

famous song "Hearts of Oak" was written, and some clever penman, whose very name now is lost, wrote a sketch of Bonaparte's invasion of England, which will contrast favorably with "The Battle of Dorking" of later days. In fact, invasion squibs were thick as snowflakes on a winter's day, and the whole country seems to have throbbed with the determination to fight to the death. Some of these squibs were not very refined, but all show signs of the unconquerable pluck which possessed the people. Some were needlessly bombastic, as in Ansell's etching of Napoleon "twenty-four hours after landing." This print exhibited the French Emperor's head stuck on a pitchfork, and two rustics are speaking.

One says: "Why, harkee, d'ye see, I never liked soldiering afore, but somehow or other, when I thought of our Sal, the bearns (sic), the poor cows and the geese, why I could have killed the whole army my own self." The other rustic remarks: "Dang my buttons, if that bea'n't the head of that rogue Boney. I told ou. Squire this morning: 'What! do you think,' says I, 'the lads of our village can't cut up a regiment of them French Mounseers?' and as soon as the lasses had given us a kiss for good luck I could have sworn we should do it, and so we have." Another print of Gill-ray's makes a rustic apostrophise the head thus: "Ha, my little Boney, what do'st think of Johnny Bull now? Plunder old England, hay! Make French slaves of us all, hay? O, Lord help that silly head! To think that Johnny Bull would ever suffer them lantern jaws to become King of old England, Roast Beef and Plum Pudding!"

Well, these things are not of the best, but they are very characteristic of the period, and helped to fan the flame of patriotism. There is no doubt that, as Mr. Ashton says, the bold front shown by the English people, and the unwearied vigilance of our fleet, saved England from an attempted, if not successful, invasion. The spectacle of upwards of 400,000 men voluntarily springing up in array to defend this country must have astonished not only Bonaparte but all Europe. We have no space to touch upon all the minor subjects connected with the Irish Rebellion of 1803, or with the rumors of spies in the country, but turn to more peaceful characteristics of the period.

Roads are, perhaps, as good a test as any of the civilisation of a nation, and persons now seated in an express train can hardly realise that at the beginning of the century the means of conveyance were only the stage coach or the stage wagon. The latter was a huge and cumbersome concern, with immensely broad wheels, so as to take a good grip of the road, and cover the ruts. These machines and the few canals then in existence did the inland goods carriage of the whole of England. Slow and laborious was their work, but a few passengers were poked in among the goods, and were carried cheaply. Mr. Ashton prints an advertisement, or bill of the Tunbridge Wells "original wagon," which appears to have journeyed to London and back twice in the week, taking twenty-four hours to perform the distance of thirty-six miles. The luxurious travelling of those days was by posting—i. e., having fresh horses at certain recognised stations.—People had to pay pretty smartly for this luxury, the price averaging one shilling per horse a mile. Sedan chairs were used in town at eighteenpence per hour,

and sixpence per hour afterwards. There were also hackney coaches in London, the fares being almost identical with those for chairmen. Moreover, the Thames was extensively used for traffic, and those were halcyon days for the watermen. Boats plied for hire from every "stair," and there was much touting and squabbling for fares among the owners. There were but three bridges over the river, and Gravesend was then the *ultima Thule* of the Cockney, though Margate and Ramsgate were sometimes reached by sail boats or "hoys," as Charles Lamb has duly recorded; but to round the Foreland was considered a very venturesome voyage. Yet even then the Pool was a forest of masts, for the docks were few and inadequate.

The lighting of the streets was very poor. Twinkling oil-lamps, flickering with every gust, shed a feeble glamour over ill-paved and dirty thoroughfares. The lamps were always needing fresh oil and wicks, and men went round almost daily to attend to them. Mr. Ashton gives a graphic description of the introduction of gas, and shows how it gradually overcame ridicule and opposition. Men ate and drank much more freely than now, and the "cult of beefsteak and porter" was at its height. Beer was the national beverage; but it was brewed, says Mr. Ashton, from good malt and hops, not out of sugar and chemical compounds as at present. The quantity drunk in London alone was enormous. Provisions were not so dear as now. Beef averaged from 6d. to 9½d. per lb.; mutton from 6d. to 10d. This, however, was in the latter part of the first decade of the century. At an earlier period the masses of the people at least knew—as we have seen—the pinch of hunger and of scarcity, and bread stuffs were very dear.

Concerning dress and the strange vagaries of fashion. Mr. Ashton has much to say. Headdresses of false hair formed structures marvellous to behold, and were in great request; the prices ran from four to twenty guineas, some, however, could be got for half a guinea. Powder was in great use; "quizzing glasses" were patronised by fops; while of curious bonnets, hats, coats, and diaphanous skirts and sleeves, there seemed no limit. Early in the century Gretia Green marriages were in full force, and it is surprising to be reminded that they were legal until 1856. The great vice of the age, which women shared equally with men, was gambling, and instances are recorded of ladies of title riding in public horse races, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, the Prize Ring, and other debasing sports were common and greatly enjoyed by the people.

But we must take leave of this interesting and highly instructive book. Mr. Ashton is entitled to great praise for his painstaking and conscientious work, into which he has managed to throw so many skilful touches as to make the whole a remarkably vivid picture of English social life in the first decade of the present century.—*Nonconformist and Independent.*

Cushions and pillows stuffed with pine, hemlock and spruce, are now the fashion. They make fragrant and useful ornaments for parlors and bed-rooms and are particularly grateful to people suffering with lung trouble or headache.

A glass full of pure good water should be colorless, odorless and tasteless.