

THE PERVERSENESS OF WOMEN.

There is an old story, of a man, who had married a young lady, and who had a friend somewhat sceptical as to the obedient tendency of the wife's disposition, much to the dissatisfaction of the Benedick, who strongly asserted and warmly asseverated that his will was law, and that she never by any chance disobeyed any wish or injunction of his.

"Have you ever tried her temper in that respect?" said the friend: "have you ever desired her positively not to do any particular thing? for that is my point, since you tell me she never refuses to do whatever you desire her to do."

"No!" said the affectionate husband, "I never have found occasion to desire her not to do anything, but—"

"That's it! as the old women say," cried the friend, "female obedience is proved by negatives; tell her not to do any particular thing, give her no particular reason why, and see if she does not do it."

"Ridiculous!" says the husband.

"Try!" said the friend.

"Well," replied the husband, "agreed! we are both going away for the day; what proof shall I put her too? what shall I tell her not to do? may she not play her harp? must she not sing, or draw? or, in fact, tell me what you want me to prohibit her doing, and I stake my life she does it not."

"Oh, no!" said the friend, "drawing and singing, and playing the harp, are things which she might abstain from without a murmur, or, what is more essential to the affair, a wonder; because she has sung, and played, and drawn a thousand times; it is an injunction not to do something she has never done before—for instance, tell her when we go, not to climb some particular hill, for particular reasons which you do not choose to give her; or, by way of carrying the principle out to its fullest extent, warn her not to attempt to ride on the dog's back."

"Neptune's back!" said the husband. "Yes," replied the friend, "on the back of this most valued Newfoundland dog, the bravest and faithfullest of his breed."

"Ride on a dog's back!" exclaimed Benedick, "how can you be so absurd?—as if—"

"Ah! there it is," said the friend, "as if—now, take my word for it, if you issue the injunction, without giving her any reason, Harriet will break it."

The most incredulous of men rejoiced at the idea, which he felicitously ridiculed, and resolved upon trying the experiment in order to establish his Harriet's superiority of mind, and his friend's exceeding silliness.

He parted from his Harriet, and with tender fondness she clung round his shoulder, as he said in quitting her,

"Harriet, dearest, we have seldom been separated since our marriage—I shall be back soon—take care of yourself, love—but, just attend to one thing I am going to say, dear; don't try to ride upon Neptune's back while we are away."

"What!" said the laughing Harriet, "ride upon Neptune—ha, ha, ha! what an odd idea!—is that all you warn me against?—why, what a ridiculous notion! why should you tell me that? What nonsense!"

"That, my dear," said the husband, "is a secret; all I beg of you is, not to ride upon Neptune."

"Ride upon Neptune!" repeated the lady, and she laughed again, and they parted.

When Benedick and his friend returned to dinner, the laughing Harriet did not as usual present herself to receive them; there was a sort of gloom pervading the house; the footman who opened the door looked dull; the butler who came into the hall looked as white as his waistcoat; the lady's own maid rushed down stairs, evidently to prevent a scene.

"Where is your mistress?" said Benedick.

"Up stairs, sir," said the maid, "there is nothing the matter, sir—nothing in the world, sir—only my mistress has had a fall—quite a little fall on the walk in the flower garden—and has cut her face the least bit in the world, sir; all will be well to-morrow."

"A fall!" said Benedick.

"Humph!" said the friend.

And up-stairs ran the anxious husband.

"What has happened?" exclaimed he, catching her to his heart, and seeing her beautiful countenance a little marred—"how did this happen?"

Harriet cried and hid her face.

The explanation never came altogether clearly before the friend of the family; but the accident was generally thought to have arisen from Harriet's having endeavoured to take a ride on Neptune's back.

THE EMPEROR OF CHINA AND THE MERCHANT.—During the reign of an emperor of China, who was celebrated for the vigour and strictness of his justice, a viceroy of one of the provinces of that vast empire, that lay most remote from the imperial city, having wrongfully confiscated the estate of an honest merchant, and reduced his family to poverty, the poor man found means to travel as far as the emperor's court, where he ob-

tained a letter to the viceroy, commanding him to restore the goods which he had taken so illegally. Far from obeying this command, the viceroy put the merchant into prison; but having the good fortune to escape, he went again to the capital, and threw himself at the emperor's feet, who treated him with great humanity, and gave orders that he should have another letter. The merchant wept at this resolution, and represented how ineffectual the first had proved; and the reasons he had to fear that the second would be as little regarded. The emperor, who had been stopped by this complaint, as he was going in great haste to dine in the apartment of one of his favourites, became a little discomposed and answered with some emotion, that he could do no more than send his commands, and that if the viceroy refused to obey them, he told the merchant to put his foot upon the viceroy's neck. "I implore your majesty's compassion," replied the merchant, at the same time holding fast the emperor's robe, "his power is too mighty for my weakness; and your justice prescribes a remedy, which your wisdom has never examined." The emperor had, by this time, recollected himself; and raising the merchant from the ground, said, "you are in the right: to complain of him was your part, but it is mine to see him punished. I will appoint commissioners to go back with you, and make search into the grounds of his proceeding; with power, if they find him guilty, to deliver him into your hands, and leave you viceroy in his stead; for since you have taught me how to govern, you must be able to govern for me."—W. G. C.

OWEN MACARTHY.

Among the many rich and pathetic narrations of Irish humour and pathos, which bespangle the pages of Mr. Carlton's *Trails and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, is one of "Tubber Derg; or, the Red Well," the principal character in which is Owen Macarthy, a loving-hearted peasant, who, in order to alleviate his distress, travels to Dublin, when after a fruitless appeal to his landlord for assistance, he returns to the abode of all he loves on this earth; and on knocking at his cottage-door, his demand for entrance is unheeded:—

"Mother of glory! what's this? But wait, let me rap again. Kathleen, Kathleen! are you widin, avourneen? Owen!—Alley!—arn't yees widin, childre? Alley! sure I'm come back to yees all!"—and he rapped more loudly than before. A dark breeze swept through the bushes as he spoke, but no voice nor sound proceeded from the house; all was still as death within. "Alley!" he called once more, to his little favourite; "I'm come home wid something for you, asthore; I didn't forget you, alanna; I brought it from Dublin all the way! Alley!"—but the gloomy murmur of the blast was the only reply.

Perhaps the most intense of all that he knew of misery was that which he then felt; but this state of suspense was soon terminated, by the appearance of a neighbour who was passing.

"Why thin, Owen, but yer welcome home again, my poor fellow; and I'm sorry that I hav'nt better news for you, and so are all of us."

He whom he addressed had almost lost the power of speech.

"Frank," said he, and he wrung his hand "What—what! was death among them? For the sake of heaven spake!"

The severe pressure which he received in return ran like a shock of paralysis to his heart.

"Owen, you must be a man; every one pities yees; and may the Almighty pity and support yees! She is, indeed, Owen, gone; the weeny fair-haired child, your favourite Alley, is gone. Yesterday she was berrid; and decently the nabours attended the place, and sent in, as far as they had it, both mate and dhrank to Kathleen and the other ones. Now, Owen, you've heard it; trust in God, an' be a man."

A deep and convulsive throo shook him to the heart—"Gone!—the fair-haired one!—Alley!—Alley!—the pride of both our hearts!—the sweet, the quiet and the sorrowful child, that seldom played wid the rest, but kept wid mys—! Oh, my darlin', my darlin'!—gone from my eyes for ever! God of glory! won't you support me this night of sorrow and misery!" With a sudden yet profound sense of humility he dropped on his knees at the threshold, and as the tears rolled down his convulsed cheeks, exclaimed, in a burst of sublime piety, not at all uncommon among our peasantry, "I thank you, O my God!—I thank you, an' I put myself an' my weeny ones, my *pastchee boght*, into your hands.—Keep me up and support me—oh, I want it! You loved the weeny one, and you took her: she was the *light of my eyes*, and the *pulse of my broken heart*; but you took her, blessed Father of heaven; an' we can't be angry wid you for so doin'! Still if you had spared her—*if—if—oh, blessed Father! My heart was in the very one you took!* But I thank you, O God! May she rest in peace, now and for ever! Amen!"

Necessity obliging Owen and his wife to leave their abode, they gain a precarious living by begging; at length, fortune smiles on him, and he returns to the resting-place of his "fair-haired one," and thus apostrophises over her grave:—

"Alley!" he exclaimed, in Irish, "Alleey, nhien machree! your father that loved you more than he loved any other human cratur brings a message to you from the mother of your heart,

avourneen! She bid me call to see the spot where you're lyin', my buried flower, and to tell you that we're not now, thanks be to God, as we wor whin you lived wid us. We are well to do now, *acushla oga machree*, an' not in hunger, an' sickness, an' misery, as we wor whin you suffered them all. You will love to hear this, pulse of our hearts, an' to know that, through all we suffered—an' bitterly did we suffer since you departed—we never let you out of our memory. No, *asthore villish*, we thought of you, and cried afther our poor dead flower many and many's the time. An' she bid be tell you darlin' of my heart, that we feel nothin' now so much as that you are not wid us to share our comfort an' our happiness. Oh, what wouldn't the mother give to have you back wid her: but it can't be. An' what wouldn't I give to have you before my eyes agin in health an' life? But it can't be. The lovin' mother sent this message to you, Alley. Take it from her. She bid me tell you that we are well an' happy; our name is pure, and, like yourself, widout spot or stain. Won't you pray for us before God, an' get Him an' his blessed Mother to look on us wid favour an' compassion! Farewell, Alley, asthore! May you sleep in peace, an' rest on the breast of your great Father in heaven, until we all meet in happiness together. It's your father that's spakin' to you, our lost flower; an' the hand that often smoothed your golden head is now upon your grave.

Another Brute Tamer is about visiting England to illuminate and amuse the novelty-seeking public. We learn by a Marseilles paper, *Le Semaphore*, of the arrival there from Columbia of the American vessel, *Bustard*, bringing Senor Martin Oataya, his son, and a racer of a new description, which bids fair to be a formidable rival to our aeronauts; it consists of a Condor of the Cordilleras of enormous size, the two extremities of his extended wings is thirty-two feet, who has been rendered so gentle and tractable, that Martin Oataya's son uses him like a horse, gets upon his back, and to the astonishment of all, flies with him to an immense height, managing him by means of a little stick with a steel point. The boy and bird reached Florence in twelve minutes, and returned in the evening.

Nature is an Eolian harp, a musical instrument; whose tones again are keys to higher strings in us.

Every beloved object is the centre of a paradise.

Surmise is the gossamer that malice blows on fair reputations; the corroding dew that destroys the choice blossom. Surmise is the squint of suspicion, and suspicion is established before it is confirmed.

The Public Garden at Gibraltar.—The alameda, or public walk, one of the lungs of Gibraltar, is ornamented with statues and geranium trees, which, indeed, they are. General Elliot is surrounded with more bombs than he was during the siege; while Nelson forms his companion, emerging, like Jonah, from two huge jaw-bones of a whale. At one end is a shadowy, silent spot, where the bones are laid of those who die in this distant land. This alameda was kept up by a small tax laid on the tickets of the Spanish lottery, which were sold in the garrison.

We understand Mrs. Rothschild has purchased Wilkie's picture of the "Pinch of Snuff," for 800 guineas; and that the same artist's "Village Card-players," for which the late Duke of Gloucester paid £50, has been disposed of to G. Bredel, Esq. for 500 guineas.

The Sebastiani del Piombo, was sold at Foster's rooms in Oxford-street, on Friday, the 20th, for 550 guineas.

We learn by the Nottingham Review, that Millhouse, the poet, died on the 13th inst. We shall give a memoir of this gifted but unfortunate man in a future number.

Punishment of a Tom and Jerry Boy, of the olden School.—Yesterday, one Daintry, alias Wilson, a carpenter, was whipt from the watch-house in Great Marlborough Street to the Blue Posts in Poland Street, for stealing knockers from gentlemen's doors. He had two brass knockers tied round his neck."—*Post Boy*, Dec. 14, 1747.

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