

the mind. We hang over the beautiful flower which we meet in the wilderness; the traveller is charmed with the oasis in the midst of the desert; and a great and generous action in a mean and an avaricious man, excites our wonder and approbation. At a carnival in—, a lady danced before a splendid audience, but besides her elegant movements, she was mistress of a dark glossy beard, and the audience were no less surprised and delighted with the spectacle of the one than by the exhibition of the other.

It is asserted by some authors that the Romans wore beards till the introduction of barbers. Now it is a grand question, whether beards were the cause of barbers, or whether barbers were the cause of smooth chins. The question is thus decided by logical argumentation: Beards produced barbers, and barbers produced smooth chins; hence bushy chins are the cause of smooth chins. "So!" said my worthy friend Sir Timothy Standfast, "and this is called logical argumentation." "Yes, replied my learned friend Dr. Bibliopole, "and the question was almost as famous as that of the ass between two bundles of hay"—placing the forefinger of his right hand in the palm of his left, and explaining the matter to the Knight. "Action arises from motives; now if two motives are equal and opposite, the mind or operative principle, like a balance in equilibrium, will remain at rest, and no action will follow. Thus an ass between two bundles of equally savoury and tempting hay, will eye the one and then the other, and, as the motives are equal, it will droop its head and starve." "This is logical reasoning," added Mr. Sneerwell, "but unfortunately for the science, when it was brought to the proof, the result was always contrary to the theory, for the ass never failed, if the bundles of hay were not very large, to begin instantly to one, and then make a bellyful of both." "You are disposed," said Mr. Macadam, the Rector, "to make merry with my favourite study. I know not, however, whether to approve or to condemn your ridicule. The present system of metaphysics, in my opinion, may occupy a place by the side of many of those obsolete systems which have passed into oblivion. But the philosophy of mind is the most interesting study to man, and when it commences a new career, and when its usefulness and its importance shall be appreciated, it will be deemed the most sublime of all human pursuits."

Beards, like every thing else, have had their fashions. It was the fashion to entwine gold threads with the beard, which hung over the chin in elegant festoons, and a fine gentleman became attractive not by the lustre of his wit, but by the lustre of his beard. What a ridiculous

fashion! Madam, I say with a bow of complacency, it was no such thing, for what is the difference between suspending gold from the hairs of the beard and the lobe of the ear? Nothing but fashion, which is a necromancer that throws its charms over us; and how easily would truth dispossess us of our prejudices, did we not hold them with so firm a grasp.

It was the fashion to shave the upper lip, to curl the beard, and to cut it into one or more points. To this last fashion the ladies made strong objections, and the fashion was abolished. "What could be their objections?" said my worthy friend Sir Timothy. Some ladies who were present smiled, but nobody answered his question.

An object is agreeable or disagreeable according to the ideas or emotions we associate with it. Society is divided into parties, and we are less anxious to arrive at truth than to recede from the party which is in opposition to us. A lady sings a beautiful song, with which I am charmed, but in walking along the streets I hear it bawled by a ballad-singer, and it loses its charm. I have a fashionable cut of my coat which pleases me, but I observe a porter who has got the same cut,—it instantly loses its pleasing associations, and I change it. Such are the courses and doublings of fashion, which is easier run down by vulgarity than reason. In a neighbouring nation, the sober and the learned trimmed their beards with lengthened gravity—and what did the fine gentleman do? They formed and twisted theirs into a thousand fantastic shapes;—and what then did the sober and the learned do? They cut off their beards altogether, and this was the origin in that kingdom of smooth chins.

The history of beards is curious, but in this age of shaving it is difficult to handle it; and I say with a grave author, that no investigation is more unsatisfactory than the history of beards.

FOREGIVNESS.

WITH misunderstandings and constrained intercourse arise between friends, or between members of a family, they seldom pass without a crisis, and an explanation; but these are dangerous moments of revolution, and for once that they wrench out the wounding thorn, it happens thrice that they press it in the deeper. Ah, why do we find it so difficult freely to forgive, freely to forget? We nourish our wrong; we meditate upon it, we desire to have some right, some recompense, and thus warm the serpent's egg in our bosoms. Blessed are the peacemakers! Blessed are the good who forget, who forgive, even without thinking, 'I forgive!'—*Mary Howitt.*