Chambers's Edinburgh Journal, No. 427 eBook

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THE CHARITABLE CHUMS' BENEFIT CLUB.

The 'Mother Bunch' public-house stands modestly aside from the din, traffic, and turmoil of a leading London thoroughfare, and retires, like a bashful maiden, from the gaze of a crowd to the society of its own select circle. It is situated in a short and rather narrow street, leading from an omnibus route running north from the city to nowhere in particular—or, if particulars must be given, to that complicated assemblage of carts, cabs, and clothes-lines; of manure heaps and disorganised pumps; of caged thrushes, blackbirds, and magpies; of dead dogs and cats, and colonies of thriving rats; of imprisoned terriers and goats let out on parole; of shrill and angry maternity and mud-loving infancy; and of hissing, curry-combing grooms and haltered horses, to which Londoners have given the designation of a Mews. Mr Peter Bowley, the landlord of the 'Mother Bunch,' was the late butler of the late Sir Plumberry Muggs; and having succeeded, on the demise of the baronet, to a legacy of L.500, and finding himself unable any longer to resist the charms of his seven years' comforter and counsellor, the cook, supplemented as they were by the attractions of a legacy of the like amount, he had united his destiny and wealth with hers in one common cause. The name of Sir Plumberry Muggs, even though its worthy proprietor was defunct, was still of sufficient influence to procure a licence for his butler; and within a few months of his departure, Mr Bowley had opened the new Inn and Tavern for the accommodation of Her Majesty's

thirsty lieges. He had congratulated himself upon the selection of the site, and upon the suitableness of the premises to the requirements of a good trade; and his heart swelled within him, as he sat at the head of his own table, on the occasion of the house-warming, dispensing with no niggard hand the gratuitous viands and unlimited beer, which were

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at once to symbolise and inaugurate the hospitality of his mansion. He had a snug bar curtained with crimson drapery, for the convenience of those who, declining the ostentation of the public room, might prefer to imbibe their morning-draught with becoming privacy. He had a roomy tap-room, where a cheerful fire was to blaze the winter through, and a civil Ganymede minister to the wants of the humblest guest. There was a handsome parlour hung round with sporting-prints, with cushioned seats and polished mahogany tables, where the tradesmen of the neighbourhood might take their evening solace after the fatigues of business; and, more than all this, he had an immense saloon on the first floor above, calculated for social conviviality on the largest scale, and furnished with mirrors, pictures, and an old grand-piano, a portion of the *lares* of the deceased Sir Plumberry Muggs.

Mr Bowley, however, soon made the unpleasing discovery, that it is one thing to open an establishment of the kind—which had already swallowed up two-thirds of his capital—-and another thing to induce the public to patronise it. Notwithstanding the overflow which had gathered at his house-warming, and the numberless good wishes which had been expressed, and toasts which had been drunk to his prosperity, yet the prosperity did not come. Of the hundred and fifty enthusiastic well-wishers who had done honour to his entertainment, squeezed his hand, and sworn he was a trump, not a dozen ever entered the house a second time. Do what he would, Bowley could not create a business; and the corners of his mouth began visibly to decline ere the experiment had lasted a couple of months. He made a desperate effort to get up a Free-and-easy; he had the old piano tuned, and set an old fellow to play upon it with open windows; exhibited a perpetual announcement of ‘A Concert this Evening;’ and himself led off the harmony, to the tune of *Tally-ho*, at the top of his voice. It was all of no avail. The half-dozen grooms who joined in feeble chorus did not pay the expense of the gas; and he found the Free-and-easy, without abettors, the most difficult thing in the world. So he gave it up, and fell into a brown study, which engrossed him for a month. He had visions of Whitecross Street before his eyes; and poor Mrs Bowley sighed again, and sighed in vain, after the remembrance of Sir Plumberry’s kitchen, and its vanished joys. The only symptom of business was the gathering of half-a-dozen nightly customers, who sipped their grog for an hour or two in the parlour; and one of these, moreover, had never paid a farthing since he had patronised the house. There were twenty grogs scored up against him, besides a double column of beers. Mr Bowley will put an end to that, at anyrate; so he signals the bibulous debtor, and having got him within the folds of the crimson curtains, he politely informs him, that credit is no part of his system of doing business, and requests payment. Mr Nogoe,

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the convivial defaulter, who is a gentleman of fifty, who has seen the world, and knows how to manage it, is decidedly of Bowley's opinion—that, as a general rule, credit is a bad plan; inasmuch as, so far as his experience goes in the public line, to afford it to your customers, is the first step towards losing it yourself. But he feels himself free to confess, that he is at the present moment under a cloud, and that it would be inconvenient to him to liquidate his score just then, though, of course, if Bowley insists, &c. While Bowley is pausing to consider which will be the best way to insist, Mr Nogoe carelessly leads the conversation to another topic, and begins to descant upon the marvellous capabilities of the 'Mother Bunch' for doing a first-rate trade; and hints mysteriously at the splendid thing that might be made of it, only supposing that his friend Bowley knew his own interest, and went the right way to work. The landlord, who is now all ear, and who knows his own interest well enough, pours out to his guest a glass of his favourite 'cold without,' and seating himself opposite him at the little table, encourages him to be more explicit. A long private and confidential conversation ensues, the results of which are destined to change the aspect of affairs at the 'Mother Bunch.' We shall recount the process for the information of our readers.

Next morning, Mr Bowley is altogether a new man; brisk, cheerful, and active, he has a smile for everybody, and a joke and a 'good-morning' even for the cobbler, who has the cure of soles in that very questionable benefice, the Mews. He visits his tap-room guests, and informs them of a plan which is in operation to improve the condition of the labouring-classes, of which they will hear more by and by. He is profoundly impressed with the sublime virtues of charity, benevolence, brotherly love, and, as he terms it, all that sort of thing. Day after day, he is seen in close confab with Mr Nogoe, who is now as busy as a bee, buzzing about here, there, and everywhere, with rolls of paper in his hand, a pen behind his ear, and another in his mouth, and who is never absent an hour together from the 'Mother Bunch,' where he has a private room much frequented by active, middle-aged persons of a rather seedy cast, and where he takes all his meals at the landlord's table. The first-fruits of these mysterious operations at length appear in the form of a prospectus of a new mutual-assurance society, under the designation of 'The Charitable Chums' Benefit Club;' of which Mr Nogoe, who has undertaken its organisation, is to act as secretary and chairman at the preliminary meetings, and to lend his valuable assistance in getting the society into working order. Under his direction, tens of thousands of the prospectuses are printed, and industriously circulated among the artisans, labourers, small tradesmen, and serving-men in all parts of the town, both far and near. Promises of unheard-of advantages, couched in language of most affectionate

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sympathy, are addressed to all whom it may concern. The same are repeated again and again in the daily and weekly papers. A public meeting is called, and the names of intending members are enrolled; special meetings follow, held at the large room of the 'Mother Bunch;' the enrolled members are summoned; officers and functionaries are balloted for and appointed; rules and regulations are drawn up, considered, adopted, certified, and printed. Mr Nogoe is confirmed in his double function as secretary and treasurer. Subscriptions flow in; and, to Bowley's infinite gratification, beer and spirits begin to flow out. The Charitable Chums, though eminently provident, are as bibulous as they are benevolent; for every sixpence they invest for the contingencies of the future tense, they imbibe at least half-a-crown for the exigencies of the present. The society soon rises into a condition of astonishing prosperity. The terms being liberal beyond all precedent, the Charitable Chums' becomes wonderfully popular. A guinea a week during sickness, besides medical attendance, and ten pounds at death, or half as much at the death of a wife, are assured for half the amount of subscription payable at the old clubs. The thing is as cheap as dirt. The clerk has as much as he can do to enregister the names of new applicants, and keep accounts of the entrance-money. By way of keeping the society before the public, special meetings are held twice a month, to report progress, and parade the state of the funds. Before the new society is a year old, they have nearly one thousand pounds in hand; and Bowley's house, now known far and wide as the centre and focus of the Charitable Chums, swarms with that provident brotherhood, who meet by hundreds under the auspices of 'Mother Bunch,' to cultivate sympathy and brotherly love, and to irrigate those delicate plants with libations of Bowley's gin and Bowley's beer. The Free-and-easy is now every night choke full of wide-mouthed harmonists. The 'Concert this Evening' is no longer a mere mythic pretence, but a very substantial and vociferous fact. The old grand-piano, and the old, ragged player, have been cashiered, and sent about their business; and a bran-new Broadwood, presided over by a rattling performer, occupies their place. Bowley's blooming wife, attended by a brace of alcoholic naiads, blossoms beneath the crimson drapery of the bar, and dispenses 'nods and becks, and wreathed smiles,' and 'noggins of *max*,' and 'three-outers,' to the votaries of benevolence and 'Mother Bunch;' and the landlord is happy, and in his element, because the world goes well with him.

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When Whitsuntide is drawing near, a general meeting of the club is convened, for the purpose of considering the subject of properties. A grand demonstration, with a procession of the members, is resolved upon: it is to come off upon Whit-Monday. In spite of the remonstrance of a mean-spirited Mr Nobody—who proposes that, by way of distinguishing themselves from the rest of the thousand-and-one clubs who will promenade upon that occasion, with music, flags, banners, brass-bands, big drums, sashes, aprons, and white wands, they, the Charitable Chums, shall walk in procession in plain clothes, and save their money till it is wanted—and in spite of five or six sneaking, stingy individuals, so beggarly minded as to second his proposition, and who were summarily coughed down as not fit to be heard, the properties were voted; and the majority, highly gratified at having their own way, gave *carte-blanche* to their officers to do what they thought right, and for the credit of the society. Accordingly, flags and banners of portentous size, together with sashes, scarfs, and satin aprons, all inlaid with the crest of the Charitable Chums—an open hand, with a purse of money in it—were manufactured at the order of the secretary, and consigned in magnificent profusion to the care of Mr Bowley, to be in readiness for the grand demonstration. A monster banner, bearing the designation of the society in white letters upon a ground of flame-coloured silk, hung on the morning of the day from the parapet of Bowley's house, and obscured the good 'Mother Bunch,' as she swung upon her hinges, in its fluttering folds. The procession, which went off in irreproachable style, was followed by a dinner at Highbury Barn, at which above a thousand members sat down to table; and after which, thanks were voted to the different officers of the club; and, in addition thereto, a gold snuff-box, with an appropriate inscription, was presented to Mr Nogoe, for his unparalleled exertions in the sacred cause of humanity, as represented by their society.

The jovial Whitsuntide soon passed away, and so did the summer, and the autumn was not long in following; and then came the cold winds, and fogs, and hoar-frost of November. The autumn had been sickly with fevers, and Dr Dosem, the club's medical man, had had more cases of typhus to deal with than he found at all pleasant or profitable, considering the terms upon which he had undertaken the physicking of the Charitable Chums. He was heard to say, that it took a deal of drugs to get the fever out of them; and that, though he worked harder than any horse, he yet lost more of his patients than he had fair reason to expect. With nearly fifteen thousand members, the deaths in the club became alarmingly frequent. Nogoe, as he took snuff out of his gold box, shrugged his shoulders at the rapid disappearance of the funds, as one ten-pound cheque after another was handed over to the disconsolate widows. His uneasiness was

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not at all alleviated by the reception of a bill of two hundred and fifty pounds for properties, &c. among which stood his snuff-box, set down at thirty-five guineas, upon which he knew, for he had tried, that no pawnbroker would lend ten pounds. He called a special council of all the officers of the club, and laid the state of affairs before them. The first thing they did, was to pass a vote for the immediate payment of the property bills; a measure which is hardly to be wondered at, if we take into account that they were themselves the creditors. The treasurer handed them a cheque for the amount; and then, apprising them that there was now, with claims daily increasing, less than two hundred pounds in hand, which must of necessity be soon exhausted, demanded their advice. They advised a reissue of prospectuses and advertisements; which being carried into effect at the cost of a hundred pounds, brought a shoal of fresh applicants, with their entrance-money, and for the moment relieved the pressure upon the exchequer.

But when the November fogs brought the influenza, and a hundred of the members were thrown upon their backs and the fund at once; when it became necessary to engage additional medical assistance; and when, in spite of unremitting energy in the departments of prospectusing, puffing, and personal canvassing, the money leaked out five times as fast as it came in, then Mr Nogoe began to find his position peculiarly unpleasant, and anything but a bed of roses. With ‘fourscore odd’ of sick members yet upon the books—with five deaths and three half-deaths unpaid—and the epidemic yet in full force, he beheld an unwholesome December threatening a continuation of sickness and mortality, and a balance at the banker’s hardly sufficient to pay his own quarter’s salary. Again he calls his colleagues together, and states the deplorable condition of affairs. The representatives of the five deceased members, whom Nogoe has put off from time to time on various ingenious pretences, having become aware of the meeting, burst in upon their deliberations, and after an exchange of no very complimentary remonstrances, backed by vehement demands for immediate payment, are with difficulty induced to withdraw, while the committee enter upon the consideration of their cases. Nogoe produces his budget, from the examination of which it appears, that if they are paid in full, there will remain in the hands of the bankers, to meet the demands of the ‘fourscore odd’ sick members, the sum of 4s. 7d. What is to be done? is now the question. A speechification of three hours, during which every member of the committee is heard in his turn, helps them to no other expedient than that of a subscription for the widows, and a renewed agitation, by means of the press and the bill-sticker, to re-establish the funds by the collection of fresh fees and entrance-money. The subscription, the charge of which is confided to a deputy, authorised to collect voluntary donations from the various lodges

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about town, turns out a failure: the widows, who want their ten pounds each, disgusted at the offer of a few shillings, flock in a body to the nearest sitting magistrate, and clamorously lay their case before his worship, who gravely informs them, that the Charitable Chums' Benefit Society being duly enrolled according to Act of Parliament, he can render them no assistance, as he is not authorised to interfere with their proceedings.

In the face of this exposure, the agitation for cramming the society down the throats of the public goes on more desperately than ever. By this means, Mr Nogoe manages to hold on till Christmas, and then pocketing his salary, resigns his office in favour of Mr Dunderhead, who has hitherto figured as honorary Vice-Something, and who enters upon office with a gravity becoming the occasion. Under his management, affairs are soon brought to a stand-still. Notwithstanding his profound faith in the capabilities of the Charitable Chums, and his settled conviction that their immense body must embrace the elements of stability, his whole course is but one rapid descent down to the verge, and headlong over the precipice, of bankruptcy. The dismal announcement of 'no effects,' first breathed in dolorous confidence at the bedsides of the sick, soon takes wind. All the C.C.s in London are aghast and indignant at the news; and the 'Mother Bunch' is nightly assailed by tumultuous crowds of angry members, clamorous for justice and restitution. The good lady who hangs over the doorway, in nowise abashed at the multitude, receives them all with open arms. Indignation is as thirsty as jollity, and to their thirst at least she can administer, if she cannot repair their wrongs. Nogoe has vanished from the locality of the now thriving inn and tavern of his friend Mr Peter Bowley, and in the character of a scapegoat, is gone forth to what point of the compass nobody exactly knows. The last account of him is, that he had gone to the Isle of Man, where he endeavoured to get up a railway on the Exhaustive Principle, but without effect. As for that excellent individual, Bowley, he appears among the diddled and disconsolate Chums in the character of a martyr to their interests. A long arrear of rent is due to him, as well as a lengthy bill for refreshments to the various committees, for which he might, if he chose, attach the properties in his keeping. He scorns such an ungentlemanly act, and freely gives them up; but as nobody knows what to do with them, as, if they were sold, they would not yield a farthing each to the host of members, they remain rolled up in his garret, and are likely to remain till they rot, the sole memorials of a past glory.

The Charitable Chums' Benefit Society has fulfilled its destiny, and answered the end of its creation. It has made the world acquainted with the undeniable merits of 'Mother Bunch,' and encircled that modest matron with a host of bibulous and admiring votaries; it has elevated Bowley from the class of struggling and desponding speculators, to a substantial and influential member of the Licensed Victuallers' Company: it has at once vastly improved the colour of his nose and the aspect of his bank-account; and while he

complacently fingers the cash which it has caused to flow in a continual current into his pocket, he looks remarkably well in the character of chief mourner over its untimely fate.

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LA ROSIERE.

About twelve miles from Paris is situated the pretty vernal hamlet of Maisons Lafitte. It hangs around the Chateau Lafitte—a princely residence, formerly the property and dwelling of the well-known banker of that name, but for many years past in other hands. In front of the chateau, a broad avenue of greensward strikes straight away through a thick forest, extending many miles across the country; and parallel with the front of the building is an avenue still broader, but not so long—La Grande Allee—wherein the various *fetes* of the hamlet are celebrated, and which, moreover, forms a principal scene in the following narrative.

Before the Revolution of 1793, the name of Gostillon was familiar as a daily proverb to the people of Maisons. There were three or four branches of the family living in the neighbourhood, and well known as industrious and respectable members of the peasant class. When the earthquake comes, however, the cottage is as much imperiled as the palace; so the events which brought Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette to the block, and sent panic into every court in Europe, also broke up and dispersed the humble house of Gostillon. In the awful confusion of the times, some were slain upon barricades; some sent hither and thither with the army, to perish in La Vendee or elsewhere; and some fled to seek safety and peace in foreign lands. Thus it came to pass, that at length there were only three females in Maisons—a widow and her two daughters—bearing the once common name. Mme Veuve Gostillon managed to obtain a living by cultivating a small garden—the flowers and fruit from which she sold in the markets of Paris—and by plying her needle. Her daughters were named Julia and Cecilia, and there was the somewhat remarkable difference of eight years between their ages.

Just as Julia had reached her fourteenth year, and little Cecilia her sixth, a terrible misfortune happened to the industrious widow: a stroke of paralysis deprived her of the use of her limbs, and rendered her unable longer to maintain herself and little family by the labour of her hands. A time of severe distress ensued for this remnant of the once numerous and hearty family of the Gostillons; but it was only for awhile. Julia—shrewd, spirited, and industrious—worked night and day to perform the labour heretofore the portion of her parent, and to liquidate the extraordinary expenses of the poor widow's sad illness, and the derangement consequent thereupon. Steady assiduity seldom fails of success. It was not long before she had the satisfaction of finding matters proceeding in a somewhat straightforward manner—doctor's bills paid; arrears of rent, such as they were, made up; and the little business in flowers, fruit, and needle-work proceeding smoothly and satisfactorily. There is much attractiveness in the virtue and good-behaviour of youth; and Julia, handsome, intelligent, modest, and sweet-tempered, soon became the favourite of all who knew her.

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The peasantry of France have, from ancient times, maintained the custom of publicly demonstrating their esteem of any young female member of a community, who, in her progress from childhood to adolescence, or rather to womanhood, may have given evidence of the possession of any unusual amount of amiability and cleverness. Young girls who are deemed worthy of public recognition as examples of virtue and industry, are waited upon by the villagers on a fete-day, led forth, seated on a throne of flowers, crowned with roses, blessed by the *cure*, and presented with the honourable title of *La Rosiere*. The custom is graceful and poetical; and the world hardly presents a more charming spectacle—at once so simple and so touching—as the installation of a *rosiere* in some sequestered village of France. The associations connected with it are pure and bright enough for a Golden Age. All who take part in the little ceremony are humble people, living by their labour; the queen of the day is queen by reason of her industry and virtue; they who do her such becoming and encouraging homage, old and young, lead lowly and toilsome lives, and yet have the innate grace thus to evince their reverence for the best qualities of human nature. The pageantry of courts, and pompous crowning of kings and queens, grand and splendid as they are, have not such spiritual fragrance as these village queen-makings; soft glimmerings and shinings-through of the light of a better world—a world with which man, let conventionality disguise him as it may, always has some sympathies.

For three years, the exemplary Julia had continued to support her helpless parent and little sister, when, in accordance with this custom, the good folks of the hamlet determined to shew their appreciation of her estimable qualities at the next fete, by crowning her with roses, and enthroning her with the usual ceremony in the Grande Allee. In the meantime, Victor Colonne, son of the steward of the chateau, happened to pay a visit to the poor widow's cottage; and thereafter he came again, and again, and again, courting Julia Gostillon.

But Victor and Julia were not made for each other. He was thriftless, idle, dissolute—-the small *roue* of the neighbourhood: she was careful, industrious, virtuous. He was good-looking—of a dark, saturnine beauty, insidiously impressive, like the dangerous charms of a tempter; she was radiant and lustrous with the sweet graces of modesty, innocence, and intelligence. Julia, however, young and susceptible, was for a time pleased with his attentions. Persuasive powers of considerable potency, and personal attractions of no mean sort, were not exerted and prostrated at her feet entirely in vain. Ingenuous, trustful, and inexperienced, she listened to the charmer with a yielding and delighted ear, and was happy as long as she perceived nothing but sincerity and love. It was but for a time, however. The Widow Gostillon

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liked not her daughter's lover. Of more mature perception, of sharper skill in reading character than her child, she conceived a deep distrust of the airy smile and studied gallantry of Victor Colonne. She took counsel with matrons old and circumspect as herself; made herself acquainted with Victor's history; watched his looks, listened to his words narrowly and scrutinisingly; and, day by day, felt more and more strongly that she liked him not—that there was mischief in his restless eye and soft musical voice. She communicated her fears to Julia, told her the history of her suitor, and bade her be on her guard. Julia was startled and distressed. These suspicions checked the brightness and little glory of her life, and settled wanly and hazily on her soul, like damp breath on a mirror. But they served as points of departure for daily thoughts. Looks and words were watched, and weighed, and pondered over with wistful studiousness; and while Victor believed his conquest to be achieved, his increasing assurance and gradual abandonment of disguise were alienating him from the object of his pursuit. Julia had accompanied him on different occasions to the chateau; been presented to his father; and had been seen, admired, and kindly spoken to by the Comtesse Meurien and her daughters. Victor had lost no opportunity of strengthening his suit by stimulating her ambition and pride; but it was without avail. Though pleased for a time, she soon discovered that he was cold, heartless, and even dissolute. The intimacy betwixt them was fast relapsing into indifference, and, on her side, into dislike, when a certain *denouement* of Master Victor's notorious love-makings, accompanied by disgraceful circumstances, determined her to put an end to it, once and for all.

'So you are determined?' exclaimed he with ill-restrained anger, as she repeated her resolve to him for the fourth or fifth time.

'Yes: I will have nothing more to say to you,' replied she firmly.

'Then my father and his reverence the cure may lose all hopes of me!' returned he bitterly. 'I have done much ill—I own it: I have won no one's esteem: I have been idle, irregular, profligate. But wherefore? Because I have had no one to care for me. Since my mother died, I have been left to myself, with no kind hand to guide me, no kind tongue to warn me: what wonder that youth should go astray?'

'No one to care for you!' exclaimed Julia, not without a tinge of sarcasm. 'Do not your father and monsieur the cure do their utmost for you?'

'The one reproves, and the other prays for me,' said Victor, with a derisive smile; then turning to Julia, with a face in which penitence, respect, and affection were well simulated, he exclaimed: 'but thou, dear Julia, art the sovereign of my soul! in whose hand my fate is placed. It is for you to shape my destiny: will you award me love or perdition? At your bidding, no honourable deed shall be too high to mark my obedience.'

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‘Then return to Marie Buren, and redeem the promise you made her,’ exclaimed Julia warmly.

’Nay, sweet Julia, if my priestess bids me turn away from heaven, I am justified in protesting. Hope is the spring whence good and great works flow. Bid me despair, and you bid me seek ruin.’

‘Pooh! pooh!’ exclaimed the young girl with contempt. ’I am plain Julia Gostillon, who loves frankness and honour. You have neither one nor other, and so I love you not; and again and again I repeat it, I will have nothing more to say to you.’

Though the persevering Victor continued the colloquy, and exerted himself to the utmost, sparing neither vows nor tears, Julia remained firm. At last, seeing that his case was hopeless, he changed his tone into one of sorrowful resignation—declared that honest frankness was a great virtue, and that it was well they had discovered that their affection was not reciprocal; and, in conclusion, begged the wearied Julia to accompany him that night to the chateau for the last time, for the purpose of explaining to his father, who might otherwise be troubled with suspicions, that their courtship was broken off by mutual consent. After much persuasion, Julia consented, and accordingly paid her last visit to the chateau that same evening.

A few days after this occurrence, the 15th of June arrived, the day of the fete. On the preceding evening, unknown to the good Julia, a score of light-hearted girls were weaving garlands of flowers, and preparing the crown of roses, in the house of neighbour Morelle; in that of neighbour Bontemps another gay party were industriously ornamenting a wooden throne with coverings, hangings, and cushions of brightest-coloured flowers; and half the people of the hamlet were thinking of Julia, and preparing bouquets, pincushions, caps, and various little trifles, to present to her on the morrow.

In due course the morrow came. The summer sun had not risen many hours, when troops of bright-eyed girls, lustrous with rosy cheeks, braided hair, snow-white gowns, and streaming ribbons, went, tripping beneath the trees, towards the cottage of Widow Gostillon. After them came bands of youths and boys, and anon men and matrons, and the elders of the place, till nearly all the little community was gathered round the house. Early as it was, Julia had risen, and was at work. She had had her own pleasant anticipations of the fete—though she had not heard that a *rosiere* was to be crowned, much less that the honour was in store for herself—and had intended, by commencing some hours earlier than usual, to have done her work so much the sooner, that she might share the pleasures of the festal day. But all thoughts of work were quickly banished by her eager visitors, who, touched even by the fact, that they had found her busy at the time when all were holiday-making, embraced her, praised her, bade her prepare for coronation, wept, laughed, chatted, clapped

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their hands, jumped, danced, and made such a bustle, that Widow Gostillon, in some consternation, cried out from her chamber to know what was the matter. And the poor widow wept, too, when she discovered what was going on—wept solemnly in thinking over Julia's fidelity to herself, her industry, cleverness, self-denial, sweetness, and, as a proud mother might, of her beauty. And presently the neighbours brought forth the poor invalid in her chair, and placed her on a pleasant spot beneath the trees, whence she might behold the installation. Then Julia retired with those appointed to be her attendants—her tiring-women, the ladies of her court; and when, some time after, she came forth, blushing and trembling, and with happy tears upon her face, wearing her simple holiday dress of white muslin, ornamented, in charming style, with wreaths of roses, the cries of 'Vive la rosiere!' might have been heard a long way off.

A little while, and sounds of music and of many voices filled the Grande Allee. The long rows of booths and marquees, dancing-rooms, gymnasiums, toy-tables, *bonbon* tables, fruit-stalls, &c. &c. were surrounded by busy crowds: all was activity and cheerfulness. In a large open space in the midst, a short distance from the front of the chateau, the flowery throne, gorgeous in variety and vividness of colours, was set up on a dais on the greensward. The band of celebrants, with Julia and her train in their midst, advanced. Little Cecilia walked by her sister's side, hand in hand, in proud surprise. Before them, an aged peasant marched solemnly, bareheaded save for his silver hair, carrying the crown destined for Julia; and with him, also bareheaded, the cure. A benediction, accompanied by a prayer that the metaphorical ceremony might have some influence in attracting the youthful people present to the practice and pursuit of virtue, having been uttered by the priest, Julia was handed to the throne, and the crown of roses was placed upon her head by the white-haired veteran. A sweet chorus was then chanted—*Vive, vive la rosiere*!—in the melodious verses of which the signification of the ceremonial and the praises of the fete-queen were recited.

Thus far matters had proceeded happily, when the attention of the gay party was attracted by the apparition of a commissaire of police, who, marching up with the aspect of a man having important and disagreeable business to perform, exclaimed: '*Eh, bien!* we are merry to-day! Accept my best wishes for your enjoyment. Can you tell me, friends, where I am likely to find a fair *demoiselle*—one Julia, daughter of Mme Veuve Gostillon?'

'*Voila*, monsieur!' cried several, much surprised. 'Our *rosiere* is she!'

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‘Ah, what a fate is mine!’ muttered the worthy commissaire, much affected, as he looked at the beautiful and rose-wreathed Julia. ’If I had ten thousand francs, I would give them all to be spared this work: but duty is duty. Courage! all may yet be well. Friends,’ continued he, raising his voice, ’excuse me if I interrupt you some few minutes. I would not do it were I not bound to. It will be necessary for Mlle Julia to accompany me to her home. I trust we shall not be absent long.’ He raised his cap, offered his arm; and Julia, amazed and frightened, descended from her throne, and conducted him to the cottage.

‘Pardon, mademoiselle,’ said he, when they stood inside; ’I am instructed to search this house.’ Julia, puzzled, confounded, bowed assent.

The commissaire proceeded, with a hasty hand, as if he wished to get the work quickly over, to ransack drawers and boxes. Whenever one or the other had been searched in vain, he clapped his hand to his breast and muttered: ‘God be thanked!’ and appeared as if his mind were in some measure relieved of a burden which oppressed it. At length he arrived at Julia’s chamber—here, as elsewhere, drawers and boxes seemed to present no signs of the object sought for: the thanksgivings of the commissaire were frequent; his cheerfulness appeared to be returning. Presently, however, he proceeded to turn out the contents of Julia’s little reticule-basket: first came a pocket-handkerchief, on the corners of which flowers had been wrought by Julia’s needle. ‘Very pretty!’ remarked the commissaire. Then appeared a number of slips of rare plants, recently collected. ‘Ah! you are a botanist?’ said the commissaire.

’They are from the conservatory of the Comte Meurien, at the chateau: I meant to have planted them to-day,’ said Julia.

‘Who gave them to you?’

‘Mme Lavine, the *femme de chambre*.’

‘Ah, *diable*! I hope you have nothing else from that chateau?’

‘I have nothing else,’ replied Julia, blushing, and somewhat discomposed, as she remembered Victor.

‘What is the matter?—why are you agitated?’ demanded the commissaire, regarding her fixedly.

‘It is nothing,’ said poor Julia, much distressed by his stern and scrutinising look.

‘Nothing? I fear it is something! Alas! I begin to lose hope.’

‘Hope of what?’ asked Julia wonderingly.

‘Of your innocence!’ replied the commissaire sternly.

‘Mon Dieu! What do you mean?’

‘Ah, restez tranquille, pauvre demoiselle; nous verrons toute-suite.’ And with a shrug, he continued his investigation of the contents of the reticule-basket. It contained a great variety of little knick-knacks, which, with much patience, the commissaire turned out and examined, one by one. At length he came to a little parcel, the paper-envelope of which appeared to be part of an old letter, and was thickly covered with writing. It was one of Victor’s letters. Julia blushed again.

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‘What have we here?’ demanded the constable.

‘I forget what there is inside,’ said Julia. ’I hardly knew it was there.’

‘Let us see.’

He opened two or three wrappers—the portion of the letter formed the outside one, the others being blank white paper—and there fell out, descending upon the table with a sharp jingle, a pair of gold bracelets, ornamented with pearls and turquoises, a superb coral necklace, and a diamond ring.

‘Mademoiselle!’ exclaimed the commissaire, whose face appeared to lose all flexibility of expression the moment the discovery was made, presenting now merely the stern, impassible, mechanical look of an officer on duty, ’these are the identical articles for which I have been searching for the last three days. Will you be good enough to change your dress as quickly as possible, and prepare to accompany me to the office of M. Morelle, magistrate of this district?’

At this juncture, the Widow Gostillon was conveyed back to her cottage by some of her neighbours, with little Cecilia by her side. Entering Julia’s chamber, her young friends found her in a swoon, from which the commissaire was assiduously endeavouring to recover her. A scene of a most painful character ensued. Without afflicting the reader with a recital of the agonised and indignant protestations of Julia—the anger and affright of Widow Gostillon—the sorrow, sympathy, and amazement of the villagers—suffice it to say, that the commissaire, in the course of the morning, conducted Julia into the presence of the magistrate.

It appears that the articles of bijouterie found in Julia’s reticule had been missed from the chamber of Mlle Antoinette Meurien the very morning after Julia visited Victor’s father at the chateau. The young lady had seen them on her toilette early the preceding evening, and had not worn them for some days, so that she could not have lost them whilst walking or riding. It was evident they had been abstracted. A search was instantly commenced. The domestics were examined, and their rooms and boxes searched, but without either finding the property or fixing suspicion on any one of them. The police were then apprised of the robbery. The servants of the household underwent a second and official examination, but all earnestly declared their innocence. It being ascertained, however, that Julia had visited the house the night on which the property was lost, an order was issued, commanding that her residence be searched, and that she be brought before the authorities. Among the witnesses who proved Julia’s visit to the chateau was Victor Colonne. In mingled affliction and indignation, he answered the questions put to him, and declared that she who had but lately been the object of his ardent affection was the very soul of honour and purity. A lengthened examination elicited from him that he had conducted Julia to the chamber of Mlle Antoinette, for the purpose of shewing

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her the superb manner in which it was furnished and decorated. She had stepped up to the toilette, he admitted, and had surveyed herself, as was very natural, in the glass, but it was only for a moment; he was close to her all the time, and indeed they hardly remained in the chamber two minutes: they entered, looked round, and retired, and that was all. It was true, he did not keep his eyes on his companion all the time; but had she taken anything, he could not have failed seeing the act.

A general impression prevailed among the people at the chateau that Julia was innocent; that it was impossible for one so virtuous and intelligent to commit so disgraceful and rash a theft. Indeed, the tide of suspicion had been fast turning against Victor himself, when it received a new direction by the discovery of the missing articles in Julia's reticule. Another examination ensued, the distracted Julia, as has been stated, being herself brought into the presence of the magistrate. In intense affliction, she declared her innocence: that she knew not how the articles had got into her reticule; she had not put them there; did not know they were there; had, indeed, never touched them at all. The portion of the letter in which they had been wrapped was handed to her, and she was questioned concerning it. 'It was part of a letter,' she said, 'which had been addressed to her by Victor Colonne.' She remembered receiving it; but by what means it came to be applied to its present purpose, she did not at all know. M. Morelle sternly bade her tell the truth, and conceal nothing; it would be better for her. In great agony, she earnestly reiterated what she had said. It was useless; the evidence against her was too strong to be shaken by merely her own denial. Moreover, the commissaire of police, in delivering his evidence, laid much emphasis upon the embarrassment and distress she had evinced whilst he was searching the little basket in which the articles were found.

The case was on the point of being decided against her, when, by what may be termed a providential interposition, the tables were suddenly turned, and she was rescued from the jail, from infamy, and perhaps from death! A young girl, one of the domestics at the chateau, having examined the portion of the letter which formed a link in the circumstantial evidence, produced from her pocket another fragment, which exactly fitted to the first, and made the letter complete! With much curiosity, and indeed excitement, all listened eagerly to what she had to say. She stated that the fragment she produced, which formed the remainder of the torn letter wrapped round the stolen articles, she had picked up in the garden of the chateau, where it had been dropped by Victor. Julia's reticule had been left on a seat under a tree; the witness saw Victor open it, and take out a letter. He did not know she was at hand; indeed, could not see her. He tore the letter into two pieces: he appeared agitated. One piece of the letter

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dropped to the ground, the other he did something with which she could not perceive, and replaced in the reticule. When he was gone, she picked up the fragment which had fallen; and seeing it was part of a love-letter, full of warm protests, &c. she put it into her pocket, intending, she said, to joke him about it. A few minutes more, Julia came by, took up her reticule, and went home, declining Victor's company, though he requested permission to escort her.

Hereupon, Victor was immediately submitted to a severe re-examination. Aghast at the disclosure just made; abashed at the many angry eyes directed towards him; harassed by the searching questions of the magistrate, and the sense of guilt, his assurance and hypocrisy completely deserted him; and, after equivocating and protesting for some time, he sullenly confessed all. Discarded by Julia: he had attempted to effect her ruin!

The good little Julia was almost as much overcome by the overwhelming emotions which now possessed her, as she was at the miserable position in which malignity had so lately placed her. Whilst Victor was being conveyed to the jail, where he was to suffer the punishment due to his villainy, Julia was conducted home to her now rejoicing parent, amidst the congratulations, caresses, and praises, of troops of friends. The day after her acquittal, the throne was again set up in the Grande Allee, and the ovation to her industry and virtues was completed in triumphant fashion. The Meurien family, feeling deeply the injury she had suffered, gave their presence at her inauguration, and afterwards did many a friendly act for her. She is now as industrious and charming, and as much respected as ever, though no more Julia Gostillon, but Madame Vichel—being the wife of a thriving herbalist of that name. As for Victor, he has not been seen at Maisons since.

RAMBLES IN SEARCH OF WILD-FLOWERS.

EARLY MONTHS OF THE YEAR.

A ramble in search of wild-flowers in January would be pretty much 'labour in vain;' at least so far as that one special object was concerned. I do not mean to say that all nature is dead at that season, for there are mosses, lichens, and fungi to be found in abundance; but flowers, in the ordinary meaning of the word, are not to be found, unless we consider those brilliant frostwork flowers which we sometimes find as such. It was a season unusually cold for Devonshire, when, with a merry party of boys and girls, I sallied forth to see how nature looked decked in her robe of virgin white. Hill and valley were one sheet of 'innocent snow;' and every twig, leaf, and blade of grass; every spray of the furze and heath; and every broad, drooping leaf of that beautiful fern the hart's tongue (*Scolopendrium vulgare*), was coated with hoar-frost, and sparkling in the rosy sunbeams like the flowers in a magic garden. At Sherbrook Lake, where a rivulet of

clear water usually flows along the bottom of the ravine down to the sea, there was now a hard mass of ice, on which our boys rushed for a passing slide; and above, where the deeper water lies under the shadow of the brushwood, the frost had been busy performing its frolic feats—

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‘And see where it has hung th’ embroidered banks
With forms so various that no powers of art,
The pencil, or the pen, may trace the scene!
Here glittering turrets rise, upbearing high
(Fantastic misarrangement!) on the roof
Large growth of what may seem the sparkling trees
And shrubs of fairyland. The crystal drops,
That trickle down the branches, fast congealed,
Shoot into pillars of pellucid length,
And prop the pile they but adorned before.
Here grotto within grotto safe defies
The sunbeam; there, embossed and fretted wild,
The growing wonder takes a thousand shapes
Capricious, in which fancy seeks in vain
The likeness of some object seen before.’

From the beautiful beacon cliff—to which we eagerly toil through the snow, and up and down the slippery hill-sides—we behold the sea as still and smiling as in summer, and as clearly reflecting the exquisite blue of the vault above; but each of the many little rills which the long rains preceding the frost had caused to flow over the face of the red cliffs, is now a stationary thread of silver, spell-bound by the enchaining frost; and icicles, or, as old-fashioned people call them, *aglets*, of three or four feet long, ornament the overhanging ledges, prone to fall to the beach—far, far below—when a thaw releases them from their present stations. But the air is so very keen that nothing but the briskness of our walk, and the enlivenment of an occasional spell of snow-balling, in which the seniors are tempted to join the juniors, prevent our stagnating into ‘pellucid pillars’ ourselves. So much, then, for our January ramble. The season of which I have now to speak was most different. After unusual cold, especially after snow, it is not uncommon to see an early spring appear, and so it was now, as Spenser says—

’The fields did laugh, the flowers did freshly spring,
The trees did bud, and early blossoms bore;’

and so warm was it one day towards the end of February, and the air so sweet, that I resolved on having ‘Jack’ and sallying forth in search of wild-flowers—not flowers of frostwork, but real spring jewels.

On this excursion, I thought it expedient to take Fanny, which, though a somewhat stubborn little beast of burden; yet so bent was I on seeing the sweet spring-like hedges and banks, that I agreed to endure Fanny; and at the given time on her I mounted, and after much persuasion, got her under-weigh: the boy George bringing up the rear.

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And now on we go, Fanny rather tiresome, and George rather merciless; for when she *will* poke her head into the hedge, and stand stock-still to eat, or, worse still, suddenly push up against a stone-wall, to the imminent danger of crushing my foot to pieces, he thumps and pushes her till the echoes in Echo Lane reverberate with the unpoetical sound. However, on we go by degrees, and find the banks everywhere rich with fresh springing grass and deep full beds of moss, with every here and there the pale lemon-tinted petals of the primrose just peeping through the partial openings in their shrouding mantles of green; and there, above us, hangs that which I had hoped to find—the catkins of the hazel, which have been hailed by children for centuries under the names of 'Pussy-cat's tails,' or 'Baa-lamb's tails;' and a more interesting flower for examination as we pass onwards we can scarcely have, for its structure is very peculiar and beautiful. We will gather a good bunch of these pretty pendent tassel-like clusters; and see! as we break off the stems, what a shower of gold-dust is scattered over us, and flies in all directions through the air! So abundant is this yellow pollen beneath the scales of the catkins, that we shall find, if we place them in our moss-basket, that the table below them will be coated with it in the course of an hour or two. The common hazel or nut-tree affords a fine illustration of the structure of that division of plants to which most of our common European trees belong, and which, from its including the oak, is called 'the oak-tribe.' I shall not, however, expatiate on the hazel, the pride of our old copse-banks, but look beneath its long slender branches, and there, lurking modestly, do I see that pretty little yellow flower, the lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*.) Every one knows this little early blossom by sight, if not by name. Its root is formed of numerous clustering tubercles, or oblong knobs, with fibres. This root is sometimes washed by the rain until these tubercles appear above ground, when, as Loudon tells us, 'ignorant people have sometimes been led to fancy that it rained *wheat*.' The celandine has slightly-branched stems, two or three inches in height, on which grow alternate stalked heart-shaped leaves, sheathed at the base, where they sometimes contain one or two knobs like those of the root. The flowers, which are terminal and solitary, are much like a butter-cup—of a golden yellow, and exceedingly shining within, and tinged with green on the outsides. 'After the flowre decays,' says Gerarde, 'there springeth up a little fine knop or headful of seede.' This head of seed alone is left by about May to mark where the plant grew; and even this soon dries up and disappears. Wordsworth has thrown an interest about this plant, which it would not otherwise have possessed, by his elegant little poem called *The Lesser Celandine*.

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Here and there, also, in the more sheltered spots, we find a blossom or two of the pretty pink herb Robert (*Geranium Robertianum*), with its hairy red stems, and divided leaves, and star-shaped blossoms of bright rose-colour; or an early plant of the ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) gemming the ground with its purple, labiate flowers on the sunny bank beneath the underwood, luring one for a moment to believe that the sweet purple violets were already come: vain hope! which not only the season but the place forbids; for though I have found *white* violets near the scene of these excursions, in the south of England, yet I believe the sweet-scented purple do not grow in that neighbourhood. In a late ramble, there was a spot which I was eager to reach; for there I knew that I should find

> 'Chaste snow-drop, venturous harbinger of spring,
> And pensive monitor of fleeting years.'

This pretty well-known flower, sometimes called Fair Maid of February (*Galanthus Nivalis*), belongs to the same natural order as the daffodil and narcissus—the *Amaryllideae*. Gerarde calls it 'the timely flouring bulbous violet,' and thus graphically describes it: 'It riseth out of the ground,' says he, 'with two small leaves flat and crested, of an overworne greene colour, betweene the which riseth up a small and tender stalk of two hands high; at the top whereof commeth forth of a skinny hood a small white floure of the bignesse of a violet compact of six leaves, three bigger and three lesser, tipped at the points with a light greene; the smaller one fashioned into the vulgar forme of a heart, and prettily edged about with greene; the other three leaves are longer and sharp-pointed. The whole floure hangeth downe his head by reason of the weak footstalk whereon it groweth. The root is small, white, and bulbous.' It is one of the earliest flowers which appear, and may often be seen bursting through the snow, the virgin white of its petals by no means shamed by the lustrous purity of its cold bed. It has no calyx; six stamens; the filaments short and hair-like; the anthers oblong, with a bristly point, and one pistil, the style being cylindrical, and longer than the stamens. The capsule, which is nearly globular, contains three cells, in which are numerous globular seeds. It is found in orchards, meadows, and the sides of hedges, and named from two Greek words signifying 'milk' and 'a flower.'

And now we reach the orchard: but how am I to get in? There is nothing for it but a scramble up that bank round the root of that old oak, whose gnarled boles will afford me footing, and it will be easy to descend on the other side; and so, with a few slips, I contrived to land in safety among the long, tangled grass, and broken branches of apple-trees, richly clothed with lichens, mosses, and fungi, in a spot which looked as if untrodden by human foot for years. But that could not really have been so, for no doubt the old trees had borne their usual crop of ruddy apples, which had been duly housed. The value of an apple-orchard in Devonshire—that land of delicious cider—is not a trifle, and our farmers do not leave their orchards untrodden and uncared-for. This was, however, sufficiently wild. But now for my snow-drops: there they wave in thousands —

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> ’Like pendent flakes of vegetating snow—
> The early heralds of the infant year—’

in every stage of beauty, from the hint that a tiny spot of green and white, bursting through the dark earth, might give, to the fully-developed blossoms, hanging lightly on its graceful stalks, robed in its vestal garb of white, and shedding its own peculiar fragrance on the pure air. I gathered large supplies—enough to make me the envy of all the lovers of spring-flowers whom I met; enough to fill my moss-basket, and vases, and glasses without end for myself; and enough to send a feeling of spring brightness and joy into the hearts of two or three invalids, to whose sick-rooms I sent some of these pretty messengers.

Somewhat draggled with the wet grass, and muddied with the slippery hedge-bank, I at last returned to the lane where I had left Fanny. However, there was no one but George to notice my appearance, and he was too much taken up with the basket of fine roots which he had procured (be sure always to take a trowel and basket with you on such expeditions), to care how I looked; and, besides, as ’no man is a hero to his valet,’ so no lady is a fine lady to her donkey-boy; and homewards we turned, threading our way between the overarching trees, not as yet shewing sign of leaf; but their richly-tinted bark, varied by mosses and lichens of different hues, and partly mantled with ivy, now in full berry, looked almost as beautiful, as the sunbeams fell on them, and the blue sky shone between, as they do in their summer verdure.

On we jogged, Fanny well pleased to be on her homeward course; until at last, coming to a cross-way which would have either led us straight home or taken us thither by a little circuit, I, lured by the desire of seeing whether the daffodils began to shew blossom, resolved on the latter road, not duly considering that perhaps *she* had decided on the former. But so it was; and, notwithstanding sundry stripes, her will remained unsubdued, as she presently evinced. After we had gone a little way up a lovely sunny lane—slowly indeed, for she was evidently as perverse as she could be, yet with much enjoyment on my part—I was gazing upwards at some delicate white clouds, which a light breeze wafted across the face of the sky, or watching some bird in its flight, when suddenly I felt the jogging onwards cease, a slight undulating motion, and found that my feet were on the ground. Fanny had lain down in the dust, and I had but to rise as I would from a low chair to be standing quietly by her side. George dared to grin, and there were two or three country-people who happened to be passing at the time, who were convulsed with laughter at my expense—a laughter in which I could not but heartily join. How much has fancy to do with such things! How grand is the idea of a camel or an elephant meekly kneeling down to receive or deposit its load! how dignified I should have felt had I thus descended from one of those noble animals!

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whilst this mode of being deposited by a poor little donkey made us all laugh! Truly, 'there is but a step between the sublime and the ridiculous;' and my adventure certainly smacked of the latter. But Fanny had conquered; and, as if with one stroke to confirm her victory, and to rejoice over it, she suddenly turned over on her back, cracked the girths of the old saddle, and rolled over and over in the dust with all four legs up in the air. This was too much for endurance; so, leaving George to readjust the saddle as best he might, and bring home our basket of spoils, I turned back, and sauntered homewards with my bunch of 'timely-flouring bulbous violets' in my hand. At Kersbrook I discovered a new treasure—one which, however, I afterwards found to be common, although it was then unknown to me—and it was some time before I could make out what it was. I took it for a saxifrage, but could find nothing under that head which exactly answered to it. It was, I at last discovered, the golden saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*) or opposite-leaved sengreen, nearly allied to the saxifrages, and of the natural order saxifrage, but not one of them. I found it fringing the side of the brook between the wall and the water. It grows about four or five inches high, with branched stems bearing very succulent, kidney-shaped leaves opposite each other—the radicle leaves on long foot-stalks, whilst those of the stem-leaves are much shorter. The flowers, which are of a bright greenish-yellow, grow in small umbels; and the whole plant has a yellowish hue. The uppermost flower in general bears ten stamens, whilst the next boasts of but eight each. Its capsules are two-beaked, one-celled, and two-valved, the seeds numerous and roundish. It is named from *chrysos*, 'gold,' and *splen*, 'the spleen.' There is another specimen much like this, of which I have spoken, *Chrysosplenium alternitifolium*; but it is larger, handsomer, and less common. In the Vosges this plant is much used—as our own water-cress is in England—for a salad, under the name of *Cresson de Roche*. There is a little flower, elegant and singular in appearance, though, as its name indicates, not one of much splendour, which resembles the golden saxifrage, in the peculiarity of having a different number of stamens in its crowning floret from those of the lower ones: this is the green moschatel (*Adoxa moschatellina), adoxa* signifying 'inglorious.' The flowers are pale-green, in a terminal head of five florets, the upper of which is four-cleft, and has *eight* stamens, the other being five-cleft, with *ten* stamens in each. Its fragile stem and delicate compound leaves, and the early season at which it blossoms, give attraction to this little plant, and make it a favourite with me. The butter-cups are not yet in bloom; but the daisies! Oh, what store of daisies is on every bank and in every field, and what troops of baby children, with their little baskets, sitting on the green turf and picking them! I do love the daisy; and indeed I much fear that I should have been found taking part with that 'merry troop' of 'ladies decked with daisies on the plain,' of which we read in Dryden's elegant fable of *The Flower and the Leaf*, rather than with those wiser and more renowned who 'chose the leaf':—

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’A tuft of daisies on a flowery lay
They saw; and thitherward they bent their way;
To this both knights and dames their homage made,
And due obeisance to the daisy paid.
And then the band of flutes began to play,
To which a lady sung a virelay:
And still at every close she would repeat
The burden of the song—“the daisy is so sweet."’

The structure of the daisy has been noticed in a former paper, and its appearance needs no description. But there is one other flower which I meet with that must not escape us, and that is that noble plant, the butter-bur (*Tussilago petasites*), named from a Greek word signifying a broad covering. Its leaves, the largest produced by any British plant, are sometimes from two to three feet across, and form a shelter for poultry and small animals from the rain. It is a composite flower of the sub-order *Tubulifloreae*. The large club-shaped bunch of flower comes before the leaves are more than partially developed, and are of a pale-purple tint, and of a most delicious fragrance, not unlike the heliotrope. When these die off, the magnificent leaves form quite a beautiful object in the landscape. Artists are fond of introducing them into the foreground of their sketches, and very ornamental they are; but they should be careful not to place them where nature never designed they should grow, among dry hill and rock scenery, or on the sea-coast—for they are only to be found growing in moist and shadowed places, and usually in the vicinity of a brook, to which they form a very apposite adornment.—-But here we are at home, and there stands Fanny at my door with her load of treasure, George having trotted her home by a shorter cut than that which I had followed; and unless Jack or Sam can honour me with their company the next time I go flower-picking, I shall surely, as the Scotch say, ‘ride upon shanks naiggie.’

AN EVENING IN WESTMINSTER.

In a drizzly afternoon at the close of January, we met by appointment at a house in Westminster with a gentleman, who had kindly undertaken to introduce us to a very remarkable institution in that part of the metropolis. A walk of a few minutes through the plashy streets brought us to a wide gateway, like the entrance to a brassfounder’s yard. We soon found ourselves in a narrow court, encumbered with building materials and surrounded with plain brick structures, which appeared to have either been recently erected, or to be undergoing some changes designed to adapt them to new purposes. Everything looked plain and homely, even to rudeness; but we, nevertheless, knew well that a heart of humanity and noble intention beat under the rough exterior of the place.

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Rather less than four years ago, the teacher of a ragged school in Westminster encountered, in the course of his professional exertions, three or four boys who had hitherto been thieves, but now expressed a desire to leave their evil courses. Having some reason to repose faith in their professions, and being humbly anxious to assist them in so good a purpose, he received them into a poor garret-lodging, hired and paid for out of his own resources. He supported them there, taught and trained them, making himself their friend as well as their mentor, and in time he succeeded in getting them passages to America, where they have since prospered. Mr Nash—for such is the name of this philanthropist of humble life—continued his benevolent exertions and sacrifices, till various gentlemen, hearing of what he was doing, came to his assistance. A little money being then collected, it was found possible to take in a greater number of boys. In short, Mr Nash became the head of a little institution for the reclaiming of criminal and vagrant youths, which has finally become located in the yard we have described, under the name of the London Colonial Training Institution and Ragged Dormitory. It is still a kind of family arrangement of Mr Nash's own, taking its character mainly from his benevolent and self-sacrificing efforts, although drawing pecuniary support from the public, and ostensibly graced with a list of honorary officebearers, with the Earl of Shaftesbury at their head.

There is a prepossessing simplicity in the whole affair. We found the ground-floor of the new building used as a school and public room, and the two upper floors as dormitories —nothing but brick walls whitened, brick and deal floors—no luxury, but cleanliness and good ventilation. The beds were mere bags of straw laid on the floor. Three plain meals per day are given. The strictest regulations are maintained; but there is no restraint. The inmates can leave the institution if they please. Their coming is entirely voluntary; and, to make sure of their being thoroughly in earnest, they are not admitted to the humble privileges of the place, till they have lived a fortnight upon a pound of bread a day, sleeping all the time upon bare boards. In the outer buildings, the boys are trained to carpentry, tailoring, and shoemaking. A few are instructed in printing: in their little office, we found one ordinary press, besides a small one for taking proofs. They can execute shop-bills and placards for the tradesmen in the neighbourhood, and we received a copy of an annual report which had been printed very neatly by them. In work, schooling, religious exercises, and walks out of doors on the ordinary days of the week, the time passes usefully and not disagreeably. At the end of a year, they are, if not provided with employment at home, sent to some of the colonies with a small outfit, generally at the expense of some benevolent individual. Lord Shaftesbury has been particularly

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liberal in furnishing means for their shipment. The inmates feel that they may now have a hope in the world. They hear of companions who are prospering in America, and they work cheerfully on in the faith of getting there also. Very few fail in their course, or act dishonestly towards the institution. When one or two lately left it, taking away things not belonging to them, the others set out in search of them, caught them, and handed them over to the police. This shews how their hearts are interested in the institution. They feel that Mr Nash acts towards them in pure kindness, and they are anxious to make a suitable return. And kindness really is the sole principle at work in the place. One good man rules these sixty outcasts of society without guard or assistance; without the use of punishment, beyond a temporary restriction of meals; without, it may be said, any force whatever, but that of his benevolent intentions.

At the time of our visit, the establishment contained about sixty inmates. We felt a peculiar interest in visiting the room of probation. There had been four youths in it in the morning; but one had withdrawn, not being able to stand the severity of the test. The three remaining youths stood up in their wretched attire, and we questioned them in succession. They had all been thieves, and all of them had passed through several convictions—one through no less than twenty-two. We asked this last youth how he had come to think of retreating to the Colonial Training-School. He said, that he knew he could not go on much longer without being transported: he dreaded this fate. Some companions who had been in the school, but deserted it, told him of it. They praised the institution, as one where every kindness was shewn to unfortunate youths, notwithstanding that they had themselves proved unworthy of its benefits. He therefore came, determined to suffer whatever might be inflicted upon him, rather than go back to his wicked courses. We learned that he had been for several years a pickpocket, residing in a low lodging-house at 1s. 9d. a week; sometimes well off, sometimes otherwise, but always harassed by the terrors of punishment. According to his account of the boys who live in this manner, there are some who enjoy its freedom, and would not abandon it; but there are many who would much rather turn from it, if an opportunity were afforded them. We afterwards spent some time in the school-room amongst the boys; heard them sing a hymn, and, at the request of the governor, addressed a few words to them, chiefly suggestive of hope respecting their future career. During the whole time, their behaviour was marked by perfect propriety; we did not observe even an indecorous look in the whole company.

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We bade adieu to Mr Nash, with a deep sense of his heroic philanthropy, and of the value of the lesson which he is giving as to the means of reclaiming the desert places of society. As far as the funds supplied to him permit, he is transforming the juvenile delinquents of the London streets into respectable citizens, having already redeemed a hundred and fifty-six, and either provided for them in England, or despatched them to the colonies. One may well suppose, that in the process of reformation much must depend upon the special character of the person who exercises the reforming discipline. A mere routine of school exercises, of scripture readings, of hymn singings, would go little way with minds so vitiated by bad habits, if there were not a particular effort made by the disciplinarian to make all work thoroughly into the moral nature of the pupils, so as to produce a real renewal of feeling and spirit. Even to rouse the unfortunate being from the idea with which he is apt to start, that he is only called upon to enter on a new career which will be better for him in a worldly point of view, and to elevate him to the superior and only vitally serviceable idea, that he must love goodness for its own sake, and for the love of the Author of all goodness, is no light task. We can, therefore, imagine scarcely any position calling for a more peculiar combination of qualities than that of the conductor of this extraordinary seminary. It is a strong testimony to the suitableness of Mr Nash for his functions, that they were entered upon under the impulse of his own mind. We have further proof of it in the good effects of his teaching, for the histories of many young men who have passed through his hands can be traced from authentic documents. One who emigrated to the United States so lately as March 1850, already reports that he is earning there L.3, 12s. per week, and has just married a young woman who had saved 300 dollars; another of his pupils is now acting as a missionary in Australia. They write to their former governor in the most grateful terms, and with strong expressions of hope regarding their own future. It is interesting to think of all this good being done by individual exertion and self-devotion. No government interferes: there is no certain fund to be depended on. A simple MAN, sensible of humane obligations towards the unfortunate, comes forward and puts himself in direct intercourse with them. They might mistake the views of a government, or of a set of parish authorities; they might lean unduly upon any formally-appointed fund. They cannot mistake the designs of a mere human being like themselves, or become spoiled by indulgence in so poor a retreat. The gratitude due by society to such a man is incalculable.

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It is gratifying to think that Mr Nash does not stand alone in his disinterested course. There is a Mr Ellis, a shoemaker in Albany Street, Regent's Park, who, under the impulse of religious feeling for the unfortunate, has taken a number of delinquents into his care, with a view to reforming them. Four years ago, he began with two, to whom he assigned certain rations. The first movement was an act of self-denial on their part. In order to secure the admission of a companion, who could not otherwise have been provided for, they agreed that their rations should be divided with him; and on these terms he was admitted. Soon after, the number was increased to fifteen; and with this number Mr Ellis has gone on most successfully. The boys have been industrious, and only one has been guilty of any offence. The prosperous man of the world, who thinks himself entitled to use all his own for his own sole gratification, will hear of these things with incredulity, and pity Ellis and Nash as enthusiasts, who foolishly sacrifice themselves for a whim; but we greatly doubt if the worldling's proudest or most luxurious hour gives one-half the true satisfaction which these men enjoy in the midst of their ragged adherents, under the blessed hope of rescuing them from destruction in this world and the next.

The subject of juvenile delinquency is beginning to attract a good deal of attention, for it is now clearly seen that the root of most of the predatory crime by which the country is afflicted lies here, and till the root is struck at, the branches will continue to flourish. It appears that for some years the number of juvenile criminals has been on the increase; auguring, of course, an ultimate increase in the number of adult offenders. Some vigorous measure for the reduction of juvenile delinquency is felt to be now required. Amidst all the alarms which it is exciting, and amidst the expressions of hopelessness which we often hear from those who give little attention to the subject, it is gratifying to find, that there are some glimpses of what appears to be the right course to be taken. First, one great point is very clearly established—that it really is possible to reclaim juvenile criminals. It cannot, however, be done by punishments of any kind. It is to be done by kindness, religious influence, and industrial occupation, along with the holding forth of a hope of transition into a better course of life. Those who may be incredulous on this point, had better acquaint themselves with the facts of the case. It is too little known, that there has been a society at work for the last sixty years in England, for the reform of juvenile offenders. It has a farm at Red Hill, near Reigate, from which about forty youths go out every year to agricultural labour and humble trades, in which the great bulk of them do well. The similar institution at Mettray, near Tours, produces similar results on a greater scale. And the simple truth at the bottom of the whole affair is, that young thieves are, in general, deserted or orphan children, or children driven forth to destitution by vicious parents: criminal through circumstances, and finding no true happiness in their wicked kind of life, a large proportion of them *desire to reform*, and will suffer not a little in order to obtain admission to respectable society.

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It has lately been shewn, that society has a strong interest of a pecuniary nature in the reformation of juvenile delinquents. A boy or youth continually going about as a pickpocket or petty larcenist, is a destructive animal of somewhat formidable character. To get quit of him at last by transportation, costs at the least calculation L.150. Now, he can be put through the twelvemonth's course of reformation in such a school as that which we have described, and deported as a free emigrant to Australia (where he is welcomed), for L.25. Thus, even in an economical light, the reforming of the youth is a great gain. Magistrates are everywhere impressed with the hopelessness of a mere judicial treatment of these hapless children. They come back to the dock at almost regular intervals; severity is of no avail with a poor wretch who, on being discharged from jail, finds all honest employment denied to him. It is by reform alone that we can rid ourselves of this moral pest, by which our country is disgraced.

There is but one difficulty in the case, and that is one involving profound social questions. Shall we see criminal children taken care of, and treated kindly, while many of the children of the honest poor are so ill off? Shall we not, by taking these children under our care, and so relieving parents and others of their responsibility towards them, sap the principles of the industrious poor, leading them to desert or cast off their children, whom they will now be sure of seeing cared for by others? We must admit that there is much force in these queries; but it would be wrong to allow them altogether to deter us, where the reasons on the other side are so urgent. It may be possible, by keeping to such individual efforts as those of Mr Nash, or to those of little unobtrusive societies, to prevent much of the evil apprehended. And it may also be practicable, as we find is proposed, to arrange that there shall be a legal claim upon parents for the expenses incurred in reforming their criminal offspring. Thus none who are not themselves destitute, could safely leave their children to the chances of a criminal life. It is also most desirable, that the state should limit its interference to grants of money in proportion to the sums advanced by private or local effort, and to the enforcing of a law for the detention of vagrant and criminal children where it may be necessary. Under such precautions, we think most of the advantages might be obtained, with a much less admixture of evil than many would now be disposed to expect.[1]

FOOTNOTES:

[1] The reader will find excellent matter on this subject in Mary Carpenter's recent volume on Reformatory Schools, and in a 'Report of the Proceedings of a Conference on the Subject of Preventive and Reformatory Schools, held at Birmingham on the 9th and 10th of December 1851.'

'MEN OF THE TIME.'

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A neat little volume, well filled with information, has made its appearance under this title; [2] the object being to present sketches of living notables—men who, in their several walks of life, tread in advance of the general multitude in this and other countries; and from whose actions we may learn the character and aims of the passing era. The idea of gathering together materials of this kind, and laying the result in an accessible form before the public, is a good one. All will depend, however, on the manner of execution. The attempt before us, being the first of its kind, is perhaps necessarily imperfect, and we may expect some improvements should the work realise the expectations of its publisher. For example, we miss the names of various men of note, to whom England owes many acknowledgments—such as Dr Neill Arnott, Mr Edwin Chadwick, Archibald Alison, &c.—and in several instances, also, the sketches actually given are very deficient in attainable facts; while there occur notices of individuals whose names can scarcely be said to be known to the public. With these imperfections, the work is a handy biographic compendium, full of amusing particulars, that cannot fail to be useful in the way of reference. To provincial libraries, the book will be a cheap and agreeable accession. As a specimen of the manner of execution, we present the following scraps of quotation:—

'Brooke, Rajah Sir James, is a Somersetshire man, born on the 29th of April 1803, at Combe Grove, near Bath. His father was engaged in the civil service of the East India Company; and when of sufficient age, the future rajah was sent to India as a cadet, and, on the Burmese war breaking out, went to the scene of operations; entered upon active military service; and whilst storming a stockade, received a bullet in his chest. This wound kept him for awhile balanced between life and death, but a strong constitution stood him in good stead, and he was able to reach England on furlough, to seek the full restoration of his health. When sufficiently strong, he set out on a tour through France, Switzerland, and Italy, the languages, as well as manners and condition of which he studied; but the longest leave of absence will expire at last, and we find our hero, in due course, again setting out for the East; failing, however, to reach it at once, for the ship in which he sailed was wrecked on the Isle of Wight. In his next vessel, he was more fortunate, and safely reached India, to resume his duties; but finding a long official correspondence requisite to explain why a shipwreck should have delayed an officer's return, he resigned the service of the East India Company, and in 1830 sailed from Calcutta for China. "In this voyage," says Captain Keppel, in his *Expedition to Borneo*, "while going up the China seas, he saw for the first time the islands of the Asiatic Archipelago—islands of vast importance and unparalleled beauty—lying neglected and almost unknown. He inquired and read, and became

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convinced that Borneo and the Eastern Isles afforded an open field for enterprise and research. To carry to the Malay races, so long the terror of the European merchant-vessel, the blessings of civilisation, to suppress piracy, and extirpate the slave-trade, became his humane and generous objects; and from that hour the energies of his powerful mind were devoted to this one pursuit. Often foiled—often disappointed, with a perseverance and enthusiasm which defied all obstacle, he was not until 1838 enabled to set sail from England on his darling project.'" Having procured and manned a yacht, he set out on his expedition to the Eastern seas, in spite of all sarcasms from croakers; and 'when the news came home that he had truly engaged in the suppression of the Malay sea-robbers, and had been rewarded by the cession to him, by a grateful native prince, of the territory and governorship of Sarawak—a tract embracing about 3000 square miles of country, with a sea-board of about fifty miles—said croakers began to think the adventurous undertaking not so wild after all. The steps by which he became rajah of Sarawak may be here recounted. When in his vessel, the *Royalist*, he reached the coast of that country, he found its ruler engaged in the suppression of one of the rebellions frequent in uncivilised regions. His aid was solicited by the Rajah Muda Hassim, and that aid being given, secured the triumph of the authorities. Muda being soon afterwards called by the sultan to the post of prime-minister, suggested the making the English captain his successor at Sarawak—a step eventually taken. The newly-acquired territory was swampy and ill cultivated by the native Dyaks, who varied their occupations, as tillers of the land, by excursions amongst neighbouring villages, *in search of heads*. To rob the native of a neighbouring town of his cranium, was regarded in much the same light as the capture of a scalp would be amongst North American savages. Brooke saw at once that no improvement could arise whilst murder was regarded not only as a pleasant amusement, but to some extent as a religious duty. He declared head-hunting a crime punishable by death to the offender. With some trouble and much risk he succeeded to a great extent in effecting a reform. Attacking at the same time another custom of the country—that of piracy—he acted with such vigour, that a class of well-meaning people at home, stimulated to some extent by the private enemies of Brooke, accused him of wholesale butchery. The fact that the destruction of pirates was rewarded by the English executive by the payment of what was called "head-money," justly increased the outcry. To kill one pirate entitled the crew of a ship-of-war to a certain prize in money—to kill a thousand, entitled them to a thousand times the amount. This premium on blood was wrong in principle, and the result of a wholesale slaughter of Eastern pirates by order of Brooke, led to the very proper abolition of the

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custom of paying this “head-money.” The men who are entitled to the praise of securing this amelioration of our naval system were not, however, content with the triumph of the just portion of their case; they sought to brand the rajah as a cruel and greedy adventurer—in which attempt they fortunately failed. It is surely unjust to test the acts of a man living and ruling amongst savages by the strict usages of action acknowledged and found most proper for guidance in civilised communities. When, after his first appointment, Rajah Brooke returned to see his friends and to take counsel in England, he was welcomed very warmly. He was made Knight of the Bath; invited to dine with the Queen; found his portrait in the print-shops, and his biography in the magazines and newspapers. The government recognised his position; ordered a man-of-war to take him to the seat of his new settlement; gave him the title of Governor of Labuan, with a salary of L.2000 a year, with an extra L.500 a year as a consular agent, and afforded him the services of a deputy-governor, also on a good salary—the hope being that the result of all this would be the opening of a new emporium for British trade.’ To this notice might be added an expression of deep regret that there should be any controversy as to the real nature of Sir James Brooke’s operations in the East. This scandal ought surely to be put an end to by some distinct investigation and avowal one way or the other.

The above notice of Sir James Brooke naturally suggests a recollection of his relentless accuser, Joseph Hume, and we turn up the account of that personage.

’Hume, Joseph, a Radical Reformer, whose history adds another memorable example of perseverance raising its possessor from a humble station to distinction. He was born at Montrose, in the year 1777. While he was still young, his father, the master of a small trading-vessel of that port, died, leaving his widow to bring up a numerous family. Mrs Hume, it is related, maintained herself and her children by means of a small earthenware business, and placed Joseph in a school of the town, where he received an education which included instruction in the elements of Latin. With such scanty stores of knowledge, he was apprenticed to a surgeon of Montrose, with whom he served three years. Having attended the prescribed lectures to the medical classes in the university of Edinburgh, he was admitted, in 1796, a member of the College of Surgeons in that city. India was at that time a favourite, and, indeed, almost the only field for the young who had no other fortune than their talents and enterprise. To India, accordingly, Mr Hume went, and entered as a surgeon the naval service of the East India Company. He had not been there three years, before he was placed on the medical establishment of Bengal. Here, while increasing his professional reputation, he had the opportunity of watching the whole operation of the machinery of the Company’s

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service. His quick eye soon detected the deficiencies of the greater number of the Company's servants in command of the native language, an acquirement so valuable in possessions such as ours. He determined to acquire a knowledge of the dialects of India, not doubting that a sphere of larger utility and greater emolument would open before his efforts. The Mahratta war breaking out in 1803, Mr Hume was attached to Major-general Powell's division, and accompanied it on its march from Allahabad into Bundelcund. The want of interpreters was now felt, as Hume had expected, and the commander was glad to find among his surgeons a man capable of supplying the deficiency. He continued to discharge his new duties without resigning his medical appointment, and managed to combine with both the offices of pay-master and post-master of the troops. His ability to hold direct intercourse with the natives continued to be of immense service to him, and enabled him to hold simultaneously a number of offices with most varied duties, such as nothing but an unwearying frame and an extraordinary capacity could have enabled any one person to discharge. At the conclusion of the peace, he returned to the presidency, richer by many golden speculations, for which a period of war never fails to offer opportunities. In 1808, having accomplished the object for which he left his native land, he came to England, and, after an interval of repose, determined upon making a tour of the country, the better to acquaint himself with the condition of its inhabitants.' After making this tour, and visiting various continental countries, he returned to England, where he devoted himself to a political career; and since 1812, he has for the most part had a seat in the House of Commons. His parliamentary history since 1818 has been that of a reformer of abuses and enemy of monopoly, and he is respected even by those who differ from him in opinion.

Our next specimen is—

'Thackeray, William Makepeace, author, was born in India, in 1811. He is of good family, and was originally intended for the bar, of which he is now a member. He kept seven or eight terms at Cambridge, but left the university without taking a degree, for the purpose of becoming an artist. After about three years' desultory practice, he devoted himself to literature, abandoning the design of making a position as a painter, and only employed his pictorial talents in illustration of his own writings. For a short time, he conducted a literary and artistic review, similar in plan to the *Athenaeum*; but the new journal, although characterised by great ability, perished in competition with established rivals. He also, with the assistance of Dr Maginn, started a newspaper; but this was unsuccessful. His first distinction was won as a writer in *Fraser's Magazine*, *Punch*, and other periodicals of character. In the latter amusing periodical appeared his *Jeames's Diary*, a clever satire on

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the follies of the railway mania, exposing the hollow foundation upon which railway fortunes and reputations were made. His *Snob Papers*, published in the same manner, have since been collected and reprinted with great success. His satire is as keen as that of Fielding. His *Paris Sketch-Book* appeared in 1840. His *Irish Sketch-Book*, with numerous engravings drawn by the author, was published in 1845. In the next year, appeared his *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo*; and in 1847, the first numbers of *Vanity Fair* appeared, in the proper name of their author. This, Thackeray's first fully-developed novel, has been followed by *Arthur Pendennis*, completed in 1851. His Christmas-book, entitled *The Kickleburies on the Rhine*, was attacked by a writer in the *Times*; whereupon Mr Thackeray replied, in a very unmistakable way, in a preface to the second edition of the work. The critic fared very badly in the contest.' The charge made against Mr Thackeray is, that he abuses the characters of the literary class with a view apparently of catering to public prejudice. We believe that any such imputation is entirely unfounded; and that Mr Thackeray's observations on the infirmities of authors are due to an honest exposition of his subject. Mr Thackeray has lately imparted much delight by delivering lectures on the literary personages of last century; and in this very act has gracefully raised the public estimation of living authorcraft.

We may extract the following passages respecting the early career of Mr Dickens:—

'Dickens, Charles, the most popular writer of his time, was born in February 1812, at Landport, Portsmouth. His father, the late Mr John Dickens, in the earlier part of his life, enjoyed a post in the Navy Pay Department, the duties of which required that he should reside from time to time in different seaports: now at Plymouth, now at Portsmouth, and then at Sheerness. "In the glorious days" of the war with France, these towns were full of life, bustle, and character; and the father of "Boz" was at times fond of dilating upon the strange scenes he had witnessed. One of his stories described a sitting-room he once enjoyed at Blue-town, Sheerness, abutting on the theatre. Of an evening, he used to sit in this room, and could hear what was passing on the stage, and join in the chorus of *God save the King*, and *Britannia rules the Waves*—then the favourite songs of Englishmen. The war being at an end, amongst those who left the public service with a pension was the father of our novelist. Coming to London, he subsequently found lucrative employment for his talents on the press as a reporter of parliamentary debates. Charles Dickens may, therefore, be said to have been in his youth familiarised with "copy;" and when his father, with parental anxiety for his future career, took the preliminary steps for making his son an attorney, the dreariness of the proposed

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occupation fell so heavily upon the mind of the future author, that he induced his father to permit him to resign the law, and join the parliamentary corps of a daily newspaper. His first engagement was on the *True Sun*, an ultra-liberal paper, then carrying on a fierce struggle for existence, from the staff of which he afterwards passed into the reporting ranks of the *Morning Chronicle*. On that paper, he obtained reputation as a first-rate man—his reports being exceedingly rapid, and no less correct. In the columns of the *Chronicle* he soon gave proofs of other talents than those of a reporter; for in the evening edition of that journal appeared the *Sketches of English Life and Character*, afterwards collected to form the two well-known volumes of *Sketches by Boz*, published respectively in 1836 and 1837. These at once attracted considerable notice, and obtained great success; and the publisher of the collected edition, anxious to make the most of the prize which had fallen to his lot, gladly came to an arrangement with Mr Dickens and Seymour, the comic draughtsman—the one to write, and the other to illustrate a book which should exhibit the adventures of a party of Cockney sportsmen. Hence the appearance of *Pickwick*, a book which made its author's reputation and the publishers' fortune. After the work had commenced, poor Seymour committed suicide, and Mr Hablot K. Browne was selected to continue the illustrations, which he did under the signature of "Phiz." Meanwhile, Mr Dickens had courted and married the daughter of Mr George Hogarth, then, and now, a musical writer; a man of considerable attainments, and who, in his earlier days, whilst a writer to the Signet in Edinburgh, enjoyed the intimate friendship of Sir Walter Scott, Jeffrey, and the other literary notables at that day adorning the Modern Athens. The great success of *Pickwick* brought down upon its author demands from all sides for another work, and "Boz" agreed to write *Nicholas Nickleby*, to be published in monthly parts. In the prefatory notices, which give additional value to the cheap and elegant reprint of the works of Dickens, we are indulged with slight glimpses of his own recollections, personal and literary.' It is unnecessary to note the titles of Mr Dickens's subsequent works, all of which have justly obtained popularity. He has latterly entered on a path not dissimilar to our own, and in this he has our very best wishes. The cause of social melioration needs a union of hearts and hands.

FOOTNOTES:

[2] Bogue, London: 1852.

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY'S BOOK OF SYNONYMS.

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Accuracy of language is one of the things which, in ordinary speech and writing, is but indifferently observed. The reason, perhaps, is to be sought, not in any general indifference to correctness or precision, but rather in the want of some recognised authority, some specific rules or principles, to which the use of words apparently synonymous, yet of slightly different signification, might be distinctly and easily referred. It is in regard to the finer shades of meaning, the subtler touches of expression, the application of words and phrases where the strictest exactness and perspicuity are required, that an ordinary English style is apt to become loose and shadowy; and it is precisely here that we are entitled to expect the severest, chastest form of utterance. Coleridge used to complain of a general confounding of the word ‘notion’ with ‘idea,’ and was often at great pains to point out the distinction between the two, as also between many other words similarly misused. Archdeacon Hare, too, has remarked upon the common misapplication of such words as ‘education’ for ‘instruction,’ ‘government’ for ‘administration,’ ‘the church’ for ‘the priesthood’ or ‘ministry;’ and indeed holds that such a confounding of terms leads to serious practical misunderstandings and confusions.[3] Any one, upon reflection, will perceive that in the common use of these and numberless other words, there is often a signal lack of clearness and precision, and will hardly fail to notice that the error proceeds from a want of due attention to the nice and peculiar meanings of words which are vaguely presumed to have the same signification.

As a help to those who may wish to attain a somewhat more than common correctness of style and language, Archbishop Whately has recently published a small work on *English Synonyms*;[4] and the rapidity with which the first edition has been disposed of leads us to infer that the public is to some extent prepared to take an interest in the subject. The second edition, ‘revised and enlarged,’ is now before us, and it is thought that a brief glance at its contents may not be unacceptable to some of our present readers.

The word ‘synonym,’ as the archbishop observes, is, in strict reality, a misnomer. ’Literally, it implies an exact coincidence of meaning in two or more words, in which case there would be no room for discussion; but it is generally applied to words which would be more correctly termed pseudo-synonyms—that is, words having a shade of difference, yet with a sufficient resemblance of meaning to make them liable to be confounded. And it is in the number and variety of these that, as the Abbe Girard well remarks, the richness of a language consists. To have two or more words with exactly the same sense, is no proof of copiousness, but simply an inconvenience. A house would not be called well furnished from its having a larger number of chairs and tables of one kind than were needed, but from its having a separate article for

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each distinct use. The more power we have of discriminating the nicer shades of meaning, the greater facility we possess of giving force and precision to our expressions. Our own language possesses great advantages in this respect; for being partly derived from the Teutonic, and partly from the Latin, we have a large number of duplicates from the two sources, which are, for the most part, though not universally, slightly varied in their meaning.

'These slight variations of meaning,' he proceeds, add to the copiousness of the English language, by affording words of more or less familiarity, and of greater and less force. This may easily be understood, if we consider that the branch of the Teutonic, spoken in England during the Anglo-Saxon period, never became extinct, but that three-fourths of the English language at present consist of words altered or derived from that ancient dialect; that these words usually express the most familiar ideas—such as *man*, *house*, *land*, &c.; and that the French terms gradually introduced, being those of a more highly civilised people, were adapted to express the more refined ideas. This is true even of physical objects; thus, for instance, most of the names of the animals used for food are still Teutonic—such as *ox*, *sheep*, *swine*, &c. The Anglo-Saxons, like the modern Germans, had no objection to say *ox-flesh*, *sheep-flesh*, *swine's-flesh*; but the Norman conquerors, introducing a more refined cookery, introduced with it French words for the flesh of the animal; hence we have *beef*, *mutton*, *pork*, &c.'

It has not been the author's design to notice *all* the synonyms in the language—that, as he remarks, would be an almost endless undertaking; 'but merely, after excluding technical terms, and words which do exactly coincide, to select a few of those groups of words which are in most frequent use, and are most liable to be confounded.' His purpose, perhaps, will be more distinctly shewn, if we add a few more sentences from the preface.

'Many persons,' says he, 'imagine that two words must either coincide precisely in their meaning, so as to be, in the primary and strict sense of the word, "synonymous," or else stand for two (more or less) distinct *things*. Indeed, it would often be regarded as almost a truism to assert this; but those who maintain such an opinion overlook the fact, that two words, without exactly coinciding in sense, may nevertheless relate to one and the same thing, regarded in *two different points of view*. An illustration of this is afforded in the relation which exists between the words, "inference" and "proof." Whoever justly infers, proves; and whoever proves, infers; but the word "inference" leads the mind from the premises which have been assumed, to the conclusion which follows from them; while the word "proof" follows a reverse process, and leads the mind from the conclusion to the premises. We say: "What do you infer *from* this?" and "How do you *prove* that?"[5] Another illustration may be quoted in the synonyms, "expense" and "cost." The same article may be expensive and costly; but we speak of *expense* in

reference to the means of the purchaser; of *cost*, in reference to the actual value of the article.'

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This work does not profess to deal much with *etymologies*; the author thinking that any very strict attention to the *derivation* of words, in connection with synonyms, would only tend to confuse the subject. The history of the origin and growth of words must undoubtedly throw light upon their meanings; but he, nevertheless, holds the two questions to be completely distinct and separable; and thinks that, in an inquiry into the *actual* and *present* meaning of a word, the consideration of what it originally meant may frequently lead us into error. A few suggestive remarks are given upon this matter.

'Our question is, not what *ought* to be, or formerly was, the meaning of a word, but what it *now* is; nor can we be completely guided by quotations from Shakspeare or Milton, or even from Addison or Johnson. Language has undergone such changes, even within the last sixty or seventy years, that many words, at that time considered pure, are now obsolete; while others—of which the word "mob" is a specimen—formerly slang, are now used by our best writers, and received, like pardoned outlaws, into the body of respectable citizens.' The standard, accordingly, to which the author refers in the work before us, is the sense in which a word is used by the purest writers and most correct speakers of our own days.

The synonyms are arranged or classed according to the parts of speech to which they belong—namely, into particles, nouns, adjectives, and verbs. The uses of all the words are well defined, and sufficiently illustrated by examples; a table of contents and a complete index are also added, rendering reference to any word as easy as looking for it in a dictionary. The table of contents, indeed, will be found to serve most of the purposes of a vocabulary of synonyms: a glance at it will frequently give you all the words of similar signification to the particular one for which you may happen to require an equivalent. From the part of the book relating to *verbs*, we take the following; the words under notice being, *To teach, instruct, inform, educate*:—

'Of these words, the first two are often used synonymously, but they have also a distinct meaning. "Teaching," strictly speaking, when distinguished from instruction, is applied to the practice of an art or branch of knowledge: instruction, to the theory. A child is, correctly speaking, *instructed* in the grammar of a language, and *taught* to speak the language. Thus, teaching may be merely mechanical; while "instruction" implies a degree of understanding in the pupil, as well as in the master. A child who has been *taught* to learn lessons by rote, without understanding them, will find difficulty in comprehending *instruction* in the principles of what he has learned: hence, we speak of *teaching* a brute, but never of *instructing* it.

'*Information*,[6] again, is distinguished from instruction, in relation to the truths conveyed by it. Matters of fact, made known to one who could not have known them before, are called information: instruction elicits new truths out of subject-matter *already* existing in the mind—(see Whately's *Logic*, book iv. Sec. 1.)

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’A traveller gives us information respecting foreign countries; a metaphysician instructs us in the principles of moral science—principles drawn from facts already known to us. The two processes may take place at the same time: a child in learning a lesson receives both information and instruction: he is taught things he never knew before, and also taught to apply and make use of what he does know already. In fact, pure mathematics is the only branch of instruction which includes no information, as the propositions are all based on principles previously assumed. In short, a person who is informed, *knows* something he did not before; one who is instructed, *understands* something he did not before; one who is taught, can *do* something he could not do before.

’Education is more comprehensive than any of the other words before us. It includes the *whole course* of moral and intellectual teaching. One who gives occasional lessons is not said to *educate*. To *educate* (agreeably to its derivation, from “e-duco,” not “in-duco"), includes the *drawing out* of the faculties, so as to teach the pupil how to teach him_self_; which is one of the most valuable of arts.

’Moral training, considered *by itself*, is called “teaching;” this constitutes no exception to the rule laid down, as its object is to enable us, not to *know*, but to *do* what is right.’—(P. 32-34.)

’Few words, perhaps, are more apt to be misapplied than the string of adjectives treated of in the section next quoted—namely, *benevolent, beneficent, charitable, munificent, liberal, bountiful, philanthropic*.

’Benevolent and beneficent, together with their conjugates, have curiously diverged from their original meaning. Etymologically, “benevolent” implied merely *wishing* well to others, and “beneficent” *doing* well; *now*, “benevolent” includes both kinds of feelings and actions, and “beneficent” is restricted to acts of kindness on a great scale, and generally performed by some one of exalted station and character: hence, we speak of the “beneficence” rather than the “benevolence” of the Creator. It may perhaps be said to follow from this, that “benevolent” draws our attention more to the character of the agent; “beneficent,” to that of the act performed—retaining, so far, a tinge of their etymology.

’"Charitable” (when not used in reference to a mild and candid judgment of others) seems to be restricted to one kind of benevolence—that which consists in alms-giving.

’"Munificent” resembles “beneficent,” in referring always to favours on a large scale, and conferred by superiors; but there is this important difference, that “beneficent” always implies some real and essential good done, while “munificent,” as its derivation implies, may be applied equally to any *gift*, whether really useful or not. One who makes a present of jewellery or pictures to a friend, is munificent, but would not be called “beneficent.” If he raised a distressed family from starvation, the word “beneficent”

would be more appropriate. But one who gives largely to the public, or to some institution, is called munificent. It seems to convey the idea of splendour. No one can be called munificent who does not give on a large scale.

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’Any one who is ready to give *freely*, as the etymology implies, on whatever scale, is “liberal.” “Bountiful,” again, is stronger than “liberal,” and implies giving in abundance; it also differs from “liberal” in being restricted to *giving*; while “liberal” is applied to an easy style of expenditure in general; to the reverse, in short, of “stingy,” or “miserly.” Many people live in a *liberal* style, who are very far from being “bountiful.” Bountiful always seems to imply, giving out of an ample store.

’"Philanthropic,” as its etymology indicates, implies benevolence solely in reference to the *human race*, and always to masses, not to individuals. One who devises some plan to benefit numbers, is called “philanthropic;” but we should not talk of “philanthropically giving a loaf to a hungry child."’—(P. 83-85.)

As space is beginning to press, our last extract must be short: it relates to words often enough employed indiscriminately—*imagination, conception, fancy*. ’"Imagination” and “fancy” are frequently confounded together, but are, nevertheless, very distinct in their signification. In the first place, “imagination” implies more of a *creative* power than “fancy;” it requires a greater combination of various powers, and is therefore a higher exercise of genius. “Fancy,” on the other hand, is more an employment of ingenuity and taste, though it also requires inventive power. Secondly, “imagination” implies a longer flight; “fancy,” rather a succession of short efforts: the one is a steady blaze; the other, a series of sparkles. An epic poem would require an exercise of the first; a ballad, or other lighter production, of the last: hence, we may see that the difference between the two is, in some measure, one of subject-matter; for the same power which we call “fancy” when employed in a melody of Moore, would be called “imagination” in the works of Dante or Milton. In short, the efforts of “fancy” bear the same relation to those of “imagination” that the carving and polishing of a gem or seal does to sculpture.

’In the third place, *wit* may come into works of “fancy,” and could not be admitted into the province of “imagination.” The same with what are called *conceits*.

’"Conception” has something in common with imagination, but it implies more decidedly a creative power, and is referred to something tangible and real; whereas, in efforts of fancy and imagination, there is always a consciousness of unreality. The province of “conception” is that which has a real existence: hence, the productions of painters, sculptors, and musicians, are called “conceptions.” “Conception” also denotes something framed and originated in our *own* mind; whereas the imagination or fancy may be acted on merely from without. The poet or writer of fiction exercises his own conceptions, but awakens the imagination of his readers.’

These quotations will give as general a notion of the work as can be conveyed by a few extracts. To those among our readers who may be in quest of such a book, we can decidedly recommend it as one that is certain to be useful. It is by far the best of the kind that we have ever happened to meet with; and we think that if it were universally

studied and consulted, the result would be a great improvement of expression, both in common speech and literature.

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FOOTNOTES:

[3] See *Guesses at Truth*. First series.

[4] *A Selection of English Synonyms*. Second Edition. Parker, London: 1852.

[5] See Whately's *Logic*, book iv., chap. 3, Sec. 1, in which the above is illustrated by the difference between the road from London to York and the road from York to London.

[6] The nouns are used here instead of the verbs for convenience sake, as they precisely correspond.

'CHAPTER ON CATS.'

In No. 419 of this Journal, an article with the above heading mentions among the exports from New York to New Granada 100 *cats*. Wherever our contributor may have picked up his intelligence, the original source is the *New York Herald*; but, unluckily, a paper of a more practical character—if we may judge from its title—*The Dry-Goods Reporter*, gives the custom-house entry in full, in which the change of a single vowel makes a prodigious difference. The entry is this: '100 *cots*—125 dollars—to Granada.'

A MARINER'S WIFE.

'Ah me, my dream!' pale Helen cried,
With hectic cheeks aglow:
'Why wake me? Hide that cruel beam!
I'll not win such another dream
On this side heaven, I know.

'I almost feel the leaping waves,
The wet spray on my hair,
The salt breeze singing in the sail,
The kind arms, strong as iron-mail,
That held me safely there.

'I'll tell thee:—On some shore I stood,
Or sea, or inland bay,
Or river broad, I know not—save
There seemed no boundary to the wave
That chafed and moaned alway.

'The shore was lone—the wave was lone—
The horizon lone; no sail

Broke the dim line ’twixt sea and sky,
Till slowly, slowly one came by,
  Half ghostlike, gray and pale.

’It was a very little boat,
  Had neither oars nor crew;
But as it shoreward bounded fast,
One form seemed leaning by the mast—
  And Norman’s face I knew!

’He never looked nor smiled at me,
  Though I stood there alone;
His brow was very grave and high,
Lit with a glory from the sky—
  The wild bark bounded on.

’I shrieked: “Oh, take me—take me, love!
  The night is falling dread.”—
“My boat may come no nearer shore;
And, hark! how mad the billows roar!
  Art thou afraid?” he said.

’"Afraid! with thee?”—“The wind sweeps fierce
  The foamy rocks among;
A perilous voyage waiteth me.”—
“Then, then, indeed, I go with thee,”
  I cried, and forward sprung.

’All drenched with brine, all pale with fear—
  Ah no, not fear; ’twas bliss!—
I felt the strong arms draw me in:
If after death to heaven I win,
  ’Twill be such joy as this!

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’No kiss, no smile, but aye that clasp—
  Tender, and close, and brave;
While, like a tortured thing, upleapt
The boat, and o’er her deck there swept
  Wave thundering after wave.

’I looked not to the stormy deep,
  Nor to the angry sky;
Whether for life or death we wrought,
My whole world dwindled to one thought—
  Where he is, there am I!

’On—on—through leaping waves, slow calmed,
  With salt spray on our hair,
And breezes singing in the sail,
Before a safe and pleasant gale,
  The boat went bounding fair:

’But whether to a shore we came,
  Or seaward sailed away,
Alas! to me is all unknown:
O happy dream, too quickly flown!
  O cruel, cruel day!’

Pale Helen lived—or died: dull time
  O’er all that history rolls;
Sailed they or sunk they on life’s waves?—
I only know earth holds two graves,
  And heaven two blessed souls.

REMITTANCES TO AND FROM EMIGRANTS.

Within the past few years, a system of foreign exchanges has been perfected in this country, by which the smallest sum of money can be remitted either way across the Atlantic, with perfect security and the greatest dispatch. Drafts are drawn as low as 1s. sterling, which are cashed in any part of Great Britain or the United States. This, to emigrants who wish to bring over their money without fear of loss, or to residents here who wish to remit small sums to their relatives or friends in Europe, to enable them to come to this country, is of vast importance, as it guarantees them against loss; that is, when the drafts are good. This is, therefore, the great point at issue. To obtain drafts of undoubted credit and security is the first thing to be considered. There are dozens of drawers on both sides of the Atlantic, all of whom have their friends, who place more or less confidence in the character of the bills drawn. We have no doubt they are all sound and solvent. We know nothing now to the contrary. The drafts can be obtained in any

city in the Union, for any amount, from 1s. sterling upwards, drawn upon some place in Europe; and drafts can be obtained in various European cities payable in any city of the United States.—*Abridged from the New York Herald.*

FOREST-TREES.

In contemplating the length of life of one of the reverend and hoary elders of the forest, we are apt to forget that it is not to be measured by the standard of man or of the higher animals; for it is really not the measure of an individual existence, but, as it were, of the duration of an empire or a nation. A tree is a populous community, presided over by an oligarchy, of which the flowers are the aristocracy, and the leaves the working-classes. The life of the individual members of the commonwealth is brief enough, but the state of which they are members, has often a vast duration; and some of those whose ages we have referred to, could they take cognisance of human affairs, would look with contempt upon the instability and irregularity of human governments and states, as compared with the unchanging order and security of their own.—*Professor Forbes in Art-Journal.*

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WHISKY AND MISERY.

Whisky and misery, whichever be cause, whichever be effect, always go together. There has been, as is well known, a failure of the potato-crop, and consequently a famine, in the West Highlands and Hebrides. In the island of Mull, about L.3000 of money raised in charity was spent in the year ending October 10, 1848, for the eleemosynary support of the people. In the same space of time, the expenditure of the people on whisky was L.6009! We do not know how much had previously been spent on whisky in that island; but we may judge from the fact ascertained regarding Skye. In the year ending October 10, 1850, the sum paid in the latter island for whisky was L.10,855—considerably more than *double the amount expended in relief by the Destitution Fund*, and *more than double the consumption of the same district in 1845*, the year before the distress commenced! 'That is,' says the *Quarterly Review*, which quotes the facts from excellent authority, 'the increased consumption of whisky exactly tallies with the extraneous aid received; in other words, the whole amount of charitable assistance *went in whisky*!'

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