ALISON'S HISTORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

(*Continued from* p. 511.)

HISTORY is interesting under a two-fold aspect; it has a *scientific* interest, and a *moral* or *biographic* interest. A scientific, inasmuch as it exhibits the general laws of the moral universe acting in circumstances of complexity, and enables us to trace the connexion between great effects and their causes. A moral or biographic interest, inasmuch as it represents to us the characters and lives of human beings, and calls upon us, according to their deservings or to their fortunes, for our sympathy, our admiration, or our censure.

Now, without entering at present, more than to the extent of a few words, into the *scientific* aspect of the history of the French Revolution, or stopping to define the place which we would assign to it as an event in universal history, we need not fear to declare utterly unqualified for estimating the French Revolution any one who looks upon it as arising from causes peculiarly French, or otherwise than as one turbulent passage in a progressive revolution embracing the whole human race. All political revolutions, not effected by foreign conquest, originate in moral revolutions. The subversion of established institutions is merely one consequence of the previous subversion of established opinions. The hundred political revolutions of the last three centuries were but a few outward manifestations of a moral revolution, which dates from the great breaking loose of the human faculties commonly described as the 'revival of letters,' and of which the main instrument and agent was the invention of printing. How much of the course of that moral revolution yet remains to be run, or how many political revolutions it will yet generate before it be exhausted, no one can foretell. But it must be the shallowest view of the French Revolution, which can *now* consider it as any thing but a mere *incident* in a great change in man himself, in his belief, in his principles of conduct, and therefore in the outward arrangements of society; a change which is but half completed, and which is now in a state of more rapid progress here in England, than any where else.

Now if this view be just, which we must be content for the present to assume, surely for an English historian, writing at this particular time concerning the French Revolution, there was something pressing for consideration of greater interest and importance than the degree of praise or blame due to the few individuals who, with more or less of consciousness what they were about, happened to be personally implicated in that strife of the elements.

But also, if, feeling his incapacity for treating history from the scientific point of view, our author thinks fit to confine himself to

the *moral* aspect, surely some less common-place moral result, some more valuable and more striking practical lesson might admit of being drawn from this extraordinary passage of history, than merely this, that men should beware how they begin a political convulsion, because they never can tell how or when it will end; which happens to be the one solitary general inference, the entire aggregate of the practical wisdom, deduced therefrom in Mr. Alison's book.

Of such stuff are ordinary men's moralities composed. Be good, be wise, always do right, take heed what you do, for you know not what may come of it. Does Mr. Alison, or any one, really believe that any human thing, from the fall of man to the last bankruptcy, ever went wrong for want of such maxims as these?

A political convulsion is a fearful thing: granted. Nobody can be assured beforehand what course it will take: we grant that too. What then? No one ought ever to do any thing which has any tendency to bring on a convulsion: is that the principle? But there never was an attempt made to reform any abuse in Church or State, never any denunciation uttered, or mention made of any political or social evil, which had not some such tendency. Whatever excites dissatisfaction with any one of the arrangements of society, brings the danger of a forcible subversion of the entire fabric so much the nearer: does it follow that there ought to be no censure of any thing which exists? Or is this abstinence, peradventure, to be observed only when the danger is considerable? But that is whenever the evil complained of is considerable; because the greater the evil, the stronger is the desire excited to be freed from it, and because the greatest evils are always those which it is most difficult to get rid of by ordinary means. It would follow, then, that mankind are at liberty to throw off small evils, but not great ones; that the most deeply-seated and fatal diseases of the social system are those which ought to be left for ever without remedy.

Men are not to make it the sole object of their political lives to avoid a revolution, no more than of their natural lives to avoid death. They are to take reasonable care to avert both those contingencies when there is a present danger, but they are not to forbear the pursuit of any worthy object for fear of a mere possibility.

Unquestionably it is possible to do mischief by striving for a larger measure of political reform than the national mind is ripe for; and so forcing on prematurely a struggle between elements, which, by a more gradual progress, might have been brought to harmonize. And every honest and considerate man, before he engages in the career of a political reformer, will inquire whether the moral state and intellectual culture of the people are such as to render any great improvement in the management of public

affairs possible. But he will inquire too, whether the people are likely ever to be made better, morally or intellectually, without a *previous* change in the government. If not, it may still be his duty to strive for such a change at whatever risks.

What decision a perfectly wise man, at the opening of the French Revolution, would have come to upon these several points, he who knows most will be most slow to pronounce. By the Revolution, substantial good has been effected of immense value, at the cost of immediate evil of the most tremendous kind. But it is impossible, with all the light which has been, or probably ever will be, obtained on the subject, to do more than conjecture whether France could have purchased improvement cheaper; whether any course which could have averted the Revolution, would not have done so by arresting all improvement, and barbarizing down the people of France into the condition of Russian boors.

A revolution, which is so ugly a thing, certainly cannot be a very formidable thing, if all is true the Tories say of it. For, according to them, it has always depended upon the will of some small number of persons, whether there should be a revolution or no. They invariably begin by assuming that great and decisive immediate improvements, with a certainty of subsequent and rapid progress, and the ultimate attainment of all practical good, may be had by peaceable means at the option of the leading reformers, and that to this they voluntarily prefer civil war and massacre for the sake of marching somewhat more directly and rapidly towards their ultimate ends. Having thus made out a revolution to be so mere a *bagatelle*, that, except by the extreme of knavery or folly, it may always be kept at a distance; there is little difficulty in proving all revolutionary leaders knaves or fools. But unhappily theirs is no such enviable position; a far other alternative is commonly offered to them. We will hazard the assertion, that there never yet happened a political convulsion, originating in the desire of reform, where the choice did not, in the full persuasion of every person concerned, lie between *all* and *nothing*; where the actors in the revolution had not thoroughly made up their minds, that, without a revolution, the enemies of all reform would have the entire ascendency, and that not only there would be no present improvement, but the door would for the future be shut against all endeavour towards it.

Unquestionably, such was the conviction of those who took part in the French Revolution, during its earlier stages. *They* did *not* choose the way of blood and violence in preference to the way of peace and discussion. Theirs was the cause of law and order. The States General at Versailles were a body, legally assembled, legally and constitutionally sovereign of the country, and had every right which law and opinion could bestow upon them, to do

all that they did. But as soon as they did any thing disagreeable to the king's courtiers, (at that time they had not even *begun* to make any alterations in the fundamental institutions of the country,) the king and his advisers took steps for appealing to the bayonet. Then, and not till then, the adverse force of an armed people stood forth in defence of the highest constituted authority—the legislature of their country—menaced with illegal violence. The Bastille fell; the popular party became the stronger; and success, which so often is said to be a justification, has here proved the reverse: men who would have ranked with Hampden and Sidney, if they had quietly waited to have their throats cut, become odious monsters because they have been victorious.

We have not now time nor space to discuss the quantum of the guilt which attaches, not to the authors of the Revolution, but to the subsequent, to the various revolutionary governments, for the crimes of the revolution. Much was done which could not have been done except by bad men. But whoever examines faithfully and diligently the records of those times, whoever can conceive the circumstances and look into the minds of the men who planned and who perpetrated those enormities, will be the more fully convinced, the more he considers the facts, that all which was done had one sole object. That object was, according to the phraseology of the time, to *save* the Revolution; to *save* it, no matter by what means; to defend it against its irreconcilable enemies, within and without; to prevent the undoing of the whole work, the restoration of all which had been demolished, and the extermination of all who had been active in demolishing; to keep down the royalists, and drive back the foreign invaders; as the means to these ends to erect all France into a camp, subject the whole French people to the obligations and the arbitrary discipline of a besieged city; and to inflict death, or suffer it with equal readiness—death or any other evil—for the sake of succeeding in the object.

But nothing of all this is dreamed of in Mr. Alison's philosophy: he knows not enough, neither of his professed subject, nor of the universal subject, the nature of man, to have got even thus far, to have made this first step towards understanding what the French Revolution was. In this he is without excuse, for had he been even moderately read in the French literature, *subsequent* to the Revolution, he would have found this view of the details of its history familiar to every writer and to every reader.

It was scarcely worth while to touch upon the French Revolution for the sake of saying no more about it than we have now said; yet it is as much, perhaps, as the occasion warrants. Observations entering more deeply into the subject will find a fitter opportunity when it shall not be necessary to mix them up with strictures upon an insignificant book.

CASPAR HAUSER.*

'THE proper study of mankind is man,' says Pope; and he might have added, 'the chief amusement of mankind is man;' for not only do the metaphysician, the moralist, and the politician examine man in various lights, as a matter of study or of business, but the idle while away their time, and the industrious relax themselves with human nature, under various forms, or placed in various circumstances. Novels and romances are treatises on human beings, for the amusement of human beings; and the drama is entirely and exclusively devoted to the same end, through the same means. Even little children must have their human plaything, sometimes in the shape of a doll or of Punch, sometimes of a fairy, a giant, a dwarf, or necromancer; for their infant powers, seeing only the exterior of man, and but part of that, seek exercise and excitement in the contemplation of beings with new forms and extended powers. The child is feeble in body, and he delights in contemplating corporeal strength; he is poor and weak, and likes to think of unbounded wealth and power; he is confined in space, and dreams of beings who rove whither they will; he is moral, and is amused with Punch's unbounded and ludicrous violations of morality. In short, he feels the shackles of childhood and humanity, and fondly imagines beings who are entirely free from the vulgar impediments to the will. But still his fancy hovers close to earth, and forms its brightest creations out of childish objects, pleasures, and emotions.

Little as we know what we are, and how this goodly partnership of body and mind became slowly concocted into its present condition, we know still less what we were when infants, what we then felt and thought, what we then knew and had to learn. Little can we now conceive the wilderness of colours, odours, tastes, smells, and bodily feelings, pleasures, and pains, into which our infant being was then thrown:—to have eyes, yet not to have learnt to see; ears, without comprehending one sound; hands, with no power to hold or touch, or knowledge of any thing to be touched or held; feet, of no use until the complicated art of walking has been attained, after many experiments and many failures.

So little do we remember or know of our infant selves, so fruitlessly do we interrogate others in that condition, that those who have devoted themselves to the study of the mind, and who have long sought to trace the origin of our knowledge, return, like travellers from a strange and unknown country, with wonderfully

* CASPAR HAUSER.—An Account of an Individual kept in a Dungeon, separated from all communication with the World, from early Childhood to about the Age of Seventeen. Drawn up from legal documents, by Anselm von Feuerbach. London: Simpkin and Marshall. 1833.

discordant reports. All is instinct, says one, and the instincts increase in number and in power, according to our wants at different periods of our lives. No, says another, we are like white paper, and receive our impressions from external objects; our bodily and mental state are equally formed by circumstances. A third party steps in with another doctrine, new in language, if not in sense; then comes a fourth; and after talking, and writing, and disputing, and mutually proving, or rather asserting, each other to be in the wrong, some one, more adventurous than the throng, betakes himself to observation. He examines himself on various occasions, at different ages, and in different states of body and mind. He examines others, differing in age, sex, temperament, and condition, and compares them with himself. He then finds that he and others have learnt to see, but long before they were able to explain the process, and that now they have forgotten every thing about this process. He cannot interrogate infants; so he reasons upon the subject, makes up his theory, and avails himself of the rare occurrence of an adult, blind from birth, but successfully operated upon, and receiving sight, whom he may interrogate; for in respect to vision, this adult is as yet an infant. The deaf acquiring the sense of hearing, afford him new experiments on another sense. He then inquires into the condition of the blind generally, with and without that education which we are now able to give to them; also into the condition of the deaf and dumb, under both circumstances; and of those unfortunate beings, like James Mitchell, (so interestingly described by Dugald Stewart,) who being deaf, dumb, and blind, show no traces of mental imbecility that may not be accounted for by the absence of these senses. Savages, and human beings brought up alone, like Peter the wild boy, have also been examined, as exemplifications of man under extraordinary circumstances. But favourable specimens of human nature, under most of these circumstances, are so rare; and when they do occur, it is so seldom competent observers are at hand, that the most valuable opportunities are too frequently partially, if not wholly lost. Such a case is that of Caspar Hauser.

Let it not be supposed that these intricate studies are idle or worthless. Is it nothing to learn as much of human nature as our faculties and opportunities permit? Are stones, and plants, and animals to be studied, while man is neglected? Our senses and faculties, bodily and mental, may be greatly improved by education; we have yet very much to learn of this first of studies, almost every thing to learn; and our only chance of making progress, is to interrogate ourselves and others, in varied circumstances. The more striking and novel the circumstances of mind, or body, or situation, the more clearly is some portion of body or mind exhibited.

'Caspar Hauser' is the story of the condition and education

of a youth, who was kept almost wholly from intercourse with nature or mankind, until the age of seventeen. The tale, if true, is valuable, because it affords evidence or illustration of many points in metaphysics; if fictitious, it is still valuable, as a treatise of metaphysics on a novel plan, calculated to amuse and instruct many who will not look into an abstract work on human nature.

We confess that we expected to find 'Caspar Hauser' a German romance, filled with horrors and extravagancies,—possibly a German Frankenstein; but with the exception of the inexplicable fact of the youth's being kept in a state of captivity till the age of seventeen, and debarred from intercourse with mankind and external nature; and of a subsequent attempt upon his life; the work is an unusually simple and unpretending narrative of a human being in an almost inconceivable state of helplessness and ignorance, and of his progress in improvement. It has no appearance of being written for effect; a professed writer of fiction could hardly have maintained so subdued a tone. If it be a fiction, it must be the work of a more profound and acute metaphysician and novelist than we could readily point out. But the existence of the youth is a well-known fact; he has been seen by thousands; and the book appears under the name of Von Feuerbach, the celebrated jurist, who was officially concerned in the legal investigations which took place, and who has been interested in the youth ever since. And it appears that Earl Stanhope has taken a great interest in him, and at present provides for his education and support.

We shall now give a sketch of the condition and progress of Caspar Hauser, trusting that our readers may be thereby induced to peruse the work itself, which of course presents the subject in a more agreeable point of view, than is possible in a brief abridgement.

On the 28th of May, 1828, a youth was found in the streets of Nuremberg. His appearance of brutish dulness, his inattention to external objects, and his invariable reply of the same incoherent words to all questions, led to the suspicion that he must be either an idiot, a madman, or an impostor. A letter which was in his hand when he was found, stated little more than that he was left in 1812 in charge of the anonymous writer, who represented himself as a labourer. Being conveyed to the police, he there attracted much attention. He used his hands and fingers in the most awkward manner conceivable. His feet, which, like his hands, were small, and beautifully formed, bore no marks of a shoe, and were as soft on the sole as the palms of his hands. His walk was a waddling, tottering, groping motion, and he stumbled slowly and heavily forward, with outstretched arms, which he seemed to use as balance poles, and the slightest

impediment caused him to fall. The formation of the bone and muscles of his leg was very peculiar, and could only be accounted for on the supposition that he had been constantly kept sitting on the floor, with his legs stretched straight out.

It was ascertained, partly from the youth himself, after he had learned to speak, and partly from circumstantial evidence, that he had been confined from early childhood in a small, dark chamber, where he had always remained in the same position, and where he had never seen a human creature. Every morning he found a supply of bread and water by his side; and some opiate appears to have been occasionally put into the water, after waking from the effects of which, he found that his clothes had been changed, and his nails cut. His sole occupation was playing with two wooden horses and some bits of ribbon. Here he was not unhappy, for he knew no other state. The man with whom he had always been, but whose face he never saw, taught him, shortly before his appearance in Nuremberg, to pronounce a few words; and having set him upon his feet, endeavoured to teach him to stand and walk. How he got to Nuremberg, he knows not; but coarse clothes and boots were put upon him, (for in his confinement he had only trowsers and a shirt,) and he was left, as described, in the street. Who he is, or what he is, he knows not, nor how long or where he was kept in confinement. The only proof of this strange story is the assertion of the youth himself, and the much stronger testimony of his bodily and mental condition. He was like a new born child in all which must be acquired by experience: he was destitute of words, ignorant of common objects, and of the daily occurrences of nature, and he abhorred the usual customs, conveniences, and necessaries of life. Bread and water were the only sustenance he would take; other things make him shudder even at the smell; and wine or coffee, mixed with his water, gave him sweats, vomiting, and violent headaches.

During his abode with the police, he exhibited an almost complete indifference and insensibility to external objects, until a policeman gave him a little toy horse, with which he was much delighted, and he amused himself entirely with playing with it, seated in his usual awkward position, and insensible to every thing going on around. Very near objects he would sometimes gaze at, with a stupid look, occasionally expressive of curiosity and astonishment, but passing and distant objects remained unnoticed. He was delighted at the sight of a lighted candle, and forthwith put his fingers into the flame. Of distance he had no notion, but tried, like an infant, to catch at bright objects. Feigned cuts and thrusts were made at him, with a naked sabre, without exciting his apprehension, or even causing him to wink. The sound of the neighbouring clock and bells was at first dis-

regarded, but soon attracted his notice: he was much struck by some passing music; but was thrown into convulsions by being injudiciously placed near the drum at the parade.

After remaining a short time with the police, Caspar Hauser was placed in charge of the keeper of a prison for vagabonds and beggars, who, suspecting that he might be an impostor, watched him narrowly, but found his whole conduct perfectly consistent with that of a little child. The jailor and his family (like the policemen) soon formed that attachment to the stranger, which is formed towards an innocent and helpless child; the jailor's little children played with him, and taught him to speak; and the man himself admitted him to his table, where he learned to sit on a chair, to use his hands, and to imitate the customs of civilized life.

The story now spread abroad, and multitudes flocked to see the captive. They gave him toys, talked to him, and often teased him with their importunities and ill-timed experiments. It is to be regretted that scientific men did not see him sooner. Von Feuerbach visited him after he had been considerably more than a month at Nuremberg, and reports that he found the walls of the room covered with prints and pictures, which had been given to Caspar, and which he had fixed with his saliva, which was as sticky as gum. Numerous playthings, clothes, money, &c. which had been given to him, were lying about in regular order; for Caspar packed them all up in the evening, and unpacked and arranged them every morning. His eyes, at this time, were inflamed, and avoided the light, and they long continued very weak. Von Feuerbach noticed no shyness or timidity in the youth, who was now pleased with the visitors, especially with those who were finely dressed: after looking earnestly at them, and repeating their names, he never forgot them. A frequent spasmodic affection was noticed on one side of his body, succeeded by a nervous rigidity.

When first found, Caspar appears to have known only five or six words. He pronounced plainly those he knew, but his language was as indigent as his ideas. It was difficult to become intelligible to him, and his jargon was equally unintelligible to others. Conjunctions, participles, and adverbs were, for a long time, entirely wanting in his speech; his syntax was miserable; he rarely used pronouns, and spoke of himself and others in the third person, like a little child, and of course made many ludicrous mistakes.

Like a savage, or a little child, he was remarkably fond of bright colours, and preferred glaring red to every other colour. Green and black he disliked very much; he preferred brick houses, when red, to trees and plants, and he even wished that his favourite animal, the horse, had been of a scarlet colour.

His curiosity, his thirst for knowledge, and the inflexible perseverance with which he fixed his attention on what he determined to learn or comprehend, became, in a while, remark-

able. He even left his playthings and his favourite horses, for writing and drawing, and complained of being bothered by the multitude of his visitors, who did not leave him time to learn. He also frequently expressed a desire to go back to his hole, as he had not there suffered from headaches, nor had been teased as he was in the world. Indeed, he was subject to many painful sensations from his new impressions, especially from the sense of smell, and he was troubled by the incessant questions and by the inconsiderate and not very humane experiments of the visitors.

His remembrance of the names and titles of visitors, of flowers, &c. was very remarkable, but this power decreased, or appeared to decrease, as the powers of his understanding increased.

The excitement which he received from the numerous visitors in the prison, his extraordinary efforts to acquire knowledge, the unusual quantity of light and free air, and the many strange and often painful excitements of his senses, at length were more than his feeble frame could withstand. He became ill; and his unconquerable aversion to every thing but bread and water, prevented medicines from being administered to him.

On the 18th of July, (nearly two months after he was first discovered in Nuremberg,) he was released from the tower, and committed to the care of Professor Daumer; and so great was the curiosity he excited, that the magistrates were obliged to issue an order to prevent the admission of future visitors. He now for the first time, slept in a bed, and had dreams; he related his dreams as actual occurrences; and it was some time before he learnt to perceive the difference between waking and dreaming. It was the work of much time and difficulty to accustom him to ordinary food; and after this was accomplished, he grew considerably in a short space of time; but a constant head-ache and inflammation of the eyes prevented him, long after his recovery, from reading, writing, or drawing.

With regard to vision, he appears to have been in a state nearly resembling that of the blind boy couched by Cheselden; for instance, he could not distinguish between a round or triangular object and a mere painting of such objects; or between a painting and a carving of a man and horse; but by packing and unpacking his playthings, he gradually learnt the difference. Being shown a beautiful prospect from a window, he drew back with horror; and being asked some time afterwards, when he had learned to speak, why he did so, he said it appeared as if a wooden shutter had been placed close before his eyes spattered with different colours. Indeed, it was some time before he could distinguish distant objects, for when he did go out, it was but a short distance, and his weak eyes and constant danger of falling, prevented him from looking round. He could see with unusually little light, and though his eyes were weak, his sight, both of near and distant objects, was remarkably acute.

His hearing was at first very acute, but it became less delicate

in time. His sense of smell was painfully acute, and caused him more misery than all his other senses. All odours were more or less disagreeable to him, and powerful odours caused violent headaches, sweats, and even attacks of fever. The smell of meat, cheese, vinegar, wine, &c., was very painful to him, and even the ink, paints, and pencils, he used, gave him annoyance.

His obedience was unconditional and boundless to those who had acquired authority over him; but this had no connexion with his knowing, believing, and judging. He must be convinced by his senses or understanding, before he would acknowledge any thing to be true; otherwise he would leave the matter undecided. When told that in winter all things would be covered with a cold white substance, he plainly evinced that he would believe this when he saw it, not before. When the snow did come, he took some up with great glee, but immediately dropped it, crying out that the white paint had bitten his hand.

It required no little pains and patience on the part of Professor Daumer to teach him the difference between organized and unorganized bodies, between animate and inanimate things, and between voluntary motion and motion that is communicated from without. Men or animals cut in stone, carved in wood, or painted, he conceived to be animated; it appeared strange to him that horses, unicorns, &c., hewn or painted on the walls, did not run away. He expressed his indignation against a statue in the garden, because it did not wash itself; and was struck with horror at the sight of a great crucifix. If a sheet of paper was blown down by the wind, he thought that it had run away from the table; he supposed that a tree manifested its life, by moving its branches; and its voice, by the rustling of its leaves; and was angry with a boy for striking it with a stick. He also thought that the balls of nine-pins ran voluntarily along, and stopped when they were tired.

To animals he long ascribed the properties of men. He was angry with the cat for taking her food with her mouth; and wished to teach her to use her paws and sit upright; and he expressed great indignation at her unwillingness to attend to what he said. He wondered why some oxen, who were lying on the pavement, did not go home and lie down there. He spoke of trees as if they had been stuck in the ground; and of leaves and flowers, as if they were the work of human hands; nor did natural objects interest him otherwise than by causing him to ask who made them. The first external object that produced any great effect upon him, was the sight of the starry heavens: it was then for the first time that he was heard to complain against the author of his captivity, who had prevented him from beholding such a glorious sight.

Though too weak and awkward to take much exercise without great fatigue, he exhibited an extraordinary fondness for horses, and being sent to a riding-school, soon excelled in riding to a degree that astonished every one.

The contact of Caspar Hauser's hand or body with a magnet or with metals, and even the presence of metals, produced a singular and unpleasant sensation in him, as did shaking hands with any one, or the touch of an animal, as a horse or cat. Many instances of this singular sensation are related. Towards the end of 1828, when the morbid excitability of his nerves had been almost removed, this sensation began gradually to disappear, and was at length totally lost.

Though full of childish gentleness and kindness, he had no presentiment of the existence of a God, or of a more elevated state of existence. Nothing appeared to him to have any reality that was beyond the reach of his senses.

'All attempts made in the common way to awaken religious ideas in his mind, were for a long time entirely fruitless. With great *naïveté* he complained to Professor Daumer, that he did not know what the clergymen meant by all the things that they told him; of which he could comprehend nothing!!....There were two orders of men, to whom Caspar had, for a considerable time, an unconquerable aversion—physicians and clergymen; to the first, "on account of the abominable medicines which they prescribed, and with which they made people sick;" and to the latter, because, as he expressed himself, they made people afraid, and confused them with incomprehensible stuff. When he saw a minister, he was seized with horror and dismay. If he was asked the cause of this, he would reply—Because these people have already tormented me very much. Once, when I was at the tower, four of them came to me all at once, and told me things which at that time I could not at all comprehend; for instance, that God had created all things out of nothing. When I asked them for an explanation, they all began to cry out at the same time, and every one said something different. When I told them, All these things I do not yet understand; I must first learn to read and write; they replied, These things must be learned first. Nor did they go away, until I signified to them my desire, that they would at length leave me at rest. In churches, therefore, Caspar felt by no means happy. The crucifixes which he saw there excited a horrible shuddering in him; because for a long time he involuntarily ascribed life to images. The singing of the congregation seemed to him as a repulsive bawling. First, said he, after returning from attending a church, the people bawl; and when they have done, the parson begins to bawl.'

By the summer of 1829, Caspar Hauser had made great progress in his education. He then collected his recollections of his life in a written memoir, which, though miserably executed, was much talked of and shown about. It is conjectured that his incarcerators became alarmed on learning this, for, on the 17th of the ensuing October, an attempt was made to assassinate him, by a man in disguise, who inflicted a wound on his head. The wound itself, and the alarm attending it, brought on a state of delirium and frenzy, from which the unfortunate youth was long in

recovering. A judicial inquiry took place on this occasion, but it was not attended with any satisfactory results.

The latest accounts describe Caspar Hauser as a singular compound of child, youth, and man; remarkably industrious, but without genius or talent; and utterly destitute of fancy, pleasantry, or figurative expression; but judging accurately of all that comes within his narrow knowledge and experience. He is mild and gentle, has no vicious inclinations, passions, or strong emotions, and though timid, he modestly but firmly insists on his rights. His expertness in observing men is stated to be considerable. He is also described as strongly feeling his condition; and, latterly, to have become pious; though he laughs at the belief in spectres, as the most inconceivable of human absurdities.

His present mode of life is that of ordinary men. He is now able to eat most of the common kinds of food; the extraordinary elevation of his senses has sunk almost to the common level, and

'Of the gigantic powers of his memory, and of other astonishing qualities, not a trace remains. He no longer retains any thing that is extraordinary, but his extraordinary fate, his indescribable goodness, and the exceeding amiableness of his disposition.'

It is stated by Von Feuerbach, that for some time past, Caspar Hauser has been provided for by Earl Stanhope, who intends to bring him over to England.

We must now conclude our notice of this very interesting little volume, which is destined, we think, to reach a very extensive circulation.

ON TITHES.

The writer of the following remarks is one who, up to a very recent period, entertained so much confidence in the intentions of the present Whig Administration, as to believe it would never again be necessary to address the public upon this most impolitic and obnoxious impost. I allude not to the subject of Irish Tithes, upon which enough has been said, but to tithes in England, a burden which has hitherto been borne with less of visible impatience than in the sister country, but with heart-burnings, and a bitterness of spirit, of which those who are not intimately acquainted with the state of our rural districts can form but a very inadequate conception. A bill for the commutation of tithes was promised; this, as far as it went, was a boon; but the only important part, the compulsory clauses, the part which would have compelled a grasping churchman to compound with his parishioners, is withdrawn, and nothing retained but clauses permitting the parties to fix a permanent commutation, if they can agree among themselves, and provided further they can obtain the

consent of the bishop of the diocese. Of what avail is the permission so kindly given? Is there a parish in the country, taking those first in which a composition is paid for tithes, where the clergyman, on the one hand, does not consider himself fully entitled to a greater sum, and where the parishioners, on the other hand, do not pay that sum with reluctance, and are not constantly seeking to reduce the amount? But how will the bill avail, and what a cruel mockery will it seem, in those instances where the clergyman is at open war with his parishioners, taking his tithes in kind, and exacting to the uttermost farthing? Where then are the elements of agreement? Is it reasonable to expect the strife to be amicably terminated with no umpire appointed to decide between the conflicting claims? There may be cases, but undoubtedly they are rare ones, where tithe-payers and tithe-receivers live together upon a friendly footing, with no jealousies or feelings of ill will on either side; but in these instances, if such there be, the want of a commutation bill would be scarcely felt: and it will be looked upon as nearly valueless.

The first great error in Lord Althorp's plan regarded the appointment of valuators, the selection of whom would have been made to rest almost exclusively with the clergy; thus rendering the tithe-receiver the judge in his own cause. This part of the bill there was reason to anticipate would have been altered in Committee. But the most objectionable feature was the clause which provided that the commutation should be governed, in the case of every farm, by an average of the amount of tithes paid during the last seven years. Against this clause, as might have been expected, numerous petitions have been poured in, and the Noble Lord has met these petitions by rendering the bill wholly nugatory for any good purpose, and depriving the agricultural interest of all prospect of relief, at least during the present session.

The injustice of the proposition to fix the burden of tithes at an average of the amount paid during the last seven years may be seen at a glance. It would have given a high premium to those whose lands have been underworked or suffered to lie waste, while those who by skilful management, or by the application of capital have brought their lands into the highest possible state of cultivation would have been punished by a heavy fine, made perpetual, and which, under circumstances which might render the same degree of cultivation unprofitable, would become absolutely ruinous. The proper way would have been to have regulated the tithe, not by the accidental circumstance of the good or bad cultivation of the land during any number of years, but by the value of the land itself, and the amount of rental; this would have simplified the whole measure, and, as may be seen by the petitions, would have given general satisfaction.

Here I may take occasion to show how mistaken is the notion, that the burden of tithes falls exclusively upon landlords, and is

not therefore a tax in which the public at large is interested. The produce to be obtained from the soil depends quite as much upon the manner in which it shall be worked, or the amount of capital applied to it in labour and manure, as upon its own native capabilities. Take two farms of equal extent and fertility; suppose them both let at the same rent to different individuals, one having at his command a large capital, the other little or none, it is obvious that the produce of the one farm will often double that of the other. It was but the other day I crossed a field which a few years back produced four quarters of wheat to the acre, but which in the hands of the present occupier produces nothing but thistles and a coarse pasture. The same process, however, which would double the amount of produce would double the amount of tithes, and hence it will be seen that the tithe system is a tax upon capital employed on land, a tax upon industry by rendering it unprofitable to employ more than a minimum of labourers, and a tax upon bread by limiting the quantity of corn grown.

If then it be asked, why, when capital is so abundant that the rate of interest is but two-and-a-half per cent. on good bills, more capital is not applied to land? The answer is, that the capital so applied could not be expected to yield more than a profit of ten per cent., and that ten per cent. would be claimed by the clergyman for tithes.

It is high time that the abomination of the present system should cease. In the neighbourhood in which I am at present resident, the rector has for many years taken his tithes in kind, and being a wealthy landowner, farming several hundred acres on his own account, it is to him attended with no inconvenience. This at least is a case in which we see none of that liberality which as we sometimes read, in Tory prints, is evinced by tithe-receivers. I have known our worthy rector send for two shillings from a pauper of the parish, as the tithe of a solitary apple tree growing in his cottage garden, the produce of which was sold in the market for one pound. In taking the tithe of lambs, should there be, for example, but twenty-five instead of the more titheable number of thirty, the farmers here are compelled to kill one of the lambs, and to give the half to the rector, that he may not lose even a fraction of the exact proportion to which he is by law entitled. In my walks I am constantly meeting a boy with donkey and panniers, whose office it is to collect the tithe of milk from every farm-house. This is done every tenth day; a day of fasting and moaning to the calves whose unhappy lot it is to be born in this part of the country: and yet the greater part of the milk thus obtained only serves to make a wash for the pigs kept by our worthy rector, to which purpose it is literally applied. I mention these facts not to raise your indignation against an individual, whose name I therefore forbear to mention, but that you may judge

what must be the '*morale*' of a community in which, through the apathy of our legislature, these things are yet endured.

And now allow me to say a few words on what has been profanely termed 'the divine institution of tithes.' It would be mere trifling to argue that there is no divine authority for supporting our existing establishment by tithes; but I allude to the assertion a thousand times repeated, and never, that I have seen, contradicted, that the tithe system is copied from the institutions of Moses. I must take leave to deny the fact, and I cannot at the same time but express my astonishment that among the multitude of bible readers that everywhere abound, no one has yet come forward to do justice to the Jewish lawgiver.

Do I deny that tithes are plainly recognised in the Old Testament? by no means. But observe the important distinction;—tithes among the Jews were collected once only in three years,—the tithe of the third year's crop, and of that year alone, was allotted for the support of the Levites and of the poor; the Levites being provided for in this manner, because to them no inheritance in the land was assigned. See Num. xviii. 20. The Jewish tithes, therefore, embraced but the thirtieth part of the gross amount of the produce of the land, and very willing would our farmers be to adhere to the literal text of the bible, if our divines would abandon legal for scriptural authority.

As, however, the position I assume may be new to many of your readers, I will briefly refer to the evidence of the fact.

Deut. xiv. 28.—'At the end of three years, thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase, the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates.

29.—'And the Levite, because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates shall come and eat and be satisfied, that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.'

Again. Deut. xxvi. 12.—'When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase, the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates and be filled.'

We may further remark that tithes among the Jews appear to have been a voluntary tax. We may look in vain in the books of Moses for any power given to the Levites to distrain and sell the goods of those who might be unable or unwilling to pay. When the Pharisee said, 'I pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and of all I possess,' it is plain he would not have adduced this as any proof of merit if any power existed to enforce the payment. The distinction between a voluntary and a compulsory tax is of no small moment. Were tithes placed upon the Jewish footing in

this country, no tithes would be paid in those cases where the Levites of our establishment performed no adequate service in return. Nor would tithes be paid where poor rates are collected, it being clearly enacted by Moses that half of the tithes should be set apart for the poor, or in other words, that the poor rates should be paid out of the tithes.

Further, under the Jewish law the tithe only of the increase could be taken. It was clearly the spirit and intention of that law that tithes should not be claimed where the value of the produce does not equal the cost of cultivation. Here, however, in England, if a man sell three bushels of wheat, and have such bad success as to reap only the same quantity, the tithe of his three bushels is taken by the church.

It would be well, however, if instead of a thirtieth, the clergy of this country would be content with a tenth, for in many cases under the present system they receive a fifth. My neighbour paid last autumn a tithe of his potatoes, and upon the nine-tenths which were left fed his pigs during the winter; this spring he has paid tithes upon his pigs, and thus the same crop of potatoes was twice tithed. The same individual will twice pay tithe of hay, for the hay which has been already tithed, will be given to his cows, and will a second time be tithed when converted into milk.

It is unnecessary to compare the two systems further to show how essentially different was the tithe system instituted by Moses to the noxious impost which prevails in this country.

THETA.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF PEL. VERJUICE.

CHAPTER IV.

Grapnel. And he is fairly gone?
Schoolmaster. Fairly or foully,
Gone he is, Sir.
Grapnel. Then he will ne'er return.
Schoolmaster. Why think you so?
You speak as 'twere your wish.
Grapnel. I care not how—
The sea will swallow him, or he will hang—
But not return—
Schoolmaster. I do not wish your prophecy may prove
Your gift. OLD PLAY.

I HAD complotted with a boy, almost my only companion, that we should abscond together The precise hour was to depend on his convenience: in the interim, I carefully noted down, from Patterson's book of roads, every turn we should take on our route to Liverpool. I had marked the distances and gentlemen's seats, and all other distinguishing points of the journey—so that I was prepared with my maps effectually to preclude the necessity of inquiring a foot of the road, though I had never been three

miles on it previously; and the whole was one hundred and four miles. So firmly had I resolved on the enterprise, that my impatience increased with every minute of his delay: when a circumstance occurred which transferred the arbitration of the affair to my hands. My uncle took a journey to Ireland; and being not altogether compunctionless, I shrunk from the idea of taking advantage of his absence; for, insignificant as I was, there were matters of trust confided to me: it was sufficiently criminal to break the bonds at all; we agreed, therefore, to await his return. Meantime, another accident induced me to abandon the scheme entirely. My father showed me a letter which he had received from my uncle, containing the following words:—'Give my love to my nephew, and tell him, it will yield *me* pleasure, and *him* profit, to find all right in his department, on my return.' I have that letter, a demy sheet, all filled with close writing on three sides, the fourth written on the doubles, and that blessed paragraph before my eyes now, as clearly, and as freshly as in the moment my father put it into my hands. I see every creased fold of the paper, and the beautiful running text, as distinctly as I did twenty-six years ago; and I remember too the laying my open palms on my face and eyes in the delicious emotion which the paragraph occasioned; and I feel again the gentle tap of my father's finger on my hands, while so engaged; and I hear his voice again, as he says, 'Come, come, that's right, but you should'nt——' and he said no more. What a world of joy and bliss burst upon me in that instant. As the letter contained matter of business, I was despatched to the country-seat of my uncle's partner, who, on reading it, relaxed his magisterial brows, (he was a justice of the peace,) pointed to the word '*profit*,' and gave me the letter, that I might read the passage again. That 'profit' was the least of the letter's beauty: I say so without affectation, I felt so then, and I have ever felt so. The squire, who, notwithstanding, was a truly benevolent man, thought profit the binding word, the lever to move me. I looked, as I felt, the happiest of mortals, and he did me the honour to suppose I had been 'drinking something.' Pish! *he* could not understand me. My uncle had never talked of love before to me. From the hall I made all speed to my friend George, to tell him I could not go with him; he was astonished! 'No, I could not leave my uncle.' And how long was this feeling to remain with me? *Nous verrons*,—however, the effect was instantly powerful. I was up early and blithely in the morning: continued a steady industry and attention through the day, had no dreams as I sat at the desk: I examined closely into every trifle connected with my duties, or which was committed to my charge; performed many of my points twice or thrice over, for the purpose of improving on them; arranged and rearranged the divisions of packages; felt nothing that seemed like weariness or lassitude; and anticipated my uncle's return with joy. He came, met his

wife, children, and others, with warmth of affection, deferring every mark of kindness to me, except the 'How d'ye do, Pel?' Well, I comforted myself with the surprise he would receive when business hours arrived to give him opportunity for exercising his glance of examination. I suppose he did find all right, because he gave me a *cold guinea;* for he said nothing to me in giving it. To me a guinea was an immense sum; but it was words that I wanted with it; from him five kind words only would more have delighted me, would have been of more service to me, than fifty such guineas. He said nothing; and the bright and beautiful glow of new delight in existence, was at once extinguished. I was left to cranch the harsh, salt, and corroding ashes in a deeper, tongueless, soundless, hushed up misery. I could not endure it, indeed I could not. If I had reasoned on the point,—but I could not reason on such points, I could not reason after the world's fashion: if I had, or could so have reasoned, what better proof of my uncle's kindness and satisfaction was necessary? He gave me a guinea silently, I was to draw my inferences from it. Perhaps I might have drawn a different inference if I had not frequently, nay, I think always, seen him accompany his gifts and presents to other young people with some playful jest, or more endearing token of affection. Reader, you will perhaps say, did not that guinea convey a volume of good-will and praise, considering your condition? Not to me: I tell you I was deficient in common-sense; and I did not see how the mere act of giving money was a proof of affection. I never could see it in that light. To me the affection was ever, ever will be, in the manner; and, believe me, I am skilled enough to understand the manner. I know whether it is true or treacherous, whether it is a jewel drawn up from the rich and inexhaustible stores of the heart, or the paltry paste which form and fashion make current; and I ever did, and ever shall, prefer a reward of looks and words from a warm, abundant, and freely giving nature, to any money which may come coldly. This is nonsense, I know; to be sure it is: call me whimsical, eccentric, or worse, if you please. I tell you again, I love the caress of a child, or the gambols with which a dog expresses his joy at seeing me, better than a thousand 'how d'ye do's,' or 'we are most happy to see you's;' with very few exceptions. My relative estimate of each becomes daily more firmly rooted; and were it not for occasional renovating flashes which I feel in sincere sympathy, from most rare hearted and morally constituted creatures, I should think of the 'how d'ye do's,' and treat them, as lifeless things. Call me eccentric again, you do not know all, I shall come to the end of my story, perhaps; and you *will not know all.*

Well: this was the *coup de grâce* to my hesitation: it struck down every counselling cling; brushed away every shadowy warning; and that hour I reeled along to my friend George. 'I'll

go directly—directly—**now**!' said I to begin with. 'What has happened?' he inquired, in astonishment. 'Nothing; that is, every thing: come, are you ready?' After a few more words in debate, we agreed to start in the morning at three o'clock; and join each other on a bridge two miles from the town. I returned home, packed up a few articles from my scanty wardrobe, with a book or two, in a bundle, then lay down, to wait through the long interval till three o'clock. Now reflection came upon me, and for a time it was bitter; yet, I will frankly own, that bitter was not drawn from remorse of conscience in the dishonest act of deserting my duty, or betraying a trust. I declare to you, reader, I really believed my uncle would be glad to get rid of me; I had no other thought in reference to him, than that my absconding would be a pleasure to him, for it would release him from all further trouble on my account. Angry he, perhaps, would be that I had deceived him; but for the anger I had no compunctious visitings. I thought also, that every individual in his own family would be rejoiced when they were told in the morning, that 'Pel had run away.' One or two of them, at least, I am now sure I wronged by such opinions of them; I did not know, I could not think so, at that time. But I suffered acutely in reflecting how severe an affliction this course of conduct would bring to my father: how utterly his hopes would be crushed: but, on the other hand, I knew he was not a man of such wisdom as to mew a boy up in prison and show him freedom, and expanse, and verdure, and hills and waters, through the grated window, in order to extinguish his love for them; he knew that a log and chain to a colt's heels, though they may check his ability to frisk awhile, are little likely to subdue his inclination for a caper when the log is taken off: he knew me better than they did; and I thought he thought I should never do any good there, and he was right. Oh! the wisdom and prudential caution of grey beards, (or wigs,) which smother up the fire of youth, while they constantly pour oil upon it, and think they are quenching it. Will not a recollection of their own youth teach them? Have they not seen, daily, that the dammed up waters overrun their bounds and run to waste of themselves and destruction to others? Do they not, each day of their guidance, see the collected and accumulated desires outbursting from the barriers and chains in which they have foolishly compressed them, breaking out because the victims were chained, and felt the galling? But the old channel is fairly digged and deeply, the way well beaten; it is the road on which our fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers have travelled before us. It is of venerable age, a sacred institution of our ancestors. And so many able books of direction have been written by so many able men! should we presume to question their worth, their inestimable value, should we dare to innovate, to deviate, to change? What arrogance! Do these arguers forget, yes they do, that able men may have had no

other aim than beating that particular road into smoothness? Wedded to prejudice, they were selfish guides oftentimes; bigoted in a creed, they were interested finger-posts. As you see in going into a town, 'the shortest way by the Stag,' that is the landlord of the Stag's creed. 'The nearest way to the Strand through the Lowther Arcade.' How kind, how considerate is that notice, the good-natured pedestrian thinks! so I thought one day when I was very much fatigued. Pooh! pooh! the shopkeepers in the Arcade put up that board. The highest endeavour of these intellectual guide-posts has been directed to prevent your looking for any other, or to show you *theirs* was the best, safest, and most beautiful. And you never dreamed of making an experimental survey yourself, or you might have been convinced out of your credulity. Is not this true? Is there one in a thousand who breaks out into the infidelity of thinking that what he was taught is not all truth? Dare one in a thousand become sceptical on those matters which he believed in his childhood and boyhood? No, no, he dreads the obloquy of such heresy, as he fears it on more sacred matters. That dread, and that dread only, binds him in both: and what a concentration of influences, what masses of established power combine against every effort to induce people to think out of the covenanted track! And daring indeed is that man, who, bursting the shackles of convention, effects his freedom at the expense of his reputation for sanity. The question considered by the mass, *i. e.* every body, except such darers, never is, 'What is right?' but 'What is the custom?' decides the 'order of the course.'

With few exceptions, and these are yet rarer among the great ones, the *principle taught*, the motive to action, and the stimulant to exertion through life, which are most carefully implanted in our seminaries of education, are in direct contravention to the most valuable injunction in the Christian doctrine; which though told to the pupil over and over again leaves no mark except an almost invisible scratch that suggests an occasional joke. Oh, but the *teaching* is very impressive. This teaching is everlasting *contention for superiority*. Here is the foundation stone, here are the steps and pinnacle-top of their system. Selfishness in germ, fruit, and essence. Acquisition of knowledge, or, more closely to speak, learning, (for learning, however its possessors may be self-elevated in supremacy, is not always knowledge,) is made, not for the love of knowledge, not as a source of happiness to ourselves, nor as a treasure-house from which we can dispense happiness to others, (papa and mamma's gratified vanity excepted,) but for the *superiority* it yields—the word superiority having altogether a genuine Tory sense, viz. rule, authority, domination, power over those who chance to be less endowed.*

* They have neither the courage to proclaim it, nor the honesty to whisper it in their confessions, but this is the secret source of the objection of the privileged wealthy, the 'higher orders,' to the education of the 'lower classes. They feel that 'know-

Such is the system's object, never confessed, embellished by occasional triumphs, a feather in the cap, a paltry fanfaronnade. The *principle* is fed most plenteously: all its efforts, its plans, attractions, displays, are for the constant nutriment of that evil to which they say man is naturally prone, originally and inescapably born. At all events if they do not find it there, they take wondrous pains to place it and plant it, so that there shall be no danger of its not growing up. Yes, their doctrine inculcates the theory and practice of selfishness, and during the whole course of instruction, every day they drawl out some verbiage about 'loving your neighbour as yourself.' 'If thy brother offend thee seventy times seven, forgive him,' &c., the inevitable consequence of which must be, (for I can conceive no other result—true, I do not look through their spectacles,) a laugh at these precepts of love and forgiveness. No, no, the pupils never laugh, unless it be in their sleeve; they quote the passages, and retalk them over again, to show that they are not infidels, and continue in their practice of selfishness, of loving themselves most devotedly too, wallowing in their own pool from which all their business and folly overbubbles, till it accumulates a stream on which they sail with undeviating steadiness. Perhaps the teachers adopt their process, this o'erlaying of white with thick and substantial brick colour, in order to prove their doctrine of innate vice, fearing that nature and a different system might exhibit their doctrine's fallacy. Oh, the blessed system of education! War with man is the business of instruction, and I will engage to buy up all the boasted friendship which grows out of school companionship, at two-pence per head. Note ye, on condition that it passes the examination of a keen-eyed inspector. It is but a suspension of hostilities, a mutual consent to be civil.

What vagrancy of thought is this, reader! Let me return to my sleepless lying down, to wait till the clock struck three. I then rose, crept softly down stairs; as people not wishing to be heard going down stairs usually do, I suppose. I never heard the stairs creak so much before, and the carpet-wires rattled louder than was their wont. I knew the spot on which the box of keys was deposited, picked out the great one from the jingling many, passed through the rooms and doors out into the air, opened the large portal, and was in the street. Here I encountered the watchman of the premises, Dick Harris, who, night-capped and hatted, and unsuspicious, looking at me, said, 'You are up this morning very early, Pel.' 'Yes, Richard, I am going to take a long walk,' I replied, with that perfect coolness to which I am an entire stranger when not in extreme peril: at such times I am steady nerved

ledge is power,' and fear the domination will slip through their fingers if information be extended. Their vituperation of the instruction, which is rapidly advancing among all ranks, is dictated by a dread that the barriers of exclusiveness will be broken down.

enough to walk across the mouth of a coal-pit on a bridge of razor edges. Even the sight of my bundle, which I did not attempt to conceal, caused no inquiry. I shook him by the hand with a 'good bye, Richard.' He turned off: I drew the key from the lock within, and relocked the door on the outside: the court through which I had passed was flag-paved, and a channel or gutter cut therein run under the door-sill: up the orifice I threw the key; it fell *clank, clank,* upon the stones, and startled me! That *clank, clank,* fell upon my heart, and for years and years afterwards that sound continued to recur in moments of great excitement, not always of danger, and shook me out of my thoughts. Who will account for this? I think I can in some measure, not wholly; but as I might perplex instead of enlighten you, readers, and perhaps entangle myself in a web which I could not unravel without a lengthened process, I will avoid the accountability, and leave the statement of this spectral clank visitation to be laughed at, as a morbid fancy, a disease, a nervous superstition. Still I state it as a fact. That sound has struck upon me in the din of battle. I have heard that *clank, clank,* singly, and distinctly, above the roar of the cannon; the sound struck twice and no more on such occasions. In the midst of festivity it has pierced through the music of the dance; in the uproariousness of lamp-gilded mirth, that sound has suddenly haunted me. What is now become of the spectre? I never hear it. On the three last instances of its visitation, I was in extraordinary circumstances: first of the three in Dalmatia, near, indeed among the ruins of an ancient city on the coast, between Spalatro and Trau. I cannot find the place in any book, nor is it noted in any map within my knowledge, unless it be marked Trau Vecchio; if so, the map is in error by some two or three leagues. On the spot, and in the adjacent islands, it is called Arcangelo. I looked into the 'Osservazioni,' but was not satisfied. Of this adventure I may speak hereafter. The next was—where think you, reader?—under the tremendous down-pouring mountain of waters, in that horribly sublime cavern behind it, at the foot of Niagara, as I stepped among the eels that wriggled and writhed on the crushed fragments of rock, with which its surface is strewn: and lastly, (this was in June, 1825,) at Les Escaliers Naturelles, where the river Montmorenci thunders alone in intense solitude over beds and ridges of rocks, three miles backward from the precipice over the ledge of which he dashes himself in glistening and foamy grandeur into St. Lawrence's bosom. I will take you to this place by and by, reader, for I believe you have never yet seen it, unless your own feet have carried you there. You shall have a winter view of it as well, such as I had; and you will not easily forget it. Gugy!—I wonder if he hears me across the Atlantic—do you remember how we wabbled and shook over the Cahots in your Cariole, while your tandem steeds jingled their bells, and

snorted impatiently at this interruption of their would-be spirited pace?—how the balized way smoothed as we approached Beauport?—how you put on your spectacles as we neared a certain large domicile; the home, then, of one whose home is nearer to you now? but there is no one at the windows, though, at your request, I look with two earnest eyes. And 'my nerves are steady' as we plough through the spotless, crisp-coated snow on that declivity, in order to reach the river and skim along the ice. They are steady, although your leader Alexander, a noble horse is he, exhibits symptoms of distaste for the jaunt, as he is every moment striking tangents and pivotting on his heels, with his haunches buried in the snow, and rearing laterally from the course. Not very steady, as I stand again in the freezing mist, with that magnificent, eye-dazzling, sense-confusing spectacle, heaving down its mighty wrath, in one broad and endless sheet of liquid light, full before me, into my very eyes. And you are now, as then, looking at *me*, not at Montmorenci, to trace, if you can, the effect which this glorious scene has on your enthusiastic companion. Right, Gugy; it has filled me with wondering, bosom-swelling silence! Hey! good reader, whither have I wandered? You must pardon me, pray do, I could not help it: when my thoughts take that direction, I am spell-bound, amazed, drunk with delight, as I look again on the revivified, reformed, recreated objects which memory and imagination combine to spread before me. Oh, reader, what a treasure is this double existence! How much misery has it enabled me to bury! What happiness it yields!—Now, back to the clanking of the key, which struck through my ears every step as I trudged along the first two miles of a pilgrimage, which though it has continued through a hundred thousand leagues, will probably end only with life, or limbs' incapacity: the first two miles of a rugged, jagged, and thorny course, a hurricane rift, now in the gorge of a mountain, now at the mountain's summit, now in the fissure of a precipice, or upon its narrow and slippery ledge, where the turn of a toe would have dashed me headlong into a fathomless abyss: now on a trackless desert, or at a point in the wilderness, from which radiated twenty roads, and no direction-post was to be seen, no star, no compass to guide. I plunged into one at random; it led me to glorious beauty, and a clear, cloudless prospect of happiness. I walked awhile among its flowers; but venoms intruded there, and drove me again to the wilderness. Did I call them venoms? Perhaps I did: I think I did not; and on I restless roamed, hoping every where, and at all times, save in minutes of deadening gloom; but I fought with the darkness, and from that very darkness struck a light which beaconed me on: it showed me that beauty was earth's and nature's attribute. Though hope deceives, she cannot quell me by disappointment; though she saddens the heart's pulsations by what proves to be an ignis fatuus here, she cannot vanquish my spirit; she cannot extinguish

the fire which she herself kindles. I feel this is so; I know she cannot; and I shall find what I seek, that she is true at last, though I may die without knowing it. As untamed and untameable is my spirit at this hour, as it was on the morning I walked that two miles, as unchecked and unsatiated is my desire for roaming further, further still, as it was on that first essay of my hundred thousand leagues. And here I sit at my garret window, while the cross on the dome or lantern of St. Paul's is peeping over the intermediate chimney-pots to see what I am doing. Some of the work, if it were fairly done, which you bargained to do, in order to be placed up there. If that cross possessed a 'mind's eye' which can look into mind, it would see that I have halted on a high wooden bridge across a canal, an aqueduct within a few yards of me, and a rushy and reedy stream running under its arches, near a village, which it would puzzle the reader to find by inquiring in its neighbourhood, were I to write it down properly. Let him take the following beautiful effusion of a visitor to its annual 'wake,' for direction—

Nobody knows, nor I won't tell,
What I had at *Yenton:*
A frizzled pig, and a scalded cat,
And a pudden in a lantern.

Let the reader inquire the way to Yenton, and he will succeed: but who could tell him how to find ERDINGTON? Well: I arrived at this bridge, ascended the stairs, and leaned against its rails, to wait for George. The glory of a July morning was beautifying over hill, and field, and stream. I was not melancholy, not sad, there was riot in my heart, the sanguineness of high pleasure confused with dread: and I bent my head upon the rail and wept. Absorbed, I neither saw nor heard the approach of my friend, till he tapped me on the shoulder: both were silent; we descended the stairs, made one bundle of our two, passed a stick under the knots, and each lent a hand, then moved on, with the bundle dangling between us, at a rapid pace; and through the whole day's journey of forty-four miles, the silence was broken by what can scarcely be called mirth, it was an intoxication of hilarity, which lasted only for a few minutes, and sank again into stillness. Nor was the stillness despondency, on my side, at least. We felt we were on a wide, wide world; and to me, the world had never looked so beautiful! I do not mean the world's world: a hundred times on the jaunt, the richness of verdant and flowery existence invited me to pause and gaze, and bade me forget weariness. The month was July, the high noon of nature's splendour, when all was redolent of the passionate summer's voluptuousness, and gracefully beautiful indolence fresh in the consciousness of its own loveliness. My friend George was my senior, yet I saw, on the second day, I was the stronger; not in limb, muscle, or sinew: he evinced a

kind of looking back, and a reluctance to let me discover that he did so, and I exerted my diligence in keeping his thoughts forward. Would that I had permitted them to take their course! *I* should still have gone on, and fallen into my destiny's track; and he,—— poor fellow! We made thirty-seven miles the next day, and arrived in Liverpool at three o'clock on the third of our flight. I was foot-sore and limb-wearied, nothing more, and after depositing our bundle with him at a small lodging-house, (which was then on the outskirts of Liverpool, on the Manchester road, that house is now swallowed up, and streets stretch out a mile beyond its site,) I limped impatiently down towards the ships' masts which I saw.

For the thought of a ship was my childhood's delight,
And the sight of a ship was my boyhood's wonder:
She had been in the climates whose day was my night;
She'd united the lands which the oceans sunder.

She had kissed the green waves where the red corals glisten,
And had gazed on the shores where the sea shells sing;
And I long'd to go with her, to see and to listen:
Oh, I long'd to be borne on her snowy wing.

She had baffled the billow, and rode on its crest;
She had danced where the tropical sun shot fire:
And the '*crash*' of the ice-berg had risen from her breast—
But a ship had ne'er gladden'd my eyes' desire.

She'll be new to me ever though thousands I've seen;
And the foam-sparkling path still is joyous to me:
And though sea-sick and sore I have many times been,
I am sure I shall never be sick of the sea.

There's poetry for you, reader! Is'nt it sublime? Laugh if you will, I put it down before you that you might laugh *at* it. I remained roaming about the docks, and looking at the countless number of ocean wanderers packed together there, and dotting the river's face, till dusk, and the fear of losing my way ordered me off to our six-penny lodging, to bed, and there I lay in furious discomfiture all night—*too many bed-fellows*—and that clank, clank, of the key was again ringing in my ears. I turned over the means of evading the pursuit which I so much feared: I was in torture, as I anticipated the consequences of being overtaken and sent home again; a punishment awaited me, how much more to be dreaded than bodily stripes! Authority's reproaches, and suspicion's watchings; no light breaking in upon cold looks, but an expression of caution and mistrust, or the pleasure of showing me that I was detected and defeated, the triumph of aversion. I know I wronged them: I know it now; but I had no conception of aught else then, I could understand only their dislike of me, for their affection never smiled upon me; and the one who could

sympathize with me, did not know my misery, or its cause; he could not believe it was so sharp and so deeply seated. That any *good* to me would be meant by their pursuit, was utterly out of my thoughts, I should have expected milk from paving stones as soon. Why, why did they suffer me to think thus of them! How many hours of silent bitterness have I endured in reflecting on this mutual misunderstanding; how much have I regretted that I could not perceive it was only an error in their policy, the general mistake, the very common course of those who have the guidance of youth: but it blighted. I can now see that it was meant to check me in that familiarity and communicative openness, which were implanted in my nature. I felt that I was made to receive kindness, and to reciprocate affection in its fullest burst and most genial glow. Such *was* my nature; my frame, my mind, my heart, my spirit were such; this I will dash forth in defiance of the charge of egotism, and the ridicule with which this claim to original beauty may be met. Such I was; inexhaustible were the stores, unfading their light, untiring in their action, and would have continued such had they not been repulsed, forbidden, dashed back; *but they did not die.*

Early next morning, we both sallied down to the Docks, to inhale the tar and pitch, &c. impregnated air, and to gaze on the sea coursers, stabled and stalled. Curious, inquisitive, and admiring, my eye ran over the crowd in St. George's dock, where large and gallant flags, striped and starred, waved and fluttered in the breeze, all flaunting with the intelligence that this was to them a gala-day: it was the 4th of July, and the American sailors were full of early hilarity in their prepared resolutions to honour the anniversary of their independence in due form,—that is, after a sailor's fashion of making merry. I eyed with delight the many boards suspended in the rigging, announcing the agreeable information, that this noble sky-pointing ship was bound for Baltimore —that to Philadelphia—a third and fourth to New York—others to Charleston;—further on were ships for Jamaica, St. Domingo; in other directions, for Messina, Gibraltar, Cape of Good Hope, Stockholm, Gottenburg,—and each found favour in my eyes; each had a magnetic influence on my mind. But how to choose; it was a kind of cœna-dubia; or, as it was early in the morning, jentaculum. Out of so many I knew not which to fix upon; she that promised to go furthest, though, had most attraction. Compassionating fortune released me from the difficulty. I had observed, without discovering that it meant anything, for the last half hour, or longer, two well-dressed sailors, that is to say, two clean white-trowsered, neat blue abundant-button jacketed, glazed-hatted, long pigtailed, mahogany-wainscot-faced, quid-cheeked men, were our constant attendants; walking where we walked, and stopping as we stopped; admiring this fine ship, and that fine ship, as we admired them. But their admiration was

conditional, a comparative and exceptive admiration, and mingled in it something which was like intended information to us, though not immediately addressed to us, it was talking at us, with some allusions to ships much larger, finer, and more beautiful than any there. Really I thought them very obliging. Go where we would the pigtails swung in attendance on us. At length one said, 'Are you looking for a ship, boys? 'Well,' thought I, 'this is a very civil, kind-hearted fellow, spite of his mahogany face.' This put an end to all our trouble. 'I thank you, yes; I should like to go on board of a ship.' 'Well come along with us,' said first pigtail's duplicate, 'our ship is a gallows deal finer than any you've seen yet, with a jolly good Captain too; he splices the main brace every week, and every time of close-reef topsails.' 'Ay,' said pigtail the first, 'and he'll order the *pusser's* steward to blow your kite out with lobscous and choke your luff with figgy-dowdy.'—What splicing the main brace, and choking my luff, and lobscous, and figgy-dowdy meant, I could not guess for the life of me; but as they were illustrations of the 'jolly captain's' good qualities, there was a spell in the unintelligible jargon; (many with wiser heads than mine have been humbugged by such process;) and with our guides, who, seeing we were strangers, kindly kept close to our elbows, we stepped lightly along, and entered a narrow street parallel with St. George's dock; several persons, as we passed, stood to look at us; and I noticed a shaking of heads, as if they meant 'Ah! something is wrong;' there seemed to be a compassion in it. 'Look there,' said one of the sailors. I did look '*there*,' as he pointed, and saw an immense white flag, with a large red cross on the field, and a jumble of smaller crosses in its corner, sweeping and swinging magnificently from a second-floor window, down almost to the pavement. Into the door of the house we passed; ascended a flight of stairs,—our body guard regularly placed, one leading, the other bringing up the rear. We paused at the end of the first flight, and the leader tapped with his knuckles twice, on what sounded door-like, and without waiting for an answer, opened the door just sufficiently wide to admit him *slippingly*, and it was instantly closed again. There was something in this which struck rather chillingly on my spirits, as we stood there in the dark passage. My friend George could not suppress his alarm, and he grasped my wrist hard, with a groan, 'Oh,' trying to draw me back, but I was afraid of being frightened:—I felt an instinctive certainty that we could not escape that way if we endeavoured to do so, and I was right, for at that moment I heard the stepping and scraping of feet on the stairs—there was nothing for us but to go on. The door was now drawn open, and our pig-tailed leader looked over our heads to his comrade, then beckoned to us to 'heave a-head;' we did so; there were three other of the same breed of animals as our guides, standing in the room, near a door which opened as I supposed,

to an inner apartment. In the middle of the room was a table, whereon lay several printed and red ink-ruled papers with blank spaces, pens and ink, a book which looked like a register, and a small mahogany box. At the table were placed a leather-covered arm-chair, and one of lighter character and dimensions. The guarded door opened, and my eye glanced on ranges of pistols and cutlasses suspended, and cutting Euclidisms and trigonometrics on the walls: this looked awful! A very handsome man, with an epaulette on each shoulder—an armless sleeve hanging from one—walked forward and seated himself on the leather chair. He smiled as he surveyed us both with a look which indicated anything but unkindness; and the bland manner in which he addressed us, captivated me. He civilly asked if we wished to go to sea. I answered, 'yes sir;' George was silent; I was spokesman for both. Then followed the usual flummery about the honour of serving his majesty, fighting his enemies, promotion, brave fellows, glorious wooden walls, &c. 'What is your age?' 'Seventeen, sir.' 'Seventeen!' 'I shall be, sir, if I live a little longer.' 'Ay, I dare say.' I spoke openly to all his inquiries except on the article of name; that I concealed, and gave him my mother's. 'Will you let me see it correctly written?' and one of the pigtails advancing to the table drew paper and held a pen before me. I took it and dashed off the name in full, sponsorial and matronymic, at a stroke. 'You write a beautiful hand, young gentleman.' Young *gentleman! Young gentleman!* only think of that! Young gentleman, to me! 'Oh, what a good man this is!' I thought, as I blushed at the tips of my fingers and under my toe nails, while every hair of my eye-brows stood on end and oozed. 'Well, if you conduct yourself properly with diligence and sobriety, I do not question but you will make your way.' 'I'll try, sir.' At this stage of the business another personage entered and took the vacant chair, riveting his two great green glassy eyes on us; his whole face besides was a blank, but how those eyes seemed to grin! a tiger at his studies; and his light sandy hair stood bushily out like a wig of hemp, every thread of which had a quarrel with its neighbour. Between the Captain and this queer-looking animal, a half-muttered, half-hissed conversation ensued; the tiger was proposing something to which he of the epaulettes objected, and I gathered the words '*Tender,*' '*the hold,*' '*pair of scamps,*' '*riff-raff,*' to which the gentleman shook his head, and said, 'No, no.' I learned the meaning of all this soon; and, Captain Mends, after twenty-five years, accept my thanks for your 'no, no.' A shilling was put into my hand, which I gave to one of the pigtails. My friend George received one also, and stood staring at it as it lay in his open palm. We had sold our bodies to the king, and to all others, his naval officers, to that tiger-gentleman inclusive. 'The French ship (so it sounded in my ears) will receive you,' said the Captain, 'and

carry you round to Plymouth, where you will be put on board one of his majesty's vessels of war, and there good care will be taken of you.' 'Ay, very good,' said tiger; but very unlike a tiger's was the voice; it was a growling squeak, that set your teeth on edge. Said the epaulettes, addressing one of the pigtails, 'Hopkins, give this note to Mr. ——, (this was Lieut. ——, I forget the name.) *Hopkins!* a sailor named Hopkins! I thought all sailors were Ben Blocks, or Bill Hawsers, or Tom Bowlines, or Jack Junks, or Mat Mainmasts, or Joe Mizens, or Ned Halliards, but, *Hopkins;* what an unnautical name was that. Ah, me! 'all is not gold that glistens.' Hopkins and his pigtail shrunk a foot in my esteem. Hopkins! oh, Hopkins, how you dwindled before my optics when I heard you so called! and it was to *Hopkins* I had given the shilling! A movement toward the door cut short this silent solo. I looked at the Captain and bowed, and turning to the other, I just caught sight of a row of dirty yellow palisades, and a portcullis of the same texture and colour, at the entrance of a dark and dismal cavern, for such his mouth, guarded thus, appeared to me; and those two eyes squeezed together, the whole of their infernality of light concentrated into two diminutive, fiercely burning dots. What an ugly, villainous, diabolical grin! That was his laugh; I never saw him or it in my life afterwards, but I can never forget it. The door of the room opened, and through it the light streamed upon, I don't know how many, figures standing outside. This caused an ugly misgiving: we descended the stairs; in the street a various collection of men, women, and some children had gathered near the door, and as we came forth there was a murmur, and an exclamation of 'Poor boys, they have been trapped.' Something was wrong I felt, but I could not see the trapping. As we proceeded through the streets many of them accompanied us, and I heard a lusty voice cry out, 'The bloody press-gang have grabbed those two lads.' 'Press-gang!' and I became icy cold. Press-gang! then I had fallen into the clutches of those horrible monsters of whom I had heard such frightful statements; whom I dreaded so suffocatingly! Impossible; there was nothing in the remotest degree fearful in the character of these men! They had shown to us nothing which I should not have expected from common kindness or civility: and that gentleman in the epaulettes; oh, I could find no idea but affection for him. Hah! there was the green-eyed monster; that tiger fellow was a sample of what I could easily imagine a press-gang to be composed; there was nothing fearful or repulsive in any of the others; and I subdued my fear; but poor George, after a pause of bewildered stupefaction, burst into tears. I laughed to cheer him; and presently we arrived at the jetty, where a smart boat, with six smart sailors, lay waiting to receive us.—'Shove off,' was the word, and one man with a pole having a hook at its end, did 'shove off,' and '*splash*' the oars of the others fell

on the water. Don't believe, reader, that I had never seen or sailed in—no, not sailed, but moved in—a boat before. I had seen hundreds of coal barges on the Dudley canal, towed by skeleton horses, whose food was some pint of beans per diem, and their drivers whipped them with those iron cranks which they use occasionally for winding up the paddles at the locks, though the chief use of these cranks was as a whip. But here we skimmed along across the ripple, made by the uniform dipping of the oars, so gaily, so lightly, that my fears were smoothed as I admired the motion of men and boat, which latter was advancing obliquely on the tide towards a ship which was pointed out to me by pigtail Hopkins. 'Is that a French ship?' I inquired of him. A gruff 'yaw, hah, ah!' chorussed from the six rowers, which ended on a cadenza from pigtail Hopkins. 'I wish she was a French ship out at sea, and you and me in a good cruiser in chase of her, though her cargo is no great shakes; her name is the Friendship, and a rare friend she is to some folks.' 'Clap a stopper on your jawing tackle, Hopkins,' said another. But Hopkins would 'spin his yarn.' 'There's many a chap aboard of her as would have his running geer choked in the luff, or his life lines stranded, if we had not shipped him.' Choked in the luff! what *does* that mean? I asked myself. 'Ay, or he'd catch toko fau'n yam, sarved out by the parish beadle, at the cart's tail, instead of beef and burgoo, aboard o'that craft.' 'Toco fau'n yam at the cart's tail!' I laughed at the jest, the whole boat's crew thought it something funny, but I could not understand it. 'What is that long thing like a coachman's whip, flying at the topmast head?' said I, somewhat proud of my nautical knowledge. 'Top *mast*,' said Hopkins, contemptuously, 'you mean to say the *main tu'gallon must* head, but that's the main truck as it flies from. Why that's his majesty's *pennant*, what he flogs the French with.' 'Oh!' here I felt a kind of rumbling under my ribs. Fighting was very amusing, very interesting matter in a book, but the first feeling that I was probably to be occupied in furnishing, or assisting to furnish materials for a tale of battles, had something in it of a strange, and not particularly agreeable nature. But then I might live, escape to tell the tale myself. Ah! there's the balm; there's the momentum; the putter on, the magnet which attracts, the excitement that stimulates many an honourable hero. Hero! this I certainly never expected to be, this I certainly never shall be, except by accident, as many heroes have been made; though I sometimes dreamt of it as a thing to be wished.

Now we were approaching very near the ship, 'Unrow,' and up at once flew the oars out of their *rullocks*: 'Boat your oars;' and I scrambled after Hopkins and a youngster (who had been silent during the transit) up the ship's side, and stood on board his Majesty's tender, *Friendship*. Hopkins gave the note to Lieutenant ——, who, after a word or two of question to me and my

companion, ordered the steward to serve us out the day's allowance, and give us *hammocks;* and we were shown into a hole; the descent to it was by notches cut in the angles of a post, against which, polished by greasy hands, a knotted rope was suspended: this hole was called the steerage: in some ships it is the after-hold, here it was after-hold, cable-tier, and steerage, in one: as yet I did not descend: I stood on the deck gazing on the intricacy of method in the infinity of cordage, till my brain *gnawed* itself in the perplexity, and to escape from it I looked about from stem to stern. I saw some eight or ten men, with hard and rugged, weather-beaten visages, not so trimly 'rigged' as Hopkins and his comrades were, distributed here and there, and huddled together on the forecastle as many more of the most squalid, dirty-bearded, matted-haired wretches, stockingless and shoeless, with such enormous splay feet, their bodies covered, or partly covered, by fragments of various coloured garments: the wildest creatures I had ever looked upon. I never had imagined man in such a state; and what faces! each man carried a countenance of reckless misery, a hatred of hope, a defiance of despair, or it was despair mocking itself. My soul was sick as I looked upon them, and they laughed at me aloud; and then a sudden burst of confused yells, laughter, and hideous curses arose;—whence? from the caverns of the ship. I looked down, and as I did so, a hot and pestilential effluvia rose and enveloped me. I looked through a heavy wooden grating, across which was a strong iron bar, with a huge padlock attached to it; and I saw that which threw me back almost fainting with horror! My throat felt as if it were filled with lumps of something which produced a sense of strangulation; and how fiercely my heart did 'knock at my ribs against the use of nature!' I remember I bent myself forward, bowing my head down upon my breast, for some minutes after, retreating from the grating, as if I would by that quell the violent and audible beating. In that short glance, I had seen a crowded mass of disgusting and fearful heads, with eyes all glaring upwards from that terrible den; and heaps of filthy limbs, trunks, and heads, bundled and scattered, scrambling, laughing, cursing, screaming, and fighting, at one moment. Ere long I learned what they were; among them were the offscourings of villany, the refuse of jails, beings whose infamy was their source of merriment, their solace in captivity! There too were men whose lives and characters were unimpeachable, both in law and custom; industrious men, on whose reputation the world's breath could not cast a blemish, who had been forcibly seized from their hearth-sides; I heard much of their histories afterwards: there were men also, who, closing months of toil and peril, or years of hope-encouraged perseverance, in distant climes, returned to their native shores to be kidnapped, as their foot was in the act of kissing the strand, or suddenly intercepted as their arms were stretched forth to give and to receive

the welcoming embrace of fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, wives, and children, whose piercing cries or bitter curses were of no avail, utterly, save to give a piquance to the fiendish enterprise! All, all were mingled, herded, and barred in that pestiferous, gorge-sickening, soul-blighting den! In that hole, which could not be thirty feet in length, by the ship's breadth, one hundred and eighty human beings were crammed to eat, drink, and sleep. Every morning the den was emptied of its inanimate filth, except that which was glued on and ingrained in the bodies and rags of its occupants; who, by divisions of ten or twelve, were permitted to ascend to the deck for half an hour, for the purpose of purifying themselves; or, as the lieutenant coarsely, but most truly expressed it, 'to blow the stink off them.' These were some of 'Old England's jolly tars,' her 'Wooden walls defenders,' men who sing,

'Britons never, never, never will be slaves!'

'An ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination.'

CHARACTER; OR JEW AND GENTILE.*

Mrs. Leman Grimstone is a most agreeable companion for an excursion in the regions of fiction. We know of no novelist who combines more of the requisite invention and versatility of talent, with so much of pure, wise, and noble purpose. Both in her former production, 'Woman's Love,' and the present, there is a rich vein of originality running through the narrative, such as one rarely meets with. And yet though its presence is felt, it is never obtrusive. Like Miss Martineau, she writes with a didactic purpose; but not being restricted to the illustration of a single section of that Moral Economy which is her science, there is less occasion to bank up the narrative, and restrain it from those windings and overflowings which characterise the current of real life. Like Miss Austen, she excels in description, especially that of persons and circumstances which at first appear common place, and incapable of interesting; and her descriptions have generally the additional merit of conveying some knowledge of character and mind, and answering some further purpose besides that of producing a vivid picture in the reader's imagination. Like Miss Edgeworth, she has humour, not so broad and racy, but a quiet lady-like humour, which though it provoke not a laugh, never fails of a smile; and like Miss Edgeworth too, she rarely loses sight of the subject of education, on which her notions well deserve the attention of parents and instructors. Like Godwin, she is a reformer, political and social, but aiming at changes less total and impracticable than some contemplated by the author of 'Caleb Williams,' more in the reform-not-revolution way; and

* A Tale, by Mrs. Leman Grimstone, 2 vols.

if pursuing her object with less power, ever manifesting far more ease, grace, and flexibility. Were we to trace a parentage for the character of her fictions, we might ascribe the maternity to Miss Austen, and the paternity to the author of Barham Downs and Hermsprong. Mrs. Grimstone looks more abroad, beyond mere household doings, than the one; and has less causticity and partizanship than the other.

It is the lowest praise to which the author is entitled, but it is needful to say, lest we should mislead the reader by the observations just made, that her story is as abundant in stirring incident as the most thorough-bred novel reader can desire. The plot might have been more skilfully developed: its management is however a manifest improvement on that of her former publication. The effect is heightened by the variety of costume, both physical and mental, which the Jewish characters enable her to introduce. The stately daughter of the Jewish Baron, is a poetical and oriental sketch, and so is the Patriarch Mezrack, and his daughter Hagar. They cast a rich tinge on the familiar faces and homely scenes, like a painted glass window in an English drawing room.

Mrs. Grimstone excells very much, both in the delineation and the developement of character. She preserves its metaphysical truth. Her mind has a distinct conception of the individual nature of each actor in the history. There are no lay figures. She sustains the propriety of every word and deed, and of all the interior workings of the soul, when her plan requires that these should be laid bare, more completely than it has ever been done, save by the great masters of fiction. The influences are distinctly indicated, and the conduct adequately matured. Sir Ralph Beaucaire in becoming the mere creature of vulgar and worldly ambition, and Marmion in becoming the victim of his glowing impressibility, seem to be fulfilling an inevitable destiny. The story only works out the problem of their fate from the given quantities of their nature and their circumstances. From several sketches of character, we select that of Malfort; the intellectual portion of it; the personal description is most appropriately fitted to it.

'Perhaps none are more surprised at the successful issue of a scheme than the very rogue that achieves it; because, having tact enough to put matters in a train, they work out their own accomplishment; and he, conscious of the smallness of his efforts, and his total absence of desert, naturally wonders, in the secret recesses of his soul, at the great result.

'Malfort was one of those moral enigmas that baffles inquiry. He was at once profound and shallow; for whatever skill may be exerted to do evil, the doing it shows the mind to be essentially unsound. He had courage and cowardice; he dared to do acts that, if detected, would overwhelm him with disgrace and misery, and he lived in ap-

prehensive watchfulness, through fear of their revealment. He had pride and humility; he was inflated with the consciousness of crafty power; but he could cringe to the power that mastered him. He was social and selfish; he loved society, and seemed to enjoy sympathy; but perhaps his ministry to that was the veriest selfishness, for self-gratification, in some form or other, was the alpha and omega of all his actions. He was industrious and idle; possessed a restless activity that kept him ever originating something, but, with an inaptitude for regular and continued labour, he in reality did nothing.

'Perhaps a perfect anatomy of his character none could bear, but those familiar with the disgusting details of the moral dissecting-room; who know what humanity is, what it may be made, and how it is made what it often becomes; who love it too well in its beauty, not to pity it in its debasement.

'While almost every one regarded Malfort as a being of the blandest and most unselfish benevolence, living and acting for and with his fellow-creatures, he was in fact a creature of the meanest and most selfish motives, preying on and perverting all he approached. He professedly squared the rule of right and wrong by the advantage or disadvantage to society; on this comprehensive principle he could allow himself to do individual mischief, under pretence of producing collective benefit. *His* was one of those grand moral theories by which wholesale philosophers become retail rogues.'—p. 62—65. vol. ii.

Passages are scattered through these volumes which deserve quotation for their wisdom and their beauty; we take almost at random the following on evil example and libertinism.

'Evil example is like the incendiary's fire; we may perceive where it has sprung, but cannot tell where it may spread. It is not those that sow the whirlwind that always reap the storm; when the blast is once abroad it involves all, even the very straws that lie in its way.'—p. 109. vol. i.

'The libertine has all the brute's indifference, without the brute's excuse for it; but he ensures a penalty that may well win him the pity of even those that most spurn him. In the hour of remorse—and if it never reaches him before, it does at the hour of death—he hears "a voice crying in the wilderness;" it is the voice of abandoned childhood, left by reckless selfishness to the wolves of society!'—p. 87. vol. ii.

The application of a scriptural expression in the latter quotation appears to us to be marked by great felicity and originality, and there is much beauty in the following reflection appended to a death-bed scene:

'Philosophy may satisfy itself that vice arises from the inevitable necessity of the wretched structure of society; it knows too that every crime is pregnant with its own punishment; and, revolting at the idea of an eternity of torment, as the decree of a just and benevolent God against a being whose duration of error has been, comparatively, but as an instant, it can consign the wicked unto death, and trust there may be, for them, no resurrection. But with those that have sinned little,

and suffered much,—who have endured penalties that another's crimes have purchased—who have sowed the seed, but never been allowed to reap the harvest—who have lived in hope, but died without fruition,—can philosophy contemplate them, and deny the immortality of the soul? If there be a belief beautiful and beatifying, it is the belief of the eternal life of the good, and the everlasting reunion of the attached!'—p. 205, vol. i.

In the remarks on the qualities and training which are desirable for those whose sphere of exertion is the chamber of sickness or debility, there is that sound and strong sense, combined with good feeling, which ought to recommend this work far beyond the precincts of the circulating library.

'Nursing should be held as a profession, and its professors be endowed with a suitable education—be called to the exercise of its duties while yet in the vigour of life, and not after. Appointed to act as the adjunct of the surgeon and physician, ought they not to possess some kindred intelligence? How often, for the want of this, has the best medical advice proved nugatory! It is not contended or desired that women should supersede or rival the male practitioner, since excess of sympathy, it is to be feared, would ever be liable to endanger female efficiency. But as the assistant, the agent of the medical man, woman, under all circumstances of illness, is, beyond description, essential; but it must be cultivated woman, capable of comprehending the intelligence she acts with, and the necessities she acts on.

'We shudder to think of the mischief and misery ignorant nurses have done and may cause. They are about humanity when it lies in the prostration of physical and, consequently, mental weakness,—when it is drawing its first breath, and essaying its dawning powers. A few years ago in France,—perhaps still in the remote provinces,—it was common for nurses to compress the heads of infants by actual violence or continued pressure, if the shape of the skull did not happen to please them. In our own country, in our own day, the administration of ardent spirits, from a motive of mistaken kindness, is common, especially among the poorer classes; and, be it remembered, the best benefactors and the brightest ornaments of the human species have been given to the world by poor women.

'Neglect and indifference to mankind in the mass pervade society throughout, and generate the mischief that lame laws and subsequent quackery vainly attempt to cure. In nothing is the truth of this assertion more conspicuous than in all that regards the birth and first years of the human being. It is the fate of the great majority of the species to fall from the hands of nature into the hands of an ignorant nurse and an ignorant mother; after these, schoolmasters, doctors, divines, lawyers, and legislators tinker the injured individual till death comes to his rescue; nor even then can his memory or his soul escape speculations that are busy with his fame here and his fate hereafter. But most conspicuous in this blindfold system, that paralyzes human progress, is the disregard of female cultivation. In all the departments of life in which *men* are called to act, some preparatory discipline is deemed necessary and afforded; but where women are concerned, the presiding deity is chance. No provision

is made to fit *them* for their allotments, though they are called to fill offices involving the most vital interests of society. Women extract knowledge from practice—they rarely bring knowledge to it: that, under such circumstances, they so often acquit themselves with ability, is pregnant with proof that mental power is the unalienable property of humanity; and, since it thus bursts above the blight of neglect, and repels the effects of mistaken institutions, what, under better auspices, might not be hoped from it?'—p. 32—35, vol. i.

The dialogues, which frequently occur, especially in the first volume before the bustle of the story begins, deserve great praise. They are characteristic, well-timed, interesting, and instructive. The first links of long, useful, and often novel trains of thought are put into our hands, and only the most inert will let them slip without tracing them further. Mrs. Trevor, a frank, independent, and speculative woman, who, we presume, speaks the opinions of the author, talks thus:

'"We call ourselves christians," she added, "but where do we recognise our brethren as the children of a common parent, as beings alike powerless at birth, and perishable in death, and filling the intervening space as we can, and not as we would? Exclusiveness is the vice of pride. Better would it please our God to make this world a place of common fellowship, than, like the costly cathedral, with its gilded pews and seatless aisles, a place of invidious distinctions. Even the common of religion has been parcelled out by pride; the selfish line of demarcation drawn where God himself says all are equal! I cannot re-model society; but I may regulate my own house; and my practice shall exemplify my principle. I will endeavour to imitate the Great Master, and say, 'Come *unto* me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,' not to learn *of* me, but to learn *with* me, and to learn that greatest, most consolatory of all truths—that *we are all brethren.*"

'Some one remarked that there was a great difference in the brothers.

'"True," she rejoined, "and why? May not the cause be found in the spirit of proscription which operates to prevent that intercommunion which would liberalize the rich, and refine the poor? The former cannot endure the infringement of the mere points of empty etiquette which the latter are disqualified to observe. Dress, display, and fashion are estimated beyond intelligence and sociality. We want cheap or gratuitous moral amusements, and zealous moral teachers for the people. To what may the increase of methodism be ascribed? To the zeal of its ministers, who, though often preaching a revolting doctrine, under all the disadvantages of ignorance and vulgarity, have yet evinced a warmth, an energy that aroused the attention, and excited the feelings of their hearers. If the same energy was exerted to awaken the powers of reason, to appeal to the moral affections, can we doubt of the effect that might be produced? May not congregations of rationalists be collected as well as congregations of fanatics? Why have we not places of amusement and moral instruction, museums, and libraries open to the people?"

'"Because the vulgar," cried the objector, "spoil the works of art without improving by them; waste that which they are not worthy to use?"

'"How long will they do that?" she rejoined. "Only while they *are* vulgar; which they must ever be if there is no attempt to make them otherwise. Afford to all proper means, and God has so gifted his creatures, that they will accomplish the right end. Cannot we take a hint from the ancient philosophers? Oral instruction, the most effective of any, is scarcely known among us. Are there no moral missionaries who will teach moral philosophy, without alarming the ignorant by saying it is such? Cannot they give moral illustrations, simple and evident in their application, beautiful in their truth, and enforced with eloquence and benignity?"

'"Then you would have public walks, and peripatetic philosophers?"

'"Yes; I admire their doctrine and mode of teaching."

'"And how would you support the expense of all this?"

'"By curtailing pensioned pomp—by annulling hereditary and unearned honours—by applying to real utility the wealth devoted to empty show. A great man has said, that '*he* deserved well of his country who made a blade of grass to grow where grass had never grown before.' How much more does he deserve that plants good feelings and useful ideas in the moral waste or wilderness of a barren or neglected mind—who teaches, without technical parade, or professional pomp, a knowledge of moral nature, of physical nature, of the gentle humanities, of all the most general and useful truths."

'"And you imagine this would effect a happy change on the poorer classes?"

'"Let it be tried. To what do the more cultivated classes owe their propriety of manner, discretion, and discrimination? To the facility of access to moral instruction, delicate amusement, and judicious association. Can no practical effort be made to give these to all the other grades of society? Yes, easily. But no; the grand aim is to increase wealth, not happiness. Large revenues are prized beyond an improved or contented people. Thus the vintner's gaudy palace every where seduces the poor man to drunkenness, but not one institution rises to invite him to rational amusement, and through that medium to moral amelioration. The coffee-shops, where he can procure a cheap, unintoxicating beverage, and have at the same time access to a little literary knowledge, I hail as one step in the poor man's favour."'—p. 32—37, vol. ii.

These volumes are well-timed, and it would not be amiss that those peers should read them who are yet deliberating on their legislative conduct towards our Jewish brethren. Not that they will find any direct discussion of the policy of conceding civil rights to the children of Abraham, but they may learn some beautiful lessons of tolerance, for which both their heads and hearts will be all the better, and therefore their senatorial conduct more satisfactory. They may see, judiciously and touchingly exhibited, how much we are all the creatures of circumstance, and how bad are the workings of the distinctions which have been set

up and perpetuated in society by a short-sighted selfishness. Such lessons deserve general consideration. They ought to be attractive; for while most forcibly inculcating an enlightened philanthropy, the author always inculcates it with a force which is characteristically feminine. We talk of masculine understandings, but according to the ancient Greeks the goddess of wisdom was a woman.

ON THEATRICAL REFORM.

THE 'decline of the stage' has of late years become a stock phrase amongst a large portion of the public, and those writers who affect to guide the opinions of the public. The matter has been so long assumed as an undoubted fact, that it would seem to have grown into an acknowledged truism, no more to be disputed than the fact that the earth revolves about the sun. Yet, notwithstanding, a close analysis will probably set the matter in a different light. What proof is there, that the aggregate amount of money, paid by the public for admission to the various theatres, is less, even in proportion to the numbers of the population, than it ever was, even in those days which were held to be the 'palmy' state of the theatre? The declinarians will probably reply, by referring to the condition of the large theatres, regarding them as business speculations for purposes of profit. This is granted; but then on the other hand let them look at the numerous theatres which have arisen on all sides to take away the audience. Let them look at the fact that many country towns now maintain theatrical establishments of their own, a portion of whose inhabitants were accustomed to make occasional trips to London, one of the principal inducements being the desire of visiting the theatres. That individual speculators, or that specific theatres, may have suffered, is no proof whatever of a general decline. The question at issue is, not even whether numerous actors are out of employment or badly paid, but whether as regards the general population a larger proportionate number of human beings are now maintained by the various employments connected with the drama than ever was the case before. Those who look at the increased number of the theatres must reply in the affirmative; and it will scarcely be questioned, that higher salaries and a larger number of them are now paid than ever were paid before. If the fact be so, and I believe that it is not to be doubted, what becomes of the assertion as to the 'decline of the stage?' Could the proprietors of the large theatres maintain their monopoly to the letter, against all the principles of justice, there is little doubt that their establishments would again be in a most prosperous condition; *i. e.* with ordinary attention to calculation in their financial arrangements, a matter in which they have for the most part been so

woefully deficient, that nothing but an enormous rate of profit could ever enable them to keep their funds in advance of their expenses. But the increased gain which such a monopoly would give them, would be obtained only by the ruin of a large number of actors and the consequently diminished pleasures of a large portion of the play-going community. The fact is, that the large theatres are injudicious contrivances for performing badly numerous branches of the drama; and the smaller theatres, which only aim at doing one thing, do it so much better, that when the market is open to competition they carry away all the custom. The monopoly which served to keep the supply of theatrical entertainment beneath the demand for it, was the cause that the patent theatres were built of so large a size that not above one half of the audience could hear or see distinctly. The monopoly was the cause that a large capital was employed in extra scenery and other property for a large variety of performances. The monopoly was the cause that a treble company of actors were usually kept on the establishment, or that actors who were expected to play threefold characters, and consequently to play all badly alike, were paid large salaries. The monopoly, which yielded large profits, was the cause of a wasteful expenditure in carrying on the concern, and which could not have been kept up had the audience possessed a choice, as they were exceedingly badly served in consequence of 'His Majesty's servants' having more to do than they were capable of. Had the large theatres been establishments for issuing forth manufactured goods, it is clear, that even without a monopoly they might have been carried on to greater advantage than smaller ones, but the commodity they dealt in was seeing and hearing, and consequently the supply they could yield was limited by space. Beyond a certain distance the article they dealt in was deteriorated, yet notwithstanding all their customers had to pay at the same rate. Consequently, so soon as the smaller theatres were opened, and proffered their commodities at a lower rate of payment, where all the audience were treated alike, could all hear and see, and where for the most part the acting was quite as good as that of the larger theatres, the larger portion of the play-goers were at once taken up by the new establishments, and the old ones, being still saddled with their heavy expenditure, so soon as their income was diminished fell in ruin. And thereupon the cry was raised of the 'decline of the stage.' The stage, the stages of the large theatres, have declined; they are unfitted for the purposes they were intended to serve, they are fit for nothing but *spectacle*, and although their proprietors endeavour to uphold them by means of persecuting the minors, it will be altogether in vain. The public have come to the conclusion that all monopolies are mischievous, and either with or without the concurrence of the legislature they will be swept away.

But notwithstanding the fact that the decline of the profits of

the patent theatres is no proof of the general decline of the stage, it is quite certain that the improvement of the stage has not kept pace with the improvements in other branches of art. This fact might in itself be considered sufficient to have kept the stage in a far worse condition than that in which we find it. If it has thriven so well, under so many new circumstances tending to depress it, we may reasonably hope that when it shall be freed from its shackles, competition in excellence will advance it high in public favour. Every body can remark, that the persecution, the disabilities in law, and the covert proscription in private life, which the Jews have had inflicted on them by the nations among whom they have dwelt, have had far more effect in keeping up their peculiarities, and preventing the developement of the higher qualities of which they are capable, than any deficiency of intellect or mischievous regulations of their own. They have remained a separate people, not by their own wish, but by the injustice of their neighbours, just as the wisdom of the Greeks has degenerated into cunning under the oppression of the Turks. Most people are now aware of this fact, yet it does not seem to strike them, that a similar law of proscription has hitherto prevented the profession of acting from rising to the same state of excellence as other arts. It is the more needful that the proscription should be removed, inasmuch as theatrical attraction has now to contend with numerous other intellectual tastes which have grown up amongst the public since the days of Garrick, and which by their better cultivation draw into other channels much of the money and attention which would be given to theatrical amusement, were there a constant developement of all the excellencies of which it is capable, so as to meet the capacity of the constantly increasing taste of the public. In the days of Garrick, play-goers were not readers as they now are. There were no books of a high order of imagination constantly issuing from the press, and furnishing a variety of novelty. There were no dioramas, and panoramas, and cosmoramas, and zoological gardens, and colosseums, and numberless other methods of expending surplus coin in public amusement. The stage reigned sole and undivided, and occupied the principal talk of the town, while foreign politics excited little of stirring interest in that age compared with the age of transition in which we at present live, and during which the minds of the large majority of all classes are occupied with the stirring details of political agitation of a domestic nature, to the exclusion of all fictitious excitement. It requires no prophet to foresee, that as public enlightenment proceeds, the excitement, which is at present on the increase, will gradually lessen, and as actors improve in fitness for their profession, their influence over the public mind will increase. At present, by far the larger portion of the plays which are put forth are behind the taste of the play-going public. They can feel no interest in fictitious and unnatural emotions, and to represent

human nature as it really exists in the finer specimens, requires a class of actors widely different from what they have hitherto been accustomed to behold. With the exception of a very few, from what classes of society are the mass of actors and actresses drawn? Are they from the refined, the educated classes? No, on the contrary, the profession of acting is for the most part the resort of the needy, the vicious, and the idle. Not the talent for acting, but the desire to act, is the common rule, and thus, acting, instead of being what it should be, a combination of the highest kinds of human refinement, is degraded into low and miserable mimicry. Here and there, peculiar circumstances bring forth a rare specimen of high talent; but the talent of a single individual is insufficient to embody forth a whole play, to make the illusion complete. It has indeed been alleged, and by those who have paid much attention to theatres and acting, that the instances are very rare, in which the peculiar organization and combination of qualities requisite for a first-rate actor are found in the same individual. This is partly true, but then it must be remembered, that the sphere of humanity in which the instances are sought is just precisely that in which they are the least likely to be found. A ban has been set upon actors and actresses, and they are in the mass held to be outcasts of society. By law they are vagabonds, unless they chance to be admitted to the privilege of using the slavish designation of 'His Majesty's servants;' and though those of high name and talent are endured, the mass are designated in contempt as 'stage-players, and 'play-actors,' *i. e.* mere mimics or mountebanks, without any pretensions to high feeling or high intellect, and the hopelessness of acquiring respect causes them to be regardless of morality, at least that morality on which the public affects to set a value. They are made Pariahs by society, and as a consequence they establish new rules of morality amongst themselves. Time was, that stage-playing was considered the direct opposite both of religion and morality, and subversive of all virtue. It might be so, but the immorality was not in the art itself, but in the professors of it. The public had determined that none but worthless people should be allowed to become players, and that if worthy people attempted to practise the art they should be held in no better esteem than those they mixed with. As a consequence, an art, whose immense value as a vehicle of public instruction has never yet made the fitting impression on those who might guide the public, has been left as a monopoly, wholly, or nearly so, in the hands of the worthless and inferior members of society. When the ban shall be removed, when all those who are conscious of the capacity shall be allowed to practise the art, and all who believe that they possess the capacity, shall be allowed to essay the practice, without losing caste, the numbers of those possessing the highest talent for it will be found very considerably increased. There can be little doubt that, for the most part, those possessing the highest

talent for acting will be found amongst the educated classes of society, who are at present especially shut out.

Setting aside the immorality prevalent amongst many of those who follow the profession of acting, and of whom it may be doubted whether after all they are more immoral than the rest of the community, and especially such parts of the community as possess temperaments equally excitable with theirs, for the business of an actor or actress has a tendency to bring forth to the public gaze all their private actions as well as public ones, and set them in a strong light—setting this matter aside, as belonging not to the art, but to the individuals, what is there in the art itself, in the use, not the abuse of it, which has a tendency to foster immorality either in the professors or their audience? Is not oratory oratory, whether it be poured forth from the lips of an actor, or a barrister, or an M. P.? Is not the influence of music, which brings forth the perception of the beauty to be found in the creation, is it not a good influence, even if not equally powerful, whether the locality be a theatre or a chapel? Are not moral sentiments equally moral, whether they be found in a play or in a sermon; and is not that morality the most useful, which, being conveyed in a palatable form, is the most likely to be imbibed, like the Political Economy of Miss Martineau? No one doubts that the student would glean most knowledge from Adam Smith, and Ricardo, and Malthus; but unfortunately, the mass of mankind are not students, and if they will not take strong mental medicine in its naked form, it is better that they should take it wrapped up in literary currant-jelly than not take it at all. Is not the exhibition of living beauty in 'God's own image' more likely to rouse the imagination of the sculptor and painter, than the forms of the academy in clay and plaster, and marble? Are not the lights of a theatre as good and wholesome lights as the lights of a chapel or a church? Let there be no misunderstanding here: I deny not the utility of churches and chapels, and should rejoice to see the beautiful spirit of christianity more rife in them, in opposition to the trading spirit of religionism, but I abhor the cant which would, for interested purposes, assume, that because a church is good a theatre must necessarily be bad; that morals can only be taught within consecrated walls. What is there in the beautiful scenery of a theatre to give an immoral impression, more than in the adornments of a Catholic chapel, or the pictures at Somerset House, or the National Gallery? What is there more improper or ridiculous in stage costume, than there is in the robes of a Catholic or Protestant priest or bishop, or the judges and counsellors of the law courts? Nay, the former is commonly in good keeping, whereas the latter are most absurd. Is an actor, of fine person, and noble countenance, clad in a handsome costume, in the character of a good and wise man, and giving forth truths in the modelled tones of oratory, is he less likely to make an impression on his audience, uniting the powers

of passion and reason, than is a professor at an ordinary lecture? Cannot the lesson of the patriot be as well read to him from the boards of a theatre, as from the floor of St. Stephen, or the pulpit of the Rotunda, or the platform of a political union? Does not a great actor, in short, by operating upon several senses at once, wield a moral power infinitely greater than that of a debater at St. Stephen's, and if so, why should he be held in less respect? Some contemner of theatres and actors will perhaps reply, 'This is all very true in the abstract, but it is found in practice that players and play-goers are very immoral people.' Then I ask, to what is it owing that an instrument capable of producing so much good to the community, should only be productive of evil? There is but one answer: the odious, the accursed, the mischievous, the suicidal monopoly.

The most ancient attribute of the stage, and which has most commonly been quoted in its favour, is the fact of its being a moral instructor for the community. Many who have deemed themselves further advanced in wisdom have affected to laugh at this, and to regard the stage merely as a matter of amusement, entirely devoid of influence. The wise people may nevertheless have been out. The stage has possessed influence, though the influence has been evil; and being evil, it is fortunate that its influence has not been more widely extended. The power and influence of the drama, if rightly guided, might be enormous. The rulers of despotic countries are aware of this, and therefore is it that they invariably make the stage their own property, and guide its proceedings in the mode which seems the best adapted to their own interest. Those who doubt, might be reminded of the power of the old Greek tragedies, and the Roman Roscius might be quoted to them, but they would perhaps reply, that the power they possessed was only an evidence that there was a lack of other excitement, which is not the case now. What then will they reply to the fact, that the excitement which built up the barricades of Brussels was engendered at the theatre, that the revolution lately attempted at Frankfort, also had its origin at the theatre.* Why do people visit the theatres at all? Because 'man is infinitely precious to man,' and when he cannot behold in reality the higher beings of his species, he loves to behold their semblance and the painting forth of their actions, as near the life as may be. The taste of man in the rough, is not always good; it requires cultivation, and therefore is it that the demons of his species have seemed to him like heroes. Therefore is it, that now the eyes of the community are opened, they refuse any longer to worship the pagod things which were crammed into the plays of former days,

* A writer in the Spectator—the ancient, not the modern—describing his sensations after a tragedy, said that he felt so heroic, that he could have defended the Spectator and Sir Roger de Coverley against a score of Mohawks. Yet upon staying out the farce, all his heroic virtue vanished. It is a true picture, and the moral is admirable.

and sat for characters. They have nothing in common with them, and the proof of it is, that even among Shakspeare's plays, those only have retained their hold which embody human passions apart from the considerations of factitious dignity. There is no decline of interest in all that concerns men in reality, and still less in histrionic fiction, which, after all, frequently contains more truth than much of the reality which passes for truth in the world. Time was that the battle of Waterloo was presented on the stage, and the 'drowner of men' was hailed with clamour through his representative. This has passed away; no audience will now hail with acclamations the shedders of human blood, but it was at the time a proof of the interest taken by play-goers in the deeds of their fellows,—that they loved the fiction because it represented humanity, *i. e.* human actions, and thus will it ever be. The living representatives of human life will ever yield pleasure, but the public taste is now more refined, and the art of acting, as well as the matter acted, must make much progress to meet it. The matter acted must be such as will take hold on the sympathies of the audience, and the actors must be creatures of God's making, and not of man's marring. They must be trained in no school but that of unerring nature; they must be the aristocrats,* *i. e.* the best beings of humanity, possessed of the most perfect physical organization, together with the highest moral and intellectual qualities, and they should be sought wherever they might be found, without paying regard to high or low birth, or any of the externals of art or fashion.

Supposing the stage to be adapted for all that I have endeavoured to indicate, it must at once be clear, that so far from the profession of an actor or an actress being one of dishonour or degradation, it ought to become one of high utility. Let the ban be removed from the profession of acting; let actors and actresses be acknowledged as teachers of the people, and in that capacity let moral conduct be exacted from them, and the disregard of public decency punished as is the case in other classes of society, not by the proscription of the whole body, but by the expulsion of the offending individual. Let genius and talent, instead of being an excuse for vice, as is the case at present, be considered only as accompanying circumstances calling for additional severity of punishment. Let the public do this, and they will work a change which will appear almost miraculous. Under such countervailing motives, theatres would cease to be the haunts of disgusting sensuality, or at worst they would be divided into distinct classes,—the haunts of vice and the schools of virtue. At present, the proprietors, who call themselves 'respectable,' and who would be much scandalized at the idea of being thought immoral, are in

* The name of aristocrat has lost its proper meaning. In common parlance, an aristocrat now means merely a person surrounded by factitious dignity, without regard either to mental or corporeal excellence.

reality traffickers in vice, or if not so, its base and voluntary ministers. Under the circumstances of a beneficial change, such as I have alluded to, the same motives would press on theatrical proprietors to preserve public decency, as are now imperative on certain other proprietors, and the agents of vice would necessarily slink into unseemly holes and corners, and thus two separate species of nuisances would disappear from the public gaze, instead of being thrust forward to the annoyance of the well disposed.

The love of acting is a very widely spread passion, which, if closely analyzed, would perhaps be found based on the love of power,—a desire to rule over the minds of others,—which seems to be corroborated by the fact, that most incipient actors believe their peculiar forte to be tragedy, until convinced of the contrary by the suffrage, or want of suffrage, of their audience. At most of the boy-pens, christened by the name of schools, the propensity to act is found to be strong, and the schoolmasters use it as an instrument to excite the boys to emulation in the use of speech, through the process of declamation. It is said also that Napoleon took lessons of Talma how to act the emperor. Thus an actor may teach a sovereign, but is not held fitting to teach a people. But after the love of acting and declamation has been first encouraged in a boy by his schoolmaster, and the exhibition of it has met with the approbation of his parents and friends, he is expected to put it away as on a shelf so soon as he has left school, and then to acquire new tastes of a directly contrary tendency. If he persist in liking acting, he is called a 'spouter,' a 'stage-struck fool,' and sundry other epithets, and warned that total ruin must be the consequence if he does not abstain. The boy cannot comprehend how that which met with approval while at school, can change its nature after he has left school, his reason revolts from the tyranny, and he resolves to persevere. Perchance he is thwarted in his first wishes to make an essay, and they become stronger by the denial of gratification. Walter Scott remarks, that if Waverley's aunt had given him unlimited access to the young lady he first took a fancy to, the charm would probably have lost its force, and even thus is it with acting. Give the boy or the young man his way, let him try the experiment, and he will be satisfied as to his fittingness or unfittingness, but this is not the rule. He is debarred from the opportunity of proving his skill, and he runs away and becomes a stroller. Whether he succeeds or fails, the stamp of player is thenceforth stricken upon him, and, unless he be a rich man, he may never turn away from that for which he is unfitted, to that for which he is fitted. A man may study for a surgeon or physician, and afterwards become a tradesman, or a merchant, or a clergyman, or an officer in the army. Amongst professions he may change from one to another with impunity, and amongst trades the same. The military engineer may turn away from the business of destroying towns, and, as an architect, take to building

them up, but the unfortunate wight who has once essayed to act, and has failed, finds all resources shut against him. He is proscribed. If he goes to a lawyer and applies for the situation of clerk, the lawyer replies, 'Oh! you are the stage-struck young man, and won't do for me.' The merchant makes the same reply; the chemist, the apothecary, the tradesman, the manufacturer, all are alike. There is a great hardship in this to the individual, and the public at large is a still greater sufferer. It cannot be doubted that amongst the educated classes of the community, the greatest chance exists of finding individuals suited for first-rate actors. Amongst bankers' clerks, and the sons of thriving tradesmen, amongst lawyers and doctors, ay, and amongst churchmen, embryo actors may exist, just as probably as a Clive was found amongst the clerks of the India company; and it is desirable that they should have the opportunity of trying their skill—if the spirit move them—without being subject to a cruel punishment in case of failure, because their ambition had soared too high. It is like the ordeal of old, when a large reward was the price of success, and the pain of the burning ploughshares was followed by a lingering death of torture in case of failure. It would be well to get rid of the penalty. The failure, in attempting a walk of genius beyond a man's powers, is in itself a heavy punishment, and it ought to be considered sufficient. He has attempted no crime, and had he been successful, the public would have been greater gainers than himself. When this ban shall be removed, the effect will be most advantageous; for a number of inefficient actors will be removed from the sphere for which they are unfitted, the pressure of population will cease to press against the theatrical fund, and a larger supply of first-rate talent will be brought forward. Theatrical talent is more widely diffused than our present ignorance will allow us to believe. The spirit of acting is ambition and the love of excitement combined. Circumstances would convert an excitable actor into a soldier, or sailor, or traveller, or chieftain, perchance to display as much skill and bravery, and energy, as those who were more legitimately trained. Walter Scott understood human nature, when he created Jack Bunce the pirate, out of the strolling player, who delighted in the alias of Frederic Altamont. The same spirit was stirring in both cases. The favourite amusement of the officers on board war ships while at sea is acting plays, just as is the case with aspiring schoolboys. He who could enact—not mimic—the hero best, would of a surety find his enthusiasm stirred the strongest, while boarding an armed foe. The battle words of the play would instinctively become the battle words of the real fight, the slogan of ferocity, just as surely as John Kemble, in the feeling of acting reality, struck the pewter drinking vessel from the hands of his colleague behind the scenes, deeming that he dishonoured the Roman fame. The great Goethe was an enthusiastic lover of the drama. Bulwer makes Paul

Clifford, while a youth, emulous of enacting the part of Turpin, and partially putting it in practice in after life. Have not the forty thieves of the Arabian Nights been imitated in real actings, by thieving boys in London streets? It is more likely that those boys gleaned their ideas from the enactment at the theatre, than from the book, and there is little doubt that the presentation of Tom and Jerry, was the forerunner and teacher of many similar real scenes. When the time shall come that such things shall be avoided, and better things presented in their room, a corresponding improvement will be remarked in the public. Base actors have represented base things; the viler human passions have been set forth as merely laughable and ridiculous, but when the ban shall be removed, higher natures will set themselves up as teachers of the people, whether as amateurs or as paid professors, and higher qualities will be taught. There is genius enough to be found; if ye doubt it, look on the faces which pass along the streets, and after printing them on the retina of your vision, lament with me, that

'Knowledge, to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll.'

Lament with me, that 'chill penury,' or more chilling training, has kept their nobler faculties from being more fully developed. But the time is coming, there is yet a glorious beyond in view; human wisdom will prevail over human ignorance; and the progress of refinement and accompanying noble sentiments, will be in a compound ratio.

'Its coming yet for a' that,
When man to man the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.'

JUNIUS REDIVIVUS.

To be continued.

CORFE CASTLE RUINS.

IN sunny beauty's self-diffused light,
That beam'd to shame the cheat of Athelwold,
She moves before me—Lo! the spiritual might
Of vision is upon me: I behold
The bleeding 'Martyr' spur his horse to speed,
And the queen smiling at the mother's deed!

I've trod the very stair Elfrida trod,
And seen the summer-clouds roof fleetingly
The towers of her inheritance! Ay, strode
Above the walls where monarchs feasted high,
Sweet women sinn'd, and dungeon'd victims groan'd,
And vassals revell'd whilst their masters moan'd!

Nettles and thorns and ivy overspread
  The high places of the tyrants of old days;
And o'er their weed-choked hearths is idly read
  The little name of each dull thing that strays
From his poor pigmy hovel, to crush'd towers,
Where the past's shadow clasps and overpowers

The substance of the present. Some few flowers
  Amid these silent ruins breathe and smile;
And birds and insects frame their brooding bowers
  In the cleft walls—as if to reconcile
The eternal enmity of birth and death,
Ashes with blood, and airless dust with breath.

The fulness and the vacancy of being,
  Reality and vision, truth and fable
Alternately with blindness and with seeing
  Endue my pausing spirit; and, unstable,
Yield mingled visitings of faith and doubt:
Pale adumbrations of this wreck without
Come to the chaos within—I darkly dream,
Lull'd by the unseen flow of my mind's cavern'd stream.

* W *

MARY.

Thou art not beautiful, if freshest youth
  Or fairest form doth make the asker's creed;
But thou art beautiful, if love, and truth,
  And wisdom, who wait on thee still to feed
  Thine eye, thy smile, thy voice,—be all we need.
They know thee not who love thee not, they wear
  A blinding veil, that makes them idly heed
Thy gentleness to win, meekness to bear,
Thy strength to live or die, for what thy soul holds dear.

I watch thee when in mood quiet and holy
  Thou sittest rapt—I dream there is no taint
On this most lovely world, of pain or folly—
  I gaze on thee as on a pictured saint
  In some cathedral niche, where thro' the faint
And hallow'd shade, from glass of many dies,
  All things how bright soe'er are made acquaint
With gloom—o'er all the spell of twilight lies—
Yet fadeth not the light in those upraised eyes.

I gaze again, when in less tranquil mood
  The spirit thro' thy thrilling frame doth move,
Thy mind all eager for its work of good,
  Thy heart all busy at its work of love,
  The quivering lip, the trembling hand that prove
Thy tenderness is truth—I gaze and see
  The longing soul pant for its home above,
Strive with the frame that will not set it free
To seek a world where all are angels like to thee.

Oh tarry yet, sweet soul! this world is dark,
And needs the light and comfort of those eyes;
Thou art a dove and must not leave our ark,
Thou ever with the olive branch thy prize;
Thou hast a mission, ere thy spirit flies,
To teach all others to resemble thee,
That o'er, away unto thy native skies,—
Away immortal soul, thy bonds are free,
Away, and find thy heaven—Love and Eternity!

ASPLAND'S SERMONS.*

THE author of these Sermons seems to be an admirer of the style of Tillotson and Blair, and in our opinion has 'bettered the instruction' which is to be derived from that school of composition. Like theirs, his discourses are characterised by sound sense, always perspicuously, and often elegantly expressed; there is scarcely ever any thing in them which can offend, usually much which must please; and if passages are rare, which, by their eloquence or originality, stand out in relief, there is a general harmony, proportion, and polish, which enhances the effect of each discourse as a whole, and tends to produce on the mind the kind and degree of impression which we may infer that the preacher contemplated. We seldom meet with compositions which have more the appearance of being precisely what the author intended they should be. So equable are they, that a specimen might be taken almost at random, without partiality or unfairness, to exhibit their characteristic qualities. We select the following on account of its subject:

'In the midst of commotions we tremble and complain. A thunder-storm alarms us, for we fear that the lightning may fall upon our own roof; but presently all is serene in the heavens, and we philosophize upon the salutary tendency of storms and tempests. Under a civil tyranny, a rebellion breaks out, and the timid and selfish predict universal ruin—without them, and in spite of them, liberty is established, and their children and their children's children go up to the temple to praise God for putting the love of liberty into the hearts of some of those that went before them. In the reformation of the Church, the philosophers of the day see nothing but the loosening of the bonds of religion, and an inundation of moral and spiritual evil: thus Erasmus, who was foremost to expose the corruptions of the Church of Rome, alarmed at the effect of his own works, predicted unheard of miseries from the defection of the people from the priesthood; but the Reformation, falling in with public opinion, went on; error after error, superstition after superstition, imposture after imposture fell, and there is not now an enlightened Roman Catholic in Europe, who does not look back with pious gratitude to the Refor-

* Sermons on various Subjects, chiefly practical. By R. Aspland. London, Hunter, 1833.

mation, as the means equally of purifying his own church, and of restoring religious liberty to the world. The Reformation was indeed the occasion of much religious persecution, a state in which there always prevail great crimes and great miseries; but this is only one side of the picture: by the sharp discipline of persecution have been formed some of those noble minds on whose constancy and moral heroism history delights to dwell, and to whom the Divine promise assigns the brightest crown of heavenly glory. Nor is this all; the school of persecution can alone, perhaps, teach communities the great lesson of the sacred rights of conscience. In the beginning, men seriously think that they ought to do many things contrary to peace and freedom, and that they render God service by making one another wretched. Tired at length of the interminable warfare, they allow each other time for reflection; by degrees, they see and feel and deplore, the evils of strife and violence on account of opinions; in the calm, philosophy puts forth her strong arguments, and the still small voice of revealed religion is heard urging her powerful persuasions, until in the end, the sinfulness of persecutions is generally admitted, and the right of all men to freedom of conscience is placed amongst the axioms and elementary truths that no man in his senses dares to dispute. When, again, the chain was broken that bound the souls of mankind to the papal throne, it was rightly enough foreseen that the Christian world would break into innumerable sects, and prodigious calamities were predicted as the fatal consequence: we can now smile at the gloomy prophecy: none of the evils arising from sects are at all comparable to those springing of necessity from the insolence and imposture of one dominant church, whilst many blessings have flowed from the exercise of private judgment: the various Christian parties have served as balances or checks in the social machine; the spirit of emulation has excited them on all sides to greater efforts for the attainment of intellectual and moral eminence; controversy has promoted free inquiry, which has led to the acknowledgment of certain general truths; in these, the wisest and best men of all parties, after a time, are disposed to take up their rest; and in this manner sects, like some dreaded serpents which carry with them an antidote to their venom, cure their own evils, and terminate, by a natural and easy death, in that rational and charitable faith, the last attainment of human reason, but the first lesson of the Gospel, in which all men of all nations may agree, a moral and devotional, rather than a doctrinal creed, and a creed which allows, respects, and cherishes, those diversities of persuasion which the Creator has made inseparable from the human mind, and which are thrown into the social system in order to quicken the intellectual powers, and to save society from supineness and sloth, the worst state into which man can fall, and the worst, because a nearly hopeless state. p. 32—35.

The euthanasia of sectarianism here described, is, indeed, devoutly to be wished. We should rejoice to see stronger symptoms of its speedy approach. It is to be feared, that in Dissenting, as well as in Established Churches, there are too many obstacles created by petty interests and passions to the simple pursuit of truth and the honest expression of opinion. The more imperative

is the obligation on all true Christians of promoting, not only in legislative enactment, but in social intercourse, that mutual toleration, without which there can neither be liberality nor liberty. There are many observations in the volume before us, which tend directly to this point; and many others which do so incidentally. On that and many other accounts we regard it as a valuable contribution to the cause of rational piety and useful practice.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE SPIRIT OF GNOSTICISM, DURING THE FIRST CENTURIES OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

'Una superstitio, quamvis non concolor error.'

PRUDENTIUS.

ONE of the earliest expedients adopted by the human mind to extend and perpetuate its knowledge, is classification. But the distinctions thus introduced, however necessary to assist and direct the first stages of its intellectual progress, have no exact counterpart in the reality of things, and require to be softened down, and sometimes almost disappear, when the mind is brought by more enlarged observation to a juster conception of the infinite variety of truth. Nature executes nothing *per saltum:* throughout the universe every change is graduated, every transition imperceptible. This remark is equally true of the history of man, and of the classification of human characters, parties, and opinions. Here, as in the kingdom of nature, the lines of demarcation between the several species are often traced with too much abruptness and precision; and the facility with which the mind yields itself to an established distribution, and embraces the moral associations attached to it, offers a perpetual hinderance to the impartial administration of historical justice.

The proof of this statement we rest on the general history of sects, philosophical and religious: a more particular and a very curious illustration of it may be found in the rise and influence of those singular speculations, which, under the general title of Gnosticism, introduced a new variety into the multifarious aspects of human opinion during the first ages of our era, and marked by imperceptible gradations every shade of belief and speculation, that claimed any kindred with Christianity, from Judaism on the one hand to the very verge of Polytheism on the other.* Our

* The works that we have followed as our authorities in the following sketch of the Gnostic schools, in addition to what may be found in *Lardner (History of Heretics,)* and *Priestley (History of Early Opinions, &c.,)* are *Histoire Critique du Gnosticisme, 2 tomes avec planches,* par M. Jacques Matter, and *Allgemeine Geschichte der Christlichen Religion und Kirche von Dr. August Neander.* 1sten band. 2te Abtheilung, p. 414—540. This last writer has devoted a particular work to the subject of Gnosticism, which we have not seen, *Genetische Entwiklung, &c.;* but as his general history appeared subsequently to that work, it may be supposed to exhibit in a condensed form his latest opinions and final corrections.

practice of studying Christianity almost entirely through the medium of the canonical Scriptures, which authenticate its origin, leads us to regard it too much as an insulated fact in the vast complexity of human affairs, uninfluenced in its form and developement by the actual condition of the world at the time of its appearance, standing apart in its own solitary divinity, and separated by a broad and impassable barrier from all intercourse and sympathy with them *that were without.* But history exhibits a different picture. The pure religion of Jesus came into the world in the midst of influences, which, without affecting its divine essence, modified its outward character, and were the source of the errors which blended themselves with it. Among these influences none were more powerful than that spirit of daring and mystic speculation, which assumed in its more definite shape, when blended with any of the doctrines or facts of Christianity, the peculiar designation of Gnosticism.

This designation, in its fundamental idea, implies the possession of a superior science, communicated only to a few, and distinguishing them from the multitude. Though the term is limited in its actual use to speculations more or less connected with Christianity, yet the spirit which it represents is of far higher antiquity, must be traced back to the mysteries and sages of the East, and is in its nature diametrically opposed to the popular and unpretending character of the gospel. Even among the republican Greeks, the distinction between the *exoteric* and *esoteric* doctrines of philosophy existed, but chiefly in those schools that were most remarkable for an Oriental tendency of ideas. The revival of this love of mystery, with the assumption of a divine knowledge, derived from intuition, or communicated through a secret tradition, which was perceptible at the time of the origin of Christianity, arose from the intermingling of the ardent and contemplative spirit of the East with the more practical mind of the West, which was one of the effects of Alexander's conquests in Asia, and was perpetuated by the foundation of an universal *entrepôt* for commerce, language, philosophy, and religion, in Alexandria. The ancient philosophy of the Greeks experienced this influence almost as strongly as Christianity; and the new Platonic schools only exhibit another phasis of the general spirit of Gnosticism.

It would be an abuse of terms to describe Gnosticism as a kind of philosophy, since it assumed rather than reasoned, created systems, instead of searching after truth, and set facts at defiance with an audacity unparalleled in the history of speculation. Its strength lay in the earnestness with which it addressed itself to the deepest yearnings and most intense questionings of our moral nature: its field was the imagination; and here by the boldest imagery and most arbitrary combinations it endeavoured to solve those deep problems of natural theology, relative to the origin and purpose of evil, and the connection of matter with mind, to which

even the reason of the nineteenth century has as yet confessed itself inadequate. We should best designate the mental character of the Gnostics by a word, which the French and the Germans have not scrupled to borrow from the Greek, *Theosophists*, men whose contemplations were fixed immediately on God, the eternal source and principle of all things, instead of looking for wisdom nearer home by studying the order and harmony of his visible works. This *à priori* and fundamental knowledge of God was the *gnosis* which raised them so far above ordinary men, and from which they drew with so much certainty and confidence their magnificent theories of the order of Providence and the plan of the universe. It was distinct from faith, which they despised as unequal to the wants and capacities of a spiritual mind; nor was it reason, which, as an instrument of divine truth, their theories are a sufficient proof they never employed; but it was actual knowledge, which they pretended to derive either, 1. from some primitive revelation, to which they had access; or, 2. from immediate intuition; or 3. from a more exact knowledge than was granted to the world, of the pure doctrines of Jesus Christ.

As Christianity arose out of Judaism, the question naturally occurs, whether the latter religion was at all impregnated with this Oriental spirit. That this was the fact, is not only probable from the influence to which it must have been exposed during its temporary exile on the banks of the Euphrates, but is certain, from the existence of the Cabbala, which we can first detect in the interval between the Babylonish captivity and the birth of Christ. The Cabbala was a body of *esoteric* doctrines relative to the spiritual world, which, as the name implies, had been derived from tradition, and which bore a close resemblance to the system of Zoroaster. The distinguishing feature of both systems is the doctrine of successive emanations from one primeval source of light, and the acknowledgment of a vast number of spiritual agents good and evil, in the administration of the affairs of the universe. Zoroaster, it is well known, taught the existence of two hostile powers, the causes respectively of good and evil, Ormuzd and Ahriman; and the traces of this belief, the recognition of a kingdom of darkness warring with that of Jehovah, which was an idea altogether at variance with the simple and absolute monotheism of the Mosaic institutions, first became perceptible after the return of the Jews from the land where their elders had had perpetual intercourse with the sages of Chaldea and Persia. Then first we discover, as a result of the diverse action of foreign influences on the same community, the hitherto unknown phenomenon of sectarian division among the Jewish people: the Pharisees eagerly embracing the splendid spiritualism of the East, the Essenes and Therapeutæ exhibiting its mystic and ascetic tendencies; and the Sadducees, who rejected all tradition, and prided themselves on an adherence to the simple law of their fathers, presenting a

Judaic antagonism to these innovations. The elements of Gnosticism were therefore in existence, and actually fermenting in the heart of Judaism, before the preaching of the Gospel; and we may consider the cabbalistic doctrines as the transition state between pure Zoroastrism and the final developement of the proper *gnosis*.

Contemporaneous with these changes in Judea itself, a Gnostic element was forming, under circumstances somewhat different, in another quarter, to which we have already alluded, in the city of Alexandria. Hither, it is well known, a number of Jews had migrated in the reign of the first of the Ptolemies; and amongst them were those who shared in the general enthusiasm fostered by those princes for letters and philosophy. The adoption of Greek as the common dialect of the multifarious inhabitants of the city, promoted the readier intermingling of their religious and philosophical ideas. In this centre of the eastern and western worlds, the doctrines of all sects and countries were thrown into combination, and from their mutual action arose new forms of speculation. The mystic science of the native priesthoods, though declined from its ancient reputation, must still have had its influence in the general excitement of human ideas; and it was here brought a second time into collision with the institutions of the great Hebrew legislator and prophet, who was said himself to have been learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and to these elements and to the traditional knowledge of the system of Zoroaster, which the Jews brought with them from Palestine, were added the doctrines of the several Grecian schools, and especially that of Plato, which found in Alexandria a congenial soil.* Under these influences flourished Philo, who allegorized the Mosaic code, and found in it all the doctrines of Platonism. We can trace in his writings the germ of Gnosticism. By his doctrine of a *logos*, or world of ideas, dwelling in God, and the medium of the divine agency on the world of matter, which he borrowed from Plato, he prepared the way for some of the most favourite speculations of the Gnostic schools. He ascribed all true knowledge of God to intuition; and conceived that from this source Moses and the prophets derived a kind of gnosis.

From perceiving the tendency of men's ideas previous to the appearance of Christ, we are the less surprised at the form that was given to his doctrine by various sects, when it came to be disseminated in the world. It combined with elements already existing, and formed compounds in which the pure and practical wisdom of Jesus was disguised in mixtures of heathen origin. It is stated by ecclesiastical writers, that only two kinds of heresies were known in the two first centuries; that of those who denied the possibility of any connexion between the visible and invisible worlds, and considered Jesus Christ a man in appearance only,

* Gratissimum hospitium urbem Alexandriam habuit Platonica philosophia. Heyne, de Genio Sæculi Ptolemæorum, p. 144.

the Docetæ; and that of those who considered heaven and earth as equally under the superintendence of one divine principle, and regarded our Saviour as, in nature, a mere man—the Ebionites: these were viewed as the extreme points of heretical opinion; one denying the divinity, the other the humanity of Christ; and between them, recognising the union of the two natures, the precise centre of orthodoxy was supposed to lie. It will be seen, however, that the Gnostic principle, in its various forms, connected by imperceptible gradations even these extreme points of divergency; that there was an Ebionitish form of Gnosticism as well as one which harmonized with the system of the Docetæ; and that the doctrine of Cerinthus, in particular, who was contemporary with St. John, marks the transition from the Judaizing sects of Christians to proper Gnosticism.

When the course of speculation is so purely imaginative and arbitrary, so little governed by any principle of reason, as in the case of the Gnostics, it becomes almost impossible to classify the several schools and doctrines with any approach to exactness. As these speculations, however, had their source in philosphical doctrines, which existed previous to Christianity, we may, for the sake of distinctness, distribute them into two prominent classes, according to the regions in which the doctrines, from which they appear to have sprung, chiefly prevailed, and trace them either to an Alexandrine or a Syrian gnosis. Of these two schools of Gnosticism, it is observed by Neander, (i. p. 424,) that Platonism, with its peculiar views of the nature of matter, is the basis of the former; and Parsism, with its doctrine of the two principles of light and darkness, of the latter. In the former of these schools, Satan is the being opposed to the supreme and benevolent God, and matter is his domain, while the *demiurgus,* or immediate maker of the world, so far from being opposed to the supreme God, is his agent and organ. In accordance with these principles, no contrariety was supposed to exist between the old dispensation and the new; between the material and the spiritual world: the former were regarded as states of progress and transition to the higher order of things announced or existing in the latter; the visible husk or shell of a gnosis, that was revealed to the spiritual mind. There were thus two different worlds, and two different dispensations corresponding to them; at the head of each dispensation, as at the head of each world, there was a different God, a higher and a lower; and this distinction was extended even to Christ, the earthly Christ and the heavenly Christ being united at the baptism. Though the notion entertained of matter by this school was such as might lead to ascetic practices; yet their acknowledgment of a harmony between the visible and invisible world deterred them from the extravagances of those who considered matter as altogether within the jurisdiction of a malignant being. In the Syrian gnosis, on the other hand, into which the

dualism of Zoroaster entered as an element, the *demiurgus* represented Ahriman, and was a being essentially hostile to the good and supreme deity. From him the old dispensation proceeding was in its spirit and its precepts directly opposed to the new: the present world was a mass of evil; matter was to be insulted and destroyed in every possible way; and between earth and heaven there was no union and sympathy whatever. These views operating upon minds of different temperaments, led to different practical results: with the pure they led to the extreme of asceticism; with the impure to unbounded licentiousness; and, in both cases, from the same principle, a contempt for matter. From the opposite tendencies of these two schools, the Alexandrine and the Syrian, they might be further designated as the Judaizing and the anti-Judaic.

It is unfavourable to our forming a just appreciation of the character of the Gnostics, that we know their sentiments only from a few fragments which have been preserved of their writings, and from the representations given of them by their avowed enemies. Their leaders appear for the most part to have been men of good moral character, and actuated by pure intentions, but led away by an unbounded love of speculation, and by the vain hope of finding in Christianity the solution of difficulties which it does not undertake to explain. Their great and fundamental error had its source in the fruitless attempt to associate with Christianity the speculations of what was then called philosophy. Smitten with the moral beauty of the gospel, and charmed with the new light which it seemed to throw on the dark and hitherto inexplicable enigma of existence, they did not perceive the simple, practical end for which its revelations were exclusively calculated, and fancied they saw in it a key to the whole train of mysteries, on which they had been accustomed to exercise their thoughts. Blending its facts and its doctrines, in the most arbitrary manner, with the conceptions which they had derived from heathen sources, and which, whenever they felt the want of any supplementary idea to complete their theories, they continued to borrow with the most indiscriminate appropriation from the endless systems and fragments of systems still in existence around them; they attempted, out of these heterogeneous elements, to make a consistent whole of their religion and their philosophy, and thus furnish a complete solution of the moral problem of the universe. They did not understand, what perhaps is not yet generally understood, the distinction between religion and philosophy, the moral cultivation of the heart and the effort of the intellect to grasp universal truth; and from confounding their provinces they produced, what Lord Bacon represents as an inevitable result, an heretical religion and a fabulous philosophy.

Their besetting sin was the pride of intellect, the ambition of transcending the barriers prescribed to the human faculties, and of

raising themselves to a state of intellectual and spiritual superiority above the vulgar. This pre-eminence they founded on their possession of the gnosis, which they derived by immediate intuition from God, and which they regarded as a sort of key to the secret treasures of the divine mysteries. Guided by this interior sense, they decided most daringly between the true and the false in the recorded teachings of Christ and his apostles: retained or rejected at pleasure any of the books of the sacred canon, and sometimes substituted others in their place. They were the philosophizing Christians of that early age, looking for confirmation of their own theories in the language of Scripture, and, when Scripture was refractory, binding it to the requirements of their own gnosis. They were men who admitted the facts of the life and teaching of Jesus, and who have been properly quoted by Lardner as unexceptionable witnesses for their truth; but who had not yet learned to pay implicit deference to the canonical transmission of those facts, and were quite disposed to place their own private tradition upon a footing of equal authority with the written word. They made the distinction, which has been adopted in later times, but which there is considerable difficulty in applying, between what Christ said under the immediate influence of inspiration, and what he said from accommodation to the prejudices of his hearers. But by far the most objectionable part of their system was the further distinction which they attempted to introduce into Christianity, of a doctrine for the vulgar and a doctrine for the enlightened; a distinction which, if it had once obtained footing, would have struck at the root of Christian freedom and equality, and by establishing Christian mysteries and initiations, and a caste of *illuminati*, would have brought back the worst institutions of heathen priestcraft.

The radical idea, prevading most of these Gnostic systems, is that of a revelation through Christ of the supreme and unknown God. They did not rest in this revelation, or limit it to its moral applications, but saw in it a light that was to unfold to them the moral machinery of the universe. They had attained, as they conceived, to the primeval source of truth, and could follow down from it, through its successive emanations, the widely-extended economy of the spiritual world. Their speculation was carried on in the extremest spirit of opposition to the modern and only sound philosophy, that of ascending from facts through successive inductions to general principles: they, on the contrary, assumed the principle and asserted the facts; and the results were unsatisfactory and portentous in proportion to the magnitude and difficulty of the subjects on which their favourite speculations turned.

It was an idea of the Gnostics, that the emanations from the Supreme Being were effected by a voluntary limitation of the fulness of his own perfections; and the whole series of emanations thus produced, they called *pleroma*, the circle of spiritual beati-

tude, and the future dwelling-place of emancipated souls. The origin of evil was variously accounted for; sometimes a succession of evil spirits was supposed, emanating from God, in an order correspondent to that of the good spirits, as in the *amshaspands* and *dews* of the system of Zoroaster; sometimes the corruption was gradual, as the spirits in the order of emanation approached the confines of the world of darkness, and came within reach of its influences; sometimes the envy, jealousy, or ambition, of a subordinate spirit was the exciting cause; sometimes evil was regarded as an inherent property of matter, which the Creator could modify but not exterminate.

These successive emanations from the supreme mind appear, at first view, to be nothing more than personified abstractions, merely allegorical representations of the attributes and operations of the Divine intellect; and their names favour this supposition—depth, silence, truth, wisdom, man, grace, life; but they were regarded as real beings, and invoked as such. Man, that is the primitive type and general idea of man, as formed in the image of God and the visible representation of his perfections, was one of the most remarkable of these emanations: it figures in the Cabbala, and was thence transferred to some of the Gnostic systems.

Creation has ever seemed one of the deepest mysteries to the human mind. In reasoning from the visible and finite to the invisible and infinite, human conceptions necessarily intervene; and the distinction of sex, with which the great law of production is connected in the natural world, suggested a gross theory to the first speculations on creation, and formed the basis of the earliest fictions of mythology. This essentially heathenish idea was not excluded from the Gnostic systems, which sometimes represented the emanations as proceeding in *syxygics* or couples, with a recognition of the sexual distinction. The souls of individuals were supposed to have their corresponding partners in the angelic world, with whom they were to be finally united. In the system of Valentinus, the consummation of all things was described as a great marriage festival; in which Σωτηρ and Σοφια will be joined in the bands of an everlasting union, with the pairs of πνευματικοι and angels under them, in the *pleroma*; and lastly the *demiurgus*, with his ψυχικοι, will bring up the train of this celestial company, as the friend of the bridegroom, who rejoices greatly at his voice. Such was the interpretation given to the words of the Baptist, (John iii. 29,) as the representative of the *demiurgus*. By some of the Gnostics, baptism was considered as a mystic union with the spiritual partner in the unseen world, and celebrated as a kind of bridal feast. In fact, the Gnostics invented a system of Christian mythology, peopled heaven and earth with spirits, and wrought out the plain and simple facts of the gospel history into a wild tissue of dreamy speculations.

Deeming themselves admitted into immediate intercourse with God and the spiritual world, it is not surprising that the more enthusiastic among them should have aspired to the exercise of supernatural powers, and fallen into the practice of magic, or, as it was then called, *thaumaturgy*. If Simon Magus, who is mentioned in Acts, was a Gnostic, he must have been one of this description: but the more respectable of their leaders were not chargeable with such practices.

The Egyptian schools of Basilides and Valentinus were distinguished for their bold and fanciful conceptions. They agreed in their fundamental ideas, but differed in the developement of them: the δυναμεις of Basilides were the same with the *æons* of Valentinus, emanations from the supreme God. Basilides taught the metempsychosis, and believed the soul to be in a continual course of migration to higher stages of being, from plants and even stones, in which he thought the principle of life might be imprisoned, to beasts, birds, men, and angels. Valentinus made a distinction between the Christianity of the natural (ψυχικος) and that of the spiritual (πνευματικος) man; the former was the result of miracles, striking on the outward sense and rested on authority; the latter proceeded from an interior conviction of the truth, which required no external evidence to produce it. To these Egyptian schools, the gems or amulets, wrought over with curious characters and signs, and known to antiquaries by the name of *abraxas*, are usually ascribed. Lardner (vol. ix. p. 300—4,) questions the fact of such stones having ever been used by any Christian sect. The probability is (Matter, ii. p. 54) they did not belong to the learned of these sects, since we do not find them mentioned, as in that case they infallibly would have been, by their opponents: but they were worn by the vulgar as charms to protect them against the influence of evil spirits, and may be regarded as one among the many indications of the imperceptible shades with which the corrupted forms of Christianity, especially in the lower classes, melted away into heathenism.

We leave it to ecclesiastical antiquaries to describe and arrange the endless diversities of the forms of Gnosticism; but we may observe, that of all the Gnostic schools, the most practical in its tendency, and the purest apparently in its intentions, was that of Marcion. Though his school forms a class almost by itself, yet, from the country of its origin, and from the principle of contrariety between the Old and New Testaments, by which it was chiefly characterised, it must be referred to the Syrian rather than the Alexandrine gnosis. Marcion's object, mistaken as might be his means of obtaining it, was the restoration of pure and primitive Christianity from the dregs of tradition. Neander says, he was the first of the Protestants who may thus date their origin from the high antiquity of the second century. Marcion was originally, it seems probable, a heathen; though his father had become a

believer of some consequence in the church of Sinope, on the remote shores of the Euxine. His ardent mind was powerfully captivated with the purity, the spirituality, and the universal benevolence of the teachings of Jesus. Unfortunately his mind had been warped by the ascetic notions then prevalent concerning matter; and, as his temperament was incapable of entering into any subject with moderation, this bias urged him into many extravagances. Destitute of any sane principle of historical interpretation, and looking at every subject with the natural simplicity and directness of his ardent mind, he was excessively revolted by what he considered the gross anthropomorphitism of the Old Testament; and ascribed it to a Being, opposite in character and hostile in purpose to the God of the New. In this spirit, he published a work of *antitheses*, or contradictions between the Old Testament and the New, which he prefixed as an introduction to his edition of Luke, the only one of the gospels which he retained. From this edition he resolutely expunged whatever he thought inconsistent with the character of the God of the new covenant, and every passage which recognised the authority of the old. This was the chief indication of his Gnostic spirit; viz. the employment of this internal sense to determine what was, and what was not, pure Christianity; but his imagination was little exercised in the framing of those wild and fanciful theories, which formed so large a part of other Gnostic systems. His error—and it was that of the whole sect—in great measure, it was the besetting delusion of the age, was that of setting out with a theory, the assumption of a gnosis; and then, in defiance of all history and criticism, remodelling the Christian doctrines in accordance with his views. Our knowledge of his principles destroys our confidence in his criticism. It is hardly possible to doubt that the New Testament was mutilated by him. It ought, however, to be stated, that one of the most sagacious of modern critics, the late Professor Eichhorn, took a more favourable view of Marcion's gospel, and supposed that it merely exhibited one of the primitive forms of the *urevangeliam*, of which the gospel according to the Hebrews formed one branch, and that of Marcion the other; and conceived that he was unjustly charged by his adversaries with cutting away what had, in fact, been added to the original gospel. (*Eichhorn's Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 43—72.)

The supposed contrariety of the Old Testament to the New, and the consequent ascription of it to a different Deity, was the source of some of the wildest theories of the Gnostics. A false zeal for the honour of Christianity was one of the most powerful means of its corruption. The Ophites, for example, so called from the serpent which they reverenced, considered Jaldabaoth, the God of the old dispensation, as the enemy of man, who forbade him, from malice, to eat of the tree of knowledge; and the serpent, who urged man to violate that command, as the organ of divine wis-

dom. These anti-judaical principles were carried to their extreme by the Cainites, who looked upon all the bad men punished under the old dispensation as those who alone deserved to be considered spiritual, and the faithful servants of the true God.

If we may borrow a term from the Greek, the principle of the prevailing Gnostic sects was rather *syncretism* than *eclecticism*; they saw truth every where; they found affinities in every system; and associated the elements of the most opposite religions in their theories. They ran into the opposite extreme of the exclusiveness of the Catholic church. While the Catholics saw error in every system but their own, the Gnostics, with equal want of reason, made no discrimination, and blended truth and error into one heterogeneous mass. This was particularly the case with the Carpocratians, who were equally tolerant in their theology and lax in their moral principles. In a Greek inscription, discovered in Cyrenaica, and ascribed to this sect, we find the names united of Osiris, Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Epicurus, and Christ: an union which, however strange it may seem to us, was not without its parallel in those days. The Emperor Alexander Severus showed what Gibbon sarcastically calls (vol. ii. p. 450,) 'a singular but injudicious regard for the Christian religion,' by the erection of a domestic chapel, in which he placed the statues of Abraham, of Orpheus, of Apollonius, and of Christ.

The Gnostics generally despised martyrdom, and justified the use of concealment and reserve for the privilege of remaining in the bosom of the Catholic church. They understood the extent of the application of the text, to the pure all things are pure. It has been well said, that the moral tendency of opinions cannot be judged of from the characters of those who first propagate them. The Gnostic leaders were, for the most part, men of pure morals, rather ascetic in their lives, of ardent minds and misguided imaginations; but in the sequel their sects degenerated. From the fanatical contempt of matter, and the belief that the gospel conferred an exemption from the obligations of all positive law, they fell into the wildest antinomianism, and confounded all moral distinctions. Gnosticism, though we have viewed it solely in connexion with Christianity, showed itself, as we have before observed, in heathenism also, and was one of the indications of the spirit of the time. It attempted to appropriate to itself the accumulated wisdom of antiquity, and to find in the united reasonings and conceptions of all sects, Jewish, Christian, and Heathen, the solution of those problems to which no one philosopher or sage, and no one sect or party, had hitherto been able to devise a satisfactory answer.

How far the language and conceptions of the writers of the New Testament have been influenced by the prevalence of these Gnostic opinions, is a question on which the most distinguished names will be found ranged on opposite sides. Both parties, perhaps, have

been too exclusive in their views. Indirectly those theories must have had influence on the outward form of the Christian Scriptures. The canon was formed in the very midst of these influences; and a just appreciation of the spirit and tendency of the Gnostic systems cannot fail to be among the most useful aids to an enlightened interpretation, if not of the three first gospels, yet at least of that of John, and of the controversial writings of the abrupt and enigmatical Paul.

ON THE DEFENCE OF THE HOUSE AND WINDOW TAX, IN THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.*

The article headed as below, in the 'Edinburgh Review,' just published, is a Whig homily on a Tory text. It is an amplification, with an application to existing circumstances, of the memorable rebuke which Lord Castlereagh administered to the English people for their 'ignorant impatience of taxation.' It is a defence of taxation upon consumption and industry as opposed to taxation upon property. It denounces the 'monstrous principle that, because a man has, by superior sagacity, ingenuity, or economy, accumulated a fortune, he shall be liable, not only to a greater amount, but also to a heavier *rate* of taxation than others!' and it vituperates, in most unmeasured terms, those who desire, by amending the fiscal system at present pursued, to make the public burdens fall on the shoulders that best can bear them. They are 'destructives,' 'revolutionists,' 'would be tyrants;' their pretences 'hypocritical,' their designs 'selfish;' and their plans 'iniquitous' and 'insane.' All these amiable and convincing figures of speech are accumulated in one short paragraph, and hurled at the heads of those who are simple enough to press upon Lord Althorp, now that he is in office, the adoption of what he affirmed would be 'a very good measure,' when he was in opposition. Then 'it was the ill-arranged state of the taxes that pressed heavily on the country;' now, the system is 'bottomed on sound principles.' No longer ago than March, 1830, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had 'no hesitation' in advocating the reduction of taxes and the imposition 'of a property-tax to meet the deficiency;' now, the bare mention of such a proposition shows a taste for anarchy, confusion, and universal ruin. These are the things which disgust people with public men and political parties. Every honest nature recoils at the loathsome hypocrisy, and stands aghast at the impudence which connects with it the demand of confidence and the abuse of those who will not follow the leaders in their shameless tergiversation. Look at the dishonesty of the sentence just quoted, the description of the 'monstrous principle.' If by a *heavier rate* of taxation be meant one which bears more heavily upon the rich

* No. 116, Article 7. Complaints and Proposals regarding Taxation.

than upon the poorest who are subjected to it, that is what no one, that we know of, has ever advocated. Taxation touches the means of bodily support of the poor, and the personal comforts of those of the middle classes: but whoever imagined such imposts on property as should reach even the amusements and luxuries of the wealthy? A higher per centage does not make a heavier burden. The annuitant of two hundred a year would pay far more in a twentieth of his income, than would be paid in a tenth by the Lord of Chatsworth. The latter need never know of the reduction by any effect upon his personal enjoyments; the former would feel it in many a privation. And what jugglery there is in the reviewer's association of 'a fortune' with 'sagacity, ingenuity, and economy.' One would suppose from reading it, that we lived in a country where wealth was meted out proportionally to the worthiest; society constituted according to the principles inculcated in our little story books and nursery tales; and the whole island one beautiful picture of 'Virtue Rewarded.' Of the great fortunes which are made, how many are made thus fairly? And of those which are, why should not the possessors pay for the security of that which society has enabled them to gain by the toil of others? A property tax is only an insurance on their share of the cargo with which the vessel of the state is freighted. But the reviewer knows well enough, though, for a sophistical and insidious purpose, the fact be misrepresented, that the acquisition of wealth is much less common than its inheritance. It would not indeed have appeared quite so 'monstrous' to say that they, 'who toil not neither do they spin,' who are born to live idly and luxuriously on the fruit of others' labours, and whom any conceivable amount of needful taxation will leave the quiet possessors of unearned advantages in abundance, should bear the chief burden of the institutions from which they derive the chief benefits. This would have seemed not so very unreasonable. The class is therefore kept out of sight entirely. Better forget the aristocracy when there is talk of taxes. They will come into remembrance again when places are to be filled and reforms to be resisted. But there is a corollary to the reviewer's statement. 'A policy of this sort would, by paralyzing industry and invention, and driving capital and talent abroad, speedily bring about the total ruin of any country insane enough to adopt it.' Would it? We rather apprehend that the men of capital and of talent, the inventive and the industrious, would think twice before they expatriated themselves on such a score. If we can keep them now, little need we fear the loss of them when almost every manufacture, lightened by the removal of some drag-weight or other, would spring forwards with unprecedented activity. Were the price of food to fall, as it then must, to the continental level, and every article and implement of productive industry to bear only its own cost, what a spirit of life and energy would be diffused through the entire population of the country.

Those only would think of leaving it, who could best be spared, and we could well endure their absenteeism. The taxes would be paid but once, and with the smallest expense in collecting; new markets would open; the competition which is becoming formidable, would be distanced; and the thriving architect of a fortune, would be tenfold remunerated beforehand, for the premium which he would have to pay for the security of his property, when he should resign himself to its enjoyment. Instead of industry being paralyzed, fresh life-blood would be infused into its veins, and strength into its sinews. Only imagine the removal of a burden of thirteen millions per annum from the labouring classes of this country. It would be a beautiful 'paralysis.' And the removal of almost double that pressure from the middle classes; they would be paralyzed too. There would certainly be little disposition in either to move off. Nor would more than a fraction of the burden taken from them fall upon the wealthy. There would be the saving of an enormous expense in collection; and having the powers of legislation chiefly in their own hands, retrenchments in public expenditure would no doubt be found practicable, which now are pronounced to be totally impossible. Altogether, we should not be quite so totally ruined as the reviewer prophesies.

If the present system of taxation is to continue, there are many taxes of which we should rather be rid than the assessed taxes; many which are worse in principle and more injurious in their results. We agree with the reviewer that their pressure falls chiefly upon the middle and not on the lower classes. It is not the mechanic, but the tradesman and shopkeeper, that is chiefly affected by them. They injure, not so much the producers as the exchangers and distributors of commodities. They might be worse: it does not follow that they are not sufficiently bad. Their continuance partakes something of the nature of a retributory visitation on the middle classes for that apathy towards the political rights and peculiar interests of the labouring classes, which they have to a considerable extent manifested. Had they stood by those classes in demanding a more extended suffrage, they would now have had a better prospect of relief. Had they even exerted themselves as much for the addition to the Reform Bill, of free, that is, secret voting, and responsible, that is, short parliaments, as they have done for the removal of this impost, there would have been a tolerable certainty of its removal as soon as those changes came into operation. They have (a large proportion of them) acted under the influence of that blighting curse of our country,—the selfishness of class morality, and verily they have their reward. It might have come, indeed, with a better grace from other hands. It might have been left for other than ministerial tongues and pens to revile them as fools or madmen, rogues and revolutionists. It might have been left for other journals than the 'Edinburgh' to smile at their complaints as

'quite inconsiderable.' And those who needed and had their help, pledged even to the extreme of refusing payment of taxes should the Tories be restored, might have spared the taunt and threat which are somewhat indiscreetly put forth in the article under consideration. How like the repetition of an old *Standard* or *John Bull* cheer to Wellington and his musketeers, does it read. 'Let Government be firm and decided; let all attempts at resistance, provided any such be made, be immediately repressed by *prompt and exemplary punishment*, and they will very soon cease to be heard of.' (P. 438.) How it smacks of the spirit of the Great Captain. In what a summary way are the refractory to be disposed of. The *modus* is not revealed. Is submitting to seizure for taxes to be made treasonable? Is the empty pocket to become legal evidence of felony, without benefit of clergy? Must there be an English Coercion Bill for the pacification of the Strand and Regent Street? The reviewer and the reviewer's masters may depend upon it, that when once any considerable body of the people are so far provoked as to leave the tax-gatherer to his remedy, it will not be so easy a task as they imagine to settle the account. Big words will not do. 'Vigour beyond the law' is a kind of action that induces reaction. Tax in kind is less manageable than tithe in kind. The people have learned from events that they possess a peaceful power which may 'make Government give up a tax,' and give up something else along with it. No bluster, then. 'Some mollification for your giant,' sweet peers and potentates, great lords of Downing Street and St Stephen's. Like Bottom the weaver, let him roar gently.

The beauties of the assessed taxes, according to the reviewer, are four: 'They give no encouragement to smuggling; they do not change the natural distribution of capital and industry; their assessment requires no officious interference with the affairs of individuals; and they are not easily evaded?

Now if these be the criteria of the reviewer, let them be fairly applied to that whole system of taxation on articles of consumption and the necessaries of life, of which the assessed taxes are an integral portion. For it must never be forgotten that with them the whole system stands or falls. It was on this view of the question that the House of Commons did decide, and that the people should decide. The alternative was of ministerial selection, and we do not object to it. The choice is between the present system, as a whole, and a property tax. That entire system cannot be more distinctly or completely condemned than by the application of the proposed test. Under the existing imposts, smuggling *does* exist, the natural distribution of capital and of industry *is* perverted, there is plenty of officious and vexatious interference, and there is also abundance of evasion. It is idle to select this particular tax, and by commendation of its assumed qualities vindicate a system of a directly opposite character. This is the mere trick of the rhetorician.

If these were his real reasons for advocating the assessed taxes, he would *à fortiori* be the advocate of a property tax. They are in fact a property tax, distinguished from it only by peculiarities which make them much more open to objection, and less entitled on any score to preference. His allegations are only partially true. They do to a certain extent divert capital and industry from their natural channels. The very word *surcharge* will in many districts call up a host of recollections quite sufficient to settle the question of 'officious interference;' and ample proof is before the legislature and the public of their shameful, or rather shameless evasion, if not by, yet on behalf of, the aristocracy. It is only partial truth, therefore, that can be conceded to this description. And the same remark applies to the reviewer's assertion, that they are not paid by the tenant, but by the landlord. In a few cases that is the fact; but only in a very few cases. The builder of houses will only provide fresh shelter for us, so long as he receives in rent the regular profit on his capital. With an increasing population, the burden of the tax must, therefore, generally fall on the occupier. The competition is that of tenants for houses, rather than that of landlords to obtain tenants. And this must especially be the case where situation is a primary object. The tradesman and shopkeeper cannot choose their ground: they must inhabit certain localities: it will not do to spread their wares in a wilderness. The houses which they need are at a monopoly price. The reviewer avails himself of the statement made in the House of Commons, that numbers of houses were empty in the Strand, Regent Street, and other principal streets in London, to argue, that 'shops are not deficient, but *in excess*. And being so, it is quite clear that the taxes imposed on them, though paid in the first instance by the tenant, really fall on the landlord, the rent received by the latter being reduced proportionally to the amount of the taxes.' This might be written innocently in the north; but any resident in London must know that the argument is as empty as it assumes the shops to be. Vacancies in such streets are frequent, but never permanent. They are not occasioned by the want of competition for them amongst tenants, but by the intensity of that competition. They are occasioned by the failures incessantly occurring amongst those who, in their eagerness to obtain an advantageous position, submit to burdens so disproportionate, as to render their profits inadequate. A shop in such a situation is a ticket in the great commercial lottery. And the number of blanks is long before it diminishes the avidity of buyers. It may be said that, were the taxes repealed, the competing tenants would be ready to pay the same amount as rent. They might for a time; but they would soon find, as they may find now, that they could not afford it. Then the rents would fall, and might fall so low as to make the landlord pay the tax. The hope of getting rid of the tax, a hope which has been so strongly encouraged, is one element

of the present destructive rivalry. This is a very unwholesome state of things. Heaven forbid it should be permanent! We hope the time is coming for more rational modes of distributing the productions of nature and of art, than this expensive and demoralizing plan of individual competition, the evils of which have arisen to such an enormous height. The statement as to the number of empty houses may have been quite true, as to any given day, but when the fact is explained, and the explanation may be verified by any resident in the metropolis who will take the trouble to observe, it leads to a directly opposite conclusion from that deduced by the reviewer. His argument can only hold in what must be a comparatively rare case, the overbuilding of shops in a locality which yet remains a desirable one. In that case the tax no doubt falls, as he says, upon the landlord; but though he be a landlord, it may not be altogether just or agreeable for him to bear it. This does not affect the general character of the tax, which falls heavy on the private occupant, but often heaviest on the tradesman.

One great objection to these taxes, is the monstrous inequality of their pressure. To this a flimsy answer is attempted, accompanied by the venture of a most ill-timed and ill-judged panegyric on the aristocracy, whose exemption, somehow or other, from all but a mere modicum of the burden, has been very effectively contrived. It required considerable hardihood to contend that the wealthy have been misrepresented in this matter by unprincipled demagogues, that the tax really falls upon them 'in an increasing ratio,' and that they ought to be relieved by a different arrangement. True it is, that a house with forty windows pays 7*s.* 5½*d.* per window, and one with eight windows only 2*s.* 0¾*d.* per window: that on houses rated from 10*l.* to 20*l.* a year, the duty is 1*s.* 6*d.* per pound, and on those of 40*l.* and upwards, 2*s.* 10*d.*: here the scale stops. But the difference thus produced, is a trifle compared with the advantage which aristocracy has over trade in the assessment. Had the reviewer, in his absorbing attention to Mr. Spring Rice, forgot the facts mentioned in Col. Evans's speech, that Northumberland House (Charing Cross) pays but 4½*d.* per foot, while the small grocer's shop next door to it is charged at the rate of *seven shillings* per foot? Does he not know that, out of London, the highest assessed house in all England, England with its thousand palaces and castles, is that of a tavern-keeper at Brighton? The facts elicited and published by the United Parochial Committees are perfectly astounding. There are but 438 houses, in England and Wales, assessed at 400*l.* and upwards, and of these 419 are in the metropolis. A tradesman in Regent Street pays precisely as much house-tax (56*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) as the Duke of Devonshire pays for Chatsworth; one third more than the Primate of the Church for Canterbury Palace, the Duke of Buckingham for Stowe Palace, the Marquis of Westminster for Eaton

Hall, and the Duke of Marlborough for Blenheim; twice as much as the Marquis Cholmondeley for Cholmondeley Castle, Earl Hardwicke for Wimpole Hall, Mr. Coke for Holkham Hall, the Duke of Rutland for Belvoir Castle, and the Duke of Northumberland for Alnwick Castle; more than three times as much as Earl Grey for Howick House, and four times as much as the Duke of Cleveland for Raby Castle, and the Earl of Scarborough for Lumley Castle.* And these are the poor, distressed creatures whose burden hurts the sympathies of the Edinburgh reviewer. He would have them pay no higher rate of duty than the ten-pound cottager. 'Whatever the rate of house or window duty may be, it ought to be uniform on all houses subject to its operation, whether they be worth 10*l.* or 1000*l.*, or have 8 or 800 windows.' What an amiable equalizer and philanthropic leveller!

The window tax is objectionable on account of the unsightliness and discomfort with which it has so extensively affected the habitations of our countrymen. Its imposition was a penal law against light and air, and architectural comeliness. It introduced the blind style of building. The future antiquarian will be certain of the houses built in the Pitt era by their construction. But this is poor comfort to their darkened and half-stifled occupants.

There is a political objection to these taxes, which, perhaps, like other of our objections, is to the reviewer a recommendation. They have the effect of disfranchising from one fourth to one third of the poorer householders. They still keep the way partly open for a species of bribery which has long been practised, and by which alone, we believe, some very important elections have been decided. They prolong an irritating sense of partiality and oppression, from one election to another. They throw electioneering influence into the hands of the tax-collectors. They add to the insolence of that already insolent and unwelcome class of visitants, making them feel, as registration time approaches, that the old course of procedure is reversed, and the payer must seek the receiver, on penalty of disfranchisement. Never was a great measure more debased by a paltry adjunct than when the Reform Bill was made a taxation screw. Were it only for the enfranchisement of the tens of thousands who are unable to make up their accounts in time, and who are not one jot less independent, or mentally qualified, than a large proportion of their superiors in station, we should say, Off with the house and window tax. Recognise the rights which that iniquitous clause has held in abeyance.

Our strongest reason, however, for desiring the repeal, is the immense benefit which the industry of the country would derive from the remodelling of our whole system of taxation, simplifying

* Vide Mr. R. M. Martin's work on Taxation, for these and many similar enormities.

its machinery, and making it bear on property. We stick to the opinions which Lord Althorp and Mr Poulett Thomson held three years and a half ago. They may be very bad opinions now; we cannot help that. Unless for this reason, we frankly avow that we should care comparatively little about the taxes in question. Pernicious and unequal as they are, their greatest mischief consists in their being the key-stone of a bad system. We are far more interested about the repeal of the taxes on knowledge. They block up the mental windows of the people. We think of them as the reviewer thought in October last. We then looked, as he did, to the Whig Ministry for the speedy repeal of that wicked impost. We said with him, 'that we should look in vain is wholly impossible, when we consider how many of its members have devoted themselves to the diffusion of knowledge. Assuredly they of all men must be the first to desire that it should be taxed no longer than the necessities of the revenue require. Indeed, what Mr. Bentham says of law taxes, applies, since these have ceased, emphatically to the one in question—What shall be put in its place, supposing the revenue insufficient and a substitute necessary? *Any other.*' And yet now this journal lauds the removal of the duty on pantiles. It finds all Lord Althorp's reductions 'most judicious.' But there is amongst them a diminution of the duty on advertisements. A rare boon, indeed, compared with the good which was desired, and believed to be promised. We asked for bread and he gave us a stone. And the cry is still, 'Patience, patience; patience and confidence; give them time.' Have they not had time? They have found time enough to resist the Ballot, the shortening of Parliaments, and the unshackling of knowledge. Time, now, can little affect the estimation in which they must be held by the friends of freedom and improvement. They may succumb yet more to Tory peers, or they may resist, and resign; in neither case can they again be the people's leaders. And who will be? We know not. They will be found, we suppose, when wanted. But they must be men who have distinct principles of political action; who will not fritter away every measure of reformation to placate the sworn foes of all reformation; who will not make a game at see-saw of the conflict between justice and corruption; and who will confront with manliness all that individuals, or orders, can threaten, in their consi stent advocacy of the rights, liberty, and prosperity of the millions. Such men would find it very practicable to govern the country in a very different mode from that adopted by Earl Grey and his colleagues.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Taxation of the British Empire. By R. Montgomery Martin. London, E. Wilson. (1.)

The Mother's Oracle, for the Health and proper Rearing of Infants. London, Henderson.

The Shelley Papers. 3*s.* 6*d.* (2).

Rhymed Plea for Tolerance. 4*s.* (3.)

Brief Notes on the Rev. Dr. Arnold's 'Principles of Church Reform.' By Lant Carpenter, LL.D. (4.)

The Scripture Teacher's Assistant. By Henry Althans. 1*s.* 6*d.* (5.)

A Comprehensive Dictionary of English Synonymes. London, Carpenter.

The Domestic Habits of Birds. (Library of Entertaining Knowledge.)

The House Tax Defended, and the Cause of the Working Classes Advocated; with General Observations on Taxation and Political Economy. By John Volkman. 6*d.* (6.)

(1.) Mr. Montgomery Martin has found a mare's nest. He is much afraid of Revolution and Republicanism, and has discovered a new argument which cannot fail to annihilate the monsters. They are, he contends, much *more expensive* than legitimate monarchy. He has found also that the Corn Laws are no tax, and that to remove the Taxes on Knowledge could not fail to produce anarchy. Still a man cannot collect facts concerning taxation without being useful, even in spite of himself. Some good, in this way, Mr. Martin may do by his book. And he adds more to it spontaneously; especially by his remarks on a Property-Tax. The information he has amassed is very convenient and useful, and must have cost him much labour.

(2.) Reprinted from the Athenæum; interesting to all admirers of the Poet, and calculated to increase their number. The Memoir is by Captain Medwin.

(3.) The writer is an avowed admirer of Dryden and Pope, and has caught some of the qualities of their versification, especially that of the latter. The satirical parts of his poem are not seasoned high enough for the popular taste; but he pleads for tolerance in a tolerant spirit, and that good cause is adorned by the refined and benevolent mind of its advocate.

(4.) Calm, sensible, and pertinent, as might be expected from the Author. We intend soon to take up this subject in right earnest.

(5.) Some very good hints as to the manner in which children should be taught to read with the understanding; the matter inculcated is sometimes objectionable.

(6.) The writer proposes the following problem for national consideration:—'What is the best plan that the country can adopt to bring into exercise the present unemployed portion of the population; and so employ them, as to achieve the greatest production, at the same time carrying with it a system of distribution that will reach all?'—Any contributor towards a satisfactory solution deserves well of mankind. Something towards a solution may be learned from this pamphlet.

Thoughts on the Mixed Character of Government Institutions in Ireland, with particular reference to the New System of Education. By a Protestant. London, Fellowes.

Exposition of the False Medium and Barriers, excluding Men of Genius from the Public. London, Wilson. (7.)

Letters to John Howard, Esq. of Ripon, Author of 'The Necessity of the Trinity.' By Thomas Thrush. 1*s*.

The Assurance of Faith, or Calvinism identified with Universalism. By the Rev. David Thom, Liverpool, 2 vols. 8vo.

Man unfit to govern Man. By a Citizen of London. Sherwood. (8.)

A Treatise on Tontine. By Charles Compton, Author of the 'Savings' Bank Assistant.'

Captain Owen's Narrative of Voyages to explore the Shores of Africa, Arabia, and Madagascar. Bentley.

Barbadoes, and other Poems. By M. J. Chapman. 6*s*.

Men and Manners in America. By the Author of Cyril Thornton. 2 vols. 8vo. 21*s*.

The Colonies. By Col. C. J. Napier. 18*s*.

The Visitor of the Poor, designed to aid in the formation and working of Provident and other kindred Societies. From the French of the Baron De Gerando; with an Introduction by Dr. Tuckerman of Boston, U. S. London, Simpkin and Marshall.

Illustrations of Political Economy. No. 19. Sowers not Reapers. A Tale. By H. Martineau. 1*s*. 6*d*.

Travels in the United States and Canada. To which is added, an Essay on the Natural Boundaries of Empires. By J. Finch. Longman.

William Howitt's Vindication of his History of Priestcraft against the attack of Archdeacon Wilkins. Second edition. Wilson.

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7. An original, startling, and eloquent book; disproportionate in its parts, and defective in its details, but full of vital energy. We regret not being able, just now, to go into the subject.

(8.) An argument against a Christian's interfering with politics; the basis of which is the assumption that the Author of our religion founded a Church or Spiritual Government to which his disciples are subject. We call it an assumption, because the alleged evidence seems to us totally inadequate for its support.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Thanks to J. H. His letter is highly gratifying to us, though we deem its publication inexpedient.

The hints of our Glasgow friend shall be attended to, so far as we find them practicable.

Mr. Bailey's writings have all been reviewed in the Repository on their appearance.

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