

THE NORTHERN STAR.

Foreign intelligence.

FRANCE.

On Friday the Assembly was engaged with the question of its own dissolution. The result of a division was the adoption of M. Rattéau's project for a speedy dissolution, by 100 votes against 396, and its reference to a committee.

The question thus decided is equivalent to the first reading of a bill in the British parliament. It sanctions the principle of the measure, and it is considered here that the Assembly cannot go back on the question, but must fix an early day for the dissolution. Whether that day be the one fixed in the project of M. Rattéau, the 19th March, or that proposed in the other project of MM. Pagnier and Bixio, the 4th May, is of comparatively little consequence, now that the principle of the project for a speedy dissolution is decided.

The next step consequent on the vote of last night will be the appointment of a new committee to report on the proposition of M. Rattéau. That report cannot be brought up in less than eight or ten days, after which the project must be read three times with intervals of five days, thus whatever expedition be used the clause cannot be passed in much less than four weeks, and it is therefore presumed that the elections cannot take place before the beginning of April. A project was accordingly presented to-day by MM. Wollofski de Latrye and Gerard, proposing April 10th for the dissolution of the present Assembly, and the convocation of the next.

The members of the National Assembly met on Monday in their respective *Bureaux* to examine the proposition of M. Rattéau relative to the dissolution of the Assembly. The most perfect accord prevailed on the occasion between the Montagnards and the representatives of the Palais National, and both concurred in rejecting all the propositions tending to fix a date for the dissolution of the Assembly. They presented a majority of about 500, and all the commissioners elected to report on the proposition, with the exception of one, were averse to it. Those commissioners were—Messrs Houze Lavergne, Baulant, Dupont de Bussac, St. Gaudens, Jules Favre, Havini, Marie, Degouze, Pierre Buonaparte, Sarrans, Grey, Ligner, Lichtenberger, Combarel de Laval, and Rognard.

On Monday M. Armand Marrat was re-elected President of the Assembly, by a majority of 477 against 221, his competitor being M. Dufaure; but as it was previously announced that M. Dufaure declined the candidature, the contest was nominal.

WHAT NEXT?

The French Government is about to undertake a great maritime expedition, and there can be no doubt that it is for the Roman States, and with the object of reinstating the Pope in his dominions. The workmen and seamen at Cherbourg and Toulon are working day and night. Troops are embarking, and 'War against Roman liberty' is said to be the order of the day!

THE BUONAPARTES.

The cousins of the President are likely to give him some trouble. Pierre Buonaparte has openly joined the Extreme Left. The ministry desired to remove M. Napoleon Buonaparte, the son of Prince Jerome, from Paris, by inducing him to accept an embassy, but he successively refused the mission to Brussels, the Hague, and London, and that of Constantinople. He has resolved to remain on the spot to take advantage of events.

PERSECUTION OF THE TRUE REPUBLICANS.

The Attorney General of the Republic is actively engaged in prosecuting the most violent of the Club orators. M. Barnabe Chauvelot, President of the Club of the Reine Blanche, was convicted, by default, on Tuesday week, of having insulted the Commissary of Police appointed to watch the proceedings of the club. He was sentenced to imprisonment for one month, and to pay a fine of 1,000 francs. M. Barnabe Chauvelot has fled from justice.

M. Bernard, one of the most popular of the Socialist orators, was likewise convicted on the same day, for having, in a speech delivered in the Club of the Rue de Chabrol, made a libellous attack on General Lamoriciere. He was sentenced to imprisonment for one month and to pay a fine of 100 francs.

The trials by court-martial of the insurgents of June have recommenced in Paris. Two shoemakers, notorious for the violence of their political opinions, have been acquitted, the evidence having been insufficient to convict them of the fact of their having taken up arms during the insurrection.

M. Barthélémy, who was tried by court-martial in Paris a few days since, and sentenced to hard labour for life, for having taken an active part in the insurrection of June, effected his escape from the military prison of the Rue Chêche-Midi on Friday night week. He was joined in his flight by Dr Lacambre, an intimate associate of Blanqui. Lacambre had been arrested in consequence of having taken an active part in the attack on the National Assembly on the 15th of May. A strict search is being made for the fugitives.

The Club Valentino, of which M. Bernard was President, was closed on Monday night by the authorities. A considerable crowd, which assembled shortly afterwards, was dispersed by a patrol, composed of troops of the line and the garde mobile. This is a movement in a right direction.—Times.—[The turbulent *Times* ever rejoices at the persecution of the advocates of justice. That vile journal is the curse and disgrace of England.]

The Club of *Travaillers* at Toulon has also been closed by the authorities.

PERSECUTION OF THE PRESS.

A party calling themselves 'Les Jeunes Montagnards' have started into existence. They have announced their intention to found a club to be called the *Club de la Place Carnot*.

The Times of Saturday contained a long account of a meeting of one of the ultra-democratic Clubs on the previous Wednesday, from which we give the following extracts.—

'The most violent portion of the Republicans held a meeting last night at the Salle Valentino, in the Faubourg St. Honore. The club was presided over by a person now notorious, in Paris, a solicitor at Belleville. He has, I believe, already borne testimony either to the sincerity of his opinions, which are Socialist as well as Republican, or to his love for notoriety, in the fact of more than one prosecution, fine, and imprisonment for the violence of his language. He is a man about thirty-five years of age, of middle size, thin, pale, with high cheek bones, with his long black hair falling down behind, and his upper lip concealed in a thick moustache; in a word, the very type of a being discontented with his lot, and burning with a desire to exchange his quiet, but useful calling for one of a more stormy character. His voice was rather husky, his gesticulation theatrical; but his language was fluent, and often sarcastic. He took the chair at eight o'clock, and long before that hour the crowd outside the door, waiting for admittance, was considerable.'

'Horn-Bens or Democracy!'—The correspondent of the *Chronicle* writes:—According to the journals, the state of the public mind at Gotha is far from satisfactory. That place, indeed almost all the small states of Germany, are hotbeds of red-hot democracy. [Alas poor *Grundt*!]

PRUSSIA.—The political trials at Berlin are proceeding. Several workmen have been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

The *Silesian Journal* of the 5th contains the following curious details relative to the composition and projects of the ultra-democratic, and more especially of the central club, or society, calling itself the 'Confederation or Union of Justice' (*Bund der Gerechtigkeit*), of which the directing committee and leaders are Republicans. The president and principal members of this dangerous club are known to few, as secrecy is imposed by formal oaths, and it is add'd, by penalties, which remind us of the old *Whengenrich*. The *Silesian Journal* gives, however, a list of names which it would be useless to repeat, as none are men publicly known, unless it be those of Harro, Hering, and Mazzini. The object of this secret confederation is the destruction of all dynasties, and the establishment of a universal Republic (*Weltpolitik*).

For this purpose, the central committee commenced establishing lodges as early as March. Upon the first meeting of the Democratic Congress, in May last, at Frankfort, men only of secondary importance, such as Frobel, the companion of Blum, and others, who were members of this dangerous club, were chosen. This Congress chose a central permanent committee, of which Zete, of Mayence; Professor Bayrohofer, of Giessen; Schutte, who became notorious as an agitator at Vienna; John Ronge, and German Metternich, of Feldkirch, were members. Two months later the leading committee was transferred to Berlin, where we had proc'd. its activity and deleterious workings. All minor

General Lamoriciere been what he was in 1832, it is not probable that he would now wear on his breast so many decorations, or display on his shoulders the epaulettes of General. Neither, had he continued to remain the admirer, the disciple of the *Reine Enfantin*, would he have declared in the National Assembly the other day that he did not know the 'Social Republic' meant. He had forgotten his lesson of Socialism. He then alluded to the *National* newspaper, and pointed out the difference between what it now is and what it once was, in the days of Louis Philippe. There no language was so strong to stigmatise the contemptible tyrants and profane persons who oppressed the Spanish nation. Now it has not a word of censure of the Government that sent its agent to Madrid, whose sympathies towards those same tyrants are known to the world. He referred to the work of M. Guizot, *De la Démocratie en France*, and quoted from it the sentence (p. 11) insisting on the necessity of extirpating the fatal idea that the word 'democracy' must be proclaimed everywhere, and aloud, before anything like government can be established, or before any party can say it exists. He asked 'how could that man talk of dignity who was one of the first to join the barbarians, the Cossacks and the Prussians, who invaded France, and massacred her sons, while fighting for the independence of their country—how was the ready and unblushing apologist of the vast system of corruption which at length overthrew his master, and nearly ruined France, who resisted every attempt to restore the political condition of the nation?' His invectives against M. Guizot were terrible, and they were received with applause by the greater part of the meeting. The delicate question of the amnesty was then touched on by Bernard. The people, he said, were now the sovereign in France; it is now their turn to dictate their will; and the Emperor commands the President to pardon their erring brothers (*frères égares*) of June that day prompt obedience must be rendered to their will. Many of the arrested had acted under a delusion; but many, very many, were innocent. He spoke of Barbes, and bestowed on him the highest eulogies; he described him as a man possessed of all the civic virtues of an ancient Greek or Roman Republican! He turned the National Assembly into ridicule for wasting the public time in trifling discussions, and leaving the vast interest of the nation unattended. Yet, while he censured such a waste of time, he denounced the agitation now going on to compel it to dissolution; and he described it as the result of a conspiracy between the Legitimists and Orleanists, who had sworn to make a crusade against the Assembly for its Republican character. Such as it was, the Assembly was, at all events, Republican, and the same could not be said of the Legislatives, which would, probably, begin its career by the restoration of the Empire or the Monarchy. Above all, he cautioned the Republican party to be on their guard against those who would excite them to a violation of public tranquillity. Those who gave them such pernicious counsels were the secret agents of their enemies—Royalists of every shade, and aristocrats. He denounced those who would mediate empires or insurrections. Pacific agitation was their plan; it was thus that Socialism recruited its disciples—Propaganda, but one of reason, and not of the sword. Let them reserve their strength for the hour when the Republic was in danger; and when any attempt was made to overthrow it, or change the form of government the people had given to themselves, then, indeed, they would all descend into the streets.

This sentiment was loudly applauded, the audience shouting *Vive la République*.

Several other persons spoke, after which the proceedings were brought to a close, by the President announcing a banquet on Sunday and another on Monday. The one intended to be celebrated on the 5th had been postponed. It was also mentioned that persons were stationed at the doors to receive the contributions of those who were willing to assist their brothers in distress. The 'brothers' who gave them such pernicious counsels were the secret agents of their enemies—Royalists of every shade, and aristocrats.

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Kossuth has gone to Debreczin with his adherents, in order to form a junction with the troops of General Bem. He took with him the regal insignia of St. Stephen, the Hungarian King.

The statement of the Vienna mail of the 10th instant, that Kossuth had fled to Debreczin, with the regalia of Hungary and the book-note press, is confirmed by the *Breslauer Zeitung*, which adds that he has been joined by the committee of Defence, and by those members of the Diet who had declared the throne of Hungary vacant, and that his partisans are some 12,000 strong. On the 6th inst. the 1st army corps of the Imperial troops left Pesth for Debreczin. Pesth and all its vicinity had been evacuated at once. The Magyar forces had evacuated them upon the approach of the Imperialists.

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Poetry.

BEAUTIES OF BYRON.

SECOND SERIES.

III.

PROMETHEUS.

Titan ! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise ;
What was thy pity's recompence ?
A silent suffering and intense ;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And that is jealous lest the sky
Should see his hideous self !

Titan ! his voice is echoes,
Until the earth is given
To thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill ;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die :
The wretched effe terra !

Was thine—and that thou hast borne it well,
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack ;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appear him tell ;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissimile,
That in his hand the lightnings tremble.

The God-like crime was to be kind
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen man with his own mind ;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit ;

Thou art a symbol and a sign ;
To mortals of their fate and force ;
Like these, Man is in divine,

A troubled stream from a pure source ;
And that no power can foresee
Our own final end, and his resistance,
And his sad unfilled existence,
To which his Spirit may oppose

Itself—and equal to all woes.

And a firm will and a deep sense,

Which even in torture can despise,

Owns concerter'd recompence,

Triumphant where it dares defy,

And making Death a Victory !

IV.

WINDSOR POETICS.

Lines composed on the occasion of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent being seen standing between the coffins of HENRY VIII. and CHARLES I., the royal vault at Windsor.

Famed for contemptuous breach of sacred ties,
By headless Charles see heartless Henry lies ;
Between them stands another sceptred thing—
It moves, it reigns—in all but name, a king ;
Charles to his people, Henry to his wife,
In him the double tyrant starts to life ;
Justice and death have mixed their dust in vain,
Each royal vampire wakes to life again.
Ah, what can tombs avail—since these disgorge
The blood and dust of both—to mould a George ?

Reviews.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION OF SHAKSPERE.

By W. J. Birch, M.A., New Inn Hall, Oxon, Author of the "Real and the Ideal," &c. London : C. Mitchell, Red Lion-court, Fleet-street.

Overwrought praise, though less repulsive than exaggerated censure, is hardly worthy of lighter condemnation. Egotism is the soil in which flourishes the noxious weeds of arrogance, selfishness, and folly, and the deadly work of the sycophant is to foster those ill-weeds for some selfish or slavish object of his own. Praise of the dead, no matter how immeasurable or unwarranted, can hardly be productive of evils at all corresponding to those produced by flattery of the living; nevertheless, applause lavished without discrimination upon the tenants of the tomb, may be not altogether harmless. The adorers of a name are usually less anxious for the establishment of truth than for the popular acceptance of their theories or fancies. Encouraged by the adhesion of those who have not the time to inquire, or the will to think for themselves, the self-confident theorists assume that they are right, and that all dissenters from their views must be wrong. The standard of orthodoxy is set up (for literature, as well as religion, it has its orthodoxy), and all who will not "fall down and worship" are pronounced heretics.

The orthodox admirers of Shakspere are an example of the truth of the above remarks. In his own day the great dramatist was not appreciated at his true worth, nor, indeed, was he for a long time subsequent to his death. Gradually a truer estimation of the creations of his master-mine came to be entertained; and at length, Garrick and Siddons, and subsequently Kemble and Kean, by their matchless personation of the poet's "characters" exalted his name to the pinnacle of popularity. Actors, equal to those above-named, no longer dazzle and delight the English people, but what Shakspere has lost in the theatre, has been more than counterbalanced by his gain in the domestic circle. Where formerly a few hundreds read the works of the poet of Avon, thousands and tens of thousands now read them. Cheap printing has done as much—perhaps more than the stage, to extend the fame of Shakspere.

Not to be a professed admirer of Shakspere in these days, is to be out of the fashion. Moreover, the orthodox, one must admire his works according to rule. Woe to the unlucky wight who may presume to judge for himself, and, judging, venture to differ from the orthodox faith as it is in Shakspere.

Mr. Knight, in giving his views of the life and character of Shakspere, says :—

Do not have been entertained as to Shakspere's religious belief, because few or no notices of it occur in his works. This ought to be attributed to a tender and delicate respect about holy things, rather than to inattention or neglect.

On this assertion—for which there is no foundation out of the prejudiced or diseased imagination of Mr. Knight—Mr. Birch has founded his "Inquiry." Our author well says, that after "inquiries into the life of Shakspere, which have ended in the omission and restoration of a letter in his name," there is no need to offer an apology "for an inquiry into the religious character of the man from the monuments he has left behind him."

The inquiry instituted by Mr. Birch is both elaborate and impartial. He measures the philosophy and religion of Shakspere not by any arbitrary standard of his own, but by the poet's own words and works. Nor does he confine himself to one or two of the Dramas, he reviews the whole, and shows beyond the possibility of refutation, if not of cavil, that one sentiment runs through, and pervades all—that of hostility to priesthood, and contempt for spiritual creeds and dogmas.

In the limited space to which we must confine these remarks, we cannot do more than indicate the argument, which extends through a book of four hundred and fifty pages.

After a hasty review of the life of Shakspere, in the course of which Mr. Birch shows that the great dramatist associated with the great free-thinkers, such as Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Raleigh, and Fletcher; he proceeds to the Plays, prefixing to the full inquiry an epitome of the whole. In *Titus Andronicus*, "Humanity is opposed to piety, and humanity is vindicated." In *Henry VI.* "the character of the King is eminently calculated to bring the people into contempt. He is weak, credulous, and cowardly—without dignity and without sense." "He who drew this character must have intended to insinuate, by a powerful example, the incompatibility of piety and manliness; or we must suppose him incapa-

ble of understanding the force of words." In support of this view of the Monarch's character, Mr. Birch quotes the following striking lines, from *Queen Margaret's speech to Suffolk*, in Part II.—

"All his mind is bent to holiness,
To number Ave-Maries on his beads ;
His champions are the prophets and apostles ;
His weapons holy saws of sacred wit ;
His study is his till-yard ; and his loves
Are brazen images of canoniz'd saints.
I would the college of cardinals
Would choose him Pope, and carry him to Rome.
And set the triple crown upon his head ;
That were a state fit for his holiness !

From Mr. Birch's remarks on the *Merchant of Venice*, we quote the following :—

"The wretchedness in this play are nearly all profane. An unskilled railing is founded upon points of sacred wit. What dramatist, save Shakspere, ever represented the diffusion of the true knowledge of the gospel, 'till it covers the earth, as the waters cover the sea ?—as tending to 'raise the price of pork' by the proserlity of the Jews ! Neither Rabelais, nor Wootton have displayed more ingenuity in realising the ridiculous upon a serious subject, than our poet has in this play. Upon what principle, therefore, are we to recognise in Shakspere a 'reverential mind' and in others who fall below him in the same walk of wit, a professed disbelief, it is difficult to determine. Shylock is a character that excites sympathy, while the Christians figuring in the play, only awaken reprobation and disgust. Their scoffs, gibes, and taunts, drive the friends to despair, and foment the bad qualities he displays ; with coarse brutality they triumph at his fall. And when robbed of his daughter, his fortune, and his life, Christianity, which, like many, should have dropped the gentle dew from Heaven, is made still to assail him. Gratiolus would sooner bring him to the gallows than show him favour ; and he is hunted into the folds of the church, as though it were a den, and the poor fallen and trampled Jew a wild beast. Sure, Christianity was never before set by a Christian in so execrable a light !

In Henry the Fourth, "Falstaff is the hero of profanity." "Let," says our author, "the partisans of Shakspere's seriousness spend half-an-hour with Falstaff ! " In good truth, Mr. Knight must have been wilfully blind, when, with this play before him, he asserted for Shakspere "a tender and delicate reserve about holy things !" Falstaff jokes on *Bardolph's* nose ; and on his replying that it does him no harm, *Falstaff* says :—

"No ! I'll be sworn ; I make as good use of it as many a man doth of a death's head, or a *memorial* : I never see thy face, but I think on hell, and Dives that lived in purity ; for there he is in his robes, burning, burning."

This play positively teems with similar instances of the poet's "tender and delicate reserve about holy things ! " Much more of the same kind, the reader will find in *Henry the Fifth*, where the subject of *Falstaff's* death is made the subject of joke upon joke by his surviving companions. The "tender and delicate" levity throughout the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, of which *Falstaff* is the hero, needs no comment.

Mr. Birch's review of *Measure for Measure*, the *Tempest*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *Hamlet* in particular, deserves comment far beyond what the limits of this notice will admit of. In *Othello*, "Cassio drunk is religious, What reverence could be intended by these contemptible exhibitions of sottish piety ? The Lord's Prayer seasons the merriment of his inebriation."

Mr. Birch's treatment of this play is pecu-

liarily valuable, from the light he throws upon the character of Iago.

"The chief objection to this play has been, that Shakspere has not given sufficient motives to Iago, who weaves the plot, and produces the catastrophe. But Shakspere, particularly in the first act, shows an anxiety to supply such motives. Relying for injuries, real or supposed, mixed up with a good deal of envy, and a bad disposition, blindly impels Iago to schemes of revenge. He had the mortification of seeing his own merit set aside, and Cassio's preferred. Iago was a brave and experienced soldier, with a character for honesty which could not have been acquired without worth, while Cassio was but a theorist in the art of war, owing his advancement to *interest*. Causes of this kind, we know, in modern times, maddened some men into assassins. But Iago thought he had received much greater provocations than those enumerated. Both Othello, who had been instrumental in forwarding the views of Cassio, and Cassio, who had wrested from him the objects of his ambition, were thought by him to have profited by the infidelity of his wife, * * * * * In 1820, therefore, wished Othello to feel towards his Desdemona the poison which he said gnawed his vitals at the thought of the relation between Othello and his wife."

This is only a portion of the critique. The whole should be read and thought over by those who take an interest in the creations of Shakspere.

"Had," says Mr. Birch—"Had Shakspere never drawn but the character of Hamlet, as it now stands, and left his other creations religious, he would have stamped himself as once a sceptic."

"Could he be less than a sceptic who drew Hamlet with the weight of argument in his favour ? His wit so pointed, his object so subtle, his balances so determined. None could delineate such a character as he who understood it, and none would exalt it (as Shakspere does) but he who was professed in it."

"Of Hamlet's scepticism, his famous soliloquy, beginning 'To be or not to be,' is a demonstrative proof. Nowhere in the whole range of literature are the *pros* and *cons* of life and death put with such perverse force. That there *may be* an hereafter is the ancient position of the doubt. The Christian, who weaves the plot, and produces the catastrophe. But Shakspere, particularly in the first act, shows an anxiety to supply such motives. Relying for injuries, real or supposed, mixed up with a good deal of envy, and a bad disposition, blindly impels Iago to schemes of revenge. He had the mortification of seeing his own merit set aside, and Cassio's preferred. Iago was a brave and experienced soldier, with a character for honesty which could not have been acquired without worth, while Cassio was but a theorist in the art of war, owing his advancement to *interest*. Causes of this kind, we know, in modern times, maddened some men into assassins. But Iago thought he had received much greater provocations than those enumerated. Both Othello, who had been instrumental in forwarding the views of Cassio, and Cassio, who had wrested from him the objects of his ambition, were thought by him to have profited by the infidelity of his wife, * * * * * In 1820, therefore, wished Othello to feel towards his Desdemona the poison which he said gnawed his vitals at the thought of the relation between Othello and his wife."

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"Of Hamlet's scepticism, his famous soliloquy, beginning 'To be or not to be,' is a demonstrative proof.

"Theatrical critics, however, have not been

so much as to notice the *pros* and *cons* of life and death.

"As regards the justice and propriety of determining the opinions of a person from his writings, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton says :—

"In the mind of man there is always a resemblance to his works. His heroes may not be like himself, but they are like certain qualities which belong to him. The sentiments he utters are his at the moment; if you find them predominant in all his works, they predominate in his mind. * * * * * His works alone

make not up a man's character, but they are the index to that living book."

This is universally admitted, when the characters of Byron, Burns, Shelly, and others are brought under discussion, but denied in the case of Shakspere. Why so ? The critics would be puzzled to give a good and sufficient reason for this distinction. Perhaps they adopt as a serious sentiment the satire of *Isabella* (*Measure for Measure*). *

"Great men may jest with saints ; 'tis in them ; But in the less, profanation."

This book has fallen like a bombshell amongst the orthodox worshippers of Shakspere. The critics "have (as the Scotch say) 'gane wad' !" One of the ungentle critics declares that this volume is so full of inconceivable blunders that were there the slightest spark of cleverness in it, we should conceive it put forth in jest." Another critic, while repudiating Mr. Birch's conclusions, acknowledges his "ability and research," and describes his book as "a monument of research and wisdom." One critic gracefully speaks of Mr. Birch as "a viper" on the assumption that the (he said) "viper" is "gnawing" at that old "file" of Shakspere. But another of the tribe—the Prince of the weekly reviewers is fairly puzzled whether to set our author down as a bigot or an atheist. This is the best possible testimony to

Mr. Birch's impartiality, and a sufficient answer to the gentleman of the "viper" and the "file." One critic—the oracle of a superannuated *Gazette*—has fairly taken the lead of his brethren in their crusade against this work. Most appropriately, he begins and ends with *Dogberry*, for assuredly he has "writ" himself "down an ass." He abuses Mr. Birch as an "over-righteous critic," and fiercely denounces his "cant" and "intolerant spirit." Evidently the poor creature either has not read the book he professes to review, or if he has done so he has read, or too great a knave to write truthfully and impartially.

Mr. Birch's defense against such critics is best given in his own words :—

"The author wishes to be considered merely as an inquirer, not as a censor. He desists not to judge Shakspere for his sentiments, but only to exhibit them."

This from the preface, and in another para-

graph :—

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THE RATIONAL MODE OF PERMANENTLY AND PEACEABLY ADJUSTING THE PRESENT DISORDERED STATE OF EUROPE.

SECTION FOURTH.

LAW 22.

"In these townships, after the children shall have been trained within them to acquire new habits and new feelings, derived from the laws of God, there shall be no useless private property."

Reasons for this law.

Private property is one of the great demoralising and repressive powers, arising from the laws of men, and is the cause of innumerable crimes and gross injustice.

So long as private property shall be maintained, man will be trained through its natural influence to be ignorantly selfish; that is, to desire to

grasp every thing that may be converted into private property for himself; and, all will openly or more covertly oppose their fellows, with a view

to obtain the largest share in the scramble of life.

The principle of this selfishness, thus implanted in childhood and youth, tends to

create a most vicious and unfavourable character for the adult. It has an isolating and

individualising influence upon each, that checks and stifles the finest and best feelings of humanity.

It is strongly calculated to make man

look upon his fellow man as his enemy, and to

create general suspicions of the motives and

actions of strangers, and even of neighbours—

each being thus taught to endeavour to over-

reach others, and to take advantage in bar-

gain-making even of those called friends to

each other. The evils of private property ex-

tend in all directions; it produces a most un-

favourable, unjust, and artificial character in

those men and women whose wealth is large,

and most unpleasant feelings of hatred and

jealousy in those who are suffering the innum-

erable evils of poverty. It fills prisons, and

aids to fill lunatic asylums, stands in the way

of great general public improvements, and

increases the expenses of society, to protect it-

self, to an extent that few know how to estimate.

It accumulates immense useless property for a small portion of society, and com-

pels the greater mass to live in poverty, or

which is nearly as bad, in the constant dread of it.

It is now deemed by the laws of men an

essential element of society, under the laws of

God, it will be discovered to be an evil of in-

calculable magnitude, and a never-failing cause

of disunion among all classes in all countries.

Volumes would be unequal to detail the loss

and unnecessary sufferings which it creates to

the human race.

It is said to be a stimulus to individual

exertion; and such a stimulant is required

under the irrational system which has neces-

sarily emanated from the laws of man; but,

under the new arrangements which will arise

in a system based on the laws of God, a far

more powerful stimulus will perpetually

exist, which, instead of stimulating to action

for individual gain and isolated advantages,

will call forth the daily exercise of all the

higher faculties of humanity, for the godlike

purpose of benefiting all, to the utmost

extent of those powers.

LAW 23.

"As soon as the members of these townships shall have been educated from infancy in a knowledge of the law of God, trained to act in obedience to them, and surrounded by external objects all in union with them, and thus made to acquire a true knowledge of their nature, there shall be no punishment or reward of individuals."

Reasons for this Law.

It is known to those who have studied

nature, that the general and individual qual-

ties of all things created are given to them by

the Great Creating Power of the Universe;

and that not THE THINGS CREATED, but

THE CREATOR, is the sole author of one

and all, whether animate or inanimate, whether

mineral, vegetable, or animal, whether rational

or irrational existences; and, of course, that

whatever compound of the general qualities

of humanity any may have, the general qualities

and particular combination of them in each

one is alone the work of that Creating Power,

and for which it is *inseparably* to blame, and

the essence of *injustice* to punish the poor, passive,

created being, whether man or any other ani-

mal, except in self-defence, or to obtain the

means of sustaining life which could not be

otherwise supported; and that every act of

unnecessary cruelty is an act in opposition to

the laws of God.

For man, then, to make laws to punish man

by man instead of training them from birth to

know the laws of God, and to act uniformly in

accordance with them, is to make it certain

that man has not yet acquired a knowledge of

humanity, or learned to know himself, or how

to act like a reasonable or rational being. And

from the past history of man, it is now made

evident that he has been created with powers

to progress slowly, through unnumbered genera-

tions, from the most ignorant unreasoning

savage, toward a state in which, at length, he

begins to approach to a condition in which

circumstances are forming to advance the

growth of his creation, that he may become

for the first time in his history, a full formed

man, or a rational being.

It is now only that he is beginning to ac-

quire the knowledge that kindness, directed

by a knowledge of what human nature has

been made to be, is far more powerful for good

than force of any character or description;

that by kindness, wisely and judiciously direc-

ted, man from birth may be now easily trained

and educated in accordance with the laws of

God, to become, in every instance, to the ex-

tent that his created faculties will admit, good,

wise, useful, and happy; while the govern-

ment of force and punishment, in accordance

with the laws of men, can never train one

individual to be good, wise, or happy, in com-

parison with the goodness, wisdom, and hap-

iness, which all will attain and enjoy under the

government of the laws of God—laws which

will produce continually, and without excep-

tions, charity, due consideration for all created

or trained differences, consequent forbearance,

and inimitable kindness. Under this change,

all individual punishment will be discovered to

be not only the very cruelty of injustice, but

the most erroneous mode of governing beings

who are intended to be made good, wise, and

happy, and to be formed into rational men, and

women.

The good effects of the decrease of punish-

ment in lunatic asylums and schools are begin-

ning to be seen and acknowledged. In the

best of both, physical punishments scarcely

now exist. The time approaches when it will

be discovered that the speediest mode to ter-

minate the innumerable diseases—physical,

mental, and moral—created by the irrational

system contrived to punish man by

man is, at this day, one of the strongest

and most insidious to which the laws of men lead;

and the daily incarcerations and murders,

private and public, and wars between nations,

are unmistakeable declarations to the world of

the low state of intellect and the total absence

of right reason among the people of all nations,

climes, and colours.

One of the first measures of the population

of the world, as soon as the present veil of ig-

norance can be removed so as to permit it to become rational, will be to adopt arrangements to prevent any necessity for a continuance of governing by force and fraud, and of punishing one created being by another equally created and as ignorant as itself. While men shall be so ignorantly trained and educated as to make laws, or maintain laws, in opposition to God's laws, and thus make man the judge of his thoughts and actions which he comprehends not, and therefore blames and punishes his fellow-men according to his notions, whims, and limited faculties, there can be a slow progress only made towards a rational and healthy state of terrestrial happiness and untroublous enjoyments.

The writer had the peculiar opportunity of governing a population of two thousand five hundred souls, by principles of kindness, for thirty years; and although the experiments were commenced and continued under many strongly opposing circumstances, created by men's laws, yet was it successful in producing knowledge, morality, and happiness, far beyond his most sanguine expectations. And whenever an attempt shall be made to govern on the same principles, in accordance with the laws of God, the necessity to resort to human punishments will soon cease, and happiness will speedily produce goodness throughout any population that shall be thus wisely governed.

The true way, being the shortest and most pleasant to the parties, is, first to adopt

measures to make man the partial and healthy

state of terrestrial happiness and untroublous

enjoyments.

The CORONER.—Has the Tooting establishment, as to the Tooting infant pauper

asylum, been removed so as to permit it to become rational, and to afford some explanation on this subject.

Mr. DRAOUT.—I have been requested to

make a careful inspection of the various rooms occupied as cholera wards for the reception of sick children. It is necessary, however, to premise that as the powers of the General Board are limited, under the provision of the Nuisances Removal and Disease Prevention Act, to the issuing of regulations and to institute inquiries, no authority exists for enforcing any measure which in consequence of this investigation might appear to the General Board to be desirable. I first entered those which had been received, returned to the inquest room, when

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asylum, been removed so as to permit it to become rational, and to afford some explanation on this subject.

Mr. DRAOUT.—I have

potatoes, and were perfectly satisfied both as to the quantity and quality given to the children.

Witness first received notice of the outbreak of cholera on the 2nd of January.

The CORONER here interrupted the witness to suggest that every information possible should be given to parents inquiring for their children in the workhouse. He had had several complaints on the subject. One poor woman stated that the first information she had received about her child was that he was dead and buried. (Sensation.)

Mr. JAMES said that everything that lay in his power should be done to allay the anxiety of relatives, but he could only speak for himself.

The report stated that meetings were held, and that it was resolved the children should be removed. Witness immediately gave up and removed all who were at a fit state from Tooting. This was on Friday, the 5th. 153 children were removed.—Coroner.—How many were left behind in consequence of being ill? It was stated that twenty-one were left, but there were thirty-seven in the first instance.—Coroner: How many are there now left alive out of the thirty-seven? I am sorry to say there were only fifteen on Sunday last. Six are not accounted for, but it is supposed they went home to their parents. One little thing got into the van unperceived. (A laugh.) We used every exertion to bring away those who did belong to us, and not to bring those who did not belong to us. I received an official list of the living on Monday, being filled up to the previous day. Mr. Drouet called on me on Saturday, and said that the list was not full, but in his opinion he had come up without it. I had an account of sixteen deaths, while there are only six unaccounted for. There were heard that two children left on the 31st Dec., probably taken out for a walk by their parents, and have not returned.—Coroner: Why did not Mr. Drouet give earlier information? He was not asked. If you had seen the reckless state of madness he was in, you would feel that it was utterly useless to put the question.

WILLIAM WREN, member of the board of guardians of the Holborn Union, examined.—I went with the committee to Tooting; the children were at dinner. They were all standing; I believe they never sit at meals. I cut up 100 potatoes, not one of which was fit to eat. These were served out to the boys. They were positively black and discoloured. I did not speak to the children, nor did I complain in their presence. I told Drouet the potatoes were very bad. His reply was, that they cost him 27 a ton. They had no other vegetables. On his mention of the price, I suggested other food. He made no reply. We passed through the wards. I remarked to Mr. Drouet that the newly erected rooms smelt unwholesomely. One of the committee (Mr. May) suggested that they should be a foot higher. Drouet said he should have enough to do if he minded everybody. This witness corroborated the statement of the former witness as to the violent conduct of Mr. Drouet on the 4th of May. One boy said he had been struck by Drouet.—The Doctor said, "You had a good dinner to-day." The boy then said, "We have not bread enough either for breakfast or supper." I found that the printed dietary was one ounce less per meal than in the union. I went again on the 30th of May, when everything assumed a different aspect. The potatoes were excellent. I was surprised to find that the bread was not weighed. It was cut indiscriminately into sixteen pieces. I examined the meat. One thing struck me. I observed some of the boys with salt in a bag, and they were bartering it with others for their potatoes. I ascertained that no salt was supplied to the boys. The calculated cost of maintaining children in the workhouse, including clothing, is 3s. 1d. per week. It has been as low as 2s. 1d. I think 4s. 6d. was ample payment. Ten or twelve shillings a year would clothe them as they are clad at Tooting. Mr. Drouet keeps a tailor on the premises. I did not object to the dietary, further than the potatoes. Mr. Drouet said that, if we paid more, we might have them better fed. I heard that St. George's in the East end of St. George's.—Mr. Drouet proposed to reduce it to 4s. 3d. when provisions became cheaper. Everything was better on the second day's visit; but my impression was, that our visit was expected. Mr. Drouet apologised. I don't think he had notice, but he would learn it in my way.

RICHARD HALL, Esq., Assistant Poor-law Commissioner, and a Poor-law Inspector, occasionally visited Drouet's establishment twice a year to obtain information for the Board. The Commissioners had come to the conclusion that they could not regulate these institutions. The Commissioners might have exercised power by prohibiting any union from sending their children there, but it would be a very strong measure. I think that, directly, the Commissioners had no power over Mr. Drouet's establishment. I deemed it my duty to visit from time to time, and report the board. My last visit was on the 16th November. My visit was in consequence of Mr. Drouet having intimated to me that he intended to receive children from St. Pancras. I reported that neither his accommodation, nor his supply of teachers and trainees, would admit of his increasing the number of children. I recommended that he should receive pecuniary assistance towards the payment of teachers, as Mr. Aylmer had received some years before. I did not think that the children of the school was in a proper state at the time of our visit. It was too late. I said so to Mr. Drouet.

The CORONER.—Did you ever expostulate with Mr. Drouet as to the crowding of his rooms? Yes, in 1840 I found that the children were sleeping three in a bed, and I expostulated with him on the subject.

He said he had been told that the person now dead (Kelly) was sleeping in the next bed to her husband.

SARAH COWDERY (a pauper), sister of the deceased James Cowderoy, stated that she did not see her brother when he was ill until Sunday morning at half-past nine o'clock. She saw her brother on Saturday week: he was then going to the Free Hospital with food for the children. (The children removed from Tooting.) He made no complaint against any one. He was a sober man. Her brother had not been five weeks out of the Fever Hospital before he was sent in this way to the Hospital.

Mr. WALKER here observed, that a man so recently suffering from fever was the last person that ought to have been so employed, for it was well known that the weak were the most liable to attacks from cholera, and though it had been held by most eminent authorities, and such, indeed, had been his own opinion, that cholera was not contagious, yet he must say that some things which had recently taken place calculated, in some degree, to shake that confidence.

MR. EDWARD WYATT, one of the medical officers of the union, who had made a post-mortem examination of the bodies, stated that the two deceased persons died from malignant, commonly called Asiatic cholera; and a verdict to that effect was accordingly returned by the jury, one of the jurymen at the same time suggesting that under present circumstances, additional medical assistance should be obtained for the necessities of the workhouse, in the propriety of which suggestion Mr. White concurred.

THE VERDICTS.

Mr. WALKER held an inquest on Monday at Clapham workhouse, on five children, named Kellie, Ridgway, Hartley, Inger, and Pollington, removed from Mr. Drouet's pauper establishment at Tooting, where they had died of cholera. In the course of the proceedings it was elicited that the Clapham guardians have 105 pauper children still at Tooting, and that ten children from Clapham had died at Mr. Drouet's.

The CORONER observed that he had heard very little of the children here.

Mr. WALKER here interposed, and objected to the evidence of these children being taken.

The CORONER observed that whenever he wanted to elicit the truth, children were the best witnesses, but was willing that the children at the hospital should be first taken if Mr. Drouet wished it. Mr. Drouet agreed to this arrangement, and the proceedings were adjourned till Friday next.

INQUEST AT HACKNEY.

An inquest was held on Saturday last before Mr. Baker, at the Old Mermaid, Church Street, Hackney, to inquire into the cause of the deaths alleged to be from cholera, of John Burke, 14; William Walton, 7; Thomas Neeson, 7; and John Keen, 3 years and 3 months old; pauper children belonging to Islington, who had been removed from Tooting on Monday week last, and placed in Park House, with fifty-five others. Mr. Baker read the principal points of Mr. Grainger's report, and suggested the practicability of deferring the inquiry until the termination of that pending before Mr. Walker. After some conversation, the jury then proceeded to view the bodies, which were lying in an out-building of Park House, and afterwards minutely inspected the house, the arrangements of which gave unequalled satisfaction. Eight children were in the convalescent ward, and two in the sick ward in a dangerous condition. After the return of the jury, a long and animated discussion ensued between the jury and coroner and Mr. Oldershaw, and the inquiry was adjourned for some days.

INQUEST AT CHELSEA.

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The CORONER observed that he had heard very little accounts.

Mr. PORTMAN said that there had been no true case of cholera at Tooting since Saturday; the cases were merely consecutive fevers.

The CORONER.—How many deaths have you had at Tooting altogether?—Mr. Portman.—Over 100. I cannot exactly say.

The CORONER.—Yes, a great many more than that—more than 130.

JOHN KELLICK examined.—Was a labourer, and now an inmate of Chelsea workhouse. His two children were sent to Tooting from that workhouse about nine weeks back, and then was more satisfied with their appearance than when in Chelsea workhouse. When he saw the children, he was not allowed to see them in private. The children were sent out into the lodge to see him, and some of the officers of the establishment were there. I did not ask to be permitted to see them privately and alone. I again saw them on my last monthly Sunday out, and I then asked them if they had sufficient to eat there, and they answered "No." I took them down three allowances of pudding, which my wife had brought here, and two allowances of food and butter, though the children had just had their dinner there. They were then asked what they ate the whole of it. They said they did not get enough to eat there, and they wished they were not becoming back at the Chelsea Workhouse. I did not complain to the Chelsea guardians that my children had not enough to eat at Tooting. Had I done so, I might have met with worse treatment than I have done. When I went the second time I found that as well as not having enough to eat, the younger one was eaten up with the itch. I was there last Sunday week, and then thought my chil-

drren looked well; but that was the time they were dying. On the following Thursday I received notice that my child was ill, and on going to Tooting the same day I found the deceased in one of the sick wards, and very sadly. I remained in the ward for two hours. I saw no medical gentleman attend upon my child, or any other, all the time I was there. I saw Mr. Kite and Mr. Popham, but they were not attending my child. I think there were about fifteen children in the ward where my child was.

The CORONER.—Did you ask to see the medical man about your child?

WITNESS.—I did not. I am positive I saw no medical administrator either by the nurses or the medical men. When I came back I sent in a petition with four others, to the Board, to say that we would find lodgings for our children in the parish, if the guardians would let them come away from Tooting, and find them in food. The answer was, that the guardians had decided that the children should all remain at Tooting, and it could not be allowed.

MARIA ISGAR said she was the mother of the deceased Sarah Ingar, and saw her die at the Tooting Asylum at four o'clock on Saturday morning last, after an illness of twenty-four hours. She had great pain and cramps in the stomach, and had mustard poultices and other remedies applied, and medicine administered by the medical gentlemen. Deceased had been at Tooting about eight weeks, and on remarking that she looked very pale the last time she saw her she complained that she was kept out in a cold yard. By the Coroner: I saw her in the lodge, but I had no opportunity of speaking to her in private. I did not notice that she was scantily clothed except about the neck and shoulders. On Friday night, after she was taken ill, I asked her if she had sufficient food, and she said, "No mother; I did not get food enough" and she then told me she had bought bread of one of the nurses, with some halfpence I had given her. On the Friday evening nothing was given her but brandy and water.

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