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A TALE OF TWO CITIES.

In Three Books.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

BOOK THE THIRD. THE TRACK OF A STORM.

CHAPTER I. IN SECRET.

THE traveller fared slowly on his way, who fared towards Paris from England in the autumn of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two. More than enough of bad roads, bad equipages, and bad horses, he would have encountered to delay him, though the fallen and unfortunate King of France had been upon his throne in all his glory; but, the changed times were fraught with other obstacles than these. Every town gate and village taxing-house had its band of citizen-patriots, with their national muskets in a most explosive state of readiness, who stopped all comers and goers, cross-questioned them, inspected their papers, looked for their names in lists of their own, turned them back, or sent them on, or stopped them and laid them in hold, as their capricious judgment or fancy deemed best for the dawning Republic One and Indivisible, of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, or Death.

A very few French leagues of his journey were accomplished, when Charles Darnay began to perceive that for him along these country roads there was no hope of return until he should have been declared a good citizen at Paris. Whatever might befall now, he must on to his journey's end. Not a mean village closed upon him, not a common barrier dropped across the road behind him, but he knew it to be another iron door in the series that was barred between him and England. The universal watchfulness so encompassed him, that if he had been taken in a net, or were being forwarded to his destination in a cage, he could not have felt his freedom more completely gone.

This universal watchfulness not only stopped him on the highway twenty times in a stage, but retarded his progress twenty times in a day, by riding after him and taking him back, riding before him and stopping him by anticipation, riding with him and keeping him in charge. He had been days upon his journey in France alone, when he went to bed tired out, in a little town on the high road, still a long way from Paris.

Nothing but the production of the afflicted Gabelle's letter from his prison of the Abbaye would have got him on so far. His difficulty at the guard-house in this small place had been such, that he felt his journey to have come to a crisis. And he was, therefore, as little surprised as a man could be, to find himself awakened at the small inn to which he had been remitted until morning, in the middle of the night.

Awakened by a timid local functionary and three armed patriots in rough red caps and with pipes in their mouths, who sat down on the bed.

"Emigrant," said the functionary, "I am going to send you on to Paris, under an escort."

"Citizen, I desire nothing more than to get to Paris, though I could dispense with the escort."

"Silence!" growled a red-cap, striking at the coverlet with the butt-end of his musket. "Peace, aristocrat!"

"It is as the good patriot says," observed the timid functionary. "You are an aristocrat, and must have an escort—and must pay for it."

"I have no choice," said Charles Darnay.

"Choice! Listen to him!" cried the same scowling red-cap. "As if it was not a favour to be protected from the lamp-iron!"

"It is always as the good patriot says," observed the functionary. "Rise and dress yourself, emigrant."

Darnay complied, and was taken back to the guard-house where other patriots in rough red caps were smoking, drinking, and sleeping, by a watch-fire. Here he paid a heavy price for his escort, and hence he started with it on the wet, wet roads at three o'clock in the morning.

The escort were two mounted patriots in red caps and tricolored cockades, armed with national muskets and sabres, who rode one on either side of him. The escorted governed his own horse, but a loose line was attached to his bridle, the end of which one of the patriots kept girded round his wrist. In this state they set forth, with the sharp rain driving in their faces: clattering at a heavy dragoon trot over the uneven town pavement, and out upon the mire-deep roads. In this state they traversed without change, except of horses and pace, all the mire-deep leagues that lay between them and the capital.

They travelled in the night, halting an hour

or two after daybreak, and lying by until the twilight fell. The escort were so wretchedly clothed, that they twisted straw round their bare legs, and thatched their ragged shoulders to keep the wet off. Apart from the personal discomfort of being so attended, and apart from such considerations of present danger as arose from one of the patriots being chronically drunk, and carrying his musket very recklessly, Charles Darnay did not allow the restraint that was laid upon him to awaken any serious fears in his breast; for, he reasoned with himself that it could have no reference to the merits of an individual case that was not yet stated, and of representations, confirmable by the prisoner in the Abbaye, that were not yet made.

But, when they came to the town of Beauvais—which they did at eventide, when the streets were filled with people—he could not conceal from himself that the aspect of affairs was very alarming. An ominous crowd gathered to see him dismount at the posting-yard, and many voices in it called out loudly, “Down with the emigrant!”

He stopped in the act of swinging himself out of his saddle, and, resuming it as his safest place, said:

“Emigrant, my friends! Do you not see me here, in France, of my own will?”

“You are a cursed emigrant,” cried a farrier, making at him in a furious manner through the press, hammer in hand; “and you are a cursed aristocrat!”

The postmaster interposed himself between this man and the rider’s bridle (at which he was evidently making), and soothingly said, “Let him be; let him be! He will be judged at Paris.”

“Judged!” repeated the farrier, swinging his hammer. “Ay! and condemned as a traitor.” At this, the crowd roared approval.

Checking the postmaster, who was for turning his horse’s head to the yard (the drunken patriot sat composedly in his saddle looking on, with the line round his wrist), Darnay said, as soon as he could make his voice heard:

“Friends, you deceive yourselves, or you are deceived. I am not a traitor.”

“He lies!” cried the smith. “He is a traitor since the decree. His life is forfeit to the people. His cursed life is not his own!”

At the instant when Darnay saw a rush in the eyes of the crowd, which another instant would have brought upon him, the postmaster turned his horse into the yard, the escort rode in close upon his horse’s flanks, and the postmaster shut and barred the crazy double gates. The farrier struck a blow upon them with his hammer, and the crowd groaned; but, no more was done.

“What is this decree that the smith spoke of?” Darnay asked the postmaster, when he had thanked him, and stood beside him in the yard.

“Truly, a decree for selling the property of emigrants.”

“When passed?”

“On the fourteenth.”

“The day I left England!”

“Everybody says it is but one of several, and that there will be others—if there are not already—banishing all emigrants, and condemning all to death who return. That is what he meant when he said your life was not your own.”

“But there are no such decrees yet?”

“What do I know!” said the postmaster, shrugging his shoulders; “there may be, or there will be. It is all the same. What would you have?”

They rested on some straw in a loft until the middle of the night, and then rode forward again when all the town was asleep. Among the many wild changes observable on familiar things which make this wild ride unreal, not the least was the seeming rarity of sleep. After long and lonely spurring over dreary roads, they would come to a cluster of poor cottages, not steeped in darkness, but all glittering with lights, and would find the people, in a ghostly manner in the dead of the night, circling hand in hand round a shrivelled tree of Liberty, or all drawn up together singing a Liberty song. Happily, however, there was sleep in Beauvais that night to help them out of it, and they passed on once more into solitude and loneliness: jingling through the untimely cold and wet, among impoverished fields that had yielded no fruits of the earth that year, diversified by the blackened remains of burnt houses, and by the sudden emergence from ambush, and sharp reining up across their way, of patriot patrols on the watch on all the roads.

Daylight at last found them before the wall of Paris. The barrier was closed and strongly guarded when they rode up to it.

“Where are the papers of this prisoner?” demanded a resolute-looking man in authority, who was summoned out by the guard.

Naturally struck by the disagreeable word, Charles Darnay requested the speaker to take notice that he was a free traveller and French citizen, in charge of an escort which the disturbed state of the country had imposed upon him, and which he had paid for.

“Where,” repeated the same personage, without taking any heed of him whatever, “are the papers of this prisoner?”

The drunken patriot had them in his cap, and produced them. Casting his eyes over Gabelle’s letter, the same personage in authority showed some disorder and surprise, and looked at Darnay with a close attention.

He left escort and escorted without saying a word, however, and went into the guard-room; meanwhile, they sat upon their horses outside the gate. Looking about him while in this state of suspense, Charles Darnay observed that the gate was held by a mixed guard of soldiers and patriots, the latter far outnumbering the former; and that while ingress into the city for peasants’ carts bringing in supplies, and for similar traffic and traffickers, was easy enough, egress, even for the homeliest people, was very difficult. A

numerous medley of men and women, not to mention beasts and vehicles of various sorts, was waiting to issue forth; but, the previous identification was so strict that they filtered through the barrier very slowly. Some of these people knew their turn for examination to be so far off, that they lay down on the ground to sleep or smoke, while others talked together, or loitered about. The red cap and tricolor cockade were universal, both among men and women.

When he had sat in his saddle some half-hour, taking note of these things, Darnay found himself confronted by the same man in authority, who directed the guard to open the barrier. Then he delivered to the escort, drunk and sober, a receipt for the escorted, and requested him to dismount. He did so, and the two patriots, leading his tired horse, turned and rode away without entering the city.

He accompanied his conductor into a guard-room, smelling of common wine and tobacco, where certain soldiers and patriots, asleep and awake, drunk and sober, and in various neutral states between sleeping and waking, drunkenness and sobriety, were standing and lying about. The light in the guard-house, half derived from the waning oil-lamps of the night, and half from the overcast day, was in a correspondingly uncertain condition. Some registers were lying open on a desk, and an officer of a coarse, dark aspect, presided over these.

"Citizen Defarge," said he to Darnay's conductor, as he took a slip of paper to write on. "Is this the emigrant Evrémonte?"

"This is the man."

"Your age, Evrémonte?"

"Thirty-seven."

"Married, Evrémonte?"

"Yes."

"Where married?"

"In England."

"Without doubt. Where is your wife, Evrémonte?"

"In England."

"Without doubt. You are consigned, Evrémonte, to the Prison of La Force."

"Just Heaven!" exclaimed Darnay. "Under what law, and for what offence?"

The officer looked up from his slip of paper for a moment.

"We have new laws, Evrémonte, and new offences, since you were here." He said it with a hard smile, and went on writing.

"I entreat you to observe that I have come here voluntarily, in response to that written appeal of a fellow-citizen which lies before you. I have come here, to clear him and to clear myself. I demand no more than the opportunity to do so without delay. Is not that my right?"

"Emigrants have no rights, Evrémonte," was the stolid reply. The officer wrote until he had finished, read over to himself what he had written, sanded it, and handed it to Citizen Defarge, with the words, "In secret."

Citizen Defarge motioned with the paper to the prisoner that he must accompany him. The

prisoner obeyed, and a guard of two armed patriots attended them.

"It is you," said Defarge, in a low voice, as they went down the guard-house steps and turned into Paris, "who married the daughter of Doctor Manette, once a prisoner in the Bastille, that is no more."

"Yes," replied Darnay, looking at him with surprise.

"My name is Defarge, and I keep a wine-shop in the Quarter Saint Antoine. Possibly you have heard of me."

"My wife came to your house to reclaim her father? Yes?"

The word "wife" seemed to serve as a gloomy reminder to Citizen Defarge, to say with sudden impatience, "In the name of that sharp female newly born and called La Guillotine, why did you come to France?"

"You heard me say why, a minute ago. Do you not believe it is the truth?"

"A bad truth for you," said Defarge, speaking with knitted brows, and looking straight before him.

"Indeed, I am lost here. All here is so unprecedented, so changed, so sudden and unfair, that I am absolutely lost. Will you render me a little help?"

"None," Citizen Defarge spoke, always looking straight before him.

"Will you answer me a single question?"

"Perhaps. According to its nature. You can say what it is."

"In this prison that I am going to so unjustly, shall I have some free communication with the world outside?"

"You will see."

"I am not to be buried there, prejudged, and without any means of presenting my case?"

"You will see. But, what then? Other people have been similarly buried, in worse prisons, before now."

"But never by me, Citizen Defarge."

Citizen Defarge glanced darkly at him for answer, and walked on in a steady and set silence. The deeper he sank into this silence, the fainter hope there was—or so Darnay thought—of his softening in any slight degree. He, therefore, made haste to say:

"It is of the utmost importance to me (you know, Citizen, even better than I, of how much importance), that I should be able to communicate to Mr. Lorry of Tellson's Bank, an English gentleman who is now in Paris, the simple fact, without comment, that I have been thrown into the prison of La Force. Will you cause that to be done for me?"

"I will do," Defarge doggedly rejoined, "nothing for you. My duty is to my country, and the People. I am the sworn servant of both, against you. I will do nothing for you."

Charles Darnay felt it hopeless to entreat him further, and his pride was touched besides. As they walked on in silence, he could not but see how used the people were to the spectacle of prisoners passing along the streets. The very children scarcely noticed him. A few passers

turned their heads, and a few shook their fingers at him as an aristocrat; otherwise, that a man in good clothes should be going to prison, was no more remarkable than that a labourer in working clothes should be going to work. In one narrow, dark, and dirty street through which they passed, an excited orator, mounted on a stool, was addressing an excited audience on the crimes against the people, of the king and the royal family. The few words that he caught from this man's lips, first made it known to Charles Darnay that the king was in prison, and that the foreign ambassadors had one and all left Paris. On the road (except at Beauvais) he had heard absolutely nothing. The escort and the universal watchfulness had completely isolated him.

That he had fallen among far greater dangers than those which had developed themselves when he left England, he of course knew now. That perils had thickened about him fast, and might thicken faster and faster yet, he of course knew now. He could not but admit to himself that he might not have made this journey, if he could have foreseen the events of a few days. And yet his misgivings were not so dark as, imagined by the light of this later time, they would appear. Troubled as the future was, it was the unknown future, and in its obscurity there was ignorant hope. The horrible massacre, days and nights long, which, within a few rounds of the clock, was to set a great mark of blood upon the blessed garnering time of harvest, was as far out of his knowledge as if it had been a hundred thousand years away. The "sharp female newly-born, and called La Guillotine," was hardly known to him, or to the generality of people, by name. The frightful deeds that were to be soon done, were probably unimagined at that time in the brains of the doers. How could they have a place in the shadowy conceptions of a gentle mind?

Of unjust treatment in detention and hardship, and in cruel separation from his wife and child, he foreshadowed the likelihood, or the certainty; but, beyond this, he dreaded nothing distinctly. With this on his mind, which was enough to carry into a dreary prison court-yard, he arrived at the prison of La Force.

A man with a bloated face opened the strong wicket, to whom Defarge presented "The Emigrant Evrémonte."

"What the Devil! How many more of them!" exclaimed the man with the bloated face.

Defarge took his receipt without noticing the exclamation, and withdrew, with his two fellow-patriots.

"What the Devil, I say again!" exclaimed the gaoler, left with his wife. "How many more!"

The gaoler's wife, being provided with no answer to the question, merely replied, "One must have patience, my dear!" Three turnkeys who entered responsive to a bell she rang, echoed the sentiment, and one added, "For the love of

Liberty;" which sounded in that place like an inappropriate conclusion.

The prison of La Force was a gloomy prison, dark and filthy, and with a horrible smell of foul sleep in it. Extraordinary how soon the noisome flavour of imprisoned sleep, becomes manifest in all such places that are ill-cared for!

"In secret, too," grumbled the gaoler, looking at the written paper. "As if I was not already full to bursting!"

He stuck the paper on a file, in an ill-humour, and Charles Darnay awaited his further pleasure for half an hour: sometimes, pacing to and fro in the strong arched room: sometimes, resting on a stone seat: in either case detained to be imprinted on the memory of the chief and his subordinates.

"Come!" said the chief, at length taking up his keys, "come with me, emigrant."

Through the dismal prison twilight, his new charge accompanied him by corridor and staircase, many doors clanging and locking behind them, until they came into a large, low, vaulted chamber, crowded with prisoners of both sexes. The women were seated at a long table, reading and writing, knitting, sewing, and embroidering; the men were for the most part standing behind their chairs, or lingering up and down the room.

In the instinctive association of prisoners with shameful crime and disgrace, the new comer recoiled from this company. But, the crowning unreality of his long unreal ride, was, their all at once rising to receive him, with every refinement of manner known to the time, and with all the engaging graces and courtesies of life.

So strangely clouded were these refinements by the prison manners and gloom, so spectral did they become in the inappropriate squalor and misery through which they were seen, that Charles Darnay seemed to stand in a company of the dead. Ghosts all! The ghost of beauty, the ghost of stateliness, the ghost of elegance, the ghost of pride, the ghost of frivolity, the ghost of wit, the ghost of youth, the ghost of age, all waiting their dismissal from the desolate shore, all turning on him eyes that were changed by the death they had died in coming there.

It struck him motionless. The gaoler standing at his side, and the other gaolers moving about, who would have been well enough as to appearance in the ordinary exercises of their functions, looked so extravagantly coarse contrasted with sorrowing mothers and blooming daughters who were there—with the apparitions of the coquette, the young beauty, and the mature woman delicately bred—that the inversion of all experience and likelihood which the scene of shadows presented, was heightened to its utmost. Surely, ghosts all. Surely, the long unreal ride some progress of disease that had brought him to these gloomy shades!

"In the name of the assembled companions in misfortune," said a gentleman of courtly appearance and address, coming forward, "I have the honour of giving you welcome to La Force,

and of condoling with you on the calamity that has brought you among us. May it soon terminate happily! It would be an impertinence elsewhere, but it is not so here, to ask your name and condition?"

Charles Darnay roused himself, and gave the required information, in words as suitable as he could find.

"But I hope," said the gentleman, following the chief gaoler with his eyes, who moved across the room, "that you are not in secret?"

"I do not understand the meaning of the term, but I have heard them say so."

"Ah, what a pity! We so much regret it! But take courage; several members of our society have been in secret, at first, and it has lasted but a short time." Then he added, raising his voice, "I grieve to inform the society—in secret."

There was a murmur of commiseration as Charles Darnay crossed the room to a grated door where the gaoler awaited him, and many voices—among which, the soft and compassionate voices of women were conspicuous—gave him good wishes and encouragement. He turned at the grated door, to render the thanks of his heart; it closed under the gaoler's hand; and the apparitions vanished from his sight for ever.

The wicket opened on a stone staircase, leading upward. When they had ascended forty steps (the prisoner of half an hour already counted them), the gaoler opened a low black door, and they passed into a solitary cell. It struck cold and damp, but was not dark.

"Yours," said the gaoler.

"Why am I confined alone?"

"How do I know!"

"I can buy pen, ink, and paper?"

"Such are not my orders. You will be visited, and can ask then. At present, you may buy your food, and nothing more."

There were in the cell, a chair, a table, and a straw mattress. As the gaoler made a general inspection of these objects, and of the four walls, before going out, a wandering fancy wandered through the mind of the prisoner leaning against the wall opposite to him, that this gaoler was so unwholesomely bloated, both in face and person, as to look like a man who had been drowned and filled with water. When the gaoler was gone, he thought, in the same wandering way, "Now am I left, as if I were dead." Stopping then, to look down at the mattress, he turned from it with a sick feeling, and thought, "And here in these crawling creatures is the first condition of the body after death."

"Five paces by four and a half, five paces by four and a half, five paces by four and a half." The prisoner walked to and fro in his cell, counting its measurement, and the roar of the city arose like muffled drums with a wild swell of voices added to them. "He made shoes, he made shoes, he made shoes." The prisoner counted the measurement again, and paced faster, to draw his mind with him from that latter repetition. "The ghosts that vanished when

the wicket closed. There was one among them, the appearance of a lady dressed in black, who was leaning in the embrasure of a window, and she had a light shining upon her golden hair, and she looked like * * * * Let us ride on again, for God's sake, through the illuminated villages with the people all awake! * * * * He made shoes, he made shoes, he made shoes. * * * * Five paces by four and a half." With such scraps tossing and rolling upward from the depths of his mind, the prisoner walked faster and faster, obstinately counting and counting; and the roar of the city changed to this extent—that it still rolled in like muffled drums, but with the wail of voices that he knew, in the swell that rose above them.

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE.

SOME years ago a minute bit of nondescript something, looking more like a fragment of an old trunk with all the hair worn off than anything else, was sent to an eminent microscopist, to determine what it was. The microscopist placed it in the "field," and pronounced it to be a bit of human skin—the skin of a fair man—covered with the hairs which grew on the naked parts of the body. Now the fragment had been taken from under a nail on an old church door in Yorkshire, where, just one thousand years ago, the skin of a Danish robber, who had committed sacrilege and been flayed for the offence, had been nailed up, kitewise, as a warning to all evil doers. Time and weather had long ago destroyed all traces of this Danish Marsyas; but the tradition remained in full force, when some one, more anxious than the rest, scraped away a portion of the door from under one of the nails, transmitted the same to a microscopist, and printed the result as we have given it.

Another time microscopy was made to play even a more important part as evidence. In a certain late murder, where the victim had had his throat cut through both shirt and neckerchief, the prisoner attempted to explain away the presence of blood on a knife, which was assumed to have been the instrument of murder, by saying that he had cut some raw beef with it, and forgotten to wipe it afterwards. The knife, with the blood upon its blade and shaft, was sent to a microscopist, and the following was the chain of facts which he deduced from it:

1. The stain was blood.
2. It was not the blood of dead flesh, but of a living body, for it had coagulated where it was found.
3. It was not the blood of an ox, sheep, or hog.
4. It was human blood.
5. Among the blood were mixed certain vegetable fibres.
6. They were cotton fibres, agreeing with those of the murdered man's shirt and neckerchief, which had both been cut through.

7. There were present, also, numerous tessellated epithelial cells.

That is, the cells of the mucous membrane (called epithelial cells) were tessellated, or disposed like the stones of a pavement, which proved that they came from the lining of the throat. For the mucous membrane lining the throat is composed of tessellated cells; that covering the root of the tongue of columnar cells, or cells arranged in tall cones or cylinders; and that lining the viscera is ciliated, or carrying small waving hairs at the tips. Thus, the microscope revealed beyond doubt that this knife had cut the throat of a living human body, which throat had been protected by a certain cotton fabric. The evidence tallied so exactly with the actual and supposed condition of things, that it was held to be conclusive, and the murderer was hung. Without the microscope he might have escaped punishment altogether.

The human hair is a singularly beautiful thing to look at under the microscope. It is made of successive layers, or overlapping cells, gradually tapering to a point like the thinnest and most infinitely twisted paper cone. The edges are serrated with shallow saw-like teeth; it is perfectly translucent, and marked with a great many transverse lines, exceedingly irregular and sinuous. Hogs' bristles are more like human hairs than any other animals; but the sinuous lines are finer and closer, and no saw-teeth are visible at the edges. The finer hair of the horse and ass have the overlapping plates about as close as in the human hair, but they are strikingly different in the arrangement of the medulla or pith.

We must go wool-gathering (literally, not metaphorically) with Mr. Gosse and his delightful book entitled *Evenings with the Microscope*, to which we are indebted for the greater part of this paper. "Sheep's wool," he says, "is clothed with imbrications proportionally much fewer than those of human hair;" that is, the layers or rolls of our twisted paper cone are pulled farther out, which makes them wider apart, at the same time that the cone itself is much attenuated. These imbrications are of infinite importance; for on them depends the felting quality of wool, by which we are enabled to have flannel and broadcloth, soft stuff for ladies' dresses, thick duffel for old women's petticoats, window hangings, and blankets, scouring flannel, and cashmere shawls. The more imbrications to the inch in the woollen fibre, the better, closer, and stouter the material made. In the first microscopical examinations, a fibre of merino was found to have ten thousand four hundred serratures to the inch; a fibre of Saxon wool, which is finer and possessed of a superior felting power, had two thousand seven hundred and twenty; Southdown, inferior to both, gave two thousand and eighty; and Leicestershire wool, notoriously inferior to all, had only one thousand eight hundred and fifty.

The prettiest hair of all is the bat's. It is like an immense number of trumpet-shaped flowers

set one within the other—a living chain of expanded bells, most beautiful to behold. The hair of the Indian bat is even more flower-like and elegant than that of its English cousin, as the lips of the "flowers" are closer together, more pointed, and more feathery in the growth. It is to the English bat's what a double flower is to a single, or a garden flower to a wild one.

Hive bees have slender pointed hairs upon the head, each hair beset with a number of subordinate short hairs set on in spirals: on the leg, the yellow hairs which we can see with the naked eye, turn out to be strong curved horny spines, scored obliquely like a butcher's steel, and used as combs for gathering, storing, and scraping out the pollen. Besides his combs, the bee carries two baskets in his thighs, which baskets are the perfection of such implements, being smooth inside, of undeniable form, and staked up with strong spines: in short, the very ideal of such baskets we should use for carrying pollen or flower grain. But this is, by-the-by, out of our present line. Birds' feathers are essentially hairs, of a highly complex arrangement, and not much like hairs in outward appearance, but in use and analogy nothing more nor less. Each barbule of the vane is composed of a series of secondary barbules, all of which lock, or rather hook and-eye together, in the strongest form of union known. This is the reason why the vane is so difficult to separate, and why it springs back with such force when torn asunder for a moment. The whole vane is composed of these barbs and barbules, one side of which is furnished with hooks, the other with loops; and so they lock together with a strength which nothing but great violence can overcome.

From hair to scales is but a step; for scales are fishes' hairs, as feathers are birds' hairs, and all three answer the same purposes in animal economy. The scales of a fish overlap each other like the tiles of a house, so that the water always runs from them, and cannot by any possibility run up in between; just as air and water cannot run upward through a bird's plumage, but must flow off and downward. Different fish have differently shaped scales. The scales of the perch have their free sides set with fine crystalline points, arranged in successive rows, and overlapping; gold and silver fish have no crystalline points on their free edges, but lining each scale is a layer of soft pigment, a bright gleaming substance, golden or silvery, according to the colour of the fish. This pigment divides again into two substances, one of which gives colour and the other metallic lustre. The former is simply a layer of loose membranous cells, orange-coloured or white, as the case may be; the latter are flat specula or crystals, oblong prisms with angular edges. These crystals are quite transparent, and scarcely visible at all, when seen by transmitted light; by reflected light they give back a glancing shine, like steel plates. They are always quivering, flashing, vibrating, and perhaps are the cause of

that wonderful pearly play of light which is so indescribably lovely in these creatures. Many other fishes have these specula within their scales, but none are so brilliant as those of the gold and silver fish.

When the microscopist examined the blood on that murderer's knife, what did he see? An infinite number of small round bodies of a clear yellowish colour, called blood globules, or blood disks, which, when the blood is fresh and living, are seen floating in a colourless fluid, but when the blood is dead, or coagulated, are heaped together like rolls of money, and quite stationary. It is only when thus heaped together that their rich red colour can be seen, only when the light passes through a number of them, amassed in heaps, that their hue is determinable. Alone, they are simply of a light yellowish tinge, in a mass they are a deep bright scarlet. It is these disks which give its "blood-red" colour to blood; for blood is pale or high coloured according to the smaller or larger number of them which it contains. All vertebrate blood contains these disks, which in the mammalia are circular, or nearly so, and slightly concave on both surfaces, while in birds, fishes, or reptiles they are elliptical, and flat, or slightly convex on the surface. Men, monkeys, seals, whales, elephants, and kangaroos have them of about the same size; all other animals have them much smaller—the smallest being found in the ruminating animals. The little musk-deer of Java has disks not more than one-fourth as large as the human. But these are the smallest known among the mammalia, and quite out of the ordinary rule. Oxen have them about three-fourths, and sheep little more than one-half, the human average. Speaking broadly, fish and birds have them nearly equal in size, but of a more elongated ellipse in birds than in fishes; compared to the human blood disks they average the same diameter, but are rather more than half as long again in length. The largest of all are found in reptiles; especially in the naked-skinned frogs and newts. A large American species—the *Sirena lacertina*—has them the extraordinary size of 1/400th of an inch long by 1/800th broad, or about eight times the size of those of man. Our own common newts, though possessing the largest known among us, are not above half the size of the tremendous fellow's just quoted.

One of the most interesting microscopic experiments is the circulation in the foot of a living frog. It is an experiment easy to be made, owing to the extreme fineness and tenuity of the membrane which connects the toes; and is perfectly satisfactory in all its aspects—excepting perhaps to the frog himself. We will give it in Mr. Gosse's own words:

"There is an area of clear colourless tissue filling the field, marked all over with delicate angular lines, something like scales; this is the tessellated epithelium of the surface. Our attention is caught by a number of black spots, often taking fantastic forms, but generally somewhat star-like; these are pigment cells, on which the colour of the animal's

skin is dependent; but the most prominent feature is the blood. Wide rivers, with tortuous course roll across the area, with many smaller streams, meandering among them, some pursuing an independent course below the layer, and others branching out of them, or joining them at different angles. The larger rivers are of a deep orange-red hue, the smaller faintly tinged with reddish-yellow. In some of these channels the stream rolls with a majestic evenness, in others it shoots along with headlong impetuosity; and in some it is almost, or even quite, stagnant. By looking with a steady gaze we see that in all cases the stream is made up of a multitude of thin reddish disks, of exactly the same dimensions and appearance as those we saw just now in the frog's blood, only that here, being in motion, we see very distinctly, as they are rolled over each other, that they are disks and not spherules, for they forcibly remind us of counters, such as are used for play, supposing they were made out of pale red glass."

Blood disks are not always red coloured. In some invertebrate animals they are quite pale and hueless; indeed, scarcely to be called blood disks at all, save by analogy, as belonging to the fluid evidently serving to keep up the life of the creature. We are obliged to content ourselves with analogy in many other things connected with the lower organisms, and call that a heart, those lungs, this a brain, and yonder a nerve, which are as unlike their antitypes in humanity as a cuttlefish is unlike a man.

The microscope shows us some very pretty facts connected with the cuttlefish, and chiefly about his bone, or shell. In the first place, then, this bone, or shell, does not enclose the animal, as is the normal condition of shells and their fishes, but is enclosed by it, "being contained within a cavity in the substance of the fleshy mantle." Cut the mantle and the shell drops out. The cuttlefish is a rapid swimmer in the open sea; wherefore it needs a shell at once light and strong, buoyant and protective. A solid limestone shell would sink it to the bottom like a stone. Accordingly we find this bone, or shell, to be not only light, but an actual float both in shape and substance. It swims like a cork when thrown on the water. The microscope shows us why. Under a high power, a small cube cut out of the "pounce" reveals itself to us as a collection of the most wonderfully beautiful stalactites ranged in stages—inconceivably thin crystal laminae grouped in columns and edgeway plates, supported on corrugated limestone floors. It is a fairy cavern of stalactites ranged one upon the other in infinite succession, and of bewildering beauty of form and colour; and as all the interstices of this most lovely dome of crystal columns are filled with air, we have thus a combination of strength and lightness as wonderful as the result is beautiful. The microscope is never so bewitching as when it shows us the minute geometry of Nature. Her living mechanism is beautiful too, and strangely prophetic of the mechanical contrivances of man. Take the periwinkle: would you expect to find a mower, an Irish reaper, or a patent reaping-machine in

him? Yet he does for the *confervæ* exactly what the reaper does for grass and corn, and with not so very different means. The tongue of the periwinkle is like a translucent ribbon with a number of hooks projecting from its inner surface and arching downward. The arching tip of each tooth is cut into five toothlets, and with this ribbon-tongue, which he uses as an endless band, or watch-spring, our friend rasps and mows his crop of *confervæ*, using his instrument in a highly workmanlike and creditable manner, and leaving marks on his pastures just like the marks which a mower leaves from his scythe. Other mollusks do the same: we take the periwinkle as the type of his class, the differences of management between him and his compeers being too small for special record. The eyes of mollusks are as curious as their tongues, and much more beautiful. The periwinkle carries his at the end of soft zebra bands, striped black and white; while the little scallop bears a row of jewels—rubies, emeralds, sapphires, diamonds, and opals—at the base of the waving tentacles which he pushes out from between his shells. There they are, of all colours, and bright as the brightest jewels, set on to loose velvet ends that hang free from between the shells. The eyes of the scallop are amongst the most lovely things of all the lovely sea-world. Snails have bright black eyes at the tips of their “horns;” and slugs have ears—strange things, not much like the ordinary ears of man or donkey. Deeply seated in the soft flesh of the neck are a pair of transparent globules, or bladders, filled with a clear fluid, in which several minute bodies swing about in all directions, yet never hit the sides of the enclosing capsule. These are the otolithes, or ear-stones, and are the means by which the creature hears. When they burst it is with a certain disengagement of gas, whence these small microscopic otolithes have been said to be formed of carbonate of lime.

Among the pretty baskets of dried seaweed brought to us by old women and children on the shingle are some things not quite the “weeds” they look. Those exquisite crimson leaves, thinner than the thinnest and finest tissue paper, with solid ribs and sinuous edges, are weeds; so are those tall, regularly cut, dark-red feathers—that tuft of purple filaments as fine as a silkworm’s thread—that broad, irregular expanse of richest emerald green, crumpled and folded, but glossy as if varnished—these are all algæ, or seaweeds proper. But among them, though classed as plants, are some things which are animals instead; such as those pale-brown, drab, or snow-white flattened leaves, divided into broad irregular lobes, which are called broad hornwreck, or leafy sea-mat, by men of the old school, but by naturalists of the new, *Flustra foliacea*, of the class *Polyzoa*. Our leafy sea-mat is a curious thing to look at. Seen through the microscope it seems all made up of wicker cradles, with pillows and counterpanes complete, while at the end of some of the cradles sits a tiny white globule with a closed yellow door.

Mr. Gosse shall tell us what he saw in the cradles:

“Suppose, then, a coverlid of transparent skin were stretched over each cradle, from a little within the margin all round, leaving a transverse opening just in the right place, viz. over the pillow, and you would have exactly what exists here. There is a crescent-form slit in the membrane of the upper part of the cell, from which the semicircular edge or lip can recede if pushed from within. Suppose yet again, that in every cradle there lies a baby, with its little knees bent up to its chin, in that ziz-zag fashion that children, little and big, often like to lie in. But stay, here is a child moving! Softly! He slowly pushes open the semicircular slit in the coverlid, and we see him gradually protruding his head and shoulders in an erect position, straightening his knees at the same time. He is raised half out of bed, when lo! his head falls open, and becomes a bell of tentacles! The baby is the tenant-polype!”

The bird’s head coralline is another strange formation of the same class. In each principal cell is an acknowledged polype, as is fit and natural, but beside the polype proper, in other and secondary cells lies a creature like the head of a bird of prey, with a hooked beak, and two mandibles which open to an enormous distance and keep up a perpetual snapping. These birds’ heads catch the prey for the polype; hold fast by some dainty little annelid or luscious slug, and this poor wretch, dying in the merciless grasp of the hooked beak, attracts whole crowds of infusoria; which infusoria serve the polype for food. So at least is the hypothesis of to-day; another may be started to-morrow. The queer little white baskets with closed yellow doors, the globules set behind the cradles of the baby polype, answer the same purpose. Each is tenanted by a curious kind of creature that acts as hunter or jackal to its master polype; a creature with the oddest mixture of dependence and individuality possible; catching food which it does not eat, and acting as if by independent will, when it cannot move a hair’s breadth from its place.

That sentence naturally brings with it the idea of locomotion. Nothing in nature is more varied than the several means of progression. We have two feet, other animals have four; two of these become wings with the bird, all of them fins with the fish. But it is with the invertebrate animals that we find the most variety. “The poulpe ‘flops’ awkwardly but vigorously along by the alternate contractions and expansions of the web that unites its arms; the snail glides over grass and stones by means of its muscular disk; the scallop leaps about by puffs of water driven from its appressed lips; the lobster shoots several yards in a second by a blow of its tail on the water; the gossamer spider floats in a balloon of its own making; the centipede winds slowly along upon hundreds of pairs of feet; the beetle darts like an arrow upon three; the butterfly sails on painted fans which some have termed aerial gills; and the house-fly makes six hundred wing strokes every second, and, if alarmed, can go from thirty to thirty-five feet in the time.” The flight of the dragon-fly is even

swifter and stronger. One watched by Leeuwenhock was chased by a swallow in a menagerie a hundred feet long. The dragon-fly distanced the swallow and beat him at the end. A dragon-fly once flew on board ship at the least five hundred miles away from the nearest point of land, without, so far as could be seen, stopping to rest, though some rest, one would think, it must have had. From the centipede to the dragon-fly, from the wild horse to the sloth, we pass through a pretty wide range of differences.

The wings of insects are very interesting objects, both to look at unassisted, and with the microscope. The wings of the house-fly are found to be covered with minute stiff short hairs; the black network of lines that we see in them are elastic horny tubes, over which the membrane is stretched like the silk of an umbrella over its ribs. Bees have a very curious mode of strengthening their flight, in the shape of hooks and corresponding doublings on the edges of their wings, so that when they are flying, these are kept expanded by even extra aids to the elastic ribs and tightened membrane. Who would have thought of a bee hooking and eyeing himself out in that manner! All sorts of theories have held ground successively, respecting the feet of flies. First they were suckers, and they walked by means of exhaustion and atmospheric pressure; then they were grappling irons, and they hooked themselves on to microscopic inequalities by means of invisible hooks; then they were glue pots and exuded a natural gum, which gummed the insect at every step; now we believe they are assumed to be all three: claws, or spines, to hook; pads, or cushions, to preserve them from abrasion (these pads were the original suckers); hairlets as sucking disks, that exude a certain moisture,—all these hypotheses are found to be true, as always happens in cases when truth unrolls itself in sections.

The scales on the wings of insects are a world in themselves. The little bristle tail which leaves a thick dust on your finger, though touched never so lightly, leaves in that dust a mass of metallic scales of all shapes. Oval, heart-shaped, round, elliptic, long and narrow, shovel-shaped, they lie under the microscope like a collection of fairy toys, all made out of gems. The sugar-louse has oval or shovel-shaped scales, set on to a stalk and arranged like a fan; the five-plume moth of the summer meadows has them willow-leaved in shape, sometimes singly pointed, but generally notched with two, three, or four notches; the six-spot burnet moth has them lustrous but opaque; the blue butterfly, shaped like a battledore; the buff-tipped moth has large scales like a fan; the magnificent emperor has them triangular; while some have them fringed, some pear shaped, and others corrugated, but all overlapping each other, or tiled. The diamond beetle is the most splendid fellow of the lot. He has a row of precious stones in his flat transparent scales that irradiate the whole field with their gleaming glory. Those precious stones are set on to broad bands of black velvet, velvet and jewels alternating in stripes in the

most regal and enchanting manner. Few objects are so beautiful as the scales of the diamond beetle, with their royal richness and burning glory.

Then what strange projections of science we find! We have already spoken of the mower's art typified in the mollusk's tongue, now we come to the air-pipes of insects, and the best modes of strengthening them. Being marvellously thin, they are consequently very liable to injury; wherefore they are lined, just as we line our gas-pipes, with a delicate coil of springs wormed within them in close spirals. This exquisite thread is wound round and round, like the most intricate and attenuated watch-spring, and keeps the air-pipe distended, while it affords the greatest amount of strength and protection compatible with the space and design. This coil has the strange quality of not being continuous, and as if cut out of an infinite length; but is pierced as if cut out of a plate that was not long enough, and so has to be joined and added to every now and then. The joinings are quite visible under the microscope; but no theory that we know of has been yet started to explain this strange parsimonious freak of nature. All small insects have this watch-spring, or gas-pipe lining to their air-tubes; but they do not depend wholly on those air-tubes. They have breathing holes, or spiracles as well, all over their bodies—oval disks sunken into little pits—black, with a white centre. The entrance to the spiracles is variously defended. Some open with a trap-door; some are covered with a fine gauzy net; some are protected by a sieve, as in the house-fly; others by a filter, as in the daddy-longlegs; others, again, are true colanders, as in the grub of the cockchafer; but all have their spiracles, or breathing-holes, and all are defended against dust and dirt by some such contrivance as we have spoken of.

If but everything about them was as harmless as wings and breathing-holes! Unfortunately for us, our admiration has often to take a rueful turn, and, warm from our delight in jewelled scales and cunning mechanism, we turn to other organs which excite anything but pleasure. The sting of the bee, for instance, is not a very charming thing to contemplate, with the possible chance of a personal acquaintance. That sting is composed of a pair of lancets kept in a sheath until the time of action, serrated or saw-toothed the wrong way; so that when they have once plunged themselves into anything, they are not very easy to withdraw, as the teeth point backward, and keep fast but invincible hold. At the base of these lancets is the huge poison-bag, which gives the sting its venom, and does all the real mischief. The horse-fly, with the brilliant metallic colours, red, blue, and scarlet, painted in broad bands round his large eyes, has a tremendous array of lancets; gnats with their eyes like great globes of black velvet studded with gold buttons, have six lancets of various forms, one-sixth of an inch long, and furnished with a poisonous fluid to add to their power; the biting apparatus of the abominable bug is a long spit

on which he can carry any small prey, he may take a fancy to; the flea has a case of minute but terribly sharp, piercing and cutting instruments; and the leech has a cavernous mouth that acts like a huge cupping-glass, and a file of sharp teeth that see-saw their way through the distended skin. Even the gall-fly cannot lay her eggs in peace and charity with all the world, but must needs drop some poison along with them, whereby the very being and nature of the oak is changed, and the stern old woody fibre converted into pap and pabulum for a few crawling maggots. The butterfly remains innocent to man, but not so wholly guiltless to nature. His beautiful proboscis is a flat spiral ribbon of several coils, acting as a sucking-pump, and furnished with a large number of hooks, by which the edges can be united at will. This elegant coil he inserts into the nectar tubes of flowers, and sucks out all the juices with gluttonous rapacity. We venture to say that the poet who spoke of butterflies kissing the sweet lips of flowers, &c., never looked through a microscope and saw that flat coiled tongue bristling with hairs and armed with hooks, rifling and spoiling like a thing of worse fame, but of no worse life.

Antennæ, which are like fans in the cockchafer, and like fern fronds in the oak-egger moth, in the crabs are ears (the upper and inner pair), while the outer and lower are organs of smell. Crabs go through four stages before they arrive at maturity; barnacles go through two—barnacles, with their twenty-four long delicate filaments curling and uncurling like a hand, or spread abroad like a casting-net to gather up prey for that black oval with pale blue edges.

Spiders are the most murderous animals in creation. They have nets and traps, caves, fangs, hooks, and poison bags—all the paraphernalia of robbers and assassins, with a stock in trade sufficient for half a dozen Mrs. Radcliffes. When a spider attacks a hapless fly, he plunges his two horrid fangs downward into it, pouring out his poison into the wound, whereby he soon kills his miserable victim. That this poison is a powerful acid is proved by its power of turning litmus paper red for a considerable distance round the place struck. The fangs shut up like a knife-blade into its case when not used or wanted, and open and erect themselves when the creature is savage and wants to use them. His eight eyes are like globes of polished diamond, and curiously follow the necessities of his situation. When the creature lives at the end of long tubes, or underground, they are clustered forward on his forehead, for he only wants to look straight before him, but to look before him intently; when he lives in short tubes, terminated by a large web exposed to the open air, they are more separated, and give him a wider range; when he lives in the centre of an open web they are more divergent still, and set in slight prominences so as to have a freer axis; and when he is of the wandering tribe, they are scattered so that he can see every way and all

round at once. The nocturnal species have no dark pigment like the rest, but have, instead, a curtain which reflects a brilliant metallic lustre, so that their eyes shine like cats' eyes in the dark.

Spiders' webs are made of two kinds of silk; the one forming the cables and radii simple and innocuous, the other forming the concentric or spiral threads, closely studded with minute globules of fluid like small drops of dew. These globules are intensely viscid, and by them alone is retained the fly, and even the bee, the gnat, and the pretty little moth. A fat old spider, basking half asleep in the middle of his treacherous net, yet never so asleep as not to be on the alert if but the wind shake its moorings too roughly, is more like one of Bunyan's giants than anything else; he is the tyrant of the garden, the butcher, the assassin, the oppressor of the weak, the wily circumventor of the strong. He demands no quarter and he deserves none, for after he has gorged himself with the fat of his thousands, he haply falls a prey to some tyrant over him, and so the whole circle is complete, from the centre to the circumference.

WELL DRESSED.

A WOMAN fond of dress is a term of opprobrium. What does this condemnatory phrase mean—if it has any meaning? Is it that the woman neglects her mind, her manners, her husband, and her children, whilst she trims tawdry yellow, with sky blue? Or that she tries to be neat clean, and clothed in a manner becoming her position in life, her age, her figure, and her complexion? Dress has been described as affording an index to a woman's character. It does more; it actually affects her character. A woman well dressed, and conscious of being well dressed, becomes a very different person when she is put into slatternly clothes. In the first position she respects herself; in the second she feels not only discontented with herself, but with her neighbours. Goldsmith, in the Vicar of Wakefield, says: "A suit of mourning has transformed my Coquette into a Prude; and a new set of ribands has given her younger sister more than natural vivacity."

It is a question open to some debate whether manners have affected dress, or dress manners. No one can deny that the one has always reacted on the other. Stiff, elaborate dress is connected with stiff and courtly manners; the high-flown compliment, the minuet, the volta. No knight could have borne arms in defence of a Bloomer, nor could the most determined lover drink a toast out of a Balmoral boot. The hair in long ringlets, or wrapped round a classic brow, speaks of poetry, music, painting, and all that is refined. We imagine these visionary personages thus clothed, walking on some pleasant terrace, feeding a peacock whose graceful plumage harmonises with the costume of its fair owner. A woman is decidedly an imitative animal; and when you put her into the wide-

awake, the short skirt, the jacket, into the pockets of which she is very apt to thrust her hands, you will generally find her sayings curt, her laugh loud, and her talk not a little inclining to slang.

We applaud a connoisseur who buys a picture because it is a beautiful piece of colour. Why should we not have these charming combinations in women's dress? How often a little bit of scarlet velvet, well placed, gives value and tone to the dress! When the eye is cultivated, it is as irritable as a musical ear, and equally pained by discord. In many pictures, the sole charm arises from harmony of colour—a harmony which the eye drinks in with delight. The French have an innate sense of colour; we see this, in all the trifles that adorn their shops; a little box is painted with two colours which are so harmonious, that it is a delight to look at them. The English choose two colours, but as long as they are opposed to each other, they consider that sufficient; but these, being often discords, give pain.

As you look from your window in Paris, observe the first fifty women who pass; forty have noses depressed in the middle, a small quantity of dark hair, and a swarthy complexion; but then, what a toilette! Not only suitable for the season, but to the age and complexion of the wearer. How neat the feet and hands! How well the clothes are put on, and more than all, how well they suit each other. Not one colour swearing at another colour. We have been imitating the French for centuries in the matter of dress; yet, how little we have succeeded in learning from them? If we were asked what would secure success in dress, we should answer, Freshness, before all things; better a clean muslin than tumbled satin. A lady once held up a collar and said, "Is it soiled?" "Yes." "Why, you never looked at it." "No; but if there is any doubt, it is soiled."

You ought never to buy an article because you can afford it. The question is, whether it is suitable to your position, habits, and the rest of your wardrobe. There are certain clothes that require a carriage to be worn in, and are quite unfit for walking in the streets. Above all, do not buy wearing apparel because it is miscalled cheap. There is no such thing; cheap clothes are dear wear. The article is unsaleable because it is either ugly, vulgar, or entirely out of date. One reason why you see colours ill-arranged, is, that the different articles are purchased each for its own imagined virtues, and without any thought of what it is to be worn with. Women, while shopping, buy what pleases the eye on the counter, forgetting what they have got at home. That parasol is pretty, but it will kill by its colour one dress in the buyer's wardrobe, and be unsuitable for all others. An enormous sum of money is spent yearly upon women's dress; yet how seldom a dress is so arranged as to give the beholder any pleasure! To be magnificently dressed certainly costs money; but, to be dressed with taste, is not expensive. It requires good sense, knowledge,

refinement. We have seen foolish gowns, arrogant gowns. Women are too often tempted to imitate the dress of each other, without considering

The difference of climate and complexion.

The colours which go best together, are green with violet; gold colour with dark crimson or lilac; pale blue with scarlet; pink with black or white; and grey with scarlet or pink. A cold colour generally requires a warm tint to give life to it. Grey and pale blue, for instance, do not combine well, both being cold colours.

The first inquiry you must make, if you wish to be well dressed, is into your defects of figure and complexion. Your beauties you are already sufficiently well acquainted with. You are short: you should not wear flounces, nor stripes going round the figure. You are fat: don't wear a check. You have high shoulders: avoid a shawl, which is very graceful when well put on by a tall woman, but ugly when dragged across the bosom, as if to hide an untidy gown. To look well, a shawl must be large; no arrangement can make a small shawl look well.

All imitations are bad. They deceive no one, and, the first gloss having passed off, they stand revealed for what they are: not for what they pretend to be. Let the cotton be cotton, and not pretend to be silk. A velvet dress is a prudent purchase. It never looks too fine, and, with the addition of lace and flowers, is suitable for any occasion. It is, of all materials, the most becoming to the skin. Satin is not so, because more glossy than the skin itself; so diamonds, being brighter than the eyes, serve to dim rather than to brighten them.

It is impossible to speak too strongly on the subject of selecting colours that suit the complexion and hair. White and black are safe wear, but the latter is not favourable to dark or pale complexions. Pink is, to some skins, the most becoming; not, however, if there is much colour in the cheeks and lips; and if there be even a suspicion of red in either hair or complexion. Peach colour is perhaps one of the most elegant colours worn. We still think with pleasure of Madame d'Arblay's Camille in a dress of peach-coloured silk, covered with India muslin, and silver ribbons. We forgive her for having run into debt for it. Maize is very becoming, particularly to persons with dark hair and eyes. Whatever the colour or material of the entire dress, the details are all in all: the lace round the bosom and sleeves, the flowers,—in fact, all that furnishes the dress. Above all, the ornaments in the head must harmonise with the dress. If trimmed with black lace, some of the same should be worn in the hair, and the flowers that are worn in the hair should decorate the dress.

Ornaments should never be merely and evidently worn as ornaments. Jewels, flowers, and bows, should do some duty. They should either loop up a skirt, or fasten on lace, tulle, &c. There should be some reason for placing them; a bow of ribbon that has no mission, is a fault.

Flying streamers are unpardonable. Milton's description of Dalilah does not prepossess us in her favour :

Sails fill'd and streamers waving,
Court'd by all the winds, that hold them play.

Nothing looks worse than a veil flying behind your bonnet. Either draw it over your face, or leave it at home.

We have not yet mentioned the subject of dressing the hair. By attention to this, much may be done to decrease the defects of the face. If this be too long, the hair should be arranged so as to give width ; if too short, the hair should be plaited and put across the fore part of the head, or turned back, which, if the forehead be low, gives height, and an open expression.

We have not, perhaps, pressed sufficiently strongly on the necessity of the dress being suitable for the hour. No dress, however charming, is admissible in a morning but one strictly fit for that time of day. Every woman, whatever her station in life, has duties to perform in the forepart of the day ; and to see a lady ordering the dinner, or arranging the wardrobe in satin and artificial flowers, would be simply ridiculous. A velvet jacket may appear at the breakfast-table ; but the simpler and neater the costume the better. All jewellery in a morning is in bad taste. Cobbett warns a man against a woman "fond of hardware." The imitations of gems which are frequently worn, are not only in bad taste, but are absurd. Pearls, which, if real, would be a monarch's ransom, and mock diamonds, before which the Koo-i-noor looks small, are sometimes heaped upon tasteless persons in terrible profusion.

Some years ago, we English imitated our neighbours, the French, in wearing almost entirely stone-coloured, or grey dresses ; but we neglected the ribbons of either scarlet or pink, with which they enlivened those grave colours. Another of our great mistakes, is to suppose that a ball-dress, when its freshness is gone, will do for a dinner or evening dress. There are some small folk, who appear on the first of May, to whom it would be a suitable and welcome present. Gloves and shoes are most important ; a new pair of well-fitting gloves add wonderfully to any dress, morning or evening. Cobbett in his work, Advice to Young Men, says, "When you choose a wife, look to see how she is shod, if her shoes and stockings are neat : a slip-shod woman is a poor look-out."

We do not advocate spending much money upon dress ; but we ask to have it spent with thought and tact in its arrangement and colour. We all know beautiful women—wise, good, charming women—whose dress is generally totally deficient in taste, and we ask for the same improvement in mixing colours in dress that our artists, our architects, and the stage now display to us. How much of our associations with people depends upon dress ! Elizabeth's "muslin mane" seems needed for her character. Mary Queen of Scots only rises before us in her black velvet, and the cap which bears her name ; and the

vision of Laura is not complete without the dress of green velvet and violets which Petrarch did not disdain to chronicle.

WITHERED FLOWERS.

STRANGE are the memories, oh, withered flowers,
That to my heart ye bring in wordless speech ;
Brightly as sunshine falls on distant towers
And gilds their outlines—of the past ye teach.

For from my childhood and its sunny pleasures,
As with a key, ye turn the lock of years,
Ye lift the lid, and bring forgotten treasures
Before these eyes that watch the store with tears.

Have ye a mirror in your withered petals,
Wherein I read the history of my youth,
That ye give back like glass or polished metals
A thousand visions fraught with light and truth ?

Again I view my home at quiet even :
The sparrows hopping on the gabled eaves,
Windows illumined by the crimson heaven,
Varnish'd with joy and framed with quivering leaves.

I seem to hear the murmur of the river,
As it flows on beneath the arching bridge ;
To see the moonlight with its white-hued shiver,
Lying in bands upon the pebbly ridge.

And, stranger still, I have the self-same feeling
That traced the letters of my old romance :
The glow of love, o'er all around me dealing
One hue of joy—that old forgotten trance.

A moment since, and some unknown connexion
Gave me a strange reality of bliss :
I pressed another's hand in dear affection ;
I felt my forehead glow beneath a kiss.

Now—but the light is vanished from my spirit,
A cloud conceals the splendour of my sky.
How could I build on mortals who inherit
The common fate—to live—to love—to die ?

For they are dead, those loved ones. Life is fleeting,
And steals away the props on which we trust :
Leaving one only hope of future meeting,
A stamp for memory, and a heap of dust.

Leaving affections like these withered flowers,
That we may hold and turn with reverent hands ;
And thoughts that picture out the glorious bowers,
Of which these figures are but shadowed bands.

TWO TRAINS OF PLEASURE.

Most people ought, by this time, to be able to answer the following question : What is an enjoyable excursion train ; or, as the French phrase it, a train of pleasure ?

Ten minutes under a mountain ; half an hour down a coal mine ; to Huddersfield and back in a day, or to Newcastle and back in a day and night ; glimpses of cathedral cities ; hurried dinners in coast towns ; dim, fleeting views of docks, and ships, and harbours ; glances at lakes ; whirlings past monuments ; superficial panoramic lessons in the topography of your native land, to say nothing of bilious voyages across different parts of the Channell,—are these the kind of excursions which reinvigorate the

exhausted frame, and are the long, toiling lines of carriages which carry you entitled to be called trains of pleasure?

This kind of amusement (if amusement it be) has been growing more cheap, and consequently more popular every year, especially under the wild competitive battles which have arisen from the mutual jealousies of different railways. Leeds may not only be a distant, but a somewhat uninviting industrial town, until the chance of going there and back for half-a-crown invests it with charms that are wholly irresistible.

Wolverhampton will not be offended if I say that it is not a modern Athens, and yet it can always command its streams of excursion visitors, when its railways are disposed to be liberal. Your clerks or your shopmen despise the dissipation which their fathers enjoyed, and when they now hear the chimes at midnight, it is often in a railway carriage. They leave their work and their ledgers on a Saturday at noon, and when they return on the following Monday, it is, perhaps, from the borders of Devonshire.

I have travelled a good deal in excursion trains myself, and I have seen the distances of journeys gradually lengthened from tens of miles to hundreds of miles, without the periods of resting time being in any degree altered or extended. While I am perfectly ready to admit that a large amount of instruction may be derived from such wild marchings into the bowels of the country, I am not so ready to admit that there can be much recreation in becoming a volunteer courier or an amateur Queen's messenger.

I am at this moment slowly recovering from the exhausting effects of two excursion trains, and I put it to any sensible person whether they may fairly be considered trains of pleasure. Number One was an excursion deep into the central mining districts of my native land, and it involved the following labour and proceedings:

I was called by a policeman at five A.M.—no great hardship this, perhaps, as it was on a fine July morning. I had been shaved overnight, so that my toilet was not very irksome; and, about half-past five, or a quarter to six, I closed the door of my house with a hollow bang behind me, and sallied out into the silent street to mingle with yellow-faced, sleepy-eyed, worn-out constables, early breakfast-stall keepers, and hurrying workmen. The air was clear, as it always is at this hour, and at this period of the year, and I had my reward in seeing my commonplace parish church looking perfectly lovely through the transparent medium. A quiet walk of three-quarters of an hour brought me to the railway station at King's-cross, from which my train of pleasure was advertised to start at seven o'clock precisely.

Having half an hour in which to get my breakfast and select my place in the train of pleasure, I order some coffee at the refreshment counter, and proceed to regale myself. I cannot sit down, from a fidgety sense that I have no time to

spare, and I make the thick fluid and dry biscuit more repugnant and indigestible by repeated glances at a large clock on the wall before me. At last I am found seated in my train of pleasure, a quarter of an hour before it is likely to start—my carriage being one of many vehicles, and I being one of about four hundred passengers. Not many minutes after seven A.M. we steam out of the station; and, after a splendid run of four hours at express speed through the flat country, and past the red-bricked towns, and the square churches which line the Great Northern Railway, I find myself at Doncaster. My two other railway companions in the first-class coupé carriage have hardly spoken the whole way through. One has looked out of the window as if in a trance, and the other has done nothing but read a newspaper.

Finding myself in Yorkshire at an hour when I usually rise from the perusal of my morning papers, I am naturally led to ask myself what purpose has brought me there. I knew, before I started, that my journey had something to do with coal mining and the coal trade, but I am induced to search further and inquire again. I find that the directors of the Great Northern Railway had consented that, from the 1st of July, 1859, the produce of each of the various South Yorkshire collieries shall be sold with the name of the colliery, and unmixed with any other coal. The owners of the best coal regard this as such a boon that they have resolved to celebrate this separation of qualities by a train of pleasure to the "three pits," and free passes are issued to a wide circle accordingly. Behold me—who know no more of the mysteries of the coal trade than others, who like to burn good coal, when they can get it—at Doncaster, then, one hundred and fifty-seven miles, by rail, from London, as the first stage in my train of pleasure to celebrate the separation of the qualities.

Ten minutes being consumed in shunting the train and refreshing the crowd of visitors, we are again upon our railway road for the first of the three pits—the notorious Lundhill Colliery. Here it was that, on Thursday, the nineteenth of February, 1857, one hundred and ninety-two men and boys perished by the most fearful explosion that has ever distinguished mining history. Like the ruins of a battle-field, the signs of such a catastrophe are soon cleared away, but the widows and orphans remain. They remain to receive this train of pleasure with wonder, smiles, and shouts—a dense group of sunburnt women and children, whose clean caps and aprons look doubly and deceptively clean, brought out, as they are, by the background of black ashes, smoke, and coal-dust.

The visitors who are assembled to celebrate the separation of the qualities, rush up a grimy ladder on to a grimy platform, and look down the smooth brick side of the pit's mouth. At their back is the engine-house, where the engine draws up or lets down the chain which supports the cage; and at their side, to the east, is the ventilation shaft—a chimney that runs parallel to the descending shaft, and terminates

at the bottom in a furnace. This furnace is never suffered to go out from the hour when it was lighted, as long as the mine is in active working, and in need of air.

It consumes full an hour to let down the mass of visitors to the bottom of the pit. They take their places eagerly in the cage, like people who are anxious to get into a theatre, and they are sent down the hole into utter darkness at the rate of about eight miles an hour, and in parties of eight at a time.

After half an hour spent in looking about me, and especially in regarding a small colony of miners' houses near the pit, and recalling, in imagination, the sounds of wailing that must have come from their open doors and windows on that February day of mourning two years ago, I took my place in the cage in front of a pale-faced gentleman, who looked as if the signal for letting us down was the signal of death to him, and he was perfectly aware of it. Not a sound was heard, nor the whisper of a voice, as we glided down the perpendicular passage, except at one point, about fifteen yards from the mouth of the shaft. The top of the pit being on a raised platform, the chimney of the shaft is exposed above the ground for a certain length, and a window is made on each side, near the point where the chimney disappears beneath the surface of the earth, to give a little light during some portion of the descent. At each of these windows, leaning on the ledges and grinning through the grating, were a crowd of brown-faced orphans, and as the cage passed their faces, on its rapid road to the black passages where their fathers had perished, they greeted it with a combined, re-echoing yell of childish joy. Not only were all traces of the great explosion removed from the neighbourhood, but time had also removed them from these children's hearts.

When we had descended with giddy speed about two-thirds of the pit's shaft—a distance of about one hundred and fifty yards—a sudden check took place, in order to let us down the remaining seventy yards with greater care. The effect of this check was to cause an illusive sensation that the action of the machinery had been reversed, and that we were ascending even more rapidly than we had come down. Wild thoughts of utter destruction—impending danger—the intelligence of something wrong being discovered below—passed quickly through the minds of the silent, breathless human cargo; and there was not an adventurous excursionist in that cage who did not wish himself well out of it. A few seconds of painful reflection, and instead of the welcome daylight being seen once more, a sudden shock was felt—the whole structure had suddenly touched the bottom of the shaft, and the travellers were dragged out of the cage and over a box-ledge by rough and unseen hands, to stand in the bewildering darkness of the Lundhill pit.

The next step in this train of pleasure was to grope your way to the lamp-room and procure a "Davy" to light you along the passages. Here

the excursionists met in dark crowds, and celebrated the separation of the qualities by smearing themselves with oil.

To walk, bent nearly double, in a long straggling file for more than half an hour, and along about a mile of coal passages—called workings, boardgates, or levels—was the next step in this train of pleasure.

To avoid pinching your toes under the revolving rollers, for drawing ropes, under your feet, or striking your head against many projecting snags of coal above, was another step in this train of pleasure. Another step was to get hold of a talkative boy, who was full of stories about the explosion, and to follow him to a forbidden part of the pit, called the waste workings, and see the outstretched mark of a man's form impressed upon the roof. This man must have floated up after the pit was filled with water to put out the fire, and the water was charged with lime to prevent decomposition in the one hundred and ninety bodies; and he left a white seal of himself to be the talk of the miners for many years. Very few excursionists availed themselves of this step in the train of pleasure, and those who did—myself amongst the number—found themselves almost the last stragglers who arrived at the bottom of the shaft. We stepped into the cage to be drawn to the surface, and at about two-thirds of the ascent another check in our speed occurred, and we were under the impression that we were returning to the bottom, until we were undeceived by being shot out on the platform. The guard of the train of pleasure, and the train of pleasure itself, were waiting to receive us, and when it was believed that no more excursionists were left down the pit, we turned our backs upon the black mine, the miners' colony, the widows, and the orphans, and went onward to the second of the three pits—the Edmund Main.

At the Edmund Main, another similar descent of visitors took place, with similar results; and those who did not leave the Lundhill pit begrimed with coal-dust, and in the condition of master chimney-sweeps, had now no reason to pride themselves upon their superior cleanliness.

After a moderate delay, the train of pleasure was again upon its road, to deposit the excursionists at the third pit—the Oaks Colliery. Here, all the machinery was actively employed in raising coal, so that those visitors, whose rough edge of mining appetite had not been taken off by the two former pits, were reluctantly compelled to satisfy themselves with a mere survey of the surface. The owners and their representatives were very courteous and attentive, but the men, who are only paid for what they actually do, were very properly determined to push on with their work, in spite of the crowd assembled to celebrate the separation of the qualities.

Once more the train of pleasure was got under weigh, and this time for what is called the black Yorkshire town of Barnsley. As the King of Pandemonium is not so dirty as he is painted, I

was not surprised to find Barnsley excessively neat, clean, and respectable. The town itself was white enough for all practical purposes; it was the visitors only—the celebrators of that mysterious separation of the qualities—who required washing.

Never before, perhaps, had such a demand for soap and water been made at the King's Head, and never had Yorkshire chambermaids been so flustered, hurried, and worried. Luckily, the crowd of grimy excursionists oozed out into the yard, and satisfied themselves with tubs, butts, and horse-troughs. In the hotel there were nineteen gentlemen, at one time, in one bedroom.

The cause of all this hurry and sudden desire to become purified was the next step in the train of pleasure—a public dinner (to celebrate the separation of the qualities) in the Town-hall of Barnsley. To find the Town-hall it was only necessary to follow the dinner, which was being conveyed by a succession of helps—both male and female—from the hotel, before mentioned, publicly down the main street, and through the thronged market-place, on a full market-day, a distance, perhaps, of an eighth of a mile. The attendants looked rather flushed and bewildered, poor things; and the Barnsley public, with the market men and women, assembled to watch the combined procession of food and visitors. A stout young woman, who was bearing a pair of steaming roasted ducks along the road, was stopped by a greasy girl, whose cap had been put on in a hurry back part before, and who carried a vegetable dish. What the girl said, in the choicest Yorkshire dialect, must remain a mystery, but the stout young woman very properly replied, in the same dialect, that she could not be worried on such an occasion. Who would care to be worried when carrying a pair of roasted ducks along a crowded high street, about four o'clock in the afternoon of a summer's day?

Through the market-place, up some steps, through a large lower hall, strewn with vegetables and baskets, like Covent-Garden Market, past a beadle, and up a stone staircase, and the excursionists found themselves in the Town-hall of Barnsley.

The dinner was substantial and profuse, and apart from the fact that the bulk of the diners were from London, and the dinner was in Yorkshire, the travellers by the train of pleasure had no cause to complain, nor the county to feel ashamed. Stray coachmen served you, and ostlers placed dishes before you, as if they were handling feeds of corn, but that was of little consequence.

About five o'clock, however, when the separation of the qualities was proposed from the chair as a formal toast, and when the visitors found themselves nearly two hundred miles from home, drifting into the usual routine of a public dinner, with the prospect before them of having to return from Yorkshire to London the same night, besides doing other things that were on the programme of the train of pleasure, by the

way, the slight absurdity of their position began to be faintly apparent.

The toasts, for all this, were received with all due honours; the convivial excursionists were got back to their railway carriages about half-past six P.M.; and about seven o'clock the whole train of pleasure arrived once more at Doncaster. Here the new church, a triumph of revived Gothic architecture, was to be seen, and the excursionists were accordingly allowed half an hour to see it. Some lingered at the station; others found their way to the borders of the churchyard; while others got into the building, and shocked the pew-opener by rudely mounting the pulpits. Finally, the whole of the stray sheep were penned up once more in their railway carriages, the lamps were lighted, the train of pleasure was again upon its way, and—after investigating three coal-pits, going through a public dinner, winding up with a very small allowance of church to a very large allowance of coal and sack, and travelling nearly four hundred miles to do all this—the celebrators of the mysterious separation of the qualities found themselves at King's-cross some time about midnight.

This is an example of a well-meaning, hospitable train of pleasure treat, that was given to a number of visitors in accordance with the spirit of the age. Train of pleasure Number Two is another example of what is sold as recreation, at a time when railways are looking after the pocket-money of great people and small people.

To Paris and back for twenty-seven shillings by the short sea-passage route of Folkestone and Boulogne, allowing three clean days in the French capital at the time of the great Italian army and August fêtes, would seem to promise well, and did promise well—upon paper.

The first step in this train of pleasure was to procure a passport; a performance in which a lawyer or doctor is required to assist, by giving a letter of recommendation, in which the Foreign Secretary, for the time being, is moved to be ungrammatical and sign himself "we," in consideration of two shillings; and in which the French Consul, in consideration of four shillings and threepence more, is induced to endorse this ungrammatical ticket-of-leave for French travel. The passport being all right (as it very properly ought to have been, after the best part of two days had been expended in obtaining it), the next step was to get shaved overnight (an indispensable ceremony, if you wish to qualify for any train of pleasure), and to be called on the morning of Saturday, the 13th of August, at about six o'clock. I dress myself in a style that I believe peculiarly adapted to the country to which I am going; I take a close, stuffy, four-wheeled night cab, and render myself at the South-Eastern Railway terminus about a quarter-past seven A.M.

After a breakfast of the same tap of coffee that I tasted at the Great Northern Railway, with certain solid additions, supposed to be the proper fortification for a sea-voyage, I take my place at a quarter to eight A.M. amongst many hun-

dreds of my fellow-creatures in the train of pleasure, and in three hours, or even less, I am walking towards the boat at Folkestone. Nature, on this occasion, being disposed to be kind, the closely packed mass of human beings is taken across a glassy sea without an individual instance of sickness, and deposited in the tender, outstretched arms of the expectant French custom-house officials at Boulogne. After the usual ungenerous suspicions with regard to my small portmanteau, and the usual triumph of injured innocence on the part of that very ill-used and necessary article of travel, I am thrown, a houseless wanderer, on the hot sandy streets of Boulogne, to be stung to death by touters from one o'clock at noon until eight o'clock in the evening. After several dinners, various drinks, a game at billiards, a fruit feast in the market-place, a walk upon the sands, and a bath in the sea—all nothing but various devices to pass the time, and all enjoyed uneasily, with a sense of lingering on the road—the train of pleasure is ready at last to receive us, and I take my place with the knowledge that I am about to travel all night upon the most sluggish railway in Europe—the Great Northern of France. To expect anything more than your legal place, to hope to stretch your legs, much less your body, are all idle dreams on such a journey as this. Tomorrow (Sunday) is the greatest fête day that France has seen for nearly half a century, and a million of visitors are expected to swell the already crowded population. I begin to fancy that the present train of pleasure is another great mistake.

Night travellers are but sorry, hideous phantoms at the best of times, and what can I expect now? Wild peasants from French Flanders, both male and female, who speak a hoarse, guttural dialect of the Parisian language, as charming as Bolton English; a pale-faced Boulevard tailor's shopman, in a very tight-fitting dress suit, who reclines in one corner of the carriage, not far from the flickering lamp, and who looks exceedingly ghastly with his head bound up in a white pocket-handkerchief; a couple of female peasants with huge caps and enormous baskets, who look like English prize-fighters dressed up for chimney-sweepers' May Queens; a stout compatriot, who snores most vigorously when asleep, and who presents an absurd resemblance to one of Messrs. Barclay's draymen; another stout compatriot, a true native of Bethnal-green, who thinks and speaks most tenderly of the beer he has left behind him; some fish-women from Dunkirk, and some factory operatives from the neighbourhood of Amiens (the French northern Manchester), complete a choked carriageful of excursionists. What nodding varied shapes they assume, as the train of pleasure crawls along, as the moon looks in at the window, as the lamp gutters down, as the white autumn steamy mist covers the fields and trees like a deluge of water! What maniacs they look, without keepers, as they roll from their cells of carriages at a great refreshment station, rush along the platform, forget the number of

their compartment, and shout out to missing friends as they clasp a long loaf of bread or a bottle of wine, and are hustled by the liveried half-police railway officials.

Paris at last, about half-past five on the Sunday morning, with half its population already astir, and its streets festooned with innumerable tricolor flags. I obtain a one-horse fly with some difficulty (for is it not the great fête morning?), and drive to my hotel. My hotel, indeed! Anybody's hotel; everybody's hotel. They have been full to overflowing for several days, so has next door, and next door but six; so has another place of rest where I have been in the habit of stopping; so have several hotels that have been strongly recommended to me; so has the place where my father stopped before me. This is the great fête day, and I have come by a train of pleasure. I give up the fruitless search at last, and another hour finds me, a very dusty, tired, fishy-eyed traveller, in a very dirty, obscure, and (very likely) disreputable private lodgings.

I go out to be shaved; and the barber finishes me off rapidly and dangerously, for he is anxious to be off to the fête. I apply at a street corner to have my boots cleaned, and the shoe-cleaner is drunk. He shouts out, "Vive la France!" with a flourish of his brush, and falls helpless over his foot-box.

I wander about the crowded streets, and soon become aware that every cab, fly, and vehicle in the city is engaged for ever. I penetrate with difficulty on to the Italian Boulevard, and might have obtained a very good view of the military procession if I had paid seventy francs for a share of a window. I did not pay the seventy francs, and was consequently left to buffet with the mob. A standing on a coach wheel, a school form, or an upturned basket was offered me, in the same style as at the Derby; but while I found the prices too high, I found the temporary platforms too low, and I declined the many eligible positions that were forced upon me. I saw the sunburnt, slouching, stooping troopers pass by, at different times, from different points of view, to the melancholy sound of the military drums; and when I had feasted enough upon this spectacle, I sought for a dinner. Here, again, I was doomed to a bitter disappointment. My favourite restaurant could refresh me no more; it was crowded to the garrets; so were all restaurants; and I dined with difficulty.

Monday and Tuesday (the other two of the "three clear days") were passed in much the same manner: no vehicles were to be had, the theatres were free and crowded, and it was only towards the evening of the third day, near the hour at which my ticket ordered me to start on my return, that Paris began to assume its natural, comfortable, and proper aspect. At nine P.M. on the Tuesday evening, much worn in body, I again rendered myself at the railway station. There may have been a thousand people waiting for the train of pleasure, but they looked like twenty thousand. A body of soldiers, with

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drawn bayonets, was there to keep order, as well as a number of the usual admiral-looking armed Paris police. I endured the crowd for an hour, and should have been much more happy and comfortable if the peasants who surrounded me had brought their trifling change of clothing in portmanteaus or carpet-bags, instead of in small egg-chests, and rude boxes with sharp corners, not unfrequently studded with nails. A slow filter through a gate and across a yard, then through another gate and across a luggage room, then through a door, and we found ourselves jammed in the chief hall of the railway. Half an hour of this crowd and atmosphere was borne with different degrees of individual impatience, until a liveried official calmly announced that the whole affair was a mistake, and that our train of pleasure was waiting for us at the end of a calm, cool, narrow, and undiscovered passage.

A fight for seats; a carriage with the same mixture of travellers as before; a ten hours' night run, at about eighteen miles an hour to Boulogne, with the garlic-scented head of a Picardy peasant resting asleep upon my shoulder (a journey that seemed to last for years); a pause of five hours in Boulogne; a calm passage of two hours across the Channel in a drizzling rain; a delay of an hour at Folkestone; and an arrival, after a fair run of four hours, at London-bridge station about ten o'clock on Wednesday night; and my second train of pleasure was brought to an end. What advantage I obtained by going to Paris at such a fête time, and passing two nights in a French railway carriage, I have not yet been able to learn, unless I went to patronise these wild, exhausting trains of pleasure, that form the chief travelling amusements of the present day. I am not a Tory obstructive; nor do I hold any heretical opinions with regard to steam; but when I see the crowded list of long and rapid excursions that are daily advertised upon the city walls, I look back, perhaps with regret, to the time when Hornsey Wood House was considered a day's trip, and when Epping Forest formed the eastern boundary of my wildest attempts to travel.

WONDERS WILL NEVER CEASE.

WHEN we are all wise, Marvels of Science may, perhaps, content the common thirst for wonderment as well as it has heretofore been satisfied by curiosities of Superstition. Certain it is, that the imagination claims its daily food, and demands wonderful facts, false or true—but in either case strange matter that is credited—as one part of its diet. Wonders will never cease out of the world. The greatest of philosophers and the most ignorant of village crones wonder alike, as they eat alike, only they do not feed from the same dishes.

The superstitions of the country side, still vigorous in many a farm and village throughout every British county, are the relics of a body of

science that once rested on the names of Plato and of Pliny, and was cherished by philosophers in Europe till about three hundred years ago. Much that appears most ridiculous in folk-lore may be traced back to its origin among all that was most learned in a bygone day. To study superstition seriously is worth while, and in aid of those who would do so, a contemporary journal that, "when found, makes note of" all the waifs and strays of knowledge scattered up and down the land, for the assistance and amusement of the learned, has for some years past been a gatherer of old wives' tales. A volume of Choice Notes from Notes and Queries, taking folk-lore for its subject, now contains the pith of many thousand entries. From these notes we gather and arrange an illustration or two of this feature in our social history.

Superstition deals with a man's life before his birth, and does not part from him at death. To determine the sex of an unborn child, get help, if you want it, to eat up a shoulder of mutton at a supper, hold the bladebone before the fire till it is so far charred that your two thumbs may be thrust in two places through the thinnest part. Put a string through the two holes so made, and tie it in a knot, then hang the bladebone by the string upon a nail outside the house door and go to bed. The sex of the first person ignorant of the charm who enters in the morning will be the sex of the child in question. This was tried once in a house where the first comers were always women; but, on the critical morning, it was a remarkable fact that a man first entered, and, six weeks later, it was truly a man child that was born.

To be born with a caul is lucky. A child born on Christmas-day or in chime hours will be able to see spirits.

Born on a Sunday, a gentleman;
 Born on a Monday, fair in face;
 Born on a Tuesday, full of grace;
 Born on a Wednesday, sour and grum;
 Born on a Thursday, welcome home;
 Born on a Friday, free in giving;
 Born on a Saturday, work hard for your living.

A May baby's always sickly. You may try, but you'll never rear it. Rock the cradle when the baby is not in it, and the child will die. Children with much down upon their arms or hands are born to be rich. A child that does not cry at baptism is too good to live. If several children are baptised together, and the girls are taken to the font before the boys, the boys will have no beards when they are men. Persons called Agnes always go mad. If a child's finger nails are cut before it is a year old, it will live to be a thief. If they want trimming within that age, they are to be trimmed by biting. If you wish well to your friend's child, you must give it, when it first comes to your house, a cake, a little salt, and an egg. When a child has the thrush, say the Eighth Psalm over it three times daily for three days. Or you may catch a duck and hold its bill wide open in the child's mouth. The

cold breath of the duck will cause the disease slowly and surely to depart. Whooping-cough never will be taken by a child that has ridden upon a bear. When bear-baiting was in fashion, this belief yielded a part of his income to the bear owner. Roast mouse cures the measles. A consumptive infant should be carried through a flock of sheep as it is let out of the fold early in the morning. The weaning of a child should begin on Good Friday.

Between birth and death we may indulge in thousands of these fancies which are still credited by some people in England. If I eat an egg I must finish by making a hole in the shell, or the witches will sail out in it to wreck the ships. And, considering the price of eggs, I may refrain from burning egg-shells, because if I do so the hens cease to lay. If I have the cramp of nights, I may cross my shoes and stockings when I take them off, or put my slippers under the bed with the soles upwards. If I have a sty in the eye I may pull a hair out of the tail of a black cat and rub the tip nine times over the pustule. I may know that I am going to receive money if I find a spider on my clothes, and am not bound to accept Fuller's moral to the saying. "The moral is this: such who imitate the industry of that contemptible creature may, by God's blessing, weave themselves into wealth and procure a plentiful estate." If I meet a white horse I may know that I must spit at it. I may rejoice in having teeth set far apart, because that makes me lucky and a traveller. If my keys, or penknife, or any steel thing that I have, will rust, in spite of any care, I may be sure that somebody is laying money by for me. I may know how lucky it is to find old iron and hoard up old pot-lids and horse-shoes discovered in the public road; by the fortune this thrifty habit accumulates. Seven years' trouble but no want, is the sentence I may hear mystically pronounced upon me if I break a looking-glass. If my left palm itches, money goes out; if the right, money comes in.

Rub it 'gainst wood,
'Tis sure to come good.

If my knee itches, I shall kneel in a strange church; if the sole of my foot, I shall walk over strange ground; if the elbow, I shall sleep with a strange bedfellow. If my ear tingles, I am to hear sudden news. If I shiver, or feel cold in the back, somebody treads over my future grave. If my cheek burn, somebody talks scandal of me. If I hear a singing in my right ear, somebody praises me; if in the left ear, somebody abuses me, and I may punish him by biting sharply into my own little finger: in so doing I bite his evil tongue. If I have my clothes mended on my back, I am to be ill spoken of. At church I may take good heed of the preacher's text, knowing that all texts heard in church will have to be repeated on the Judgment-day. If the clock strikes while the text is being given, death may be expected in the parish. Of course I may know that it is unlucky to kill a cricket, because crickets bring

luck to a house, but eat holes in the worsted stockings of those who destroy them. I may know, too, that if I kill a beetle it is sure to rain; that I must not let a feather-bed be turned on Sunday if I wish to keep my luck; that sneezing on Monday hastens anger, but that if I sneeze on Sunday morning fasting, I shall enjoy my own true love to everlasting. To dream about that lady, I must stick nine pins into the blade-bone of a rabbit and put them under my pillow. So there arise now marvels concerning courtship:

If an unmarried person happens to be placed at dinner between man and wife, that promises marriage within the year. When you first see the moon in the new year, take off one stocking and run to a stile, there you will find, tucked under your great toe, a hair of the same colour as your lover's. The first egg laid by a pullet is the luckiest thing a man can present to his sweetheart. Men must never go courting on Friday. In some Lancashire villages they pursue home with poker and tongs and tin kettle music whoever breaks this rule. If the fire burns brightly when it is poked, the absent lover is in good spirits. Persons about to marry, when they meet a male acquaintance, are desired to rub their elbows. When a newly married couple first come home, bring in a hen and make it cackle. A maiden who desires to know which of her lovers really care for her, names each as she throws an apple pip into the fire; if the pip cracks, the love is hearty. A girl shelling peas, when she finds a peaseod with nine peas in it, must lay it on the threshold of the kitchen door: the first bachelor who crosses it will love her. Two people on the point of being married, should first loosen all the knots and ties about their clothes, and afterwards proceed to fasten them again privately. Be sure when you get married that you don't go in at one door and out at the other. Whichever sleeps first on the marriage night will be the first to die. So there arise now marvels concerning death:

A wild bee, that is a bumble-bee, entering a room, gives warning of death. So does the crowing of a hen, so does the squeaking of a mouse behind the bed of a sick person. If the door of a hearse be closed before the mourners are all in the coaches, there will be another death in the family. If a cow breaks into your garden there will be death in your house within six months. The gentleman who sends note of this superstition adds the singular fact that it was made known to him by the breaking of three cows into his own garden, when an old house servant grieved that there would be three deaths in the family within six months—and there were. The third was that of a son-in-law, into whose garden, also, a cow broke some weeks before he died. Nobody can die on a bed in which there are any pigeon or game feathers. This is a wide-spread belief, easily confirmed to the ignorant by proofs like the following, which were adduced by a Sussex labourer against a sceptic: "Look at poor Muster S—, how hard he were a dying; poor

soul, he could not die any way, till neighbour Puttick found out how it wer. "Master S—, says he, i ye be lying on geame feathers, mon, surely;" and so he wer. So we took'n out o' bed and laid'n on the floore; and he pretty soon died then?" "The last thing a man longs to eat seems to be pigeon. A very respectable farmer's wife being applied to for some pigeons which a sick man fancied he could eat, said, "Ah! poor fellow, is he so far gone? A pigeon is generally almost the last thing they want. I have supplied many a one for the like purpose." If a pigeon is seen sitting on a tree, or enters a house, or from being wild grows tame, that is a sign of death. If any bird flies into a room and out again by an open window, that is a sign of death among the inmates of the house. The soul may be seen going out as a steam or a blue vapour about five minutes after death. Then every lock in the house, of boxes as well as of doors, should be unfastened. It used to be thought that the first pains of purgatory were inflicted by the squeezing of the soul between the hinges, and that leaving doors and lids unlocked and open caused to the departing a free, painless escape. The lingering look of a mother's love upon a dying child, prevents the fleeing of its soul, and the child struggles in vain to die, till the compassionate eyes of the mother are averted.

That is an eye of holiness; but there is also the evil eye, which causes death. An old woman had a rosary of lucky stones—that is to say, of stones with holes in them—hung up in her cottage. She owned unwillingly to a friendly lady that it was meant for protection against the evil eye. "Why, Nanny," said the lady, "you surely don't believe in witches now-a-days?" "No! I don't say that I do; but certainly in former times there *was* wizzards and buzzards, and them sort o' things." "Well," answered the lady, laughing, "but you surely don't think there are any now?" "No! I don't say that ther' are; but I do believe in a yevil eye." As to the old lady's buzzards, there is a story in Yorkshire of an ignorant person being asked if he ever said his prayers, who repeated them as follows:

"From witches and wizzards and long-tail'd buzzards,
And creeping things that run in hedge-bottoms,
Good Lord deliver us."

Then again there are to be remembered, as part of the popular faith of the ignorant, the legends still attached to rocks, and streams, and churches. Breedon church, in Lincolnshire, stands alone on the top of a high hill with the village at its foot. They began building it within the village till they changed the site, because every night the stones laid during the day were carried up to the hill top by doves. The site and name of Winwick church was decided by a pig who every night came crying wee-wick! wee-wick! and carried the stones in his mouth from the wrong place selected, to the ground hallowed by St. Oswald's death. The devil built the bridge at Kirkby Lonsdale, and the picturesque stones in

the stream below are those which he was carrying in his apron when its string broke. At Peel, in the Isle of Man, a witch with a basin of water said once that the herring fleet would not return. Every ship was lost, and she was rolled down hill in a barrel set with spikes. The grass has never grown since, on the barrel's track, and to this day you may "see the mark all down." The Welsh peasant hears spirit-hounds, the Cron Anawn, when the storm sounds over the mountains. Sometimes swelling like the bay of a bloodhound, the nearer they are to a man the less their voice, and the further the louder. The shriek of the Cyocraeth is often heard. She is the hag of the mist, who sits in the mountain fog, with torn dishevelled hair, lank arms and claws, long black teeth in her corpse-like face, and leathery bat's wings. Her name means cold grief, and her wail freezes the blood of those who hear it. Sometimes she flaps her wings against the window pane, and moans the name of one within who has been marked for death. It is this hag who cuts the torrent beds by dropping, when she is about to settle on a mountain, the huge stones she carries in her cloak as ballast when she flies. In some parts of South Wales, this hag has no sway, but it is Brenhin Llwyd, the grey king, who sits ever silent in the mist. There is a Welsh fairy, the Pwcca, that is seen constantly upon the moor in the form of a handful of loose dried grass rolling before the wind. Even upon a wisp of dead grass will the fancy be set rolling. Miss Costello tells a Pyrenean legend which detects the spirit of the Lord of Orthez in two straws moving on the floor.

The fancy must and will work. The whole world is full of wonders that reveal the divine glory and goodness. Life is full of strange problems, of entanglements of love and enmity, of days of mirth and weeping, that engross attention from all powers of the mind and soul. While we are ignorant, we link religion to such fanciful opinions as those of which a handful has been shaken out on this leaf of paper. Teach folks a little abetter; det their fancy, thriving upon diet wholesome and abundant, be the steady helper to them, that it may add its quickening influence to their pleasure and their work here, and become their hope for the hereafter. Superstition will soon vanish. All that is poetry in folk-dore may abide while there is literature in our country. As superstition, it degrades: as poetry, it raises us. For,

Shakspeare's self, with ev'ry garland crown'd,
Flew to those fairy climes his fancy sheen,
In musing hour; his wayward sisters found,
And with their terrors dress'd the magic scene.
From them he sung, when, 'mid his bold design,
Before the Scot, afflicted and aghast,
The shadowy kings of Banquo's fated line
Through the dark cave in gleamy pageant pass'd.

But it is not worth while to drag a dying man out of his bed because we fancy he is lying upon game feathers, or to go into a church at mid-

Freemason's apron over my knees, and was getting all ataut. The day was burning and golden, the sky blue and spotless, except where white clouds billowed and toppled about like poised avalanches. The bell rang, the guard waved his red flag, we were off with a hiss and trample, and a pulsation as of some giant's heart.

I settle myself down in the spare box of a carriage, I establish a treaty and alliance of legs with the Buckinghamshire man, who I find has been a militiaman, which is a tie between us. Lady's-maid, sallow and waxy with sitting up late at night, cheerless, for ladies coming home from gay parties, subsides into a stupor of rest, in the corner. The drummer—such a drummer!—a little pink-faced boy, say about fourteen, frank, at his ease, with his great buff belt, with brass scutcheoned buckle, lying before him on a vacant seat, with his knapsack, only numbered with name, No. of company, and detachment. How firm and disciplined, and almost gentlemanlike, he looks with his black trousers slived with red cord, and his little scarlet frock, fringed white at the shoulders, and striped and epauletted with white lace, studded with blue fleur-de-lis reminiscences of Cressy and Agincourt, and our old French claim.

The Buckinghamshire man, in an energetic and robust way, announced himself to me as having been for thirty-five years watchman of Olney parish, sheep-shearer, brewer, and guide to Cowper's cottage, where the poet kept his tame hares and wrote the hymns, and other curiosities. He was a cheery, ruddy, large-made man, with eyes of washed-out blue, large, round, and staring; in his gestures, demonstrative, stamping, and redundantly energetic.

But I must go back to the starting. Ching, clang! ching, clang! ching, clang! went the Euston-square bell. Whew! whew! whew! went the guard's whistle. Another drummer-boy, with two medals at the breast of his scarlet coat, who had come to see his younger comrade off, thrust his hand in at the window to give him a last shake.

"Good-by, Tom," said the rough, kind strippling, "and take care when you get to the station to go straight home, and don't let any blackguard get your money out of you; get to your father and mother, then you are all right. Think of the regiment. Mind and write to the drum-major."

A demon-thirsting scream gave the signal.

"Good-by, Tom," said the lad.

"Good-by, Jack," said the boy.

The little fellow would have liked to cry, but he was a soldier, and a soldier's son, and he didn't like, so he gave a rather rueful look at the blank, square window—no kind, sturdy face there now—and to hide his faint heart set to work buckling up and arranging his great, square, black knapsack, on which his name, "Thomas Wilson, Scots Fusiliers, 27, 3rd Company," was inscribed in great white letters. Then he shifted his linen bag, or haversack, which was slung at his side by a linen belt passing over his shoulder; then he adjusted his smart foraging-

cap, with the strap on his lip, and loosened, just to feel he was out of Trafalgar-square barracks, his white buckskin belt with the brass badge of a buckle. He was not going to compromise the character of the army among civilians.

We passed out of the great shadows of the station tunnel that fell on the white page of the book I was reading like the broad shadow of some evil angel's hand. Champ, champ! rattle, rattle! like the roar of a million of Attila's cavalry chafing at our heels—a battling, angry din that deafens and excites—we break out into the free light.

Now, no noise but the gentle puff of the engine far away, and the white cloud at the window, as of the great Manitou of the *vain a nomen*, breathing, sleeping on this pleasant autumn day, high in heaven as his spirit life. Now, no brooding, noisy darkness, but a broad column of light like that of a sudden resurrection, or as the sunshine comes to us out of the grave of an eclipse. We settled ourselves to our places for the next forty miles' rush and roll, and the great white clouds of steam floated round us as if we were being borne on the Hindoo image-car of Paradise to the gardens of India.

We began to settle; the lady's-maid took out a limp, ill-used novel; the drummer began, with true boy's hunger, to pinch suspiciously certain projections in his haversack that seemed edible; the Buckinghamshire man's eyes fixed intently on him with mingled admiration, sympathy, wonder, and sagacity. He was eminently sociable, and began the conversation at once by aiming a playful blow at the drummer's chest, and asking a question so abruptly, and in such a deep chest voice, that it sounded like a blow too:

"Isn't a volunteer better than two pressed men, youngster?" said the Bucksman, as if contradicted and put out.

Tom laughed, and said he rather thought so. "This is a queer card," thought he, and looked so.

"I say," said Bucks (let us call him Bucks for shortness), with a sorrowful shake of his rusty hat and grizzled hair, at the same time wetting his lips to show that he was going to begin, "those were nice ones at that public-house with your comrade there and the other soldiers. Oh! they were bad ones, bad lot."

"Yes, they were," said Tom, in a neat, disciplined voice, recognising Bucks as having been together at the "ale-us" before starting.

"Very bad lot; I should be sorry to see sons of mine like those gentlemen with the pack of cards. Did you see one of them pull the sergeant's sword and make a slash in fun at him. Oh! they were bad ones. I was sorry to see it. Bad ones, bad ones."

Bucks relapsed into silence after this simple homily on virtue, and proceeded with his staring blue eyes to take a careful inventory of the drummer's fantastic dress from top to toe: his scarlet coat, a little purple and faded in places, its long stripes of dull white lace worked with blue fleur-de-lis (strange tradition of the old

Agin-court quarrel), his stiff collar, with its ruff of blue and white lace, his neat belt and shining brass, and his soldierly trousers of black, corded down the seams with red. Bucks never seemed to have enough of it.

"This is the stuff to make a soldier," said he, suddenly, with intense enthusiasm, such as men who remember the old French wars and volunteering days can only feel now it is the fashion to be philosophic and cosmopolitan. "Wert in the Crimea, lad, eh? Did'st box the Rooshians, lad?"

"No," said Tom, stoutly and honestly, "but that comrade of mine, who you saw shake hands with me, was, and was wounded, too. The band, you know, carry off the wounded."

"Look at this lad now!" said Bucks, addressing every one, and proudly, as if he were his father, with stentorian voice, hitting his corduroy thigh violently with his clenched fist; "I saw, last week as even was, a regiment pass through Tring with a drummer-boy no bigger than him, and they stopped at the public house the Malt Shovel, in Tring, where I was hewing. Lor' bless you! what a stir the farmers made with t' lad. I do believe if he could have eaten gold they'd have given it the little lad." (All this our honest friend spoke as if he was chewing every word, forte e molto staccato.) "Bread and cheese, good Lord! I should think so; good strong ale (six bushels to the barrel), and rattling good double Gloucester till he could not eat any more. I thought they'd have made him dead drunk, but the brave boy (he was the bugler) pushed back the glass at last, and said, as stout as a lion,

"Thankee, gentlemen, all the same, but I'll take no more, or I shall not be able to do my duty to-morrow—thank you all the same." And HE DID NOT, for all the pressing. Ah! 'twas a brave bugler lad, that was."

The drummer was intensely interested, and unconsciously, as Bucks spoke, kept unbuckling his knapsack by a nervous restlessness of fingers.

"Well, next day," went on Bucks, "I saw this bugler go up to the sergeant, who had stopped his week's money to prevent his spending it. It was all in kindness of the sergeant, but still he had no business to do it."

"No sergeant had no business," said Tom, determinedly; "a sergeant can't interfere with the boy's pay unless he has behaved bad."

"Well," continued Bucks, encouraged, "the bugler boy went up to him, BRAVE AS A LION" (roars so that the lady's-maid drops the limp novel, thinking there is a collision, and henceforward listens like a wise woman), "Why have you stopped my pay, sergeant?" said he.

"The sergeant said, 'Never you mind, boy.'

"But he said, 'I will mind. I'll have my fair money.'

"Then the sergeant said, 'I'll report you.'

"But the drummer went on saying, 'If you don't give me the money, I'll report you, sergeant.'

"Then the sergeant, in his burning rage and furious spite, called out to another boy to sound the bugle, and he did it—sounded a sound, but rather weak and poor like, and the men who were by, laughed, and tapped their muskets on the floor. Then the boy stood up again as bold as a hero, and said, 'Is that the way you sound a sound? Give it me!' And he took the bugle, and blew such a sound, so clear and true, it was good indeed to hear. He said, 'This is the way, sergeant, to blow the bugle-call!'" Imagine this story told in a jovial, unflinching crescendo of voice, ending with a complete burst that stunned us.

We all laughed, which encouraged Bucks, and made him ten times noisier and redder. His face now was a burning coal—he may have been drinking. He now amused himself by going over all the boy's accoutrements. "This," says he, "is where you put your clean shirts in for home, your pipeclay, and your brushes; this is for your prog;" and so on, touching each article like a showman as he went.

"Did you ever put your head in a beehive?" said Bucks, turning sharp round on me.

"No," said I, smiling, and watching his light blue Saxon eyes and inflammatory face.

"Well, then, that's just the feeling I have in my ears after being a bit in London—danged, dirty, noisy place! How glad I shall be to get back to Olney! I've worn this," said he, touching the boy's red uniform, "though you wouldn't think it."

"You have?" said I, with an expectant surprise, which was as good as saying, "Let us hear, then, all about it."

Bucks began by clenching both his red fists, and placing them firmly on his two knees; then, putting his head on one side, he opened fire thus:

"I was in the Bucks Militia myself when I wor eighteen—yes, I wor eighteen as never comes agin, when one doesn't care for the king on his throne, not us! (Violently, though no one interrupted him, but his nature was combative.) "I remember when the old Dook of Buckingham, father of the present dook (he's not worth a bad farthing now), reviewed eight hundred of us in the great park at Stowe. He was a big man, he was, a rattling good waggon-load of stuff, he was." (Laugh.) "Seventeen stone, if he weighed a hounce, gentlemen. He used to come in his open yellow barouche every parade day, and have his two greys (he always drove greys), drawn up with their two noses exactly opposite the two big drums" (digs his two hands into two typical places on his two thighs), "so as to accustom 'em to the noise, so as they shouldn't never sly. Yes, I remember as well as if it was yesterday the speech he made to us the last review day—ah, as well as if it was yesterday! I was only eighteen then." (Tone of manly regret not incommendable). "This is what he said, said the dook: 'Officers and men of the regiment of the Royal Bucks Militia, I thank you heartily for the admirable manner you

have conducted yourselves under arms? (so we had—we had all presented arms when the dook came on the ground), and I invite you all to dinner this afternoon in a tent in my park; and all those who have fathers, mothers, sisters, or sweethearts, let them bring them with them. Officers and men of the Royal Bucks Militia, I wish you farewell and good appetite!"

"Bravo!" said I.

"Ah, bravo, indeed!" said Bucks. "That was acting like a king—and ay, he was a king!—and we all went. Every man, jack of us had as much roast-beef and plum-pudding as he could eat; good streaky beef, too, and jolly good pudding, plenty of plums, and a quart of strong ale—Burton—that would stand by itself; and every one had a pound and a half of it to his own cheek, besides a large three-corner cocked-hat slice to take home for one's friend or sweetheart. I took mine home to a sick brother."

"Good," said I; "that showed the heart in the right place, that did." Drummer's eyes kindled at the memory of pudding—pudding being a sort of divinity with boys. Then, ashamed of being caught worshipping pudding, he looked at his red-corded trousers, and arranged his belt.

Bucks continued stormier than ever. "Well, and every man of us militia had a sort of flower-pot thing to put his grub in, and a cup—a new tin cup—to each one for his malt liquor."

"Much speaking?" I threw in.

"Lor' bless you!" said Bucks, "I should think so—toastesses and cheering and stamping. How I got home to Bucks I don't know, but I did it in time by zig-zagging all through Stowe Park and the long avenue."

"Lor'! to hear the speech-making in the red-striped tent and in the house, both at the same time, two or three rising at once. It *was* darned good fun, I can tell ye. (Slaps his knee, the nap of which many thousand previous slaps have altogether removed, and doubling up with a colicky chuckle that was almost too much for him, at which the limp, pale lady's-maid smiled dolefully, and in a way that implied smiles were irreligious, unbecoming, and ungentleel). "Speech-making! I should rather think there was, and plenty of it, all under the flags, in the marquis, as they called the tent set up on purpose for us to dine in, near the Flaying House, as it was called, where the deer killed in the park used to be prepared; and every time a toast was drunk the yeomanry guns fired three times" (shakes his head)—"yes they did. Then the dook gave the best men prizes for running in sacks, grinning through a collar, shooting at a target, dipping for sixpences in treacle, and all sorts of pastime, that the gentry likes to see the tenantry busy about in these gala days."

"That was doing it like a king," said I.

"What fun!" cried Drummer Tom.

"It *was* doing it like a king," said Bucks; "and he wor a king: more than another dook I know of was he who was pelted with what I should not like to mention" (dreadfully myste-

rious) "in the streets of Buckingham, and he then swore he would do for the place, and make the grass grow in the streets."

"And so it did," said I; "when I last saw it; it was fast asleep, was Buckingham, and snoring."

"Yes, the dook, he moved the 'sises," said Bucks, fiercely, "and all that, to Aylesbury, to pay them out. Dear me, what a grand place Stowe was in the old days! It was a reg'lar little kingdom, was Stowe, shut in with a ring fence, south front nine hundred and sixteen feet from east to west—I've paced it a thousand times—and massy stone lions, and Corinthian statuaries, and all that, and picters, and hundreds of weight of books, and water, and green turf, and bushes, and a flight of thirty-one steps from the entrance to the lawn. It wor beautiful. You never clapped eyes on—no, that you didn't—"

"I suppose you know Bucks well?" said I.

"Ah! that I do," said Bucks, "and enough, too, Risborough, and Leighton Buzzard, and Berkhamstead, and Wendover, and High Wycombe (good ale there), and Beaconsfield, and Woburn, and Newport Pagnell. Bucks, too! You should see the gilt swan in the Town-hall how it used to shine on market days."

"What, after the fall of Stowe?" I inquired.

"No," said Bucks—"no, no, sur, long ago; and I knows Olney too, well, that I do. I've been watchman there, man and boy, thirty years. You've heard of Muster Cowper, the poet?"

"Of course I have, and his Olney Hymns, too," said I.

Bucks (enraptured) cried, "Yes, yes, and Mrs. Unwin, and the pet hares, and all on 'em! Well, I show gentlemen and ladies the house and summer-house where he used to write, and garden, and where the Throckmortons, who were his friends, used to live. The Ouse, you know, runs through Olney."

"It was a melancholy, dull place for a melancholy man to go to," said I.

Bucks took no notice of this remark, but broke fresh ground. "We have had a powerful lot of fires," said he—"incendiary fires—in Olney: a dozen cottages or more burnt down in a year or two."

"That's a bad job," said Drummer Tom.

"It is a bad job," said Bucks. "How they goes and breaks out I don't know, and nobody knows; but we must try and get at the bottom of it, we must. There is no ill-will between master and men, not as I know of"—(stops a moment and slaps his knee)—"the whole thing is a mystery, a perfect mystery. P'r'aps it's the gipsies."

"You've seen hard work, I should say, to judge by your face," said I.

"Ay! that I have, sir. I tell you what, sir, I have stood at sheep-washing every day for three weeks, from six in the morning till eight at night, and hardly taken bit or sup from week's end to week's end—hadn't taste for it—nothing but drink for me then."

"Well, but one farmer's sheep would never

last three weeks?" I inquired, innocently, knowing no better.

"One farmer!" said Bucks, contemptuously; "why I washed for half the county, so much the score. Tell you how I did it. I stood up to my lines in water, ready to take the ship; then my mate passes me the ship, and I takes him head and tail, rubs him well all over, back and belly; then ducks him, and pass out to the mill tail. All the wool as comes off in my hands goes to me for parquisites—it did, true as I sit here, gentlemen. Terrible hard work, cramping work too, worse than salmon-fishing. Of course you come out now and then for a drop to mix with all the water you've sopped up," he said, sympathisingly. Bucks winked, clenched his teeth, and rubbed his eyes, like the maddened gambler in Hogarth: "I tell you what, muster, I've drunk as much as nine or ten quarts of strong ale a day, besides spirits, and it had no more effect on me at the time than mere water, believe me; but afterwards I had a raging, burning fever, as they called the deliddleum trimmings, orful bad it was—no, that worn't the name, it was something like deleerium treamens, I know there was rum in it. But now, thank God (God be thanked!), I have not touched ale or spirits for these six months; and look here" (tremendous energy; invites me to pinch him; and pinches the frosty healthy reds and purples of his cheek)—"you'd think I'd been just flushed with gin, wouldn't you? Didn't you?"

"I confess I thought you had been taking a farewell glass," said I.

"No, not a drop," said Bucks, evidently exhilarated. "Feel this arm: this colour is all nateral colour, and if it wasn't for a little ailment and sourment occasionally, I don't know now, at seventy, whether I was ever better in my life."

"So you have been up, I suppose, to have a day's holiday in London—to see Saint Paul's, the British Museum, and Madame Tussaud's wax-works?" said I.

Bucks whispered, putting his face close to mine, "I'll tell you all about it, for you and I put our horses together very well, and I feel quite neighbourly towards you, though you're a gentleman and I a poor working man."

Guard cries, "Stafford! Stafford!" Bing, bang, goes the bell.

"Here's how it is: George—my son George—is in London, and his going came about thus: he had been a long time without work, and he and his wife were living on me, and that preyed on George, and he got silent and moody-like, and sat alone and said nothing, and mumped so that one would have thought he had fallen out with me (my missis, poor dear old 'oman, you must know, has been dead these five year). Well, one morning, a year ago, long afore it was light, I was awoke by something pulling the clothes, and I says, says I, 'Who's there? what's

up?' and somebody says, 'It's I, father.' 'Who's I?' 'Why George; I am going up to London to try and get work, for it breaks my heart to prey upon your little means like this. Good-by, father.' Then I sat up, and tried to reason with the lad; but, lor', there!—it wor no use. 'So,' said George, 'don't waken my wife, but make it up for me when I'm gone; and pawn this watch of mine for her; and as soon as I can hear of anything I will return, but not a moment before. Don't say anything, father; there's the watch. Good-by!' And George went. We never heard of him for nearly a long twelvemonth arter, till last Monday was six weeks, when down comes a letter, sealed with a brave man's thumb—no bad seal neither—telling us as George was doing well, had got regular work in a London brick-yard, and was very much respected by all as knew him, and by his employer. Says he in the letter, 'Come up, father, directly, and come and arrange about bringing up Mary, and letting us live all together, comfortable like; and here's money to get my silver watch out of pawn,' says he, in the letter. Well, we were glad, I believe you, and so, off I went. I didn't know George at first, with his Crimean beard. 'That isn't George,' said I, to the woman of the house. 'It is George,' said he himself, with his own voice. And so it was.

"Well, the next morning when I awoke, I looks around and wondered where I was. 'What's up,' says I, 'where am I?' 'With George, your own son George,' says he, from the other bed; and so I was. And now I'm going down to Olney, to have a sale, give and sell all my things, send up my bedding by waggon—because George has got only one bed—and going to settle in London, convenient to the brick-yard, seeing as how I'm getting a trifle old and don't like living all alone. Olney is not what it was."

"I know how it is," said I; "all your old friends have died off, and you feel in the way among the young folks who jostle for the new paths."

Bucks replied approvingly, "Yes. Well, I suppose that's about the size of it. But here's my station; so good morning to you, sur! I wish you a pleasant journey and every excess."

So the Buckinghamshire man and I, parted.

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