

"WIT IS FOLLY UNLESS A WISE MAN HAS THE KEEPING OF IT."

CHARLES FOX and his friend Mr. HAIRE, both much incommoded by duns, were together in a house, when seeing some shabby men about the door, they were afraid they were bailiffs in search of one of them. Not knowing which was in danger, Fox opened the window, and calling to them said, "Pray, gentlemen, are you fox-hunting, or hare-hunting?"

"Go to the d—!" said LORD THURLOW one day, when storming at his old valet. "Pray give me a character, my lord," replied the fellow drily; "people like, you know, to have characters from their acquaintance."

CHARLES BANNISTER, coming from a coffee-house one cold and stormy night, said that he never saw such a wind. "Saw such a wind!" replied a friend. "What was it like?"—"Like!" answered Charles; "like to blow my hat off!"

Women who are given to chattering have been compared to clocks. FONTENELLE being asked what difference there was between a clock and a woman, replied, "A clock serves to point out the hours, and a woman to make us forget them."—It is also related that a Lady, aged ninety, said to Fontenelle, at ninety-five, "Death has forgotten us."—"Silence! not a word," said Fontenelle, placing his finger upon his mouth.

Dining one day at a party in Bath, QUIN uttered something which caused a general murmur of delight. A nobleman present, who was not destitute of the brilliancy of his ideas, exclaimed, "What a pity 'tis, Quin, my boy, that a clever fellow like you should be a player!" Quin fixed and flashed his eye upon the person, with this reply: "What would your lordship have me be—a lord?"

LORD NORTH, who had a perfect antipathy to music, being asked why he did not subscribe to the Ancient Concerts, and it being urged as a reason for it that his brother, the Bishop of Winchester, did: "Ay," replied his lordship, "If I was as deaf as my brother, I would subscribe too."

DR. MEAD, the celebrated physician, was once assailed in a pamphlet by DR. WOODWARD. The doctors met—a fight ensued with swords. Mead disarmed his adversary, and ordered him to beg for his life. "Never!" said Woodward—"never, till I am your patient!"

When SIR WALTER SCOTT was extending his garden at Abbotsford, an old servant was getting exasperated by digging some very stony ground. Sir Walter saw the old man's feelings were rather ruffled, and said to him, "That's grand soil you're working on."—"Soil!" replied the gardener, sarcastically, "A' think it's the riddlings o' creation."

The poet PIRON was about to enter the drawing-room of a man of rank at the moment his host was ushering in a titled friend. The latter politely drew back to permit Piron to pass. "Come on, your grace," said the master of the house, "he is only a poet." Piron immediately exclaimed, "Now that our respective qualities are known, I claim the privilege of my rank," and he entered before them.

MACAULAY having to review some bulky memoirs of Lord Burleigh and his times, began his notice with the delicately satirical statement that the book consisted of two thousand closely printed quarto pages, that it occupied fifteen hundred inches cubic measure, and that it weighed sixty pounds avoirdupois.

On a wet, miserable, foggy London day in Autumn, CHARLES LAMB was accosted by a beggar-woman with "Pray, sir, bestow a little charity upon a poor destitute widow woman, who is perishing for lack of food. Believe me, Sir, I have seen better days." "So have I," said Lamb, handing the poor creature a shilling—"so have I; it's a miserable day. Good-bye, good-bye!"

On one occasion LORD PALMERSTON distributed the prizes in connection with the Romsey Labourers' Encouragement Association. In one class there was a sum of thirty shillings awarded to a labourer in the noble lord's own employ "for having made provision before marriage," with the like sum to his wife for "similar prudence." Referring to this case, the noble lord said they were all taught that a virtuous wife is a crown to her husband, but here was a wife who was worth thirty shillings to hers.

Some years ago a gentleman went into a druggist's shop, and when he had selected what he wanted he told the boy in waiting to put the article down to SIR CHARLES NAPIER. The boy, who being a newcomer, knew not Sir Charles, started at the uncouth dress of his customer, and smartly asked, "How am I to know you are Sir Charles Napier?" Sir Charles coolly thrust his hand into his trousers, pulled out that part of his shirt marked with his name, and laughingly said to the boy, "There, my lad, will that satisfy you?"

When SIR JOHN CARR was at Glasgow, in the year 1807, he was asked by the magistrates to give his advice concerning the inscription to be placed on Nelson's monument, then just completed. The knight recommended this brief record—"Glasgow to Nelson."—"True," said the bailies, "and as there is the town of Nelson near us, we might add—"Glasgow to Nelson nine miles," so that the column might serve for a milestone and a monument."

When Mr. Alexander Baring became head of the banking-house of that name, he entered on a series of monetary operations on a gigantic scale and of European importance. The greatest of these—one of the greatest ever performed by a single banker—was, that he freed France from the incubus of an occupation of Russian, Prussian, and Austrian armies of 50,000 men each, by the loan of a sum of about £1,000,000. This momentous transaction occasioned the saying of the witty French Premier, the DUKE DE RICHELIEU—"There are six great Powers in Europe: England, France, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Baring Brothers."

Dr. Sewell and two or three other gentlemen, walking towards Hampton on a summer's day, were met by the famous DANIEL PUNCELL, the punster, who was very importunate to know upon what account they were going thither. The doctor merrily answered, "To make hay."—"Very well," replied the other, "you'll be there at a very convenient season—the country wants rakes."—The same gentleman, as he had the character of being a great punster, was desired one night in company to make a pun extempore. "Upon what subject?" said Daniel. "The King," answered the other. "The King is no subject," was the ready reply.

At a dinner party ERSKINE was seated near Miss Henrietta—, commonly called Miss Hennie—, who had been celebrated for her beauty, but was then somewhat past the meridian of life. "They say you are a great man for making puns," said Miss Hennie to the wit; "could you make a pun on me?"—"Ah, Hennie," was the cruel rejoinder, "ye are no chicken!"

"Doctor," said a man to ABERNETHY, "my daughter had a fit, and continued for half an hour without sense or knowledge."—"Oh," replied the doctor, "never mind that; many people continue so all their lives."

A story is told of SULLY, the painter, a man distinguished for refinement of manners as well as success in art. At a party one evening Sully was speaking of a certain belle who was a great favourite. "Ah," says Sully, "she has a mouth like an elephant."—"Oh! oh! Mr. Sully! how could you be so rude?"—"Rude, ladies, rude! What do you mean? I say she has got a mouth like an elephant because it's full of ivory."

In 1815, during the riots produced by the Corn Bill, several members, on their way to the House of Commons, were surrounded by the populace, who obstructed the avenues, and insulted those who were known to be friendly to the measure. One member, on entering the house, exhibited his torn coat to the Speaker, complaining of the want of protection. Another lamented the loss of his hat; another had been hustled in the crowd, and if not really hurt, seriously frightened. SIR FREDERICK FLOOD, who was a supporter of the Bill, and equally entitled to the displeasure of the populace, boasted his superior address in the following terms:—"Mr. Speaker, they surrounded me too, and inquired my name; now, Mr. Speaker, I hate prevarication, but, my name being Flood, I felt myself at liberty to answer 'Waters,' and so they let me pass without molestation." The story excited great laughter.