

ON PUBLIC OPINION AS SHOWN BY PETITIONS TO PARLIAMENT
DURING THE PRESENT SESSION.

IN the *Times* newspaper of the 10th June, we find the substance of the 22d Report of the Public Petition Committee, containing an account of the petitions, with the number of signatures attached to them, presented to the House of Commons, up to the 24th May last. The document is a curious and instructive one. We have taken the trouble to classify the petitions according to their objects, to note their order as to the number of signatures, and to calculate the average of signatures to a petition, on each topic. The latter is given in whole numbers, reckoning a fraction as one when not less than the half. The results appear in the following table:

****** The figure *prefixed* to each topic indicates its rank according to the total number of petitioners.

I. CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS.

| | Petitions. | Signatures. |
|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 11. Vote by Ballot..... | 37 | 24,646 |
| 20. Repeal of the Septennial Act..... | 15 | 9,289 |
| 17. Repeal of Taxes on Knowledge..... | 14 | 12,566 |

II. ECCLESIASTICAL REFORMS.

| | | |
|---|------|---------|
| 2. For the better Observance of the Sabbath | 1061 | 261,706 |
| 26. Against Sir Andrew Agnew's Bill..... | 20 | 2,794 |
| 6. For the Abolition of Lay Patronage in the Church of Scotland..... | 132 | 61,871 |
| 23. Against the Irish Church Reform Bill... | 98 | 6,707 |
| 34. From Roman Catholics, for relief from the necessity of being married according to the rites of the Established Church.. | 4 | 520 |
| 13. From Protestant Dissenters, for the same | 99 | 20,972 |
| 18. Against the New System of Education in Ireland..... | 12 | 11,082 |

III. LOCAL AND CORPORATION REFORMS.

| | | |
|--|-----|--------|
| 28. Against the Volunteer Corps at Huddersfield..... | 1 | 2,400 |
| 4. For Corporation Reform..... | 116 | 70,517 |
| 24. For the Scotch Burghs Bill..... | 24 | 4,657 |
| 37. Against the same..... | 8 | 271 |

IV. HUMANITY AND MORALITY.

| | | |
|---|-------|-----------|
| 8. For removing the Civil Disabilities of the Jews..... | 46 | 44,100 |
| 36. Against..... | 3 | 134 |
| 1. For the Abolition of Slavery..... | 4,603 | 1,209,355 |
| 35. Against immediate Abolition..... | 1 | 391 |
| 15. For the repeal or alteration of the Beer Act | 159 | 19,774 |
| 19. Against the same..... | 11 | 10,988 |
| 22. For Mitigation of the Criminal Laws.... | 13 | 7,000 |

tion, and the gross amount of petitions and petitioners, on several of the most prominent topics. It might have been expected that we should have found a correspondence ; that where the greatest number of persons petitioned, the petitions would, severally, have been the most numerously signed. The contrary is the fact, in many and those very striking instances. Nearly a million and a quarter petitioned for the abolition of Colonial Slavery, and yet the total amount of signatures divided by the number of petitions, yields only an average of 263 names to a petition. Against the Corn Laws, only 18,239 persons have petitioned ; but the average of signatures to a petition is 1130. Several similar discrepancies may be noticed by inspecting the Table and the two lists appended to it. They point to the conclusion that a high average of signatures to the petitions on any subject indicates a strong public feeling, even though the total amount of petitioners should not be comparatively large ; while a large number of petitions, with a low average of signatures is presumptive of organization and activity in the getting up of an appeal to Parliament. Let the reader look at the twelve topics which stand highest according to *the number of petitions*. Of the first four, not one comes into the list of the twelve which have the highest average of signatures. They would be nearly at the bottom of a complete list arranged on that principle. How is this ? We take the solution to be that in these and similar cases, a kind of petition-manufacturing machinery was diligently employed. We do not say that it was not employed for an excellent object. Our opinion on the plague-spot of Colonial Slavery needs no iteration here. The question is not as to the object, but the means. In the number of petitions on this subject, we trace the agency of the Anti-slavery Society, and of the various bodies of Dissenters organized in their sects, associations, and congregations. The Sabbatarian petitions indicate the latter machinery, aided by the parochial influence of the established clergy. No. 6 in this class furnishes us with an average which may be assumed as that of a Protestant Dissenting Congregational Petition. Nearly all the petitions which it includes are probably of that sort. The congregations muster, one with another, 212 petitioners. Now the Sabbatarian average is 247, and the Anti-slavery 263. Deducting the great petition against Slavery, signed by somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 persons, the last average would be reduced yet nearer to the congregational point. With the exception of the petitions for Poor Laws in Ireland, which are very insignificant, these are the only petitions of which the average of signatures is between 200 and 300. The affinity is remarkable ; especially when taken in connexion with others which we proceed to point out ; and remembering that these three topics have most interested the religionists who act, if churchmen parochially, and if dissenters congregationally. The petitions, which have an average of above

1000 signatures, are those for the Factory Regulation Bill, for the Reduction of Taxation, and for the Repeal of the Corn Laws. Here we see the effect of large public meetings, and a strong popular feeling, or rather a strong pecuniary interest, animating them. There is one point on which the religionists have mustered in this way, and with a similar result. That is, the New System of Education in Ireland. The congregational and parochial tactics were not applicable to this subject. The more respectable part of the movers of that machinery were in favour of the Ministerial plan. So the fanatics had nothing left for it but public meetings. And they accordingly held their gatherings, unmolested by opposition, at Exeter Hall and elsewhere. What was the consequence? Only a dozen petitions; but each of those petitions had nearly a thousand signatures. This is the only class of petitions emanating peculiarly from religionists, which comes into the first twelve in the order of the average of signatures. The exception proves the rule. It establishes our theory of the 'Results of Machinery.' There is also an exemplification of it in the petitions for and against the repeal of the Beer Act. The evangelical clergy have been very busy in this matter. The number of petitions for the repeal is 159. They were not, we believe, zealously seconded by the Dissenters. The average of signatures is very low; only 124. The counter petitions were only eleven; but they were signed by very nearly as many thousands. Here was machinery *versus* interest. All the petitions averaging between 600 and 700 names, have a close affinity. They are, for Vote by Ballot, the repeal of the Septennial Act, the repeal of the House and Window Tax, and for Corporation Reform. This is the more remarkable, as there is a great disparity in the number of *petitions*; which, following the above order of topics, are 37, 15, 104, and 116. We may hence, perhaps, assume 620 names to a petition, as the usual result of a public radical reform meeting. The reduction of taxes was a theme to carry more general sympathy with it than the assertion of a great public principle: accordingly the average mounts up to 1198. But on the Assessed Taxes the parish committees brought petition machinery into play, and as a natural result of organization, the number of petitions is greater than that for the last-mentioned purpose, but the average falls to 440. The Scotch petitions against lay patronage have both a high average (468) and number (132). Here is both organization and popularity. The ecclesiastical difference between that country and England is distinctly marked. Now turn to Ireland. A precious specimen of organization, without popularity, appears in the fact that the petitions against the Irish Church Reform Bill were no fewer than 98, and the average of signatures no more than 69. Against the tithes, the people only mustered 65 petitions, but with an average of 332 signatures. Our proof grows somewhat lengthy: but the point deserved elucidating, as it often

indicates the worth of petitions, and may help us towards a correct interpretation of them as exponents of public feeling. Petitions are by no means to be disregarded, because the numbers in which they are presented may have been multiplied by means of some kind of organization in the parties petitioning. Where the organization results from interest in the subject, it evidences the strength of desire or determination. Millions would have organized themselves for obtaining Constitutional reform, but for the Six Acts, and other laws against Political Associations. When, as in the case of the several ecclesiastical bodies, the organization has arisen from a different principle, and is legally recognised and permanent, it is evidence of power in the petitioners, an indication not to be overlooked by the party petitioned. It bears on the prudence, if not on the merits of the case. Sometimes the petitions are few, not because there is no popular interest in the subject, but because there is little hope from the Legislature. All the circumstances connected with petitions require to be considered, to arrive at a just notion of the respect due to them.

In petitions of the first class, those which pray for *Constitutional Reforms*, we have included those for the repeal of the Taxes on Knowledge. They ought not to be confounded with such as emanate from the mere desire for the removal of a pecuniary burden. The object of the petitioners is public instruction. They think that the greatest possible amount of information, on whatever affects the well being of the community, should be dispensed to the greatest possible number, and at the lowest possible rate. They think that a good Government, like a good man, should love the light, and that only a tolerably strong light on the proceedings of a Government can keep it good. Many of them think that it would be much more right and reasonable, that the diffusion of information should, if needful, be secured by taxation, rather than be repressed, and to a great extent suppressed, by taxation. They would have provision for public information regarded as an integral portion of the national institutions. And they know, and have offered to demonstrate to Ministers, that so far from any sacrifice being necessary, the revenue might be improved by the removal of the present prohibitory duty on cheap newspapers. The character of these petitions is not financial but constitutional. Although not numerous, they have that claim on respect which arises from a high average of signatures, (nearly 900 to each.) In this particular, they rank above the other petitions of this class, and form a class by themselves. The petitions for the Ballot (which are first in the gross amount of petitioners) stand next, (666,) and for the repeal of the Septennial Act, third, (619.) The order accurately expresses, we apprehend, the wishes of the thorough reformers. The total amount of signatures may be thought to show the feebleness of that description of politicians. The inference would be somewhat hasty.

They can only organize themselves in open defiance of the law, and should that ever happen, it will scarcely be for the purpose of petitioning. The topics themselves have not those considerations of local or urgent temporary interest which facilitate the holding of meetings. Two large sections of this body are opposed to petitioning; those who have not yet lost all confidence in the present Ministry, and those who have lost all hope either from Ministers or the present parliament. It is not improbable, that the course of events will ere long unite these two sections with the present petitioners, in a common course of action. They will then show a formidable front. They are, in fact, the whole body of reformers, who were reformers anterior to the adoption of that question as a Ministerial question by those who are now in office; together with a large addition which must have been made to their number by the occurrences of the last two years.

The second class of petitions shows an extraordinary activity in the four great ecclesiastical bodies, the Established Churches of the three kingdoms, and the Dissenters of England. Neither the Catholics nor the Presbyterians of Ireland appear in this list, in their corporate capacity. Both have their reasons; but not exactly the same reasons. The former are past hope of getting any thing, and the latter not past fear of losing something. The Irish petitions (unless the little marriage petitions are from that country, and excepting those against tithes,) are all episcopalian and anti-reforming, showing, or at least according with the fact, that in that unhappy country, so long divided into the oppressors and the oppressed, the plunderers and the plundered, the Government is hated by the former, and not trusted by the latter. The Scotch petitions show that the nuisance of which they complain, and which is indeed a corrupt and corrupting excrescence, must be abated. The character of the Protestant Dissenting marriage petitions, we have already shown. They are machine-made. They are woven in the parson power-loom. This grievance has never been complained of till very lately, nor did it seem to press with any weight upon the orthodox Dissenters, until the Unitarians had shown considerable restiveness under their peculiar burden, and made some progress towards its removal. Then the congregations were stirred up, and they have done the duty to which they were invited. The great display of religious organization is in the Sabatarian petitions. We believe the motives and desires of these petitioners to be so various, that it is utterly impossible to say what they would have. If they can agree, the people who can muster a thousand petitions, though with only a little more than 200 names to each, must be pretty sure of carrying their point. We wish it had been public instruction; but when has the power of ecclesiastical or sectarian organization been directed to that object?

On the third class we have little to remark. The subject of Corporation Reform is the only one (except perhaps that of Colo-

nial Slavery) which is in favour both with the Government and the people. Hence it stands high in all the lists, being fourth in the order of the total amount of signatures, fifth in that of the number of petitions, and twelfth in that of the average of signatures to each petition. This fact shows how 'the hands of Government would be strengthened' by the people (as the phrase goes) in effecting Constitutional Reforms, were they but disposed to accomplish such reforms. In what we deem the best test of public principle and earnestness, the average of signatures, these petitions are a little below that of the Ballot and Anti-Septennial Act petitions, though far superior in number.

A glance at the numbers for and against the Scotch Burghs Bill, will furnish the reader with another instance of the different workings of organization and interest.

Class IV. is, on the whole, honourable to the country. The average signatures to the petitions for the Jews, are swelled by the large Christian petition from the inhabitants of the metropolis. No deduction on the score of machinery, can make those for the Abolition of Slavery other than a magnificent display of public feeling. They are a glorious monument for humanity. Those for the Factories Regulation Bill, are also very honourable, and must be, substantially, successful. The subject is in some respects a difficult one; and it has been abominably entangled for party purposes; but the overworking of children is an atrocity that, whoever be the culprits, and wherever the burden may fall, must be put down; and will. The petitions for the mitigation of the Criminal Code, average well—539 to a petition. There philanthropy and intelligence go hand in hand. Would that it were more so throughout this whole class of petitions. It affords stronger demonstrations of benevolence than of wisdom. Glad should we be to see the zeal which it exhibits directed towards the grand and all comprehensive subject of national education and instruction. The abolition of slavery, even in a sense far more comprehensive than that which the expression bears in the present case, is itself only a branch of that still more glorious emancipation, the abolition of ignorance. And for this blessed purpose, how much might be done by legislation.

Like the celebrated potatoes thrown at the state carriage of George IV., the next class 'speaks for itself.' They are the 'you must' of the impoverished people, in reply to the 'we cannot' of the feeble Ministry. Several of them rank high in the scale of all the tests which we have indicated. They are not to be trifled with. The expedient of a property tax, in lieu of all others, must evidently be reconsidered. Meanwhile, if this 'impatience of taxation' be 'ignorant,' why is the protecting duty on ignorance so inconsistently and fatuitously upheld? The people will not submit to the continuance of their present burdens. If retrenchment cannot relieve them, commutation must; and

such a commutation as will shift the pressure to the part where it can best be borne. How oddly, how disgustingly, does the idea of a reformed Parliament and a real representation of these petitioners, associate with the facility with which the bonus to the West Indian interest was transformed from a loan to a gift, and from fifteen to twenty millions!

The singularity of the last petition in the Table, baffles our principles of classification. We cannot just now ascertain whether the one subscriber of the one petition for the impeachment of Ministers, was the chairman of a meeting, or represented only himself. His prayer is gone to the limbo of vanity. It would be a sight for sore eyes, to see the House of Lords sitting in judgment on a whole Administration; and such a House on such an Administration. 'Leave them to Heaven,' good man: as Hamlet did his mother; and if they have indeed, like her, played false, and been made traitorous to reform, by the blandishments of Aristocracy, a heavier retribution than impeachment before the Lords (Polonius, we suppose, to fill up the parallel) will assuredly be their destiny. Even now, they must be lost to all sense of honourable fame, not to feel the difference in their position which one short year has made. Should the hereditary fatuity to which they truckle jostle them again from office, where now are the enthusiastic multitudes that once bore them back triumphantly? The *Globe* and the *Times* may cry 'Wolf,' but who stirs? There is no echo. Their firmest friends have long been reduced to apologies for what they cannot justify, pleas of difficulty and embarrassment, and petitions for procrastination of the judgment. They have made hosts of enemies; and many are those who would gladly have continued the confidence which they generously reposed, but who have been forced to its withdrawal by repeated disappointments, forgotten professions, violated promises, and the insane attempt to retain some hold of the people, and yet propitiate the vain and rapacious interests that can never be at one with the public good. The great object of all who aspire to public usefulness, must henceforth be to teach the people (in the pursuit of whatever promotes the real and permanent improvement of their condition) to rely solely on themselves, and to qualify them for that self-reliance by the dissemination of political wisdom.

PHOSPHOR AND HESPER.

PHOSPHOR.

IN a flood of ether I swim, I swim!
 My argent lamp dewily burning;
 But, Sister! thy splendour is dim, is dim!
 As an eye to the grave returning—
 Why is thy beauty mourning?

HESPER.

I am weary and sick with dreams,
White Son of the Waking Morn!
For since the sun set in these western streams
I have slept in the midst of my golden beams,
The pillow of air adorning;
And visions of time and space and heaven
The life in my heart have lulled, or riven;
And now I sink
On night's dim brink,
Like a soul to the grave, that is unforgiven—
Forlorn! forlorn! forlorn!—
Art thou my sadness scorning?

PHOSPHOR.

The starry curtain of the dawn
Hath my silver hand withdrawn,
Orb of evening splendid!
My joy hath not birth from thy sadness;
But the sun hath endow'd me with gladness:
From the crystal height of my eastern throne
I behold him ascending alone, alone!
Into heaven, with eye distended—
Like a thought of God in the poet's soul!
His herald-cloud is above me, tinted
With the light his purple kiss imprinted:
Its foldings pallid in dew unroll,
Which the lark, on my lustre calling,
Imbibes in its balmy falling:
I hear the star beneath me sighing
With the burning love on his pale heart lying—
Art thou, too, dying?

HESPER.

I seek my tomb
In the purpled verge of the night-cloud's gloom:
Like hope from the heart, I sink from heaven.
Our queen is tranced in a ghostly swoon;
Red-banner'd Mars faints by the fainting moon,
And the constellations around are driven
Into the depths of the brightening dawn—
Like dew by the sphere of a flower absorb'd,
Or starting tears in the eye withdrawn!
Only thou art radiant-orb'd:
The morn o'ermantles the earth and sea—
Farewell! they need not me:
O'er the gulf of night am I clouded!

PHOSPHOR.

Farewell! I am failing like joy
Which its own sweet excess doth cloy—
Farewell! in light I am shrouded!

W.

RULE BRITANNIA.*

WHAT a glorious wind ! How it tears about over heaven and earth, like a mad devil broke loose from the adamantine prison-house. Clouds above are flying before it, like the leaves below. Why this wind is a whirlwind. How it rushes, raves, and roars ; it blows the world topsy turvy ; one might walk, if we could but stand, over a milky way of acacia blossoms. The little peaches and nectarines are pelting like hail through the green-house windows. The oaks are tossing about their mighty arms, like fierce Saracens of old, with their maces and war-clubs ; and the tall poplars are bending before the blast, their foliage flying, till you see their bare trunks straining like the masts of a ship in distress, when her canvass is all abroad in tatters. And there's the music of the main too, piping loud and high, all around and through the grove. How well the trees do it : right Æolian harps are they, and Æolian trumpets, clarionets, bassoons, and trombones too. Splendid are the billows now in the Bay of Biscay. If I were there in my hammock, I should reckon it rough rocking ; and yet if I were as heavy as I am now, methinks I should sleep, even to such a motion and to such music. Heavy, heavy ! and sleep I must. The sounds are dim in my ears, yet ever and anon they are too startling. Qualify them, I pray thee, with some of that new music, whatever it may be.

And the piano blended its tones, though what they were I heeded not, with the rushing and rustling of the trees without ; and though it was mid-day in June, and I am most unused to daylight sleeping, I went off, fairly and soundly on the sofa—and then and there I dreamt a dream. I have seen and heard of large and majestic billows ; I have watched those which, when the wild winds have been working their will, break at the foot of St. Catherine, uprearing their huge forms as they strike upon the sands, their tops retreating and curving, till they form a colossal arch-way, where the sons of Anak might stand, for a moment, beneath the vaulted watery roof, till down they come in thunder. I have tossed on those which approach the Hebrides and the Orkneys, swollen with the pride of having rolled unbroken from the western world ; and much have I heard of those on which the giant of the Cape looks down, those broad mountain masses, those watery Grampians, where, in the trough of the sea, one intervening wave may hide from those who pace the turrets of our floating Indian towers, the top-masts of their comrade ; but not even these, nor aught save those of Martin's Deluge, could compare with the measureless billows of my vision. And yet, there was no fury in their greatness ; they were not like the heavings and frettings of Sea at war with Earth ; but as parts, proportionate and harmonious, of a world of waters. It was not as if 'a shoreless ocean tumbled

* A Characteristic Fantasia for the Piano Forte, on the National Air of Rule Britannia, by M. Marielli, 5s.

round the globe,' but these waves were as the ample and graceful foldings of the world's vast oceanic mantle. They rose and fell like the regular heavings of a living world's gigantic bosom. And the splendid sun was shining on that 'azure main,' as if he loved it; and his image was reflected there—clear, bright, and deep, as if he were loved again. It was there when the billows rose, and it was there when the billows fell—glittering, but yet unbroken in the change. And as I admired the simple and serene magnificence of this elemental scene, there burst from that cloudless sky a peal of thunder,—of thunder so full and sonorous, and as it seemed to me so significant and supernatural, that a sensation of troubled awe spread over my frame, and I felt as if present at that wonderful work 'in the beginning,' when 'the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, and God said, Let there be light, and there was light.' The scriptural recollection was probably suggested to my sleeping senses by the unbounded expanse of that visionary ocean, and under the influence of the association thus called up, the long rolling of that thunder fashioned itself into a resemblance of syllabic utterance; such a resemblance as there is of form in the dim outlines that grow upon the eye out of thick darkness, or even from blazing light, like the angel of the Lord emerging from the glory at the top of Jacob's ladder, in Rembrandt's painting of the patriarch's dream. It was possible to persuade oneself that it only thundered; and yet the sensation of my dream, wrought out in verbal record, would rather be, 'there came a voice from heaven saying, Let Britain arise!' And the progress of events confirmed the interpretation. I was indeed present at the last act of creation. The voice from above was echoed by a hollow, murmuring, responsive sound, that came from the very bottom of the abyss, beneath all that weight of waters. In a moment all was convulsion and confusion. Strange noises, deep, shrill, rapid, rolling, voluminous, a chaos of sound, terrified my ears. The placid majesty of sea and sky vanished. Dense vapours blotted out the sun. From the ocean, columns of flame burst forth abruptly, ascended high, and disappeared; and were followed by others in quick succession. Wild meteors were blazing here and there throughout the atmosphere. The stars, which became partially visible as the sun was obscured, had 'forgotten their courses,' and reeled in the sky, and rose and set confusedly, like warriors' plumes in desperate conflict. A hurricane swept madly along over the surface of the waters, which sometimes yawned to the very centre, and then swelled up 'as high as huge Olympus.' And still the submarine thunderings continued, and swelled louder and louder, and the volumes of flame became more ample; and as I began to madden with the uproar, and felt my temples throbbing, and was struggling to awake, as one struggles with the pressure of deadly nightmare, all was hushed, and there was the sweet music of a heavenly harp, and it played imperfect snatches

and suggestive notes of the music of that noblest of all national airs; and I looked, and the elements were sunk to repose, and the sun was beaming down that sweet first smile of fond complacency that follows passion and agitation, and the billows were as giants who had died and been regenerated into little children, and they were gently and playfully kissing the feet of the white cliffs of our island, which had, amid those convulsive throes of nature, arisen 'from out the azure main.' And the meaning of what I saw revealed itself to me, and I knew by the thrilling prelude of that harp that angels were about to hymn 'the charter of the land;' but their song was not yet. The island was covered with mist. It hung heavy over the valleys, and wreathed itself around the hills and mountains. But towards their summits it was thin and fleecy, and as it parted, I had glimpses of celestial forms, the minstrels who struck at intervals the broken, yet most harmonious symphony of that well known 'strain,' the new-born genii of the new-born land, its 'guardian angels' in the delicate spring of their being, the same that were seen by the bard of the seasons, of patriotism, and of liberty.

There was one amongst them who appeared to be their queen, so lofty was her stature, and so stately her bearing. She stood on the summit of a cliff, and stretched her hand towards the waves, as if demanding of them some token of submission and fealty. But the billows dashed themselves upon the cliff, and flung their foam high up against its face as in defiance and in scorn. And the deep abysmal thunders again uttered their voices, but in angrier and discordant tone. And that wild volcanic action, and the elemental confusion, came back with aggravated horrors. Yet amid it all, from time to time, I heard stray notes of that heavenly harping, till at one louder and longer swell, it seemed (but all was quick as lightning) as if that being of loveliness and majesty had thrown herself from the cliff-top into the furious waves, snatched, from some reluctant power beneath, a colossal trident, and regained her rocky throne, waving it proudly around her crowned and helmed head. Then the thunderings ceased, and the sea was calm and gentle as an inland lake, and the mists cleared away, and the land lay in sunshine, and I had vision of sparkling rivers, and waving fields, and crowded ports, and stately towers, and multitudinous cities; and the spirits thronged around their queen, and they twined a laurel bough in her helmet-crown, and their harps and voices rung out the full strain of the patriotic chant, and it resounded with a martial clang, and there were armies on the heights in glittering array, and gallant navies covering the ocean; and lightly as I reckon of the glory of arms, I felt my heart swell within me at that triumphal chorus. But soon I perceived, that though the familiar air was again and again repeated, it was with a varied tone and spirit. The associations, which in these diversified changes it called up,

ceased to be either insolent or warlike. Among them there was the solemnity of the hymn and the lightsomeness of the dance; and as the sound varied, so varied the visible scene, and those bright genii bent the knee, or moved in joyous measure, while she whom they encircled, smilingly doffed her diademed and laurelled casque, threw it upon the ground, placed on her brows a simple wreath of oak and olive, and the trident in her hand became a cornucopia. Again the chorus of the strain rung sweetly and loudly in mine ear; so loudly that I awoke, yet still the sound went on, with chords and modulations so rich and fanciful and full of harmony, that I was bewildered to find it did *not* proceed from the genii of my dream, and said, amazedly, 'What *are* you playing?' The answer was: 'O such a beautiful and imaginative composition; Marielli's Fantasia on Rule Britannia: she has developed all the poetry of the song in such a musical commentary as only genius and science together can produce. Look at this introduction, or rather, listen to that, and to the variations which follow.' 'I have,' said I, 'I have heard them all, unconsciously; they have been acting on my associations as I slept; the music interprets my dream to myself, and my dream may interpret the music to others. It is a truthful criticism, as far as it goes; but wide awake should the critic be, who would do full justice to the expressiveness, science, grace, and fancy of Marielli's compositions.'

ON THE MINISTERIAL PLAN FOR THE ABOLITION OF NEGRO SLAVERY.

THE state of transition from extreme political darkness, to the rush of light caused by the bursting of political truths amongst the mass of the community,—which is the peculiar characteristic of the age in which we live,—has been hastened of late in its operations, with a compound progression, much more remarkable than the ordinary celerity with which exploded errors are driven into obscurity. To this cause must be attributed the state of dazzled excitement, in which the public mind finds itself bewildered. The truths are known, the conclusions are arrived at as general principles, but the knowledge how to carry them into practice for the benefit of the community is as yet imperfect. The wants of the public have not been foreseen by those capable of influencing the public, and consequently no provision has been made to supply them. No far-reaching intellects have been in the places of public trust, no god-like Turgot has yet held the directive power, over a people well disposed to tread in the right path, whenever it shall be pointed out to them by those whom they believe devoted to their welfare, and whose reason and enthusiasm walk hand in hand. The men at present in the possession of power, are utterly unfitted for it. Even though they be not

the knaves which a large portion of the community believe, then they come under a denomination not less mischievous to the community—imbeciles. They lack the knowledge which gives courage, the wisdom which gives decision, and the earnest energy, which, when directed to good purposes apart from calculating selfishness, takes hold on all men's hearts, and carries conviction to their minds. Men are willing to be led onward to truth, but they must, as an indispensable condition, have confidence in their leaders. The army which trusts not its general, or believes that the general has sold it to the enemy, falls into confusion till such time as it elects another general, whose talents and honesty may warrant its confidence: and such might be the case with the British nation, but fortunately the chances of confusion are small, owing to the pervading good sense of the community, and the fact, that the men fitted for rulers are to be found whenever they shall be diligently sought for, whenever the present over-excitement shall lessen, and the same attention shall be paid to secure the best working system of government, on which so much depends, as people are accustomed to pay to the management of their private concerns, in order to render them prosperous.

The union of the qualities requisite for the first class legislators is extremely rare. The self-poised, self-collected nature, is at variance with the earnest enthusiasm which loves to think with other men's thoughts, which loves to draw closer the bonds of sympathy. Not a man at present in power possesses the former quality; is there one who possesses the latter? Let those answer who can speak with their own knowledge; the public suffrage will reply in the negative. The public generally are not prejudiced against truth; when it is obvious, they receive it with open hearts and willing ears; they know that upon knowledge depends the bettering of their condition, but the rulers generally are disposed to try truths by the ordeal of their own interest, or apparent interest, for they are not profound reasoners, and wherever they see a certain good to the public, accompanied by the chance of a contingent evil to themselves, they take what they consider the sure side, and refuse to acknowledge the truth. They possess not the self-poised nature, the equable temperament, which constitutes judgment in the highest degree, and as they are inordinately elevated by all that seems favourable to their power, and thereupon assume the aspect of the bully, so are they proportionately depressed by any thing unfavourable, and they sink into cowardice. People of this class are peculiarly unfitted to grapple with the time, they can do nothing but in the track of custom, of dull routine; they exclaim against theory, and practice is all in all with them, simply because their minds have not been trained to theorize justly. They take a false theory, and finding that it cannot be reduced to practice, they thereupon exclaim against all theories, forgetting that a true theory must be the germ of a true practice,

as much as geometry must be the basis of all the works of a carpenter, who may nevertheless work correctly without ever having heard of the word 'geometry.' They wish to rule the world according to established models, forgetting that the wants of the world have outgrown them, and that new truths have rendered necessary the construction of new theories, to be verified and corrected in practice. Not being competent to the task, they think to get over the matter by denying the wants of the world, and asking for a precedent. This will not do. If they resist the just demands of the community, or are incompetent to fulfil them, they must be cast out. There was once an age in the world when precedents existed not, and the present generation of men is as competent to make precedents as ever former generations were. Previous to the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill, some of its advocates affected to ground their claim upon the parchments of the treaty of Limerick, as if the law of justice was not the primary source to refer to in a question of right and wrong—of fittingness and unfittingness. The new truths which have begun to illumine the political horizon, have astounded and alarmed the rulers, at the same time that they have dazzled and gladdened the ruled with the most cheering aspect of hope. The rulers try to resist their influence, in all but the most glaring cases, and often when they attempt to amend they make worse. The ruled are indignant at the interested delay, and in their anxiety to push on the beneficial movement, would go to sea without rudder or compass, as if the mere hoisting of the sails would, by putting the vessel in motion, ensure her arrival at the wished for haven. This must not be. At the same time that all brave men are willing to peril life and limb in the voyage, it is requisite that the vessel should be well found with all that may reduce the risk as much as possible, and ensure, so far as human exertions or foresight can secure it, the certainty of success. I am not amongst the faint-hearted. The voyage of improvement must be performed at all hazards, but I am not inclined to stick the gallant vessel fast upon a rock if care and caution may avoid it.

The present Ministry have got themselves into a situation they are not calculated to fill. They did not anticipate the effects of the Reform Bill. They deemed that it would be a sop to the people, and still public clamour: they thought not of ulterior consequences. They, doubtless, now regret their concessions, but it would be wiser in them to reflect, that they have only given without confusion, what ultimately would have been taken by force. The people's eyes are opened, and they know their interest. Their clamours for reform, were they addressed to wise and honest men, would be received in a manner calculated to secure confidence and obtain the requisite time for the concoction of efficient remedies for the public evils, but the Whigs are scared at the din, and in their coward affright talk absurdly and act worse. They patch,

and join, and alter, and divide, and differ in opinion, and after exciting a mingled feeling of disgust, and hatred, and contempt, they end by making the matter worse than it was before. In quick succession are thrust upon them, the revision of taxation, the ballot, retrenchment, free trade, extension of the suffrage, the India question, the Irish question, the Bank charter, the tithes, the taxes on knowledge, national education, church reform, and the question of the abolition of slavery. Even a wise man might ponder how to reply to so many demands poured upon him at once, but the effect upon the imbecile Whigs is to cause absolute inanity. In their despair they bethink themselves of the universal Whig maxim, as set forth in the 'Edinburgh Review,' in the article on 'Lord Mahon's War of the Succession.' 'For a public life to be useful, it must be one of compromises.' In this sentence is the secret of Whig policy, but it must be added, that the 'utility,' according to Whig definition, means only making the public their 'oyster,' as ancient Pistol hath it. Taking expediency for their guide, in the present stage of their affairs, they shuffle off every question they can, and amongst others the most important of all, that of national education, and proceed to tinker all that is forced on them. I will take as an example, the question of the abolition of negro slavery, first remarking, that I have reason to believe it a fixed principle with the Aristocracy, to resist the education of the people, from the conviction, that with national education their sway must instantly cease. The remark of a leading man amongst the Whigs has been, 'that it would be a much happier condition for the people, if they could be again brought back to the ignorance of the last century.'

The public mind in England has definitively determined that negro slavery must be abolished, and that without much latitude of time, save so far as it can be made out to be for the benefit of the slaves themselves. This resolution is not the consequence of any interested feeling, but merely a matter of principle, a perception which has gradually gained ground, of the injustice where-with a large number of black men were treated by a number of white men, numerically inferior, but possessed of greater power by reason of their superior intellect. Various evil motives have been attributed to the chief men amongst the abolitionists who have pushed on the cause in and out of parliament, and retorts have been made in the same spirit. It is very possible that there may be individuals of bad character on both sides of the question, but this makes nothing either for or against it. It is nothing new for ambitious men to fasten themselves on to any cause which may reflect importance on them, without feeling any further interest in the cause. But it is quite as customary for malignant envy to select as the objects of attack, those who stand out from the crowd, and are distinguished from their fellows by superior intellect or humanity. The Athenian hated Aristides because he was called

the "Just," and the same kind of badly constituted mind may sway many Englishmen. But whatever may be the case with individuals, makes nothing against the spirit of humanity which influences a whole nation, with the exception of those who are Tories in principle, and believe, either honestly or dishonestly, that the rule of irresponsible power is the best rule for the world, and who would, if they could, reduce the white population of Britain to the same condition as the black population of the West Indies. However this may be with the Whigs, they have found that the current of public opinion sets too strongly in favour of emancipation to be resisted, and they have accordingly made use of it as a propitiatory sacrifice, possibly in the hope thereby to stave off some more unpleasant demand, and take glory to themselves for their liberality. Now, one might have imagined, that having once resolved to emancipate the negroes, they would have resolved to do it in the manner which might secure the maximum of good with the minimum of evil, and that to that end they would have selected the wisest man they could find to arrange it. But Whig policy reasoned after a different fashion. They selected Mr. Stanley, who, by his arbitrary insolence, and want of sympathy with the thoughts and feelings of his fellows, had embroiled the whole of Ireland, and brought it to the verge of a civil war, purely for the gratification of his personal malice towards Mr. O'Connell, who, by his superior shrewdness, had rendered him as ridiculous for his want of effective power, as he was before hateful for his aristocratic morgue. To the people of England, the disposition of Mr. Stanley was precisely that which a West India planter might feel towards his slaves. So long as sycophancy were observed towards him, so long might he condescend to be generous, and therefore, this very disposition was likely to make him the most unfit man to regulate an important question, upon which so many angry passions were already let loose. But the Whigs thought otherwise; their principle would seem to be that of fighting down opposition wherever practicable, as in the case of the Spa Fields' meeting, and they imagined that the best mode of meeting the insolence of the West India planters, would be by letting loose the insolence of a Stanley upon them. The dogmatic insolence of this person has always been described as intolerable, to any being of refined or gentlemanly feelings; but, notwithstanding, it might have been imagined, that after his defeat and exposure on the Irish question, and his experience of the evils of ignorance,—it might have been imagined, that upon entering upon a new office, he would at least have taken some pains to become acquainted with the details, history, and principles of the subject he had taken in hand. Lord Howick, while in office, had acknowledged the well-known fact, that Mr. Stephen, the chief clerk, knew more of the subject, and was at the same time an abler man, and better fitted to manage it, than any other. In

short, whoever might be the nominal head of the office, it was well understood, that the real man of business was Mr. Stephen. A wise man, therefore, whose intellect had not been debased by aristocratic morgue and egregious vanity like that of Mr. Stanley, would have been anxious to add to his own stock of knowledge all that he could procure from other sources, on which to form a judgment. He would not have despised the information of his predecessor, or of those whose long practice in office must have given them a considerable amount of knowledge, but he would have learned what he could, and then have estimated it according to its value. But not so Mr. Stanley. Full of presumption and self-conceit, he deemed that his genius and talent were to surmount all obstacles without opposition, and he was so exceedingly anxious to obtain the whole credit due to his transcendent abilities, that the moment he entered the office, he made it known that he needed no assistance from any one, but meant to do all his own business—by intuition, it may be supposed. Mr. Stephen having been jealously excluded from all share in his councils, he addressed himself to his improvisatory task, and in due time brought forth his programme, which I shall notice further on. I would here ask one question of the Whigs. The fact being granted, that Mr. Stephen knows more of the slave question than any other person in office, why should either Lord Howick or Mr. Stanley be put over him? Why should he not hold the ostensible as well as real place? Why should an ignorant man be set to fill it, while there is an instructed man at hand? Is there any other answer but the glaring one, that there is power and a large salary attached to it, which it would be considered a species of sacrilege to bestow upon any one but an aristocrat. And upon this principle is it, that the coin of the nation is wasted, and the national business badly performed. Those members of the House of Commons who advocate the true interests of the community, might employ themselves worse than in pointing out the glaring instances of the waste of the public money, in giving large salaries to aristocratic puppets, at the same time that the labours they profess to perform are actually performed for them by men of superior abilities at inferior salaries.*

The slaves must be freed! Fall what may, at all hazards, whether of injustice to whites, or of mischief to blacks, or to

* I believe that the objection to placing such a man as Mr. Stephen in the actual situation of minister, would be the fact, that upon a change of ministry he must turn out, and then the whole business would be stopped for want of knowledge in the in-comer. What a satire is this upon the machinery of our Government! The Noodles and Doodles of either faction are to fill the offices ostensibly, and pocket the cash, and the men of business, the whole rank and file, remain in *statu quo*, whatever be the changes, to have their utility impeded and their time wasted, by instructing, or offering to instruct, every succeeding fool. This is bad enough, but what must be the additional mischief, of the immorality thus engendered, by false pretences, in endeavouring to make the members of the aristocracy pass for wise men and men of business, when they are merely unprincipled speculators, a sort of civil *condottieri*.

blacks and whites alike, the slaves must be freed ! Even though the ultimate result were to be the massacre of the whites, the slaves must be freed, for the amount of evil, if evil must be the consequence, cannot compare with the demoralization which is the consequence of the present system ; which, at the same time that it utterly debases the master, gives no hope to the slave. It is an indisputable fact, that the forced labour got out of the slaves, is got out of them by the whip alone, or by the fear of it, and that if the whip were abolished, they would cease to work, for no means of compulsion could be found, short of bodily torture, to induce them to work. It has been clearly shown in the speech of Lord Howick, that if slavery is to continue at all, the most humane exercise of it would be to deprive the slave of all rights whatever, and to give to his master as unlimited authority over his person, as over the bodies of his quadrupeds ; for in that case he would at least be treated as well as the horses and mules, and not wantonly injured, but merely worked to death as a source of commercial profit, whereas, by interposing between him and his master, the slave presumes upon certain legal rights which he cannot support, disputes his master's authority, is tempted to neglect his work, and suffers a continual martyrdom from the lash, which he would avoid, and suffer himself to be quietly worked to death, were he morally sure that he had no appeal. Here and there, no doubt, may be found examples of wanton barbarians, to whom the shrieks and groans of their fellows are as sport and music, but generally speaking, this is not the case. Wholesale cruelty is only brought about by selfish interest. Now, no human being, with the smallest pretension to justice or humanity, could for a moment defend the propriety of delivering over a fellow-creature, bound hand and foot, like a wild beast, to the uncontrolled power of his fellow-man, merely because the one were black and the other white. The resulting evils of such a system are so numerous, not merely to the blacks, but to the whites also, that I do not scruple to affirm my deliberate conviction, that it would be a less crime against humanity to send forth fleets and armies to destroy the whole population of the West India Islands, both blacks and whites, than to suffer it to continue. The first would be one huge scene of cruelty, which would excite universal abhorrence, and thus prevent any chance of its repetition ; the last would sap and demoralize every feeling of virtue and humanity in all concerned, both slaves and masters, for an indefinite time. Interested people may be found in abundance, who will talk of the necessity of slavery for the support of our sugar trade and shipping, but this makes nothing to the question. If their argument be even sound, it is only a proof that one class of human beings have lived in the active oppression of another class, and it would be better for the community that beings thus demoralized should cease to exist ; it would be better that the shipping

should be destroyed, and the Antilles be made pasture grounds. It would be better that we should exist without sugar, than that we should consume it at the cost of the torture of our fellows. It would be better to put all those dependent upon slaves for their subsistence on the pension list for the remainder of their existence, rather than the slavery should continue, rather than such diabolical atrocities should be permitted, as have been recorded by Henry Whiteley* and numerous other persons. The blood runs cold while reading them, the muscles involuntarily contract, and the hand grips as on the hilt of a weapon, to strike the oppressors dead, and thus decide for ever the question of 'property.' The wonder, the most unaccountable wonder is the patience wherewith the slaves submit to their callous oppressors; nay more, that black hands should be the wielders of the 'cart-whip,' to inflict cruelty upon fellow-blacks. How brutalizing must be the influence which can thus thoroughly destroy the power of reflection, the power of perceiving that if the blacks were simultaneously to refuse to flay their brethren, flogging must altogether cease, inasmuch as the whites would not be sufficiently numerous even to perform the labour. The mere folding of the arms in passive inaction would be sufficient, yet have not the blacks sufficient energy to bring it to pass. Henry Whiteley, who seems to be a humane man, and whose statements bear internal evidence of their truth, notices a remarkable fact, the gradual hardening of the heart which takes place even in humane people, after becoming familiarized to scenes of cruelty. He describes an overseer, a generally humane man, who

'stood by and witnessed the whole of this cruel operation (flogging young women with a cart-whip on the naked flesh) with as much seeming indifference, as if he had been paying them their wages. I was meanwhile perfectly unmanned by mingled horror and pity.'

This was in Jamaica. Further on Henry Whitely says,

'After a few weeks, although my moral abhorrence of slavery continued to increase, my sensibility to the sight of physical suffering was so greatly abated, that a common flogging no longer affected me to the painful degree that I at first experienced.'

Here then is an argument which might at once weigh even with the selfishness of the whites, against the continuance of slavery, even were there no other argument to adduce. The moral beauty of the character of the white himself is destroyed. He calls himself a Christian, and he goes through a course of self-degradation for the sake of gain, which reduces him from the condition of civilized humanity to that of a ferocious savage. And for the sake of protecting our commerce and our shipping, is this system of iniquity upheld! Verily, it is marvellous, that in the nineteenth

* 'Three Months in Jamaica, in 1832.'

century there should exist men, and men who hold themselves to be of God's making, who possess some power of thinking and reasoning, and who stand forth before the people as their teachers and instructors, and who yet, in the teeth of all reasoning, perversely maintain that the end of human life is not human happiness, but human production; who say, 'protect our commerce and our shipping, even though it be at the cost of converting black men into oxen and mules, and white men into tigers to prey upon them.'

After the general affirmation, that the Antilles can only be profitably wrought by slave-labour, the great argument against setting the slaves free, is the assertion that they will soon follow up their manumission by scenes such as took place at Santo Domingo. As is usual, in all cases of controversy, the abolitionists are inclined to exalt the negroes into angels, the slave-owners to represent them as demons, only to be kept down by severity. That the negroes may one day, when they get more knowledge, cut their masters' throats, is by no means impossible; they have had provocation enough, to tempt even quieter men than they are, to do such a deed long ago; but I do not see that they are much more likely to do it when free, than while they are slaves, for assuredly they will have less temptation, and they may forego something in consideration of the punishment their tyrants will undergo, in being balked of their will. It is possible that the angry feelings of the white masters, and their little power of reasoning, may induce them to insult and abuse the manumitted slaves, just as they insulted Lord Mulgrave, and the new freeman may in consequence feel an itching for vengeance, which may spread at the sight of blood; but this is not altogether certain. Henry Whiteley says,

'The attorney of the estate replied significantly, It is an opinion amongst us, but one which we do not wish to acknowledge, or be known, that *slavery and knowledge are incompatible.*'

This is precisely the conclusion which the Whigs have arrived at in another hemisphere, and therefore they uphold the 'taxes on knowledge.' But both Whigs and slave-holders should recollect, that ignorance alone is untameable, and if the tyrant suffers during the Saturnalia of the slaves, who have newly broken their chain, it is himself alone who is to blame.

Evidence enough has been brought forward to show, that the whites exercise great occasional cruelty towards the negroes, but it is no less certain, that during the partial insurrection which took place some time back, the negroes exercised great cruelty towards the whites. Upon this and similar facts, the anti-abolitionists argue the danger there would be in setting the negroes free. Against these are adduced other facts, tending to show that in various places, free negroes have become good citizens of the

community, and have accumulated 'property,' which last is triumphantly quoted as a proof, beyond all other proofs, of their moral excellence. Nay, still more, some black families in Canada live quite 'respectably,' and actually maintain white free servants in their employment. All this is no doubt very true, but the disputants are involved in a very common error. They take examples of individual negroes, or of small bodies of negroes, and without stating any thing more of their characters, than that they are simply negroes, proceed to reason from such imperfect data, as though the instances they selected were perfect samples of the whole negro population. This is about as accurate as if one were to take an individual of any particular country in Europe, as a sample of the whole European population. There are as many varieties in the negro races, as there are in the European races, and it would be as fair to take a Calmuck as a specimen of the English nation, or a physically perfect Englishman, as a specimen of the Calmuck nation, as it is to argue that the negroes are all bad, because some of them are ferocious, or that they are all good and industrious, because some of them are industrious and have thereupon grown rich. It is much to be lamented, that our data are so very imperfect as to the original peopling of America and the islands with negroes, but what little is known, will at any rate help to throw more light upon the matter in question.

The principal African tribes which have served for the supply of the accursed slave trade, have been the Coromantyns, the Mandingoes, and the Eboes. The former, I have understood, were usually, if not cannibals, closely verging upon that state, and the most ferocious of all the African tribes. They were naturally remarkable for the elongated muzzle, and the low retreating forehead; artificially remarkable for their teeth, which were filed to resemble those of a shark or of a saw, as if for the purpose of seizing their prey; and in addition to this, they were marked with three or four cicatrized gashes at the outer angles of the eyes. The Mandingoes, on the contrary, were a far finer race; they possessed a totally different physiognomy, less of the animal faculties, and more mental skill. They possessed far nobler qualities, and at the same time that they were as brave as the Coromantyns, were far more humane and intelligent. The Eboes neither possessed the intellect of the Mandingoes, nor the ferocity of the Coromantyns. They were mostly patient drudges, after they had got over the pain of their first captivity; not liking work, but stirred to perform it by fear of the whip. These were the negroes who so commonly attempted to drown themselves at sea during the passage, in the expectation that thereby they would get back to their own country. They were also accustomed to kill themselves by eating dirt, and they were the class peculiarly liable to be operated on by the superstition of the Obeah. As the principal

demand for negroes was for the purpose of field labour, it is of course probable, that those fittest for it would fetch the highest prices, and consequently the greatest number of the imports would be Eboes, as being best fitted for a drudgery, which neither the Mandingoes nor the Coromantyns would willingly perform. The Mandingoes were the class who were fittest for house servants, from their superior intelligence, and they were probably employed as such, but there was always a strong feeling of self-respect about them, even though shown in an uncouth fashion, and they were almost useless for field labour. Some of the sugar plantations of the Puertos Intermedios on the coast of the Pacific, between Peru and Chile, were colonized by Mandingoes, and to this day they bear a less price in the market by one-third, than the negroes of Peru. They are considered *mala casta*—a bad race—*i. e.* they will not work freely. Even in the interior provinces of La Plata, a Spanish Creole lady, when angry with her domestic servants, will use the phrase ‘Ah, Mandinga!’ which is considered equivalent to ‘mule.’ The same quality is designated by the name of obstinacy or resolution, according as the act in question may chime in with the wish of the judge, and masters and mistresses are usually accustomed to consider passive obedience as the finest quality either in slave or servant. With regard to the imported Coromantyns, they would be precisely the kind of people likely to be selected for drivers, as coercing the poor Eboes with the whip would be congenial to their dispositions. There surely can be no difficulty in comprehending, that the division of labour in slave countries, was and is regulated upon the same principles as take place in England at the present day, each being set to that for which he is most fitted. Why else is it that certain branches of labour are performed by Irishmen, certain other classes by Scotchmen, and others by Englishmen? Now, though the breeding of the black races in the West India islands has not been under any peculiar regulation, still it is probable that in many cases the qualities of the imported negroes have been preserved pure in their descendants; and we may, therefore, reasonably suppose, that though there are numerous instances of ferocious negroes still existing, and also abundant examples of others possessed of foresight, and consequently capable of ‘getting along’ in the world, the staple of the negroes will still be found to be the indolent and passive Eboes, who only work from necessity. Those who on both sides of the question are so ready with their examples, and so anxious to make a part serve for the whole, would do well to remember the fable of the gold and silver shield. It is much to be regretted that the circumstances of the accursed traffic,—a large portion of it having been smuggling,—should have precluded all chance of our getting accurate information on the subject. In the case of the massacre of Santo Domingo, it is well known that the ferocity of some of the actors was not more remarkable, than the

humanity and fidelity of others. It by no means follows, that because the negro population succeeded in exterminating their white masters, they were therefore all alike ferocious, any more than the fact of the bloodshed enacted at the French revolution is a proof that the whole nation was destitute of humanity. Ferocity is always a proof of energy, and energy misdirected; and we know well how a single energetic man will sometimes lead a whole mass. If a fourth or fifth part of the negroes of Santo Domingo were Coromantyns or Mandingoes, they would have been amply sufficient to coerce the remainder. It is said, and not disproved, that even at the present time a system of forced labour prevails in Santo Domingo. Now if it be so, is it not likely from the foregoing premises that the drivers are the Mandingoe and Coromantyn descendants, and the driven the descendants of Eboes? This matter would be worth ascertaining, and I have no doubt of the result, judging from what I have seen in other countries. Amongst the negroes, as amongst the white races, knowledge is power. The negro settlers in Canada would, without doubt, be found to be of Mandingoe origin. The free negroes found in New York and Philadelphia in prosperous circumstances, are beyond question, physically, a far finer race, than any employed in the slave states, though there are also numerous examples of free negroes who remain in a very miserable condition, as no one will doubt, who has ever travelled in those states of the Union where slavery is on the decline, on account of free labour working it out. The business of the slave, like that of workmen hired by the day or week, is to do as little work as possible for his master, and the only mode to secure industry is to make the reward commensurate with the exertion, as in the case of labour which is contracted for by the piece. Even then, there are numerous human beings like the Eboes, whose inert disposition is such, that in cold countries they confine their exertion to the temporary supply of bare food and clothing, and in warm climates to the food alone. They cannot perceive that there is any utility in the accumulation of what the world calls luxuries. The red Indians of America are of this class; and how does the matter differ from the case of the Turk, who chews his opium to put himself past thinking in a delicious dream, or of the Italian, who reclines in the shade and lauds the *dolce far niente*? ‘Arrah, Dennis!’ said a bricklayer’s labourer to his comrade, while ascending the rounds of a ladder with a hod of mortar, ‘sure and I wish wages was a guinea a day.’ ‘What then, Pat?’ replied his comrade. ‘Sure, then, and it’s only one day in the week I’d work any how.’ A large portion of the inhabitants of the world are thus constituted. They work only because they are obliged. Of this opinion, or rather feeling, are the Eboes and their descendants, who probably comprise the great majority of the West India population; and so remarkably distinct from these people are the better classes of

negroes in the state of New York, that I have known a person who had resided long in the West Indies, stare with astonishment on first beholding the free negroes, who fill the offices of cooks, stewards, and servants on board the American vessels, which frequent the London and Liverpool docks. 'Some of them,' he remarked, 'talk like white people, and look like them in all but their wool, and the colour of their skins.' It is an undoubted fact, that many negroes might be produced superior to many whites in their power of intellect and physical organization; but it will be found, upon examination, that the negroes have been selected from the finest specimens of their race, and the whites from an inferior portion.

The proposition to keep up negro slavery for the sake of procuring sugar cheap—a very questionable matter—and of keeping up our shipping and commerce, is so monstrous, that it cannot be for a moment entertained by any one whose mind is swayed by the principles of justice; it would be seeking a small utility by the perpetration of a monstrous wrong, pregnant with evils far more enduring than the temporary loss of sugar or commerce, even supposing such to be the result. But such would not be the case. West India sugars are only kept in the market by high duties levied upon other sugars; and even though the East India and Brazil sugars be of inferior strength, that is probably only the result of inferior manufacture; and it must be remarked, that that very fact of inferior strength makes the duty still higher, just as a duty of ten shillings per gallon upon alcohol ten per cent. under proof, would be a heavier rate than the same amount per gallon levied on alcohol ten per cent. above proof. Leave the trade free, and it is probable that East India and Brazil sugar would put West India sugar out of the market; and if it be alleged that an improvement might take place in the West India growth and manufacture, there is still the same argument to be applied to the other sugars. If England has excelled in calicoes and silks, on account of the rude state of skill and mechanism in India, it is most probable that the manufacture of sugar may be quite as rude, and Brazil is certainly not the country where the arts have as yet been carried to the greatest pitch of perfection. Now, would not the commerce of Brazil and India afford as much employment for shipping as the commerce of the West Indies? But it would scarcely be a moral thing to purchase the slave-made sugar of Brazil or any other country, after refusing the slave-made sugar of the West Indies. It would be far more desirable to cultivate beets, even though they might yield a worse article, *i. e.* supposing the free-labour East India sugar did not suffice. The slavery must be abolished, that is beyond doubt; it is a *sine qua non*; but if it can be shown that extending the manumission of the slaves over a term of five or six years, so that all might not be turned loose in a single day, but that they might gradually be

prepared by instruction for the advantages of freedom, no rational being would object to it, but it must be shown that such delay would be for the advantage of the slaves themselves, and not for the advantage of the masters. Many of the advocates for abolition are very anxious to prove, that those who now depend upon slave-labour will be quite as well off, so far as pecuniary profits go, after the abolition as before. This cannot be, unless some efficient means shall be found of inducing the negroes to work. At present, it would seem by the evidence, that the whole provision which the slave-owner makes for his slave is some fifty shillings per annum, in clothes, salt-fish, &c., and in addition, the privilege of cultivating a patch of ground to feed himself and family. Therefore, beyond that, all the work which the whip extracts must be clear profit to the planter, if he dispose of its produce. Of course, the amount of labour each man would perform would be less than a free labourer would get through, if united by interest; but then the latter could be paid for, and consequently it would not be profit, or at least but a small proportion of it. But for the reasons before given, the probability is, that the field negroes would not work if they could avoid it. And then comes the question, what in the absence of the whip are the means of impelling them to work? There is but one mode—starving them into it. The land in the West Indies is, I believe, all the property of individual owners, or if not, the ownership must reside in the Crown. There is, therefore, no room for the negroes to “squat,” and thus lead a lazy life, as they would gladly do if let alone, *i. e.* supposing them scrupulously to regard the rights of property. In such a case we may suppose that the landholders would drive them to any terms they might think proper, by depriving them of food, unless they agreed to cultivate sugar. This all sounds very plausibly; but the fact is, that the negroes have no especial regard for the rights of property. Their moral training has not been of the kind likely to inculcate a scrupulous regard to the property of others, when their own property, even in their own bodies, has been disregarded by the whites. Therefore they will only reason upon the obvious principle, that all who exist upon the soil have a claim to be maintained upon the soil, and will not follow it out into those details which may be for the especial advantage of the legal owners of the soil. The legal claim upon them for rent, on account of the land they may occupy, may be undeniable, but who is to enforce the legal sanction if they break the law? They will squat wherever they may find an eligible spot of land, and although a small number might be driven off, who is to drive off a whole population? It would be a more hopeless task than the collection of tithes in Ireland by the military. The negroes would plant their crops in defiance of the law, and who would root them up again? How many troops, how many policemen, would be requisite to maintain the ascendancy of the law under such cir-

cumstances? The sources of quarrel would be innumerable; and no long period could elapse, ere the blacks, emboldened by their newly acquired freedom, would seek to avenge all former cruelties by a general massacre of the whites. And supposing this not to take place, what is there to prevent the blacks, when freed, from leaving the islands, and seeking a land fitter for a lazy life on the Spanish Main or elsewhere? At all events, the ill-regulated minds of the whites, when they are balked of their accustomed arbitrary sway, will not be slow to yield motives for black fury. ‘You think me no man!’ was the exclamation of the poor flogged black described by Henry Whiteley. When he shall be a freeman, he may, perchance, be stirred to try conclusions of a like kind on his former flogger. It seems very probable that the number of troops are likely to need increasing to meet the future demands for coercion, while the revenue to maintain them will be decreasing. It may, perhaps, be deemed advisable to have recourse to the mulatto population as a constabulary force, on the ground of the known hatred subsisting between them and the blacks; but it will be rather a dangerous experiment, for, like all mixed races, they are despised and consequently irritated, by one side, while they are hated by the other, and as a consequence, they hate both, and are not unlikely to set both together by the ears, for the gratification of private vengeance. But each day knowledge will increase amongst the blacks, and as the expense of keeping them down will increase in the same proportion, while the profits will decrease, it will probably at length be taken into consideration whether the West Indies are at all worth maintaining as colonies, whether it would not be better to give them up altogether to the blacks, and try to make a bargain with them for any amount of payment which may be obtained. Much stress has been laid on the advantages to be obtained in the West Indies after the emancipation of the slaves, by improvements in the modes of working, and thus lightening human labour. That there is room for this, no one will doubt, who takes into consideration the fact, that manure—wet dung—is carried to the fields in baskets on negroes’ heads, instead of the obviously improved mode of a cart or even a wheelbarrow. This fact is an evidence of a whole host of coarse and barbarous manipulations, which might be profitably altered. But would they be altered? I scarce think they would. Improvements in manufactures do not advance too rapidly even in England, with a favourable climate for the developement of human energy, and the pressure of population to act as an inducement. How, therefore, is it likely that they will take place in a climate which is proverbially adverse to energetic exertion, either of body or mind? But supposing this difficulty overcome, the West India islands have still other difficulties to contend with; they are old soils, and consequently not so luxuriant as the new soils of America and India. They are of limited extent, and

the number of white families to be maintained from them have increased in the usual ratio, so that the pressure of the idle population against the means of subsistence has been felt there as well as in other parts of the earth. Hence it is that West Indians have ceased to be so 'generous' as formerly. But there is still another disadvantage. Hitherto they have produced the strongest sugar, and this probably is on account of their better modes of preparing it, which Brasil and the East Indies have yet to fall back upon. Both these latter sugars are prepared by the process of claying, *i. e.* they are partially refined by discharging the molasses on clay, and it is probable that it is this very process which destroys or carries off much of the saccharine principle, leaving the sugars of less strength. Mr. Cropper, in his pamphlet, alludes to the claying of sugars in Brazil and Cuba as if it were an advantage, but this must be a mistake. It is but a rude mode of refining for their own use, and for Spain and Portugal, which have no refiners, and whose inhabitants would not use the sugar in the coarse brown form of the West Indies. But when refining by the best processes, such as are used for loaf-sugar, shall become customary in Brazil* and the East Indies, which will be the case before any long period elapses, the West Indian sugars will, as to price, be put out of the market. If then these statements be correct, it would seem that there will be little chance of profit for West Indian proprietors, after the emancipation of the slaves shall have taken place, though upon the whole the probability is, that no massacre of the whites is likely to happen, as in Santo Domingo. But emancipation *must* take place, and the next question is, how it may be arranged to produce the most favourable results to the blacks, while avoiding all needless injury to the whites.

It has by many been laid down as a principle, that in case of the emancipation of the slaves, their masters will be entitled to compensation for their pecuniary loss, as a matter of right; and some even argue, that the slave ought to work out his own ransom by his own labour. Those who hold the latter opinion, would seem rather to argue in favour of the interest of the slave-holders, than in accordance with the principles of justice. It seems rather strange that because the slave has been stolen, he should be additionally punished for the crime of another, so soon as the theft is acknowledged. The contrary would rather seem to be the

* A supply of sugar from Brazil for any long period is however very problematic. The population is, I believe, three millions of blacks to a million and a half of whites. The latter a mixed breed of varying grades between European, Portuguese, and the old Brazilian cannibals. Several indications of latent ferocity have appeared in the course of the revolutionary struggles. The negro slaves are also aware that their brethren in the neighbouring Spanish Colonies have been emancipated, and it requires no power of prophecy to foresee, that with such a *materiel* any popular convulsion in Brazil, when once fairly set going, will be terrific in its effects. The state of society in Brazil is a human volcano, requiring a very slight additional ingredient to put it in action.

case, and he might fairly demand compensation for all the labour previously forced from him. And those who argue, that as emancipation is a thing put in force for the benefit of the nation, the nation is thereby bound as a matter of right to be at all the expense of compensation, are also wrong in principle. The nation, it is true, made laws, which permitted the possession of slaves, and the operations consequent upon their possession, and laws also have been made authorizing the possession of land. When the nation takes the land of individuals for the national use, compensation is made; but in this case the article in question is turned to the profit of the nation. In the case of the slaves, it is not a seizure of property, but merely a restitution to the slave of that freedom of which he had previously been unjustly deprived. But though the slave-holders have no legal or moral claim to compensation, as a matter of right, they have a claim to consideration on the score of humanity and of public utility. They also have sustained an injury by the operation of mischievous laws. They have been induced to embark property in stolen goods, which goods the law had led them to believe were honestly come by, and they have moreover suffered a consequent demoralization, which has unfitted them to get a living in other ways. It would be unjust and cruel to turn out disbanded soldiers or sailors to starve, and ruined slave-owners would be in the same condition. Those who acknowledge the force of this argument, allege that they are only entitled to workhouse allowance, but this would only be another form of cruelty. In speaking of those who will suffer pecuniary distress by emancipation, I do not allude to the residents on the islands, the overseers and attorneys, and the whole tribe of actual negro coercers, who are for the most part coarse-minded people, without claims upon the property, and quite capable of procuring their own subsistence by other employments. The proprietors of West India estates are rarely residents upon them. They are for the most part in the situation of the Irish absentee proprietary. I believe it will be found that there are few cases of large incomes arising to individual proprietors from this source—the attorneys and agents are the principal gainers. Probably there are many instances of families who are barely supported, by incomes of from one to three hundred pounds per annum, and who have been in the habit of receiving their quarterly payments, as others do from the public funds, without exactly knowing by what process they came to them, beyond the hands of the clerk or merchant who was the immediate agent. These then are the people who would suffer, and to turn whom upon the parish would be extreme cruelty. Now, if compensation is to be given to them,—and humanity imperatively requires it—the amount should be regulated by the diminution of income they may sustain in consequence of emancipation, and not according to the arbitrary value which may be set upon each slave according to the notion of the valuers,

and who seem to go upon no fixed principle, some saying 80*l.*, some 40*l.*, and some 25*l.* per head. If the estates be rendered utterly valueless, and the income entirely lost, then humanity would dictate compensation to that amount. But if it could be shown that under the present system no profit whatever were accruing to the proprietors, then the proprietors would not be entitled to claim a single farthing on the score either of humanity or justice. They would be in a situation similar to that of a man who might wish to claim an enormous sum for a piece of worthless land standing in the line of a new road. If they get no profit by holding negroes in slavery, they would be no worse off in case of emancipation. I believe it will be found in practice, that the principal profits of the estates go into the pockets of the people employed on the estates, from the attorney downwards, and that the system is of that nature which the owners cannot alter. It is a common saying that the agent or attorney of a West India estate drinks champagne, but the owner must put up with small beer. If this be so, the matter would not be very difficult to solve. The attorney would scarcely have the impudence to talk of a vested right, and the owner might reasonably be satisfied if he were no worse off than before. Let the actual losses of the owners be proved, and payment made, not as a fictitious loan, but as a free gift,—not as a claim of right, but as a provision of humanity.

The speech of Mr. Stanley, in which he propounded his plan, is remarkable for its profusion of pompous verbiage, and the absence of sound logical inference. A disposition to laud the charlatan Canning, and drag him in as a constant reference, is its great peculiarity. Mr. Stanley seems inclined to swear by him on all occasions, and verily it is like master like man. So crude a concoction has rarely before been brought forward. The only good feature about it, with regard to adults, is, that it makes the slave at least one fourth free, but for that fourth the people of England are to pay a consideration of fifteen millions sterling,—but mark the swindle—the Whig ‘expedients!’ It is not a payment but a *loan*. As if there were any security in the West Indies to enforce the repayment of the loan! Dishonest pretext is remarkable in all that the Whigs do. Then again the negro is expected to pay the price of his own body before he can be free, and a tolerably high price it is set at. But he is no longer to be a slave forsooth! Oh no! an apprentice is the term. Heaven save the mark! It is true he must work his whole time for twelve years, or he will remain a slave at the end of that period, but not a vestige of his earnings becomes his own.* Three fourths of his time he is to work for his master in consideration of the food and necessaries with which he may be furnished, *i. e.* salt fish and

* Those who are learned in ministerial intentions say that it is intended to give the slave the profits of his earnings. This may or may not be. I can of course only reason from the public documents, which do not seem to me to warrant any such inference.

clothing to the amount of fifty shillings per annum, and permission to cultivate a patch of waste land in his own time. At the rate at which free labour is paid—three and fourpence per day*—the value of three fourths of a year's labour is nearly forty pounds, and this is to be given to the master as a compensation for food and clothing worth fifty shillings. Then the fourth part of the slave's labour for twelve years, *i. e.* three whole years' labour, equivalent to one hundred and fifty pounds sterling, is to be paid by the slave for the property of the remaining three fourths of his body, at a time when the full value of a slave in the market of Charlestown is only eighty pounds sterling. In addition to this, the slave apprentice, or apprentice slave, is still to be eligible to the usual amount of cart-whip lashes, but with the difference that the magistrate and not the master is to lay them on. In all cases a provision is made to maintain the cart-whip, both by the ministerial abolitionists, and by the slave-owners; a strong proof this that it is not calculated on the negro yielding much work by any other stimulus. Now, if it be determined by those who, in courtly phrase, guide his Majesty's councils, that each negro is to produce his master some forty-five pounds per annum for twelve years, one would imagine that the 'compensation' would be sufficiently ample without coming to the people of England for fifteen millions sterling as a loan, or a gift, or for a gift of twenty millions, as is now proposed. But perhaps it is in contemplation to make a handsome job of the distribution, which may run over as many years as the business of the Nabob of Arcot, which served to provide for so many dependents of those in power. Even in the case of the negro children under six years of age, who are to be declared free, a provision is made to watch the improvidence of their parents, and to seize the first opportunity of again making them slaves under the name of apprentices, the males for eighteen, and the females for fourteen years, to the masters of their parents. A goodly temptation this to the masters, to encourage profligate habits in their adult negroes, and thus secure them a constant supply of youthful slave-labour without wages. Mark the glaring injustice of the clauses! First of all, the slave must for twelve years give up his whole time to his master, if he is to become a freeman, yet he is to be at all the expense of maintaining his free offspring, or they will again become slaves, under the name of apprentices, for a long term of years. The twenty millions sterling talked of as a compensation, must be far beyond the value of the slaves; and if this money is to be paid to the slave-owners, there can no longer be any pretext for keeping the negro in bondage, at least for the profit of his master. If he works at all upon compulsion, his earnings ought to be applied

* I have taken Lord Howick's estimate, but I should think it much too high. Probably he takes the skilled labour of mechanics and domestic negroes, hired by the day, as a standard. The coarse labour of field negroes cannot be worth so much, or it is evident that very large fortunes must have been realized.

to his own benefit. But beyond this, it seems there is to be an appointment of stipendiary magistrates, judges, police, moral and religious teachers, and others, under the control of his Majesty, by which fresh expenses will be incurred, and some considerable amount of jobbery, all of which must come out of the pockets of the English nation. The whole plan, in short, is crude and ill-digested. It is the work of a shallow brain ; but little else could have been expected from a man like Mr. Stanley, more anxious to make a display for the purpose of setting people on to stare, as at the tricks of a mountebank, than to consider wisely and dispassionately, and to avail himself of every means of procuring knowledge. His whole endeavour seems to have been to show in how short a time he could cut the Gordian knot of the slavery question, which has originated so many disputes.

Since writing the above, three clauses of the Bill have passed, and with such large majorities, that I may assume that his Majesty's Ministers will have it all their own way without further opposition. The clauses are, first, that the slaves are to remain slaves, and eligible to the magistrate's whip under the name of apprentices. Secondly, That twenty millions of pounds sterling are to be paid to those who call themselves the West India interest, by way of a sop to stop their mouths, and without any consideration of how it is to be raised, and within what time. The third clause is, that the English people are to be at the expense of maintaining magistrates, judges, teachers, police, and troops, all at the disposal of his Majesty's Ministers, with, of course, the usual amount of jobbery, which is the pest of all public business. Mr. Wason moved as an amendment. that the whole expense should be met by a tax on property, but this, as a matter of course, was instantly scouted by all 'respectable' men.

The apprenticeship, as before shown, is merely a change of names, for the purpose of ensuring to the masters twelve years of hard labour from all slaves above six years of age, and a provision has been made also, to visit any improvidence of the father upon the children, by making them slaves for a large portion of their lives, thus making it the evident interest of the master to encourage improvidence in his slaves. This apprenticeship therefore, if the data I have taken be correct, is far more than sufficient to enable the master to extract from the carcass of the slave the market value of it, as the biped brute which the slave-owners have commonly considered him. If therefore the system be carried into action, there is no pretext for asking a single shilling of compensation from the English nation. If compensation be granted by the English nation, then there is no pretext for forcing it a second time out of the labour of the negro himself. The only pretext after that, for keeping him in subjection at all, whether under the name of a slave or an apprentice, must be his own benefit. Therefore, the whole of his earnings should be applied to his own

benefit, and out of that fund should come the expenses of judges, magistrates, police, teachers, troops, &c., as well as poor's rates for infants, and the unfortunate destitutes, who cannot be many in a land where to scratch the earth is to produce a crop.

Much talk has been bandied about the value of the West India colonies to England; but the fact is, that so far as any pecuniary advantage is concerned, it would be a fortunate thing for England if the whole of the Antilles were sunk beneath the waters of the Atlantic. People talk of the sugar trade, and ask with the utmost simplicity what we should do without sugar? The answer to this is, if the Antilles did not produce it, other parts of the world would. And what if there were no sugar at all? There was an age in the world when people had it not, and yet contrived to grow up tall, and straight, and goodly; and it is scarcely to be supposed, that the world would be extinguished, even though the sugar-cane were totally lost. Besides, the world is older than it was, and were sugar suddenly to vanish from us under the present processes, it would be so desirable a thing to regain it, that chemists would set to work with the prospect of an enormous gain before them, in case they could produce a substitute. At one time it was prophesied that the French nation could no longer carry on war for want of salt-petre, but they eventually found a remedy; and such will be the case with sugar whenever human beings shall resolve that they will not destroy their bodies prematurely, by the cultivation and preparation of a gigantic grass. As a matter of mere interest, therefore, the wisest thing England could do, would be to withdraw her troops, and leave both whites and blacks in the West Indies to settle their quarrels as they best could; but the question is not one of interest, but of humanity, and for the sake of humanity it is, that Englishmen will be willing to add to their burdens by the payment of fresh taxes if necessary. But it would be the act of fools, to suffer themselves to be cheated and plundered, for the gratification of Mr. Stanley's arbitrary insolence. Twenty millions sterling, though voted by the House of Commons in breathless haste, must not be paid away without knowing to whom, and whether fairly or not, amongst the numberless hands which will be stretched out to receive, while the corresponding mouths will still cry 'Give, give,' like the daughters of the horse-leech. The only claimants who will be entitled to attention, are the *bonâ-fide* proprietors and mortgagees, and they must be compensated in the proportion of the profits which they were actually making, and not by the nominal value of their property. They could not have increased the amount by their own energies; and they are not entitled to claim any thing on account of what their agents annually plundered from them. What they actually *had* under the existing system, and not what they *might have had* under a better system, must be the rule to go by.

The compensation, or rather the act of charity, being then

agreed to, the slaves should be considered as freed, and they should only be restrained from the full exercise of freedom by those means which are evidently conducive to their own interest. It would most likely be a mischievous thing to turn loose in a single day a whole population of slaves. Their gambols would be rather unwieldy, and perhaps mischievous; but how must it be arranged, to decide which should be freed first? Reason would point to the aged, because the older the slave is, the less time has he for enjoyment. The glaring defect of Mr. Stanley's apprentice scheme is, that the old men may be dead before they can reap any benefit from it, which is a great hardship. I would propose then that all field negro slaves above the age of forty-five should at once be set free, and that five years should be the maximum of restraint upon the remainder, but all should be freed as fast as they attained the age of forty-five years. In addition to these, there would be no harm resulting from at once setting free all slaves above the age of twenty-one years, who may have been brought up to mechanical trades, or to domestic service, because the fact of having been so brought up, implies a superior power of intellect, and the consequent possession of forethought. The remaining slaves should then be obliged to work for wages, if any means short of the whip could be found, and the experiment would be fairly tried, whether they would be voluntarily industrious or not. The wages they might earn, should have a portion deducted from them as a tax for the expenses of government, and above all, *schools*; and the labour of the free slaves might also be taxed, through the agency of those who might employ them. As an additional inducement to labour, Savings' Banks might be established for the receipt of their earnings, and those who might accumulate money the most rapidly, should thereby hasten the term of their manumission, and this upon a graduated scale. By this process the actual state of the negro intellect might be ascertained and classified. Probably the best persons to fill the offices of teachers and local magistrates, would be the missionary preachers, simply from the fact that they have gained the confidence of the negroes, by suffering persecution in their cause. I confess that my knowledge of the negro character, so far as I have had the opportunity of observing it, does not lead me to expect much from the mass in the way of forethought, but the means I have stated seem to be the most likely to draw it forth, if it exists in any quantity. The present mode of apprenticeship places emancipation at such an indefinite period, so far as negro intellect is concerned, that I much fear the apparent giving, and real withholding of freedom, will be misunderstood by the negroes, that they will fancy the King has given them freedom, which their masters unjustly withhold. They will in consequence refuse to work, as in the case of the former insurrection, and all will break forth in broil, perchance to terminate in a more fearful result. *Mais nous verrons.*

June 12, 1833.

JUNIUS REDIVIVUS.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF PEL. VERJUICE.

CHAPTER III.

MY FIRST PLAY.

Look closer to 't: you make the evil first;
 A base, then pile a heap of censures on it.
 'Tis your own sin supplies the scaffolding
 And mason work: you, skilful, rear the grim,
 Unsightly fabric; and there point, and say
 'How ugly is it.' You meanwhile forget
 'Tis your own handywork. I could say more;
 But there's a check within: 'tis such an one,
 As you, I trow, have banished from its birth-place.

OLD PLAY, (very scarce, 'marked in the Catalogue,
RRRR: which signifieth rarissimus.')

'Oh, Pylades, what's life without a friend?' Shall I ever forget these words, or the clear, ringing voice—a voice, which in its character was neither trumpet nor bell, but a compound of both, mellowing into each other—which first conveyed these words to my ear? No; and less probable is it that I shall lose the power of re-creating every circumstance, form and colour, order and arrangement, of the occasion on which I heard them. I am sure it is less desirable; when this light of eye fades, and this vigour of imagination and reflection falters, may I— *—fiat voluntas tua!* How came I, for the first time, how came I ever to 'go to a play?' There were about me those who would have deemed I was rushing headlong into the gate 'opposite to St. Peter's,' if I entered the doors of a theatre. Yet I did go. All the world was wide staring at a wonder; all the world professed to see miraculous genius in a boy: there were, indeed, a few exceptions, a few questioners, but they were scouted as morose or envious; and the gaping curiosity of the world dilated my eyes with desiring astonishment. I could and did wish, but dared not hope for, the gratification: and with what a heartfull of swelling delight and impatience, and impulsive thankfulness, did I receive my uncle's permission, unsolicited, garnished by a gallery ticket, to go and see the 'young Roscius.' I lost not a minute ere I carried the joyful intelligence to my father; who, let the truth be spoken, entertained notions of a different complexion on this 'opposite to St. Peter's' mischief: he was almost as joyous as I was, in the anticipation of the impression and pleasure I should receive, and added a shilling for fruit between the acts; and, 'Well, you'll come and tell me all about it next Sunday.' The intervening twenty-four hours were the most wearisome and sense gnawing I ever knew. I rolled from side to side, shifting my position every five minutes during the unslept night; and all next day the fingers of the clock were the laziest pieces of machinery that ever were invented: the sun was stupified, he was a laggard, and seemed

to loll and lounge on his journey, verily as if to torment and laugh at me. After a long, long, long watch of outstretched, provokingly prolonged minutes, four o'clock did come; two hours previous to the opening of the doors, three before the rising of the curtain: and forth I sallied, stepping, no, vaulting on air. On my arrival near the theatre, I saw a compact wall of thirty yards length, and fifteen feet breadth, built up of human bodies, close, compact, wedged, and welded: the owner of each particle fearful of slipping an inch in retrograde, or of being squeezed a hair's breadth out of the line. I lodged my diminutive substance in the mass. It was a blazing day in June. Oh, my masters, I was soaked! but I bore it like a hero, as most heroes bear hardships. I had a glory in view, and flinched not at the squeezing and sweltering. I have lost all this courageous endurance latterly. I could no more find patience to wait two hours now for the opening of the theatre's doors, than I could find the centre of gravity by boring for it with a gimlet; yet my love of the drama is stronger than ever: but on the occasion to which I am now your index, reader, all, every thing was new, of mind-exciting, soul-captivating, body-panoplying character. The very sky over my head seemed made for, and it did perform the office of, friendly participation in my senses: it communicated an encouraging, smiling, sympathizing brightness to my delight. I was in a bath of perspiration and bliss. I was part, yet single, of the mass assembled for the same object, urging to the same goal. Each individual was a portion of myself; I loved them all; they assisted me in my enjoyment; they aided me in the expectation of which they were themselves full; and the two hours ran away unperceived by me: the knowledge that they had passed was communicated by the bending and heaving of the wall, which drove itself inwards by its own invisible and internal machinery; the secret chain was one soul linked to and coursing through five hundred bodies; the billowing mass lifted me from my feet, and carried me, resistless and effortless, to within the **MAGICAL DOORS**. The same power bore me on to a sort of pigeon-hole, in which I deposited my ticket and received a copper check; my visit to the pigeon-hole was not of three seconds' duration, but I found opportunity to be struck with the peering, keen, mechanical abstraction of look in the man who received my ticket. It was a species of human being that I had never before recognised, and I had him down instantly on my tablets; (those malleable iron ones of which I spoke in my first chapter; being rather vain of the phrase I remind you of it, reader.) Away from the pigeon-hole, and I ran, leaped, and pushed, and panted up the endless, countless, and tantalizing stairs. At length I was **IN THE THEATRE!** I started back at sight of the steep, almost precipitous declivity: it seemed like a hill with its components and fragments, creeping, leaping, falling, rolling, rumbling, and settling down in the dying

labours of an earthquake, though masses, for a whole half hour, continued tumbling into place, till all was settled in a firm and compact body. The deep roar of the many hundreds of voices, here and there one rising into a scream, at first appalled, then left me to a tumult of wonder, and bewildering, breathless intensity of eye and ear. There, directly beneath my gaze, was the large, sacred, green veil, behind which the mysterious preparations were then in state of progress. What a sublimity of office was in that baize curtain! With what dignified composure, what Jupiterian equanimity did that curtain look forth its authority, its command that the sacred precincts which it guarded, the hallowed rites which it concealed, should not be profanely penetrated! Heroes and demi-gods, and Ida's beauteous queens were there, robing for the festival! An after and less reverential acquaintance with these affairs, told me there was a drawing on of flesh-coloured legs; a tugging at gilt leather breast-plates; a tying of lambrequins; a buckling of sandals; a proper adjusting of certain padding; corking and india-inking of eye-brows and whiskers, and a breeding of roses on the cheeks, by the marriage of a hare's foot with red lead, and a thousand other mortal earthlinesses too tedious to mention. But of all these I saw nothing now: blessed state of innocence! The deities were smiling at each other, as they sipped their nectar, and inhaled ambrosial essences. I feasted in stillness on the exhilarating idealities, and sat in unbreathing ecstasy. Ha! look! look there! a face and two Olympian fingers opening and peeping through a crevice in that sacred curtain! Most happy and envied, most privileged of beings! who and what art thou? Thought is more speedy than speech; I had time to think this, not to speak it, for instantly there was an outbursting of noises; such—'my young remembrance could not parallel a fellow to' them—such as forced me out of my feelings of worship and venerating curiosity. They were compounded of hiss, growl, snarl, whoop, yell; 'Off, off;' 'Ya a a a h—ya a a ah! off, off!' Cats, dogs, geese, serpents, bears, brayers, wolves, owls, and rooks were at once tearing their throats with warring discord on my stunned and confounded ears: but the face and fingers, after an exhibition of a phalanx of teeth by the former, withdrew, and the hallowed orifice closed. Now my eyes turned to survey and revel through the capacious, deep, gorgeous, gilded, and emblematically painted—room? no; not room. It was a mountain scooped out from summit to base, and caverned in its bosom; and the blue and fleecy sky overhead, the roof being coloured to represent a canopy of bright day; all arranged with seats, bowery and flowery, on which a thousand tinted streaks, and dots of shrubs and verdure rested. But the shrubs and flowers were most inharmonious, and for heat, it was a blast furnace in Guinea! the hollow of Etna was breezy and cooling rather than that. The noise was deafening and tremen-

dous; but amid the din I caught the indistinct twanging and crashing of musical instruments, and looking, I saw, far beneath me, near the foot of that magnanimous green curtain, some fifty arms jerking, and as many heads bobbing and rocking, with delirious earnestness and furious rapidity: there was a regiment of violins undergoing military torture at one and the same moment. This I afterwards learned was called the orchestra. There was a magical and mysterious influence in that indistinctness of sound, which grappled at my imagination, as the splashes of light, in measureless distance, in Martin's pictures, have since grappled it. At once, as if some spell had struck every heart, and bound mute and motionless every voice and limb, there was a dead stillness. This sudden and instant calming of the tempest was positively awful and sublime. I trembled: and noiselessly, grandly, and slowly the cloud of curtain rose up, up, and vanished. Then, oh, then! on my enchanted eyes grew forth a magnificent palace, interminable in colonnades, and sacred with recesses, stretching far, far, far into distance; thence the mellow effulgence of an ethereal splendour subdued, drew the imagination on to an everlastingness of melodious and flowery elysium. Paint, canvass, and brushes, glory to ye! In quick retrogression the eye stepped on the gorgery of the marble columns, and over their sculptured and trophied decorations, then took their impatient rest on the space between the stream of light on the verdant floor, and the nearest range of pillars. From opposite portals, two beings stepped lightly and gracefully forward, till they met. Not yet; for the instant a sandalled foot from one was visible at the verge of the mystic recess, the mountain shook with the thunder which at once, in one passionate and headlong peal, rattled and echoed, and rolled from its summit, sides, and hidden depths beneath me! It was the collision of four thousand palms, many of them as horny as a horse's hoof, the beating of so many feet with simultaneous, constant strokes, and the volleying of two thousand voices in 'Bravo! bravo! bravo!' all in exact unison of burst. What a moment was that for the young and beautiful stripling, a juvenile deity descended, who stood, and bent a graceful acceptance of the homage! Again and again the thunder rose and rolled, and again the boy-god bowed. Yet was there another being, an elder, still a youth, standing near him, retired back a step or two: he stood erect and beautiful; he bowed not; he felt the homage was not to him; he was deaf and absent to it all; he was still Mr. King, spite of his sandals, tunic, and peplum. The uproar melted into air; the last rumble of the thunder sank down, down, down from a murmur to a sigh; then to unheard, suppressed breath; deep, deep, intense stillness: and I heard the voice of that rare creature, if creature he could be, musically syllable forth the words, 'Oh, Pylades! what's life without a friend?' In that vast assemblage of men,

women, and youths, of different degrees, temperament, and character, the rough and the courtly, the rude and the refined, the semi-savage and the delicate, the educated and the illiterate, the turbulent and the meditative, the timid and the tipsy: not a whisper, not a breathed sound curled on the atmosphere to disturb the adoring silence; there was a tranquillity as perfect as in the stars, the quiet of a moonray sleeping on, and borne about by, a vivified statue. Oh, how I was enthralled, enchanted, spell-wrought, by what I saw and heard! With utter unconsciousness of myself I arose and bent forward, with outstretched arms, as if to fly whither I was irresistibly and dreamingly drawn, when a jerk at my coat tail, and a voice in anger's shrillness, crying 'Cawn't ye sit deawn? y'ore rucking my geawn'd,' drew me back. Oh, what a hurling down from the heaven of imagination was that! 'Gi that gewee some woots! turn um hout! throw um hover!' screamed and bellowed from every side, and a thousand heads and as many pair of exasperated eyes were directed towards me. 'Oh, that this too, too solid flesh would thaw and resolve itself into a dew!' (I had read Hamlet) was my prayer. I was steeped, saturated, parboiled in a caldron of shame. I was for some moments in a state of utter annihilation: but the storm died away, peace returned, and with it my fixedness of eye and devouring of ear. I was forgotten, praise be to the saints! and the splendid phantasma proceeded. The play-bill, which was crushed and doubled up to a hazel-nut's bulk by this time, had told me that Pylades was Mr. King, Orestes 'by the young Roscius'. Then came the deep-toned, stately Pyrrhus, a metempsychosis of Mr. Barrymore, or Mr. Barrymore a metempsychosis of Pyrrhus: take your choice, reader; yet I offer another version of the 'say,' I think Mr. Barrymore was himself all the while. Heavens! what majesty of step! Oh, reader, if you are very young, you can form no idea of it, unless you have seen Liston in Lord Grizzle, or Jack Reeve in Abrahamides; no disparagement to Barrymore though; he was as good as nine-tenths of his day: that 'stage tread' is obsolete now; but how it was bepraised and beworshipped by your papa and mamma! The legs superlatively proud of bearing such a body, the feet speaking their conscious dignity of belonging to the legs, each wrinkle in the stocking's instep and ham seemed to say 'how all these people are admiring me!' There were guards, and battle-axes, and shields, and spears, and a throne! Lawks me! I had never seen a throne before; that is to say, a real, genuine, bona-fide throne, nothing but pictures of them in books. Sir reader, I would have sacrificed my dinner every day for the next month, even to have touched one of those blessed battle-axes, or to have clutched the shaft of one of those honoured spears! But the men that bore them! Oh! to their glorious state, ambition could not dream of aspiring! Then the ladies, the angels, the deesses,

for such to me they were, to be gazed on only at a distance, unapproachable and immaculate! How beautiful! how very, very beautiful they were, indeed they were, whether you call them women or goddesses! how much more than lovely! Mortality's touch, or the voice or breath of earthliness would have blasphemed them. Yet the play-bill informed me that Hermione, the Juno, the tornado queen, Hermione was ycleped by mortals *Mrs. Johnstone*, and the tearful, sad, and fond, and graciously tender Andromache, was grossly called *Miss Norton*, and that both were real women! But I would not, I could not believe it, even though the white cambric handkerchief of the latter told me it had just left the profane hands of the laundress, it was folded so neatly: and how prettily those pretty fingers unfolded it to my view, and exhibited the nice rectangular creases ere it was lifted to those glorious eyes to wipe away the tears which did not glisten there! Ah me! if I had carried a hundred hearts under my waistcoat, they would all have jumped out and yielded themselves captives, willing, joyous captives. But bless you, reader! I have been in like predicament a hundred times since; black, brown, fair, and coppery, all have held me in their thralls, and, as I thought with each, past escape. It is all over now, and I am as free as a weathercock. How I followed every step and waving of the arms with my earnest gaze, or I endeavoured to do so! but I was somewhat perplexed to look at two at once. How every word and every tone trickled through my ears and dropped into my heart! all was delicious, soul-elevating, and soul-subjugating enchantment! except between the acts; and then I was reminded that I was an earthly gallerian, that all around me were earthly. It would be almost profanation of the subject to turn to the occurrences of the evening pending these intervals; it was a matter of astonishment to me, that the impressions which I took, and which all seemed to take, could be so easily thrown away. Amid the general clapping of hands, and thumping with sticks, and beating with hoofs, that followed any thing which pleased or struck the multitude, I was dumb and motionless; I had no power to bring the palms of my hands in collision; the *vis insita* slept; mind had ceased to act on the body. There was one sympathetic and simple creature sitting next to me (not the one whose 'geawnd I had rucked') motionless and mute as myself, but she found breath to whisper to me, 'Are they alive?' alluding to the beings on the stage. 'Oh, yes,' was all my reply, glad to give the information, and not a jot surprised at the question. But between the acts I was really agonized; what with the ugly change and impatience for the elevation of the cruel act drop-scene, I could scarcely endure myself. There was whistling and shouting, and hallooing to acquaintances, and cork drawing, all in a moment from the descent of the act drop: ay, ere it had closed the view in entirely, the villany began; and

this from the very persons, who, a second or two ago, were sitting with such hungry stillness and greedy attention! What are they made of? This was interstitial misery; but delight and ecstasy, choking, suffocating ecstasy, again took possession of me, as the compassionating screen withdrew its presence. What a bliss is ignorance! I am quite certain I could not now be bribed to sit through the play of 'Orestes, or, the Distrest Mother,' as it was acted on that evening: every thing was faultless, beautiful, divine then, because I had thought no more about the matter; I had examined no further into the qualities of acting, and materials and workmanship, than the rest of the public, those who are in the habit of deciding the fate of a histrionist. In short, I had not learned to find fault. The star, the wondrous magnet of the evening, the being who drew the *enthusiastic* multitude to gaze on him, was he who figured as Orestes: but it was Andromache that stood pre-eminent with me, sweet, tender, and soul-dissolving in my sight. Folks said Hermione was the finest; she may have been; but I have ever had an instinctive aversion to a virago, whether in brocade and lace and diamonds, silk or ginghams, or in linsey-woolsey, but the most horrible of these horrors, is a *genteel* virago! Where was Astyanax for whom she feared and grieved? What a blessed child was that for whom *she* moaned and wept! And I heard Pyrrhus tell her, ten times at least, with boisterous, bullying condescension, that he loved her, and I disliked Mr. Barrymore, and this too without loving Miss Norton.

Would that this could last for ever! I wished. Oh! how I dreaded, whenever my thoughts turned to realities, how I dreaded the termination, the shutting up of this enchantment! The prospect of the curtain falling, people all going away, lights extinguished, and the 'counting house!'

'Madam, 'tis done, your orders are obeyed;
The tyrant lies expiring at the altar!'

said the boyish-murderer; urged by the o'er-mastering passion for her who advised the act; while his mind shook in terror at the raging impulses of his heart. How I trembled too! Such was the point, the precise moment in that engrossing incident, when a loud 'Ho, Lord, oh!—ho, moy hoy! moy hoy!' broke the dense and dumb mass of spectators into another commotion of heaving, tossing, and yelling. It was not my doing this time, but I felt the burning of shame again upon me. 'What's the matter?' and heedless of shins, shoulders, and heads, down plunged a constable to the quarter from which the disturbing cry uprose. There stood Hermione and Orestes, waiting neither patiently nor complacently, I ween, but striving to personify both, till it pleased the inferior deities above that their regalities should proceed in their hot debate. 'Hallo! what's the matter here? Come out;' in the

meekness of a mastiff's growl, said constable, at the same instant gripping the collar of the crier, who, with his left hand comforting his sinister eye, stood two benches below me,—‘Come out.’ ‘Why it was that chap, yander—’twarn’t my fault: ee ull’ed a big gewzbree at me, un uz ot me a gob o’ the hoy, and welly blinded me.’ (This is a sample of the English I was set to learn, in obliteration of my native tongue, vide chap. i.) Remonstrance was useless; the constable was obdurate, energetic in his office; and upwards, up the hill of legs and paunches, arms and heads, remorseless of the discomfiture of many a shawl, the damage of sundry white cottons, and the ‘rucking’ of countless or uncounted ‘*geawnds*,’ he dragged the offended offender, he ousted the man of the wounded optic. Quiet once more: and presently all eyes and heads were pointed as before the ‘row began.’ Hermione and Orestes, by a clapping of hands, were informed that they might now proceed. I was throughout so earnest in my attention, so fixed in my gaze, and took impressions of all I saw and heard, so acutely and deeply, that I am sure I could have marshalled every step of foot, position of body, and motion of arm. I could have coursed over every tone of voice which I heard that night, for years afterwards. I felt everything, that is, I understood everything, except that which was most uproariously applauded, that which was clapped and ‘bravoed’ by the audience most vehemently—the *mad scene*. Young and ignorant as *I* was, I felt sorry that it was done. I scarcely know how to describe what I thought of it, but the best I can say is, it seemed to be the action and manner of a man who, tired of a task in which it was necessary to assume an appearance of grave earnestness against the grain, was resolved to put an end to the matter by making bombastic fun of it. I saw the same character performed by Booth, at Charleston, in South Carolina, in 1821,* and recollected every

* Booth was an extraordinary man, a truly great actor, let others say what they will. He was no man’s second. Neither was he a copyist, as he was denounced for being. Booth could not ‘imitate.’ Whoever talks of *models*, or of *schools* in acting, or adopts the principle of their need or utility, I voluntarily pronounce to be altogether ignorant of the spirit of dramatic illustration. In its operation, acting makes no reference to memory: the instant memory is taxed, the spirit flies. Kind-hearted reader, (for I begin to find out who are my readers, and I may so, safely, address them,) if you will not take this from me, pray accept it from Pope:

‘When memory prevails,
The solid force of understanding fails.’

A repetition of reflections is mere mimicry. Booth’s acting was a pervasion of mind in the entirety of corporeal functions: it was thought dashing its influence to every nerve, and nerve sending back to the thought, an increased tenacity. His acting was imagination of the highest order, intensely physicalized. Hear Pope again:

‘When beams of warm imagination play,
The memory’s soft figures melt away.’

Booth’s failing, I fear, was a deficiency of moral strength: he could not battle with and overcome the assaults of mortification and disappointment: they bore too hard upon his nature: he had not the elasticity and rebound which are necessary in that combat.

movement of Master Betty. Booth made me shudder in the *mad scene*. It is by a reference to these engravings on my memory, that I can assure myself the acting which I then marvelled at, and thought, (that is to say, believed,) there was not much thinking in the matter, 'I took it as the vulgar do,' so fine, was really bad. Perhaps I may be permitted to dilate on this subject hereafter; at present suffice it to say, that acting is a very different thing to that which it is *generally* supposed to be. I am *sure*, at least, in saying, *was* supposed to be. The drama has declined: it has done so ever since minuets were banished. Tragedy went out of fashion with whalebone petticoats and powdered periwigs. The 'tragedy strut' and the 'wow-wow' threw an air of grandeur and *dignity* over the actor, and enveloped him in a mysterious halo: it was so unlike any thing else which the play-goers could see in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, therefore did they admire it.

I would undertake by this day week to drill a bag of wool into as good an actor as many of their favourites were. And you may hear them still, 'Ah! we shall never see such geniuses again!' Verily I hope not! If a correct view of acting, of what true acting consists, if the qualities of mind which are indispensable to the formation of the actor, were fairly understood, the excellent Shelly would not have spoken in contempt of the player's art. It must have been the whalebone petticoat and powdered perwig style that he was looking at. And not more than one in fifty of those who pant to belong to the profession, or to win praises by amateurship, would presume to set himself before a theatrical audience; then, perhaps, an actor might be estimated at something more than an object on which vulgar curiosity may pay to stare. And we should require no stronger proof of utter absence of honesty, or lack of ability to judge, in those whose pens were employed in laudation of the tragic powers of a boy. They did not confine themselves to an admiration of the boy's memoried tact, and imitation of a schooled manner, or I should not pause to comment on their honesty or judgment here. They gulled themselves and 'the world' by 'critical' examinations of the exhibition, as really good acting, as imagined feelings and creations of secondary existence: and, in their estimation, elevated the boy Betty to a level with—ay, to an eminence above the noblest theatrical spirits of the day. Had there been truth in the 'criticisms;' had he merited the eulogies which were awarded to him; had he deserved a hundredth part of them, the boy must have possessed the constitutional temperament, mingling with an innate fountain of moral faculties, which would have flourished and widened in manhood; and thought and experience would have invigorated them in years: whereas the result in manhood was decline, inefficiency. The original principle, the grand faculty, the sacred fire was not there, or it could not have perished so: it would have battled

against the caprices of a satiated curiosity, and fought its way up to triumph.

This body-clipping and mind-grasping subject of tragedy, was followed by the farce of 'Love laughs at Locksmiths,' and a glorious farce it is. Only to think of the effect it took on me! The very boards, the benches, the pillars and walls, seemed built up and dove-tailed of laughs. I, who had been so full of the sympathies and passions of Orestes, &c. &c., alternately swelling, weeping, choking, and shivering, was as hearty a participator in the fun, as the wisest and ablest play-goer in the house. I screamed with laughter, to the excoriation of my trachea; my jaws ached with incessant cachination; my o'er-bubbling eyes would have swamped a jolly-boat, and my poor ribs complained of cracking with the repetition of peal on peal of my free, unsuppressed, uproarious, absolute relish of the humour! What a capital, clever fellow was Risk! (Mr. Jones,) and Solomon Lob, staring, gaping, bullet-headed Solomon Lob, (little Lancaster,) was a bladder of laughing gas to me. And how painfully, amidst it all, did my thoughts turn to the drawing to a close of all this enjoyment. I almost trembled at its approach; and like one who has glanced at something which he fears, I turned away my eyes: still the ugly spectre drew me towards it, and the end did come. Oh! that some power would kindly arrest that falling curtain! No, no, the floor rose up to meet it; and the opening diminished, narrower, was a crevice, a line of light, now shut as closely as a jar of preserved damsons in my grandmother's cupboard. Still I sat with my eyes rivetted on the baize, that closer out, that black door which barriered the entrance to Elysium. Still I sat; I knew nothing of the people leaving the theatre. The only reality of which I was sensible was the gradual darkening: how long I remained I cannot tell. I knew not that I was quite alone, till an unpleased voice hailed me with 'Halloo! youngster, what are you doing here?' accompanied by a shake of the shoulder. As my head was bent down, resting on the palms of my hands, which again rested on my knees, he supposed I had fallen asleep, and saw me as he was extinguishing the lights against the gallery walls. I look around; nothing but dingy vacancy, unoccupied benches! I stepped upwards, and at the top turned round, paused to take a last look, and then plunged down the stairs with reckless rapidity, not daring to trust myself with a moderation of step, because I should think back if I did; and with the impetus fell headlong into the street, so grazing and scraping my palms: luckily the pain bodily, which this occasioned, anodyned the pain moral, and restored me to my senses. I hastened home to bed supperless and sleepless, for I was very, very busy all night.

You may be sure, reader, I was surrounded by catechisers next morning, who were curious to know what I thought. 'Well, Pel., how did you like the play?' Like it! 'Come, Pel., let us

hear all about it.' These questions were put by several who had witnessed the performances: but among my acquaintances, that is, those who supposed they knew me, I had the reputation of being somewhat of an oddity; there was, consequently, a curiosity to know how a play, for the first time, would operate on an oddity, and doubtless a hearty laugh at my simplicity was in the perspective of their questions: and they had their laugh; but the wind that raised it blew from a quarter unexpected by them. I commenced at the opening of the farce, and 'ran it through,' scene and circumstance, from beginning to end; repeating much of the dialogue on the road; tickling myself and my hearers with the incipient Toryism of Risk, who, 'when his farm was taken,' would

'Hire a lout to wield the flail,
Small beer should serve the bumpkin:
While he, by guzzling home-brewed ale,
Grew rounder than a pumpkin—
Grew rounder than a pumpkin.'

Then I 'shold the fine picture of Chupiter and Danæ, to de Arshpishop of Cologne—drapery and all—and put up mine oomprella, de cloudsh vas sho pootiful, and sheemed as if dey vas choost coin to rain.' But the flower of the exhibition was a double of Vigil and old Totterton, before the painter's door—Vigil upbraiding the old man with his age and ocular dimness, and Totterton peevishly replying with his shrill pipe, 'Bless us!' and chuckling in falsetto in triumph over Vigil, whose boasted keenness had failed to detect what old Totterton saw, 'the carriage of letters by the first-floor mail,' &c., &c., &c. Oh! they had it over and over again. Totterton and Vigil became a pest. 'But the tragedy, Pel.; what did you think of the tragedy?' 'How did you like the tragedy?' Hah! the curtain refused to rise for their entertainment on that subject. I was silent. I remember all my mirth forsook me; and they, in their wisdoms, came to the satisfactory conclusion that I had no taste for tragedy, and if ever I turned 'play actor,' I should shine in comedy. Good judges of the future, were they not? I revelled in 'tragedy' silently, unseen, in remotenesses; it was too sacred for the world's eyes. Parents, guides, guardians, and elders, are all, in their own fancy, apt discriminators of the indications of future promise in children. Parents are most liberally endowed with this faculty of penetration. They ever see a future military hero in the boy who is fond of looking at a red coat and flourishing a sword of lath. R. A. is certainly in the distance, if a child scrawl some crooked lines for arms and legs, and drop a blotch for a head; and the shoving a paper boat across a tub of water, is the first nautical essay of him who is to discover the N. W. passage. I was inordinately, passionately fond of bathing and swimming

under water,—remaining there till I was exhausted: I wonder they did not see that I should become a pearl-diver.

My hour of weekly communion with my father arrived, and brought about the same exhibition, with different results. He was surprised at my retention of the farce, and asked me ‘of the tragedy.’ I made no reply; till, on his going into detail, I at length said, ‘Oh, father, I cannot talk of it; I seem to swing in the air when I think of it!’ He instantly changed the subject.

How often after this, during the short time I yet remained with my uncle, did I race down to the stage-door, for the mere chance of looking at an actor or actress as they passed in or out, or to catch a glimpse of a lamplighter or a scene-shifter, such happy mortals, such superlative beings did I think they were; and after on one occasion of gallerying and one of pitting, (to which latter I was promoted by an aunt, not my master-uncle’s wife, she was of the ‘opposite to St. Peter’s’ creed,) how much did I covet the possibility of being admitted to the honour of walking in a procession, or of standing among the gallant guards, (though, sooth to say, there were queer looking things among them occasionally,) attendant on some of the kings and queens and heroes! But all this was a vain hope, it could never be realized; yet on those very boards, no, for *that* building was burnt down, in the very place of those boards, the first time I entered that theatre, twenty-three years after my ‘flitting’ from the counting-house, home, and England, was to fulfil an engagement, *in large letters*, to play *five nights only*, a series of Shakspeare’s tragic glories, ‘By Mr. VERJUICE, being his first appearance in this theatre;’ and I swear to you, reader, if you won’t take it without an oath, I was not, on this occasion, half so great a man in my own opinion, as I thought a message deliverer twenty-three years prior to this singular event.

There was no lack of murmuring as to my going to the play; ‘it would come to no good,’ and all the usual terrors of consequence were spread out in detail. For my own part, I could not see the evil of it, I never could to this hour; yet I think I have had my lessons, and I have pried into the affair with a close eye; I have turned it over sourly and soberly, philosophically and coolly, doatingly and hatingly. Perhaps if others will take the trouble to analyze theatrical representations to the extent that I have done, they will be less averse to them; nay, some of them will be surprised at themselves for holding such opinions. Few, however, are disposed to think earnestly on matters which are not directly in the channel of their pursuits and occupations.

Much, most, if not entirely all the evil which the opponents find in dramatic representations they carry to the theatre themselves, buckled under their own belts. There is a preparation of the senses, perhaps by rather an established obtuseness, or a temporary debasement of the intellect, which causes them to see that which is neither shown nor remotely intended to be shown;

they see, also, an encouragement to vice, in the lashing which it receives from scorn; an induction to falsehood in the ridicule to which it exposes itself, and the censure which whips it; they discover a lesson of immorality in the unwinding and outspreading to broad light of the tortuous course of villainous deception; and the branding of moral turpitude with infamy and shame, they insist is a 'bad example.' These are fools, you will say; granted. But I have heard more railers of this description than of any other; these are their soundest arguments against *theatrical representations*. My experience of these railers has told me they are more preceptively than practically virtuous.* They have lots of precepts always at hand. The demoralization is not in the theatrical representation; I could easily find parallels for illustration of my meaning, but I will let it stand as it is just now; but let me say I do not include in this list of merely preceptively virtuous, those who have never entered a theatre. There are hundreds who would pass a rigid ordeal, yet show pure in thought and act, who shrink at the very word theatre, apply it how you will; used figuratively or otherwise, as 'the theatre of life,' &c., the sound shocks them; it is, with them, an unpronounceable word; taught by habit and education they so regard it. Still I will say, and I say it unsneeringly, not unkindly, their judgment is on a par with the religion of these railers, the preceptively virtuous; it is an accidental circumstance, a matter of latitude and longitude; they have never inquired into the truth of what they have been told; they 'took it as the vulgar do;' and the most thinking of the railers have greatly erred in mistaking effects for causes, less than by attributing effect to other cause than the true one. Even *with* the preparation of the senses above alluded to, a sobering, beneficial, and delightfully instructive result oftentimes obliterates the grosser feelings, oblivionizes this preparation. If I can attest the truth of this remark in one instance only, I have a right to infer that the instance is not an isolation; but I have known it to occur with others, I have experienced it in myself frequently, and my laid-out plans have been abandoned: straight from the theatre tongueless, home to bed to enjoy there, over and over again, what I had seen and heard; and this, too, without falling in love with the actresses.

Well: shortly after this my first play-going, I *ran away*. I have led you to expect a detail of this freak, which I will give by and by. Now, have you not, readers of the ladies and gentlemen class, (if you have read so far,) settled it in your minds that I so abstracted myself for the purpose of turning 'stage-player?' Ay, that you have. 'The attraction was irresistible; it was a de-

* Here, once for all, I will declare my creed of moralities. All virtue I sum up in two words, benevolence and sincerity. All crime I comprise in cruelty and hypocrisy. There is cruelty in a smile, sometimes; there is cruelty in a cold look; there is cruelty in withholding a kind word.

vouring infatuation, and you foresaw the event.' Hold: 'you do conclude too fast.' I did not run away for the purpose of seeking the stage. My imagination gazed over an immense extent of physical prospect, and I brought it under my touch, long before my eye rested, for a permanence, on the creations of the drama. After this 'first play,' I served a seven years' apprenticeship to excitements and carelessnesses, to watchfulness and recklessness, to adventure and dreaminess, in a variety of climates and country, and amidst diversities of character and associates, and changes of condition, ere I entered on the vexatious and gladdening, the baffling and encouraging, pilgrimage of the histrionist.

In closing my first chapter, I announced to the reader that I should speak of my abstraction of myself from home in the second. Here is the conclusion of my third chapter, and I have not yet reached so far on my life's road as that event. I promise to dash at once into it in my next.

THE DUMB ORPHAN OF THE PRISON OF SANTA MARGHERITA.

THE following verses were occasioned by the circumstance which Silvio Pellico relates of the mitigation of his sufferings when imprisoned at Milan, by the sympathy of a deaf and dumb child about five or six years old, whose parents had been executed for theft. The anecdote is quoted in the last No. of the Monthly Repository, p. 404.

Where art thou, happy, blessed child—
 Thou beautiful! where art thou now?
 That I may look upon the mild
 And noble flush that warm'd thy brow;
 And see the nature-smile that danced
 On thy true lip, and catch the light
 Thine eye shot forth, the while it glanced
 Thy sense of joy, summ'd up in sight.

Oh, no—not all—a stainless tear
 Dimm'd, while it glorified, thy gaze.
 'Twas the heart's dew exhaling there,
 To radiate and approve the blaze.
 Yes, thou wast eloquent! how much
 Of meaning burst from thy footspring!
 A soul was in thy finger's touch:
 And heart and soul spoke in that cling.

I cannot see parental stain
 Roll through thy limbs, thou noble boy—
 Thou'rt free from it, as are the vain,
 Birth-honoured, of that base alloy,
 The heart's pure truth: they bathe and drink
 In stagnant ponds, and wash away
 That heritage of good, then think
 They're dignified on mento rey.

I tell thee, boy, thy friend is one
 Like thee—*he* did those waters taste—
 Thou hast not sipped—he drank ; whereon
 He nauseated : for all the chaste,
 Pure stream rejected that, and rolled
 To cheer the world, illumine the blind :—
 The world drew back :—a dungeon-hold
 And chains, that nature vainly bind.

There are, who'd teach thee, if they could,
 To shiver, shrink, recoil, and creep :
 They'd turn to ill each drop of good,
 And o'er thee charitably weep.
 They'd *teach* thee of thy father's shame,
 Not *tell* it :—bid thee humbly bend
 To them :—though 'tis another name
 They piously with counsel blend.

Time, chance, life, keep thee from their hold :
 God keep thee from their charity.
 Their warmth yields only blighting cold :
 Their pity but enslaves the free.
 They'd crush the flowers which heaven hath lent
 To adorn—oh ! they become thee well !
 Dumb, beautifully eloquent !
 Nature's pure-passioned child, farewell !

PEL. VERJUICE.

ON FEMALE EDUCATION AND OCCUPATIONS.

IN a period like the present of mental activity and improving reason, when every ancient opinion is brought to the crucible, every established usage submitted to the test,—when prejudices, however hoary, superstitions, however venerable, are alike subjected to critical examination,—when a new era appears to be approaching, in which sages rather than conquerors shall govern the world, it seems but just and reasonable, that more attention than has hitherto been bestowed, should be given to the claims of one-half of the human species, whose influence upon society and manners, though often misdirected, has never been denied.

Man, it must be allowed, seduced by his passions and misled by his imagination, is in the habit of considering woman, not as his fellow, equal, and companion, of the same species, differing only in sex ; appointed to run the same course of mental and moral discipline, to develope similar faculties and powers, and rise with him in the scale of existence ; to be the mother of his offspring, his help-mate and friend ; to accelerate with him the progress of knowledge and civilization ; but as the mere slave of his convenience, creature of his senses, idol of his fancy, and toy of his leisure hours. To this end has every varied form of female education and culture been hitherto directed, and for this purpose

framed. In such a state of things it is easy to foresee, that impediments in the way of knowledge and of social happiness will continue to arise, and the weakness and errors of woman to revert upon the head of her oppressors. All injustice, every vice—and injustice is vice—carries with it its own punishment. The tyrant and the slave, the oppressor and the oppressed, the subjugator and the subjugated, are alike deteriorated in moral worth and degraded.

‘How (observes Rousseau) shall a woman, unaccustomed to reflection, be able to educate her offspring?’—and yet the first years of man, all his first impressions, are invariably received from and directed by the sex. How important, both in a physical and moral view, are these first years, these first impressions! Of this the philosophical observer of mind needs not to be informed. How, through the whole of life, do they continue to act upon, to form the future man! While woman is only valued, admired, courted, for her personal graces and accomplishments; while her establishment in life, her importance in society, principally depend upon these, it would be a moral miracle if she sedulously sought to cultivate any other. It is true (but exceptions do not invalidate the rule) that a few respectable women of talents have indignantly broken the degrading fetters by which the sex have been bound and restrained. In vain have these lifted the warning voice; in vain, contemning the obloquy by which they were assailed, sought to rouse their own sex, and to appeal to the justice, the reason, even to the interest of the other! But little reformation has yet taken place. Catherine Macauley, whose memory is entitled to more veneration than it has received, and whose acute and penetrating mind advanced before the period in which she lived, observes, in her ‘*Letters on Education*,’ that ‘it ought to be the first care of education to teach virtue on immutable principles, and to avoid that confusion which must arise from confounding the laws and customs of society with obligations, founded on correct principles of equity.’ ‘First (she goes on to say) there is but one rule of right for the conduct of all rational beings; consequently, true virtue in one sex must be equally so in the other, when a proper opportunity calls for the exertion; and *vice versa*, what is vice in one sex cannot have a different property when found in the other. Secondly, true wisdom, which is never found at variance with rectitude, is equally useful to women as to men; because it is necessary to the highest degree of happiness, which can never exist with ignorance. Thirdly, that, as on our first entrance into another world, our state of happiness may possibly depend upon the degree of perfection we have attained in this, we cannot justly lessen, in either sex, the means by which perfection, another word for wisdom, is acquired.’

She goes on to observe, ‘that the happiness and perfection of the sexes are so reciprocally dependent on each other, that, until both are refined, it is vain to expect excellence in either.’—‘There

can be but one rule of moral perfection for beings made of the same materials, organized after the same manner, and subjected to similar laws of nature.'—'There is no cultivation which yields so promising a harvest as the cultivation of the understanding, a mind irradiated by the clear light of wisdom must be equal to every task which reason imposes upon it. The social characters of daughter, wife, and mother, will be but ill performed by ignorance and levity; and in the domestic converse of husband and wife, the alternative of an enlightened or an unenlightened companion, cannot be indifferent to any man of taste and knowledge.'—'Let your children be brought up together, their sports and studies the same; confine not the education of your daughters to what is merely ornamental, nor deny the graces to your sons. Suffer no prejudices to prevail on you to weaken nature in order to render her more beautiful; take measures for the virtue and harmony of your families by uniting their young minds early in the soft bonds of friendship: by the rational intercourse thus established, both sexes will find, that friendship may be enjoyed between them without passion. The wisdom of your daughters will preserve them from the bane of coquetry, your sons will look for something more solid in woman than mere external graces and accomplishments.'—'How much feebleness of constitution has been acquired, how many nervous diseases contracted by false ideas formed of female excellence!' Some degree of difference in corporeal strength naturally, it is certain, exists between the sexes; this difference barbarous nations abused to the subjugation of woman; and even amongst the most civilized, pride and sensuality will blind men to their own true interest and happiness. If false notions of beauty enfeeble the physical powers of woman, her offspring, whether male or female, will suffer the consequences. It is also truly said (by another able and eloquent advocate for her sex*) that 'in the regulation of a family, in the education of children, understanding, in an unsophisticated sense, is particularly required; strength of body and of mind.'—'Reason is absolutely necessary to enable a woman to perform any duty properly.' Of woman it may be said, as of the luxurious and rich, 'they have acquired all the follies and vices of civilization, and missed the useful fruits.' Again it is observed, and justly observed, by the same sensible writer, 'Woman has always been either a slave or a despot, each of which situations equally retards the progress of reason. The grand source of folly and vice is narrowness of mind; and the very constitution of civil governments has put almost insuperable obstacles in the way to prevent the cultivation of the female understanding: yet, on no other foundation can virtue be built.'—To become respectable, to acquire independence of character, the exercise of the reason is necessary; even gentleness, if it is not mere imbecility, must be

* Mary Wollstonecraft.

the perfection of reason ; the jarrings which so frequently prove destructive to the affections and to the peace of domestic life, have their source in petty jealousies, narrow prejudices, and selfish irritations. In the mistress or wife of a month, men might be justified for looking no further than external graces and accomplishments ; but if in the mother of his children and the companion of his life, the sensible man finds not a rational friend, marriage will indeed become a galling yoke, requiring all his fortitude patiently to endure.

Even in the present times, when more elaborate attention is paid to female education, to what is it principally directed ? Still true to the text of voluptuousness, to vanity, and external ornament. The taste merely, and not the reason, is cultivated. Most young females, whatsoever their rank in life may be, are trained to the arts only, and to accomplishments for exhibition and show. Disdaining the mere useful, all aspire to the ornamental, and a plain tradesman must now despair of getting a wife who will deign to be of any utility in her family, or whose refined habits and ideas will not make her shrink in disgust from the husband, whom necessity only compelled her to accept. All are *ladies*, no *women* are to be found ; social intercourse is become a mere theatre of exhibition ; friendship and rational conversation give place to the piano, the harp, and the quadrille, where rival mothers and emulous daughters, reckless of the secret weariness and suppressed yawns of the suffering auditors and spectators, contest the palm of admiration and the meed of applause.

Nothing is more worthless to every purpose of utility than a mere smattering in the fine arts ; to the wealthy and the unoccupied it may serve to beguile an idle hour, or to amuse leisure ; but an indifferent artist, a mere tame and spiritless copyist, a tasteless and mechanical strummer on any instrument, be the instrument what it may, is utterly valueless ; their exhibitions delight only the doating parent, and will be endured by others but during the transient season of youth. Should the *end* to which the display is secretly directed, that of procuring for themselves an establishment by marriage, of taking the heart captive through the eye or ear, fail amidst numerous competitors, what is to become of these unfortunate factitious beings—unable to dig, ashamed to beg ?

For a few years, it is true, many may employ in teaching their talents and acquirements, even though not of the highest order ; they may become governesses in families of greater affluence or superior rank ; or they may fill the humbler destiny of assistants in schools. But, while their youth withers, and their spirits are exhausted in these situations of constraint, servility, or drudgery, —while beneath the roofs of the wealthy or the aristocracy of the land, they add a taste for luxuries and elegancies to that for the arts, and become still more unfitted for the humbler walks of life, —have they any chance or opportunities, from the remuneration which their services receive, of laying up in store any adequate

supply for advancing years or declining powers and life? Is it even likely, however liberal may be the recompense of their labours, a circumstance rarely occurring and not to be reckoned upon, that, among the gay and great, surrounded by temptations to vanity and expense, they should acquire habits of self-denial, economy, and prudence? But liberal remunerations are not to be expected, competition is too great, and the market is already glutted; in the universal rage for the acquisition of accomplishments, their value is daily sinking; many accomplished young women, upon whose training and education a little fortune has been expended, actually barter their acquirements and time for less than the wages of a domestic servant, and for scarcely more than temporary protection and support.

Where *will*, where *must* this end? What is to become, after a transient season, of these refined, delicate, and helpless creatures? Will the honest mechanic, will the plain tradesman, burthen themselves with fine ladies and take them for wives? Will the higher classes stoop to lift to their rank females, however lovely, amiable, or endowed, whom they are accustomed to consider in their families as scarcely raised above a servile station? If lovely and attractive in their persons and manners, they are encompassed by tenfold perils.

Most formidable, most threatening in their moral consequences, are the impediments hence likely to arise to an improved state of society and civilization. This mode of female education is infinitely worse and more dangerous than would be its total neglect, since, in that case, woman, amidst the present diffusion of knowledge and literature, would come in for her share; she would read, think, acquire principles, communicate them to her children, and fulfil, at least, the domestic duties of her station. She would not blush for her unrefined parents and relatives; she would not shrink disgusted from the honest affection of her equal and neighbour, who, occupied in procuring the property, or the habits, necessary to the provision for a family, had no leisure for the study of ornament and grace.

Accomplishments, in the present rage for them, are become, not the recreation, but the arduous, absorbing business of female life. They are considered worthless if not cultivated to an excess, that enfeebles the body, engrosses the time, and leaves little leisure either for the exercise that strengthens the former, or for the knowledge and thought by which the latter only can be invigorated. If more solid studies are affected to be taught in our female schools, (or establishments in more fashionable phraseology,) they must be in subordination to those which the vanity of parents and the mandates of fashion imperiously alike demand and crave. Those who preside over schools, however qualified by good principles and good sense, (and some such respectable individuals doubtless there are,) are not at liberty to use their

own judgments as to the relative importance of the studies of their pupils, or the distribution of their time, they are themselves merely agents and instruments, it is not what they judge right and best, but what is required from them that they must perform. Even where their good sense leads them to exact from their pupils some attention to the more solid acquirements, grammar, history, geography, &c., the time allowed for these studies is necessarily so short as to permit with them only a very superficial acquaintance. This mode of education affords no encouragement to women of superior talents to undertake the management of schools, which, consequently, for the most part, fall into the hands of persons little fitted to be the guides of youth, and whom speculations of interest merely prompt to the undertaking.

Another evil also necessarily results from the multifarious objects that claim the attention of the youthful student, that no one can be completely or adequately attained; even from the most industrious and diligent, a mere smattering in the majority of them is only to be expected. The freshness and vigour of health, the buoyant elasticity of spirits, the careless joys of youth are all perilled by the sedentary habits which modern female education necessarily imposes. The writer of these remarks knew of one instance in which, by an over-excited emulation and ardour for success, the reason of a young and talented female was actually unsettled; and another, where a most alarming case of hysteria, threatening life and intellect, was the result of faculties overstrained. Women are, by nature, from a less solid structure, a more sensitive and delicate organization than man, more easily excited, and more susceptible of excess and enthusiasm in their pursuits, but the same delicacy of structure renders them less able to sustain that intenseness and continuity of attention which the more robust constitution of man cannot with impunity long support. This constant application, this tension of the nerves, is still more prejudicial at an immature period of life, before the bodily organs have attained their full developement and firmness. But, from the hapless female who laudably proposes to procure from her acquirements an independent support, almost superhuman powers are demanded. The advertisements and requisitions for private governesses, in the families of the nobility and gentry, would be ridiculous, were they not melancholy. A poor young creature has no chance for success, unless she professes with the modern languages (and not unfrequently to these the Latin is added) all the sciences and arts. In the short space of time, from twelve to eighteen or twenty, for earlier the faculties can scarcely be roused, and in the volatile and tender period of youth, attainments are expected and called for, each of which, to acquire properly, it would take a life to mature. The delusion, the inconsistency and absurdity of such expectations are too obvious and glaring to require being exposed. To the

cultivation of the understanding, to informing the mind, to developing the reasoning powers, and implanting just principles; to these, which seem to be considered as of very inferior importance, no time whatever has been spared.

From such teachers, generally speaking, (for native talent and peculiar circumstances will always produce respectable exceptions,) what results can be expected; from such culture what fruit can we hope to gather? Are wives and mothers formed in such schools, or in their offspring are good citizens and patriots to be looked for? They may glitter and dazzle during the transient period of youth; but will they become useful when they cease to be ornamental? While half of the human species are thus treated and trained, the philosopher and philanthropist will labour in vain for the advance of civilization, and the improvement of social order. Can men sow tares and hope to reap wheat?

Among the superior ranks in female life, where there is no need to barter accomplishments for support, education is similarly directed, not to the cultivation of intellect, not to the formation of principle, but to showy accomplishments and external grace. Woman is never the companion and helpmate, but still the toy or the drudge of man. If she partakes in the diffusion of literature, it is the *belles lettres* only over which she skims. Modern book societies have banished the old English classical writers; our youth, our female youth more especially, are scarcely acquainted with the titles of their works. Book societies circulate only what is new; the various tastes and opinions of the subscribers prohibit even in what is new all that is solid; politics and religion, the only subjects of vital importance, as embracing the present and future interests of the human race, are strictly proscribed, as tending to controversy and offence. The light novelty of the day is exclusively admitted and read, and the succession of such novelties is too quick to leave any lasting impression or time for other studies. The reading of the morning supplies topics for prattle and display in the drawing-room circle of the evening; all talk from a common reservoir, few or none from a source; literature itself becomes but another mode for exhibition, another means for vapid and vain display.

The dependent situation of woman in society, and her entire subjugation to the caprices and passions of man, is at the root of all moral and mental degradation. She must continue to suit herself to those passions and caprices, while those afford her the only means of procuring for herself social consideration, the only means, generally speaking, of obtaining the accommodations and comforts of civilized life. If the maternal duties and domestic avocations of those who have a numerous offspring claim a large share of their attention and time, an active mind may still find leisure for more than these; and, at all events, become by a more rational and useful mode of education better fitted for the dis-

charge of such duties. Do reading and reflection, would the pursuit of any useful art, any branch of trade suited to her station and sex, take a woman out of her family more than dissipation, fashionable accomplishments, and the opportunities sought and made for their exhibition? Are the more fortunate among the sex, those who move in a superior rank of life, to whom the exertion of their faculties to aid in the support of their families is not necessary, are they rendered by solid studies less valuable as the companions and friends of their husbands, as the guides and instructors of their children? Contrast with an accomplished modern young female the following portrait from an elegant writer.*

‘The conversation of Hortensia is rather cheerful than gay, and more instructive than sprightly: but the more distinguished features of her mind are her memory and her judgment; both which she possesses in a higher degree than is usually found in persons of our sex. She has read most of the capital authors both in English and French. There is scarcely a remarkable event, in ancient or modern history, of which she cannot give a clear and judicious account. To the mathematics she is not wholly a stranger; and though she did not think proper to pursue to any great length her inquiries of that nature, yet the facility with which she entered into the reasonings of that science, discovered a capacity for attaining a knowledge even of its abstruser branches. Her observations upon these subjects are the more to be relied on as they are the unbiassed dictates of good sense. Her extensive knowledge and refined sense have not, however, raised her above the necessary avocations of female science; they have only taught her to fulfil that part of her character with higher grace and dignity. She enters into the domestic duties of her station with the most consummate skill and prudence. Her economical department is calm and steady; she presides over her family like the *intelligence* of some planetary orb, conducting it, without violence or disturbed effort, in all its proper directions.’

To make ‘well-ordered home man’s best delight,’ mind is necessary, a presiding intellect, without which activity degenerates into a troublesome restlessness, a teasing interference, and even cleanliness and neatness into a tiresome scrupulosity.

But every woman has not a domestic establishment to occupy her, every woman has not a family to nurse and train, every woman has not a husband able to maintain her and that family. The greatest benefits conferred upon society have been in general by the agency of men unconnected with, undisturbed by family cares. It is not necessary that every one should marry; in populous states, under expensive governments, prudence keeps many in celibacy. This, if it is an evil, is now likely to be increased: various channels are open to single men, into which to divert their energies and render them honourable to themselves and

* Fitzosborne.

useful to their fellow-citizens. But what has been the fate of unmarried women? If not wealthy, and large fortunes rarely devolve to women, if not endowed with a strength of mind and character that falls to the lot of few, the situations into which the majority of them sink, when unsupported and unprotected by male relatives, (and even by these they are often plundered and oppressed,) is indeed pitiable; and even for their very misfortunes instead of sympathy they meet with insult. And why is this? Because they are allowed no reputable productive means in which they might employ their time and talents, and by independence enforce respect. If created merely to blossom, to fade, and to be trampled under feet, why has Nature, that does nothing in vain, endowed them with reason, with capacities and powers similar to those of man? Has Providence given them talents merely to fold in a napkin? Are they unaccountable and irresponsible for their use or abuse of such talents? Can they benefit society in no other way than by increasing its numbers? Are they, because less corporeally robust than man, incapable of any productive labour, of any useful exercise of the intellectual powers? This will not be affirmed, because experience has proved the contrary.

Why then not lay open to female exertion and industry more liberal sources, more various and respectable modes of occupation? If woman must be accomplished in the arts, for which by her taste and sensibility she is eminently fitted, why fritter away her time and talents by exacting from her a smattering of *all*, instead of inciting her to pay attention to *one only*, and thus by concentrating her powers to invigorate and render them really productive? Woman wants only opportunity and encouragement to rival man in every elegant, in every useful art; but she is rarely, if ever, trained as a professor, but merely as an amateur. Where nature has denied genius to reach to eminence in art, yet a steady undiverted attention to *one* pursuit will rarely fail of producing some degree of excellence. How many male artists procure a respectable provision for themselves and families by instructing youth in their art. Why should not female youth be taught exclusively or chiefly by females? Surely, both in schools and private families, they are the more proper instructors? Not as governesses, having a smattering of every branch of knowledge or of art, and a proficiency in none: but let them, as do the other sex, maintaining an independent home, instruct their pupils at their own houses, or in the several schools in which they may be placed by their friends. By women so prepared and trained, men would soon be superseded, as they ought to be, in the education of females.

Many branches of trade and commerce should also be thrown open to women in a manner that should render them respectable. Several of the bazaars have set an excellent example, by em-

ploying only females : in the shops of milliners, haberdashers, retail linen-drappers, &c. it is disgusting to see men officiate. The married woman who has been thus taught and trained in the middling class of life, would be able to assist in providing for her family and house, she would not be a useless burthen on the industry of her husband, and would thus ensure his respect with his love. The unmarried would, by the professions or trades which they exercised, keep a rank in society, and maintain the respect due to that rank : they would no longer feel the humiliation of having no social consequence but through the men, and their characters would acquire dignity and strength.

Before reason and justice can maintain their rights over mankind, all odious distinctions and prejudices, whether sexual or feudal, must be done away. If woman is inferior to man, it is not in nature but in degree, reason and virtue must be the same in both ; if their duties are different in some respects, they are still human duties, and their foundation and end must be the same. Virtue can only be depended upon that has its foundation on principle and truth. The wisdom, the happiness of succeeding generations must depend upon the instruction and impressions they receive during childhood and youth. Every system of education, whether male or female, calls aloud for examination and reform. Men, I repeat, cannot reap wheat where tares only are sown, or from thistles expect to gather grapes.

HISTORY OF PRIESTCRAFT.*

WILLIAM HOWITT here presents himself to us in a new character. We were acquainted with him as a quaker, a naturalist, a poet, a man of observant mind, kind feelings, and pure taste, but had not associated him with the idea of a reformer in church and state, a warm politician. We rejoice to see him in that capacity. The conflicts of the political arena have changed their nature, and there should be an analogous novelty in the combatants. The strife of party is over, though a few Tories and Whigs may still dream that they are fencing with the old foils, and have only to beat or be beaten as formerly by dexterity in gladiatorial tricks. The real battle has commenced, the strife between the many and the few, to decide for whose benefit society is constituted. In such a strife there must be something to do for every faculty and gift with which humanity is invested ; and especially for the noblest of them, the best qualities of head and heart. Let us have no cant about the calmer and loftier regions of imagination. Goethe lived and died in little Weimar. If we have men of all ages amongst us, depend upon it they will be men of this age too ; for

* A Popular History of Priestcraft in all Ages and Nations, by Wm. Howitt. London, Wilson.

they must be peculiarly alive to the depth, extent, and lasting influence of the convulsions by which society will be shaken and regenerated. That is no true poet's harp, the strings of which do not quiver and resound to the winds that are rushing by. These are no times for merely gathering flowers, or weaving garlands solely for their prettiness. The people of England must advance or retrograde. They must become a *community*, or, after having made what will be rightly deemed 'a vain show,' be cajoled or intimidated back into being the venal, base, and beaten drudges of a proud and rapacious aristocracy. A poet, a philosopher, a philanthropist, stand neuter ! It is not to be believed. Off with his 'singing robes and garlands,' for they are all counterfeit, or pilfered, to a certainty. Shame would it be, for this warfare to be waged with vulgar or hireling weapons. The tone and spirit of political discussion should be elevated into a worthiness of the occasion. The question is whether a corrupt and corrupting aristocracy shall have its restoration, as monarchy once had ; or whether, having been dislodged from a few of those strong holds by means of which it commanded the nation, other popular advantages should not be obtained, so as to lead to the blessings of good government, and open a prospect of accelerated improvement. And there is no voice so rich or tuneful but what it is honourably employed if lifted up, in the wilderness, to cry, 'Prepare ye the way.' Milton lingered not in the bowers of Italy, though bards and beauties were doing him delicious homage there, when ominous sounds across the ocean warned him of the coming conflict for England's freedom. He knew the poet's vocation, how large its comprehensiveness, and how paramount the obligation of aiding, with all his loftiest powers, the efforts of a people who were struggling into a better state of social existence. The mingling of such minds in the political fray prevents its sinking into a sort of alehouse brawl, and makes it appear, what in the present case it really is, a not ignoble portion of that enduring strife between the principles of good and evil which has raged, and rages, through the world's duration and over the world's extent. If the intelligence of our country did its duty, it would cover itself with glory, and the land with happiness. Now is the time for wisdom to 'cry aloud in the streets.' The loftiest principles should be championed by the loftiest minds. To enlighten and guide the millions at so critical a period as this, when one party would crush them by the sword, and another mock them with shadows ; to make the very struggle itself the means of humanizing, and refining them ; and prepare them by their exertions for reaping the amplest fruits from success ; are objects in which the noblest philosophy and poetry should find their appropriate sphere. They will not have the less permanent worth for being of essential immediate service. The little book now before us is rich in poetical beauty and religious

feeling. The stern truth is told, both of the past and of the present ; and it is so told as to make us feel that in the severest condemnation there is no malignity, that in the proposed changes there is no aim at party triumph, but that the writer's single object is to show how mankind have been injured, by what arts, under what pretences, and how their deliverance from this wretched thralldom may be effected. In the latter portions of the volume, those which relate to the present condition and practices of the church of England, there is a dignity, a beauty, and a richness of style, with a distinctness of poetical conception, and an elevation of sentiment, that remind us strongly of the prose works of Milton, into the spirit of which the writer has evidently been drinking deeply. It will be seen by our remarks that we think the work might have been made, in a few particulars, more complete ; the finest portions of it could in no way have been made more beautiful or effective.

A distinct definition of priestcraft was, in our opinion, desirable. The author should have shown when and how the occupation of the priest becomes a *craft*. He should have shown why its becoming a craft, a circumstance which in relation to most occupations is not only necessary but innocent and useful, is in this case the cause of so much mischief. Many important conclusions might have flowed from such an investigation. It would probably have appeared that the fundamental mistake is the supposing that any spiritual office can be beneficially performed for hire. A theological lecturer, like any other lecturer or teacher, may be hired ; that is, he may be paid in money for communicating that knowledge which it has cost him money (or time and toil, which is the same thing) to acquire. Such an arrangement is evidently for the benefit of both parties. But if priests be (as those of the establishment and some other sects claim to be) gifted with and called by the Holy Ghost, their exercise of the gifts and obedience to the call can have nothing to do with money without the grossest profanity. The workings of the Spirit of God in and by them are not things to make a craft of. They must relinquish their pay or their pretensions. But it is by their pretensions that they obtain their pay, or the largest portion of it ; and this incongruity and falsity at the outset poisons the fountain, and makes the waters which issue from it pestiferous to their remotest course. Even the modified pretensions of many sectarian ministers smack of the craft. All assumptions, made *ex officio*, of religious emotions, feelings, sympathies, show craft, a bad craft, priestcraft. In the craft of the actor, the external indications of emotion are exhibited for hire ; but only the imitation is required or paid for. Whatever of soul there may be in them is for the actor's honour and the spectator's gratification, but is no part of the bargain, trade, or craft. Now the priest's ministrations to the spiritual wants of individuals, if known to be without soul in them, would be only

disgusting. It is the soul in them for which he is paid. Hence his craft is neither so honest nor so innocent as that of the actor. And his operations become a craft the moment that he affects more than that instruction which can be communicated by a voluntary act, or those expressions of sympathy and other emotions which are really generated in his heart by the scenes he witnesses, and which would be so generated though he had no pretensions to a sacred character. The fact is, that there is, in the literal sense of the word, no Christian priesthood, nor can be. We are all priests, or none of us, which comes to the same thing. We elect a teacher and pay him for his teaching. That is all right and useful. If a good teacher, he will most likely be a man of strong and expansive sympathies; so much the better; but if we pretend to pay him for the manifestation of those sympathies, and make that manifestation a portion of his hired duty, we run the risk of entrapping him into the practice of priestcraft, and open a door for some portion of the evil which, as our author shows, has so long desolated the world.

The commencement of Mr. Howitt's work, announcing his design, is in a frank and daring strain.

'This unfortunate world has been blasted in all ages by two evil principles—kingcraft and priestcraft—that, taking advantage of human necessities, in themselves not hard—salutary, and even beneficial in their natural operation—the necessity of civil government, and that of spiritual instruction, have warped them cruelly from their own pure direction, and converted them into the most odious, the most terrible and disastrous scourges of our race. These malign powers have ever begun, as it were, at the wrong end of things. Kingcraft, seizing upon the office of civil government, not as the gift of popular choice, and to be filled for the good of nations, but with the desperate hand of physical violence, has proclaimed that it was not made for man, but man for it: that it possessed an inherent and divine right to rule, to trample upon men's hearts, to violate their dearest rights, to scatter their limbs and their blood at its pleasure upon the earth; and in return for its atrocities, to be worshipped on bended knee, and hailed as a God. Its horrors are on the face of every nation; its annals are written in gore in all civilized climes; and, where pen never was known, it has scored its terrors in the hearts of millions, and left its traces in deserts of everlasting desolation, and in the ferocious spirits of abused and brutalized hordes. What is all the history of this wretched planet but a mass of its bloody wrath and detestable oppressions, whereby it has converted earth into a hell, men into the worst of demons, and has turned the human mind from its natural pursuit of knowledge, and virtue, and social happiness, into a career of blind rage, bitter and foolish prejudices; an entailment of awful and crime-creating ignorance; and has held the universal soul of man in the blackest and most pitiable of bondage? Countless are its historians; we need not add one more to the unavailing catalogue: but of

“ That sister-pest, congregator of slaves
Into the shadow of its pinions wide,”

I do not know that there has been one man who has devoted himself solely and completely to the task of tracing its course of demoniacal devastation. Many of its fiendish arts and exploits, undoubtedly, are embodied in what is called ecclesiastical history; many are presented to us in the chronicles of kingcraft; for the two evil powers have ever been intimately united in their labours. They have mutually and lovingly supported each other; knowing that, individually, they are 'weak as stubble,' yet conjointly,

"Can bind
Into a mass irrefragably firm
The axes and the rods which awe mankind."

Thus, through this pestilential influence, we must admit that too much of its evil nature has been forced on our observation incidentally; but no one clear and complete picture of it has been presented to our view. It shall now be my task to supply to the world this singular desideratum. It shall be my task to show that priestcraft in all ages and all nations has been the same; that its nature is one, and that nature essentially evil; that its object is self-gratification and self-aggrandizement; the means it uses—the basest frauds, the most shameless delusions, practised on the popular mind for the acquisition of power; and that power once gained, the most fierce and bloody exercise of it, in order to render it at once awful and perpetual.—pp. 1—3.

A rapid survey is then taken of heathen mythology, in which the author follows the ingenious hypothesis of Bryant, commencing with early antiquity, and terminating with the most striking modern exhibition of the nefarious arts of idolatrous priests, as practised by the Brahmins of Hindostan. A brief view of the Hebrew priesthood follows; and then the means by which the Papal hierarchy aggrandized itself are described, and the oppressions, evil influences, and persecutions, for which its monks, prelates, and other agents are responsible in various countries. The last third of the volume, chapters xv. to xx. inclusive, is devoted to the church of England. Chap. xv. sketches an outline of the (so called) Reformation, and of the mutations and oppressiveness of episcopacy through the reigns of the Tudors and Stuarts; till the revolution of 1688, the passing of the Toleration Act, and the growth of public intelligence and spirit, produced a state of things in which the grosser violence of former times was impracticable.

'While power was left to the church, it persecuted, and would have continued to persecute. The act of William III. put an end to this; and we must henceforth look for the spirit of priestcraft in a different shape. The whole course of this volume has shown that this wily spirit has conformed itself to circumstances. Where unlimited power was within its grasp, it seized it without hesitation, and exercised it without mercy. Egypt, India, all ancient Asia, and all feudal Europe, are witnesses of this. Where it could not act so freely, it submitted to the spirit of the people; and worked more quietly, more unseen, but equally effectually, as in Greece or Pagan Rome. England after

William III., afforded no further scope for imprisonment, the martyr's flaming pile, or the bloody axe of the public executioner. It was rapidly careering in a course of knowledge and civilization, which made men acquainted with their rights, and has eventually lifted this nation to the proudest position ever occupied by any people in the whole history of the world. The established clergy, therefore, had nothing to do but to secure the full enjoyment of their revenues, and that parochial influence with which they were invested; and the consequence is that, in the noblest nation of the earth, they have become the richest body of priests and the most apathetic towards the people, from whom their wealth is drawn.—pp. 196, 197.'

Chap. xvi. adverts to the Irish church, and the Ministerial plan for its reform. We scarcely need say that so principled and thorough-going a man as our author finds that plan very unsatisfactory.

'One circumstance connected with Irish church reform is characteristic of its real nature and extent, as proposed by the present Ministers, and ought to have opened the eyes of all men. The bishopric of Derry, the most enormously endowed in Ireland, was vacant at the very moment of the organization of this plan of reform. If a number of bishoprics were to be reduced, why should this not have been one? Or if it were not thought desirable to extinguish it, why should not the incumbent of one of those sees which were to be withdrawn be translated to this, and thus one at least have been instantly removed? The surprise which the appointment of a bishop to this see, under these circumstances, created, was at once dissipated; and gave place, in the public mind, to a higher surprise and a feeling of indignation, by the discovery that the bishop thus installed, was Dr. Poynton, *the brother-in-law of Earl Grey*! This was an assurance sufficiently intelligible. Will a man set himself heartily to cut down a tree in whose topmost branches he has placed his brother? Will a man assay to sink a vessel in which he has embarked his own family? Will a general proceed cordially to blow up a fortress in which his near relative is commandant? Then, will Earl Grey set himself heartily to work, to reform efficiently the Irish church!

'The abolition of this bishopric would have been a thing of the highest importance. Its revenue, according to the present return, is 13,000*l.*; and it is proposed to reduce it to 8,000*l.* But what is the estimate of Mr. Wakefield of the value of this see?—a most competent authority. He calculates that the whole of its property, over and above the tenth part of the gross produce of the land, cannot be much short of 3,000,000*l.*; and that the bishop's land, at a fair rate of rent, would produce an income of 130,000*l.* a year. This, then, is the birth into which Earl Grey, in the face of a reformed Parliament, of his own professions of real reform, of suffering England, and starving Ireland, has comfortably put his brother-in-law, and proposes to satisfy the country by the abatement of 5,000*l.* a year out of this immense property. By the extinction of this bishopric alone, a saving to the country would have been made at once of 3,000,000*l.*!—for the question in this case is, not what the bishop actually derives from the land, but what it is worth to the nation.'—pp. 200—202.

This chapter concludes with a vigorous plea for the relief of English Dissenters from church-rates, of the country generally from tithes, and for the complete divorce of church and state.

Chap. xvii. relates to episcopal income, university endowments, pluralities, ecclesiastical courts, and clerical exactions. The following eloquent passage is occasioned by the enormous fees for funerals and for the consecration (!) of even the smallest portion of ground for the purposes of interment therein.

‘Among the lesser evils of the system are the consecration of burial-grounds, and what are called surplice fees. Nothing is more illustrative of the spirit of priestcraft than that the church should have kept up the superstitious belief in the consecration of ground in the minds of the people to the present hour, and that, in spite of education, the poor and the rich should be ridden with the most preposterous notion that they cannot lie in peace except in ground over which the bishop has said his mummary, and for which he and his rooks, as Sir David Lindsay calls them, have pocketed the fees, and laughed in their sleeves at the gullible foolishness of the people. When will the day come when the webs of the clerical spiders shall be torn not only from the limbs but the souls of men? Does the honest Quaker sleep less sound, or will he arise less cheerfully at the judgment-day from his grave, over which no prelatical jugglery has been practised, and for which neither prelate nor priest has pocketed a doit? Who has consecrated the sea, into which the British sailor in the cloud of battle-smoke descends, or who goes down, amidst the tears of his comrades, to depths to which no plummet but that of God’s omnipresence ever reached? Who has consecrated the battle-field, which opens its pits for its thousands and tens of thousands; or the desert, where the wearied traveller lies down to his eternal rest? Who has made holy the sleeping place of the solitary missionary, and of the settlers in new lands? Who but He whose hand has hallowed earth from end to end, and from surface to centre, for his pure and almighty fingers have moulded it! Who but He whose eye rests on it day and night, watching its myriads of moving children, the oppressors and the oppressed, the deceivers and the deceived, the hypocrites, and the poor whose souls are darkened with false knowledge and fettered with the bonds of daring selfishness? And on whatever innocent thing that eye rests, it is hallowed beyond the breath of bishops and the fees of registrars. Who shall need to look for a consecrated spot of earth to lay his bones in, when the struggles and the sorrows, the prayers and the tears of our fellow-men, from age to age, have consecrated every atom of this world’s surface to the desire of a repose which no human hands can lead to, no human rites can secure? Who shall seek for a more hallowed bed than the bosom of that earth into which Christ himself descended, and in which the bodies of thousands of glorious patriots, and prophets, and martyrs, who were laid in gardens, and beneath their paternal trees, and of heroes whose blood and sighs have flowed forth for their fellow-men, have been left to peace and the blessings of grateful generations with no rites, no sounds, but the silent falling of tears and the aspirations of speechless, but immortal thanks? From side to side,

from end to end, the whole world is sanctified by these agencies, beyond the blessings or the curses of priests! God's sunshine flows over it, his providence surrounds it; it is rocked in his arms like the child of his eternal love; his faithful creatures live, and toil, and pray in it; and in the name of heaven who shall make it, or who can need it holier for his last resting couch? But the greediness of priests persists in cursing the poor with extortionate expenses, and calls them blessings. The poor man, who all his days goes groaning under the load of his ill-paid labours, cannot even escape from them into the grave, except at a dismal charge to his family. His native earth is not allowed to receive him into her bosom till he has satisfied the priest and his satellites. With the exception of Jews, Quakers, and some few other Dissenters, every man is given up in England as a prey, in life and in death, to the parson, and his echo, and his disturber of bones.

'The following, from the *Leeds Mercury*, is a fair example of the expense incurred for what is called consecration of the smallest addition to a burial-ground; and wretched must be the mental stupidity of a people who can believe that such fellows can add holiness to the parish earth.' pp. 239—242.

Chap. xviii. is chiefly on Patronage. It contains some impressive illustrations of the working of the present system, in the class of characters who are made the spiritual guides of the people.

Chap. xix. is the picture of a Confirmation, portraying what it seems to be, what it might be, and what it is. We much regret that our limits will not allow us to extract this noble piece of composition. Its poetry and its power amply illustrate the kind of writing which was alluded to at the commencement of this Article as that which the political circumstances of the age require.

Chap. xx. contains the recapitulation and conclusion. The author has passed over the Dissenters altogether, as if there were no priestcraft amongst them. Some might have been detected, we think, and that even by a less observant eye. We could indicate some sources whence materials might be derived for this supplementary chapter. Is not the dissenting ministry a craft when it is taken to merely as a respectable profession; when even its humble dignities and emoluments are a rise in society, for attaining which no equal probability offers itself to the aspirant; when its influence is made subservient to personal objects, a wealthy marriage, or a legacy earned by sycophancy; when the possessors of the office arrogate the exclusive right of investing others with it, by the imposition of their sacred hands; when the people are led to regard the preacher's interpretations as authoritative; when opinions and feelings are suppressed, and the actions regulated with a view to that ascendancy, for which subserviency must be part purchase; when sectarian interests are pursued at the expense of political right, social improvement, and even of

justice to individual character ; is not then the dissenting ministry a craft ? And does it not diffuse a more subtle poison than the more noisy craft, the roaring lion of the establishment ? Some taint of this description may, we fear, be found in modern puritanism, and perhaps, ‘ Friends’ are not wholly free. How do they sometimes deal with heretics ? And in what manner does their body decide the questions which come before them ? Is it by a fair ballot, or by the sense of a majority taken in any way ? There are recollections of proceedings connected with the names of Thomas Foster, in this country, and of Hannah Barnard, and Elias Hicks, in America, which it were well could they be obliterated. There is some craft here ; and if not priestcraft, its offspring, perhaps ; not bearing the name, because not legitimate. We are sorely deceived both by travellers and natives, unless priestcraft be rife in America, though they have no establishment, and, probably, more real religion than any other nominally Christian country.

We conclude with our author’s conclusion, hoping that his little book will widely circulate, that it will produce in many minds feelings like those which it has excited in our own ; and that it will aid in bringing on that spiritual renovation which is so pre-eminently to be desired for our country.

‘ From age to age, the great spirits of the world have raised their voices and cried, liberty ! but the cry has been drowned by the clash of arms, or the brutish violence of uncultured mobs. Homer and Demosthenes in Greece, Cicero in Rome, the poets and martyrs of the middle ages, our sublime Milton, the maligned, but immovable servant and sufferer of freedom, who laid down on her altar his peace, his comfort, and his very eye-sight ; our Hampdens and Sidneys ; the Hofers and Bolivars of other lands, have, from age to age, cried “ Liberty ! ” but ignorance and power have been commonly too much for them. But at length, light from the eternal sanctuary of truth has spread over every region ; into the depths and the dens of poverty it has penetrated ; the scholar and the statesman are compelled to behold in the marriage of Christianity and Knowledge, the promise of the establishment of peace, order, and happiness, the reign of rational freedom. We are on the very crisis in which old things are to be pulled down, and new ones established on the most ancient of foundations—justice to the people. To effect safely this momentous change, requires all the watchfulness and the wisdom of an intelligent nation. The experience of the world’s history, warns us to steer the safe middle course, between the despotism of the aristocracy and the mob, between the highest and the lowest orders of society. The intelligence, and not the wealth or multitudes of a state, must give the law of safety ; and to this intelligence I would again and finally say, be warned by universal history ! Snatch from your priesthood all political power ; abandon all state religion ; place Christianity on its own base—the universal heart of the people ; let your preachers be as your schoolmasters, simply teachers ; eschew reverend justices of the peace, very reverend politicians, and right reverend peers and legis-

lators, as you would have done the reverend knights, and marquisses, and dukes of the past ages. They must neither meddle with your wills nor take the tenth of your corn; they must neither tax you to maintain houses in which to preach against you and read your damnation in creeds of which no one really knows the origin; nor persecute you, nor seize your goods for Easter offerings and smoke-money. The system by which they tax you at your entry into the world, tax you at your marriage, tax you at your death, suffer you not to descend into your native earth without a fee, must be abolished. The system by which you are made to pay for every thing, to have a voice in nothing, not even in the choice of a good minister, or the dismissal of a vile and scandalous debauchee; by which you are made the helpless puppet of some obtuse squire, and the prey of some greedy and godless priest, must have an end.

‘On this age the happiness of centuries, the prosperity of truth depends; let it not disappoint the expectations, and mar the destinies of millions.’ pp. 275, 276.

ALISON'S HISTORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.*

‘OF history, the most honoured, if not honourable species of composition, is not the whole purport *biographic*? History, it has been said, is the essence of innumerable biographies. Such, at least, it should be: whether it is, might admit of question. But, in any case, what hope have we in turning over those old interminable chronicles, with their garrulities and insipidities; or still worse, in patiently examining those modern narrations, of the philosophic kind, where philosophy, teaching by experience, must sit like owl on house-top, *seeing* nothing, *understanding* nothing, uttering only, with solemnity enough, her perpetual most wearisome *hoo, hoo*:—what hope have we, except the for most part fallacious one of gaining some acquaintance with our fellow-creatures, though dead and vanished, yet dear to us; how they got along in those old days, suffering and doing; to what extent, and under what circumstances, they resisted the devil, and triumphed over him, or struck their colours to him, and were trodden under foot by him; how, in short, the perennial battle went, which men name life, which we also in these new days, with indifferent fortune, have to fight, and must bequeath to our sons and grandsons to go on fighting, till the enemy one day be quite vanquished and abolished, or else the great night sink and part the combatants; and thus, either by some Millennium or some new Noah's Deluge, the volume of universal history wind itself up! Other hope, in studying such books, we have none: and that it is a deceitful hope, who that has tried knows not? A feast of widest biographic insight is spread for us; we enter full of hungry anticipation: alas! like so many other feasts, which life invites us to, a mere Ossian's feast of *shells*, the food and liquor being all emptied out and clean gone, and only the vacant dishes and deceitful emblems thereof left! Your modern historical restaurateurs are indeed little

* History of Europe during the French Revolution; embracing the period from the Assembly of the Notables in 1789, to the establishment of the Directory in 1796. By Archibald Alison, F.R.S.E. Advocate. In 2 vols. 8vo. 1833.

better than high-priests of famine; that keep choicest china dinner-sets, only no dinner to serve therein. Yet such is our biographic appetite, we run trying from shop to shop, with ever new hope; and, unless we could eat the wind, with ever new disappointment.*

Thus writes, although in a publication unworthy of him, an author whom the multitude does not yet, and will not soon understand. The *biographic* aspect here so exclusively dwelt upon, is indeed not the only aspect under which history may profitably and pleasantly be contemplated: but if we find ourselves disappointed of what it ought to afford us in *this* kind, most surely our search will be equally vain for all other fruit. If what purports to be the history of any portion of mankind, keep not its promise of making us understand and represent to ourselves what manner of men those were whose story it pretends to be, let it undertake what else it may, it will assuredly perform nothing.

‘To know our fellow-creature,’ (we still quote from the same author,) ‘to see into him, understand his goings forth, decipher the whole heart of his mystery; nay, not only to see into him, but even to see out of him, to view the world altogether as he views it; so that we can theoretically construe him, and could almost practically personate him; and do now thoroughly discern both what manner of man he is, and what manner of thing he has got to work on and live on.’

This is what a perfect biography, could such be obtained, of any single human being, would do for us, or more properly enable us to do for ourselves, and the perfection of a history, considered in its biographic character, would be to accomplish something of the same kind for an entire nation or an entire age. Thus in respect to the French Revolution, though complete insight is not to be had, we should have been thankful for anything that could have aided us in forming for ourselves even an imperfect picture of the manner in which a Frenchman, at the period of the breaking out of the Revolution lived: what his thoughts were habitually occupied with; what feelings were excited in him by the universe, or by any of the things that dwell therein; above all, what things he fixed his desires upon; what he did for his bread; what things he cared for besides bread; with what evils he had to contend, and how he was enabled to bear up against them; what were his joys, what his consolations, and to what extent he was able to attain them. Such clear view of him and of his circumstances, is the basis of all true knowledge and understanding of the Revolution. Having thus learnt to understand a Frenchman of those days, we would next be helped to know, and to bring vividly before our minds, the new circumstances in which the Revolution placed him; how those circumstances painted themselves to *his* eyes, ~~From~~ *from his* point of view; what, as a consequence of the conception he formed of them, he thought, felt, and did, not only in the

* Article on Biography, in *Fraser's Magazine* for April 1832, introductory to the admirable article on Boswell's Johnson in the Number for the following month.

political, but perhaps still more in what may be called 'the private biographic phasis; the manner in which individuals demeaned themselves, and social life went on, in so extraordinary an element as that; the most extraordinary, one might say, for the "thin rind of habit" was utterly rent off, and man stood there with all the powers of civilization, and none of its rules to aid him in guiding these.'

Such things we would willingly learn from a history of the Revolution; but who among its historians teaches the like? or *has* ought of that kind to teach? or has ever had the thought strike him that such things are to be taught or learnt? Not Mr. Alison's predecessors, of whom, nevertheless, there must be some twenty who have written better books than his; far less Mr. Alison himself. How should he? When in the course of ages a man arises who can conceive a *character*, though it be but of *one* being, and can make his readers conceive it too, we call him a *dramatist*, and write down his name in the short list of the world's great minds; are we then entitled to expect from every respectable, quiet, well-meaning Tory gentleman, that he shall be capable of forming within himself, and impressing upon us, a living image of the character and manner of existence, *not* of *one* human being, but of a nation or a century of mankind? To throw our own mind into the mind and into the circumstances of another, is one of the most trying of all exercises of the intellect and imagination, and the very conception how great a thing it is, seems to imply the capacity of at least partially performing it.

Not to judge Mr. Alison by so high a standard, but by the far lower one of what has actually been achieved by previous writers on the subject, let us endeavour to estimate the worth of his book, and his qualifications as a historian.

And first, of his merits. He is evidently what is termed a kind-hearted, or, at the very least, a good-natured man. Though a Tory, and, therefore, one in whom some prejudices against the actors in the Revolution might be excused, he is most unaffectedly candid and charitable in his judgment of them. Though he condemns them as politicians, he is more indulgent to them as men than even we are, who look with much less disapprobation upon many of their *acts*. He has not, indeed, that highest impartiality which proceeds from philosophic insight, but abundance of that lower kind which flows from milkiness of disposition. He can appreciate talent; he does not join in the ill-informed and rash assertion of the *Edinburgh Review*, reechoed by the *Quarterly*, that the first authors of the French Revolution were mediocre men; on the contrary, speaking in his preface of the Constituent Assembly, he talks of its 'memorable discussions,' and of himself as 'most forcibly impressed with the prodigious, though often perverted and mistaken ability, which distinguished them.' Mr. Alison has a further merit, and in a man of his quality of mind

it is a most positive one—he is no canter. He does not think it necessary to profess to be shocked, or terrified, at opinions or modes of conduct contrary to what are deemed proper and reputable in his own country. He does not guard his own respectability by a saving clause, whenever he has occasion to name or to praise even a Mirabeau. We should never think of this as a quality worthy of particular notice in a mind accustomed to vigorous and independent thought; but in whatever mind it exists, it is evidence of that which is the first condition of all worth, a desire to *be* rather than to *seem*.

Having said thus much on the favourable side, turn we to the other column of the account, and here we have to say simply this, that, after reading both these volumes carefully through, we are quite completely unable to name any one thing that Mr. Alison has done, which had not been far better done before; or to conjecture what could lead him to imagine that such a work as he has produced was any *desideratum* in the existing literature on the subject. It is hard to say of any book that it is altogether useless; that it contains nothing from which man, woman, or child can derive any one particle of benefit, learn any one thing worth knowing; but a *more* useless book than this of Mr. Alison's, one which approaches nearer to the ideal of absolute inutility, we believe we might go far to seek.

We have not often happened to meet with an author of any work of pretension less endowed than Mr. Alison with the faculty of original thought; this negation of genius amounts almost to a positive quality. Notwithstanding, or, perhaps, in consequence of, this deficiency, he deals largely in general reflections; which accordingly are of the barrenest; when true, so true that no one ever thought them false; when false, nowise that kind of false propositions which come from a penetrating but partial or hasty glance at the thing spoken of, and, therefore, though not true, have instructive truth *in* them; but such as a country-gentleman, accustomed to be king of his company, talks after dinner. The same want of power manifests itself in the narrative. Telling his story almost entirely after Mignet and Thiers, he has caught none of their vivacity from those great masters of narration; the most stirring scenes of that mighty world-drama, under his pen turn flat, cold, and spiritless. In his preface he apologizes for the 'dramatic air' produced by inserting fragments of speeches into his text: if the fact were so, it would be a subject of praise, not of apology; but if it *were* an offence, we assure Mr. Alison that he never would be found guilty of it; nothing is dramatic which has passed through the strainer of his translations; even the eloquence of Mirabeau cannot rouse within him one spark of kindred energy and fervour. In the humbler duties of a historian he is equally deficient; he has no faculty of historical criticism, and no research; his marginal references point exclusively to the

most obvious sources of information ; and even among these he refers five times to a compilation, for once to an original authority. In this he evinces a candour worthy of praise, since his crowded margin *betrays* that scantiness of reading which other authors leave theirs blank on purpose to conceal. We suspect he has written his book rather from memory and notes than with the works themselves before him ; else how happens it that he invariably mispels the name of one of the writers, he oftenest refers to ? * why are several of the names which occur in the history, also mispelt, in a manner not to be accounted for by the largest allowance for typographical errors ? why are there so many inaccuracies in matter of fact, of minor importance indeed, but which could hardly have been fallen into, by one fresh from the reading of even the common histories of the Revolution ? The very first and simplest requisite for a writer of French history, a knowledge of the French language, Mr. Alison does not possess in the necessary perfection. To *feel* the higher excellences of expression and style in any language implies a mastery over the language itself, and a familiarity with its literature, far greater than is sufficient for all inferior purposes. We are sure that any one who can so completely fail to enter into the spirit of Mirabeau's famous '*Dites-lui que ces hordes étrangères dont nous sommes investés,*' of that inspired burst of oratory upon *la hideuse banqueroute*, and of almost everything having any claim to eloquence which he attempts to render, must be either without the smallest real feeling of eloquence, or so inadequately conversant with the French language, that French eloquence has not yet found its way to his soul. We are the more willing to give Mr. Alison the benefit of this excuse, as we find his knowledge of French at fault in far smaller things. He mistakes *l'impôt du timbre* for a tax on *timber* ; *fourche*, apparently from not understanding what it is, he translates a *fork*, and *chariot* a chariot. The waggoner Cathelineau he terms a *charioteer*, and the victims of the revolutionary tribunal are carried from the prison to the guillotine in a *chariot*. Mr. Alison might with as much reason call the dead-cart, during the plague of London, by that name.

If our sole object were to declare our opinion of Mr. Alison's book, our observations might stop here. But Mr. Alison's subject seems to require of us some further remarks, applicable to the mode in which that subject is treated by English writers generally, as well as by him.

* M. Toulangeon, always spelt Toulangeon by Mr. Alison.

To be continued.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Outline of a Plan for the total, immediate, and safe Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Colonies. By Joseph Phillips, late of Antigua. London, Arch.

A Treatise on Astronomy. By Sir J. Herschell. (Lardner's Cyclopædia, vol. 43.) (1.)

Essays and Articles on Subjects connected with Popular Political Economy, illustrative of the Condition and Prospects of the Working Classes. Birmingham, 6d. (2.)

The Mother's Manual; or Illustrations of Matrimonial Economy. An Essay in Verse. 10s. (3.)

The Moral Class Book, or the Law of Morals derived from the Created Universe and from Revealed Religion. (Intended for Schools.) By William Sullivan. Boston, U. S. London, J. Mardon. (4.)

The Emancipation of the Christian Church from the trammels of Human Creeds essential to its harmony and prosperity. A Sermon. By J. O. Squier. 6d. (5.)

History of the Middle and Working Classes. London, Wilson. (6.)

(1.) Although this volume relates to subjects which require the highest powers of mathematical calculation for their proof, it is written in a popular style, brings ascertained results within the reach of all, often supplies evidence of a generally intelligible description, and is calculated to excite extensive interest in the facts of astronomical science.

(2.) The papers here republished chiefly refer to 'Labour Exchange.' They contain some acute remarks on the attack on Mr. Owen's Bazaar, which appeared in the Monthly Magazine. The appeal to success is somewhat premature.

(3.) This is a satirical poem from the pen of Mrs. Trollope. It describes the manœuvrings of a match-making mother in the higher ranks of English society. The etchings are as humorous as those of her well-known work on America.

(4.) Mr. Mardon is again before us as a spirited republisher of American books. The present work was worthy of his choice for that purpose. It is well adapted to its professed object, and may be employed in the moral instruction of the young with great advantage.

(5.) The beneficent design of the writer of this discourse is not only pursued with judgment and zeal, but promoted by the manifestation of a spirit in perfect harmony therewith, and which cannot but largely augment the force of the arguments employed.

(6.) A very valuable book. We purpose to review it.

CORRESPONDENCE.

We hope to hear from R. in the autumn.

V. P. is left at our Publisher's; we had not T. B.'s address.

More from T. W. will be very welcome.

The Letter on Geneva is sent to the Unitarian Chronicle.