

THE LITERARY TRANSCRIPT.

(For the Literary Transcript.)

THE APPLE HARVEST;

BY ROBIN GOODFELLOW.

The scarlet berries of the mountain-ash hang in large clusters on the scantily clothed branches of their parent stem, and like the false things of a vain world, tempt the hungry traveller to pluck and taste, but the sharp acid of the bitter fruit sets his teeth on edge, and teaches him that there are many showy and fair-seeming things that please the outward senses, but when the rash hand of over-curious man grasps at a closer knowledge of their beauty, they are inwardly but tottleness and vanity. The hand that stretched over the grim vault of chaos, and meted forth a beauteous world of light and loveliness, ordained an universal harmony in all things it created—that those things which are useful to both for our souls and bodies should not allure us with an inviting aspect, but that the strenuous and toilsome labours of our hands should find for us the food that must sustain us here, and that through a weary pilgrimage of woe, our souls should find a lasting resting place in the eternal hereafter. Rank weeds and pestilent productions present a fair and tempting aspect, and grow spontaneously. Food that is wholesome, fruits that are nourishing require a tender care, and exhibit nouglt of the seductive graves that tempt the senses in the vicious tree.

But to resume, glitter the sparkling atoms of a brilliant hoarfrost over the dark brown remnants of a fall and foaming summer, and the clear atmosphere of the riping season, free from the mist that veils yonder June, resembles the age of man when his declining sun gives him a vision of calmer reflection, and clears from his path all the unwholesome hindrances cast by the wild irregular passions of his youth, enabling him to see and understand the prospect before him with a calm and steady eye.

The breath of the blithe husbandman curls in a wreathing cloud, as he whistles gaily, albeit "for want of thought" or care, and wends towards the orchard where his ruddy crops hang, doubtful whether their juicy ripeness is to remain neglected through the horrid winter, or whether the warm fate of preceding apple crops, a snug and close-packed residence in a thick skin is reserved for them by the heedful farmer—there to await the destiny marked out for every green and living thing—to form a portion for the feast of man.

As he approaches, seemingly conscious of his presence, they drop and roll at his feet and crave his care and protection. From mounts a nimble youngster into the loaded branches and shakes down showers of hard and rosy fruit; some he secretes in a capacious pocket, of richer hue and larger size, either reserved as a private feast for his own right well-beloved palate, or else for some right well-beloved village damsel, whose cheeks he thinks will bear comparison with the ruddy and ruddy side of his sunny *pomme de neige*. Ah, he clambers behind a thick and leafy branch, and with a true and practised aim, darts a hard apple at the devoted back of some sour curle, and reaps a glorious harvest of shouts and merriment from his delighted companions. Now shows forth the young bent of each one's youthful fancy—the embryo mechanic seated in a quiet nook alone, carries snuff-boxes and toys out of a chosen fruit, the agile-footed youngling leaps from branch to branch, swings and sees-saws upon a bending bough, and gives back many peals of laughter to the anxious prayers of his astonished parent. Then the smitten swain, all passionate and earnest, strives to wlay the heart of his brunette,—industrious and careful the thriving young habitant cheers his companions to harder labor, while the still more thrifty and parsimonious one seeks for stray fruit and stows it carefully into the wide-mouthed sack, thus cheating the future gleaner of his just dues, and giving promise of a miserly old age.

I well remember when a boy I hid for many happy years among these harmless people, frolic and fun were all our care, and of the morrow we knew nothing more than that it was another day to be enjoyed. A frugal habitant blessed with a copious share of corn, and wine, and oil, counted among the many rich enclosures of his farm, too goodly orchards. Young mouths are fond of fruits, and mine would water at the very name of apples—old Trojan, a worthy scion of a Newfoundland breed of high respectability and soundland breed of the apple harvest, name, used on the approach of a New-England, to be called upon to exercise one of his many useful qualities, for with a face demure, my dog and I would sail forth, by round-a-

bout paths, until we reached the fence that barred my entrance to the old man's orchard—then a potato was duly moistened in the usual manner and thrown under a favourite tree, and Trojan leaped to find it; he in his hurry to meet the wishes of his master, waited not to choose among so many potatoes the one that I had flung, and he came bounding along with one of old Perinelle's apples in his mouth, and which was speedily transferred to mine, and this often repeated, secured me, as a natural consequence, what is vulgarly termed—a belly-full."

But among the group I left employed in the more legal appropriation of their own fruit, a stir has taken place, the deep-mouthed shell blown by a provident housewife at home, has summoned them to a meridian dinner, and they are plodding homewards, where, an it like you, we will leave them. Quebec, Feb. 17th, 1838.

MISCELLANEOUS SELECTIONS.

Among the many superstitions to which the Polish nation is addicted, I may be forgiven for relating the following, as its elegance of form almost redeems its absurdity. Every individual is supposed to be born under some particular destiny, or fate, which it is impossible for him to avoid. The month of his nativity has a mysterious connection with one of the known precious stones, and when a person wishes to make the object of his affections an acceptable present, a ring is invariably given composed of the jewel by which the fate of that object is imagined to be determined and described. For instance, a woman is born in January; her ring must therefore be a jacinth or garnet, for these stones belong to that peculiar month of the year, and express constancy and fidelity. I saw a list of them all, and was allowed to copy it, viz:

- * January—Jacynth of garnet.—Constancy and fidelity in every engagement.
- * February—Amethyst.—This month and stone preserve mortals from strong passions, and ensure them peace of mind.
- * March—Bloodstone.—Courage, and success in dangers and hazardous enterprises.
- * April—Sapphire or diamond.—Repentance and innocence.
- * May—Emerald.—Success in love.
- * June—Agate.—Long life and health.
- * July—Cornelian or ruby.—The forgetfulness or the cure of evils springing from friendship or love.
- * August—Sardonyx.—Conjugal fidelity.
- * September—Chrysolite.—Preserves from ills or cures folly.
- * October—Aquamarine, or opal.—Misfortune and hope.
- * November—Topaz.—Fidelity in friendship.
- * December—Turquoise or malakite.—The most brilliant success and happiness in every circumstance of life; the turquoise has also the old saying, that "he who possesses a turquoise will always be sure of friends."

SERVANTS AT THE HALL DOOR.—Every thing in life, in disease, and even in death has its peculiar laws; and from the first moment of its existence, to its final extinction, these laws become more and more visible by reason of certain signs which individualize each thing, thereby distinguishing it from all others. It is the province of an observant man to treasure up these signs; knowledge is composed of them; and he knows most of life, and is most of a man of the world, who carefully notes the largest amount of such criteria;—as he is also the best physician whose treasury of *adjunct and pathognomonic* diagnostics, is the amplest. The arrogance of prosperity and the subdued feeling of poverty; the expansion of benevolence, and the contraction of avarice; the hilarity and amiableness of youth and the misanthropy and envy of bachelorism and old maidism; with, indeed, every other affection of the heart, faculty of the mind and habit of the body, have their fixed laws, and their unerring signs, concerning which there is scarce any more room for mistake than there is in examining the motions and their results, of their heavenly bodies. To apply our grave philosophizing to one of the *smallest* of subjects—the mode of opening a hall door by servants in many houses! If the master be a fine gentleman, hospitable gentleman, the servant is sure to throw open the door to its fullest swing, to erect you with a welcome countenance, and to usher you in with a gracious, but still an inoffensive manner. If no one be at home, he receives the card as a familiar matter, and

a pleasant smile seems to intimate by countenance, not by words, his disappointment at your's and the door is closed respectfully, silently and slyly when you have passed some yards from it. If, on the other hand, the master be a wary, close, and secluded man, the servant cautiously opens the door in part; seems willing to take but a *peep* at you, and that you shall scarce have the like privilege at him, or at the hall; and if the master be at home, you find some difficulty in entering yourself by his man; and the adytum of the inhospitable host is found, more by your own exertion, than by the servant's assistance.—If you are obliged to leave a card there, the servant receives it slyly and suspiciously; he eyes it for a moment, and the door slams after you, the instant you have passed from the threshold! These different modes of receipt are characteristic of sets, of cities, of nations, and even of ages, and we could demonstrate did time permit! And we have often thought, (may experience,) that we could pronounce with some degree of confidence, *a priori*, that where the halls are very narrow, and the doors move slyly on their hinges, and the servants seem to take a reluctant peep at you,—persons of a particular set, or their descendants, dwell therein, and an expansive hospitality is a stranger in those houses. At other times we have seen halls more ample than even the other apartments; the doors standing wide open nearly at all hours; the servant promptly responsive to the old-fashioned knocker, not waiting to reply to your interrogatory as to the master, but ushering you in, with smiles and evident satisfaction; your horse, if the call be in the country, is instantly taken—if your visit be in town, you are at once on a comfortable sofa of the most ample dimensions, or an equally commodious arm chair before a blazing fire, if it be in winter, and with a full supply of fans, if it be on an oppressive summer day. That house, be it in the country, or in one of the towns, we pronounce to be the abode of *traditional* hospitality; and, we find moreover, that the whole land is filled with others just like it.

PRINCE TALLEYRAND was born lame, and his limbs are fastened to his trunk by an iron apparatus, on which he strikes ever and anon his gigantic cane, to the great dismay of those who see him for the first time—an eye not dimmed by the look of his piercing grey eyes, peering through his shaggy eyebrows; his sunbathed face, marked with deep stains, covered partly by his stock of extraordinary hair, partly by his enormous cravat, which supports a large protruding lip, drawn over his upper lip with a cynical expression no painting could render. Add to this apparatus of terror his dead silence, broken occasionally by the most sepulchral guttural monosyllables. Talleyrand's pulse, which roll a stream of enormous volume, intermits and pauses at every sixth beat. This he constantly points out triumphantly as a test of nature, giving him at once a superiority over other men. Thus, he says, all the missing pulsations are added to the sum total of his life, and his longevity and strength appear to support this extraordinary theory. He likewise asserts that it is this which enables him to do without sleep.

"Nature," says he, "sleeps and recruits herself at every intermission of my pulse." And, indeed, you see, him, time after time, rise after three o'clock in the morning from the waiat table; then will he return home, and often wake up one of his secretaries to keep him company, or to talk of business.—At four he will go to bed, sitting nearly bolt upright in his bed with innumerable night caps on his head, to keep it warm, as he says, to feed his intellect with blood; but, in fact, it is to prevent his injuring the seat of knowledge if he tumble on the ground; and he sits upright from his tendency to apoplexy, which would, no doubt, seize him if he were perfectly recumbent. We may remember the newspapers stating he was found a few years ago, his head having dropped from his pillow, so drowned in blood that without it was to be seen. Although he goes to bed so late, at six or seven at most he wakes, and sends for his attendants.

He constantly refers to the period when he was Minister of Foreign Affairs, and when this power to live without sleep enabled him to go out and seek information, as well as pleasure, in society, till twelve or one o'clock. At that hour he returned to his office, read over all the letters that had arrived in the day, put marginal indications of the answers to be returned, and then on waking again at six read over all the letters written in consequence of his orders. When Talleyrand was

engaged in the protocols here he used to tire out all his younger colleagues; and full well we knew now by experience, that at the time of the Quadruple Treaty, and on many other occasions, his eyes were open while Lord Palmerston slept. To these peculiarities we could add that he eats but one meal a day.—After serving his guests, which he always insists on doing, he gulps down, dish after dish, a volume altogether that would satisfy a boa constrictor."

ANIMAL KINDNESS.—In the Menagerie at Brussels, in a cell where a lion called Danco was kept, and which was in want of some repairs; his keeper desired a carpenter to set about them; but when the workman came, and saw the lion, he drew back with terror. The keeper entered the animal's cell, and led him to the upper part of it, while the other part was repairing. He there amused himself some time playing with the lion, and being so weary, he soon fell asleep. The carpenter, fully relying upon the vigilance of the keeper, pursued his work anxious, it may be supposed, to have done with it as soon as possible. When he had finished, he called William, the keeper to see what he had done, but William made no answer. Having, repeatedly called in vain he began to feel alarmed at his silence, and he determined to go to the upper part of the cell, where, looking through the railing, he saw the lion and the keeper sleeping, side by side, and immediately he uttered a loud cry. The lion awaked by the noise, started up, and stared at the carpenter with an eye of fury, and then, placing his paw on the breast of his keeper, lay down to sleep again. The poor carpenter was dreadfully frightened, and not knowing how he could rouse up William, he ran out and related what he saw. Some of the attendants of the house came and opened the door which the carpenter had secured with several bars, and contrived to awaken the keeper who upon opening his eyes did not appear in the least apprehensive on account of the situation in which he found himself. He took the paw of the lion and shook it gently in token of regard, and the animal quietly returned with him to his former residence.

CURE FOR A CONSUMPTION.

In the month of May, gather the flowers from the thorn bush, boil two bunches of the blossom in half a pint of milk—let it stand till it is about as warm as milk from the cow—drink it the first thing in the morning, and take a walk immediately afterwards, if the weather is favourable, and a cure will soon be effected.—This recipe has performed a perfect cure on many persons; and one thing most strongly recommend it, which is, the impossibility of its being injurious to the complaint, or to health, and therefore well worth trying.—The flowers will keep good, and be fit for use all the year, if they are well sprinkled with salt, then put into an earthen pan, or preserve jar, and tied down tight to keep the air from them.

PRICES OF MEAT, POULTRY, VEGETABLES, &c. IN THE QUEBEC MARKET.

	Saturday Morning, 3th February.	d.	q.	lb.
Beef, per lb.	0	4	0	5
Mutton, per lb.	0	5	0	6
Do. per quarter	2	6	3	6
Veal, per lb.	0	6	0	7
Do. per quarter	3	6	5	0
Pork, per lb.	0	5	0	7
Rounds of Beef, corned	0	5	0	0
Briskets, do.	0	5	0	0
Tongues, each do.	2	0	2	6
Hams, per lb.	0	8	0	0
Bacon, per lb.	0	8	0	0
Fowls, per couple	3	0	4	0
Ducks, per couple	4	6	5	0
Turkeys, per couple	10	0	13	0
Geese, per couple	6	0	7	6
Fish, Cod, [fresh], per lb.	0	4	0	0
Butter, fresh, per lb.	1	3	1	6
Do. salt, in tinnets, per lb.	0	9	0	10
Eggs, per dozen	1	3	0	0
Potatoes, per bushel	1	6	2	0
Turnips, per bil.	1	3	0	0
Apples, per bushel	2	0	3	0
Pears, per do.	6	0	7	6
Oats, per bushel	1	8	2	0
Hay, per hundred bundles	25	0	37	6
Straw, do.	12	6	15	6
Fire-wood, per cord	10	0	12	0

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