

spite of the saws of palsied age, and the vituperations of unbending formality. Old customs, if they have nothing even to recommend them besides their antiquity, ought not to be lightly abolished. The few harmless recreations which the populace have, ought not to be unnecessarily curtailed; and an indulgence in those expressions of domestic or sexual affection, and of satiric merriment, which habit has sanctioned, is no great privilege, to be granted on the one hand, whilst, on the other, much importance is attached to their enjoyment, and much jealousy shewn at their attempted prohibition. I am ready to contend that these customs are not only harmless, but even laudable and moral; and that there is ample authority in the laws of the land both to prevent and punish any abuse or evil that may be ascribable to them, without making them the object of municipal persecution. The custom of the *Charivari*, I shall probably take up on a future opportunity, when I have sufficiently dived into the arcana of the mystic symbols borne about on such occasions, and ransacked those ancient annals and treatises that are within my reach, to trace the origin and history, as well as the etymology, of the ceremony, which I believe will be found to have prevailed in the days of the patriarchs, and perhaps also, from the rabbinical traditions, to have existed before the deluge, for in one of the books of the Cabala the particulars are to be met with of the celebration of a marriage between a giant of those days, and one of the daughters of men, in which troops of revellers are introduced, with exalted horns, (shewing, by the bye, the antiquity of the horn as a concomitant of unequal marriages) ascending the mountain whither the giant had carried his mortal bride, shouting *Valicara! Valicara!* which the rabbinical commentator considers as a valedictory ad-