish I might get the toothache, as an excuse for taking my departure. Such a man in a stage coach, where you are entirely at his mercy, is worse than the nightmare. Heaven preserve me from your professed shiners in conversation. But of the colloquists who are calculated to exhaust the patience, the mistified talker is the most provoking. He covers up an idea of the most ordinary signification, or rather *buries* it under a multiplicity of words. If you put an interrogation to such an one, he stops, reflects, and then commences narrating some anecdote which he intends to apply to something which he intends to say. He hovers round and round a subject, and just when you trust he is coming to the point, strikes off into some unknown region and leaves you perfectly bewildered as to his meaning. Either he has no mind, no opinions, or you see them through the medium of his conversational powers as you glance at nature through a prism, and behold fragments of trees, walls, rivers, and houses turned upside down, in grotesque groups, and colored with strange hues. Set a nervous, clear headed person to transact business with one of this sort, and he will almost go mad.

Some are habitual praisers of every thing around them—others never open their lips but to snarl. These last are monsters in society. They prowl around like vicious dogs, snapping and biting at whatever comes within their reach. Instead of comparing the faults

and beauties, the virtues and vices of men and things properly together, and forming a conclusion as the balance is in their favor or against them, they ferret out the worst features, dwell upon them with malicious bitterness, and thus overwhelm every thing in indiscriminate condemnation.

In short, while the conversation of all is marked with the peculiarities of their respective dispositions and habits of life, few have attained that elegant familiarity with the world and the human heart which enables them in conversation to please all and offend none. Such an accomplishment is productive of the most agreeable advantages. It surrounds its possessor with a kind of cheerfulness, delightful to the walks of brilliant fashion and invaluable as the charm of the domestic circle. Yet, perhaps, few subjects engage less of the attention of scholars and eminent men of all classes. They too often exhaust their vivacity in the mental efforts of the closet, and pass among their friends mere abstracted, solitary, and sometimes disagreeable companions, unable to share the simple pleasures of life.

LETTER FROM THE CITY.

New York, July 10, 1830.

Dear C.—I presume sufficient time has elapsed since your departure from New York to render "private advices" agreeable; yet I have nothing in the world to say which would be interesting to you except the old *hum-drum* assurances that "I am quite well and hope you are the same," for which valuable piece of information and expression of love, people have been content to pay postage for a very long time. We have had here for a few weeks past a succession of the most pleasant days and nights you ever saw—just sufficiently varied with showers to keep the ground moist, the air fresh and clear and the grass green. And as for the moon, I vow I believe she has stopped going round the earth, for as far as I can recollect she has been full, clear, and round

for three weeks back. Our friend, lawyer M., has had a ducking, since you left us. He and I sailed out into the bay—he acted as the captain, I as the crew. As long as the wind did not blow much and the tide was in our favor, captain M.'s nautical abilities showed to very great advantage. He put "his hand upon the ocean's mane," as poor Byron said, with the greatest confidence and familiarity, but the bay of New York, like the great sea of human life, is crossed with many changing and obstinate currents, which play the deuce with your young city sailors. Our captain got among these, where he was compelled to take short notice of trial, and where errors could not be amended on payment of costs; and though, with the best intention in the world, he put the bow of the boat straight for Staten Island, he made a point of Long Island, near the navy yard, about a mile above that from which he had started. Fortunately being deeply skilled in navigation he determined to "tack," which he did in a very scientific manner. I observed, however, by-the-bye, that instead of making any headway we had drifted another half mile from the point which we were anxious to reach. Theory and practice, you see, are very different things. Finding all his science thrown away upon these foolish tides, the captain resolved to take down the mast and resort to oars; with this intention he sprang from his seat, the current all the time drifting us up, at the rate of four knots, but in his eagerness to precipitate the operation, he injudiciously stepped upon the side of the boat, which nearly overturned. This produced two consequences worthy of notice. Firstly—the oar splashed into the river on one side. Secondly—the captain plumped in on the other, with an expression upon his face, as he was falling, which induced me to believe he had adopted that course with great reluctance. He had not been long, however, under the water, when, with much ingenuity and presence of mind, he made for the surface, a choice which I will venture to assert the most mature deliberation could not fail to applaud. Having reached a situation where he enjoyed the additional convenience of air, he exhibited a decided resolution to resume his place in the boat—a very sensible idea, which he proceeded to carry into effect, leaving, however,

divers bail pieces, subpœnas, and the like, floating calmly on the waves, and a waterproof hat slowly descending (happily without a head in it) to the graceful sea weeds and beautiful coral groves which, as I have neither the opportunity nor the intention of investigating the subject, may or may not decorate the bottom of the stream.

He came into the boat dripping like a Newfoundland dog, but rather more out of spirits than one of that latter class of "our fellow mortals" would appear after a similar circumstance. Indeed, on the whole, the captain made for land with a degree of perseverance not extraordinary, considering his condition; and on disembarking from the treacherous element, although he said nothing, he looked as if he were engaged in his own mind in solemnly renouncing all species of practical navigation for the future, and in resolving to devote himself exclusively to his profession.

Your venerable friend K. has fallen—in love. And with whom think you? You know he "is written down old with all the characters of age. He hath a moist eye, a dry hand, a yellow cheek, a white beard, and a decreasing leg. His voice is broken, his chin is double, his wit single, and every part about him blasted with antiquity." And yet hath he fallen in love! Now run over in your imagination all the damsels on the wrong side of forty, who would be content to take the old gentleman in consideration of his amiable disposition and his hundred thousand dollars, and then understand that it is with the little —— you know who! whom we admired so much one night at B.'s. Would you not as soon expect to see the old reprobate reaching forth his withered and tremulous hand to catch the evening star, as dreaming of that young, fresh, and happy being? I have seen more of her since you went away—she is perfectly beautiful. She has all the charm of firm and glowing health, in addition to the most graceful features in the world. While serious, you deem "nature's own sweet and cunning hand" could not form a mouth more rich and expressive—when she smiles, it surpasses itself. If she rests her eyes upon you, they absolutely make you tremble. If time, and thought, and gloomy disappointment, and weary and protracted care had not given me a kind of reckless contempt for any thing on

earth that seems like happiness, I should have sunk into a very Benedict. Ten years ago if I had met such a Hebe—but no matter. As it is, she is no more to me than a fair landscape—a rose in the morning just burst from its bud—or a beautiful shell—or a piece of sweet music —or a rainbow. She is too old for a child, and yet she is scarcely a woman. I should like to have seen old K. when he broke his tender secret—and would it not have been worth while to have watched *her*, when the crimson came over her face at the idea of being bought like a slave "for cankered heaps of strange-achieved gold," and her deeply shaded eyes looked up flashingly, partly with scorn, partly with mirth? By yea and nay, I would not have been in his place to have saved myself from hanging.

FROM THE DIARY OF AN EDITOR.

THE REVIEWER.

It is scarcely possible to satisfy even an individual in all his moods of mind. His tastes will differ from yours in many instances; and when they are alike, the same subject, viewed from different positions, whence one sees the existence of much which the other does not suspect, will produce an infinite variety of opinions. How difficult, then, is the task of catering for the huge, capricious creature called the public. A monster with despotic power—responsible to no one—guided by no law—constructed of heterogeneous materials—gifted with desires and appetites inconsistent with each other—demanding today what he will loathe tomorrow—with power to blight with a glance, yet so thoughtless and destitute of that sort of prudence which an individual applies to the proper administration of his own affairs, that the weakest hand may sometimes lead him astray, for he has a great propensity to plunge into excesses. In truth the poor editor has a dire time of it, whose business it is to wait on this mighty monster, to soothe

his rage, to please his variable taste, to pat him softly on the back, and put him in a good humor with himself.

It is not, however, the public alone with whom the editor has to deal. There is a vast variety of under machinery, against which he must work his way.

I was sitting in my elbow chair, profoundly engaged in the duties of my avocation, surrounded with various new publications and piles of newspapers. I was interrupted by a timid knock at the door, which presently opened to admit a tall, gaunt gentleman, with spectacles and a cane. Although apparently young, he moved with a staid air of wisdom. His face was lean and intellectual, and he entered upon my acquaintance with the formality of one on excellent terms with himself.

"Sir, I have taken the liberty to call on you. I am connected with the Cahawba Democrat, and wish to hand you a short review of Mr. Thompson's Travels in Kamschatka. I think myself that it is one of my happiest efforts. Your paper is well established, and I believe has a pretty wide circulation, so I concluded to let you have it."

"Sir," said I, gradually unbending the expression of severity with which I had at first received him as an intruder, "you are very welcome, sir. Pray take a seat. I am happy to make your acquaintance."

"You are very good, sir," he replied, placing the manuscript in my hands; "I have read your journal with much interest, and should be happy to be considered as one of your contributors."

"Sir, you are very kind. It would give me pleasure, sir, to publish your communications. I suppose, if I should wish, in overlooking the article, if I should wish —wish to retouch—to revise—to—"

"Oh, sir, any alteration you are perfectly welcome to make which your experience dictates."

"I have no idea that any will be necessary."

"Whatever you please, sir. The piece is so—so—no great things—but I think it will make some talk. Do not let me interrupt you, sir, you appear to be engaged. I wish you good morning, sir."

"Good morning, sir," said I, fairly rising out of my

capacious elbow chair, a thing which I never do except on very particular occasions, "good morning, sir."

He gathered up his cloak, adjusted his spectacles, suffered a slight disposition toward the angular to intrude upon the elegant perpendicularity of his person, and made his exit.

"A very agreeable, well behaved, intelligent young man, I declare," said I, "very much of a gentleman. I am fortunate this morning." Let us see.

"'Delightful delineations of life and manners'—'discovers the finest natural taste, highly cultivated by study'—'would bear a comparison with the highest flights of genius among the ancients'—'bids fair to become the most extraordinary writer of his age.'"

Fine sentences these—fair, clear hand—excellent grammar. Here, Peter—tell Mr. MacNiven to leave out the "important statement respecting a young and unprotected female," and I shall have a review, under the head of polite literature."

"The men are waiting for copy," said Peter; "they've got the unprotected female almost set up."

"Can't help it, Peter. I must look over this manuscript and point it. The deuce take the people! They don't know a comma from a note of interrogation. Here's an essay on the importance of instilling virtuous principles into the young—very short—and let me see: 'The importance of virtuous principles—comma—instilled into youth—comma—future happiness—welfare in life; it's all pointed. Take it up. I'll just look over this review, and have it ready in ten minutes."

And at it I went. The article I found to be tolerably well written; but the praise awarded to Mr. Thompson's travels became so fulsome, and his production was placed so far above every other publication of this or any other century, that I found it necessary to strike out, alter, and moderate, with considerable freedom.

It was then put into the hands of the compositor, and in the afternoon, I had just spread out a clean proof on the table, when the erudite reviewer again made his appearance, as lean, perpendicular, and intellectual as ever.

"Good evening to you, sir," he exclaimed. "As I

was casually passing this way, it struck me that I would ask the favor of a proof of my review."

"Certainly, sir. You will perceive, however, that I have availed myself of your polite permission to—to—that is—to—"

"To what?" asked perpendicular, with a stare of surprise and expectation.

I perceived his face darken a little, and a pair of very reasonably large greenish looking eyes peered at me above the spectacles. I am a modest man, and can never summon up energy even to vindicate, with any degree of success, my own rights, unless I get slightly warmed in the argument. His stare and sententiousness combined, rather embarrassed me.

"Why, the fact is, my dear sir, you are—that is, you must be—indeed, it is impossible but that you should be—aware that—the greatest authors—the most renowned—and—so forth—in the hurry of writing—in the—"

"The glow of composition," he gravely interrupted.

"Exactly so, sir—in the glow of composition, they sometimes—"

"Oh, yes, I understand—some trivial error in grammar—I hope you have carefully corrected any thing of that kind."

"Why, the truth is, my dear sir, your article is really—but—but—in one or two trivial circumstances I thought that you a little over did the matter, and—"

"Sir?"

The crisis had arrived—I had got along so far tolerably well, so I buttoned my coat, took a pinch of snuff, and was preparing to go at it again; when the learned reviewer, who had been looking over the proof, exclaimed, with an expression something similar to that of Hamlet, when he perceived the ghost of the old gentleman,

"Why, thunder and lightning, sir! what's all this? why, you've ruined the article for ever! the very best passages, those I had set my heart on, are cut out!"

"I am sorry, sir, that you are dissatisfied with—"

"Dissatisfied, sir? I am dissatisfied, sir! I am offended, sir! I am insulted, sir! You have put words in my mouth which I never used. I won't have this pub-

lished so. I will withdraw the copy. I'll publish it in the Cahawba Democrat."

"It's too late. The paper is nearly ready for press."

"I wish it was ready to go to the devil, sir! Let me tell you, you overstep the limits of your right, sir, and the decency of a gentleman, and the modesty of nature, in thus presuming to—"

"Stop, sir," said I, once more rising from my elbow chair, for the impudence of the fellow made me mad; when any one takes advantage of the natural civility and diffidence of my manner, to probe me too far, I fling modesty where the rascal wished my paper. I hate a quarrel as a very troublesome, undignified, stupid piece of business; but a bully is a yet greater object of contempt.

"I regret, sir," said I, "that any difference of this nature should have arisen between us. You told me to alter your piece, and I have done so. I am responsible for what appears in my columns. I will not afford you —nay, sir, hear me out—any medium for the circulation of opinions which may be false. The book which you praise so enthusiastically, I never saw nor heard of. I have, therefore, cut out some of the most extravagant encomiums. Who your friend, Mr. Thompson is, I know not; but I shrewdly suspect his book is unworthy such unlimited praise."

"You are unfit, sir, to conduct a public journal," said my companion, "and let me tell you—"

"Let me tell *you*, sir," said I, "there is the door. If you do not walk out of it, I shall afford you a shorter passage through the window."

The scene was rapidly approaching its *denouement*, when a third person, my worthy friend Mr. Smith, entered. He greeted my antagonist with a familiar nod, but received in return a salutation rather confused, which was no sooner given, than the elegant critic, after a fierce glance at me, withdrew.

"Who is that agreeable young man?" asked I, when he disappeared.

"That—why, that's Thompson—Mr. Obadiah Thompson, the author of Travels to Kamschatka, who may, without any flattery on his own part, boast of having written one of the dullest productions that ever came from the press."

THE CRITIQUE.

SEVERAL months after the occurrence related in my last, I perceived, among my bundle of letters, newspapers, &c., from the post office, a number of the Cahawba Democrat, containing about a column of abuse against my personal character, and many contemptuous epithets bestowed upon my journal. Several of my patrons in that part of the country threatened to discontinue their subscription. The article was copied into the Cattskill United States Federal Republican, the Henry Clay Observer, and the Macdonough Jacksonian. These influential gazettes, I accidentally discovered, were edited by cousins and boon companions of Mr. Obadiah Thompson; and the whole gang, thus scattered in ambush, like Kentucky riflemen, over different parts of the field, opened upon me such a discharge of small artillery, that I so far forgot my natural equanimity and editorial dignity as to wish Mr. Obadiah Thompson, his Travels in Kamschatka, the Cahawba Democrat, and all their "kith and kin," locked up among the icebergs of the polar regions. Beside having myself read the article in question, (for the papers in which they were published were all sent me by some attentive and good natured friend,) I was almost harassed out of my senses by the remarks and interrogations of my numerous acquaintances. One shook his head with an air of pity, as if he looked on some fellow sentenced to be hanged, and then asked me if I had seen the United States Federal Republican? Another came in, giggling and grinning, as if he had drawn a prize in the lottery. He made several attempts to speak, but was interrupted by his laughter; and I was about to congratulate him on his spirits, when he slapped his hand on my shoulder, with amiable familiarity, and asked me if I had read the Cahawba Democrat? He had not yet done laughing, when a hungry, lank, consumptive looking young man, to whom I had been slightly introduced about two years before, with high cheek bones, and India rubber over shoes, who hangs about taverns, and chews tobacco, stepped into my office

with much solemnity, and taking out his pocket book, fumbled about theatre bills and tailor bills, as if he were seeking a bank bill.

Ah, ha! I thought, a subscriber, I suppose! but the paper which he handed me, instead of his four dollars in advance, proved to be one of the above mentioned paragraphs, which the young man with India rubber over shoes had kindly cut out for my especial gratification.

"I am very much obliged to you, sir; you are very polite," I exclaimed, as I saw by a glance the nature of the communication.

"Not in the least, sir," said he, and coolly replenished his mouth with about half a paper of Lorillard's best, and, after an operation peculiar to the tobacco chewing tribe of young men, and by which he nearly extinguished my fire, he favored me with a respectful bow and disappeared. So much for Mr. Obadiah Thompson.

Among the numerous perplexities to which the editor of a public print is subjected, he enjoys also certain advantages, which it would be ungrateful in me to overlook. He is a knowing one among the million. He continually sees behind the curtain how the affairs of the world are conducted. He struts about like a rooster among actors, authors, and publishers, and when he slaps his sides with his wings and crows forth his critical remarks, there is a general cackle among the literary chickens. Indeed, he can fling the whole barn yard into confusion. Like that high-minded bird, he also looks with a suspicious and unfriendly eye upon others of the fraternity who encroach upon his premises. Two of the tribe do never encounter each other but they ruffle their feathers, move with wider strides, and exhibit a superadded dignity and loftiness of demeanor which generally ends in a pretty considerable fight. Did you ever, Mr. Reader, lean your elbows on a rail fence, on some morning in spring, and behold two bantams engaged in a fierce and chivalric combat upon some abstract point of honor? Even so do the enlightened and sensible brethren of the fraternity to which I belong pass away their time—instruct the community—further the great cause of liberty and national intelligence, and gain for themselves a durable and valuable place in history.

The editor is a sort of divinity. Mortals lay gifts at his shrine. Publishers, painters, poets hover around him. Unseen hands supply him with specimens of every graceful and splendid treasure that genius or industry puts forth. The doors of places of public amusement open of themselves at his approach. His secret thoughts pass with electric speed around the world."

After having flung a fresh hickory stick upon the fire and stirred up the bed of solid burning coals, which produced a crackling blaze, I seated myself in the elbow-chair with the above reflections. I had just finished dinner. An extra glass of wine made me benevolent and happy. I deposited my legs in another chair, folded my arms, looked into the fire for ideas, and concluded to take a sleigh ride for exercise.

Suddenly a tall form stood before me. His face was begrimed and black. He gazed solemnly on me. A pleasant dream was gone.

"The men want copy, sir," was his awful salutation.

"I thought they had copy enough for today," said I.

"The last communication you sent up," said the devil, "could not be read."

"How much room in this form?"

"Two columns, sir,"

"I shall die if I dont take more exercise," said I.

"You must not die and leave the world no copy," quoted Peter.

I looked up—the scoundrel had made a pun at me and was grinning from ear to ear. I restrained my impulse to fling the inkstand at his head, and politely requested him to withdraw. Instead of sleigh ride, went to business.

At that moment entered my friend Colonel Jackson. He is about six feet in height, shoulders broad, with an athletic form, rather approaching the Falstaff style of grace. He had shot three men in duels in France, and lost all his money gambling. Yet he lived along, no one knew how; carried a bull dog frown upon his countenance, and snarled and growled at every body and every thing.

"I've come to discontinue my paper," said he. "It's too full of puffs and flummery. I want something severe and solid. I'm sick of hearing people praised. You

puff books, you puff editors, you puff actors. This is the best singer and that the best player—Mr. Thingumbob astonished us in Hamlet, and Miss The-lord-knows-who excelled herself in Cordelia. Give me something slashing, sprightly. Don't send your paper to me any more. I'll settle your bill with the clerk as I go out."

He cast his eyes on me, as if he were going to eat me up, pulled his hat down over his brows, and went away, giving the door a slam.

"The colonel is a bear," said I to myself; "but he speaks the truth." So I commenced that very moment, and wrote a critique upon the theatre. It was, as Mr. Obadiah Thompson said, "one of my happiest efforts." For, while it entered into an impartial and temperate examination of the various claims of the players to excellence, and what I deemed a philosophical analysis of their faults and merits, it contained nothing which, I believed, could be offensive to the feelings of any individual therein named.

Colonel Jackson will subscribe again, thought I, when he sees this. I felt pleased with the idea of having shown that there was at least one independent press in the country.

The day after the paper was published, I was engaged in writing an "essay on the independence of the press in the United States," wherein I had proved incontrovertibly, and perfectly to my own satisfaction, that the abuses against the press were all calumnies, and that an editor was a free agent, except inasmuch as he was controlled by public opinion, when Colonel Jackson entered once more. His hat was yet pulled down over his eyes. He stood up before me like a colossus, and flung down a note which I found to this effect:

"Sir—Your slanderous remarks respecting my personation of —— the other night are base, false, and impertinent. My friend, Colonel Jackson, will arrange the terms of this business. Time, place, and weapon as you please. If I cannot play ——, I can snuff a candle with a pistol bullet at any reasonable distance. What right have you to find fault with my acting? I will teach you that you have caught a Tartar. Yours, truly, P. L."

"Caught a Tartar!" said I, looking up at the colonel. "I think I *have* caught a Tartar. Time, place, and weapon, forsooth! Why what does the fellow mean?"

"Mr. L," said the colonel, "is *my friend;*" the last two words emphatic. "You will please keep guard upon your words when they relate to him. He has taken this step by *my* advice."

"*Your* advice!" exclaimed I, astonished. "Why it was by your advice I wrote the remarks he complains of."

"I advised you to cut up the actors, but I said nothing about my worthy friend, Mr. L. You should censure only those who deserve it. But," waving his hand gracefully, "to the purpose. What time will you choose, what place and weapon, to give my friend the satisfaction of a gentleman?"

"The satisfaction of a fool!" said I, in a passion again. "Pray, my good sir, tell *your friend*, as you call him, to play better, or I shall continue my remarks with increased asperity. I do not think the occasion worth risking my life for. I should be very sorry to kill your friend, and more sorry to be killed by him; but if he offer any insult to me, though I am unwilling to injure him, I shall know how to defend myself."

To my surprise Mr. L. himself, who, it appeared, had listened at the door, now rushed in, and, with a cane of more than ordinary weight and thickness, evidently procured with a view to a desperate assault and battery, walked up to me, his face red with rage, and lifting the bludgeon was proceeding to a very unequivocal symptom of hostility, when I took from my drawer a small uncharged pocket pistol, cocked it, and aimed at his head. He vanished with dramatic celerity. I should think the gentleman had sunk through one of his own trap doors.

"Now, sir," said I, addressing the colonel, who had fiercely walked toward the door. The more frightened he got, the more fierce he looked.

"Good morning, sir; good morning, sir," said he, and he also vanished.

I sat down and finished my paragraph on the independence of the press. About two months afterward I saw the whole affair in the Cahawba Democrat, wherein I was made to cut a sorry figure. The young man

with India rubber over shoes came in, and laid a copy of the United States Federal Republican on my table.

I then resolved to let the theatres alone, and for several numbers was silent on the subject, when one morning my respectable little friend, Monsieur Achille Barbierre, came into my office, took off his hat, made me three bows, and said:

"Monsieur Editor—*Je suis bien fache* dat you say no ting of de spectacle, de comedie, in your papier. I go tojours au spectacle—dat is way I have learn your language so parfaitment bien. Now I have peruse your papier tomorrow morning before breakfast in the afternoon—you nevair say someting about de comedie. I cannot no more be you *abonne*."

Saying this, he took a pinch of snuff—made me three bows, put on his hat, and was no longer numbered among my subscribers.

THE TRUMPET.

The affairs of my paper now began to go on swimmingly. Several unexpected pieces of good fortune relieved my mind of a weighty burthen. Mr. Obadiah Thompson wrote me word on the margin of the Cahawba Democrat, (with the pen drawn over the writing,) that if I would publish some of his original poetry, he would not only leave off abusing me himself, and shut the flood gates of the United States Federal Republican, the Henry Clay Recorder, and the Macdonough Jacksonian, but he would puff me and my paper till he had puffed away the recollection of all unkind feeling. I must here stop one moment to pay a just tribute of admiration to the wonderful efficacy and consistency of the law, and at the same time explain how I came to receive communications first written on the margin of newspapers, and then erased. Although every one is pleased on receiving a letter, no one can bear to pay for it, and most people would at any time take six shillings worth of trouble to avoid eighteen pence postage. The conductors of newspapers were, often wont to interchange their familiar ideas upon matters and things by inscribing them upon their printed

sheets, thus cheating the post office department of innumerable small contributions. To avoid this, a law was enacted inflicting a penalty of fifty dollars for every similar offence. An editor from down east was soon informed against, but he proved that he had always drawn a line over his epistolary correspondence, which the court decided (although the words were not rendered illegible) was sufficient to take the offence out of the statute; and so they go on as usual, and snap their fingers under the very nose of the law.

In accordance with our new arrangement, I was soon as much bedaubed with praise as I had previously been with slander. My editorial articles were copied all over the United States, and although many papers re-printed them without credit, and sometimes as original communications, yet on the whole I found my fame rising rapidly. My subscribers increased in such numbers that I was about making some very extensive and profitable arrangement, by which the typographical beauty of the work should be increased, and some individuals of great talent enlisted in my service.

Every thing promised that I should establish myself on a higher eminence than ever editor reached before, when my flowery prospects were nearly blighted by a trumpet. In recapitulating the prominent features of my history, I am more than ever led to acquiesce in the justice of the poet,

> "Great trees from little acorns grow,
> Great streams from little fountains flow;"

but to be ruined by a trumpet! I can scarcely sit still enough to write while I think of it.

One unlucky night, when wearied with the drudgery of my business, I sought relaxation at one of the theatres. I will say nothing about the actors, thought I, lest I "interfere with them personally," as they call criticising them; but during the performance by the orchestra of a charming overture, I noticed that the combined harmony of the instruments was slightly interrupted by the sound of a trumpet, which, from some unaccountable cause, did not seem managed with its usual adroitness. I traced the discordant notes to a little

fat gentleman, who blew it till his cheeks were puffed out like a Boreas. I was reminded of Anthony Van Corlær, the trusty and immortal trumpeter of Peter the Headstrong, mentioned in Knickerbocker's History of New York, the only true and impartial book ever written. Like his predecessor he introduced sundry fanciful demisemiquavers, altogether original, which discovered the most wonderful genius for extemporaneous musical composition ; but the envious and wilful persons who composed the rest of the band, regardless of his variations, did never stop to listen, nor to let others listen, but played right ahead, whereby it sometimes occurred that they had reached the end of their tune when the trumpet was flourishing gracefully about in the middle. I thought I should do the worthy musician a favor by informing him of his mistake, and therefore took the earliest opportunity of indicting a few remarks, in a most amicable tone, requesting him to keep his trumpet within bounds. The next day I had all the orchestra round to my office, to read the article, one after the other. First came the violins—pale, thin, genteel looking gentlemen. They read it through, every word of it; all laughed—and some of them bought the number. Then came the bassoon and trombone. The bassoon and trombone always look askew at the trumpet. Then the clarionet walked in and shook his sides at the downfall of his neighbor ; and by and by entered the bass viol, and added his triumph to the destruction of the poor trumpet. The whole tribe, flute, horn, piano, cymbals, triangle, and kettle drums, were seen at short intervals, in great glee, the wind instruments in particular, visiting my office, as soon as it was buzzed around that the blower of the trumpet had been blown up himself, and even some of the leading chorus voices were heard congratulating themselves that the trumpeter had at length met his just deserts. I was at first pleased, then surprised, and afterward alarmed at the "sensation," as the phrase is, which my poor little unconscious paragraph prduced. Judge of my consternation, when the man with the overshoes said the trumpeter was neither more nor less than a man of immense fortune, entirely without family, and who had no other occupation, business, or idea in life but playing on his

trumpet. I might have written the theatre down with half the danger I incurred in meddling with this confounded trumpet. They told me also that his love of his instrument was only equalled by his love of revenge, and that it was certain he would never let me rest till he had inflicted some deep blow upon my interest.

Several weeks passed away, and I was flattering myself upon having escaped an impending calamity, when I found in one of the newspapers, whose editor I had mortally offended by praising a particular line of steam boats, with the owners of which the worthy gentleman had quarrelled, an article recommending to the admiration of the public a magnificent periodical, full of engravings, of a superior kind, and by far the cheapest and the best which had ever appeared in any country. In due time, the publication came forth, with nothing original in it but some insolent allusions to flimsy contemporaries. Every newspaper in the United States took up the cry, and gave each week a half column of puffs to the new publication. It was soon pompously announced that the original numbers were nearly all bought up, and that the list of subscribers was increasing so rapidly that the demand for the work could not be supplied. I could not conceive how a journal, with so little intrinsic merit, should have sprung so suddenly up, and excited such a ferment in the public. I at last traced it to the little trumpeter, who depending on his immense wealth, had started the work, and paid its way out of his own funds.

The public has been taken in so often by high sounding schemes, which turned out in the end to be bubbles, that I wonder he is not ashamed to show his face in the city; yet, so far from this being the case, the more he is caught the more ready and willing he seems to be so—as some little fool of a fish, after having escaped from one hook swallows the very next he meets. It is strange that with his hundred thousand eyes he cannot see into things more accurately, and that being such a giant in strength he allows every cunning rogue to take hold of his nose, and lead him just where he pleases. The plain truth is, he is a great, good natured, foolish sort of animal, not troubled with

any superfluity of knowledge or sense, and with no more reasoning powers than my dog.

I have frequently heard that the quarrels of religious men, of politicians, of actors, and doctors, were carried on with extraordinary bitterness. In embracing a literary life I confess I had cherished a hope that it obviated all necessity for unkind feeling. My little trumpeter taught me the extent of my error. Editors are but men placed in situations calculated to draw out their worst passions. My rival carried on his periodical with great spirit, and left no means untried of ruining me. He gave his paper a form precisely similar to mine, but issued it at half the price, which I knew he could not do without sinking vast sums of money. He wrote to my agents, and offered them higher commissions, and finally induced many of my subscribers to discontinue. My Moscow correspondent, too, while taking supper in an oyster cellar in Chatham row, fell into a dispute with my resident agent in Paris, and each attempted to convince the other by hitting him on the nose, till they were both compelled to take to their beds: and the man who used to do all my sentimental poetry went over to the enemy in a most treacherous and ungrateful manner. Several of my other most valuable prose correspondents took offence, I knew not wherefore. I could not steer clear through all these quicksands, when the little trumpeter injured himself one night before a fashionable audience, by attempting to execute a flourish upon his instrument, too much for the strength of mortal man. He died—his paper shared his fate—and I was left once more to stand upon my own merits.

INDEPENDENCE OF THE PRESS.

THE field was now clear, the little trumpeter dead, Colonel Jackson and his high minded friends gave me no further trouble, I had completely appeased the wrath of the Cahawba Democrat, the Macdonough Jacksonian, and all that gang—and, as a distant relation died and left me an estate, I paid off my debts, and began to be called a "good man" in Wall street. The president of the New York Botanical Bank took off his

hat to me in the street; and it was no sooner generally understood that my name was valuable on paper, than it was whispered about that I was a young man of talent. Now let the reader, who, in the foolishness of his soul, envies the prosperity of my affairs, tax his imagination to conceive the most extraordinary of all misfortunes that ever happened to mortal. It shows, however, what a stupid monster the public is, for whom I once cherished such profound respect. There was a time when the public was to me a monarch, gifted with the most sublime attributes. I approached him only with the deepest reverence, listened to his words as wisdom, and submitted to his decisions without presuming to dream of questioning their most unimpeachable correctness. I felt even as the lowest and most insignificant Turkish slave that ever crawled forth from the meanest abode of poverty and ignorance, when brought into the presence of his magnificent sovereign, whose glance could instantaneously consign him to the bow string. But now I look upon him as a great, uncouth, senseless creature, who has not wit enough to see which side his bread is buttered. He is perfectly managed by a few sly rogues, who act as keepers, and bestow every exterior mark of respect upon him, bowing their heads down to the ground, and saluting him with swelling titles, but laughing all the while in their sleeves, and making merry at his expense as soon as they are fairly behind his back. He is the common butt of those, who, before his face, treat him with the greatest reverence, and who derive the most profit from his friendship. The manager condemns his bad taste, and then writes his bill, "the public is respectfully informed," &c. The player, angry that his benefit is a poor one, utters an imprecation behind the scenes, smooths his brow, goes out, lays his hand upon his heart, and babbles about "eternal gratitude" and "profound respect." The publisher sends forth his book, and says, "it's wretched stuff, but it will do for him; pockets the proceeds, and searches for more "stuff," to satisfy his craving appetite; and when something really meritorious comes before him, there is every probability that he will show his teeth, and growl at it, at the instigation of some of his keepers.

I soon surmounted the obstacles, which, in conjunction with the trumpet, had hitherto impeded my progress, and concentrated my exertions upon the paper. I excluded from its columns every thing common place, and filled it with the best written essays upon scientific subjects. Men of education sent me complimentary notices, with requests to put down their names among my subscribers; and it was gravely pronounced by the critics, that my journal was worthy the perusal of the most learned classes, when my list of patrons began suddenly to diminish with fearful rapidity. The more praise I received, the worse the pecuniary aspect of my affairs grew. I only wanted a little more of the genuine spirit of poetry—a few just reviews of popular living authors—some impartial criticism on the theatres, and a series of essays, in the style of Addison, to ruin me beyond reparation. In a sudden attack of independence one day, I gave publicity to a critique upon pulpit oratory, wherein several ministers were handled according to their merits, and their whole congregations, with their cousins and friends, discontinued in one morning. At another time an admirable article on landlords and tenants, which I obtained with great exertion and expense, caused a fat gentleman with a cane to come into my office in a passion.

"Let me tell you, Mr. Editor," said he, "that I am a holder of real estate in this city. I have fourteen houses, sir; free, unincumbered property. They are mine. I've worked forty years for them like a dog, and I support my family out of the rents, and I'll do with them just what I please, in spite of you, so don't send your miserable paper to me any more."

And about sixteen other fat holders of real estate, with canes, came around, one after the other, and discontinued their subscriptions.

I began to give up my theory of the independence of the press. It can never be independent, except it be rendered so by the public support. Its independence, I once believed, consisted in its willingness and its ability to express just opinions, without reference to the local interests of any party. Soon I found, however, that it consisted in something very different. If I had gone on improving the paper much longer, I should not have

had a single reader; but a short fit of sickness compelled me to neglect it for a few weeks. I was no longer enabled to pay for valuable communications; I took up with whatever came in my way; praised every body, and every thing, through thick and thin, and my prospects began to revive a little.

One of my contemporaries found something to displease him in an article which I published, and in a very coarse and insulting paragraph, held it up to public scorn. In reply, I remonstrated with him very temperately, and assured him that he had given the phrase an erroneous construction. In his next paper I read the following, which I suppose I am to consider as characteristic of the independence of the press:

"Mr. ——, of the ——, is a base assassin. He is one of your half horse, half alligator, and a little of the steam boat men. He always goes the whole hog. This polluted wretch, whom I would not take hold of with a pair of tongs, nor then, unless to give him the chastisement his impudent audacity so richly merits; this degraded outcast from all human society, who talks about *our* institutions and our country, is himself an Englishman; and if he possessed sufficient wit to know the name of the corrupt party, whose filthy principles he circulates like a vile tool, would be a tory. We shall horsewhip him as soon as our leisure will permit us to visit the city which he infests with his pestilential presence. Nor must he suppose that until then he can escape the exposure his long train of cowardly falsehoods deserves. We, Thomas Jenkins, pledge ourselves to show our readers that he is a perjured scoundrel, so totally destitute of every common feeling of humanity, that the earth groans under him as he walks."

Now Mr. Thomas Jenkins may be a very decent name, but I never heard of it before. I was naturally very indignant, and inwardly vowed that if I should ever meet with the gentleman I would give him some slight testimonial of my regard.

One afternoon I was waited on by a little, diminutive dandy, with a rattan and whiskers. He was pale and consumptive looking, and had that kind of cough which reminds a man of a quiet corner in a country churchyard, and makes him inclined to moralize. Yet a long

collar protruding over his chin, and the air of studied grace with which he rapped his slender instruments of perambulation with his rattan, taught the observer that while the precarious personage before him did remain on earth, it was his wish to appear to every possible advantage.

"Pray, sir," said he, taking off his hat, and looking very amiable and interesting, "have I the honor of addressing the editor of the ——?"

"I am the editor," said I.

"I am very happy to know you, sir," he said. "This is my first visit to your city, and my friends have been so kind as to furnish me with letters to many of your citizens. Do me the favor to peruse this."

He handed me a letter, tapped his boots with his rattan, yawned, and cast his eyes about, with the air of a self-satisfied fop, while I read the following:

"DEAR SIR—This will make you acquainted with my excellent friend, Mr. Thomas Jenkins, editor of the —— of this place. He is a gentleman of education, and I should esteem myself greatly obliged by any attentions you may have it in your power to render him during his stay in your city. Yours truly, P. B."

"Why, you impudent scoundrel," said I, as soon as my surprise suffered me to speak; "how dare you, sir, presume to trust your body within reach of one whom you have so deeply insulted and aggrieved?"

I laid my hand on his collar, and paused at the expression of utter astonishment which appeared in his face, as he replied—

"Insulted! aggrieved! who? I? My dear sir, I beg your pardon. Some mistake, I presume. You have mistaken the person: my name, as you will perceive by the letter which you hold in your hand—my name, sir, is—Jenkins—Mr. Jenkins—Mr. Thomas Jenkins."

I took down a file of his paper. "Are you, sir," I asked, "the editor of this infamous, coarse, brutal, disgraceful, and licentious journal?"

"Why, here's my paper, sure enough," said Mr. Thomas Jenkins. "Yes, sir, I *am* the editor of this journal; but, sir, upon my soul—why, you use language in reference to it, I confess—I—"

"Look here," said I, dragging Mr. Jenkins by his

collar to a position where the article which I have taken the trouble to copy above stared him full in the face; "look here, sir, at its licentiousness. Did you write that article, sir? answer me that."

"What! that article? Let's see?" And he hummed over the conspicuous words—"base assassin—alligator—steam boat—goes the whole hog—chastisement—vile tool, cowardly falsehoods—ah! yes, I remember—ha, ha, ha! What! that's the way the wind blows, is it? Yes, sir, I certainly did write that; but, sir, I hope you don't remember these trifles. We editors, you know, are privileged to a little freedom of speech; but bless my soul, sir, I meant no harm. Why, there is not a single human being, I do assure you, sir," laying his hand on his heart, "whom I respect more sincerely than I do you. I always respected you, as every man must who knows you, but—this paragraph was written in a hasty moment. Perhaps I was a little warm; but that's the way we editors do these things; they give spirit to the paper. People always understand them; they mean nothing; but, if you were offended I beg your pardon, and assure you it was unintentional."

Although I did not admire Mr. Jenkins's style of giving spirit to his paper, I could not proceed after such an humble apology, and so we parted.

EDITORIAL EASE.

Tuesday.—Read and reviewed three novels, a quarto dictionary, and three octavo volumes of travels; wrote an account of the present state of the world, cut up the legislature and the corporation, and criticised the performances at the two theatres last evening; also the grand oratorio, and Mr. Wiseacre's lectures on ornithology; received and rejected nine communications, and went to a dinner.

Afternoon. Three beautifully bound volumes on my table. Albums! from the three Misses Damper, with a request to hand them over the next morning to Mr. H., then to Mr. W., Mr. J., and indeed nearly all the letters of the alphabet. What would the fair nymphs have said could they have heard the welcome I gave them? What

must be, however, as some learned logician declared, must be; so I sat me down, and endeavored to put my poetical machinery into operation.

"Confound the women!" I muttered, as I dipped my newly mended pen into the inkstand, and with contracted brow prepared to compose something soft and airy. "Confound the women. I wish the whole sex were at the bottom of lake Asphaltites." I wrote—To Miss Clementina J. Damper,

> Could those bright eyes whose every glance
> Sends blissful raptures through my frame,
> Could they but—

A knock at the door introduced to my notice a little person with spectacles and a cane—an imitation gentleman; whom, although arrayed in new attire, you could detect for a vagabond and a quack by a single glance. With a bow, which was evidently intended as a graceful one, he said,

"I presume I have the honor of addressing the editor of the——?"

"I am the editor, sir."

"Then, sir, I appeal to you to enlighten the world upon the subject of my new pectoral, mysterious, revivifying, anti-dyspeptic syrup. It relieves every thing, sir. Consumption, croup, cancer, colds, fever, and liver complaints. It renders the voice clear and sonorous, and is, therefore, extremely beneficial to vocalists and public speakers. It makes the hair grow, and prevents the toothache. I wish you to mention me in your paper; and also publish this certificate, which I assure you is a voluntary thing on the part of the person by whom it was drawn:

'"This is to certify that I, John G. Brown, of the state of Missouri, did for many years labor under—'"

I cut him short, and having succeeded in sending him about his business, not without difficulty, sat down once more to Miss Damper's album. I had not, however, read further than "blissful raptures," when a man came in with a piece of sponge, about as large as my head. He flung it down upon the table, so that it overset the inkstand on Miss Damper's album, and said,

"Do you see that, sir?"

"Certainly, sir."

"Well, what do you suppose it is?"

"Why, a piece of sponge."

"Well, but is it not a very beautiful specimen—soft as satin, and almost as white as snow!"

"It is really a very pretty piece, indeed."

"Very well, sir; now I want you to say just so much in your paper. I live five hundred and seventy-nine Barlow street, opposite Patrick Quin's grocery store, and I want you to give me a puff."

As he departed a fellow about six feet high entered, with a large cowhide, and walked gravely up toward my chair. I hastily ran over in my memory all my satirical pieces, for I thought my time had arrived.

"Are you the editor of the ——?"

"I am, sir," said I, boldly.

"Well, Mr. Dickerson desired me to hand you this."

"And pray who is Mr. Dickerson?"

"Why, he makes gentlemen's fashionable canes, and wants you to give him a lift in your paper. He says he makes the best canes, horse whips, and cowhides in the city."

"Cowhides, fellow!" said a strange voice. "What do the public care about cowhides? Let me speak. Have I the honor of seeing the editor of the ——?"

I nodded assent, perhaps a little impatiently, for I thought there was a pretty fair prospect of the three Misses Damper's albums going home spoiled by one of my worst incipient efforts. The new intruder, with many flourishes, informed me that he was a schoolmaster.

"I, sir," said he, "belong to the new system. I teach on improved principles; so easy and expeditious, that my scholars learn more in one week than by the ordinary method they would be able to acquire in a year. I not only teach them quick and well, but you see I teach them *cheap*. My plan is to begin at the foundation and proceed upward, on such short, clear, comprehensive, and extraordinary terms, that the natural eye and the understanding are both struck at the same moment, and study becomes an actual delight. You see, Mr. Editor, I've a *natural tact*. In six lessons I teach drawing; in six more three or four different kinds of painting, inclu-

ding botany; I perfect a boy in English grammar in twelve; and in a fortnight he is completely competent to write the best poetry, and indeed every species of composition; a few more lessons, and he understands elocution, singing, and playing on the piano, guitar, and harp, flute, flageolet, and violoncello; and, by a few familiar lectures, I communicate the art of chirography, so that no one can fail to write a neat, rapid, and beautiful hand. The tyro is instructed in geography by the aid of a machine, wherein the ocean, seas, lakes, &c., &c., are represented by real water; where little mountains are erected, and continents and islands resemble the real world. Now, sir, I have written an editorial article, which I wish you to print as your own, and—"

But I will not longer trouble the reader with my pedagogue, whom I dismissed as soon as I could in decency. I immediately proceeded to finish Miss Damper, when the devil broke in upon my poetic aspirations with the awful cry of copy.

"Copy, Peter! You have enough. Why the critique on the theatres last night takes up two columns."

"Yes, sir, but one of the plays was changed, and we thought you'd wish to wait till some other time."

"The deuce—and the literary notice of the quarto dictionary?"

"It's lost, sir. We looked in all the drawers, and it's nowhere to be found."

"And how is the state of the world?"

"Set up, sir, and the men waiting for more."

"Mistress sent me for the books, sir," said a little, red headed fellow, with a green baize apron."

"Books? What books? And who is your mistress?"

"The albums, sir. Miss Damper sent me for 'em. She's going out of town."

"Pray, sir, what may *you* want?" said I, to a bald headed, stupid looking fellow, who stood bowing and scraping at some distance, with a bottle in his hand.

"Sir, I'm the man that invented the compound Asiatic mercurial syrup for the growth of the hair. I wish you to say something about me in your paper."

I was prevented from replying by a boy, who came running breathless into the room.

"Well, sir, what now? More mercurial cerate, or

have you come to announce the invention of a plan to keep people in a hurry from getting out of breath?"

"Mr. Hopson, sir, told me to give you this as soon as possible."

Mr. Hopson was one of my most valuable correspondents; he had written an article in which the word "communication" occurred three times in four lines, and, to obviate the tautology, I had taken the great liberty of substituting "information" in the place of one which did not at all interfere with the sense. This note informed me that I had spoiled his article; "he wished the press stopped, and the piece taken out. He would write for me no more. It was my privilege to reject what did not please me—a privilege which no one could dispute—but never to *alter*."

Before I had finished his epistle another was handed me from a young poet, some of whose verses I had rejected. They were not even fit for an album. The note ran thus:

"SIR—If you refuse my poetry, which has been pronounced by competent judges to be a piece of very superior merit, I should like to know why you publish such stupid trash as you do every week in your silly paper?"

This cost me thirty-seven and a half cents postage.

"What shall I give the men for copy?" said Peter.

My friend Jennings dropped in at this crisis. He is a professional lounger, and an interminable talker. He entered puffing a long whiff of blue smoke from his lips, with the air of one who luxuriates in the enjoyment of the real Havana, and as he stretched himself out on three chairs, he exclaimed,

"How d'ye do? What an easy time you editors have. Nothing to do but scribble a little. No responsibilities, no fears, never offend any body, never get offended; who would not be an editor?"

FAMILIAR CHIT-CHAT.

"WHAT a medley lies on my table this morning. Here's a work in sheets—London edition—the only

copy that ever crossed the Atlantic. It will be re-published here soon."

"You have read it?"

"No."

"Then you know not how it will go, Mr. Editor?"

"Just as well as if it had appeared last year, Mr. R. The author is here himself, has dined with the critics, the reviews are all written; it is to be ushered into existence with a flourish of trumpets in the ——, which is to be re-echoed in the ——. Mr. A. has pledged himself, Mr. B. is the writer's boon companion, Mr. C. will praise it because he hates the author of the ——, which is to be published at the same time; and Mr. D. puffs every thing in the lump, and gets the books for his trouble."

"But the public, Mr. Editor, the public—"

"The fiddlestick, Mr. R. the fiddlestick. That modest thin octavo yonder is the new satirical poem, damp from the press; it lies by the side of the Christian Expositor. These engravings are from ——. What scratching. The man there looks like a monkey. Mem. —three creditable engravings—meet the encouragement they deserve. Notes, too—a season ticket to the dancing bear; a prospectus of a new journal; the first number of a periodical, just established in Louisiana; new music, new magazine, specimen of improved type, and—but here comes Peter from the post office with letters and papers."

"Why what a mass of information you must receive from that immense heap!"

"You forget, R., you forget. We gain from them news of a freshet, or a blow; but these are streams, not fountains. They bear from the large cities, the enormous reservoirs, the floods of news with which they irrigate the distant country. For one moment look over those lying by your elbow. Open at the first page. Now read."

"Mr. Ingham's letter—the cabinet."

"Now the next."

"The cabinet—Mr. Ingham's letter."

"And the next."

"Heavy fall of rain. Mr. Berrian. Mr. Ingham's letter."

"Peep into that little blue seven by nine. What says its worship?"

"Mr. Ingham's letter. Mr. Calhoun. Ah! here are some critical observations.

"'Mr. Calhoun's letter is now before the public. It is pervaded throughout by a remarkable tone of candor and manly vigor. The sentiments of this invaluable document should be widely circulated through the nation!'"

"Well, well, that will do. Now unfold that brown fellow in large type. 'The Independent United States Champion.'

"Read the motto."

"'To wake the soul by tender strokes of art.'

"'Mr. Calhoun. The infamous epistle of this traitor to his country is now before the public. We have given the concluding portion a place in our columns of today. The reader will observe the tone of grovelling pusillanimity and hypocritical cunning which pervades the whole of this monstrous confession of apostacy and wickedness. The abandoned and licentious character of the writer can only be equalled by the—'"

"Well, a truce to politics. You see how the world wags, dear reader; and may conceive the labor of a poor editor, in endeavoring to pick the grain of truth out of all this chaff. But yet who cares? These are but the weeds of a luxuriant soil; let them sprout up; among them much good is accomplished. Here's the 'Invincible Patriot'—an arrant, time-serving creature as ever breathed; and the 'Greenburgh Messenger'—that growls and grumbles like a bear; and so on through the end of the chapter. Though, to change the figure, many a one shines through the crowd with the native light of intelligence and honesty, and sheds its beams of wit and wisdom upon the local subjects of the town or village where it has chosen its orbit.

"There is one thing which provokes a smile upon the visage of a person accustomed to the large scale on which matters are transacted in a populous city: viz. the exaggerated importance which occurrences receive from the country prints and country places; for instance, a fire. Who cares for a fire in New York? When the

bells peal through the wide silence of the night, the sleepy citizen, perchance, raises himself on his couch, and gazes a moment at the glare reflected upon the heavens, then turns again to sleep; and if a house or two, or a few blocks are burned down, how carelessly the eye glances over the paragraph in the corner of the next day's paper, and passes from "twelve new buildings in the Bowery," &c., to the marriages, theatre, auction sales, &c., &c. Look into a country village on such an occasion, or read the next Saturday's gazette, and you learn, "That the inhabitants of the peaceful village of ——, while wrapped in the mantle of unconscious slumber, were startled at the dead of night by the awful and appalling cry of 'fire!' The hideous conflagration first laid hold of Mr. Jenkins's barn, then burned on to the building used as a store by Mr. Jackson, which, dreadful to relate, was totally consumed," &c.

"This peculiarity is yet more visible in case of death. Neither nature nor art has a sound so utterly and inexpressibly mournful as the toll of a funeral bell in the country. It is the very voice of the universal tyrant whispering to your ear, and sinking thrillingly to the innermost core of your heart. A perfect shadow broods over all things. The gloom hushes every dwelling, and is reflected from every face. You cannot shake off the impression. It weighs on your soul like lead; and when the simple crowd come forth, and the coffin, heavy with that which a few hours before was a breathing, thinking, perchance, hoping being like yourself, meets your eye; how the chilling influence curdles the blood in your veins, and makes it creep around your shoulders. Yet what is death in a city? What an empty mockery is a funeral to all but the stricken bosoms which are bleeding and writhing with the cruel bolt. With what apathy, peradventure mirth, the shuffling crowds glance on the ominous train? The clattering hoofs of the beau's steed strike fire as he dashes recklessly along, the clerk hurries onward with his bundle, the stage driver's whip echoes as he hastens his jaded team; the rapid notes of the piano may be heard through the damask curtain that shades the apartment of fashion; and the sweet belle floats by gracefully with the never-ebbing tide, and dreams not that she herself, maugre those sunny eyes and that placid bosom, may, even before the flower on

her brow has faded, be thus borne on, and thus disregarded."

"Hey-day, sir, here's a digression—from an editor's table to a grave yard."

"A digression, R., suffer me to hint, neither unnatural nor uncommon."

"But I set out with you in hopes of being amused, and you have wheedled me into a sermon. I thought you would fling off your suit of sables, and laugh with me, not preach."

"True, true, my kind and merry companion; pardon the transgression, but remember that the mind is restless as the magnet, and sadness is written on so many points of the moral compass, that the thought, in its thousand vibrations cannot always point to pleasure."

"Hush, sir editor, what have *you* to do with sadness? Your health is good, your conscience is unseared, your journal is popular, you count on your list of patrons names that make the heart leap, and your avocations lead you through the most enchanting scenes. What other men seek as amusement you enjoy from the necessity of business; and instead of wasting life in some pursuit which requires neither literature nor reflection, you are continually called upon to study the one, and to develope and cultivate the other. Your existence is like that of bees and birds. You are forever fluttering around fruit and flowers. You feed upon all the elegant essences of fashion, pleasure, and science. Nearly all other professions lead man aside from these paths into something grovelling and tedious, which he pursues only from considerations of business, as the sailor imprisons himself in a floating dungeon, and consents to toss for months on the deep, at the peril of the wind and waves; or as the miner digs into the bowels of the earth for the hidden metal. When such as these find themselves in the light and pure regions which you inhabit, well may they look upon you with envy."

"Talkest thou thus to me, dear reader? Then do I know thee for one with a bright fancy, but an inexperienced mind. Art thou yet so fresh in the pilgrimage as not to have learned that the most delicious food the soonest palls upon the palate? That honey may become loathsome; that you may weary even of the

warble of a bird? There are times when the eye aches with the glitter of splendor. It is decreed that nothing, literally nothing, in this system of imperfect perfection, called physical and moral nature, can stand the test of close familiarity. The most polished marble betrays its coarseness when exposed to the microscope. There is no music but you will at length turn away from it with sated ear, or detect in it some jarring association; no face but some unlucky angle or repulsive expression may flash upon you from an unexpected position, or in an accidental glare of light; no character but at some of these dull cold moods, which occasionally float damply and darkly along the atmosphere of all minds, you shall stumble upon a weakness or a vice, a perception blunted to delicacy, a blindness to what you deem a truism, a stirring in the heart that refuses to vibrate when you touch it affectionately, a something indefinite, as a chill in the air of a summer day, which after all may be in yourself. This is the craving of unlimited expectation, for more than nature has created —the fineness of keen love, whose exquisite edge can only live in the fancy, and is turned by the touch of any thing human. I remember I once had occasion to travel over a country scarcely settled, upon a journey of many weeks' duration. My way lay directly through oak forests, across the sources of large rivers, and by the most romantic spots that ever travelling painter treasured in his sketch book. I had cherished the love of forest scenery like a passion. Its magnificent clumps of giant trees, its calm air of primeval silence and grandeur, the vast variety of branches, which sometimes bent superbly over my head like an arch, and sometimes extended to the ground like the walls of a fairy palace, faintly reflecting its green light around, and fringing the sides of the scarce trodden road. For the first week or two these perfectly enamored me. I was utterly alone, with a steed that might have borne Richard the Lion-hearted through the proudest tournament of England; and as I mused on the broken bridge, or watched the wild squirrel leaping from tree to tree, or descended into the Eden depths of the luxuriant valley, or mounted to the summit of the hill, and caught a panoramic view of the wide woods and shining rivers

below, I almost vowed, in my soul, to abandon the trickery of artificial society, and fly here, where nature's gifts might be enjoyed on her own bosom."

"Pray, Mr. Editor, that is all very fine, but what has it to do with your profession ?"

"Patience, dear R., patience; youth is so impetuous. Even as thy fancy has painted the charms of an editor's life, so was this journey to me. In three weeks I was so tired of the eternal recurrence of similar images, beautiful as they actually were, that I pined for an open field or paved street, and the hum and bustle of the town. I was fairly sick of leaves, branches, hills, valleys, and the trunks of trees. When I went to bed and closed my eyes, the everlasting boughs were waving around me, the squirrels were leaping across the ceiling, the wind was rushing over the foliage, I could not exclude them from my imagination, and when I galloped into a town of some fashion, and entered the ample hall of a large hotel, I felt as if I had been saved from drowning. Thus may the seeming fair things of earth become valueless and unwelcome if forced upon the enjoyment. Even Rasselas was wretched in the happy valley."

"And pray, Mr. Editor, of what may these indefinite disadvantages thou speak'st of be composed ?"

"One of them, my respected R., is the impossibility of chatting long in the morning with an agreeable friend like thyself. Business must be attended to. I have already staid with thee too long. Come in some other time, good friend, then, I will confess all. Had I *but* time,

> 'I could a tale unfold
> Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
> Make thy two eyes—'

But here's Peter, with his melancholy face, for more copy, to cram down the throat of my voracious publication; therefore, by your leave, I shall postpone this eternal blazonry till a future visit."

MIDNIGHT THOUGHTS.

I SAT at my window to watch the heavens all clustered with tremulous stars on a cloudless summer night. How the soul sympathizes with the magnificence of nature. To me there is nothing more impressive and sublime than silence. And then to reflect that in this deep and universal hush, the stupendous globe, and the interminable system of flashing worlds, are for ever performing their revolutions. There is more morality in this than in a homily. It disenthrals the soul from every artificial excitement, and affords the heart an opportunity to speak its own eloquence. Music hath its charm, and so hath the revel, and the flash and dazzle of fashion aud beauty; and, under their thrilling influences, the young and the ardent, with unwithered hopes and passions, might tread boldly into the perilous battle. But it seems to me, that if some dark accident should startle me with the conviction that my last hour had come, I should require no sublimer preparation than a time spent in the perfect solitude—the vast stillness, the grandeur, the glory of the midnight! Deep, hushed, beautiful midnight—and silence—absolute silence in the sky and over the earth—upon the deserted street—and in the closed temple. Is not this a dream? and why should it not be? What more will it be tomorrow? Slumber shall seal our eye lids, and a few fantastic images roll in fragments through our imagination, and the flashing stars will sink down behind the river, and morning will come, and we shall go on in the old routine, and when we look back upon this quiet and lovely hour, and feel this now lonely pavement trembling with the thundering of wheels, thronged with the crowds of money hunters, how shall we recall this dim moonlight—this deathly calm—as other than a dream? And may not all life be thus reasoned up? What is it all but a dream? He with whom yesterday we roved and forgot care; whom today finds on the ocean bound for foreign climes—what is he but a dream? She to whose side we stole a few hours ago—whose mere presence was a joy that

has departed—what is she but the veriest vision, as separate from the dull reality of our existence as yonder distant star, that will flash on just so brilliantly when we are gone from the earth? And he who once loved us, but now moulders in the dust with this very light upon his tomb, what is he but a faint vision? a something conceived in the mind. What matter is it whether waking or sleeping, since to us he is *nothing?* When you read this hereafter, dear reader, by sunlight, in the flush of hope and enjoyment, you will frown. But this comes of writing at night. It is as natural for us to be sentimental at such an hour, as it is for those shining clouds to wreathe themselves into each other's bosom and float away down the blue tide of heaven. And this is night! To one who had never before witnessed this aspect of nature, what a sublime and magnificent wonder it would be? It impresses us more than eloquence or music. It comes fraught with deep and swelling thoughts. The world appears less, and our single being more. This is the time for the atheist and the scoffer to repent—examine his cold creed—to think of his coarse jest, and not in the crowd, where the brain is teeming with false images and excitements, and the heart full of pride and intoxicating passions. And who beside ourselves are waking now? The pale student over his book, forgets his untouched pillow and toils with the hope of fame. And all the treasure of knowledge and thought he has been heaping up for years, death will perchance tomorrow wash away with a single wave. And the watchman is pacing his round beneath the window, and misery fills the eyes of some with tears instead of slumber, and the sweet girl with her irrepressible mirth and winning beauty, whom perchance you have gazed on with a thrill in the haunts of fashion, struck down from the bright flock of joyful creatures, by the fatal arrow of disease, is tossing on her downy couch as if stretched on fire, and would give her beauty and her fortune to inhale one fresh breath. And the epicure, who has wasted his life to pamper his palate and seek pleasure in refined combinations never dreamed of by nature, is writhing with gout, and envying the poor farmer who sleeps now the more sweetly for his poverty and toil. And the mother wakes and sobs as she thinks of her

buried child; and the wife, whose husband is on the deep—and the reveller drains the bowl in some secret cave of vice and ribaldry—and the watcher on the deck of the war ship beguiles his hour with thoughts of home—and the culprit immured within the dark prison walls, whose hand is red with human blood, and who tomorrow shall be dragged, with a thousand eyes bent on him, fiercely and scoffingly, to hear the calm voice of judgment read: the doom of death! And at the window of these the pleasant starlight steals in like a careless spirit upon whom the wicked and the wretched have no claim; and the dimly breaking morn shall streak the east with its brilliant blazonry, and the perfumed breeze will blow upon their hot foreheads like a mockery—and so the world goes on and the night ends.

What a change both in physical nature and the aspect of society is wrought by a few short months at this period! The elegant runaways, who have been bearing the blaze of fashion into the quiet recesses of the country, have abandoned the Springs, Niagara and Trenton Falls. She who lately startled the echoes of distant forests with laughter, or held her breath as the magnificent view from the mountain top burst on her wondering sight; she who looked down into the lucid depths of Lake George, or in the flying chariot glided like a sea bird over the marble beach of Rockaway; has now floated with the tide that sets in upon the central ocean, and is here a different being. The youth who pressed her hand in the dance at Saratoga, passes her without a glance in the gay Broadway. The very summer zephyr that kissed her forehead among the Highlands, could it enter the radiant night world that goes on within the lofty theatre, would not recognise the jewelled brow that beams from the boxes like the evening star.

How beautiful are the gradations of the seasons, from the brilliancy of summer, mellowing into the wealth of autumn, till the sun turns away his face like a cooling friend, and leaves the dying forests and fading fields to darken gradually into wintry nakedness and desolation. We remember to have been once strangely chilled with this mournful passing away of bright things. We had stolen to a lovely rural spot, always charming, but when gazed on by one who had just escaped from the bondage

of business, and the artificial world of a city life, positively bewildering and delicious. Every thing was there that a painter could crowd into Eden; and we were one of a party which might have added new rapture even to that blissful retreat. The forest was nearly dark beneath the masses of verdant foliage; the orchard boughs were bent down with their luscious burthens of crimson and gold; and the imprisoned essences of life and beauty were bursting out in new and more gorgeous forms from the hedges and the gardens, and decking the white fences with tresses of vines, blossoms and flowers, of dies as superb and glowing as if the rainbow had been broken into a thousand fragments, and scattered along the scene. A sudden illness confined us to our bed for a long period, we scarcely knew how long, and when at length returning health enabled us to venture abroad, one cloudy morning, we remember with what a frozen sense of desolation the marred, naked, dimmed prospect struck our eyes. All the bright trees were stripped, the blooming young flowers were gone, the wind sighed through empty branches, and across a dull expanse of land, whirling and rustling over the dried brittle leaves, and scattering them sometimes on the stream. It seemed as if a curse had fallen upon the spot, and so scathed it—as if, instead of roaming in the interior of the garden of paradise, we had been transported from its bowers into the bleak, dreary, dismal, *real* world. We never felt more forcibly the exquisite beauty of Milton's descriptions. We hope all our young friends have read them; if not, we pray they will put the Pelhams, the Young Dukes, the Thaddeuses of Warsaw, and even the Moores, the Byrons, (*must* we add, the Sir Walter Scotts!) away, and take up John Milton incontinently. Do not be dismayed with a few pompous lines, or a chapter of hard names; but, in the first place, read over Addison's elegant criticisms on "Paradise Lost," published in the Spectator. He will lead you in among its splendors, as a gentle friend would guide you through an ancient city, and point out its monuments, its palaces, and all its hidden wonders. It is with a most dissatisfied feeling that we hear a young intelligent girl say she has never read Milton. We always wish to be in a pleasant, still room with her alone, and all care off our

minds, and so display to her the sublime creations of that blind poet's fancy. We regret that with such a magnificent temple of mind ever by her side—so decorated with all the gorgeousness of rich imagination—so teeming with exalted ethereal influences—so blazing with unsurpassable pictures of life and nature, we regret that she should voluntarily exclude herself from such an exhibition—and passing carelessly by the gates, waste her precious faculties and ever flying hours upon unworthy objects. We would not that the glowing girl should dim the lustre of her eyes in midnight studies, or turn from the graceful duties and pleasures of domestic life and social intercourse to become pedantic and learned; but no being with a mind and a soul can enter into the spirit of such a poem without feeling nobler and happier. It dignifies the character with lofty meditations—it breaks away the webs which prejudice, passion, interest, and the common place circumstances of society are for ever weaving around the heart.

REVERIES.

HEAVEN bless Walter Scott! There is almost a melancholy in the reflection that the warmest wish of an obscure scribbler like myself is utterly valueless to one who has so often been near me, like a guardian spirit, in sickness, weariness, and despondency, and shed such cheerful light across some of the loneliest and dreariest passages of my life. I am without any companion in a strange and crowded city. My hotel is swarming with new faces. I hear laughter and music, and the rustling of a silk gown, and a half open door discovers a finely furnished parlour, and a group of graceful girls, one of whom is running her hand lightly over the keys of a piano. But I am excluded from the merry company, and now the closed door hides them from my sight. I had roamed around the city: to the reading room—to the book stores—the museum, at which latter receptacle of wonders, I was edified by

the same eternal monotony of stuffed pelicans and ostriches, great bears and lions glaring on me with their bright glass eyes, snakes, autographs, monkeys smoking cigars, overgrown oystershells, and turtles with two heads. I had snatched a glance at the theatre, and mused on the bridge—I had read the Directory and the almanac, and subjected myself to the operation of my polite friend the barber, with the laudable design of surmounting so much time. He had powdered my chin and dressed my hair according to the uninterrupted dictates of his own fancy. My shoes were polished—my clothes brushed. I had stolen a single glance at my insignificant self in a full length mirror, which adorns the drawing room of the G. hotel, and was just stretching myself, with the indolent *ennui* of a fashionable lady, upon a sofa by the fire, when an old, torn volume, full of dog's ears, met my eye behind the clock, and was immediately seized with the hungry avidity of a shark. Some friendly spirit had, very opportunely, supplied me with what turned out to be "Woodstock," by that magnificent fellow—that exhaustless fountain of literary pleasure—that princely author and honest man, Walter Scott. That I had read it several times before, which, in reference to most books, would have arrested all further proceedings in that way, was precisely the reason why I should read it again; so, without further ado, in I plunged, and the heavy hours, which had hitherto grated so harshly across my soul, floated by like light and silent clouds. Late in the afternoon I looked up to find the sky all reddening with the sunset. During the evening I forgot the bustle and solitariness of a great hotel, and at length I closed the second volume; when the last pages were dimly seen through the gathering moisture of my eyes. This sprang not from sickly sentimentality, but from the glowing excitement with which I followed this potent enchanter through the living and thrilling scenes of human life.

What an admirable production it is! With what a strong and vivid reality Wildrake stands out from the canvass? How individual, yet how natural! Pierson and Cromwell, by a few masterly outlines, are perfectly distinct and impressive—and over even old Bevis the author has shed such a coloring, that the noble beast

shares the interest of the reader. Is not such a book a glorious wonder? A few marks upon paper, borne about in the pocket, and which to many would be a mystery, a mere blank, yet what a magical influence it possesses. Suppose an intelligent savage, unacquainted with the beautiful art by which we convey *thought* from realm to realm, should behold a more enlightened being availing himself of this refined source of amusement; when the apparently useless object is opened, and the eyes rest upon it, mark how it arrests their light and wandering flashes. Hour after hour the gaze is fastened on the silent pages—they shut the ear to surrounding sounds—they change the flow of thought—make the heart beat—the eyes moisten—the system glow—the countenance lighten with sudden mirth, or reflect the dark emotions which pass visibly before the mind's eye on the little space of a single page.

Think of the beast's monotonous life, and what a fine and subtle joy has man here in comparison. How it verges toward the borders of a higher existence. How utterly and immeasurably it is beyond their comprehension. If then we are gifted with a capacity so elevated, so extraordinary, so intellectual, and yet of which millions even of our own fellow creatures have been totally ignorant, by a discovery at once so simple and easy, of the resources and hidden treasures which lie sometimes hidden within the reach of man, what glorious secrets in a yet higher life the benificent hand of nature may unlock to the human soul? At what other wonderful fountains may she not suffer us to quench our thirst for knowledge and bliss—fountains, which, perchance, are even now flowing beautifully around us, but which accident or genius, or the invisible influence of a divine spirit, may hereafter lay open to our understanding.

It is curious to contemplate the symmetrical gradations by which the principle of life, as connected with inert matter, rises in beauty and approaches perfection. How it branches up from the dark coarse earth into new, more refined, and wonderful forms and qualities of being. The spirit ranges nearer and nearer the sublime mystery of all life, and at each successive stage increases its power, its knowledge, and its capacities. The

system resembles a tree, which at first seems an obscure and apparently worthless seed, buried in the dust; then the rough barked tree strikes its gnarled roots into the soil; from this, which, although containing the invisible essence and machinery of life, presents little by which the eye can distinguish it from dead matter, behold the smooth and tapering branches spread abroad, and the green leaves burst forth; then flowers of fine coloring, and enriching the air with their balmy breath; and, to crown the perfection of this common piece of nature's handywork, fruit, lovely to the eye, soft and pleasant to the touch, cool and delicious to the taste, hangs clustering among the verdant foliage, drinking life and rich sweetness and crimson beauty from the distant sun, and destined to supply a purpose to beings more immeasurably and inconceivably superior to itself in the scale of creation, than it is above the meanest particle of dust which floats around it in the air. This study of nature's plan —this conviction of man's capacities to go on and fit himself for a higher existence, combined with the instinctive imperishable tenacity with which the mind clings to the consciousness of its immortality, makes atheism and disbelief in a future state an impossibility: not but that there are thousands who think they are skeptical, and who in the moment suffer no doubt of their annihilation to intrude upon them; but it is my opinion, that when brought directly in the face of death they are conscious of a change. This is not the effect of fear or of early associations; it is the voice of nature whispering consolation to her creature, trembling in the agony of the most awful crisis. The mind cannot conceive the idea of its own destruction.

GOING INTO THE COUNTRY.

THIS "going into the country" to recruit, discovers, after all, a very ordinary species of wisdom. I am one who rashly credited the virtues of these rural excursions, and now find myself in the predicament of

an unfortunate valetudinarian, after having swallowed the nostrum of an empiric which affords a temporary relief, only to leave the patient subsequently in a more complete distress. I write this, therefore, as a caution to unwary young men likely to be tempted into a similar snare. At first it was certainly very specious—every thing in the face of nature looked fair and beautiful. The air was scented and exhilarating, and I gave myself up to emotions of pleasure. We found numerous means of "fleeting away the time as they did in the golden age"—we reclined beneath the shade—we wandered along the beach—mounted the hill, and roamed through the woods.

By and bye came on the evening with its balmy breezes. The slight summer shower was over, and the clouds broke apart in painted masses; behind their burnished fragments the crimson sky appeared, glowing with a fine and lingering radiance, which faded like the twilight reveries of the dreamers beneath. These are not hours to waste within a room—they found us pacing and re-pacing the sandy beach—breathing in the odors that floated from the woods and fields. Then as the evening shadows thickened, and the blended and deepened colors of the west had passed like the last splendors of some gaudy and magnificent procession, a light star appeared alone in the overhanging vault, as if it were even now first created. The broad water seemed asleep, but that as it lapped softly with its silver waves upon the shore, its ripples turned to fire, and then the everlasting stars came forth one after another from the depths of the blue distance, lighting our lingering steps with the beams of clustering worlds.

Now all this is very well, but the evil consequences must not be concealed. Before I was betrayed by a designing friend into the power of certain people inhabiting the regions about New York, I was an industrious and contented young man. I was rapidly establishing a reputation for punctuality in business, for my faculties were properly balanced for my daily task. Habit had drilled me into a kind of mechanical routine, and I operated upon my special pleas and bills in chancery with the uninterrupted uniformity of a steam engine, freed from the winds and tides of wandering wishes and

dreamy recollections. My attention was not diverted from the duties before me by intruding pictures of green woods, old bridges, grassy hills, and murmuring waters; and no pleasant voices haunted my ears but such as I could hear by walking around the corner. But now I have relapsed into my idle and troublesome propensities. While my body is in the office where I transact the little business which destiny has committed to my discretion, my soul is off upon some ramble over the hills, or engaged in other occupations which have no more to do with my "orders to show cause," and my "notices of bail," than these interesting manuscripts with the gentle lights of heaven. It is also my misfortune to listen, with such thoughts as I need not enumerate, to all kinds of good music, particularly of the human voice; and this weakness sometimes assumes a very inconvenient, although ludicrous character. When I have heard a song which touches my fancy, my mind involuntarily falls into the measure, and long after the real music has died away the ghost of the tune attends upon my imagination, conjuring up apparitions of all the then accompanying persons and scenes. Sometimes it takes such improper familiarities with my dignity and common sense, that, no matter where I happen to be, it leaps from my heart to my lips, so that I often astonish sober and unsinging people with gratuitous exhibitions of my musical abilities before I can rein in and get the harmonious fiend under any restraint. Thus, the other day, when one of my clients, a huge and uncouth worker in iron, as rough and hard as a mass of his own raw material, whiskers monstrous, and fist like a sledge hammer, asked me what would be the expense of obtaining a dischage on the application of himself and two thirds of his creditors under the revised statutes, I being in excellent voice, astonished the worthy petitioner by exclaiming in such melody as was at the moment floating in my mind, "Come, away then, away then, my merry Swiss girl, to the fields bright with dew lightly stray." On another occasion a very interesting young lady, with a spruce little gentleman, who was soon to call her by the tenderest of names, waited upon me till I should finish a paper which she was to sign. I had no sooner, with an air of internal satisfaction, (for I was, in imagina-

tion, at that very moment picking wild flowers at the foot of a hill,) put the concluding flourish upon the parchment, than, instead of desiring her, as in duty bound, to "have the kindness to attach her signature," I handed her the deed and pen, and requested her, in a fine low voice, to "Meet me by moonlight alone," to the amazement of my fair client, and the extreme horror of the enamored person in new broadcloth clothes by her side, who continued to regard me at a distance during the whole affair with looks of unequivocal distrust. And this is what people call "recruiting." I am not acquainted with the views of medical men upon the subject, but my own opinion is, that a few such recruiting excursions would cause very destructive work among my pleas and declarations. I fear the gods might make me poetical, for the other day I filed a stanza in the clerk's office instead of a præcipe for a capias, and never discovered my error till I took from my pocket what I imagined the lines alluded to, and instead of the lofty language of the bard, I read, at first with perplexity, and as the truth flashed upon me, with horror, Peter Thompson *versus* Charles Jones. Trespass. Damages, five hundred dollars. Capias issued, &c.

SCHOOLMASTERS.

It is a singular fact, that the most important of all employments has been, by common consent, at least in a great majority of instances, surrendered into the hands of men without regard to their literary or moral qualifications. No art is more difficult than that of educating children: none requires more preparation or mental advantages. The requisites of a good teacher are seldom found united. He should be naturally cheerful and affectionate; yet with the very difficult power of applying both his cheerfulness and his affections in a proper manner. He should be not only intelligent and quick, but eloquent and agreeable; for knowledge itself, however extensive and profound it may be, is nothing

to a teacher if unaccompanied by a facility in expressing his ideas in an easy, simple, and attractive discourse. He should not himself have been educated alone by books, but he should rather be one who combines wide and various information upon scientific and literary matters, with an experience of the world, and an understanding of human nature. He must possess acuteness in discriminating between all classes of character and shades of feelings. Without passion he should know how to be severe, and without weakness to be merciful. He must be able to perceive, among the varied dispositions under his care, that one is stupid, lazy, and vicious, and another bright, generous, and lovely; yet his feelings must be balanced so as to avoid partiality, lest he discourage the dull, and spoil the intelligent. He should be neat in his person, and gentlemanly in his manners; for his scholars will learn more by example in matters of a trifling nature, than by any ingenious conversation; and in addition, which perhaps is more important than all others, and without which they will be useless, he must be endowed by nature with an innate deep philanthropy, a glowing ardor, to add to the sum of human happiness, a warmth of heart, that shall not be chilled by labor or destroyed by avarice, leading him to an interest in the beings around him, that shall be visible in those *trifles* of life, which may not be numbered and put on paper; but by which he will gradually endear himself to all who can reason and feel.

How different is this from the reality. School teaching has been generally undertaken, not in accordance with the tastes, the habits, or the choice of the individual, but from necessity. Men who have never studied the beautiful philosophy of the human mind, and who, perchance, hate children and books, resort to the business of instruction as a temporary expedient to make money. They have not undergone any previous preparation. They have no permanent interest at stake, and, perhaps, care not at all whether or not they whom they thus carelessly undertake to instruct, realize any advantage from their efforts. Their attention is occupied with some distant enterprise, to which they mean to return as soon as their circumstances will permit. Sometimes they are fine fellows, and sometimes fools;

and it seems that parents have hitherto exercised but little discretion in determining the capacity of the person to whom they send their children. For this there is no excuse. Any one may be a schoolmaster, and any one will be sure of obtaining some patronage. An account in one of the papers, gives an estimate that there are thirty thousand of the fraternity in the United States. Upon an average, they have probably thirty scholars each. There will be then, nine hundred thousand children committed to their charge. It would be deeply interesting to parents, and to all who regard with hope the rising generation, to behold by some magical power all these collected together in the pursuance of their daily routine. What tyranny, passion, bigotry, and ignorance lurk about those little domains where gentleness, affection, and wisdom should preside! It has been said that no man can bear the consciousness of power without overstepping the limits of moderation. Without acceding to this assertion in its fullest extent, it is certain the continual habit of commanding would lead many into error, and the teacher of a school is most calculated to feel its influence. He rules over a crowd of helpless little beings, who have neither experience nor reason to guide their conduct. Many vexatious trifles must occur to tax his patience. Confinement and disappointment unite in exciting his temper; and though he who has crossed the Alps with Bonaparte, or gone with Mungo Park into the deserts of Africa, may smile at the sufferings of a schoolmaster, yet perhaps the one has as much need of uncommon perseverance, patience, and character as the other. But how few men possess these. And how few there are competent to conduct the delicate and philosophic operation of checking the wanderings of the heart, and opening the powers of the understanding. I received a visit the other day from a quack schoolmaster, for the purpose of obtaining my name to a long list of subscribers, among whom, as I glanced them slightly over, I observed those of some of our most respectable inhabitants. My friend was very sanguine of success, as his patronage was so great; and as his views of education professed to be something extraordinary, and altogether out of the common track, he favored me with his sytem. One of the first steps of a

pedagogue, when about to establish a school, is to proclaim a new system. Some "royal road" up the difficult steep of science is continually appearing before us, whereby the arts and sciences may be taught in a given number of lessons; the dull are to be miraculously inspired, and the brilliant ripened into precocious maturity. The pupil, without any effort, is to be initiated into the profoundest mysteries of learning. A few lessons perfect him in French—he learns dancing from the perusal of a little book—with the assistance of a set of beads he masters arithmetic in a few weeks—and passes an examination in history and geography by means of a painted puzzle. The gentleman in question was a writing master. He had adopted his profession after having abandoned several others. He was originnally a native of Gibraltar, where he learned to speak Spanish and English with fluency. Some nameless revolution drove him to the western world, where, after innumerable peregrinations, he rested in New York. His *debut* before our public was made in the capacity of a grocer; but, at the end of a year, his landlord seized his goods for rent, and kicked him out of the house for reasons best known to himself. He next appeared in one of our neighboring theatres, as "Richard the Third;" but a tolerably numerous audience having hissed him with a singular unanimity of opinion, he threw up his claim to dramatic excellence and cast around his eyes for a more auspicious occupation. Some knowing one now hinted that he had better establish a school, and our hero hastened to assume his vocation. He, therefore, issued a prospectus, modestly proposing to excel any thing that ever had been, or could be done in the way of teaching, and will, very likely, before a year has elapsed, be the proprietor of a celebrated academy, and by parading the prodigious effects of "his system" before the long tried credulity of our "bank note world," will ruin the few deserving candidates for public support, whose modesty has relied with too much confidence upon actual merit.

"My system," said my friend, placing himself before me in an attitude of dignified importance, "my system has been the result of forty years' preparatory study. It is my intention to open a large establishment in New

York; but until I can complete my arrangements, I shall confine my endeavors to the single branch of chirography, or writing. The plan I shall pursue is this: when a pupil is placed under my charge for the purposes of tuition in chirography, I shall first observe his peculiar constitution and habits of mind and body. Penmanship is much more intimately connected with the mind than is generally believed, and each scholar demands a very different course of instruction, adapted to his peculiar circumstances. This is the art which I now desire to make public. I have, with infinite study, selected a certain class of words, the joining of whose letters affords a facility in acquiring the art which does not exist in the indiscriminate copies which common teachers set their boys; and my pens are of a very particular make, according as I am expected to impart a plain round hand, a commercial hand, a hand for private letters, a legal hand, or a hand for ordinary purposes. My system of making pens I shall communicate to my pupils, at the termination of my course, *gratis*, and the whole to be completed in ten lessons, at about half the price paid to any other master in the world."

I shall make no remarks upon the gentleman's *system*, but that the present *system* of reducing all things to *system*, has been pursued long enough to enable the public to discover that no solid advantages can be obtained in the way of education, exclusive of the old fashioned means of perseverance and laborious study.

TOWN AND COUNTRY.

CAN there be two things more unlike than the city and country? In the first, you have only air, light, and a piece of blue sky stretching above the compact rows of brick walls, to remind you of the original appearance of our planet. The very people seem animals of a different species as they push by, or peradventure almost run over you in the hurry of business. I have sometimes thought that real civility (I mean among strangers)

decreased exactly in proportion to your approach to the metropolis. Away off in some obscure and quiet country village, you receive a polite salutation from every passenger; and troops of little girls and boys returning from school, address you with bows and courtesies of profound respect; but as you travel nearer the mighty Babel, you perceive a diminution of that pleasing tribute, till at length you reach the thronged streets, and, like a drop in the sea, are melted into the general mass, where much care is requisite to preserve your neck and your pocket book, two articles, which to a man of business, as society is constructed, are of about equal importance. Nature is sadly metamorphosed in town. Only think that the tender grass and flower bushes have been torn away to make room for these broad, well worn flag stones. Perhaps on this very spot once stood a grove of venerable trees, and a torrent poured its silvery and flashing waters on toward the river; and, in olden times, perchance the spotted panther hath paused to drink; or the eagle, or the wild and beauteous deer hath here in a depth of loneliness, suited to its timid spirit, regarded his branching antlers in the mirror stream; and the dangerous snake hath glided along unmolested, or basked him in the noontide sun. And what have we now? A row of three story brick houses, a grocery store, a lottery office, a tavern: signs too, St. Croix rum and sugar; fashionable hat store; commissioner to take the acknowledgment of deeds; John Thompson, shoemaker; Obadiah Todd, counsellor at law; and crowds of Presbyterians and Episcopalians, Adamsmen and Jacksonmen, pouring along like the tide of the pure and playful brook, above whose once music-breathing channel their shuffling footsteps fall. If we could know their history! Yonder is a noble looking gentleman. With what stateliness he moves along! I should esteem him a poet—an immortal poet. His eye is full of the fire of genius, and he treads as if he would disdain to save his life by means of a dishonorable action. Alas, for Lavater! and alas, for human nature. He is a poor devil of a fellow who lives by gambling. He has no more idea of poetry than his dog, and would betray his friend for five dollars. But take care, or you will run over that little, insignifi-

cant, shabby man at your right. Your eye has passed him carelessly. Look again. He is one of the most gifted of men. The philosopher—the orator—the writer. He has in him the wonderful power to wake in you the highest feelings. He sheds a flood of light upon every subject which he touches—he could thrill you with his fervid and glowing eloquence, and force every chord of your soul to vibrate; and when he would speak, multitudes of the learned and great and beautiful flock to listen. Yonder is a crowd pressing together to enjoy the horror and anguish of that wretched woman. They say she has committed a crime. She has been ground down by poverty—perhaps by hunger, and her sacrilegeous hand has snatched something which the law forbade. The people swear, and curse, and fight, to get near enough to witness her desperate struggles; but two well fed, lusty constables have dragged her feeble form toward a cart in triumph. As the loud laughter announces her defeat, an ashy paleness overspreads her face—her head falls back—miserable creature—she is dead!*

I thought of these things as I wandered with a party of agreeable friends along a retired country road, which wound its way among gentle undulations, occasionally shaded by rich cool forests. Here was a contrast to the hub bub of the town. We stopped upon the old boards of a rough bridge (just such a romantic affair as one sees in the theatre) to admire the scenery—look into the brook—watch the fishes—and the turn of the shining water as it fell over a little bed of stones. At this crisis, a great green bull frog, whether from vanity—for to say the truth, he was a fine, plump, gentlemanly looking fellow—or whether the unfriendly fates, sporting with frogs as well as men, had led him unconscious to the identical spot of all the winding stream toward which our several prying eyes were directed, it is not for me to assert; but it is very certain that such an individual did issue forth from some nameless haunt or other, better known to himself than me, and, with a gentle and brief exclamation, expressive of content, as if the world went well with him, but rather difficult to

* A real incident.

translate into English, did place himself in a station, which, as the result will show, was a little too conspicuous. There he sat, with his great round eyes started both sides out of his head, and his countenance —which to his fellow frogs might have been a very fine one—expressive of an idea that he had got into a right comfortable situation. Whether he was young and enthusiastic, and, like ourselves, had come out to enjoy the beauties of nature, or whether he was an old and experienced member of the community, or, as the newspapers express it, "an aged and respectable citizen," silently meditating upon the affairs of his watery world, we had no method of ascertaining. Many little stones, however, were thrown down at him, with various degrees of skill and success, one of which, I regret to state, hit him on the head, whereat he discovered evident signs of dissatisfaction, and abandoning our society with some abruptness, plunged down to the bottom among the sand and sedges, ruminating, probably, in no very pleasant mood, upon this additional instance of the instability of human affairs.

Blackberries grew in abundance by the road side, which we were not particularly averse to appropriate to the purpose for which I presume they were placed there; and, merry as the birds which sometimes flitted across our path, we wandered as fancy led over these summer scenes—by the bay, through the woods, over fences, and down valleys; breaking the silence of the green forest, and startling its timid and various inhabitants with the unaccustomed sounds of frequent laughter.

Time has a fine fashion of slipping along on these occasions: we are surrounded by so many innumerable objects which attract the eye and captivate the imagination. The bargain-driving, calculating, slavish varlet, whose life is frittered away in the narrow haunts of a great city in petty schemes to extort money from all persons and on all occasions, finds among these winding roads, these lofty hills, built up by the ancient hand of nature, and sweetly decorated with her playful fancies, pleasing feelings are stirring which have been long idle in the depths of his character. The world, in his imagination, shows like some stupendous animal pursuing

at a distance its uncouth gambols, and amid these overshadowing branches and wild ravines, he seems to find a shelter from its vague and unhappy dangers.

WHISKERS.

"I BEG of you, I beseech you; nay, I insist upon it," said Mrs. Lawton to her son.

"Impossible," replied the elegant and fashionable individual to whom the apostrophe was addressed, touching the tip of his snow white collar, almost imperceptibly, with his thumb and middle finger, and introducing the thumb of his other hand within the arm-hole of his vest with rather a dashing air. "It is utterly and absolutely impossible—any thing but that."

"But, Charles," continued the persevering old lady, "*dear* Charles, oblige me this once—I have set my heart on it."

"It cannot be," said the youth, assuming a theatrical attitude, and extending his right arm, with his finger pointing toward the sky,

> "'Twill be recorded for a precedent;
> And many an error, by the same example,
> Will creep into the state: it cannot be.'"

"Let me persuade you," said his sister, a fine dashing girl, with a voice like the ringing of silver, and eyes which must have melted the very soul out of any man except a brother. "May I entreat you?"

"Oh, entreat? Certainly, Kate; you may entreat."

"Well, there," said she, flinging her arm around his waist, and looking triumphantly at her mother.

"But," added Charles, glancing complacently down upon his long, polished, square toed, graceful boot. "I shan't do it, you know, although you do entreat."

"Oh," said Kate, "go about your business; you are a perfect fright."

"You think so, do you, Kate?" and he glanced upon

the broad mirror, which hung at the end of the apartment, reflecting the image of a very handsome and well dressed man. "You have made quite a discovery. You deserve credit; but they won't believe you, Kate; good bye;" and, flinging across his shoulders a Spanish cloak, of blue cloth, whose ample folds fell in drapery around his stately form, he placed a ten dollar beaver upon his pericranium, and made his exit.

Mr. Charles Lawton was a gentleman in every sense of the word. His address was a sufficient recommendation into every circle of society. His person marked him for one of partial nature's favorites; his disposition candid, generous, and noble; his mind acute, powerful, and highly cultivated. He had one fault, or rather two, and they were his *whiskers!* They seemed naturally gifted with an inordinate growing force, which he was at no trouble to restrain. The consequence was, that from his cheek bones to his throat, and from the back of his neck to the curl of his chin, he was nothing but whiskers. Our essay commenced with a dialogue upon this very subject. Now, to rear an unexceptionable pair of whiskers requires taste and discernment. It is a task of the most difficult kind, fraught with various dangers. They may be too small—that's bad; or they may be overgrown—that's monstrous. There is a kind of Scylla and Charybdis in the endeavor. There are whiskers that are not written. There is a kind of man incompetent to raise them. The upper part of the cheek is as smooth as a girl's, while, from the barren soil of the jaw bone, some few unfortunate creatures struggle up into a melancholy and dubious existence, so far apart, that if they had voices they could scarcely converse without a speaking trumpet. "The attempt, and not the deed, confounds us." I pity such a gentleman from the bottom of my soul.

But this is an evil of comparatively inferior importance. It is the amazing increase in size, and multiplication of the number of this article of personal decoration which prompts me to solicit the attention of the civilized world. They find their way into all companies. Balls and parties are overshadowed by their presence; even the purity and brightness of the domestic circle are violated; and you may find a gentle youth, who yet "speaks

small like a woman," with his visage garnished like the great mogul. I am not easily susceptible to terror; but I confess the rapid strides which this fashion makes startled me, and urged me to many profound meditations. I am an American, and I love my country. The interest I felt in her welfare urged me on. From cogitations I proceeded to inquiry; investigation led to discovery; until I succeeded in unfolding one of the most anti-republican and diabolical conspiracies which ever threatened the independence of a free and happy people.

A secret society has been organized, entitled the "Whiskerandos and Mustachio Confederation," conceived and headed by two or three noted characters in this city. They hold their midnight conclave in a subterranean apartment beneath "Bluebeard Hall." Don Felix Furioso has arrived from Spain; and with Gen. Scrubbing-brush from Bear Island in the Arctic ocean, (the one distinguished for having put a band of robbers to flight in the middle of the darkest night in December, by merely putting his head out of the mail coach window; and the other for having thrown a whale into convulsions, off Labrador, which incautiously ventured near enough to look into the cabin windows as he was shaving the tip of his chin,) have been invited here to superintend the execution of their nefarious designs to overturn all our institutions, abrogate the laws, subvert the constitution, and deliver us up to the dominion of Prince Daredevil, of a little island in the South Pacific ocean, latitude ninety, who shaves every part of his face except the end of his nose. All who join their society are to cultivate this badge of distinction to the greatest possible extent. The members of this dangerous tribunal are heedless of all consequences. The dearest social relations are to be rent asunder, rather than yield a hair; and it is astonishing to observe how widely it has already spread. It embraces some of the most wealthy, fashionable, and influential of our citizens. Editors, lawyers, doctors, boys, and old white-headed men. As they become more firmly established, they are gradually throwing off caution. The mustachio is soon to be mounted by young Mr. Q., who lately won the affections of several interesting young women by displaying a blue check collar; and who has since broken off

several promising matches, and flung four milliner girls, six chamber maids, thirteen belles, and one married woman, into galloping consumptions, by paying his addresses to them without any collar at all. Monsieur Temeraire, from Paris, has an assortment on hand for those who are unfortunate in the upper lip. They are manufactured out of the horsehair, fastened with adhesive plaster, and are positively superior in fierceness and irresistibility to every other kind. Monsieur Temeraire has the honor to announce to his friends in particular, and the public in general, that he certainly must excel in this valuable art, as he spent fourteen years among the Russian bears, with the sole intention of studying the spirit of their countenances. He flatters himself that, by following his directions in regard to whiskers and mustachios, he can transform the smoothest, genteelest, and most interesting youth, so as to be distinguished from a bear itself only upon the closest examination.

This is a crisis of infinite danger, and I hope pens abler than mine will resume the subject. I recommended the mayor to order out the militia; but Mr. Bowne assured me that the officers were generally leading men in the "Whiskerandos and Mustachio Confederation," and have therefore set their faces against any interference. I then resolved to apply to the editors to publish my fears; but upon entering into the closet of one of our most celebrated, I was startled to find myself alone, in a little room twelve by ten, door shut, with a pair of whiskers of the most threatening aspect. As the only resource, I propose that we organize a society to be entitled the "Anti-Whiskerandos and Mustachiod Confederacy Society." It shall be a stock company; if the legislature also are not too far gone to grant a charter, with a capital of a hundred millions of dollars. A meeting of the citizens opposed to whiskers, including women and children, is requested in the Park on the eighth day of January, A. D. 1830, when measures will be taken to prepare a petition to congress for the purpose of excluding from office every man of whiskers, of making the oath of lawyers, that they will support the constitution and wear no whiskers, and of rendering mustachios a capital offence.

THE QUIET MAN.

You would have been delighted with him. He was so unobtrusive, so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of stillness. He was a living rebuke to every thing in nature. His tongue was a superfluity. The rose that unfolds its soft leaves noiselessly in the green house, and blooms and withers and says never a word, had an existence that he might have envied, or a stream that lapses along delusively without a ripple, his abhorrence of confusion, exercise, and riot, was so deep rooted. I have seen him walk fifty yards around an old cow, reclining in the shade, rather than disturb her cogitations. At school he used to let the birds out of the cages, the mice out of the traps. He would rather suffer any privation than speak. It was wonderful. He was a statue. A bustle acted on him like a spell. A stranger put him on the rack. He closed up in company like a sensitive plant; and the exquisitely susceptible leaves of his mind drew themselves in and shrunk, the moment he was driven from the atmosphere of his own circle. Poor, dear Alfred, to what excruciations he must have been exposed. How the rattle and thunder, the jolting, pushing, and pulling, and all the everlasting agitations and discords of this restless world, must have jarred upon his gentle spirit. What loathings and thrillings, what tremblings and shudderings must have made up the history of his existence. Have you never observed, my attentive reader, if you are afflicted with any wound, a broken arm, a gash upon your finger, or a foot encumbered with one of those visitations of humanity, which defy philosophy to tell the use of, what a tacit and unanimous consent appears to prevail among all your acquaintance to bring themselves violently in contact with the affliction? So it was with Alfred. Every disturbance pursued him. He went to a remote country village, and a barrel of powder exploded under his window. He visited a vessel of war in the bay, but had no sooner set his foot on deck than orders were given

for a salute. He spent a month in the West Indies, and was driven away by an earthquake. He was on board the steam boat —— when the boiler burst and in the Albany stage when it overturned. They have lately enlisted him in the militia, though a drum sets his teeth on edge. Poor, dear Alfred! my heart bleeds for him. Yet, in a private corner, who ever spoke more to the purpose? Who ever amassed a greater fund of observation? Who could unbosom himself to a friend more delightfully? Who could whisper in a woman's ear more persuasively? How he pours out his very soul in a letter! What a companion he would make in a prison! What a husband! What a father! What an ornament to society, if he could *but* talk! What a happy fellow if nature had given him nerve to bear the crash and riot of worldly life.

I met him one morning last summer on my way to the Albany steam boat, and was pleased to learn that he was bound on the same journey.

"I am going," said he, "to fly from the hubbub of the city, and indulge myself for a month with a country life. Nothing like rural quiet! I shall *live* till I come back to this infernal bedlam."

As we approached the ferry, a gigantic, ruffian looking personage grasped his arm, with

"Have a hack, sir?"

"Any oranges today, sir?" said a boy.

"Buy a paper?" screamed another.

"Out of the way!" thundered a cartman, as the wheel passed within an inch of our feet.

"Clear the road!" bawled a traveller, panting and dripping with haste, thinking he was too late for the boat.

"All on board!" shouted the captain.

The man rang the bell. The steam was let off, bursting by fits from the pipe, the wheel turned and splashed, and the dusty throng gave way to the green waves.

"Thank heaven!" said Alfred, uncovering his ears, and taking a long breath. "Now for the country."

A shower came up suddenly, and drove all the passengers into the cabin. Babies screamed. A lap dog, banished by the corporation law, began to bark. A gentleman at our back favored us with random passages

from Cinderella, out of tune atrociously. Alfred had armed himself with a book, and was striving to read; but five worthies, on the same bench, commenced talking politics, and after a few civil preliminaries on the subject of the general state of the country, Poland, the Reform bill, the three days, and the doctrine of nullification, started off upon General Jackson and Major Eaton, with that calm and dispassionate temper, which peculiarly distinguishes American gentlemen on board steam boats, when discussing the affairs of the nation. Alfred shut his book, leaned back, folded his arms, and closed his eyes. Resignation is a virtue. I felt for him from my soul. He is the gentlest of all human creatures. But if Major Eaton had shown himself at that moment, I would scarcely have answered for the consequences. Indeed, a little miniature dandy, with plaid pantaloons and a rattan, offering, at the same time, his silver snuff box, asked him if he did not think Major Eaton had been sadly misused?

"No, sir," replied Alfred. "I wish they had hanged him—he has been ringing in my ears these six months."

Alfred shut his mouth; the person shut his box, and the bell rang for breakfast. Accepting an invitation to accompany him to his retreat, we landed at Newburgh, and crossed over the river to a farm house, at some distance in the interior. I had only time to spend a day and night with him. He was fond of reading, and had brought with him a few choice authors, to be enjoyed in uninterrupted seclusion.

"Now," said Alfred, as we seated ourselves beneath the low moss covered shed, which formed the piazza of this humble habitation, "I am entering upon a kind of new existence. 'Happiness,' says Addison, 'is an enemy to pomp and noise;' and, believe me, there is no quiet like that of an obscure farm house. Here the thunder of carts and stages over the trembling pavements is never heard. The beating of drums, the shuffling of crowds, and all the innumerable noises of the town are strangers; and where can a man expect to find a more delightful shelter from these pests than here? Where can his memory more clearly recall the passages of his past life, or his wisdom conceive plans for the future? Here for a time evil passions lose their hold, a holy in-

fluence deadens our hatreds, and defines more strongly the outlines of our manly friendships. I look down on the world from this scene of repose. There is no enemy to whom I would not here extend my hand; my bosom owns an unwonted yearning for those, who, however beloved, are overlooked and neglected in the revel and riot of the town; and, what lofty temple softens the heart to adoration like this simple and lovely landscape, reposing in a peaceful beauty, untainted with the evils of the world? Here no troubles disturb, no interests clash, no accidents terrify. There is nothing like rural quiet."

We were startled by a sudden shout from friend Simon, the farmer. After a pretty profane ejaculation, and a sudden rush by us, so as nearly to overturn the chair on which my friend was seated, he went on shouting,

" Jacob, run, you lazy scoundrel; the hogs are in the corn. Here, Watch; here, Watch; seize 'em, boy. Run, Jacob, seize 'em, boy; run, Jacob; let down the bars."

An enormous house dog, just from the pond, started through the entry at the call, and shaking the contents of his saturated hair over Alfred, laid his course, barking furiously, toward the intruding, and now alarmed quadrupeds. Simon and Jacob shouted; the pigs squeaked; Watch added to the clamor; the cows bellowed; the geese hissed; the ducks, guinea hens, and all the inhabitants of the farm yard, joined the confusion.

" Nothing like rural quiet!" thought I.

At supper we were interrupted by the screams of Jacob. Friend Simon was promoting his education with the end of a rope.

" Poor Jacob!" said Alfred.

" Poor Alfred!" thought I; " no interests clash, no troubles disturb!"

We retired to rest early. In the room allotted to us was a clock.

" What a happy thought!" said Alfred. " A clock reminds us that time flies as it proclaims the passing hour."

We were just sinking into a sleep, when the clock struck ten. A rattling noise preceded the operation, and the bell might have been heard through the whole

house. It awakened us regularly through the night, at the termination of every sixty minutes.

"What a happy thought!"

The next day was intensely hot. The sun glanced down fiercely. The leaves hung on the trees motionless. The dog lay panting in the shadow, with half a yard of tongue hanging from his mouth. The hens, &c., gathered in silent meetings under the carts and hedges. Alfred got his Shelley, and handed me Milton. Every thing was silent enough. A woman interrupted us with a mop.

"Will the gentlemen please to sit on the other side of the house?"

"Why, what are you going to do?" inquired Alfred, looking up from his book.

"Going to wash the stoop," said the fair intruder, dashing a pail of water over the boards.

We had no sooner fairly settled ourselves in another situation than Jacob came by with a load of wood.

"Pretty Poll," said Jacob.

"Pretty Poll," screamed a voice at our shoulder, in such a discordant tone, that Alfred again put his hands to his ears. It was a parrot, whose tongue, thus set in motion, regaled us with such choice specimens of colloquism, as "Pretty Poll! Pretty Poll! Ha, ha, ha! Huzza, huzza! Come to dinner. Ha, ha, ha!"

Alfred looked resolutely at his Shelley. There was a dead silence. He went on with his book, and suddenly turned to me to read a passage of rare beauty.

"Go to work, go to work," said Poll.

"The devil take the fool," said Alfred, flinging down the volume in a passion.

"Stupid fool! Stupid fool!" screamed the bird. "Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha! Huzza! Huzza!"

Poor Alfred! He must soon learn that there is no refuge from a misfortune, the source of which is in himself. Instead of seeking to fly from tumult, he must strive to become familiar with it. The world was not formed for the fastidious or the refined. There is only one place of rest, and long may it be ere he lies in its stillness.

METAPHYSICS.

———"and reasoned high
Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame—
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy."—*Milton.*

If we could be translated into a more perfect state of existence, with all our identities and memories about us, what an interesting subject of contemplation would be our pilgrimage upon earth; what a different aspect human affairs would assume when we were elevated above their immediate interests; when we could behold them in their relations as a great whole, and perceive how all the parts were adapted to some grand consequence!

I have sometimes fallen in with false reasoners, who, from the very fact that they have observed closely and thought deeply, have discarded all generally received opinions upon metaphysical subjects; and, with a singular strength of argument, convinced themselves of the truth of some of the ancient theories, that we have been created accidentally. They assert that it is more impossible—if I may be allowed the use of such a term, where we are surrounded on all sides by apparent impossibilities—to imagine the time when matter did not exist, than to suppose that it has existed for ever. Taking it for granted, therefore, that matter, in some mode or other, either as atoms floating about in infinite space, or in the form of subtle gas, or perhaps in some shape with which we are totally unacquainted—(for, the more we learn, the more we are struck with our ignorance in regard to the fundamental truths of nature)—has always existed, they tell us that it must intrinsically have qualities, for what is it but a collection of qualities? Now, how it should gain any quality, though the most insignificant that meets our observation, is entirely

incomprehensible to us; and when we have once perceived that, from its own nature, it possesses such as shape, density, elasticity, attraction, repulsion, &c., &c., the truly philosophical mind will experience no farther surprise, nor infer the influence of any extraneous agent, from the discovery of those qualities which distinguish dead matter from that portion endued with life, thought, sensation, affection, &c.

I myself am an humble observer of these things. I cannot altogether restrain my thoughts; but I fly from the extremities to which they would lead me, and seek shelter in my ignorance from all gloomy conclusions. The restless mind may for a while abandon the pleasing hopes among which in youth it reposed, like an infant sleeping upon flowers, and shape its solitary flight through the joyless region of dim speculation; but unless it be ruined by the innumerable horrors it must encounter, it will turn back exhausted and dissatisfied to the supporting opinions and hopes of religion. Yet there are many who have been injured by dwelling too long upon such subjects, and been lost to society and themselves, amid the forbidden and dangerous mazes of metaphysics. It is best at once to acknowledge our ignorance. Man cannot cope with nature. There are subjects around which she has flung the barrier she meant to be insurmountable, and we should no more endeavor to break out of the limits which she has assigned to the range of human intellect, than we should endeavor to rise into the clouds, or live beneath the sea.

I was led to these meditations by a letter which I lately received from a friend whom I had once considered a ruined man. He had been in an excellent business, and could, by industry, have attained independence; but he mortified his family at first by neglect of all his duties, and afterward by abandoning himself to dissipation. It soon became evident that he was yielding to habitual intemperance, which gradually grew so upon him that he was banished all society but such as he met in his idle haunts through the midnight streets or the riotous tavern. For this singular alteration in his character no satisfactory reason was assigned. He had before conducted himself with the strictest regard

to the interests and feelings of his friends, and won their affection as well as their esteem, by the amiable and manly disposition which on all occasions he displayed. Inquiry was made if any secret misfortune had disgusted him with the world, and impelled him to seek the fatal relief of the bowl; but the history of his past life exhibited nothing more than the common incidents of youth and manhood—such changes as occur in the ordinary nature of things, over which we grieve the stated period, and then forget in the hopes, pleasures, and new disappointments which checker the little day of life. He had gone on in this manner for a year, and when all hope of his reformation had passed away, he suddenly appeared a new man. He resumed the character of an amiable and industrious citizen. He lived again happily in the bosom of his family. His business flourished beneath his anxious care, and, at this time, he is a happy husband and father.

He wrote me some time ago. His letter was long, and, to me, very interesting, and confirmed my opinion that the world is not so bad as we are apt sometimes to deem it. I will extract a few paragraphs for the benefit of such young gentlemen as allow their thoughts to wander away too far from the realities of life. Let Providence take care of his own works. We have every reason to believe that he knows what he is about, and when we discover the exquisite care he has taken for our enjoyment, and feel the blessings innumerable which his bounteous hand has lavished upon us, why should we suppose his favorable disposition will ever change?

After some account of the manner in which the subject of religion had affected him, and the despondency into which he fell in consequence, my friend adds:

"I had now no object for which to live. I had trusted with too much confidence to my own reason, and it had betrayed me into infidelity upon every subject. There seemed to be no Providence over human occurrences. I had lost my hold on all the feelings which link man with man, and lead his hopes on through the bright vistas of future happiness. In short, it was atheism, which comprehends all of horror that humanity can suffer. It took the tinge

of comfort from life. It made pleasure a mockery, and hope an empty dream. The earth offers to the imagination no prospect so utterly bleak as that of the atheist. He has no confidence in nature. In the thrillings of pleasure he feels no gratitude; in the anguish of suffering he knows no consolation. The world that moves on carelessly around him, was not made for him. He walks over it as an usurper, and after his brief hour of hopelessness, when he has snatched his selfish joys, and endured his lonely labors, he sinks back into the eternal grave, and mingles, like a brute, with the common mass of things. To escape reflections like these, I rushed into every excitement that chance offered, and I can scarcely say in which situation I was more wretched; in the cold, desolate moments of reason, or in the wild frenzy of intoxication.

"It was on my way to one of these scenes of debauchery, that I was met by a gentleman whom formerly I had much esteemed. He introduced me to his family, and I awoke to a scene of domestic bliss, the very existence of which I had forgotten. He was an elderly man. His wife was yet the object of his sincere affection, and he had sons and daughters growing up in happiness and beauty about him. From the circle which gathered around his cheerful fire, all misery seemed excluded. The amusements every where opened to intelligence, here sufficed to beguile their leisure hours; and those affections which I had suffered to lie dormant, here occupied all hearts, and shed a charm, an inexpressible charm, over the scene. I could not but contrast it with the lonely madness of my own fate; and when the dance had ceased, and his youngest daughter had finished one of those touching songs which surprise the heart sometimes into the tenderness of a woman, and all the fair forms whose soft voices and beaming eyes lingered in my mind had passed away, I was prepared for the conversation which he introduced, and the conclusions to which he intended it should lead me. He heard me describe my feelings with patience, and after much argument, by which I was often compelled to acknowledge myself in the wrong, he finished with the following remarks:

"'The miseries which you have suffered are not uncommon, and, were they permanent, few of us could be in any degree satisfied with life. But they are clouds which, though they will rise in the mind at certain times, yet melt away of themselves, and leave the character purer and better for the mental tempests which thy engender. There are three different periods in the life of a thoughtful man, when the world wears different aspects. To the eye of youth it is all gay—we trust all who promise, and love every one that smiles. The present is bright, but it is nothing to the brilliancy of the future; and all the delightful feelings of our nature unfold themselves luxuriantly, without experience to guide, or sorrow to chill them. But the season of youth steals swiftly away. Before we are aware, we have reached the stage of manhood, and are mingling in its wider adventures, and adapting our boyish hopes and opinions to its stern necessities. Soon we begin to perceive that the scenes around us have changed, and then to wonder that we ourselves are so much altered. That which we used to value, no longer satisfies our wishes. That which we used to wish, now appears wild and romantic. We find that we must contract the sphere of our hopes, and be content with much which, in the pride and ardor of earlier imaginings, we had rejected with disdain. Our old school mates, who, but yesterday, were sporting with us on the green, have grown up to maturity, and assumed their rank in society; and they to whom we once looked up with awe and reverence, from whose lips we received wisdom, have passed away, and their names are strangers in the places where they were once known and loved. It is very probable that, at this time, our own misfortunes begin to darken around us. We bid farewell to the thoughtlessness of our earlier hours, and can number the disappointments which have blighted our own hopes. The future loses its tinge of glory. Even the present often becomes a waste. Each year, as it rolls more darkly over us, dissolves some lingering spell of boyhood, and severs, one after another, the links that connected us happily to the earth. Now we acknowledge, in the private chambers of our thoughts, that the events we most earnestly

desired can never take place. Many of our dearest friends are gone. Many for whom alone we seemed to live, and without whose companionship and approbation wealth and fame would be almost valueless, have departed; not for a day or a year, but for ever; and after the mind has exhausted its every power of suffering by vain wishes and wretched recollections, it settles down at length into a gloomy acquiescence—a stagnant content. Here misery assumes its most hideous form, and we are in danger from wild opinions and tempting excitements. The desolation within prompts us to seek relief abroad, and it depends upon the nature of the path we here choose, whether we go forth upon a career of honor and happiness, or sink into idleness and oblivion. The affections which once stretched out their tendrils to embrace every surrounding object, now recoil from all contact, and wither up within the deep, cold, silent recesses of the heart. Our mind, once filled only with soft dreams and undisturbed affections, is now thronged with spectral doubts and fierce and dangerous resolutions. It is as if an elysian garden, where flowers had breathed and lovely girls wandered, were suddenly converted into a scene of warfare, its shady cloisters shaken by the roar of cannon, and its flowers trampled down by the tread of battle. This is, perhaps, the most important season of life. There comes over the spirit a species of desperation, a recklessness of present and future, a wantonness of despair, while reason sits listless upon her throne; and the mind, crazy with the influence of a morbid imagination, plunges into the unfathomable abyss of metaphysical conjecture. Here all is dark, void, limitless, and unearthly; and in its mighty chaos we lose all identity and interest in common things. We believe ourselves lapsing along to a termination of all our feeling, and, shuddering, we yield to our fate. Many a noble fellow is here destroyed. Many a proud spirit that has warred in vain with the influences of the world, thus bends, at length, and bows down to the dust in anguish and shame. But this humor of the mind also passes away, the tumults of the bosom gradually subside, and we become familiar with nature as it is. The imagination returns from her dark flights, reason discovers new

objects of interest and affection, and the void in the heart is filled. Go back, my friend' continued my companion, 'and learn to meet the changes of life with firmness and dignity; and if your situation afford nothing else, still you may enjoy the pride of human intellect in buffeting the storms of fate, and standing erect, though all around you be in ruins. Do your duty, and heaven will accomplish the rest. But beware of yielding to the impulses of a moment, lest you destroy the chance of happiness for years.'

"I retired to my rest with these new views of the world, and experienced relief that others could comprehend me, and had known similar despondency. I abandoned all the habits to which I had resorted before, and mingled again with the world. It would be superfluous for me to say with what horror I regarded the dangers I had escaped, and the gratitude with which I remembered the sympathy by which I had been rescued. I am now as contented as ever. All my affairs go on prosperously; the labor of my day is far from being unpleasant; and you will never realize the great happiness I experience in returning to my home in the evening, till you try for yourself the——but I am interrupted. My little boy is putting up his red lips for a good-night kiss, which will tell you better than any description what I mean, and my wife is playing upon the piano, accompanied by my sister, in a chord so sweet that I must stop to listen."

WHISKERANDOS CONFEDERATION.

Mr. Editor—Agreeably to a notice published in your last, a large concourse of our fellow citizens assembled in the Park, for the purpose of adopting resolutions in opposition to whiskers, and of directing public attention to the alarming extent of this propensity. The meeting was composed of beardless boys, patriotic spinsters, and immense numbers of those decent and unassuming gentlemen, who were either unwilling from education, or

unable by nature to cultivate the growth of this contraband commodity. Miss Rosymouth was called to the chair, and Master Minikin was appointed secretary.

The proceedings were opened by Dr. Whiteface, of Fever-and-ague alley. He rose with much dignity, and seemed by his very appearance, to command the confidence and respect of his fellow citizens. He had a long, pale, thin, hatchet countenance. His hair was combed meekly down to his eyes, which glared indiscriminately upon the expectant multitude, through a pair of spectacles resembling full moons. His nose stuck out in bold relief from his face, like a triangle, garnished toward the tip with a lively tinge, evidently inclining to scarlet, and "even handed justice" had compensated him for a total deficiency of forehead with a mouth of about twice the ordinary width. His head was set rather loosely upon a neck less distinguished for grace than length, which formed a connecting link with a body as gaunt as that of Don Quixotte.

Cæsar has said, "let me have men about me that are fat." Now, if the last named gentleman had been president of the United States, no matter what station the doctor might have occupied, there can be little doubt, in all reflecting minds, that he would have been "turned out." He held in his long fingers a sheet of paper, apparently the draft of some highly patriotic resolutions. The meeting was all attention. Not a whisper was to be heard—not a whisker to be seen. There was, to be sure, some slight signs of dissatisfaction upon the appearance of an old lady's head, above the level of the crowd, upon whose upper lip there was something resembling——but, as the disturbance was immediately quelled by the lovers of order and decorum, it is unnecessary to pursue this part of the subject further.

Doctor Whiteface premised, with a gentle flourish of his left hand, and laying his right reverently upon his heart,—

"Friends and fellow citizens. From my earliest boyhood I have been opposed to whiskers. Long ago I have perceived the fatal consequences to which they would lead. It is a painful, but the importance of the present crisis renders it a peremptory duty, for me to recapitulate a few of the unhappy effects with which this

formerly flourishing nation has been visited." (Cries of hear him, hear him—he bowed slightly, cast down his eyes, and continued.) "They have given rise to the most perplexing mistakes. After a short absence, friend meets friend without recognition. The social ties are in this way rent asunder, and sheriff's officers are unable to identify those whom they are authorized to arrest. Fashion, my fellow citizens, is a changeable and delusive goddess. She lives upon the errors of human beings. She turns their caprices into ridicule, and takes advantage of their confidence in her decrees to place them not only in the most absurd, but in the most dangerous positions. When you once facilitate her progress, you cannot afterward arrest it, and it is impossible to conceive where her encroachments will stop. Many have already commenced to let hair grow all over their faces, and to cut it off their foreheads. Are you not startled at the fear, lest in a few years, we may so far swerve as to shave all our heads bare, and have our faces completely hidden by those intrusive and wide spreading evils? Again, they have a very injurious influence upon our commerce." (Loud applause, and cries of hear him.) "Mr. Damascus, the barber, a few years ago, actually received an annual income exceeding that of the chancellor of this state." (General applause.) "Now none so poor to do him reverence. He has lost all his custom. There has been a melancholy fall in razor strops, razors, patent paste, face powder, &c., and several amiable and respectable soap boilers have been ruined. These facts, my friends, are not the mere effusions of a heated imagination. They are truths; plain, practical, and alarming truths, to which I beg your most earnest consideration. Yet these are but a small part of my arguments for the exclusion of whiskers. There has been discovered——"

The eloquent speaker here went on to give a succinct but lucid and affecting account of the "Whiskerandos and Mustachio Confederation." At the termination of which, Mr. Hungry, the broker, was visibly overcome, and young Mrs. B. fainted.

At this period, very unexpectedly to all, Captain Slashum made his appearance. He was a little man, but much celebrated in the military history of the town

during the last six years. He had enlisted in Captain L.'s company as a private, where his amiable deportment and unquestionable valor soon elevated him to the rank of corporal. The arduous and honorable duty of serving the members with notices having been executed with great credit to himself, and satisfaction to his friends, he rose, by the mere force of his own courage, to the captaincy, in which he has since served through rain and sunshine, in a manner which entitles him to the everlasting gratitude of his country. Of course he belongs to the Whiskerandonians, and wore a pair of full growns, entirely above comparison. The most indifferent observer must have perceived that they set all criticism at defiance. Indeed there could be no doubt on the subject. In addition to this he sported a very interesting vest of martial red—a collar of superior cut, and a cravat tied like the gordian knot. He stretched forth his hand, and, as the chairman called the meeting to order, for his whiskers created a considerable sensation, he commenced as follows:

"I appear here, my friends, as the representative of a large concourse of my fellow citizens. I am shocked at the calumnies which have been this day circulated. They arise from the sophistry of interested individuals. Of individuals opposed to pleasure, to beauty, and to nature. Yes, whiskers, my friends, I fearlessly pronounce to have been the intention of nature. Else why have we been created with them? They have been worn by the most distinguished of men, in all ages. Greeks, Romans, Spaniards, Englishmen, counts, magistrates, emperors, consuls, warriors, poets, have been proud to decorate their countenances according to the plan of nature. No, my countrymen, it is not the mere question of whiskers which is here involved. This is only the first link in the great chain with which our opponents are endeavoring to fetter the rights and tastes of this nation. If they succeed in this unwarranted attempt to interfere with our privileges, they will carry on the war with increased vigor: they will prescribe the manner in which we shall cut our hair; they will turn us into crop ears; they will measure the fashion of our garments; and the phraseology of our conversation. I tremble to think of the effects. I have it, upon excel-

lent authority, that the petition about to be presented to congress has been signed by women and boys. Women, who certainly cannot be proper judges of the matter, and boys, who are thus prematurely enlisted in a cause, the merits of which they are not yet competent to determine. As for me, I hold the fact to be self-evident, 'that all men are born free and equal,' and for further proof I shall take the liberty of reading the Declaration of Independence."

He read this excellent document with great effect, and several opinions were interchanged, particularly among the female portion of his auditory, that his whiskers, after all, were "not so bad."

There was something like applause as he sat down, and it would be difficult to decide as to the ultimate opinions of the meeting, had not professor Emptyhead, of the Greece-street Institute, made a short address, and counteracted the impression.

Professor Emptyhead was a short, thickset man, who had no distinguishing trait in his physiognomy, except a deep blue tinge which covered both sides of his cheeks, and the whole lower part of his face and throat.

"My friends," said the professor, "it is easy to be seen that Captain Slashum is a Whiskerandonian; but I hope you will not be influenced by his shallow arguments. He speaks of nature; but I will prove to you in two minutes that he is in error. The great and learned Confucius, the Chinese philosopher, has asserted, in the thirty-ninth volume of his treatise on things in general, page two thousand six hundred and four, line seventh from the top, that nature is sometimes to be curbed. Nature has given us passions, appetites, &c.; but these are useful only under the restraint of reason; and the same nature which gave us whiskers, gave us taste to control them. The same nature which commands us to curb our passions, to shelter ourselves from the tempest, to fly from heat and cold, also commands us to cut our nails, comb our heads, wash our faces, and cut off our whiskers. Allow me to relate to you a little anecdote. Mr. Peter Simpkins was formerly a very virtuous young man. He lent a thousand dollars to Captain Thompson, of the ship Virginia, bound for Canton, who also was a gentleman of mild disposition, and not

at all addicted to whiskers. The captain left him with the promise that immediately upon his return the account should be settled. Nearly two years passed away. Simpkins became involved, grew desperate, joined the confederation, and appeared with a pair of the articles in question, of the most palpable and audacious description; and, by one of those caprices which fortune loves to play, Captain Thompson also, whether from want of razors, soap, time, care, or absence from civilized society, had also suffered himself to be overgrown in such a piratical style, that human eyes never witnessed any thing more huge and monstrous. Simpkins was prosecuted upon a note for eight hundred dollars, and at this very period, Captain Thompson returned, heard of the distress of his friend, and although on the point of leaving the city upon another long voyage, for sailors are the most generous of human beings, flew to his relief. Simpkins sat in his counting room, and Thompson entered, 'Is Mr. Simpkins in?' 'Yes, sir: my name is Simpkins.' 'Mr. Peter Simpkins, sir?' 'My name is Peter Simpkins, sir.' 'You are not the gentleman I wish to see,' said the captain, very respectfully; 'is there not another Peter Simpkins in the city?' 'Not that I am aware of,' said Simpkins. 'There must be some mistake,' said the captain: 'good morning, sir.' 'Good morning;' and thus, my friends, neither recognizing the other, they parted: the captain sailed on a voyage round Cape Horn, and has not been heard of since."

This address was received with general applause, and Dr. Whiteface arose for the purpose of reading his resolutions, and having obtained permission of the chair, proceeded as follows.

"Resolved—That we deem whiskers barbarous, impudent, and dangerous to the liberties of the country.

"Resolved—That we will hereafter support no man for congress, senate, or assembly of this state, governor, alderman, or assistant alderman, who will not pledge himself never to wear them, nor to allow them to be worn by any member of his family.

"Resolved—That we will not support any paper, the editor of which wears whiskers.

"Resolved—That professors of colleges, teachers of

public schools, and private academies, be requested to educate their pupils in the fear and abhorrence of this disagreeable and savage custom.

"Resolved—That a press be established in this city to disseminate the principles of this meeting.

"Resolved—That a petition be presented to congress, that a law be passed rendering the wearing of whiskers and mustachios sufficient ground for a criminal prosecution.

"Resolved—That our fellow citizens in different parts of the states and the world, be requested to unite with us in organizing societies, establishing newspapers, disseminating pamphlets, delivering orations, and forming schools, with the view of arresting the progress of this pernicious evil, so inimical to the morals of the community, and so likely to bring us to ruin.

"Resolved—That the thanks of this meeting be presented to the president and secretary, and that these proceedings be published.

MISS ROSYMOUTH, *Chairman.*

MASTER MINIKIN, *Secretary.*

The meeting then adjourned *sine die*, and the citizens dispersed quietly, without any riot as had been expected.

CHOOSING A PROFESSION.

"My son," said Mr. Lewis, to a young gentleman of eighteen, who had just graduated from college, "it is time for you to think about some method of supporting yourself. I have made my fortune by perseverance, and you may easily do the same. Your sisters must be educated; little Bob must occupy much of my care, in order that I may fit him, as I have done you, to act an honorable part in the world, and to perform your duties, as a citizen and a man, with comfort and credit to yourself and me."

Charles looked up at this stately harangue, and opened his eyes with something of astonishment. He knew his father was rich, and he had always been the darling

object of his affections. A plentiful supply of pocket money had sent him through the adventures incidental to a college life with considerable *eclat*, and it might have been doubted whether he appropriated to himself more renown for the really honorable manner in which he had concluded his studies, or for the number of rakish and elegant young men whom he named among his bosom friends, and in whose enterprises he generally acted a distinguished part. He dressed with considerable style. He had been presented with a splendid watch, which he wore in his vest pocket, secured by a golden chain passing around his neck, and falling in graceful folds upon his bosom. If he did not own a horse, his particular friend, Mr. Cooper, the livery stable keeper, usually supplied him with the fastest trotter on the road, so that Charles Lewis prided himself upon being a buck of the first order, and as such was known and respected among all the dashers about town. He readily adapted himself to the necessities of his situation; smoked his segar, and drank his brandy and water with an approved air, and kept his own *queue* at the city hotel billiard table, where he pocketed the most difficult balls, to the wonder and admiration of every beholder. The cut of his coat was observed, and the style of his cravat imitated; till, at length, he arrived at such a height of distinction that nothing was more common among the inexperienced and aspiring orders of our fashionable youth, than to hear his slang quoted with the flattering addition of "as Charles Lewis says." With the ladies, he was a prodigious favorite. His graceful bow, his arch wit, the ingenuous and insinuating quality of his conversation, the rustling of his velvet vest, and the flashing of his ruby ring, insensibly won the hearts of his fair acquaintance; so that more diffident, and, perhaps, more sensible persons, who had nothing to recommend them but solid acquirements and unassuming virtue, were completely eclipsed in his presence; as some little star that had at first shed down a trembling light upon the world is lost in the broader radiance of the rising moon.

And yet Charles had a heart full of generous feeling, a mind highly cultivated, and talents sufficient to raise him to eminence.

When his father spoke, the youth regarded him with some degree of surprise, and said,

"Well, sir, I am always ready to do whatever you wish, and will commence any thing, at the time you appoint."

"Well, that's right, my boy, that's right," observed Mr. Lewis; "but you must choose, and not I. I will never restrain my children after their years of discretion, in the pursuit of their own reasonable desires."

"But what should you prefer?" inquired Charles. "Let me have the benefit of your experience."

"Why, as for me," answered Mr. Lewis, with a satisfied air, "I have, as you know, pursued the mercantile business with a good deal of success. I have enjoyed my life as well as most men; and, although when I began, I entered as a clerk in the house of C. H. & Co., you see I have made my living, supported my family, and built this house. I own lots in town and at Harlæm; I have fifty thousand dollars in the bank, and am annually laying up more; and my health is as good as it was when I used to sweep my master's floor, trim the lamps, open and shut the windows, and get his letters from the post office."

Charles thought a moment, and the last words sounded dolefully in his ears. "Sweep my master's floor, trim his lamps, get his papers out of the post office! What would C. and P. and D. say, to see me sweeping my master's floor, and going home from the post office with a bundle of letters and newspapers under my arm?"

"Why, father, I think I should never make a merchant. Commerce is a trade calculated rather to contract than expand a man's mind; it consists only in ingenious inventions to outwit others, and I should not like to waste my thoughts upon cotton and stocks, with no other object than to make money. I confess that existence——"

He had struck into one of his pet compositions and might have enlightened the world with many other elegant sentiments upon commerce, but his father, who loved him, and who, having neglected to acquire a classical education himself, had conceived something of an

idea of his son's qualifications and prospects, interrupted him.

"Well, Charles, no force. We'll try another. What say you to the law?"

"Oh, sir, worse and worse. Why, sir, the community is already inundated with torrents of young lawyers, and every annual examination washes over us a new wave of busy, managing fellows, who do not make enough to pay for their pepper. Beside, sir, you must sacrifice your health in long and dry study, and waste your days amid the passion, poverty, and distress of your fellow creatures; gleaning a livelihood from the earning of other men's labor, and often without the consolation of having rendered any service. The uncertainties, the delays, the drudgery of the law, are worse than sweeping the floor, that is, than dealing in cotton."

"You are hard to please, Charles, but must be the best judge of your own feelings. How do you like physic?"

"Like physic, sir? Why, not at all——"

"I mean the study of physic, or medicine, you dog. You must not quiz me, Charles."

"Oh, sir," answered Charles, laughing, "your horrors increase upon me in geometrical progression. Medicine is what, of all things, I abhor. I have no faith in doctors. I believe they kill as many as they save. I always hated medicine since I read of Dr. Sangrado. When all nature is bright and beautiful, and the flowers are breathing, and the birds are singing; when the blue sky is shining over my head, the fields covered with rich clover, and the shady woods echoing with the dashing of brooks, I should have to fill my pockets with epicac and rheubarb, and sneak into the dark, close, melancholy chamber of the sick and dying, to lose my appetite, my spirits, and even my life, when, perhaps, death would at length snatch my patient from me, leaving me to be paid for my fruitless skill; or when my victim had escaped, by flinging my prescriptions out of the window."

"You talk like a boy," said Mr. Lewis, smiling at the volubility of his hopeful son. "You cannot live for ever in the woods, and you are, I hope, too proud to be

an idler all your life. Every profession may be misrepresented and abused; and, on the contrary, from every one, the honest and industrious man may reap profit and fame. I think your talents and education fit you for the pulpit—Well, well, you need not speak. I see by your face, that you have a harangue ready against that too. I will give you time to reflect. These things should never be done in a hurry. Next week, or week after next, we'll talk it over again. So come along, Charles, to dinner; prepare to be something or other—and be great, my son, what ever you are."

The worthy parent seized his hat and cane, and meeting an old crony, they departed together, in earnest conversation on the state of the market, notwithstanding the lofty ideas of Master Charles upon the subject, who was thus left alone.

He remained a moment in deep silence, resting his forehead upon his hand. On a sudden he rose and stretched out his arm, lifted his eyes to heaven in the attitude of Forrest, in the character of Tell, and broke out into the following words:

"Yes, I will be great. My fame shall reach across the ocean: and I will be rich without bounds. But I will not be great as other men are, nor will I amass money by mean bargains." He drew up his figure, and folded his arms proudly on his breast. "I will be great as Kean, Kemble, Garrick, and Talma. I'll fling new light upon the divine Shakspeare. The world shall hear of me; and my name shall throng box, pit, and gallery, and my appearance shake the foundation of the mighty dome. I will dispel the bigoted prejudice which is attached to that slandered profession; and, by the strength of my integrity, and the force of my genius, I will——"

He was cut short in his modest soliloquy by the entrance of his acquaintance, the *costumer*, whose business it was to make dresses for the actors, and who professed to fit them all with the various garments of king, clown, and beggar, in most elegant style, and on the most reasonable terms.

"Ha!" exclaimed Charles. "The very man I wish to see; though, five minutes ago, I would as lief have seen the devil. The old man has been advising me to choose a profession; and, after having taken me, in

regular succession, through trade, law, and physic, he concluded—ha! ha! ha!—by mounting me plump into the pulpit. Only think of me, Andrew, with my black gown and long face, dealing out morality to 'my dearly beloved brethren!'"

"And you refused, of course, and will want the dress you bespoke?" inquired the costumer.

"To be sure I will, and this very week. I've got my part, and rehearsed it. I am determined to get through with it, and, if I am successful, I'll declare my resolution to continue on the stage—come out under my real name; and, though they may say I am a fool, 'they shall not say but that I *had* the crown;' they shall not say that 'I was fool in that.'"

"Bravo! bravo! You shall have the dress to night. I'll leave it in the theatre. You can try it on, and then——"

"And then," interrupted the young aspirant, in a theatrical voice and attitude, "'we shall be king indeed, my cousin——'"

"Oh, you'll take, to a dead certainty," exclaimed the costumer. "So don't be discouraged."

"Oh, no; 'I'll climb betimes, without remorse or dread, and my first step shall be——' But come, I must to dinner, and don't forget the dress."

So saying, they parted. The costumer hied him to his shears and needle, chuckling over the profitable bargain he had just concluded, and the thoughtless and disobedient son, smoothed his face into its usual expression, and went to join his unsuspecting family.

A few days after this conversation, while having finished dinner, they sat picking nuts, and partaking moderately of some excellent old wine, the different members of Mr. Lewis's family were struck with various feelings by the information that he had taken seats at the theatre. He was a liberal man, and a most affectionate father, and he intended thus to surprise his children, whose lively taste for theatrical entertainments had not yet been sated by frequent attendance.

By one of those caprices which fortune loves to play in the affairs of mortals, this was the very night which had been selected for the *debut* of a young gentleman,

who, as the papers announced, "had never before appeared on any stage."

Mrs. Lewis expressed herself willing to go; Miss Maria was delighted at the thoughts of watching the difference between the performance of this young gentleman and Mr. Cooper, who had lately left the city; Caroline and Eliza, the two young ones, sprang up in raptures, overturned their wine, kissed each other and their father; and little Bob, in his triumph, trod upon the foot of pussy, who was napping it quietly under the table. Poor Charles was thunderstruck; but, amid the confusion of the scene, the noise of the children, and the angry squall of the cat, the terror depicted in his countenance was happily unnoticed. His father had not been to the theatre before for a year. He cursed his fate, which seemed determined to torment him, and, in the end, conceived the suspicion that Mr. Lewis had discovered his design, and took this method to defeat it. He ventured a timid glance at his face, but it was calm and smiling, and his utmost penetration could detect nothing more than the gratification of the amiable father, who surveyed the group of his beautiful and happy children.

His next hope was that some obstacle might occur. Perhaps it might rain. He got up and went to the window; but the azure sky, which he had once eulogized so warmly, stretched its broad and lucid expanse over the city, in most provoking tranquillity.

There was no use in grieving. Perhaps, after all, it was the best thing that could happen. When his father should witness his success, and listen to the applause which every word must bring down, he might be more easily inclined to mercy; and, in short, he resolved to say nothing about his dilemma, but to appear, and go through with his part in his best manner. A little calmed by these reflections, he turned on his heel and left the room.

The hour arrived. The doors of the theatre were flung open. The company assembled, and—as it was a pleasant evening—in considerable numbers. The green curtain rose; and, at length, the crooked backed tyrant stalked into full view, and remained, for a moment, like a traveller driven by some fatal necessity to

the brink of a precipice, where he stands trembling, unable to retreat, and afraid to advance. His figure, however, was tolerable, his face fine, and the good natured audience, taking pity on his pardonable diffidence, greeted him with three rounds of applause.

Mr. Lewis started with the exclamation, "It is, it is Charles!" Mrs. Lewis cried, "Gracious heavens, my son!" and nearly fainted; while the expressions of astonishment from his sisters were unnoticed only on account of the noise which filled the house.

The tide, however, soon changed. It was immediately discovered that "the young gentleman" had overrated his powers. His readings were bad, his attitudes awkward, and his gestures abominable. He ranted and strutted through two or three acts, without any repetition of the applause which had encouraged him on his first appearance, until the tent scene, when his wig fell off, and, in his confusion, crying, "Give me another horse—bind up my wounds," he threw his sword with great rapidity against the big fiddle in the orchestra, to the imminent danger of the leader's nose. This grand and original flourish drew down the laughter and acclamations of all the spectators, except the unfortunate violin-player, who was seriously occupied in feeling if the handle of his face had really escaped unhurt from this sudden and unexpected encounter. The universal hiss that succeeded, insinuated to the managers the public opinion, and the green curtain fell, to the infinite disappointment of Richmond, who stood at the wing, arrayed in complete armor of Allen's patent silver leather, and who thus saw his victim escape his just revenge.

Charles went home, looking mortified sadly. His father said nothing, for he perceived that reproaches could not add to the salutary lesson which his son had received. Perhaps, in his heart, he was not sorry; and the next morning, at breakfast, King Richard patiently listened to a proposition to enter a counting house, where he is at this time, "trimming lamps and getting the letters out of the post office."

RESOLUTION.

Blest tears of soul felt penitence!
In whose benign, redeeming flow,
Is felt the first, the only sense
Of guiltless joy that guilt can know.—*Moore.*

GEORGE STANLY, in his youth, had been one of the most promising young men of whom society could boast. He was equally admirable in person, disposition, and the qualities of his highly cultivated mind. Every one looked forward with confidence to his future eminence; and no greater misfortune entered the imagination of any one concerning him, than that death might snatch him from his career of glory, or disease render him incapable of prosecuting his duties. But there are miseries worse than death; and it is as impossible to foretell, with certainty, the character or destiny of any, from the mirth and genius of boyhood, as to know, from the serenity of the morning sky, whether, before night, its blue bosom will be stained with clouds, or shaken with tempests. Stanly, like all others of his temperament, no sooner emerged from the restrictions of his school, and mingled with the various inhabitants of his native city, than his heart owned the influence of female beauty, and he married a lovely girl, who lived only in the hope of making him happy. A few years glided away prosperously. Two fine boys engaged his warmest affection and most zealous care, and promised to be his own comfort, as well as ornaments of society. In the midst of his success, he was introduced into a circle of friends, whose light and agreeable conversation caught his taste, and inspired him with the wish to enjoy their familiar friendship.

I have found occasion to remark, that the very best are liable to be led away from right and reason by the force of example. We may talk of independence as much as we please, and amuse ourselves with contemplating the prudence with which we adopt opinions, and the energy with which we execute designs; yet

we are all, in some measure, warped by early impressions which deepen into prejudices, or are guided in our daily character and plans by circumstances acting upon us, or examples by which we are surrounded; even as a leaf, floating down a stream, falls into its eddies and pursues the windings of the current. Our ideas of things, therefore, depend upon education, and the manner in which subjects are presented to our reason, and our imagination. An object will offer to one an appearance entirely unlike what another receives from it, and men of the warmest hearts and firmest principles are liable to lose their way in the complicated and deceitful labyrinths of human life, and to wander far from their former direction, without believing that their course has been changed. When I meet a man, therefore, abandoning himself to erroneous speculations, and smothering in his breast the sparks with which wearied nature vainly endeavors to light him to his duty, I do not yield myself to emotions of hatred or contempt, but look upon him with pity, as on a fair house wrapped in flames, or a noble ship going down in a whirlpool.

Stanly frequented the houses of his friends, and his fine manners and generous character caused him to be considered an acquisition. The commencement of his career is but the hacknied story told by the pale cheeks and melancholy eyes of many a woman, who, a few years before, had been glad in the warmth and confidence of her untried affections. His house was a strange and irksome place to him; and it seemed, that, while he lavished all his mirth and health upon strangers, he remembered his own sad and neglected home only when sickness and disappointment had unfitted him for every other place. His wife, once the fondest idol of his love, and his children, around whom he had often said all the chords of his affections were entwined, now passed by him with cold and unnoticed faces, enduring, without enjoying his forced and transitory merriment, or terrified at the scowls which distorted his brow.

Among the accomplishments to which this late course of life directly led, was gambling. He entered upon the practice, without considering whither it would conduct him. Men, in his situation, for active and salutary rea-

son, substitute a vain and weak despair, which comes over them in moments of solitude and in the coolness of passion; and, as if this were a sufficient sacrifice to propitiate the favor of their conscience, they sink again into their old habits, and hasten on to ruin.

One afternoon, Mrs. Stanly sat by her window, which overlooked the street. A dark, heavy thunder cloud, which had long brooded in the west, like some rebellious army, forbearing to advance to terrible conflict only until it gathered together all its force, slowly spread over the sky, deepening and blackening as it overshadowed the city. While shop-keepers were hastily removing their goods into their stores, carriages and carts dashed by to gain shelter, and the foot passengers, with the same design, followed each other along the street with quickened step, the pensive wife continued gazing out upon the scene, and watching the precursors of the approaching storm, with a heart which she thought as heavy, and as fraught with the elements of warfare, as the slowly moving vapor that lowered over her head. Her husband had been away for nearly two days, and her youngest, and, perhaps, on account of its helplessness, her dearest child, was lying on the bed, in the crisis of a painful and dangerous sickness.

He had just fallen into a still and deep slumber, and the mother rose to gaze on his pale, beautiful face, with feelings of heavy and tremulous anguish. The white forehead was slightly shaded by clustering ringlets of gold which her fond hand had arranged upon his brow; the blue veined eyelids hid the large orbs whose azure beauty had so often enchanted her heart; his fevered cheeks faintly streaked with crimson, resembled the virgin rose leaf which the spring has scarcely unfolded to the light, and the lips seemed about to smile, as if falling into their most natural position.

It was the very face of his father as it had risen upon the dream of her earlier days, in the vigor of health and manly beauty, and lit with the fire of devoted and successful love; and, as the incidents of the few wretched years which had since elapsed came over her mind, and she acknowledged that life had deceived her, and might, even if he retained it, thus blight the budding affections

of her boy, tears rose into her eyes, she bent down her head upon his bosom, and wept.

These were not the tears of childhood, which gush from the eyes and pass away like April showers; for their sorrows darken the mind, as the shadows of snowy clouds cross the summer stream, and leave no impression behind; but she shed burning drops, which ruined hope and wrecked love wrung from her breaking heart, with a rudeness that injured all the secret springs of life.

She was startled by the slamming of a door below. A hasty step stalked along the hall; and in a moment her husband stood before her.

He was agitated and his lips were stained with wine. His dress was disordered. His haggard face bore the signs of strong emotion as well as of prolonged revelry, and his eyes flashed with fierce and unrestrained passion.

His wife raised her head as he entered, and the sight of her grief increased his fury.

"Drivelling fool!" he exclaimed, "are you in the conspiracy too, which the world seems forming against my peace? I have been insulted and defrauded; and, when I return to my home, where a man should meet cheerfulness and consolation, why must I be welcomed with tears, and looked on as a monster? Where are the servants? Where——?"

"I have sent William for the doctor; for George is sick, and I weep for him."

"Why, what's the matter with George?" asked he, flinging himself into a chair, and turning his eyes toward the sleeping boy.

"He has a dreadful fever. He was sick when you went out, you know, and he has been growing worse ever since."

"Where's the money I left with you?"

"I have laid it in the drawer."

"Get it for me; I want it."

"George, dear George!" cried Mrs. Stanly, laying her trembling hand upon his shoulder, "you are not going out again to night. Our child is sick, and——"

"Well, you told me he was sick before. I cannot make him well by staying here mewed up in his chamber. Give me the money. I *must* go."

"You will not, you cannot leave me now; he may die before morning; and, if you go away now, I know very well I shall not see you again for hours and hours."

"Well, let him die, if it is his fate: as for me, I must fulfil my engagements—if you all die."

A crash of thunder pealed along the sky, as if the voice of heaven spoke against his brutality; but, snatching away the purse, he rushed out of the house with the same impetuosity which had marked his entrance.

During the night, the child's disorder increased. He continued in great pain till about three in the morning, when, lifting up his languid eyes to his mother, he put out his little pale lips to kiss her, and died.

Stanly was at the gambling table. He had lost and lost, and drowned the consciousness of his awful guilt in repeated draughts, till, with a reeling brain, and a conscience whose sharp stings drove him almost to delirium, he knew that he was utterly and irretrievably ruined.

As the morning began to dawn, and nature was working her still sweet task upon the reddening sky and over the odor-breathing earth, changing them, like thought, from one shape and tinge to another, the repentant husband bent his solitary way to his dwelling, and entered with noiseless step. He opened the door of his apartment. His wife raised her dim eyes with an expression so sad, that his heart smote him for his cruelty, and he felt humbled with the consciousness of guilt and degradation.

As his tumultuous passions subsided, the feelings which had long rushed with a resistless current in forbidden channels, returned into their natural course, as a stream, which accident has driven from its banks, flows back again, at last, to its common level.

"Constance," he said, and his kind, affectionate voice soothed her, for she expected his usual violence—"Constance—I am a villain. I have ruined myself and you. Our dear boy is a beggar; while he sleeps in tranquil innocence, I am here to inform you that, by gambling, we are all beggars."

"Yes," said the mother, while her pale cheek grew

paler, and her voice quivered, "yes, my husband, he sleeps indeed; but it is to wake no more."

"Merciful heaven! what is it you mean?" exclaimed he.

Silently she uncovered the infant's face, and revealed to his horror struck father, features whose fixed and marble stillness told that the universal tyrant had completed his work.

Speechless with agony, and gasping for breath, while tears refused to relieve the load that burthened his mind, the unhappy man clasped his hands convulsively together, and rushed from the room.

His first impulse was to seek the swiftest and surest means of ending his life. Walking at the rapid pace to which his stinging reflections urged him, he found, by the time the sun had risen, that he was some distance from the city, in the view of one of the most lovely scenes he had ever witnessed. The character of the country was at all times romantic. Nothing was wanting that could contribute to the perfection of the landscape. Blue skies and green fields, seeming to court the comparison of the beholder—deep and lofty forests —a river, whose meandering course might be sometimes caught by the gleaming of its own tranquil bosom in the sun, and sometimes traced by the richer and greener clusters of foliage, which disclosed, as if in gratitude, its life inspiring waters—plains of soft and velvet green, and hills, whose verdant breasts were lifted gracefully, like the long and unbroken billows of the ocean, when the tempest has departed.

There is a power in such scenery to captivate the senses; the dark, dreary thoughts, which often spring up in the best regulated mind, melt away into nothing before its soft and tranquilizing influence; and there is a charm in the early morning, which lends the aspiring spirit wings to soar away into higher and happier regions, above the grovelling interests and petty cares which agitate the surface of our little planet. Stanly, whose warm and generous qualities slept, but were not dead, felt the stirring spirit of long past years stealing over him; his mind became calm, his step regular and slow, and, as he advanced to the verge of the precipice which commanded a view of the picture scene

around and below, he was struck with an idea which made his heart leap with joy and triumph.

"I have ruined," he said, "the loveliest family that ever blessed man. I have brought poverty and disgrace where I found plenty and honor. I alone have done this; and, by this bright scene, and Him who made it, I swear, that I will, to my utmost endeavor, repair the injury I have perpetrated. Return now to my home I dare not. The father of Constance will be her protector, and that of her remaining child. I will go forth into some distant part of the world, and never return, unless with the affluence I have within these few hours lost."

He turned from contemplating the landscape, and disappeared from the spot. His wife waited long and anxiously for his coming, but he came not; and it was thought probable that heaven, in pity, had terminated a life, the continuation of which would only have been the protraction of despair. Mrs. Stanly, however, had loved her husband too well to recover from the shock, and, for a number of years, she remained in a melancholy which she could not conquer.

About ten years after these incidents, upon the very spot where Stanly had formed his generous resolution, a man was seen standing with signs of pleasure in his countenance. His face was ruddy, and embrowned with exposure to the air, and labor had swelled his limbs to manly and vigorous proportions; but the moisture which glistened in his eyes, as he turned them toward what had once been his dwelling, half buried among the trees, showed that his heart had not grown callous, although his form had become hardy. It was Stanly; who, having amassed considerable fortune abroad, had that very day returned to his native country, and paused upon the scene which had never left his memory.

It was a tranquil afternoon in autumn. The prospect was just as beautiful as on the morning of his departure, except that the sun, which was then springing up to pursue his ethereal journey, was now setting, and as he flung forth his mellow radiance in rich and glorious glances, he seemed as some beloved friend sinking calmly and triumphantly into death, whose looks

of love are stronger and deeper as he knows that we shall soon see them no more.

The sun set—but, before the fiery radiance which glowed in his warm track had given place to the pale lustre of the cold moon, George Stanly clasped his delighted and faithful wife to his exulting bosom, and folded in his arms their only child. He is at this time a prosperous man, and a most affectionate husband; and often he wanders with his Constance—who has regained half the loveliness of her former days—to that lonely hill, with the green forests waving around, and the winding river gleaming below.

SCENES FROM LIFE.

MULTITUDES of the young and happy, bent only on their own cheerful occupations, may be ignorant of the nature of a pawnbroker's business. We all derive benefit from the wants and distresses of our fellow creatures. The physician thrives best in times of sickness, and the lawyer flourishes amid trouble and discord. But the pawnbroker seems more directly to deal with the wretched. The poor who have no other method of meeting the exigences of the times, apply to him for money. The interest which they pay is generally exorbitant, and they are demanded to leave in pledge some article of considerably more value than the sum obtained. They who have no friend and no hope, save such as spring up in the interested traffic of the world, bring here their little treasured remains of better times, and sacrifice them to the relentless persecutions of fate.

As I was passing down Chatham street the other day, my attention was arrested by a sign of "unredeemed pledges for sale." The room, at the window of which this notice was exposed, was a low miserable hole, cumbered with various objects heaped together by wretchedness or folly, and dark as if the blessed beams of the sun disdained to enter the filthy den, which so evidently

betrayed the recent visits of penury and guilt. The articles hung out at the door to catch the eyes of the passengers, and those which the dim light rendered visible within, were, in many instances, valuable, and sometimes spoke of happier scenes; altogether, the collection seemed so intimately associated with want and desperation, and so fraught with melancholy histories, that before I had distinctly formed any intention, I found myself in the gloomy apartment. A little withered up old man, with wrinkled face and a stoop of the shoulders, as if he had been all his life counting over his gains, waited my commands behind the counter. His small eyes peered at me through a pair of white glasses, which appeared to add to their inquiring gaze. He stuck his pen behind his ear, took off his spectacles, wiped them, and replaced them upon his pointed nose; cast a satisfied look around his shop, over the gleanings of a hundred wrecked hopes and fortunes, and then waited my wishes with that composed and unmeaning politeness which, in great cities, becomes the common property of the good and bad.

I looked around me a moment with considerable curiosity, and my fancy, ever busy in drawing pictures of misery or bliss, presented many an image of distress which the good man's articles of trade had conjured up. The window was ornamented with old silver watches dangling at the ends of steel chains and dirty brass keys. A flute, cracked, like the fortunes of its owner, showed that some lover of music had yielded his instrument to the hardness of the times; and I pictured him to myself, whistling his old tunes, with his hands in his pockets, going home—if he had a home—on a cold wintry night, without a great coat. "Poor fellow," thought I, "perhaps he has a heart generous and aspiring as Alexander or Cæsar—perhaps he has learning, wit, talent, and virtue—yet all could not save him from the frowns of fortune." Near the flute stood a cane of very dashing appearance, with a great horn handle, worn smooth by the hand that, alas! had now bidden it a last farewell. It was ornamented with leathern tassels, after the fashion of canes, and a slight pull drew to my sight a shining blade, a foot and a half in length. "Some broken down gentleman," said I to myself, "has left this—some warm

hearted, fiery brained disciple of honor and pleasure, whom his own extravagance has deprived of houses, horses, gigs, watch, money, and forced at last to a separation from this constant friend—this *fidus Achates* —to raise a few shillings for one more supper of oysters, or a ticket at the theatre, or a dun." Great coats, under coats, and pantaloons, hung upon pegs around the room; tables, looking-glasses, portable desks, &c., were lying around, and at the door, with very particular splendor, was displayed a uniform coat, which, notwithstanding that the tawdry ornaments were a little worn, and one or two of the buttons, whether in the tumult of battle or by the mere influence of time, had disappeared, made a conspicuous part of this motley exhibition.

"Can I supply you with any thing today?" said my friend behind the counter. "These things, sir, are generally as good as new, and I can afford to let you have them cheap."

"I cannot see any thing of which I am in want at present," said I, and was leaving the shop.

"But let me show you some of my more valuable stock, sir. There are breast pins, rings, watch seals, keys, &c., of almost every kind, and much cheaper than they can be bought at any jeweller's. Please to look at them."

To oblige the man, I looked over one or two little boxes which he placed in my hands, and with sated curiosity, was about to return them, when my eye was struck with a ring which I had seen before.

It is at least five years since I knew Ellen G——. There were many other girls of my acquaintance, who were more calculated to dazzle by their charms, or to delight by fashionable accomplishments, than she, yet I never was more happy than in her society. I was but a boy then, and scarcely knew what it was to love; but I always regarded her with a feeling much too warm for friendship. I never thought of marriage, for I had a thousand other things to engage my attention; yet, when I sat by her side, and ran over to her the various adventures which had fallen under my observation, I did think I was her truest friend; and that, if opportunity would but present itself, I would do more for her

than for any one else in the world. At that time, as I said, I never dreamed of matrimony; and if I had, I think it would then never have occurred to me that Ellen would have united her fate with mine; I should have deemed that she aspired to some higher object, and repressed in my bosom every rising wish as the offspring of a saucy imagination.

She left the city some time afterward, though not before I had pressed upon her acceptance a diamond ring of some value, as a token of friendship much warmer and deeper than even I suspected.

I had since heard she was married, and happily settled in one of the southern states. I mused a moment upon what I might have been, and wished I could shape a destiny for her as bright as her own lovely image. Her sweet, happy face, and clear soft voice, passed through my imagination, and then, as we awaken from some enchanting dream, to resume the cold ceremonies of the day, I turned from my contemplations and dismissed her from my mind.

As the pawnbroker spread out his box of jewelry upon the counter, I seized the ring, and beheld engraved within it the letters E. G.

With great pains I succeeded in discovering her lodgings. I found her in the deepest distress. She had been married to an officer of the navy, whose character was as noble as his attachment to her was devoted. For some time he enjoyed her society, and they lived in happiness together; but he was ordered off to a sickly station, where there were few opportunities of communicating with each other. His letters became less and less frequent, and her share of his pay which she drew from the navy agent, and which barely enabled her to support herself and one child, was at length stopped by the news that her husband had been carried off by the yellow fever. Without friends, or any means of support, she had attempted to live independently by means of her needle; but misfortunes were too heavy for her constitution. When I saw her, her fine form was wasted down almost to a skeleton, and her lovely face, once so radiant with health and pleasure, now bore the deep

marks of time, sickness, and sorrow; each of them a sufficient foe to a flower so delicate as woman's beauty; but, united, alas! who shall paint the ravages they make upon the face and the heart.

She had long been in absolute distress, for the want of a small sum to purchase the necessaries of life; and it was a very little while after my first visit that I saw her laid in her grave, and heard the earth shovelled upon a bosom which had known hopes as pure, and affections as fond, as any ever formed by nature.

* * * * * * * *

"Oh, my dear, *dear* husband!" exclaimed a beautiful young creature to a fat morose-looking elderly gentleman, who sat in the drawing room of one of the most fashionable boarding houses in the city—"Oh, my dear husband, will you do me one more favor, and that will satisfy me for a month?"

"What is it, my dear? You know I can deny you nothing."

"Why, I have been walking today with Miss W——, and we stopped in at Mr. Marquand's jewelry store, and Mr. M. showed us *such* a set of jewels. I must have them."

"But, my dear, you have just spent two hundred upon your personal decorations—and, I should think——"

"Ah, now—you don't know any thing about it," interrupted she, flinging her white arm over his broad shoulder, and putting her delicate and snowy hand, glittering with rings, beneath his double chin. "Ah, now—I must have them. I cannot possibly do without them. Miss W—— is going to appear tomorrow night in such a dress, and if I do not get them, I am sure I shall be very unhappy."

"Well, well, my dear, you shall have them. There—" and taking out his pocket book, he displayed a bunch of notes carefully laid between other papers, which slept in its capacious bosom till avarice or speculation should draw them forth, to be rendered back fourfold.

"Oh, let me see," said his bride, while the shadows passed from her face, and her red pouting lip curled again into its accustomed smile: "here are one, two,

three, thousand dollar notes—here are five hundreds, and here——"

"Well, well, my darling," said the gentleman, with a chuckle of self-approbation, and a glance around upon the company, which spoke volumes of satisfied pride, "here 's a hundred; go, get your jewels as early in the morning as you please, and give me a kiss now worth a hundred dollars."

I thought of poor Ellen in her quiet grave, and her husband mouldering on the shores of a foreign land; but I said nothing; for I knew no eloquence would have moved pity for the poor orphan boy, thus cast upon the rough current of this strange and incomprehensible world.

FABLES.

THE TRANSPLANTED ROSE.

In a beautiful recess, formed by the interwreathed branches of a thick wood, there once grew together a company of flowers. Although they were of several kinds, they lived in great friendship with each other, and, as they had burst forth in their sylvan retreat in the early spring, they were promised by the aged trees around, a long and most happy existence. Nothing could be more delightful than the summer days and nights which they spent in each other's society. There was no envy, no jealousy, no pride—those dreadful plagues of the fair flowers of the human race—and they were luckily ignorant of any degrading luxury and wasting dissipation to sap their young strength, steal the fine hues from their fresh and tender leaves, or to bend them out of that exquisite ease and graceful simplicity which they inherited from nature. The loveliest belle, while she envied their wonderful beauty, might have more justly envied their quiet repose and cheerfulness. The breeze came to them with an equal love,

and stirred them gently; the dew fell silently from heaven, and freshened their opening bloom; the sun kissed them and ripened every charming feature, and the golden bee hummed around them in the mellow afternoons; and when the wind and storm arose they remained sheltered by the strong arms of a giant vine, which they had long cheered with their radiant glances, and which, in return, bent over, and guarded them to the full extent of his power.

There is a glory about flowers which always touches me. They are types of girlish innocence. Every one who looks at them feels that, if they have any consciousness, they must be happy. They bear upon them such an unequivocal impress of supernatural care and love. They are so clearly nature's pride—her favorites; the freshest—the sweetest—the most perfect of her creations. Who that knows the world—its dark and awful tempests—its gloomy calms—its fierceness—its hatreds—its anguish—its disease,—who would not be a flower—ignorant of these things, to open and breathe a grateful joy and pass silently away under the glory of a summer sky?

One day there came a lord, and he paused as he gazed on them. He admired all, but most he admired a tall and superb rose, that spread out its half uncurling leaves with the simple delight of health and youth.

"I will have that flower," he said, "for myself. It shall be forthwith transplanted. It will be the surprise and delight of the great and the lovely. It will excel every other." And so he went away for his gardener.

The tall rose had listened with new feelings.—Strange thoughts of tremulous pleasure thronged upon her. She nodded her beauteous head and rejoiced.

"Dear rose," said a little blue violet that peeped out beneath, "you had better be where you are, in my mind. I never knew any good to come from transplanting such tender creatures as you from their natural homes."

"Saucy and dull violet," replied the queen of all the flowers, "thou mayest remain, but I am inspired with a new existence. I wonder I never before knew what it was to be admired, or how much I excelled all of you. It is a delicious sensation—I am now the happiest of flowers."

She was interrupted by the gardener, who dug away the earth around her, and carried her to the palace of his master.

For a few hours she was intoxicated with delight. Every body praised her. She wondered that she had been so long ignorant of her merits, and how gratifying it is to be praised; but in a little time she was neglected—her color faded—her fresh leaves grew dry and withered—she hung her head—all her charms disappeared. The lord took her and cast her into the road, and, as she was leaving her brief residence she met the gardener with another rose all dripping with dew, and blushing with pleasure.

"Alas," she said, as she was dying, "alas, for my sweet and simple home. May all lovely flowers take warning by me, and shrink from the hand that would drag them from their happy seclusion to exhibit their beauties in the glare of public notice, and leave them, like me, afterward to perish unpitied."

HUMILITY AND PERSEVERANCE.

From the side of a mountain there flowed forth a little rivulet—its voice was scarcely heard amid the rustling of the leaves and grass around, and its shallow and narrow stream might be overlooked by the traveller. This brook, although so small, was inspired with a proud spirit, and murmured against the decree of Providence, which had cast its lot so lowly.

"I wish I were a cloud, to roll all day through the heavens, painted as those lovely shapes are, and never descending again in showers; or, at least, I wish I were a broad river, performing some useful duty in the world. Shame on my weak waves and unregarded bubbling. I might as well have never been, as to be thus puny, insignificant, and useless."

When the brook had thus complained, a beautiful tall flower, that bent over its bosom, replied,

"Thou art in error, brook. Puny and insignificant thou mayest be; useless thou art not, for I owe half my beauty, perhaps my life, to thy refreshing waters.

"The plants adjacent to thee are greener and richer

than the others. The Creator has given thee a duty, which, though humble, thou must not neglect. Beside, who knows what may be thy future destiny? Flow on, I beseech thee."

The brook heard the rebuke, and danced along its way more cheerfully. On and on it went, growing broader and broader. By and by other rivulets poured their crystal waters into it, and swelled its deepening bosom, in which already began to appear the fairy creatures of the wave, darting about joyfully, and glistening in the sun. As its channel grew wider and wider, and yet other branches came gliding into it, the stream began to assume the importance of a river, and boats were launched on it, and it rolled on in a meandering course through a teeming country, freshening whatever it touched, and giving the whole scene a new character of beauty.

As it moved on now in majesty and pride the sound of its gently-heaving billows formed itself into the following words:

"At the outset of life, however humble we may seem, fate may have in store for us great and unexpected opportunities of doing good and of being great. In the hope of these we should ever pass on without despair or doubt, trusting that perseverance will bring in its own reward. How little I dreamed when I first sprang on my course what purposes I was destined to fulfill! What happy beings were to owe their bliss to me! What lofty trees, what velvet meadows, what golden harvests were to hail my career! Let not the meek and lowly despair: heaven will supply them with noble inducements to virtue."

CONTENT AND PLEASURE.

THERE was a soft flower. It bloomed in the midst of a wood. Nothing could exceed its delicacy, its brightness, its grace, and loveliness. The surrounding air was laden with its breath. In its half closed leaves was a spell of such potency, that every other flower in its presence appeared dim. Its name was Pleasure.

Whoever passed by the beautiful acclivity where it

grew, wanted to pluck it. Unfortunately, however, it was only to be found on a place of difficult access, and was surrounded with various kinds of briars and thorns. Still, however, it was the delight of every eye, and the wish of every heart.

On the road side, which wound along by the bank where Pleasure bloomed so brightly, there grew in some profusion a plant of an inferior kind; at least, so it appeared when any one looked on it, which happened very seldom; for it was so plain in its colors, so humble in its attitude, so lowly and unpresuming, that it was generally quite disregarded; or, if seen accidentally by those in pursuit of Pleasure, was trampled down as something worthless. Here and there might be found one passenger, who, after gazing a while on Pleasure, and on the violent exertions made by the crowd to procure it, shook his head, picked up the little floweret at his feet, kissed it, and put it in his bosom. The name of this plant was Content.

But however inferior it might be to Pleasure in beauty, it certainly had one advantage over its brilliant rival. The former was rarely to be found in any quantity. The road to it was most frequently troublesome and dangerous, and its buds too, were often also almost beyond the reach, and so singularly small and fragile that the very airs of summer blew off the downy blossoms, and wilted the delicate leaves. The latter, on the contrary, was a hardy plant, and burst up every where in a lavish abundance. The road was lined with it. Sometimes it shot forth with vigor even in the very path, peeping up from the hard trodden ground and between the stones scattered around. About the bases of rocks and the twisted roots of old trees it lay in masses, and away in under the shade of still summer places, where the traveller in his haste would scarcely ever dream of looking, it might be seen unfolding its cheerful buds, and pushing out fearlessly with a right fresh and merry aspect.

When storms arose, Pleasure always suffered. It shrunk up like a sensitive plant; and when the wind and rain passed away, the green bank was sure to be scattered all over with fragments of blossoms and broken leaves. Poor Pleasure! If summer breezes disturbed

and ruined it, how could it be expected to stand the fierce tempest, the scorching heat, the bitter cold, and all the changes of season which come so suddenly and certainly over this world? Even in its calmest moments Pleasure drooped secretly with the thought that its beauty was brief, and its very life precarious. Every whisper among the leaves of the trees alarmed it—every rolling cloud in heaven struck a damp and a shadow upon its radiance.

But all this while Content was perfectly free and satisfied, and cared almost as little for the changes of the season as if it were immortal. There was about it an enduring hardihood, which defied the storm. The long hot droughts of summer, which burnt up the tender charms of Pleasure, had no material effect upon the leaves of Content, and when the frightful thunder shower arose, and the large heavy drops came splashing and dashing down, and drenched nature in one universal flood, Content peeped out, as the deluge subsided, with a refreshed and gay beauty, which almost equalled that of Pleasure in its best moments.

A youth came by one day, and as was the case with all who passed the spot, was struck with the sight of Pleasure, and resolved to obtain it. On so doing, he trod upon Content, but the voice of the crushed flower was unheard in his eagerness to advance. When men are hastening, with wild hope, in the pursuit of their desires, they are deaf to a thousand low sweet tones of nature, which, on their retreat, after disappointment and danger, and anguish, and, perhaps, despair, sound in their ears with an irresistible power. In a short time the youth came back, wearied, faint, and bleeding with wounds received from the briars. He was one of those wild, reckless children of passion, with whom the world abounds, and who waste energies and courage in idle and pernicious enterprises, which, if applied to more noble purposes, would make them virtuous and happy.

He had plucked the flower, but it was broken and soiled; already its vivid tinges were fading away, and its luscious perfume grew fainter every moment. He soon discovered also, to his amazement and horror, that though is was so fair and lovely, his wounds smarted at its touch, and the scent which he had at first inhaled

with a violent delight, took the strength from his limbs and the courage from his heart—made his eyes languid, his resolution weak, and his intellect dim and heavy. As he rested on a rude bank, far below the spot ornamented by the deceitful plant which had caused him so much trouble, the fine flower which had till then escaped his observation, uncurled its scented leaves, and glowing with a beauty which grew more palpable the more closely it was examined, thus addressed the tired and despondent boy:

"I called to you, fair youth, as you were mounting yonder steep so hastily, and told you to beware, but you, like all your race, paid no attention to my warning. Indeed, I doubt whether you even heard it. I am, however, not very sorry for your sake that you have had a little experience, since it will induce you to rest a moment, and listen while I confide to you a secret which you do not appear to understand. You must know then, that the plant up yonder, specious as it is, has ruined more people here in my very sight, than there are leaves in that forest. It not only attacks them with pain, but it inflames them with guilty hopes and reckless passions. It is a poison. I am a medicine. If I cannot cure, I can impart strength, which will enable you to sustain all sorrow. I am to be found every where. Nature has given me to her children, with a liberal hand, if they choose but to seize me, instead of trampling me beneath their feet, in search of more gaudy, but more worthless objects. I am full of the spirit of goodness: though I am seldom cultivated in the gardens of the great, I spring up, unbidden, around the feet of the tired traveller, and by the threshold of the poor man's cottage. and it is their own fault if they do not discover my value."

CITY RAMBLES.

It is now the twenty-second of April. Come here, Arthur. Look out of this window—there, by those vine leaves—don't you see a humming bird, clad in an

unspeakable gorgeousness, shaming the richest eastern monarch, and floating on his half-visible wings from bud to bud? Hark to his hum. Does not your heart leap with the rarest summer associations at the sound? What a superb creature! Let us go forth and rove awhile. There is something irresistibly seducing in the first breath of spring. How serene and bright is all nature. The air is a delicious temperature, and yet the sun has not yet lifted his magnificent disk fairly into the heavens. See, even now his expanded rim lingers a moment on the horizon, as if to steal a parting kiss. Now that deep, rich cloud has broken into lines and crosses his dazzling face like golden bars. See how they break away—slowly melting from his fiery beams. There—there—they are gone aside. He is clear, and his radiant floods roll over the scene without interruption.

Let us take a stroll around the good old city of Manahatta. It has been obscured so long with wintry storms that we have not lately lingered in the streets. We will greet them with a little more attention.

The trampling of horses' feet. It is a party of pleasure, consisting of several ladies and gentlemen. They come this way. Pretty! *very* pretty! And now as they are sweeping that corner I hear the sound of their light laughter. Riding is a healthy and graceful exercise, and I observe with pleasure that it is coming into fashion more and more every year; and, what is better, the ladies ride—*before breakfast.* Groups of them may be frequently noticed at this early and delightful period of the day passing in high glee up Broadway into some of the fine avenues which lead over the island. There are many admirable roads for this purpose in our vicinity. Those adjacent to the east river have many charms, but on the whole, I prefer those in the vicinity of the Hudson—through Bloomingdale, and along several by-paths that lead through winding and shady lanes down to the water's edge. I suspect the fair travellers are not all acquainted with the noble, I may add splendid prospects, within an hour's ride of their homes. There is one in particular from the rocky shore of the North river, beautiful and striking in a remarkable degree. You catch a fine

picture view of Weehawken point—the broad bay and river—the New York shore, and also that of New Jersey, gradually rising and beginning to heave with those graceful swells and abrupt acclivities which, as you proceed up the stream, enlarge so splendidly into mountain scenery.

The warm weather has brought out all the bees, white pantaloons, and soda water shops. The academies of paintings are to be opened—Niblo's garden is opened—Contoit, Palmo, Castle garden—the note of preparation is sounding far and wide.

Niblo is one of the most wonderful fellows that ever lived. The influence of his original mind has absolutely wrought a change in this city. He has given an impulse to gardens, and fireworks, bowers, green lamps, dinners, &c. There was a time when the men and women of New York *walked*. The ladies walked from the Battery to the Sailor's Snug Harbor. The merchants walked down Broadway in strings to Wall street after they had got their breakfast; and when they had perpetrated all their transactions they walked back. Citizens of every grade—except youth of the *very* first order—were compelled to follow the example of Loony Mactwolter, and traverse the distance of this extended metropolis on the machines that the hay makers use in Ireland. Hackney coaches are expensive, and the drivers insolent. But who walks now? Niblo's fertile imagination one day struck out a new plan, for he has the inventive and bold genius of Napoleon himself. "Do you see that star?" said the emperor one day to his uncle as an explanation of his ensuing excursion to Russia. "No," replied the old cardinal. "I *do*," was the reply. "Do you not see what this is for?" said Niblo to the carriage maker, when he ordered a stage four times larger than had ever been conceived here before, and to be fitted up in the most expensive style. "No," replied the wheelwright. Niblo placed the tip of his fore finger on his nose. An expression of deep thought passed over his face. "I *do*," he said; and leaving the room, ordered his man to get a bottle of Maderia, a corkscrew, and one glass, and deny him to all visiters. The event has realized his expectations. There are now in Broadway alone, twenty-six of the

most fanciful and pleasant vehicles to ride in that can be imagined. You travel two or three miles for eight cents or a shilling, and each one, I learn, takes in sixteen dollars a day. Who says the designer of this is not a public benefactor, and ought not to have a dinner?

Do you see that row of fine houses in William by Wall street? They are to come down—half of Ann, ditto—and I do not know how many others, for the sake of improving and beautifying the city. The changes which at present it is undergoing will materially alter the appearance of many portions of it. You remember the mass of filthy buildings in the rear of college green. See what an imposing row of mansions now occupies and ornaments the spot. It really has a lordly air, and is one of the most charming sections of the town. This place was formerly a sand bank; and before it was at all cultivated, or had any particular value attached to it, I have heard the then corporation leased it, with a vast amount of other real property, for an exorbitant length of time at an annual rent of a few bushels of *wheat!* Of course, when the old lease expires, the estate will revert to the corporation.

It is strange that with all the extended plans which the common council form for the benefit of the citizens, they are so inexcusably negligent of cleanliness. No city in the Union is so filthy. There seems to be no energy exerted on the subject, although the daily papers teem with epistles from cats and dogs who have departed this life, praying a decent interment. Mud lies often in the streets for weeks, ankle deep; and as for dirt, the inhabitants may fear the *ophthalmy*, a disease of the eyes which many Arabs suffer from the sands of the desert. There—look at that fellow yonder, emptying ashes into an uncovered cart. See as the light breeze springs up how it sweeps in a long train down the street into the faces of the passengers, and on the other side behold a waggon of lime treating the people opposite in the same way. All this is mighty agreeable.

Well, here we are on the Battery—a scene of which we can never tire. See that winged boat flying across the surface, and leaving behind it a wake of whirling eddies and sparkling foam. Is it not pretty? Farther off is a ship putting out to sea. She floats with a slower

motion. The gentle wind which sends the other bounding along the wave, only swells those broad, white sails with its breath. That must be a packet. How gracefully and gallantly she shapes her course toward the distant gates which lead from these silver waves—this peaceful scene—forth far and wide over the broad ocean. I never see a noble ship, all her flags streaming, and her sails set, putting out to sea, without a sensation of anxiety, admiration, and delight. But hark! the cry of the milkmen and bakers. The sun is high, and the carts are thundering along over the pavement. The various sounds of labor are rising on all sides round me, and I, like others, a slave to artificial wants, must to my task with the rest.

May 4.—I dropped into the theatre this evening to enjoy the opera. A friend asked if I had "heard the crash?" "Of what?" "The building." I requested him to explain. The immense high store of Phelps and Peck, in Fulton street, had fallen to the ground, and crushed to death he knew not how many people. I hastened to the spot, which presented a most extraordinary scene. Fancy an immense crowd, condensed within the narrow streets, around the relics of a lofty brick building, six stories high; the surrounding houses illuminated, and men upon the ruins, distinctly seen in the lurid glare of the windows and a number of torches; the shouts of the workmen, and the murmur of horror, which ever and anon ran through the throng, as a body was extricated, or a mass of the remaining wall rolled crumbling and thundering from its base. A part of the roof remained overhanging the rubbish, and apparently unsupported. The ringing of the bells had collected the hook and ladder companies attached to the fire department, and one daring fellow climbed up and fastened a rope to the tottering fragment, by which it was drawn to the earth. It is indeed a scene to be remembered. The excitement is tremendous. Hark! another hum and bustle—a mangled form has been extricated.

May 5.—Through the city this morning, there is one only theme of conversation—the accident. You hear fragments of sentences, as you pass along the streets; hasty questions and answers, all on the same subject. Let us again visit the spot. See, as we draw near, there

is a sensible change in the manner and character of the passengers. They have not the settled business look and walk which mark the New Yorkers at nine in the morning; they are eager and rapid in their pace—their faces wear an expression of anxiety—curiosity—wonder —horror. They are, in larger numbers, moving all the same way, with the same purpose. There stands the mayor, busily talking, and yonder goes a train of constables, with their poles, to keep order among the anxious and rapidly increasing crowd. The scene would call to mind a revolution, or some popular commotion; yet, instead of anger, the prevailing sentiments are fear and pity, which have hushed all the noisy and boisterous riot incidental to such large collections of people. They stand silent and awe struck, gazing on the ruins. Officers are ranged round to keep the circle clear, and give room to the workmen, who have been all night, and are yet laboring to disinter the bodies, and remove such parts of the building as remain in a situation dangerous to the surrounding inhabitants. The edifice was one of the largest in the city; the fact that it was built in the winter, but feebly put together, and completely filled with cotton and heavy merchandise, must account for the catastrophe. I never saw a picture so strikingly emblematic of wreck and ruin as it presents at this moment. It seems to have been struck with a thunder-bolt, and rent in twain; the walls and massive timbers are wrenched asunder—vast quantities of rubbish and merchandize lie heaped up on the spot, while others are precipitated into the street; much of the latter is exposed; the place looks as if an avalanche had tumbled from a mountain, and in its descent dashed a village into atoms. The bodies of a number of the unfortunate tenants have been rescued; some are discerned, but cannot yet be disentangled. One is crushed, with his head upwards. A pair of feet are uncovered beneath his arms; while, in a different place the arm of a clerk is alone visible, a silver pen yet in his fingers. One hour before this calamity occurred, I was in the second story of this very house. What strange thoughts come crowding on my imagination!

May 7.—I actually dreamed all last night of the dreadful scene described above. The earliest beams of

morning found me awake, and as a ray of the sun touched the wall of my chamber with golden fire, I shook off the remaining drowsiness of slumber, and dressed myself for a walk. Come with me, dear reader. Lift your cheek from the hot pillow. Spring is abroad, in all her magnificence. Fly from the phantom dreams that haunt your rest, and taste the sweet reality of nature. I know it is not the easiest enterprise—even the traversing of that short distance from your bed to the window. I know how potently the "murderous slumber" lays his "leaden mace" upon you. I know how delusively the moments are beguiled by spirit forms, and lovely visions—but start away from them; and how suddenly you become a new creature. Let the stupid and the guilty kill time in "swinish sleep." It is a gain to them. But to you, whose hearts are light—whose consciences are clear, it is but a death in the midst of life, which, after a certain period, benumbs and deadens all the faculties. Ah, you are up. How the grateful air from the window revives you! Did you ever notice the expression of a person's face directly after sleep? Such a vacancy—such a ludicrous absence of thought and feeling—such a "where am I?" or "I wish you were at the d—l" sort of look as he gives when you break his darling repose. I have burst into laughter on such occasions, on accidentally catching a glance of my countenance in a glass.

Is not it a delicious sensation, the laving your temples and neck with that cool transparent water? Already the blood stirs through your veins more boldly and cheerfully. Upon my soul, a faint sparkle of intelligence is rising in your eyes—you are washed and dressed—"Richard's himself again." So now for our ramble.

Whither shall we go? You do not like the dust, you say, of street sweeping—well, nor I. So pass we on, by whole armies of servant maids, with mops and watering pots—cleaners of brass knobs and door handles—bakers, milkmen, goers to market, and a thousand *et ceteras*, and here we are at Hoboken ferry. Hark, the bell rings—they are about to start. With what a deafening din the steam bursts and spouts from the pipe. We are safely on board—the engine moves, the city

recedes. We are ploughing this splendid sheet of water, which would be of a mirror smoothness but for the long foaming wake of our boat, that breaks the lucid stillness beautifully, striking its transparent green into ripples of sparkling light. Vessels, of all kinds, are plying their course, in various directions around us. The waters lie like a graceful lake by the sleeping city, circled with shores of green, except where distance lends its magic charm, and the verdant foliage melts into heavenly blue. How finely the outline of Staten Island is painted on the sky; and to the north what can be more picturesque than the broken promontory of Weehawk, with a train of snowy winged sloops doubling its verdant cape? Hear the hum of labor, rising from the town, and the dash of oars from yonder boat; and see two high ships gliding through the Narrows; and now we approach the grassy shores of New Jersey, all lighted up by the level beams of the eastern sun. The fresh air has given color to your cheek, and brightness to your eye. Your soul is awake, as well as your body. You are glowing with a thousand pleasant feelings, some subdued into tranquil contentment—others deepening into transient rapture. Tell me, is not this better than even all the boasted luxuries of morning sleep?

OBADIAH.

"You are a good for nothing lazy rascal," said an exasperated farmer to his son, Obadiah Davis. "You a'n't worth the salt of your meat to me. You have neither watered the horses, nor fed the pigs. There's Sal scolding down stairs, because there's no wood cut for the oven; and you have left the bars of the lane down, and the cow has gone into neighbor Humphrey's field. Get out, you idle, lazy, good for nothing loon—out of my sight."

Mr. Davis was six feet high. Obadiah was not more than five feet three. The last adjectives with their terminating noun, were rendered much more emphatic by

the hearty cuffs with which each one was accompanied, and the last explanatory push, which came from a hand brawny with fifty years' labor, formed a hint not to be mistaken, that the negligent youth's company was no longer wanted.

Obadiah was a lubberly looking fellow, about seventeen. He bore the beating with a good grace, the necessity of which frequent experience had inculcated; and, without saying a word to his irritated parent, he went down the lane—a neglect of the bars of which had formed one of the counts in the declaration against him—and sat down on a stone, in a little grove of trees by the side of a brook, whose waters swept rapidly over their sandy bed, and filled the air with freshness and music. He ruminated a while with his under lip out in a pouting way, which with him, as well as others, was a sign of some internal agitation.

"Yes," he exclaimed,—for why should not farmer's boys address the groves and invoke the rural spirits, as well as Tell or Brutus?—"Yes," says Obadiah, drawing the sleeve of his coat across his mouth, with more of a view of comfort than grace; "yes, I'll be darned if I stand that 'ere any more. I a'n't to be beat like a dog all my life, and I think I may as well give dad the slip now, as any other time. I'll tell him on't. If he's a mind to give me a trifle, so much the better; if he han't he may let it alone."

It was about two days after the preceding events, that Mr. Davis was surprised by the appearance of his son apparently equipped for a journey. He stared at him a moment, partly silent from displeasure, and partly from surprise.

"Well, father," said Obadiah, with some hesitation, "I'm come to bid you good bye."

"To bid me good bye, you fool! Why, where are you going?"

"I am going to seek my fortune in the world, father. I know I am no use to you. I think I can do almost as well any where else. I can't do much worse, at all events. So I am going down to York, or some where thereabouts, to get along by myself."

Mr. Davis remonstrated with the young adventurer, but found him firm in the purpose which he had it

seemed, been a considerable time in adopting; and, after much useless persuasion, with a voice softened by the thought of their approaching separation, he asked him what course he intended to pursue.

"I am going to study law."

"And how are you to be supported while you are following your studies?"

"I guess I'll teach school," answered Obadiah, with the gravity of a saint.

The old man, in spite of his sorrow, could not refrain from laughing at the thought of his young unsuccessful agriculturalist, retailing wisdom and knowledge to the rising generation, or pursuing the subtle shadows of justice through the mazy labyrinths of law. He looked at him with increasing wonder. There he was, with his brown coat, and linsey-wolsey trowsers, his hair combed straight over his forehead, and standing in the most awkward of attitudes. But Obadiah, it appears, had made up his mind, and was not inclined to return to his old employment on any terms. He, therefore, bade his father good bye, and also his sister Sally and the cook. A short walk over the farm afforded him an opportunity of performing the same tender duty toward the horses, the pigs, and the old cow. All things being at length settled to his satisfaction, he started on his way. The poultry were gathering on the roost, and the old dog, Cæsar, came after him, wagging his tail affectionately, and entreating eloquently, but in vain, to accompany his master on his novel expedition. Many sensitive folks would have yielded a few soft regrets to the quiet and really beautiful spot he was leaving perhaps for ever. But Obadiah never dreamed of regretting what he was doing of his own accord. He cast, therefore, only a slight retrospective glance upon the scene of his boyish pains and pleasures; and, having surveyed it a moment, with one eye shut, commenced his journey, whistling Yankee Doodle.

The disadvantages under which he labored were immense. Without education, and totally destitute of experience in the fashionable or literary world; friendless, and almost pennyless, he was to make his way among those who had enjoyed proper instruction and high friends from their birth—who had been ushered into

public life, with the honors of college, and who could scarcely regard the quiet, plain and retiring country boy, except with smiles and derision.

His advantages, however, were not disregarded by himself. He knew the strength of a mind which had grown up in the solitude and quiet of nature's abodes, unweakened by the dissipations of fashion, and untrammelled by the fetters of a bad system of education. He knew that he had great difficulties to struggle against, and that he must depend upon himself solely to supply all the deficiencies of nature and art, by his own unwearied application.

In a splendid drawing room of a well known city, a young gentleman was entertaining some young ladies. They were all in rich and highly fashionable apparel. The girls were lovely; and they, as well as the graceful youth, whose handsomely turned periods excited so much pleasure, and whose attic wit produced such frequent bursts of merriment, seemed whiling away the hours delightfully, in all the charming and elegant familiarity of high life. A ringing was heard at the door, and the servant announced Mr. Obadiah Davis, who accordingly walked in with his hat on, and with considerable embarrassment proceeded to business. The politeness ever attendant upon real gentility, prompted the company to restrain their disposition toward mirth, while Mr. Davis presented his letter of introduction, and the gentleman was perusing the same. But when, after having finished and folded up the letter, Mr. Chatterton introduced Mr. Davis to the ladies as a gentleman from the country, whose intention it was to pursue the profession of the law, the lurking smiles curled their rosy lips in spite of themselves; and Mr. Chatterton himself, while he performed the necessary duties which the etiquette of the day required, added to the good humor of his fair and merry companions by a wink, which did not pass altogether unobserved.

Mr. Chatterton complied with his request, which, upon the recommendation of a friend, Mr. Davis had made, to be allowed to file his certificate in the office where the young gentleman under the instruction of his father was also studying law.

Time passed on. Charles Chatterton, in the full pos-

session of an ample fortune, and surrounded by the blandishments of life, found a thousand things to charm him from his office. He was young, gay, and witty. His society was courted by all his acquaintance of his own sex, and among the fair and fascinating of the other, a heart like his was sure to find joys too delicious to be yielded for the drudgery of a lawyer's office, or the remote hope of future fame. He loved music, and its notes welcomed and detained him wherever he went. Dancing was his delight; and there were snowy hands which he knew he might have for the asking, and bright eyes to flash upon him when he did ask; and how could he turn from witcheries like these, for the dusky volumes of antiquated law? He was an enthusiastic admirer of nature, and she wooed him in a thousand ways from his tedious task. Her breath was fragrant upon the air, and her voice came to him in winning tones in every breeze. It was impossible for him to turn a deaf ear to her enchantments: therefore he walked, sailed, rode; sometimes he wandered forth in the morning, to witness the rising sun; and again, in the summer night, the moon would lure him out from the unhealthy lamp, to roam with loved ones beneath her rays.

Now during all this time little Obadiah was as busy as a bee. He had taken a school, which occupied part of his time, and the income enabled him to defray his expenses. Nothing called him from his duty. The moon shed her silvery radiance in vain; and he had seen the sun rise so often, that it had lost its novelty. His feelings were not awakened by wandering affections, nor was his clear and calculating brain disturbed by the intrusive visions of fancy. Nature, art, beauty, and fashion, went on with their various revolutions and adventures without affecting him—his time was devoted to study, and he knew no other pleasure.

Ten years passed away, and brought with it, as usual, many unexpected changes. Charles Chatterton, the lovely, the elegant, the mould of fashion, and the glass of form, had been left in poverty by the failure of his father. Bred up in the luxuries of life, and unprepared to meet its ruder scenes he was inadequate to support himself. His fine, but effeminate spirit broke

down, and he lives in poverty, neglected by his former friends, and awaiting a miserable death.

Obadiah, on the contrary, has succeeded beyond expectation. His skill and knowledge have acquired for him a high reputation; and he is rapidly amassing a fortune, which he will doubtless know how to keep, as well as to obtain. His manners, too, have become polished during his commerce with the world, and the rough and awkward country lad is now one of the richest and most celebrated lawyers of one of the first states in the Union. His influence is visible upon a large portion of society, and he has refused many offers to send him to Congress. What a pity it is that the fine and delicate enjoyments of our nature are so often inconsistent with worldly success, and that wealth and fame must be sought by so many sacrifices of feeling and affection.

THE ALHAMBRA.*

Most people are disappointed at the first glance of the falls of Niagara. They have so long heard of them as an immense wonder; they have pictured to themselves a stupendous mass pouring from the clouds upon the shaking earth; and, extraordinary and sublime as the scene actually is, they find it tame and common place, when compared with the exaggerated image of their fancy. All greatness, and beauty, and skill, of every description, which have been previously talked of, produce, in the same way, inadequate impressions on many people. If Demosthenes could be brought among us by a miracle, he would not come up to our pre-existing opinion. If Venus herself were once more to rise from the deep, she would, ten chances to one, be eclipsed by some Broadway belle, with bishop sleeves, and a jewel on her forehead. In the same way, a popular writer has a serious disadvantage to contend

* Tales and Sketches by the author of the "Sketch Book."

against in those unmeaning and vague expectations elicited by a brilliant fame; and we should not be surprised to learn, that many individuals have perused the volumes now under consideration, without that glow of delight—those bursts of laughter—that soft tenderness, into which one is surprised by a sudden gleam of wit, or an unexpected touch of pathos. He who writes with chasteness and simplicity will fail to arrest the imagination of many a reader. Some pass over his unobtrusive charms, either from carelessness, or want of taste, as they would over the modest flowers which gem the meadow, eclipsed by the glare of others more gaudy, but less fragrant and lovely. How many prefer the striking powers of Mrs. Radcliff to the simple nature, wit, and wisdom of Addison. Such will find little to admire in these pages. The world, in this, as well as in many other respects, is unreasonable. It is, in a measure, injurious to a literary reputation, for a writer to produce a very perfect and popular composition. The "Pleasures of Hope" was the death of Mr. Campbell and Mr. Moore has never been thoroughly convalescent from the effects of Lallah Rookh. Walter Scott survived his superb poetry only by energetically entering upon an entirely new and uncultivated field, where he got along tolerably well till he had the misfortune to produce Ivanhoe, from which he survived only to lead a lingering and unequal career. Even Geoffrey Crayon is something of a valetudinarian in this respect. His Sketch Book, and Bracebridge Hall, are the greatest enemies his future productions will probably meet; and we have every reason to fear that his Columbus has put an end to all hopes of his succeeding hereafter in the department of history.

Yet the tales of the Alhambra are soft and pretty, told with delightful grace of language, and addressed to the imagination of all classes. The preliminary sketches, relating the author's ramblings over Spain, his approach to the palace, from which the volumes derive their title, his drawings of character, his minute household observations, his moonlight thoughts on that interesting scene, his reveries from the various points of the prospect, are, in our estimation, really delicious. Their very familiar and easy simplicity makes them so. They are impressed in every page, every line, every word,

with the reality of truth and the glow of nature. They are evidently no inventions, but transcripts. His scenes stretch away before you; his people move, look and walk, with an individuality and a force only to be produced by the hand of a master. Indeed, the opening pages are full of the delightfully graphic and pleasing delineations peculiar to the author, and worthy of the best parts of the Sketch Book. The want of nationality is balanced by the richness of historical associations; some of those will make the heart of the student beat, as he sits in his narrow and obscure chamber. Nothing can exceed the pleasure with which we accompany the author in his peregrinations. We are no half way admirer of the former writings of Crayon, Knickerbocker, and Jonathan Old Style. We have been led by the same warm and gentle heart, the same refined and cultivated mind, the same soft and melting, yet disciplined, imagination for many a year long gone by. We have been with him in the pit of our theatre, through the crooked lanes and antiquated Dutch houses of our town, along the windings of the blue Hudson, and among the luxuriant valleys and heaving hills, which deepen away and swell up from the emerald banks. We have followed, delighted observers, in the train of his Dutch heroes, on their sublime and warlike expeditions; and we have been ushered, by his welcome and potent rod, into many a rich and mellow and melancholy scene in "merry England;" by her ancient piles, her meandering rivers, her magnificent palaces, and gardens: and now, indeed, it is pleasant to keep still onward with such a companion, over distant and more strange scenes, to the banks of the streams of Spain; by her mountains, topped with silver; to her old cities and romantic towers. We are *there* actually, while reading the Alhambra. We see the summit of the Sierra Nivada; we hear the rills and fountains playing through the palace; we behold the moon pouring floods of light upon every court and hall and ruined decoration; and we are surprised to perceive what strong impressions are made on us, and by how few words. We are charmed, completely, to follow him in his quiet observations through those lofty and dilapidated towers; and to be so well beguiled by the flowing fancies which

gleam along his pages; and by that continued and sweet play of all the most delicate and beautiful lights and shades of pathos and humor. He is as fresh as ever in his feelings. He looks upon the wonders around him with the enthusiastic ardor of a glowing boy. There is not a string in his soul but is tuned for the true harmony of poetry. It still vibrates responsive to every passing impression, to every moral or natural beauty. Indeed, his perceptions of nature and the world, which we were prepared to find blunted by travel and years, are yet alive in all their pristine vigor, and are exercised, with a grace and a discrimination peculiar to himself, upon every golden sunset—every dim mountain top—every light incident of real life. Who but he could have so wrought up the trifle of the pigeon. There is another remark to be made, *en passant*, on our author. One cannot help smiling at the right hearty enthusiasm with which he rouses himself to paint every pretty woman he meets. It is positively delightful to come suddenly, (as we continually do, by the way,) upon one of his "plump little black eyed Andalusian damsels," with her "bright looks and cheerful dispositions;" or some other rosy cheeked maiden, with dark eyes, and round and pleasant form. When he lays hold of such an one, he does it with a downright sincerity, and an outbreaking of gladness and spirit, which actually do our heart good, and he never lets her loose without bestowing upon her such a list of sweet adjectives as refresh our ideas most wonderfully.

The reader must admire the works of Washington Irving as the perfection of refined and elegant writing. He will scarce detect a word out of place—a deficiency, or a superfluity. He will find imagination chastened by taste—humor purified by delicacy, and blended with pathos. In perusing them, many will have smiles on their lips and tears in their eyes; and in their hearts will be an increased pride, that our humble literature can quote such a writer as a sufficient comment on the baseness of vagabond and venal bookmakers, who at once slander our country and disgrace their own.

LETTER FROM A QUOTER.

"GENTLEMEN—Your paper has lately contained many ironical allusions to the prevailing faults among writers, and you have taken it upon yourselves to be particularly witty on the practice of using quotations. My object in addressing you is to express my dissatisfaction with your remarks. I myself occasionally 'scrawl strange words with barbarous pen,' and am therefore more emboldened to 'commend the ingredients of the poisoned chalice to your own lips.' I dissent from you *in toto*, and, *more meo*, I shall be frank in uttering my sentiments, which are, that the rule you have so arrogantly laid down upon this subject, belongs to those 'customs more honored in the breach than in the observance.' What! sirs, shall we, in a land 'consecrated to the genius of universal emancipation,'

> 'With freedom's soil beneath our feet,
> And freedom's banner streaming o'er us,'

submit to two or three editors, who, one might imagine from their actions, are 'lords of the creation?' No!

> 'Come one, come all, this rock shall fly
> From its firm base as soon as I.'

In my future compositions I shall no more consider your instructions than 'as the idle wind.' The best writers, those who have reached 'the round and top of greatness,' the 'master spirits of the age,' men 'with thoughts that breathe and words that burn,' all of them are in the habit of quoting; and so will those of the present generation be, by which you may see that you have 'scotched the snake, not killed it.' If quotations are 'done when they are done, it were well they were done quickly;' and you, in your late presumptuous attempts to steer 'from grave to gay, from lively to severe,' have let the wind out of your sails, and thereby 'shot your arrow o'er the house, and hurt your brother.' What! shall the poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling,' be told that all

the gems which unfold their leaves in the pages of others, are fruits of that forbidden tree 'which must not be touched lest it turn to ashes on its lips?'

'Oh! colder than the wind that freezes
Founts, that but now in sunshine played,'

are such hypercritical observations.

"I regret that necessity, which, at least in this instance, is not the 'tyrant's plea,' has compelled me to be so severe on you, for I am a 'constant reader' of your columns, and often discover there

'Truth severe, by fairy fiction dressed;'

but 'coming events cast their shadows before,' and if you go on in this style you will very soon be forced to 'hide your diminished heads,' although you may think yourselves now like the sun, sitting 'high in its meridian tower.' I am not prepared to deny that the Mirror is an excellent paper; for it not only 'teaches the young idea how to shoot,' but 'wakes laughter's peal,' and, by the aid of pathetic tales, 'bids the tear-drop roll,' and thus 'sends its readers weeping to their beds;' but that is no apology for your endeavors to laugh other people out of countenance, because they happen not to think as you do. If you are offended, I can only say, 'None but the brave deserve the fair;' and (I name no names) my maxim has always been,

'Hated by fools and fools to hate,
Be this my motto and my fate.'

I fear nothing—'Not fate itself can awe the soul of Richard.' I should dwell much longer on this subject, but the 'iron tongue of time is tolling ten,' and I am really overcome with 'tired nature's sweet restorer;' so (as Falstaff says) yours by yea and no, which means, as you use him, RICHARD WIGGINS.

"P. S.—I fear the above is very ill natured, but you remember the words of the poet,

'And understood not that a grateful mind
By owing, owes not, but still pays at once,
Indebted and discharged.'"

CHRISTMAS.

THE fine high spirited boy whom I mentioned sometime ago, as being under the malignant influence of a cross schoolmaster, burst into my room the other morning, and broke a dream that I had drawn a prize in the lottery, to wish me a merry christmas. All his little miniature sorrows are now forgotten. His eyes are as bright and his cheeks as rosy as if he had never been beaten for not knowing the difference between a copulative and a disjunctive conjunction, or for forgetting that the word which his tyrant called *tisic* commenced with a *p*. The young dog has hung up his stocking, and received such lavish gifts from the good St. Nicholas, that the overflowings of his delighted heart would no longer permit him to refrain from calling upon me, his trusty friend and ally, to participate in his joy. He has a magnificent humming top and a Chinese puzzle, several profound volumes of history and travels, enriched with wood cuts of various places on the globe, and their inhabitants, some admirable story books, and other fanciful gifts, to say nothing of liberal supplies of sugar plumbs and new year cakes, and, putting his arms around my neck, he whispered the important secret with every sign of exhiliration, that he was to have "holiday for a whole week."

I remember to have heard an anecdote of a boy, connected with this famous fashion of hanging up the stocking, which, though a mere trifle, will not be devoid of interest, at least to parents. It seems this little fellow had committed some wickedness in the catalogue of youthful crimes on the eve of the long wished for festival. He did not retire to rest, however, without having suspended his stocking, to solicit the bounty of the patron saint of infant New Yorkers, and arose the next morning to examine into the nature of his treasures. With exclamations of delight, his little brothers and sisters discovered their stockings abundantly supplied with every thing to gratify their fancy and make their

happiness complete, beside encouraging notes from their affectionate and invisible divinity, but when he explored his own receipts, imagine his cruel disappointment on drawing forth—a whip. The anger of St. Nicholas and his own ill conduct betrayed so publicly, and coming upon him with the suddenness of a thunderbolt, in a moment of such highly wrought and joyful expectation, swelled his innocent heart nearly to breaking. Our informant described it in a graphic manner, and as a scene which would have formed an apt subject for a picture. The terrible emblem of supernatural displeasure was no sooner produced than the gay group of lovely young children were struck into motionless astonishment. Their lively voices were hushed in an instant. The rich and glittering fragments of childish splendor lay around unregarded, while the hero of the tragedy, with the dark looking thong in his hand, stood like a statue, his glowing cheeks turned to an ashy paleness—his uplifted eyes streaming with tears, and giving no other sign of life than a quivering of the lip, and a throbbing of the heart, till he fell senseless to the floor. The alarmed parents hastened to recover him, and sought, by convincing him that they themselves, and no angry angel, had put in the whip as a method of punishing him for his late offences, to relieve his terrors and calm his grief; but their scheme had taken a stronger hold on a lively and uninformed imagination, and struck more deeply a tender young heart than they supposed. The consequence was a fever and delirium of an alarming kind, and a bitterness of anguish which it took months to soothe.

I trust at this season our young friends will not be troubled with whips, either on their shoulders or in their stockings, for I consider them as the rightful inheritors of most of the real merriment at present afloat. Indeed, much as we talk of the several holidays and festivities which diversify the year, no one greets them with such a hearty welcome as the boys. They measure the flight of time by these great landmarks. On the first of April if you find a letter, penknife, pocket book, or a check for five thousand dollars in the street, don't stop to pick it up, for just as you grasp at it, and think good luck has befriended you at last, it will disappear

from between your fingers, and the suppressed titters of a troop of mischievous tatterdemallions, concealed behind a cellar door, or round the corner, will let you into the agreeable secret that you have been made a fool of. The immortal Washington, on the publication of our independence, was not more sincere in his gratification, than they on the return of the great climacteric of American holidays; and the evacuation of the British causes as much triumph every year among whole armies of the juvenile race, as it did to the sober citizens who thereby regained their homes. How I have mused to behold a group of raggamuffins, infinitely happier than so many kings, venting their patriotic principles in shouts and merriment on the eighth of January, before a huge transparency representing the famous hero of New Orleans, with a formidable broadsword in one hand, and leaning the other on the mane of a war charger, of extraordinary fierceness, appropriately decorated with blue and yellow lamps. Men cannot sufficiently unbend their minds from business to enter into the true spirit of these occasions. They wish each other merry Christmas as if they were going to be hanged; and their "happy new year" comes out as dolefully as we have seen a comic actor on his benefit night go through a facetious part to empty boxes. We cannot forget the cares of yesterday—we cannot refrain from anticipating the troubles of tomorrow. Bills are crowding in—money is running out. B. G. and L. Higgins's note comes due next Tuesday. Such an one has failed, and such a stock has fallen. There is not one man in ten but will tell you, if he speak the truth, that wishing him a happy new year, sounds in his ears like an insult. A friend of mine is afflicted with a "lady intellectual," who acts toward him like a Xantippe. He does not pretend to be a Socrates; wish him a happy new year, and I think it is not impossible he may knock you down. Will Whipple has been ten years courting a sweet belle about town, who gave him "his walking ticket," as one of his friends expresses it, on Christmas eve. When our carrier wished him a merry christmas, he told him to go to the d—l. How many are there whose affairs are equally crossed with perplexities and disappointments. But your true boy is of a more untameable spirit. Set

one of these adrift on the fourth of July, with a few packs of crackers, some powder, and an old pistol, and what cares he that he is to be beaten when he goes back to school, so long as he can contribute to the general racket in the cause of freedom?

As for me, amid the mirth of these times, I confess myself secretly prone to a little moralizing and melancholy. It is not that I am infected with a spirit of narrow repining, but my mind finds a kind of mournful satisfaction in dwelling upon even the darker touches with which the wisdom of Providence has overshadowed the picture of human life. It is good for us to know what we are, and to familiarize ourselves with the vicissitudes to which we are for ever exposed. When all around me, therefore, abandon themselves to lively pleasure, when the blooming bride blushes to receive friendly congratulations, and the father of a virtuous family smiles as he regards the beings whom he has protected and made contented, an irresistible impulse carries my thoughts forward through the dim glimmerings of the future, and back upon the events of the past. These universal holidays form prominent points in the year, which remind me to compare what I have been with what I may be. I cannot but also admit into my speculations the destinies of the beings around me. The young stir up my fancy to conjecture the scenes through which they must pass, and the aged to discover the adventures they have already experienced. It is wonderful as we grow old how our minds broaden, and from the sight of a single object grasp innumerable additional ideas. I remember when the appearance of a Christmas dinner enlivened me only with thoughts of good cheer and merry making. Now it is pregnant with grave reflections, and fills me with a crowd of moral images and pensive associations. I wonder at the benevolent skill with which heaven has so constructed our race, that, notwithstanding all the gloomy events which crush human feelings from one year to another, the great game still goes joyfully on—that although the arrow of grief has quivered in many a bosom, while the earth was performing her vast annual circuit, the wounds are so nearly healed. Within twelve brief months what ravages, what fearful ravages, have been wrought by

misfortune and death—how many are exposed to the perils of distant places, who should now be with us—how many are stretched out in the pain and suspense of dangerous disease—how many have been borne to their last cold sleeping place! Who so thoughtless as to remember the past without reading a lesson for the future? The approaching year will be but a type of that which is gone. They who sit by our side today may be missed when the rolling months shall bring another season of mirth. There is a sweet moral in these thoughts. I would press it upon the attention of my youthful readers. Let them reflect upon it when passion swells their young bosoms, and they will check the malignant look, and hush the angry retort. When the reckless son wounds the feelings of his mother, or the impatient husband vents his ill humor on his wife—when ungentle words rise between brother and sister, or friend and friend, let them fancy the image of a grave, newly spread over the palid face of the companion whose petty fault now agitates their bosom with rage and revenge. Surely the tumult of passion must be calmed, and they will feel the almost unloosened bonds of love drawing their hearts together more closely. They will be more inclined to see each other's virtues than their errors. They will exclaim with poor Eve, shrinking from the upbraidings of Adam after the fall,

> "While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
> Between us two let there be peace."

and many a rude scene of domestic commotion will be spared to their future recollection.

THE TRUE PHILOSOPHER.

THE worst men are not always found among the greatest criminals, nor the most melancholy dispositions among those who seem the saddest, any more than those

gifted with the highest genius and virtues on the lists of fame. There is a kind of malefactor whose wickedness actually proceeds from noble qualities of the mind and the heart. There are others who owe their correct deportment to cowardice and coldness of feeling. Pure generosity unchecked, sometimes creates the spendthrift and the debtor. The most contemptible meanness has formed the thriving, prosperous, and irreproachable citizen—of course these are exceptions to general rules. He who with warm impulses exercises his liberality according to his means, is in the true medium. The same causes have shaped characters apparently widely different, while exactly opposite causes have produced others which a superficial observer would conceive to be the same. S. and D. are both dark and gloomy misanthropes. They fly from pleasure, detest children, shun female society with the bitterest sarcasms, and one would almost believe, hate the very light of day. Nature made S. exactly what he is. He is absorbed in himself and his selfish plans, and is in reality not discontented with his lot. D., on the contrary, is naturally ardent, affectionate, buoyant, and merry. Domestic misfortunes have injured the springs of his mind. He flies from children and women, not because he dislikes them, but because they call up thoughts of his own family, with whom he once lived in a distant country. In proportion as he was happy then, he is miserable now.

> "Dearly bought the hidden treasure
> Finer feelings can bestow;
> Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure,
> Thrill the deepest notes of wo."

I have sometimes observed a peculiarity respecting character which may at first sight appear paradoxical. The most honest in their business affairs, and who sustain the most unspotted character abroad, are often, in their own domestic circle, the most unsocial, tasteless, and tyrannical; while the scoundrel of a swindler, who cheats every one, and contracts debts which he never intends to pay, has a lovely wife and sweet children at home, ignorant of his true character, who look up to him and love him as a model of goodness and

perfection. The reason of this is perhaps that the upright citizen stakes his reputation and rests his thoughts upon his character in the market, and therefore puts no restraint upon the natural roughness of his manners, while the other, knowing that he deserves no praise for his transactions abroad, ashamed of the part he has there acted, and perhaps really gifted with a kind and pleasure-loving disposition, strives to compromise with his conscience for the guilt of defrauding those for whom he has no personal affection, by rendering those around him happy.

I remember once having had occasion, as an executor, to prosecute a suit against Mr. Thompson. My lawyer informed me that he knew the person well. "It is almost hopeless," said he, "to continue your action, for although the fellow has a lucrative business, is independent of the world, and could, if it so pleased him, pay every debt and lead an honest and reputable life, yet he is cursed with a natural propensity to cheat his fellow creatures. I believe with him it is a sort of agreeable excitement, like gambling, which habit has rendered necessary. He has been so long availing himself of every deficiency and quibble of the law, is so well versed in the practice of our various courts of justice, and understands so well the arts by which liabilities may be eluded, that I can promise you very little advantage from the suit."

I do not distinctly recollect the means by which he escaped our vigilance; but the claim was never recovered, and Mr. Thompson laughed at us in his sleeve. I could not even catch a glimpse of the fellow, whom, however, I pictured in my imagination as a ferocious and black-browed looking bully, rendered hideous by every repulsive quality, both of mind and person.

Many months afterward, when indeed the affair had almost escaped my memory, I was one quiet summer afternoon invited by a friend to accompany him on a sailing expedition. We started from Whitehall in a fine light sail boat. The first almost imperceptible shadow of evening was just cooling the air and softening the landscape. The sun had disappeared from the cloudless sky, leaving behind him a radiant track of blended orange and crimson, which stole up to the very

summit of the heavens. Our little bark floated through the water, and bore us to a cottage on the opposite shore, where we landed and left our boat to the care of a servant.

"I will introduce you," said my companion, "to a friend of mine, who has selected this charming spot, built yonder neat and beautiful dwelling, and decorated it as you see. He is of a kind and hospitable disposition, and will meet you with a cordial welcome. Among the attractions which I know will afford you pleasure, his wife and children are by no means the most unimportant."

A gentleman stepped out, as he finished speaking, from the wicket-gate, which, by the side of the highly cultivated and bright looking garden, led on to the grassy and deep green lawn fronting the mansion. The building was low and plain, but spacious. The exterior was of that clear white, which, in the country, gleams so prettily through foliage. Several vines of different kinds were springing up luxuriantly around the columns which supported the piazzas; green blinds shaded the windows, and many large trees grew around in groups, some lifting tall trunks high in the air; others spreading low thick and tangled branches so as to form a more impenetrable shade. Altogether, the scene wore an air of striking neatness and pleasant quiet, which touches the mind wearied with the city's din, and awakens idle dreams of retirement and rural happiness.

The evening dew was just falling upon the fields, the vines, trees, and flowers, and called forth the delicious perfume of a thousand breathing plants. A bright star flashed like a lonely diamond on the brow of night; and the water dashed gently against the beach. I thought I had scarcely ever beheld a scene more beautiful.

A glance discovered to me what I have taken so long to describe, and I had no sooner cast around me a look of admiration than the stranger took me kindly by the hand, and by his gentlemanly and graceful attentions made me feel immediately on the footing of an old friend.

The rooms were furnished with taste bordering on

splendor, with a costly piano, massive mahogany tables of the deepest and richest stain, flute, library, and pictures. The Spectator, Shakspeare, Byron, Shelley, Coleridge, Keats, and White, were lying on the stand, London editions, in Russia binding. As my friend predicted, the wife and children were irresistible. The former was young and shy, but very pretty, the fairest of all fair complexions; a mouth, which—but being a married lady she shall go undescribed, although her eyes were large and blue, and her foot the "loveliest of remembered things." The children, two boys and two girls, were, if possible, an improvement of the mother. The same silken hair, but of a brighter gold; the same style of face, but more perfect and shadowless; such warm, earnest, radiant countenances, as enchain the attention like a spell, and make one's soul sink within him, that he is not a painter; and as for their voices, they may talk of operas, recitatives, choruses; they may even tell of the humming of bees, the rustling of branches, and the gurgling of waters, but give me the tone of a sweet child when its spirit is awake, and the brightness of its new born thoughts is glowing on its cheek, and flashing in its eyes. A meal, the zest of which was by no means diminished by our admiration of every thing around, being finished, the affectionate husband and father, with a kind of pride as graceful as it was well grounded, led his wife to the piano. The brilliancy of her playing, and the taste and feeling with which she sang surprised me. I was yet more agreeably disappointed, when her husband placed before her a duet, and accompanied her with a voice so deep, rich, and mellow, that the very children gathered around and listened in silence. We were afterward called to admire some paintings.

"I love paintings," said our host, "and could not live without them any more than without music. For this one," continued he, "I paid five hundred dollars, and the same for the one opposite. They are said to be originals by Raphael, and at least perplex the most practised connoisseurs; and now," added he, in a lively tone, as his little daughter put up her red lips to kiss him, and shook back the masses of golden curls from her

lovely face, "let us have a dance, my children, and then the little ones must be off to bed."

They were just four, and as they performed a lively dance which they had been taught by their mother, I was much struck with the affectionate pleasure which the father took in contemplating them, and the good sense and benevolence which he discovered in his words as well as his actions. A smile of perfect content overspread his handsome face as he spoke: "you see, gentlemen, where I find my happiness. To me these are the treasures of the world, and this spot its centre. My philosophy instructs me that whatever makes this scene pleasant, beautiful or attractive—whatever renders it more delightful to me, or enhances the cheerfulness and joy of these little careless inmates, is of the highest importance and value. Beside this the world offers me absolutely nothing. Fame, wealth, travel, power, the opinion of men, are all such vain and empty things to me, that I wonder when I read what pains my fellow creatures take to obtain them. I pursue my business only to insure a uniform and moderate income, which leaves me abundant leisure to enjoy rural sports and domestic occupations. I am fond of reading, music, drawing; I dote on my wife and children; as long as they are happy, I am content, and have nothing to disturb my uniform tranquillity but the fear that one day the circle may be broken—that sickness may seize one of these dear beings—that some bright head may be laid low—that some sweet voice may be hushed." I thought I perceived something like moisture in his eyes. I am sure I felt a dimness in my own. I shook him by the hand as he said "good night," with a respect, admiration, and love, rarely exceded on so brief an acquaintance.

We put forth in our little boat from the shore. Starry night now usurped the sky, and the city, with its innumerable flashing lights, lay stretched out before us on the water.

"That man," said I, "is a model. He is the best, the truest, the happiest philosopher that ever existed."

"He is the most unprincipled rascal I ever knew," said my companion. "His beautiful house and grounds have been paid for by confiding creditors, whom he has

cheated deliberately out of thousands. I would not trust him with a dollar. I admire his family, who are totally unacquainted with his dishonest habits. He has taken the benefit of the act three or four times. You see how he lives. He will cheat you if he can. You cannot judge of men in a hurry, and nothing is more deceptive than character." My friend spoke of Mr. Thompson.

CITY RAMBLES.

Did you ever read any thing more delightful in their way, Messrs. Editors, than Miss Mitford's sketches? How thoroughly they are embued with the genuine taste for the poetic and beautiful in nature. There is a summer brightness and luxuriance in her imagination, and, to me, it is as delicious to escape from the *triste* pomposity of more learned writers, to the brilliancy and freshness of her pages, as it is to steal from the eternal jangle of business, and all the jostle and din of the city, and to sit down on some grassy bank, where the whirring of the bird's wing and the warble of his song are heard, with the sound of the many branches, and where some dimpling and transparent brook, leaps on its course with the silvery bubbles floating and flashing on its surface, and the dash of its tiny waves bursting out like the laughter of a beautiful and happy child. The influence of such a writer on the moral world is inestimable. She imparts not the mysteries of science; she teaches happiness. She directs the attention to the picturesque groupings which are continually forming and breaking away around us. Her sadness is like the shadow of a cloud, which, if dissolved into a shower, only leaves the heavens bluer, the grass and woods greener, and all nature more animated than before. I never met a mind more susceptible to every varying and delicate influence. It is a finely toned instrument upon which every passing event makes music. Her tenderness is that of the poet, or the woman, while her mirth has the *irrepressible*

ness, (if I may say so) the unchecked revelry of health and youth. Her delineations of character are transcripts from nature. I should deem them drawn in a moral *camera obscura*. In her portfolio, bright heads of children, and animated forms of dogs, delight you like the fine imaginative decorations of a painter's room; but when she roams over the country, when she watches the opening graces of spring, the flash and gaiety of summer, the quiet golden richness and lavish abundance of autumn, or the iciness, and the desolation of winter —while she approaches, in excellence and feeling, the author of the "Seasons," she surpasses him in versatility and irresistible humor. In these qualities she is nearer Washington Irving. I fancy I see her pause on the summit of a hill to catch the effect of a fine landscape, to contemplate the coloring of the sky, trace the winding of the silvery river, or the outline of the blue aerial mountain, the streaming of the sunset light through the illumined grove, and the long shadow upon the lawn; or to muse, peradventure, upon the spirited attitude of a sweet, unconscious child, or an old beggar, or a wearied out angular rozinante before a dilapidated antique cart, or the sunny face of a girl, or any of the graceful and beautiful things, from the admiration of which a man of poetic temperament drinks draughts of delight, almost sufficient to compensate him for the ruggedness of his own path, the loneliness of his own bosom. Then her sketches are so evidently drawn from nature; so free from pedantry, Latin and Greek, business and *bookishness*. So fresh and orignal! By original I do not mean any extraordinary manner of relating incidents which no being ever dreamed of before. No startling theories, no trapdoors, dungeons, and other horrors; but I mean that what she writes is the result of her own feeling and observation, not of her reading.

After this opinion of the fair essayist, do you not think "much learning has made me mad" that I audaciously presume to offer you a composition written on something of the same plan? Yet if she has discovered so many admirable themes for thought and description in her secluded village, it is but probable that a city like ours cannot be destitute of materials equally valuable

for either the pencil or the pen. It was but the other evening that I was awakened from a deep slumber by a cry of *fire*. There is something singularly expressive in the human voice. The same shout frequently breaks the stillness of the night and my sleep, without exciting my attention sufficient to induce me to rise. But this one was sudden, distinct, and startling, with something in it of emotion which convinced me it was uttered by one who beheld the flames. I accordingly hastened to the window. It was a quiet, starry night. The houses on the opposite side of the street in which I resided, and apparently within a quarter of a mile of my dwelling, reflected a brilliant glare of light, and volumes of fiery smoke rolled upward with the motion of heavy billows toward the reddening sky. The shout multiplied from all quarters—the deep-toned bells began to toll—figures here and there rushed rapidly toward the scene of action—an engine thundered over the pavements—beneath my window the forms of the firemen in their huge caps and jackets shown like demons in the red dusky gleams of the torches—hoarse voices, with shouts and imprecations, urged each other onward. Hastily clothing myself, I sallied forth and hurried to the conflagration.

There is nothing in nature more beautiful than fire, and more terrible in its beauty. When thus arrayed for purposes of ruin, it conveys to me an impression similar to that which I receive from the sight of a powerful serpent. There is the same fatal brilliancy, the same fearful grace and relentless spirit of destruction, and the same admirable fitness as emblems of the infernal regions. In darkness this wonderful element exhibits its grandeur with a more magnificent effect. The roofs of lofty buildings, and summits of chimneys; the tall steeples and swelling domes, shone vividly in the distance, painted by the lurid glare. Dense masses of smoke in the intervals of a slight breeze, shrouded the blaze and darkened the scene, till leaping and glistening, through the gloom like a sheet of lightning from the brooding cloud, the flame again dazzled the eye, and made the "darkness visible" with a radiant, but dim and melancholy lustre. The conflagration had burst forth in a stable in the rear of a large wooden church, and in the midst of a closely crowded block of

buildings, mostly of the same material. A long season of intensely hot weather, without rain, had rendered them uncommonly combustible. The wind was sufficiently strong to increase the fury of the element into an ungovernable rage that resembled madness; and the cry went forth through the crowd that there was no water to be obtained, till the engines could form a line to the river, the distance to which was great: in the meantime the flame was running rapidly along the roof of the church, at first gently curling, and gradually extending to the rear and front. The crowd collected—the wind increased—the frame building was soon blazing with incalculable fury, and the flame communicated to the several adjoining houses. In less than half an hour, the rear of the church was completely consumed: a vast sheet of fire washed over it like an ocean—the interior was brightly visible; the pews, bannisters, galleries, carved columns and white ceilings, yielded rapidly to the intense heat—timber crackling—walls crashing—chimneys falling—furniture tumbling from windows—men shouting through trumpets—engines thundering—women screaming—glass breaking—earth trembling beneath our feet—the vast multitude swarming like bees in their hive, rocking and heaving in the narrow streets, and clustering on the steps, lamps, and windows, and the broad arch of heaven, burning and glowing above, all formed a scene of sublime grandeur.

The city cannot be too grateful to the body of daring firemen who nightly risk their lives in defence of our property. The soldier who exposes himself in the battle for his country, scarcely incurs more peril, or deserves more praise. The confusion continues. Here you may behold a heap of furniture, there a group of persons just escaped from the flames. Mark yonder building with a brick front, and nearly destroyed—the ravenous blaze is feeding on the ruins in which fancy pictures many a group of domestic peace and hope. The frame work is consumed—the front totters—the firemen place their long heavy ladders against it. Hark!—crash—up to the sky flash the expiring flames, and then sink with the heap of crumbled ruin. That poor dwelling belonged to a widow with a large family entirely dependent upon her exertions. She was even too indi-

gent to get it insured. With what feelings will she greet the day. A fine boy has escaped from his home, and is eagerly yielding to the excitement of the scene. He dashes fearlessly through the crowd and seizes the rope of the engine; but his foot slips—he falls—the dreadful machine rushes on—a smothered scream is faintly heard amid the dreadful surrounding din, and now a trampled and bleeding body is borne senseless through the multitude, to blast some fond mother's sight, and strike her bosom with horror and anguish unutterable. ******

The heavens are shining again with all their stars. The vast city is wrapped in shadows. The pealing bells have ceased. Silence is in the streets: all, except a low confused sound from the spot where death and destruction have been at work. You may hear the faint hum, like the subdued roar of the sea, when the storm has passed away, or the hush of the field of battle after the conflict. Wearied and exhausted firemen are slowly dragging home their engines. Morning breaks in the east. *******

The noonday sky overspreads the gay Broadway. Steeds are prancing, and flashing chariots glittering in the sun. The voice of youth and pleasure is around me: forms of beauty and splendor, dazzling jewelry, tempting pictures, sunny eyes, and slender feet. The wealthy are purchasing luxuries, the joyous giving loose to mirth. Why at such a moment should my melancholy thoughts steal back to the wreck and the ruin—to the desolate dwelling of the widow, the mangled form of that fearless boy, and to the family at whose festive board, hereafter, his bright head must never be?

SKETCH BY A PHYSICIAN.

One of the most extraordinary instances of delusion which ever came under my observation, was presented in the person of young Edward N—. The name of insanity, in the minds of most people, is connected with

ideas of delirium and danger, of the barred cell, or shaded apartment, nearly as awful to the chilled soul of the spectator as the chamber of death itself. Those, however, whose mental aberrations are glaring to all, form but a small part of the many who, although mingling in society, and conforming to its ceremonies, are nevertheless haunted by some dreadful thought, some apparition in the shape of a fancy, which they are unable to banish, and which, in reality, constitutes a lunacy as distinct, and perhaps as dangerous, as that of the raving wretch whose peals of hysteric laughter are heard mingling with the clank of his chains. Edward was not my intimate friend, but I had known and admired him. His health was not apparently impaired, and he had never dreamed of requiring my professional aid, although he was naturally of that nervous and irritable state of body and mind which most easily falls a prey to hypochondriacal imaginations. His talents were dazzling—indeed brilliantly so; and after having completed a very finished course of classical education, he had entered upon the study of the legal profession with the ardor of youth and conscious genius. In person I never knew any more perfectly noble; and his manners exercised a fascinating influence over every circle. He was the ornament, the charm, the life of every company. I never saw in any one perceptions of the beautiful more continually awake. I had gained some insight into his character, however, which surprised me, by some stanzas shown me, and ascribed to him. They were totally irreconcileable with his general liveliness of demeanor, and seemed poured forth in an agonizing spirit of wretchedness, which I could scarcely contemplate with unmoistened eyes.

One evening I accompanied him to a rather brilliant *fete* at B.'s. Habituated as I was to his animated manner in society, even I was astonished at the perpetual sparkles of wit and merriment, which drew upon him the eyes of all present. As he stood by the piano, in the act of singing, I was struck with his lofty and elegant form, the expression which flashed from his large black eyes, and the mellow richness and perfect sweetness of his voice. A fair young girl, who had been gazing with a dangerous earnestness, blushed as she per-

ceived I noticed her; and yet, with a look of glowing admiration, whispered me, while the lids of her glistening eyes drooped, as if she were saying something which she felt to the innermost core of her heart,

"Edward N. ought to be the happiest man in the world."

The next morning I was called in to see him. I absolutely started on beholding his fine countenance, now unlighted by any expression but that of a dim weariness, an apathy, as of one sick of life. I had never yet thus accompanied him behind the scenes, and as I took his dry, feverish hand, and felt his pulse, he read my astonishment in my looks, and said,

"Well, doctor, you think I am sick?"

"You have certainly exposed yourself since last night," said I.

"Oh, a slight shower," he answered.

"But that was not till late; beside, you returned in a carriage."

"Aye, doctor, but I walked out again."

"Walked out again!" exclaimed I. "What! after two o'clock, and those heated rooms! Walk out again in a shower? You deserve some pain for such carelessness. What was the matter? Any accident?

He raised his languid eyes.

"Doctor, I have often had a mind to confess to you, but, some how or other, a fear, a silly fear, has prevented me."

"Confess! What?"

His face assumed an expression of horror, and a momentary paleness overspread it.

"Doctor, I am a *wretch!* a blighted, scathed outcast; life is a curse. Since Providence first created man, this puny creature, this reptile, this basest and meanest of all his productions; he never formed one so low, so unfortunate, so—"

"Why, Edward," I said, chilled through with the singular earnestness, and the apparent agony with which he spoke, "what nonsense has mastered you this morning? You are slightly indisposed—with cold, and a touch of the blues; tomorrow you will be as merry as ever."

"Tomorrow!" he echoed bitterly and sarcastically;

"*merry*—oh, yes. This is a momentary feeling, I suppose. This withering *agony*, which has rankled in my bosom for years. Oh no, doctor; the flashes of brief cheerfulness, which you have noticed in society, are a species of intoxication; wine, women, the upspringing of the mind from protracted and gloomy depression—the natural brightness of my nature gleaming out fitfully; but, when the excitement has passed away, heavens! the slimy toad in the dungeon, the hideous light-hating owl, are not more lonely, dark, and miserable than I."

"And for what, pray, Edward?" said I, smiling.

My incredulity appeared to vex him, and to urge him on to be more communicative than he had at first purposed.

"Doctor, I am laboring under a curse—a hideous, blasting, unshunnable ban from some demon. It follows me like a shadow, everywhere, everywhere, everywhere. It crosses me in all my plans. It falls like a thunderbolt on all my budding hopes. Every thing I undertake fails; every one I love dies or turns traitor. I have knelt down and prayed that the lightning might strike me, that disease might touch me, or that some sudden accident might break this *nightmare* dream of existence."

I at once perceived my friend was sadly afflicted with hypochondriacism.

"And how long have you supposed yourself so unfortunate?"

"Since my boyhood—it has ever been thus. I am permitted to hope, to believe myself happy. The most delicious and tempting prospects are spread out before my eyes, but when I would approach, just as I have, or as I think I have reached the summit of my desires, the demon strikes—wrenches my heart—stabs, stabs with a dagger, which agonizes for ever, but cannot kill."

I endeavored to persuade him of the impossibility of his suspicion. I urged that all human beings were subject to disappointment, and that while he felt his own, those of others were concealed from his examination.

"Go abroad," continued I; "walk forth through the church yard. It is crowded with mossy stones and stately monuments. The names of sweet women and children, of fathers and mothers; all are written therein

melancholy silence. Each one of those has wrenched fond hearts, has left wrecked hopes and affections. Thousands throng the streets of this great city, whose souls yearn for that unbroken repose; beside, in dwelling too intensely upon your miseries, you overlook innumerable blessings. Every body believes you to be happy. You have health, education, personal advantages, accomplishments, youth, and wealth."

He smiled mournfully.

"Alas, alas! What are these when the heart is a void. All these I could despise, if in their stead I possessed affections, occupied and successful. But the curse of my life has been that these should be always disappointed. I am for ever rolling the rock to the summit to behold it again cast down."

I hinted to him, with an attempt to rouse him into some mirth, that *bachelorism* was his disease.

"You are surrounded," said I, "by young and lovely women."

"Aye," said he, "but who loves *me?* I know that if I should dare to fix my outpouring passions upon any one, it would be singling her out for heaven's wrath, from all the crowd about her. Either she would hate me, or I should be the means of leading her into some misery, now unforeseen and inconceivable. Disease would strike her, or some wintry grief would freeze the current of her sparkling joy."

"Ridiculous," said I, for I noticed that he seemed to waver in his anguish, that the turn which the conversation had taken had touched some string in his bosom, whose vibrations stirred within him more agreeable emotions. With difficulty I persuaded him to unbosom himself to me, and I learned, with the most pleasing surprise that he had conceived a determined passion for the lady who, on the previous evening, had betrayed such a decided interest in him. I mentioned the circumstance; it thrilled him with pleasure. We parted —weeks passed away; and, after the customary preliminaries, their mutual partiality was mutually understood, and they were married. I attended the joyful ceremony, on the completion of which the party set out on a little tour, usual on such occasions, and I required no powerful persuasions to accompany them. Edward's

spirits were high. He never appeared to so much advantage. I could perceive how the influence of such circumstances would at length have re-established his mind, and restored the elasticity of his broken spirits. I am rather too far advanced in life to fall into raptures about a face, or a form, be it male or female; for the years which sprinkle snow on a man's forehead also chill the heart, and sober down the restless fancy. But the unusual loveliness of the happy bride, the grace and propriety of her deportment, and the evidently favorable sway with which she controlled the wayward gloom of my friend, elicited both pleasure and hope.

"She beams upon him," I thought, "as the spring sun upon the late frozen earth, and his bosom will change from a desert to a garden clothed with luxuriant verdure." Accustomed, as I am, to the dark incidents of life, the dream that this latest and most specious plan of happiness which my friend had ever formed, might also be broken, never entered my mind. Gloomy, indeed, are the ways of the world. I tremble and shudder to look abroad.

It was proposed by Edward that the party should deviate a day's journey from their route, for the purpose of visiting a romantic cataract, embosomed among towering cliffs, and presenting a scene of uncommon grandeur and beauty.

Mary objected. It was strange. She stated no reason, but that she had a fear of that precipitous style of scenery.

"You little coward," said Edward. "She wants your assistance, doctor. You have cured me, you know, and now you shall her."

We accordingly started for the —— falls.

It was one of those glowing, tranquil summer afternoons, when we reached the scene, which casts a subdued splendor over all nature. The red beams of the declining sun streamed through the green forest, as we wandered down the broken rocks to the spot whence the roar of the cataract proceeded.

Mary had forgotten her fears, and was the liveliest of the company. The sound of her sweet laugh yet rings in my ears; her eyes sparkling with the excitement and exercise, her cheeks glowing, and all her looks and

words compelled me to murmur a prayer of gratitude, that two whom I so loved were completely blessed.

"Come, Mary," said Edward, "let us walk to yonder rock. Come, doctor."

"We shall get wet with the spray," said Mary.

"Who cares," replied Edward, "no one with a soul can take cold with such a scene before his eyes. Come along, you coward! What are you afraid of?"

Our voices were lost in the deafening roar of the heavy body of water which swept beautifully over the precipice, and poured, splendidly flashing, in one unbroken sheet of green, white, and gold. Our path was narrow, and led along the very bank of the river, which, after the leap, lapsed by with a silent swiftness, presenting a broad black current of extraordinary depth and power. We picked our road over the broken ledges. I was foremost, Edward next, and lastly the dear, the beautiful, and beloved companion of our journey; the path being too narrow to admit of any other method of reaching the point proposed. The rest of the company had pursued a different direction.

I looked back once. Edward was stooping to pick up a shell. Mary flung a little pebble at me, and shook her head laughingly. I turned away, and in a moment again looked back. Never shall I forget the shock—the horror that thrilled through my soul, at the sight which then blasted my view. Edward was standing in an attitude of frenzy, his eyes starting from their sockets, his hands clasped convulsively together, his lips quivering, and his face terribly pale. Mary was no where to be seen. Her bonnet and plume floated on the water.

GLANCES AT THE DRAMA.

MUCH has been said and written respecting the drama. By some it is represented as a dangerous engine in the hands of the unprincipled, used only to inflame and multiply the passions, and excite in youth that inordinate

love of pleasure which it is the great duty of religion to subdue. We acknowledge, with regret, that the stage is often disgraced by impurities, and that scenes from which, in the comparatively holier atmosphere of the domestic circle, a person of the most ordinary delicacy must shrink, receive in the theatre the smiles of beauty and the sanction of wisdom. In every society, however enlightened, there will be a class whose tastes are coarse and vulgar; who delight to ridicule and deface feelings and sensibility; and who relish, as a triumph of their own party over the aristocracy of modesty and virtue, every broad display of degraded wit and obscene genius. To solicit the acclamation of groundlings like these, talent often stoops, and the "many headed monster of the pit" too frequently swallows down, with indiscriminate voracity, the morsel of voluptuousness, sweetened with music and poetry, and the undisguised disgusting dose of ribaldry, from which good taste and common delicacy recoil. We all sometimes attend theatrical representations in the company of females. I am no friend to the affected and squeamish morality which would put a man of sense and experience out of countenance at any thing which he may see or hear any where; but, in my imagination, the character of woman stands so pure and high, and the attributes which make her superior and fascinating, are so perpetually present to my mind, that when any one avails himself of his mere brute strength to trample down her young tastes, to taint her thoughts, to introduce low and vile images among the gentle visions which play in her fancy, I deem him a traitor to nature, a kind of moral murderer. We have assigned the severest penalties to him who destroys God's image, as embodied in the outward form of man. But it is a more hideous crime to kill those precious spiritual attributes which dignify and elevate human nature, to give an unnecessary shock to modesty, to inflict a wanton pang upon virtue. Yet in the theatre, where the best will sometimes be attracted with the wife, the sister, or the daughter, it is often the case that a gross *double entendre*, from which the bashful girl has no escape, is given with all the weight of a hacknied player, who delights to be the instrument of exciting even the miserable acclamations with which the low and

the base, from every part of the house, recognise their kindred wit. This is an abuse which all must acknowledge; and it is probably the best objection which the enemies to theatrical entertainments have against them; but this will, we trust, be remedied. In tracing the progress of the stage during the several preceding ages, we find that in the reign of Elizabeth the most obscene allusions and voluptuous scenes were frequently represented, and that the virgin queen herself patronised with her presence exhibitions which would now strike the most ordinary occupant of the gallery with surprise, if not with indignation. It is evident, therefore, that the natural course of civilization is effecting a reform in this particular; and that, in conformity to the improving spirit of the times, while the relics of gothic ages are gradually falling away from our customs, opinions, institutions, and laws, the good taste of the community will enlist the fascinations of the drama more exclusively in the cause of modesty and truth.

We have also heard it urged against this species of amusement, that it attracts the young and the giddy from the duties of business and sober reflection; that, contrasted with its brilliant pictures, the maxims and practical facts of real life appear dim and tedious, and that multitudes resort here to engage in extravagant expense and profligate pleasure. To this we answer, that human beings will ever seek relaxation during their hours of leisure. If there had never been a theatre they who squander time and money within its walls would have probably directed their wandering inclinations into some more dangerous channel. Only persons naturally mean will extract evil out of that which is the source of good to others. In the bosom of such the germs of vice will lurk, whatever be the circumstances by which they are surrounded. History presents many instances of gloomy victims of false morality, who deem they propitiate the favor of heaven by smothering all the pleasant impulses with which it has enriched their bosoms. It is certain to us, that, however these may clothe themselves in saintly robes, and distort their feelings and affections into the deformity of monkish superstition; what ever may be their affectation of superior morality, their humble and artificial garb of humanity covers a

heart where exist thoughts and passions common to humanity, which still take root and flourish with a luxuriance ranker and darker, because smothered and concealed. We are not advocating licentiousness, nor ridiculing an attempt of virtue to act with temperance and honor. But we are no bigot; we are no believer in the efficacy of out wardforms and garments; we place no value on the purity which arises from the seclusion of a hermit in a cell. The virtue which we admire is an active principle. It meets the vicissitudes of the world, and overcomes them; and in regard to youth, although we are aware of the necessity of application, and that strong excitements are pernicious to the character, as they are unfavorable to the tranquil duties of the student, yet we would not frown upon rational enjoyment, as inconsistent with strength of mind and purity of heart. Application should not be too strict. The fine glowing fancies of youth should not always be fettered down. If the mind is for ever kept in chains what is the wonder if it be puny and timid; that it should bend tamely to slavish prejudices and absurd doctrines; that it should be destitute of the vigor, the confidence, the freedom, and the courage which distinguish others of more independent habits. We may often see where the man has been injured by an over wrought anxiety to make a scholar, as the child of the proud and wealthy is often caressed into effeminacy and disease, while the neglected orphan, thrust out early upon an ungentle world, gathers strength and hardy resolution from its storms and its reverses.

As for me, I confess I have found the theatre a fairy land. In my earlier boyhood it teemed with rapturous associations; and even now, when I enter the gorgeous temple I put off the mantle of daily cares; I break loose from the bondage of narrow and wearying adventures; and, like some bird uncaged, I trim the plumage of my spirit for a long and a soaring flight. I remember when the dazzling scene first burst upon my sight. It was a glorious, unearthly vision. I had no leisure to reason. I was all feeling, expectation, wonder, rapture. Even when more accustomed to it, its interest was shared by the lowest supernumerary. Nexsen, Banker, Oliff, the box keeper, the lamp lighter, all were elevated to an

imaginary importance; all moved in the glowing light which the institution to which they were attached reflected, even as the morning gives a tinge of radiance to to the obscure clouds which form only the drapery of her temple. I have looked after the ghost of Hamlet in the street, as if indeed he locked in his bosom

> "The eternal blazonry which must not be
> To ears of flesh and blood."

I once caught myself in actual astonishment at beholding the pale merchant of Venice and the ferocious Shylock, betraying a striking similarity of opinion respecting two glasses of whiskey punch, and I thought, in the words of the poet of all poets:

> ——"Can such things be,
> And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
> Without our special wonder?"

When, after an evening so strangely beguiled, the plot drew to a conclusion—when the tyrants were all slain, the lovers married, and the personages of the drama formed themselves into a grand group, which the envious green curtain snatched from my reluctant eyes, how my fancy would dwell upon its splendors! Its caverns, forests, cities, rivers, and mountains—its lovers, knights, armies, heroes, and kings came up again and again, and revolved in my imagination in a confusion so gorgeous and magnificent that I wondered how any human being, with a dollar in his pocket, could hesitate to spend it there. And then to peep behind the scenes in the daytime. To see the strange sunlight streaming down among its magic shadows. To stand in silent revery where the midnight assassin, the lofty patriot, the dark witch, the bloody tyrant had been. To stalk over the lonely plains which had once trembled with the tread of armies, or echoed with the tones of faithful love. It was as if, after years of oblivion, my spirit should revisit the earth, and find its thrones empty, its kingdoms desolate, its foaming rivers, its thronging multitudes passed away, the useless objects of man's ambition crumbling together in neglected ruin, and all the complicated machinery of life and nature run down and broken to pieces.

But the rich mists of an uncorrected fancy have vanished, and with them a thousand thoughts as artless, hopes as brilliant, and affections as unrestrained. Experience has put aside the veil which softened the harsh features of life, and gave its delusions the air of reality. The mimic winds and harmless thunders of the stage no more whiten my cheek with silent awe. Its flashing treasures have been divested of their spells. But my admiration for the drama yet remains. I admire it for the generous sentiments which it breathes upon all subjects, for the models of high character it sets up before the people, for the intellectual pleasures it affords, for its displays of innocent mirth, of stately and commanding passion, of domestic affections. I admire it for its forcible delineations of all that is high, untrammelled, and beautiful in human nature. It is full of bold, free, noble opinions. It holds up the vicious to a scorn which may be easily and justly transferred to similar objects in real society—it counteracts the malignant encroachments of bigotry, slavery, and superstition—it opposes avarice, cowardice, and a tame submission to insult, and champions fearlessly the natural rights and dignity of man. Whatever may be the pernicious consequences ascribed to to it, these are redeeming attributes, and I would no more abandon its benevolent and liberal influences upon society to escape its partial and accidental evils, than I would condemn the arrangement by which nature refreshes the fields with showers, because a passing cloud sometimes overshadows the air.

THE ECLIPSE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the bad state of the roads, the eclipse did actually take place at thirty minutes after eleven, on the twelth of February, 1831, without any postponement or delay. Thousands of our citizens were seen with "upturned, wondering eyes," gazing at the progress of the phenomenon. Vague reports were previously circulated among our promiscuous population

by knowing editors, and other of the literary sages of the town. Some thought that the moon would whisk across the sun's disc, like a moth through a candle. Some deemed that we were to be enveloped in midnight darkness; and others were of the opinion, that extraordinary events were clearly portended; and that it was high time for the people to cast their eyes about, and be prepared for the worst. These latter enlightened personages will doubtless find their theory confirmed by circumstances, and the innocent sun and moon will have to bare the blame for divers fires, deaths, broken crockery, and other accidents. Luckily, however, their shoulders are broad, and the animadversions of their earthly critics, as sometimes happens in other cases, will have but feeble influence upon the future destiny of the objects of their spleen. The stars of heaven were expected to come forth, honored with the society of a fiery-tailed comet, which has paid us a flying visit. Several learned old ladies, with the foresight natural to age, had their lamps duly trimmed and filled; and it is even rumored that a scientifie office holder in the city hall, who, in his youth, had devoted himself to the study of astronomy with unparalleled success, did arrange on his table a row of the best sperm candles, for the accommodation of such desperate transactors of business as might possibly keep an eye upon their sublunary affairs, at such a sublime period.

When the obscuration of daylight became apparent, the streets presented a singular spectacle. Lawyers, doctors, and merchants came forth to examine if the much-talked-of-event were actually taking place. Editors, with pens stuck behind their learned ears, left unfinished paragraphs, planted themselves on the steps with clerks, printers, and devils, all looking through smoked glass with one eye shut. The cartman stopped his horse, and satisfied himself of the fact that the sun was actually behind something which, rather than "argufy the topic," he was willing should pass for the moon. The chimney sweep flung down his brush, and indulged in his own reflections upon the subject; and juvenile delinquents, who, ten chances to one, had played truant from school, gathered together in groups in the middle of the streets, and interchanged pretty deep observations

upon the popular branches of astronomy. There were not, however, wanting ill-disposed persons, who went about openly expressing feelings of dissatisfaction. They protested against the whole affair, as neither more nor less than an imposition—a mere hoax, palpably got up to effect some political or other private purpose. It was, they said, just such another piece of quackery as the elephant, which they had been led to expect would take up the supernumeraries by dozens, and fling them about in the air like so many foot balls, whereas no such desirable feat was exhibited, and the beast was nothing more than a mere natural animal. Little boys stationed themselves in several streets with lighted candles and pieces of broken glass, and saluted passengers with the frequent salutation of "See the eclipse today, sir? Only two cents!" At the same time presenting the glass; but few deemed themselves warranted by the importance of the exhibition in incurring such an unnecessary and heavy expense.

We are told that the enterprising proprietor of one of the museums, who had made extensive preparations for a grand illumination, and had advertised it to be the interest of all the world to come and behold his magnificent building brilliantly illuminated at noon-day. as one of the sublimest spectacles which could engage the human mind, was induced to utter some very improper expressions when it became apparent that the world needed not his disinterested services. He declared it was one of the most ridiculous things he had ever seen in the course of his life. The truth is, however, to speak seriously, the interest with which we gaze upon this phenomenon is unlike that excited by physical wonders in general. A lofty mountain, its summit piercing through the clouds, a volcano spouting out fire, a cataract pouring its world of waters in thunder down the broken rocks, or any other object of curiosity, even those which continually pass by us unregarded, the sun's rising and setting, the break of day, the varying shapes and appearances of the moon as the clouds change "the expression of the sky," are all intrinsically more beautiful. But the importance of an occurrence, similar to that which has just taken place, consists not so much in the delight it affords the eye, as the illustra-

tion it affords to the mind, of the perfect accuracy with which the great principles of nature operate, and the height to which human science has soared, in thus exercising throughout the broad universal regions of space, the same accurate observations with which it fathoms the depth of a stream, or determines the shape of an island. When regarded in its connection with the cheering and elevating hopes of religion, from a subject of idle curiosity, it rises into a theme of wonder, and assumes an importance amounting to sublimity. It is a palpable and undeniable proof to those whose understanding cannot reach the conclusion through the mazes of metaphysical discussion, that the inconceivably vast plan of the universe is conducted by the control of unlimited wisdom. Nor can human reason refuse to submit its destiny to a power that sways the stupendous operations of the heavens with a regularity which time cannot disturb.

THE MELANCHOLY MAN.

Mav.—I feel 'tis so.
Thus have I been since first the plague broke out,
A term, methinks, of many hundred years!
As if the world were hell, and I condemned
To walk through wo to all eternity.
I will do suicide.
Astrologer—Thou canst not, fool!
Thou lovest life with all its agonies;
Buy poison, and 'twill lie for years untouched
Beneath thy pillow, when thy midnight horrors
Are at their worst. Coward! thou canst not die.
Wilson's City of the Plague.

I HAVE been all my life haunted with a desire to commit suicide. It has crossed me—it still crosses me continually. It is partly the result of constitution, and partly of early and frequent misfortunes, and a habit of brooding over them. This dreadful disease has for ever caused me to look with sickly eyes on the charms of life and the beauties of nature. I shall not here write any *history* of myself. It would not interest others.

Those incidents which have made me wretched, happier dispositions would soon forget. *I* can never forget them. I feel that my game of life has been played and lost. Those secret springs of joy and hope, which give elasticity to other minds, in me are broken. I have been always struggling against the current; and sometimes, nay often, it has appeared to me as if some awful and inexorable power were present at my undertakings, and took a mysterious delight in bringing them to ruin. True, my reason often teaches me that this is merely an absurd fancy, and that it cannot be. Yet I *think* it is, and that is sufficient to make me wretched. Sometimes, in the endeavor to combat this opinion as a superstition, I have compelled myself to embark in a design, or to entertain an affection; but invariably I have met with such severe disappointments, that I have long since ceased to hope. When I first reached the years of manhood, I found this in all my pecuniary business. Stock fell if I touched it; banks broke as soon as I became interested. The fable relates, that whatever the celebrated king of Phrygia touched, turned to gold; wherever *I* laid my hand, I was sure to produce destruction. At length I have grown so timid, that I am afraid to love, afraid to form a friendship, afraid to offer advice. He who peruses this will, doubtless, smile incredulously on me; he will say it is an impossibility. Well, let him. Indeed it seems equally so to me. I have racked my brain to believe it merely an accidental train of unfavorable events, which tomorrow may change; yet it has not changed, and I am half fain to abandon myself to the startling and terrible thought, that I am branded with some mysterious curse. Whatever may be the cause, I am miserable, and always have been so beyond description. I look for nothing this side the grave.

I became acquainted sometime ago with a little girl, eight or nine years old, with unusual powers of mind and charms of person. The sight of her face positively dispelled the shadows which brooded over my mind. She discovered a singular attachment to me. I was delighted with her thousand winning ways. I was almost happy while under the influence of *her* irrepressible happiness. It was a joy for me to meet her in the street. I have caught a gleam of her beautiful bright

countenance, amid a group of her companions going to school early in the morning, which haunted me all day.

"Shall I love this creature?" said I to myself; "will it not be bringing down upon her sweet young head the dark influence which has ever pursued me and mine? Yes," said I, "I *will* love her. I will once more try this fearful experiment. I will watch to see in what form the effects of my interest in her welfare will fall on her; to what doom it will consign her? Will the turf soon press her tender breast? Will some mournful doom darken her living heart?"

I made these reflections one morning as she passed me, with a smile, in the street.

One week after, a single line in the newspaper answered my interrogatories. She had died of a sudden and painful attack of the scarlet fever. As I perused the information I positively thought I heard the laugh of a demon in my ear, whispered on the passing breeze.

It is not one, two, nor indeed twenty circumstances of this kind which could have alone prostrated my love of life so utterly. I never had a real friend, except my mother, and she died just when I was old enough to mourn for her acutely. Among my other tortures, disease has not been wanting. A violent pain in my chest has, at certain intervals, incapacitated me for all employment. Sometimes my head grows dizzy, or burns with shooting pains. I feel like Caliban, for ever contending against a supernatural enemy, whose spirits appear busy about me. That speech of the deformed monster ever haunts my memory:

> "For every trifle they are set upon me:
> Sometimes like apes, that mow and chatter at me,
> And after, bite me; then like hedgehogs, which
> Lie tumbling in my barefoot way, and mount
> Their pricks at my foot ball. Sometimes I am
> All wound with adders, who, with cloven tongues,
> Do hiss me into madness.

The idea of being perpetually encumbered with a disease, which, while it takes from your heart the secret hope that leads to action, does not exclude you from the necessities of toil, is one of the most benumbing and wretched evils that man can suffer. He wanders through the crowd, without participating in their gladness. He

gazes on nature with an admiration which only heightens his inward anguish. In the most soft and alluring periods of pleasure, the loathsome image of a grave continually obtrudes itself upon his imagination; the icy hand of death is ever on his shoulder, and he hears the phantom whispering, "Victim of my unrelenting power, haste ye through these sunny scenes; in a short time you must quit them for ever." I have felt all this; who can wonder that I am tired of life? I have loved in this world but few, and none successfully. No man, nor woman, nor child has ever been to me other than as gleamings of what my fellow creatures have enjoyed. I recoil from one who excites in me any feelings of affection. No one shall suffer the fatality of my friendship. Who is shocked to learn that I covet my last sleep? Death, mysterious power! language cannot express the intense curiosity with which I have watched every thing appertaining to it. Yes, I have pursued the ghastly phantom in all its forms. I have gone to the prison house, and pryed into the mind of the felon who was at the break of day to expiate his crimes on the scaffold. I have planted myself there to behold him take his last gaze for ever and for ever on the sky, the green earth, the river, the light. How strange it has seemed that he, that being, that breathing, living creature, formed as I am, who speaks, and thinks, and utters requests, and walks, and takes me by the hand to say farewell; how difficult to conceive, how awful, how deeply thrilling to reflect that, in one minute more he will not exist! That which addresses you now *will not be.* Its semblance only will remain, to mock you, with a vivid recollection of the original nature you had held communion with. I once formed a vague resolution of suicide, and I thus strengthened it. I wished to become familiar with death. I would gaze quietly on him, and apply what I saw concerning him to *myself.* I strained my fancy to conceive how *I* should feel, and act, and appear in such a crisis. I have held a loaded pistol to my brain sometimes, or a viol of poison to my lips; or I have stood leaning over the edge of a dizzy height; or I have looked down into the clear ocean billows, and goaded myself on to pass the dreadful gulf. Alas! coward that I was, I feared to die as well as to live, and have turned

to my lonely walk with a relief, and put off till some other period the execution of the design.

One day I met a fine fellow, from whom I had been separated many years. He was a scholar and an observer, and, some how or other, he had the art to draw from me an account of the true state of my feelings.

"Pray," said he, when I had finished pretty much what I have related above; "pray what time do you rise?"

"At ten," said I, rather surprised at the oddity of the question.

"And what time do you retire to bed?

"At one, two, or three o'clock," said I, "Just as it happens.

"And how is your appetite?"

"Enormous."

"And you gratify it to—?"

"The full extent."

"What do you drink?"

"Brandy and water, gin and water, &c."

He laughed heartily, although it made me angry; also, I confess, it made me excessively ashamed to have talked about suicide.

"Do you know what ails you?" said he.

"Yes," I replied, "I have a broken heart."

"Broken fiddlestick," said he, "you have the dyspepsia. Diet yourself; go to bed early; rise early; exercise much."

I have done so; I am now a healthy and a happy man. I smile to think I was going to blow my brains out, because I had the dyspepsia.

BOYHOOD.

I WAS busily writing in my narrow dark back office—a partly smothered laugh struck my ear—I looked up, a bright face peeped in at the door. It was dear little Charley. The rim of his hat was turned up to leave his blue eyes unshaded. In a moment his hand was in mine, and his rosy pouting lips were put up sweetly for

me to kiss, an operation which I should have performed even in more dangerous situations. He pulled me by the hand as he spoke,

"You must come out into the street and walk. I want you to buy me some torpedoes and a top. Ah, *do* come."

He pulled me again, and looked up with that eager real earnestness which in a child is so graceful. His mother's very face and voice. It was a pleasant afternoon. My hand was tired, my eyes wearied, and my mind sick of the tedious jargon which I was scrawling; at the instant a gleam of yellow sunlight fell upon the wall, and a breeze blew in softly from the window, and lifted the hair from my forehead. Charley knew his moment, brought me my hat, and gave me another pull.

"Well, come," said I, "if I must, I must." A child can drag us to what we wish.

So, off we went; he buoyant with hope, I quietly pursuing my own recollections, until, with a succession of "pulls," which had commenced so successfully, he conducted me into the toy shop, whose multifarious and heterogeneous treasures had dazzled his fancy. I could fully enter into his feelings as he reached this attractive scene. His full dilated eyes wandered over the medley of infant wonders, very much as I suppose a child of larger growth would gaze about him if he were introduced into some vast magic garden, crowded with golden bars, precious stones, horses, carriages, pleasure boats, books, paintings, and idle heaps of newly-coined silver dollars and shining guineas. There were valuable little wooden trumpets, "those clamorous harbingers of blood and death," and appalling tin swords, of a gory red hue, leaden dragoons on horseback and in full gallop, but whether to or from the fight was wisely left to the conjectures of the spectator, humming tops, colored like the rainbow, a handsome set of tea things constructed out of pewter, one or two little "spirit stirring drums," some wax ladies in full dress, beside other expensive and useful articles.

Charley took a pretty deliberate survey of the scene, and gave many objects a careful examination before his important purchases were completed. He blew several blasts "long and loud" upon the trumpets, drew forth

the tin sword, ran his eye along the innocent blade, and made several menacing flourishes, as if he were just about to cut off the head off some rascally Algerine; he cracked the whip, bounced the ball, spun the top, and took up the dragoon, horse and all, in his hand, with such a look, that I feared the poor gentleman's fate was sealed, his unsheathed blade to the contrary notwithstanding; when a mask, which might have been moulded on the physiognomy of Caliban, caught his attention. The good natured old lady who presided over these fairy scenes smiled as she yielded to each wandering caprice and changing impulse, and I smiled myself as the sweet and girlish face of the delightful boy was encased in the uncouth and monstrous countenance which he had selected, and his soft voice came out from the hideous lips, and his golden clustering hair burst forth over the rough, wrinkled forehead. There are men who dislike children; but I think they are a great source of amusement. Their graceful actions, their outbreakings of feeling, the artless ideas which rise in their minds, and of which they can give but an imperfect expression—I am pleased to observe them, just as I love to watch the passage of a clear stream in the woods, when there are diamond sands on the bottom, and green sedges which wave with the very motion of the water; and the silver fishes are darting, while some old root or rugged stone juts out, and half dams up the brook, till the beautiful element loses its airy placidity, and gurgles over the obstruction like the purest liquid crystal.

Well, the bargain is made—Charley has taken the mask under one arm and six torpedoes in his hand. Some cake and a top fill his pocket, and full of sparkling pleasure we resume our journey. In a short time the torpedoes are gone, the last at a large majestic dog, with the walk of a lion. The fellow turned around, and looked at us with much seriousness and dignity. The boy was absolutely hushed for a moment with the awe of his presence, and took my hand; but the worthy individual deigning us no further notice, found a place to his liking, and quietly laid himself to sleep.

There are certain moods of my mind when Charles is a more agreeable companion than many older and wiser. Life has a tendency to make us all hypocrites. As we

grow old we grow mistrustful and artificial. There is a kind of unmeaning good nature worn only for the sake of fashion, and often disguising angry or careless feelings. It flings a sort of mystery about the character of all other people, so that it takes some time to find them out. But there is a trusting spirit about a young child which exposes to your notice every operation of the mind. When I am with such a being my observation is not confined to his infant form and features; I cannot help perceiving the fragility of his mind and character. I believe I can in some degree enter into the fears and feelings of a sensitive mother when she gazes on her boy. She is familiar not only with his outward shape and bearing, but with his peculiar ways of thinking. She sees a mind and heart wonderfully delicate and feeble, exposed to innumerable influences, which may either close their existence or destroy their purity. Even in the stillness of her own apartment she can scarcely regulate their infant wanderings. How must she tremble then at the thoughts of what may happen when she shall be gone, and he committed alone to the dangers of the world, to disappointment, anguish, temptation, disease, and despair. It is as if one should fashion a light boat to float only on the waters of a summer lake, and should behold it gliding with the current through some widening and deepening river toward the stormy and boundless waste of ocean.

COWARDICE.

What a life is a coward's! He is all agitation. He should have been born a woman. Then his trembling would have been *so* graceful in the eyes of the beaux—so many whiskered lips would murmur, "do not be under the *slightest* apprehension, my dear, I will take care of you." What a mistake in nature to put the soul of a girl in a body six feet high!—to let the heart of a hare beat in the ample chest of a lion—to give a pair of great flashing eyes to express, instead of exciting terror

—and a voice like the lower tones of Mr. Cioffi's trombone to breathe out feelings that should have been played *piano* on the flute! Thou capricious, laughter-loving nature, what fantastic freaks hast thou invented in the composition of thy creature man!

As the world goes, there is no feeling nobler and more necessary than courage. What a dark world of anxiety and misery it shuts out from the soul! With what a strange beauty it invests even the bad in the hour of danger!

> "So spake the grisly terror, and in shape
> So speaking and so threatening, grew ten fold
> More dreadful and deform. On th' other side,
> Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
> Unterrified, and like a comet burn'd,
> That fires the length of Orphiuchus huge
> In the artic sky, and from his horrid hair
> Shakes pestilence and war."

Yet I have sometimes thought it was only a combination of *nerve* and good sense, to conceal cowardice. "He who has not felt fear," said Frederick the Great, "never snuffed a candle with his fingers. To *fear* calamity or pain cannot be base. The most sensitive must feel all influences most suddenly and deeply. The courage of many is sheer stupidity and bluntness of perception; while the cowardice of others may be vividness of imagination and love of life. A pleasure seeking and effeminate person will very naturally recoil from whatever threatens his peace and safety; but in certain situations these are the fiercest and most dangerous enemies. There is no devil like your coward goaded to desperation. I have heard of a German student in a duel so perfectly outrageous from the excess of fear, that he rushed upon his antagonist, a more experienced swordsman, at the imminent peril of his life, struck down his weapon, and sliced him through as one would a water melon. Be wary when the deer stands at bay.

But whatever may be the constituents of either courage or cowardice, it is certain that while one passes through life with a composed peace of mind, another is perpetually intruded upon with misgivings and visions of anguish. In addition to the actual periods of risk which

come to all, these victims of fright frequently think they find peril when in reality it does not exist. The unfortunate Mr. Fitzgerald is one of this sort. A more chicken-hearted creature never swaggered about under the mask of masculine attire. His fancy is always filled with horrid accidents. He enters the steam boat with a presentiment that the boiler will burst in a few moments; and in a stage he eyes every steep declivity with a forlorn conviction that his time is come. In walking through the forest, he looks upon himself as a poisoned man if a strange leaf touches his hand, and flies the old logs and grape vines for alligators and sea serpents. He once mistook the shrill whistle of a quail for the signal of banditti; and in meeting a woodcutter with his axe, in a lonely glen, he was about to exclaim, "Take my money, but spare my life," when the intruder turned away by a side path. I was last summer walking with him in the city, when I felt him drawing me away with an expression of fright. A large, good natured dog, with his tongue lapping from his jaws, trotted directly toward him.

"He's mad," said Fitzgerald: "he runs in a straight line." And then he followed his example, and also ran in a straight line, though in an opposite direction, which made me conclude he was quite as mad as the dog.

We were once fellow passengers in a packet ship from New Orleans, and were overtaken off Cape Hatteras by a hurricane. It was night; and, to say the truth, the tempest howled terrifically. Many of the sails, which we were compelled to raise to keep from shore, were torn into stripes. Apprehensions were entertained that the vessel would spring aleak or go to pieces on the shoals. The waves ran like mountains and broke over the deck, and the whole ocean presented a scene of tremendous fury, at once sublime and appalling. The ladies in the cabin were shrieking in despair, and uttering the names of husbands and parents, whom they never expected to see again, in agonizing fear; and the captain's voice, hoarse with exertion, could scarcely be heard amid the din and discord of the elements. It is one of the greatest weaknesses of a coward to bully and brag when danger is afar off; and Fitzgerald had worn that mask bravely during the first week of blue sky and

gentle breezes. I could not but observe the change A dim lamp was flaring in the cabin, and the few passengers were collected around the table and clinging to it. Most of them were pale and silent. One would occasionally venture a remark or jest, that fell dead from the lips that spoke it. Some people would joke in the jaws of the grave. Poor Fitzgerald did not happen to be among the number. When the morning broke, we went up the gangway and looked abroad. He had no sooner lifted his head into the air than his hat darted toward the sky like an arrow. The captain was bellowing through the trumpet. The billows had swept the decks. The drenched sailors were holding on to the ropes for their lives. The deck was almost as perpendicular as a wall. Should I live a thousand years I shall never lose the impresion of his face as he stood by my side in the dim morning light: his starting eyeballs, rolling around upon the really awful scene, as the vessel went rushing, rocking, and thundering through the water: his hair was streaming in the wind: his features had the whiteness of marble: his very lips were bloodless and ashy; and as a billow some seventy or eighty feet in height, tumbling like an overturned mountain toward our stern, lifted the ship as if it would actually hurl it into the air, and then swept from our bow, leaving a chasm that seemed gaping to overwhelm us, he uttered a convulsive sound as if some hand had forced a dagger into his very heart, and clasping his white hands together, shrunk back into the cabin, the most abject, prostrated wretch that eyes ever looked on. I crawled out upon deck, clinging to a rope, addressed a good humored sailor who was holding on to a piece of the shrouds without any signs of anxiety.

"Good morning, sir," said he; "pretty stiff breeze: we go now finely: one can take some comfort in such a ship as this."

"Comfort!" echoed I; "I don't know what you call comfort." (I was wet to the skin, and had not slept all night.)

"Why," said the man, laughing, "I was in a brig last month that went down under our feet, after we had been pumping her for twenty-four hours."

"How did you escape?"

"A schooner hove in sight, and we got into the long boat."

"And how did you feel, when you found you were going down, without the hope of help?"

"Why, when we knew that the old thing *must* go—what must, you know, must—so I made up my mind to it, and felt easy."

"Easy," echoed I again, as I crept into the cabin; "and this is the way a plain, uninformed, ignorant man can meet the ghastly apparition that frights the king on his throne, and the philosopher amid his books."

I am inclined to think that cowardice may be overcome by active life and some familiarity with danger; and certainly recommend the young to begin early to train themselves in the school of reflection, to meet the perils which environ the inhabitants of this earth. They should be accustomed to calculate upon the certainty of being, in the course of their pilgrimage, often thrown into painful and critical situations. They cannot escape from them always; and, at some time or other, must give up the existence which is only bestowed for a brief period. No one ought to live unprepared to die. It should be one of the earliest lessons of the father to his son: not taught by thrusting him into scenes of horror, but by gentle admonitions; not by bringing him suddenly to the bed of the dying, but by musing with him sometimes in the recepticles of the dead, when the pleasant grass and trees are there, and he can touch his soul with tenderness and meditation, subdued melancholy and calm resignation; you may rely on it he will be better for it when he goes into the world. Passion will not so easily intoxicate, danger alarm, nor pleasure corrupt him. He who plunges headlong into the vortexes of society, conscious of no influences beyond those connected with this limited sphere, is a wretched gamester, who stakes his all on a throw, and who, if he wins today, may be irreparably ruined tomorrow. In triumph he possesses no restraint, and when trouble and peril surround him he is without support. But he who is correctly disciplined to reserve something in his own bosom from the demands of ordinary life, who moves through the adventures of the day with the full knowledge that they are passing and often vain, however he

may participate in their joys, is not prostrated by their calamities. Experience also affords a secret consolation in the thought that half the threats of fortune, like her promises, are never accomplished. I remember many who have blamed that slandered goddess for visionary prospects of human bliss, but I cannot call to mind one who has praised her for dissipating numerous storms that hang over the wanderer's path but never descend upon his head. Shakspeare has a fine sentiment on the subject of cowardice:

> "What can be avoided.
> Whose end is purposed by the mighty gods?
> Cowards die many times before their deaths;
> The valiant never taste of death but once.
> Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
> It seems to me most strange that men should fear,
> Seeing that death, a necessary end,
> Will come when it will come."

REVERIES BY NIGHT.

WHAT a lovely night! I cannot conceive two rivals more equally invested with charms of an opposite description, than a quiet moonlight night, and a blossomy, fragrant, rich, dewy, still morning in June. For my part, I have ever found the former more tempting to the feet, more soothing to the imagination. I am even now touched by the delicious spell. I have roamed alone over the silent pavements, admiring the depth of shadows which the long wall of buildings casts broadly and with unequal outline upon the street, and the inexpressibly charming and mellow floods of light which the moon is pouring on the opposite side, softly sleeping, like a smile, on the lovely scene. Then moonlight is so exquisite in its picturesque effects—so magical and *subduing*. Every thing that is touched by it, is etherealized and elevated and softened. Beautiful objects are invested with higher beauty—grandeur rises to sublimity, and sublimity oppresses the mind with a

heavy weight of admiration. Whoever looks at yonder church with deep porticos, lofty columns, and high flight of steps, will perceive what I am endeavoring to describe—the wonderful character of poetry which moonlight sheds upon the images of a landscape. The shadows falling at angles across the building—the gleaming light which streams down on the whole—all strike the eye and the mind with unusual force. Have you ever been in the woods by moonlight? A scene always so full of romantic picturesqueness—the old heavy knotted vines, twisted and intertwined with each other, like anacondas—the fresh roof of green leaved branches, and the tall trees, with all their variety—the straight, slender sapling, that rises like a graceful girl—the immense oaks, striking their gnarled roots far and wide, and heaving abroad their sinewy arms like giants—the old stumps—the bowers—the verdant glades—ravines—valleys and other recesses which awaken one's rapture so often, in a forest ramble; and then, peradventure, the brook—that beautiful roamer of the wood—that ever sweet and joyous daughter of the hill—leaping and singing for ever and ever in its fairy journey—taking every shape and form to please the most sportive imagination—now lapsing like liquid glass, then foaming with mimic fury—now winding with noiseless tread by emerald banks, all fringed with flowers; now bubbling on stones, now pouring in a tiny cataract, and now sleeping in a silver lake. These images, always so grateful to the imagination, become, in the mellow moonlight, positively gifted with a fairy beauty; and the rover through a wood, under a bright summer moon, must feel himself drinking in true inspiration at every step. How perfectly still: how hushed is all around, but for the brook and the catydid, and the distant frog and tree-toad. In the shades, how mildly the floating fire-flies flash, gleaming so strangely with their moving red light in the pale moonbeams; and how the moonshine pours itself along the carpet of the wood, marking it with various shadows, and falling through the branches and every little opening of the trees, till it is all over sprinkled with the richest and loveliest of lustre. Then the sky at night! What a wonder; what a boundless profusion of magnificence. To what a stupendous

elevation it works up the mind! There is no object in creation, accessible to human eyes, half so immense in its wonders and splendors, half so calculated to lift the soul from earth, as the moon and sky at night, when the clouds are not so many as to obscure the gaze. Reflect upon it, dear reader, when next you look upon its blue tremulous bosom. Forget the last jam, the new opera, the contemplated excursion to the country, and *feel* what it is which overhangs you. That azure vault is *endless* distance. That silver spotted circle—those gems flashing in clusters—they are worlds, habitable worlds, suns, systems, created by the same hand which moulded thy pliant limbs, and gave thee eyes to regard, and mind to wonder at them. The beautiful earth on which thou creepest, a feeble evanescent insect, is nothing to these. It might be rent apart, and with all human pride and power be in an instant destroyed, yet this same star-paved road across the heavens would be shining thus still and splendid.

I never, in my life, since I can recollect, looked upon that sight without an involuntary elevation of mind. It never failed to strike me with holy awe; to overwhelm me with calm but oppressive wonder. In my lightest moments it has cast its spell on me, and touched me with sudden thought and silence, even when I have been roaming forth in mirth, with the young and lively. I remember one night at the theatre there was a riot; an unpopular performer was hissed by one party and supported by another. The house was excessively crowded, and it seemed with actual demons—such shouting, screaming, shrieking, yelling, and whooping—such swearing, cursing, quarrelling, and deadly blasphemous imprecations—such struggling, fighting, and diabolical passions were exhibited, that at length, wearied and disgusted, with a depressed heart and throbbing temples, half suffocated with the heated and smoky air, rendered more close and nauseous by the unusual crowd, I made my way to the saloon, and leaned from the window. The effect which the sight of the heavens had on me, I shall never forget. The deep pervading hushed stillness; the calm, holy light and order and beauty reigning there; the round moon, with a flashing diamond riding by her side, and the clusters of other

large and trembling stars glimmering along that azure tide, through the slowly moving silver clouds, all combined to charm me forth from the loathsome revel within. I stole out alone, and drank in the fresh air like new wine. There was a pale light in the east before I tore myself away. Nothing is more beautiful than moonlight loneliness in a city.

FAMILY TROUBLES.

"Let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blamed enough elsewhere; but strive
In offices of love, how we may lighten
Each other's burden in our share of woe."—*Milton.*

I AM particularly pleased with the kind manner in which a certain agreeable family of my acquaintance transact trivial circumstances and conversations with each other. If any thing is wrong among the little ones, the sister corrects it with a persuasive voice. The mother's rebuke is gentleness itself, and yet instantly attended to, and the children together are affectionate and social. Perhaps my admiration may have drawn my attention to what may not be deemed of importance to all my readers, although I know there must be some willing to leave, for a moment, the loftier events of the world, to muse upon this humble picture, just as a traveller among stupendous bridges, artificial roads, and gaudy palaces, will sometimes pause by a cottage in a secluded path way, with nothing to recommend it but the simple beauty of peace and nature.

One of the sweetest rewards of social endearments springs from the fact that the same participation of those we love which enhances our joys, also alleviates our sorrows. In the atmosphere of an affectionate home, therefore, the keen arrows of the world are blunted, while the flowers which would, peradventure, elsewhere fade away neglected, here bloom with more vivid beauty, none of their fragrance wasted, or their delicate colors overlooked. As for me, when I withdraw from the

merry circle or turn from the gay and crowded streets, I seem to shut myself up in a kind of tomb. There are no connecting links between me and the world. No light steps break the perpetual stillness. No familiar voice sends its welcome joy through my veins, banishing weariness and gloom; and the pleasant thoughts which flash on me from my book are like gems found in the desert by a lonely pilgrim.

This is a subject which, however common place, is nevertheless materially connected with the comfort of mankind. You may, in a measure, estimate a man's happiness by his degree of contentment in his family; and I fear the gentle beings mentioned above are an unusual instance of peace and harmony. You may find in many an apparent resemblance, but good breeding and pride often smooth over the surface, while indifference, or jealousy, or hatred lurk like monsters beneath. Real domestic bliss requires such a combination of favorable circumstances as to render its existence almost impossible. That several persons should be amiable, intelligent, good-humored, and of an affectionate disposition, is not wonderful, but that all the members of a household should be so, cannot very frequently be the case. A single individual often spoils the peace of a whole family. How frequently I have seen a charming circle gathered around the winter fire, the native liveliness of the pretty children breaking out innocently, and their conversation and actions such as in youth are natural and graceful, and all this sunshiny scene in a moment overclouded by the entrance of a scolding mother or an austere and tyrannical father; or intruded upon by the dark countenance and bitter discontent of some of those who are never happy themselves unless they are making every one around them miserable. Such a being in my eye is a criminal. The world is so thronged with dangers and disturbances, and so full of anguish and melancholy, that when I behold any group escaping, for a time, from the general wretchedness, and surrendering their souls to merriment and contentment, I pause to contemplate it as something rare and beautiful; and I look upon him who ruthlessly destroys that of which mortals have so little, as an enemy to his fellow creatures.

What should such a person think if, doomed to travel over a parched desert, some enemy should ruin the spring of cool water just as he was kneeling to drink. To many, life is this desert, and few are their fountains of happiness, and how cruel it is to sully those precious streams with unnecessary austerity or ill nature. When old age preaches to youth, let it reflect whether it does not itself sometimes fall into error. I have seen a lovely child suffer punishment simply because it did not act as if it were forty, and parents displaying the most pernicious example to their offspring by cross glances, cutting sarcasms, and open reproaches. I once knew a mistaken father who on a certain day of the week would not permit his children to utter a single word. It was a painful sight to behold their eyes, from which nature strove to shoot out the lustre of sprightliness and unshadowed innocence, casting down their pretty orbs with a forced seriousness more proper to broken health, withered hopes, and troubled age; and ever and anon, by a furtive look, contradicting the artificial gravity of their innocent sweet mouths, where smiles were as natural as fragrance to flowers. It reminded me of some free wild bird forced from the forest, and compelled to sit all day in a narrow close cage. Yet even he is not demanded to hold his little wings motionless, cast down his bright eyes, and hush the warblings that gush up in his throat. Do not fathers know, if their own hearts do not persuade them, that it is their best policy to possess themselves of the affections of their children? However pure and full of love may be their young hearts, they cannot be insensible to the distinction between happiness and misery: and what a reflection for a dying father, that he leaves behind him beings who, when he is in the grave, will only for the first time begin to enjoy the free blessing of existence!

SKETCH BY AN EDITOR.

THE POET AND HIS SISTER.

One of the most dramatic situations I was ever placed in was meeting accidentally a worthy fellow whose octavo I had just rather freely dissected. There was a half checked stage start from both parties on our being introduced, and such a deliberate tragedy dignity—such artificial courtesies—such awkward ease—such feverish indifference! But I am wrong—there was *one* crisis in my editorial existence, more striking and picturesque, and, indeed, from the same cause. I can always, if the worst *must* come, stand the glance of a *man* with some show of coolness and composure. If he is impertinent, of course embarrassment is at an end. If he is argumentative, I can reason and explain; if distant, I can be stately; if importunate, I can "rant" as well as he; and if he meets me with a frank and graceful cordiality, and a noble forgetfulness of the past, I have my own way of putting things to rights; but I am not so confident, by half, of navigating among the shoals and quicksands of female prejudices. They do not understand business—at least they do not comprehend the imperative force which business considerations exert upon the minds of men. They *feel* more than they reason, and have different standards of estimating objects and events. To them, home is the centre of the world, and domestic avocations are paramount to all other matters. They are deaf and blind to the positive necessity sometimes existing for sacrificing private and personal wishes to the public good. The happiness of a dear circle around an evening hearth, is infinitely more valuable in their eyes than the remote general interests of literature or science, or even of justice. The wife looks on the judge as a tyrant who refuses to petition for the pardon of her guilty condemned husband. The unhappy girl attached to Andre, thought Washington a monster for persisting in one of the most *Roman* acts that has graced

modern times. The same principle of female character descends into the minute circumstances of life; and in the incident which I have alluded to, I was unhappily the instrument of illustrating it. An anonymous correspondent sent a volume of poems, charmingly printed, with uncut leaves, and damp from the press. It was accompanied by a few lines on blue paper, and in a flowing neat female hand, that had never been roughened and deepened by the hackñied drudgeries of business. Then it was folded so carefully, and sealed with a wax sprinkled over with gold, and, in the prettiest sentence I ever read, solicited my favorable attention to the poetry. On examining the book I found it bad—common place—full of plagiarisms. The author was a gentleman, but the volume was shameful. I said so—and yielding to a temptation sometimes too strong for my principles of duty, I heightened the censure with several attempts at satire, thus making myself merry at the author's expense. Several months after I met him with some lively friends. He was a generous and very sensible fellow, careless and good humored, and it would take a heavy *critique*, I soon discovered, to break a sleep of his; but there was a fair and queenly looking girl hanging on his arm (I spare you the description) and on the mention of my name (she was his sister) there came over her face, for a moment, a slight crimson, and a half veiled flash from her fine eyes, and an expression of indescribable scorn about her lips, that made me wish the remote interests of literature and all my lurking propensities for satire at the furthermost corner of the earth. That same hand which hung so familiarly on my friend's shoulder, had traced the lines on the 'blue paper,' which, rash man, I had so admired, and so rudely neglected. She was for sometime all smiles and gaiety, but half an hour after, while I was busily conversing with another, I accidentally beheld her seated in the shadow of a half open door, her look expressive of the deepest seriousness, and her large eyes resting full on my face, with a displeasure not wholly unmingled with contempt. It came over me like a north easter on turning a corner suddenly. It was evident I had offended her; and although I possess a stoical indifference to worldly opinion, in the abstract, yet, I cannot deny it,

there is, when thus put to the test, something exceedingly disagreeable in the conviction that you are despised—despised by any one, and more especially by a woman—young, pure, accomplished, and beautiful. I inwardly foreswore criticism from that moment; but I suspect Jove laughs at editors' vows as well as at lovers'.

Careless readers would not believe the vexations I am thus put to, and how many things I am forced to consider beside the main thing. I shall open a communication with the kowing ones about town, by way of aiding me in these matters. It is getting to be a serious affair. I was nearly shot the other day, (thank the statute against duelling for my escape,) in consequence of having reviewed a book severely—the author of which was much troubled with the liver complaint—I must, therefore, endeavor to find out whether the writers of books are afflicted with any serious disorder, or have sisters, before I hereafter presume to offer my opinion of their merits.

SERVANTS.

I HAVE exausted many artifices in endeavoring to procure for my family a cook, a nurse and a waiting man. My attempts were truly unlucky. The intelligence office poured in upon us one after another with the best of characters, but we could not endure them. One came with a certificate from a respectable family, in which her honesty, industry, and sobriety, were praised in the strongest terms; but happening one day to enter the room suddenly, I found Miss Sobriety at the sideboard, with the decanter of brandy and her lips in such a relative situation as let me into a very important secret respecting the young woman's disposition. I accordingly told her, in a mild way, that if she had desired any refreshment, she should have asked her mistress for it, by which means she would, doubtless, have procured it: as matters stood, I was sorry to be compelled to say we should not hereafter require her services. After beg-

ging, apologizing, and explaining with vehemence, she burst into tears—declared she was the mother of two infants, whom her husband had cruelly abandoned, and hoped that the gentleman would not take the bread out of the mouth of a poor defenceless woman, but would at least give her a good character. Not choosing to inflict the lady upon any unwary stranger, and not particularly inclined to credit her recital, I positively refused; upon which, with the suddenness with which Milton mentions that the arch fiend, "squat like a toad," at the ear of our prime mother, resumed his original form at the touch of Ithuriel's spear—the poor, defenceless creature assumed the impudent demeanor of an Amazonian virago, and astounded me with such a mingled shower of oaths and threats, and revealed such a licentious recklessness of character, as made me rejoice that I had escaped without having my wife's throat cut, or my children poisoned. This custom among decent people of giving a good character to persons with whom they are dissatisfied, merely from a weak feeling of pity, or a selfish desire to be rid of them as quietly as possible, is pernicious. It is a kind of fraud, not the less censurable, because you do not know whom it will cheat. It is a lie, which must eventually be detected. It procures only a temporary benefit to the bearer—disgraces yourself—and casts a general odium upon all the classes of honest and hard laboring people whom Providence has placed in that station.

My waiting man, John, was of a different construction. He possessed all the requisites for an excellent servant, and was in reality a great favorite of my own. But he was cursed with an incurable propensity to officiousness, and a ludicrous habit of acting as if he were one of the company rather than a waiter. My friends have been thunderstruck, at a dinner party, after the recital of some amusing anecdote, and the first burst of laughter had subsided, to hear the peal of friend John at their elbow, his approving slap on his knee, followed by some frank opinion, as "that's the best one yet," or "that fellow must have been a queer chap," or "there's no mistaking him." I should have kept him, however; but an English lady, of an aristocratical disposition, and who seldom condescended to any thing like a republi-

can familiarity with any body, having paid a long visit to my wife, John told her one day at dinner, that he "recommended the soup," as it was "very fine." She either did not, or rather, I presume, would not hear him; upon which, he took hold of her little finger, with a gentle shake, and placing his face within a most sacrilegious proximity to the haughty dame's, pronounced the monosyllable "soup," in an elevated interrogatory key. Have you ever seen a cat bristle up with bended neck against the wall, or under the sofa, with round, green, glaring eyes flashing out from the shadow at the approach of some great, good natured dog? Imagine, then, the air with which the venerable and respectable maiden lady turned round upon her foe. Poor John! he had to start; and in his place I hired an obsequious, cringing scoundrel, who moved about the house like a sloth, drank every thing that came in his way, and stole my money into the bargain.

With nurses we have been equally unfortunate. One was kind hearted, but she had such a vulgar speech, that I was unwilling she should associate with my children; another was fine spoken, but pert and saucy. Susan told them ghost stories; Sally pinched them when she was out of humor; and Peggy was a slattern, and too lazy to speak. I really once thought I was suited. Miss Arabella was apparently just what she should be: neat, obedient, industrious, modest, sober, and honest. But nature had endowed her with a pretty face and genteel carriage, and she was inspired with ideas of gentility and fashion. I came home one Sunday afternoon, and met a lady on the steps elegantly dressed. At first I thought it was my wife; but then she was not accustomed to such a dashing apparel. As I approached, I touched my beaver respectfully, and was about to inquire if the honor of this visit was intended for Mrs. S., when the stranger exclaimed, "I'll go down through the kitchen way, if you please, sir, and let you in." In a little time I found Miss Arabella saw more company than I did; and I have been surprised when at tea to descry three or four fashionable looking gentlewomen, rustling, nodding, and glittering down stairs and along the entry, in single file, till I scarcely knew whether I was in my own house or not. When

these little agreeable circles began to be enlivened by the presence of certain acquaintances of the other gender, I was fain to pay Miss Arabella her wages, and solicit her not to trouble herself with our household affairs for the future.

Sitting in my study one day, a gentleman came in, and, bowing with great politeness, called me by name, and, in excellent English for a foreigner, claimed the honor of my acquaintance, handing me a letter at the same time. I shook him kindly by the hand, begged him to be seated, and on perusing the letter found out the gentleman had understood I was in want of a cook, and begged leave to offer his services in that capacity. On a second glance at him, I remembered to have seen him at the house of a friend who had lately sailed for London.

At length, however, by dint of the most unremitting perseverance, I succeeded in obtaining three servants upon whom I could rely. The best of cooks, the most unexceptionable of waiters, and a nurse who was like a mother to the children. They resided in my family five years, during which period the more I saw of them the more I valued them. And now, Messrs. Editors, I come to the object of this paper, which is to make public the ungenerous, I may add, the dishonorable conduct of several families, whom I really had hitherto respected and esteemed, and do yet in a certain degree, although circumstances have materially degraded them, or rather the master and mistress of them, in my estimation.

I had often boasted to my friends of my invaluable servants; and their reputation, indeed, was pretty well extended through the neighborhood. Many attempts had been made to seduce them from their allegiance to me; but, as I always treated them kindly, and gave them liberal wages, I am pleased to believe they felt bound to their situation both by interest and gratitude. The waiter, Phil, revealed the names of several who had thus tampered with him; inquiring what wages he was allowed in my family, how many hours he was compelled to work in the day, and what kind of labor was imposed upon him. They hinted that he ought to expect more; that his duties were too toilsome; and, in

short, plainly told him, that, if he would leave me and make a compact with them, they would insure him higher wages and less work. This is a species of downright robbery. I prefer that such dishonest meddlers in the affairs of private families should open my secretary, and help themselves to any reasonable sum of money. That action would not be any more of a deliberate and guilty swindle, and would put me to much less inconvenience. Phil has about him a sterling honesty, which binds him to me; beside which he has a native good sense which enables him to see when he is in an excellent place; or as he one day expressed it in his homely but not weak phraseology, he knew "which side his bread was buttered." The nurse has not been so faithful. She has been allured by a house in Broadway, a family of great wealth and fashion, and the offer of higher wages, and has left me without any assistance whatever. And the cook is probably at this moment up to her eyes in business in a private boarding house, where, I have reason to believe, she will discover that it is much more easy for her mistress to make promises than to keep them. I hope some of your readers will take the hint from this statement, which has nothing but truth and good intention to recommend it for publication. I think, however, that while a large portion of them derive more gratification from eloquent poetry and fanciful tales, or essays which embrace only lofty moral or metaphysical subjects, others would be pleased with your devoting a space of the Mirror to the correction of these little evils of practical life. To such as have been or may be guilty of the unneighborly conduct complained of here, I wish distinctly to state, that I look upon them as so many swindlers, who have the bad disposition of offenders against the law without their courage. It is my opinion, that after a perusal of my humble recital, whoever deludes a good servant, by covert promises, from his place in a decent family, would pick my pocket in any other way if he durst. He is a bad neighbor, an undutiful citizen, and I will stake my life, an unkind husband and an injudicious father. And if he do not actually break the law of his country, he violates other natural rules of courtesy and moral right, and richly deserves the anathema which Burns bestowed on the foes of Scotland's weal,—"a towmond toothache."

EXTRACT FROM MRS. TROLLOPE'S TRAVELS IN AMERICA.

NEW YORK is rather a charming little city, containing from one hundred to one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, mostly black. The streets are monopolized by these sons and daughters of Africa, who take the wall of you on all occasions; and it would be entirely useless, as well as extremely dangerous, to notice any insult which they may offer you, as they carry long daggers concealed in their bosoms, and use them, too, with utter impunity, under the very nose of the public authorities. Indeed, I once saw a little black boy carried to bridewell for stealing, and that very afternoon the whole negro male population turned out in a procession, consisting of twenty thousand, with banners, which bore the words, "Wilberforce Philanthropic Society." From this, I presume, the boy's name was Wilberforce; at all events, the court of sessions (which by the way, is held in a little grocery store in William street, called *Harmony Hall*,) acquitted the culprit, in consequence of the sensation his imprisonment had produced. This took place in the month of August, and so great was the alarm, that immense numbers fled from the city, fearing another *insurrection*. Whole families departed at once. The steamboats (of which there are two tolerably good ones, one plying to Albany, the other to New Orleans on Long Island,) were every day crowded with trembling passengers, who sought refuge from the bloody and atrocious scenes which yearly disgrace the streets, and retired to Saratoga, Communipaw, Brooklyn in New Jersey, Charlestown in North Carolina, and Greenwich village on Lake George. Scarcely a night passes without the negroes setting two or three of the houses on fire, with the view of destroying the inhabitants. As the best mansions are made of light pine wood, it may be easily imagined that they are unusually combustible; but, fortunately

the city of New York has really a most copious supply of water, which prevents much damage.

Their theatres are positively amusing, and I must say I laughed very heartily, although, to confess the truth, it was only at their tragedies and their operas. The Park theatre was originally an old barn; its outside is disgraceful, and the interior more so. It has been burnt down *fourteen times*, probably by the *religious party*, which form the majority, and have now elected Jackson to the presidency. The establishment stands opposite the Roman Catholic cathedral, and is under the management of Messrs. Pierson and Drurie. I am indebted to my kind friend for many of these particulars. He knows that I am writing a book of travels, and although himself only an American, has kindly volunteered his services to collect materials for me, given me sketches of character and authentic anecdotes, and corrected, with the most scrupulous care, all my geographical and topographical illustrations, in which the reader may consequently repose the most implicit reliance. The theatres have, however, two or three tolerably decent performers. Mr. Barnes is the principal tragedian. I saw him one evening in Romeo to Mrs. Keppel's Juliet, and I must say, I thought his conception of the character rather good. He is quite small, with large melancholy eyes, and features expressive of tenderness and passion. Mrs. Keppel, as Juliet, was not sufficiently poetic, but was nevertheless pretty well. This was, however, afterward satisfactorily accounted for by the discovery that she was an English lady. I afterward saw Mr. Hilson in Young Norval. The greatest attraction they have, however, is Mr. Povey, a distinguished vocalist. He plays the prince, in Cinderella, and Masaniello quite delightfully; all the rest are not worth mentioning. A fellow by the name of H. Placide undertook to personate the Baron, but I was thoroughly disgusted. There are some peculiar customs prevailing among the audience here, which are apt to provoke a smile on the lips of a rational stranger. All their ladies dress in the most tasteless and extravagant style, and yet betray incontrovertible evidences of vulgarity, sitting on the banisters with their backs to the stage, between the acts, eating Carolina potatoes, and drinking ginger pop.

This is done every night at the Park, and some good-society females smoke "long nines," in the boxes, with a degree of audacious ease and familiarity that is really shocking. The American theatre is a large wooden building in Green street, Third avenue, next door to the United States Bank. Richmond Hill is down town.

One thing which must strike all strangers of intelligence with astonishment, is the *newspapers*. There are three hundred daily papers printed in the city, and sixty weeklies. People never think of reading any thing else. Here are their poetry, their sermons, their lectures, their history, their music, their novels, all compressed within the limits of newspapers. It is strange that they are conducted by men who have been previously distinguished in other professions. Major Noah, of the American, was once consul at Paris. Mr. Leggett, of the Courier and Enquirer, was a commodore in the navy. Colonel King, and Alderman Charles Hoffman of the Journal of Commerce, Captain Sands and General Stone of the Gazette, Brother Jenks and Redwood Fisher of the Daily Advertiser, (noted Jackson-men and poets,) and Colonel Morris of the Mirror, (the leading political journal,) are all old revolutionary heroes. It is supposed that the election of Jackson was entirely owing to the exertions of the Albion, and that gives it an overwhelming influence. Alderman Charles Hoffman is a very gifted and industrious young man. He edits the Railroad Banner of Truth, and the Journal of Commerce, and acts as district attorney; he is also a judge of the superior court, and besides, carries on an extensive auction business.

A FARM-YARD SKETCH.

On a calm summer morning a peacock stood spreading his feathers in the sun. Near him a lake lay sleeping in motionless transparency. He walked toward it with conscious pride, and bending himself over the brink, sometimes gazed at his gorgeous plumage in the mirror, and sometimes turned back his eyes, to examine the play of green and gold upon his back. The simple inhabitants of a neighboring farm-yard stood off at a respectful distance, awe-struck with his grandeur. The hens cackled to each other; the geese huddled together, poked out their long necks, and hissed; and even chanticleer, although generally on capital terms with himself, rather lowered his crest, and lifted his yellow feet with less of lordly majesty as he marched among his companions, who no longer paid him their accustomed attention. At this extorted acknowledgment of his superior splendor, heavens! how the peacock swelled!

"Certainly," said he, "I am without an equal. How mean these poor wretched creatures appear by my side. How magnificently beautiful I am. What golden tinges chase each other across my feathers. How superbly my tail reflects the light. It is full of eyes which absolutely rival the sun himself. When I look around, what is there to compare with me?"

A rose, which was blooming near, overheard this arrogant soliloquy, and addressed him,

"Pray, Mr. Peacock, do not be offended, but I think I can show you a bird, not only your equal, but so far your superior, that before man would allow one of the race to be destroyed, he would behold you and all your vain flaunting relations exterminated."

"I always thought, madam Rose," replied the peacock, "that you were a decent sort of person, and had one or two tolerable colors in you—that is, for a mere rose; but I cannot give you credit for much wisdom. And so sure am I of being considered of more value than any which you can possibly bring, that I

fearlessly challenge you and all the world to produce my rival."

"This very afternoon," said the rose, "and before the assembled creatures of the earth and air; they shall pronounce upon your respective merits."

"I will come an hour before sunset," replied the peacock, spreading his superb tail and tossing his head affectedly. "I appear to more advantage, the greater the light; good morning, madam Rose. What a fool is this ridiculous red flower," he continued in a lower voice, as he strutted away, "and so conceited too. Bah! how I hate conceited people!"

The hour for the trial came. The setting sun filled the woods with golden light; lengthened shadows lay on the soft green meadows. The bee hummed lazily along the drooping flowers, as if tired of their day's wanderings; the crows went winging their way over the tree tops to their nests; the fish hawk had made his last plunge in the lake, and was bearing his prey toward the high dry tree—every thing told of the closing day.

The peacock spread his tail and entered the arena where he was to await the expected rival. He found all the beasts, poultry, &c., of the neighborhood assembled. The geese came in single file, headed by a sage old fellow, a kind of philosopher, who led the procession with grave dignity. The hens brought their dear little chickens, with their wee bit voices; the ducks waddled to their places, and quacked "how do you do," to their neighbors, the geese. The horses, who had been let loose in the adjoining field, cantered up, tossing their heads in the air, kicking out their heels, and neighing cheerfully to their friends and fellow citizens. The ass shook his ears with much self complacency, and trotted after. An old black sheep sprang over a fence, and was immediately followed by about a hundred others, who leaped over in the same place. The cows walked out of the pond and took their stations, lashing themselves with their tails, and chewing the cud; no animal like your cow for gravity and patience. A great filthy hog, who had been wallowing in the mire, came in grunting, and thrusting himself into company where he was not wanted: but he got a good seat, because

every body feared to come in contact with him. The swallows skimmed down from their nests under the eaves of the barn, and seated themselves in a row on the rail fence. The turkeys came in late, grumbling and gobbling. They thought the whole concern rather ridiculous—they were as good as the peacock any day—"some people make such a fuss about nothing." A beautiful robin came hopping along, and flew up into a branch of the cherry tree, with a sweet and plaintive cry; while a fierce little bantam rooster pushed his way in among the horses, squared off to a turkey seven times as large as himself, and at length reached an excellent place, where he sat with the air of one who thinks himself as good as most people.

When the company were seated, the rose, who had called the meeting, in a brief and graceful address, explained the wager which had been laid between the peacock and herself.

"My friends," said the peacock, in a screaming, discordant voice, which made the robin flutter to a more distant seat, "I am nearly overcome with diffidence at appearing thus in public. Nothing but duty and self respect could have driven me to such an extremity, but as the representative of a large class of society, I feel bound to assert our claims to your attention. Look at me, my friends; examine those feathers, the rainbow tinges that melt into each other on my breast, the brilliant hues brightening up for ever and dying away, the radiance that seems to float around me, and which certainly excels in superb beauty even the vivid bow of heaven. The rose, who is a nice sort of person to be sure, but without taste, and not a little prejudiced against nature's more choice productions," (here the peacock unfolded his tail, and accidently cast his eyes upon the ass, who, supposing the remark an oblique compliment to himself, held up his head higher, gave a gentle bray of approbation, and continued to listen with imperturbable gravity,) "the rose has proffered to bring before you a bird more valuable than myself. I appeal to my person, and challenge competition."

The peacock then walked around in a circle.

"What a stately gait!" said the goose.

"And what a sweet voice!" said the ass.

"I shall now produce your rival, master Peacock," said the rose, in a sweet voice, and with something of a deeper shade of crimson passing over her soft face. She nodded her head, and a strange bird, who had not before been at all observed among the crowd, stepped forth, and stood in silence by the rose bush. His plain appearance excited some whispering—there was a good deal of cackling and simpering among the old hens, at the idea of such a small, insignificant looking creature, daring to present himself on such an occasion. The most influential goose gave a downright hiss, whereupon, all the other geese stretched out their sagacious heads, and hissed also; while the guinea hen uttered a peevish, discontented cry. Nothing, however, could exceed the irrepressible mirth of the rooster, who gave a right hearty crow of derision, unless it was the wise demeanor of the ass, who first looked down contemptuously on the little aspirant, then laughed aloud, and concluded by nodding his head and long ears to his neighbors, and winking his left eye with a knowing look, as much as to say, "stand by now and we shall have some fun."

After the peacock had remained silent for a moment, swelling and strutting, and exhibiting himself to his admirers, like a militia colonel on parade, he asked the rose, with a sneer, if she intended to "insult the audience by such a miserable jest."

The rose was going to reply, when the ass, who always puts himself forward on these occasions, and attempts to lead the rest of the meeting, rose and made a short address.

"My friends," he said, "I can no longer suppress my feelings of indignation at the insult offered to the excellent, tender-hearted and amiable peacock, by this brazen faced rose. Let me ask you, gentlemen, who and what is this rose? What has she done? What use is she of? Who ever heard her voice in the wood, as mine is heard and the peacock's, animating nature, and soothing all that have ears to hear and hearts to feel? The rose is a stupid and senseless flower, so conscious of her own insignificance, that she dare not show herself in the pathway where we tread. Look at the blush of shame which even now rises to her cheeks—look at her fee-

bleness, her uselessness, her idleness; for my part I always hated her, and preferred the noble sunflower, which lifts its yellow head, in yonder field. Now, let me ask the rose how she dare collect us (whose time is important) together, for the purpose of judging between the merits of yon small paltry brown bird, that we should never think of looking at twice, and this gay and splendid creature, which is the admiration of myself and all other *cognoscenti*, indeed, of the known world."

"I must remind the learned gentleman," said the rose, in a low but touching tone, "that there are other means of gaining fame beside appearance. That the dress of the peacock is more bright, striking, and gaudy than that of the nightingale, I am willing to allow, but dress does not make the man. The nightingale rests his hope of your approbation upon higher qualities. Nature has given him a most extraordinary power of touching the soul; and, I think, this must rank him higher in the scale of creation than the peacock."

"Oh ho!" said the ass, "you mean his singing. I have been often disturbed by his voice in the night, although I never before had the honor of seeing the vocalist. What!" he continued, "this is the fellow, is it, that keeps us awake? Well, hark ye, my little chap, give us a touch of your quality; and be short, do you hear, for our time is precious, and important to the commonwealth."

The nightingale was about to commence, when the peacock broke in,

"I also," said he, "have cultivated my voice, and aspire to some skill in melody."

"Right," said the ass, "and the nightingale is nothing to you."

The little bantam, who had perched upon the top of an old chesnut rail, came out with a sudden laugh, and slapped his sides with his wings, at this assertion; but the ass, regarding him with a grave, rebuking expression, said,

"I would have you to know, sir, that if there is any thing on which I really pique myself, it is being a correct judge of music. In that I'll yield to nobody. But hush! that divine creature is going to sing."

The peacock favored them with a song, than which nothing could be more harsh, discordant, and altogether execrable.

"Very fine, delicious!" said the ass, nodding his head; "now, let the nightingale beat that if he can."

An old hen, who had been scratching gravel at a little distance, declared that she "never knew what music was before."

An innocent little lamb, who loved the nightingale, cried "bah!" but the ass pricked up his ears and shouted, "turn him out," in such a stentorian voice, that the poor young thing was frightened half to death.

"Order, order," said the cow.

Order being obtained, a gush of melody burst from the throat of the nightingale, which instantly hushed every other sound. Sometimes it melted into plaintive sweetness, and sometimes burst forth like an impulse of love; but the pervading character was tenderness and melancholy, so inexpressibly sweet and touching, that after it had died away, a deep silence hung over the crowd, as if every one were waiting and wishing for it to commence again. The applause which ensued manifested clearly the triumph of the rose and the nightingale. The geese who had been asleep, each on oneleg, with his head behind his wing, were awakened by the clamor, and scudded across the road, after having assented to the ass, who, before he trotted off, shook his ears with a wise look, and observed,

"It is really astonishing how the public allow themselves to be lead away."

THE END.