

TABLE TALK.

STEAM—A MIRACLE.—Sir Ralph Woodford told us that when his steamer was first started, (in Trinidad,) he and a large party as a mode of patronising the undertaking, took a trip of pleasure in her, through some of the Bocas of the main ocean. Almost every one got sick outside, and as they returned through the Boca Grande, there was no one on deck but the man at the helm and himself. When they were in the middle of the passage, a small privateer, such as commonly infested the gulf during the troubles in Columbia, was seen making all sail for the shore of Trinidad. Her course seemed unaccountable; but what was their surprise, when they observed, that on nearing the coast, the privateer never tacked, and finally, that she ran herself directly on shore, the crew at the same time leaping out over the bows and sides of the vessel, and scampering off as if they were mad, some up the mountains, and others into the thickets. This was so strange a sight, that Sir Ralph Woodford ordered the helmsman to steer for the privateer that he might discover the cause of it. When they came close, the vessel appeared deserted: Sir Ralph went on board of her, and after searching various parts without finding any one, he at length opened a little side-cabin, and saw a man lying on a mat, evidently with some broken limb. The man made an effort to put himself in a posture of supplication; he was pale as ashes, his teeth chattered and his hair stood on end. "Misericordia! misericordia! Ave Maria!" filtered forth the Columbian. Sir Ralph asked the man what was the cause of the strange conduct of the crew; "Misericordia!" was the only reply.

"Subis quien soy?" Do you know who I am?

"El—El—O Senor! misericordia! Ave Maria!" answered the smuggler.

It was a considerable time before the fellow could be brought back to his senses, when he gave this account of the matter: that they saw a vessel, apparently following them, with only two persons on board, and steering, without a single sail, directly in the teeth of the wind, current, and tide:

Against the breeze, against the tide,
She steaded with upright keel,

That they knew no ship could move in such a course by human means; that they heard a deep roaring noise, and saw an unusual agitation of water, which their fears magnified; finally, that they concluded it to be a supernatural appearance, accordingly drove their own vessel ashore in an agony of terror, and escaped as they could; that he himself was not able to move, and that when he heard Sir Ralph's footsteps, he verily and indeed believed that he was fallen into the hands of the Evil Spirit.—*Coleridge's West Indies.*

FRENCH WOMEN.—There is a facility of amusement about the French quite unenjoyable by the English, and inconceivable to them. Our ideas of good fellowship and society are substantial; we like to be excited and entertained highly when we come together; but to be dressed and to go out, and to chat, is enough for the Parisian dame! she looks neither for feasting, nor wit, nor yet for any intellectual intercourse! she will dress in all her jewels to appear at her friend's *soiree*, when she and all the company will feel themselves sufficiently amused by a child set to dance, or to prate with naivete: this, with a sorbet or an ice contents her; she is the most amiable being in life. Not so the English woman; and one, I believe, cannot be found disinterested, and at the same time experienced on the point, that would not pronounce the choicest French society a bore.—*English in Italy.*

JOHNSON'S EPITAPH ON GOLDSMITH.—It appears from Mr. Cradock that Goldsmith had, in some measure, the pleasure of hearing his own epitaph; of which the reader will remember that the neatly turned compliment, *nihilletigit quod non ornabit*, forms a prominent part. Though Johnson was sometimes very rough with Goldsmith, yet he always made him only his own property; for when a bookseller ventured to say something rather slightly of the Doctor, Johnson retorted: "Sir, Goldsmith never touches a subject but he adorns it." Once when I found the Doctor very low at his chambers, I related the circumstance to him, and it instantly proved a cordial.—*Cradock's Memoirs.*

PARISIAN POLICE IN THE REIGN OF LOUIS XV.—A wager was once laid with M. Herault, Lieutenant of Police, that an obnoxious paper, called the Ecclesiastical News, should be introduced into Paris at a particular barrier, on a certain day and hour, and yet that it should escape the vigilance of the police. At the time and place appointed, a man made his appearance, was stopped, and searched with the greatest strictness—in vain. No notice was taken of a shaggy dog he had along with him; but under the rough coat of the unconscious news-carrier several of those papers were concealed. The magistrate laughed at the trick, and owned himself outwitted.—*Vie Privée de Louis XV.*

THE LION'S PROVIDER.—It was generally supposed that Thurlow in early life was idle, but I always found him close at study in a morning, when I have called at the Temple; and he frequently went no further in an evening than Mando's, and then only in his dishabille. When Chancellor, he made great use of

the services of a Mr. Hargrave, and had occasion to give himself less trouble than any man that ever filled that high station. An old free-speaking companion of his, well known at Lincoln's Inn, would sometimes say to me, "I met the great law-lion this morning going to Westminster, and bowed to him, but he was so busily reading in the coach, what his provider had supplied him with, that he took no notice of me."—*Cradock's Memoirs.*

ROYAL DELICACY.—The King, having one day at dinner inquired after a person who used to eat at his table, was told that he was dead. "Ah!" rejoined the King, "I had taken care to warn him of it." Then looking round the circle, and fixing his eyes on the Abbe Broglio, he said: "Your turn will come next." The Abbe, who was of a morose and choleric temper, replied: "Sire, when the storm came on yesterday, whilst we were hunting, your Majesty was as wet as the rest." He then went out in a rage. "This is just the temper of the Abbe de Broglio," cried the King; "he is always angry." Nothing more was said of the matter.—*Vie Privée de Louis XV.* ["Get you home," said Louis on another occasion, to one of his courtiers, whose nose fell a bleeding; "it is a sign of death."]

LORD CHANCELLOR YORKE—THE MANNER OF HIS DEATH.—Having alluded to the short life of the much regretted Mr. Yorke, after he was Lord Chancellor, I think it incumbent on me to contradict the reported manner of his death, on the authority of one of his own family. He certainly was much agitated, after some hasty reproaches that he had received on his return from having accepted the seals, and he hastily took some strong liquor, which was accidentally placed near the sideboard, and, by its occasioning great sickness, he broke a blood-vessel.—*Cradock's Memoirs.* [The delicacy of expression discovered in this passage, may vie with Froissart's tenderness in describing the death of the Count of Foix's son, who had enraged his father by refusing to eat his dinner:—"And so in great dilemma he thrust his hand to his son's throat; and the point of the knife a little entered his throat, into a certain vein; and the Earl said, 'Ah, traitor, why dost not eat thy meat?' and therewith the Earl departed, without any more doing or saying, and went into his own chamber. The child was abashed, and afraid of the coming of his father, and also was feeble from fasting; and the point of the knife a little entered into a vein of his throat; so he fell down suddenly, and died."]

TEA-DRINKING.—The Duke of Grafton used to fill his teapot full of the finest tea, and then drop water into it from the urn, and drink the essence, professing that weak tea only was prejudicial, and that he took it thus strong for the benefit of his nerves. Dr. Johnson, whose nerves were at least as susceptible as his Grace's, declared himself to be a hardened and shameless tea-drinker, whose kettle had scarcely time to cool; who, with tea amused the evening, with tea solaced the midnight, and with tea welcomed the morning! The doctor's tea certainly looked as strong, but the quality, perhaps, might not be equally as good.—*Cradock's Memoirs.*

A VISION OF THE RESURRECTION.—Methought I saw a very handsome youth towering in the air, and sounding of a trumpet; but the forcing of his breath did indeed take off much of his beauty. The very marbles, I perceived, and the dead obeyed his call; for in the same moment the earth began to open, and set the bones at liberty to seek their fellows. The first that appeared were swordsmen, as generals of armies, captains, lieutenants, common soldiers, who, supposing that it had sounded a charge, came out of their graves with the same briskness and resolution as if they had been going to an assault or a combat. The misers put their heads out, all pale and trembling, for fear of a plunder. The cavaliers and good fellows believed that they had been going to a horse-race or a hunting-match. And, in fine, though they heard the trumpet, there was not any creature knew the meaning of it. After this, there appeared a great many souls, whereof some came up to their bodies, though with much difficulty and horror; others stood wondering at a distance, not daring to come near so hideous and frightful a spectacle. This wanted an arm, and an eye, t'other a head. Upon the whole, though I could not but smile at the prospect of so strange a variety of figures, yet it was not without just matter of admiration at the all-powerful Providence, to see order drawn out of confusion, and every part restored to the right owner. I dreamed myself then in a church-yard, and there, methought, divers that were loth to appear, were changing of heads; and an attorney would have demurred upon pretence that he had got a soul that was none of his own, and that his body and soul were not fellows.—*Sir R. le Strange's Translation of Quevedo's Visions.*

WARBURTON'S ANNIVERSARY SERMON, WITH HURD'S REMARKS.—Before Dr. Hurd was quite recovered at Lincoln's Inn, I once called upon him; and he told me that Bishop Warburton was to preach that morning at St. Laurence's Church, near Guildhall, an anniversary sermon for the London Hospital. "Then, Sir," said I, "I shall certainly attend him." "I wish you would," replied he, "and bring me an account of all particulars. I believe I know the discourse; it is a favourite one; but I could rather have wished that his lordship would have substituted some other;" then hesitating, added, "but it is perhaps,

of little consequence; for he does not always adhere to what is written before him; his rich imagination is ever apt to overflow." I was introduced into the vestry-room by a friend, where were the Lord Mayor, and several of the governors of the Hospital, waiting for the Duke of York, who was their president; and, in the meantime, the Bishop did everything to alleviate their impatience. He was beyond measure condescending and courteous, and even graciously handed some biscuits and wine on a salver, to the curate who was to read prayers. His lordship being in good spirits, rather once exceeded the bounds of decorum, by quoting a comic passage from Shakspeare, in his lawn sleeves, with all its characteristic humour; but suddenly recollecting himself, he so aptly turned the inadvertence to his own advantage, as to raise the admiration of the company. Many parts of his sermon were sublime, and were given with due solemnity; but a few passages were, as in his celebrated Triennial charge, quite ludicrous; and when he proceeded so far as to describe some charitable monks who had robbed their own begging-boxes, he excited more than a smile from most of the audience. "Though certainly, sir," said I, "there was much to admire, yet, upon the whole, to speak the truth, I was not sorry that you were absent; for I well knew that you would not absolutely have approved." "Approved, sir!" said he, "I should have agonized."—*Cradock's Memoirs.*

THE REGENT DUKE OF ORLEANS.—At a supper at the Regent's, the company were indulging themselves in jests upon the new Prime Minister, Cardinal Dubois. One of the most bitter fell from the Count de Noce. "Your Royal Highness," said he, "may make what you please of him, but you will never make him an honest man." The Count was banished the next day; and remained in exile till after the death of the Cardinal; when the Regent wrote to him to return. His note was not less singular than the rest of the affair; "With the beast dies the venom. I expect you to-night to supper at the Palais Royal."—*Vie Privée de Louis XV.*

WARBURTON'S LIGHT READING.—When afterwards we became more intimate, I ventured to mention to her, [Mrs. Warburton,] that Mr. Hurd always wondered where it was possible for the Bishop to meet with certain anecdotes, with which not only his conversation, but likewise his writings abounded. "I could have readily informed him," replied Mrs. Warburton; "for when we passed our winter in London, he would often, after his long and severe studies, send out for a whole basket full of books from the circulating libraries; and at times I have gone into his study, and found him laughing, though alone; and now and then he would double down some interesting pages for my after amusement."—*Cradock's Memoirs.*

ROUSSEAU AT DRURY LANE THEATRE.—When Rousseau was in England, Mr. Garrick paid him the compliment of playing two characters on purpose to oblige him; they were Lusignan and Lord Chalkstone; and as it was known that Rousseau was to be present, the theatre was of course crowded to excess. Rousseau was highly gratified, but Mrs. Garrick told me that she had never passed a more uncomfortable evening in her life, for the reclusive philosopher was so very anxious to display himself, and hung so forward over the front of the box, that she was obliged to hold him by the skirt of his coat, that he might not fall over into the pit. After the performance, he paid a handsome compliment to Mr. Garrick, by saying, "I have cried all through your tragedy, and have laughed through your comedy, without being at all able to understand the language."—*Cradock's Memoirs.*

All ages have produced heroic women, but none a nation of Amazons.

The wearing of rings is very ancient. It was prohibited in Rome to all mechanics, and men of mean condition, to wear rings of gold, so that granting a licence for any person to wear a ring, was as much as to make him a gentleman. The usage of sealing with rings is also of great antiquity.

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