

A POETICAL COOKERY BOOK.

The writer of a keenly satirical and most amusing little pamphlet, which hails from the University of Oxford, has shadowed, if not demonstrated, that the larger portion of the poetical effusions which flood us from the purlieus of "Mount Parnassus" are capable of being concocted according to receipt. By way of illustration, he gives the ingredients and quantities of several popular cooks of the day whose names may easily be guessed from their respective "plats."

Touching the nature of poetry as illustrated by the productions of some noted pens of the day, the Oxford censor observes that it may be briefly described as "the art of expressing what is too foolish, too profane," or too indecorous "to be expressed in any other way." Then as to the materials with which they work, "animals, vegetables, and spirits," he proceeds to show, were by past lords of song deftly interwoven in their creations, whereas modern masters draw upon only one of the three, so that their readers are either deluged with fleshly lubrications, pictures of inanimate nature, or spiritual and metaphysical abstractions. Speaking of a noted poet of the "Lake school," he observes, "He confined himself almost exclusively to the confection of primrose pudding and flint soup, flavoured with the lesser celandine, and only now and then a beggar-boy boiled down in it to give it a colour. The robins and drowned lambs, which he was wont to use when on additional piquancy was needed, were employed so sparingly that they did not destroy in the least the general vegetable tone of his productions; and these form, in consequence, an unimpeachable Lenten diet."

Shelley's mode of cookery would appear to set the culinary code at defiance, though promising an exquisite hash or piquant-made dish. He "is, perhaps, somewhat embarrassing to classify, as, though spirits are what he affected most, he made use of a large amount of vegetable matter also. We shall be probably not far wrong in describing his material as a kind of methylated spirits, or pure psychic alcohol, strongly tintured with the bark of trees, and rendered below proof by a quantity of sea-water."

Let us turn to the "Recipes," which are arranged progressively for a tyro's use, commencing with "the silliest and commonest of all kinds of verse." "How to make an ordinary Love Poem."

"Take two large and tender human hearts, which match one another perfectly. Arrange these close together, but preserve them from actual contact by placing between them some cruel barrier. Wound them both in several places, and insert through the openings thus made a fine stuffing of wild yearnings, hopeless tenderness, and a general admiration for stars. Then completely cover up one heart with a sufficient quantity of chill churchyard mould, which may be garnished according to taste with dank waving weeds or tender violets, and promptly break over it the other heart."

Next is the recipe for concocting "A Pathetic Marine Poem." "Take one midnight storm, and one fisherman's family, which, if the poem is to be a real success, should be as large and as hungry as possible, and must contain at least one innocent infant. Place this brat in a cradle, with the mother singing over it, being careful that the babe be dreaming of angels, or else smiling sweetly. Stir the father well up in the storm, until he disappears."

The epic poem "may now be cooked." Our Oxford Soyer lays it down that as we may find some difficulty in obtaining a hero, we should content ourselves with the next best article, "plentiful and easy to catch, namely, a prig."

"Take, then, one blameless prig. Set him upright in the middle of a round table, and place beside him a beautiful wife, who cannot abide prigs. Add to these one married, goodly man, and tie the three together in a bundle with a link or two of Destiny. Proceed next to surround this group with a large number of men and women of the nineteenth century, in fancy-ball costume, flavoured with a great many possible vices and a few impossible virtues. Stir these briskly about for two volumes, to the great annoyance of the blameless prig, who is, however, to be kept carefully below swearing-point for the whole time. If he once boils over into any natural action or exclamation, he is forthwith worthless, and you must get another. Next break the wife's reputation into small pieces, and dust them well over the blameless prig. Then take a few vials of tribulation, and empty these generally over the whole ingredients of your poem; and, taking the sword of the heathen, cut into small pieces the greater part of your minor characters. Then wound slightly the head of the blameless prig, remove him suddenly from the table, and keep in a cool barge for future use."

It is unnecessary to mention the particular poem here so deftly dished and spiced, though it may be observed that the concomitants are equally useful to the novelist. From such favourable circumstances a highly wrought and *délicat* kettle of fish may easily be served at the shortest notice; and our sympathy is somewhat confusedly divided between the wrongs of the heavy saint and the temptations of the sweet sinner. For in this wicked world we cannot help pitying the superhuman trials of those erring ones when authors sugar the forbidden fruit out of an enchanted bag. What should we have done in their place?

Apropos of sugar, which Mr. Lowe so sagely described as the especial solace of ladies, we now approach the dazling, succulent regions of eternal "sweetness and light"—a combination of divine philosophy and transcendental poetry, barley-sugar and sunshine! What a charming diet for "an age when young men prattle about protoplasm, and young ladies in gilded saloons unconsciously talk atheism!" Is it surprising our mental stomach is disordered when we must, to be in the fashion, consume some such "plat" as the following, more deleterious than the frenzied combination of the hasty ball-supper on the swift-succeeding plates of two reckless, absorbed, flirting fellow-creatures?

"Take one soul full of involuntary unbelief, which has been previously well flavoured with self-satisfied despair. Add to this one beautiful text of Scripture. Mix these well together, and, as soon as an ebullition commences, grate in finely a few regretful allusions to the New Testament and the Lake Tiberias, one constellation of stars, half a dozen allusions to the nineteenth century, one to Goethe, one to Mont Blanc or the Lake of Geneva, and one also, if possible, to some personal bereavement. Flavour the whole with a mouthful of 'faiths' and 'infinities,' and a mixed mouthful of 'passions,' 'finites,' and 'yearnings.' This class of poem is concluded usually with some question, about which we have only to observe that it shall be impossible to answer."

Whosoever may have groaned over the exquisitely muddling,

discordant pages of a venerated master of strange dishes which are *caviare* to the vulgar, and generally more admired than understood, will appreciate the next recipe. Let us call it Analytical Pudding, and congratulate the lucky fingers that can extract a tasty plum from the bulky darkness. Would that it were possible to learn how many honest, plodding, common-sense readers have skirted the gates of Hanwell, trying to learn what the frantic poem was all about! The nightmare poet should be prosecuted by the Crown for hopelessly muddling the brains of John Bull.

"Take rather a coarse view of things in general. In the midst of this place a man and woman, his and her ankles tastefully arranged on a slice of Italy or the country about Pornic. Cut an opening across the breast of each, until the soul becomes visible; but be very careful that none of the body be lost during the operation. Pour into each breast as much as it will hold of the new strong wine of love, and, for fear they should take cold by exposure, cover them quickly up with a quantity of obscure classical quotations, a few familiar allusions to an unknown period of history and a half-dead fresco by an early master, varied every now and then with a reference to the fugues or toccatos of a quite forgotten composer. If the poem be still intelligible, take a pen and remove carefully all the necessary particles."

Passing over excellent prescriptions for the modern Pre-Raphaelite and long-winded narrative mythological poem, we arrive at the Byronic-Satanic. "Take a couple of fine deadly sins, and let them hang before your eyes until they become racy. Then take them down, dissect them, and stew them for some time in a solution of weak remorse; after which they are to be devilled with mock despair."

Our cook appears to agree with Johnson, that patriotism may be defined as the last refuge of a scoundrelism. Indeed the sight is not uncommon of a tavern demagogue, inspired by a "dogsnose," spouting "Chartism," while his poor wife and child cower cold and hungry round the corner. So we have writers of patriotic poems who might better serve their oppressed country by leading lives of ordinary respectability, and speaking moderately and decently.

"Take one blaspheming patriot who has been hung or buried for some time, together with the oppressed country belonging to him. Soak these in a quantity of rotten sentiment till they are completely sodden, and in the meanwhile get ready an indefinite number of Christian kings and priests; kick them till they are nearly dead; add copiously broken fragments of the Catholic Church, and mix all together thoroughly. Place them in a heap upon the oppressed country; season plentifully with very coarse expressions; and on the top carefully arrange your patriot, garnished with laurel or with parsley. Surround with artificial hopes for the future, which are never meant to be tested. This kind of poem is cooked in verbiage, flavoured with liberty, the taste of which is much heightened by the introduction of a few high gods and the game of Fortune.—*London Society*.

THE MONACO-RATAZZI ALLIANCE.

Anna Brewster, writing from Rome, has the following: "The last bit of gossip is the report of the marriage of the Prince, the reigning Prince of Monaco, to Madame Ratazzi! One can hardly credit it. But the news comes to me from excellent authority. It is not announced publicly, but I am assured that the report is true. *Si j'étais Reine* is the title of Madame Ratazzi's curious novel in which she lampooned Turin society. Then she hoped to be Queen of Piedmont. Now, if this story is true, she is a reigning European princess. What social luck for her, and what a blunder for the Prince of Monaco! Ratazzi has not been dead a year. The Prince's wife died ten years ago. That Princess of Monaco was a Princess Chislaine, Countess de Meroide, a kinswoman of Prince Amadeus's wife and of the Monsignor de Meroide who is to be named Cardinal in June, according to report. As the Prince of Monaco was born in 1818, his reported folly cannot be attributed to second childhood; he is at that period of life of which Byron said so wittily:

"The worst of all ages is the middle age of man."

"His son, the hereditary Prince, married the daughter of the Duke of Hamilton in 1869, but they soon fell out and parted company. Last year, when the hereditary Princess of Monaco and her mother, the widowed Duchess of Hamilton—who, by the way, was by birth a Baden Princess—were in Florence, the hereditary Prince tried to get possession of the child of this short-lived, ill-starred marriage. This child is a boy, and was born in 1870, so he is quite a baby yet. Everybody was on the side of the Princess, for it appears that the hereditary Prince is a bad fellow. The child was smuggled off into the house of some Russian lady, the officers of the Prince were forbidden to enter by the Russian authorities, and the Princess and her mother carried off the child. Madame Ratazzi has Bonaparte blood in her, and is acknowledged by some of her Bonaparte kinsfolk, notwithstanding her notorious reputation. She is probably one of the vainest and most conceited women living, and uses the journals for *réclames* as much as a quack doctor or cheap clothing store does. Her mother was a half sister of Cardinal Bonaparte, a daughter of Prince Lucien (the son of the old Prince Lucien, brother of Napoleon I.) by a second marriage with a certain Madame de Bleschamps. This mother of Madame Ratazzi married a Sir Thomas Wyse, who was English Minister to Greece. Madame Wyse led an adventurous life, and her daughter has followed in her footsteps. A gay Princess of Monaco she will make."

A GENTLE CLOWN.

Charles Dickens did not disdain to devote some of his youthful powers of genius to a sympathetic and heartily appreciative biography of the famous and irreproachable English clown, Joe Grimaldi; and the death, at Bordeaux, about a month ago, of Debureau, the greatest of French *Pierrots* and oft-celebrated delight of Theophile Gautier and Scribe, has induced many interesting reminiscences in foreign print. Like Grimaldi, the French grotesque pantomimist was the son of a professional clown of great note, who strove hard to avert the boy from his own vocation—for a time, at least; and, like the younger Grimaldi again, Debureau could not resist the hereditary instinct impelling him to the playhouse. He and the veteran Paul Legrand were long the renowned rival comic pantomimists of France; and his inimitable foolery in the whitened face, white peaked hat, and snowy costume of the traditional *Pierrot* made thousand of audiences roar over what

is the only clean and harmless humour of the Parisian theatre.

Before giving way finally to his inherited predilection for the stage, this genius of the grotesque acquired a good education, and always thereafter maintained the intelligence and manners of a well-bred man in private life; but on one occasion, when a wild young nobleman of Paris exhibited the questionable feeling and taste of inviting him to meet a party of learned *savants* at dinner, his professional wit got the better of his reverence. After listening for a while to the erudite discussions of all sorts of abstruse and scientific themes by the pundits around him, he suddenly sprang to his feet, seized two tapers from a pair of candlesticks on the table before him, turned a double somersault with marvellous agility and grace, and, in descending, replaced the candles in their sockets. "There, gentlemen," said he to the astounded pedants, "you have spoken what you know, and I have done what I know. So, we are quits."

At the particular request of the Khedive, Debureau paid a professional visit to Egypt, and in the City of the Pharaohs reaped a golden harvest of more than \$40,000. Low as his calling may have been in the scales of intellect and art, he was unquestionably the greatest in it of his time; the enthusiastic praises of the critical and æsthetic Gauthier gave him a rank much above anything conceivable in comic pantomimicry outside of France, and the ample fortune and blameless name which he has bequeathed to his children are proof of the compensations and sterling merit that may enter into a career apparently no more substantial than a sorry jest.

A Geneva physician has observed that among populations dwelling at a high elevation above the level of the sea cases of consumption are very rare, while on the other hand cases of pneumonia are very frequent. Having bestowed attention also upon therapeutic effects of a change of latitude he comes to the conclusion that a given increase of altitude produces always the same effect, whatever the altitude of the starting point.

The business agent of Miss Braddon and of Mr. Wilkie Collins has recently made arrangements for the publication of works by those two writers in Holland, Russia, and Sweden, and in the language of those nations, upon terms which recognize the interests of the authors. For instance, "*Lucius Dayore*," is to be published in the German language, and £100 has been accepted for the copyright; in the Russian language for £45, in the Swedish language for £30, in the Dutch language for £25, and in the Italian language for £10. "*John Jago's Ghost*," a short story written by Mr. Wilkie Collins in the *Home Journal*, is to be published in German, and £65 is to be given for the copyright; in Swedish for £10, in Russian for £15, in Italian for £5, and in Dutch for £5.

News of the Week.

THE DOMINION.—Mantoba wants to extend her boundaries.

—A terrible tragedy occurred on the Great Western Railway on Saturday 28th ult., resulting in the death of 7 or 8 passengers, and the serious wounding of 10 or 12 others. The Sarnia express left there at 8:20 p.m., with several petroleum and baggage cars, and one coach crowded with passengers. About midway between that city and Komoka station, an oil lamp in the closet fell from where it was suspended to the floor, and was broken. In a moment the oil ignited, and the whole interior of the closet was on fire. A panic at once seized the passengers, and efforts were made to stifle the flames by the use of the cushions, but it was found useless. In a few minutes the car was consumed, and those who could not escape were burned to a crisp.

GREAT BRITAIN.—It is said that the new Parliament immediately after assembling will adjourn for a fortnight or three weeks.—The company which issued proposals a few weeks ago for laying a light telegraph cable between England and America has abandoned the enterprise, because of scanty support, and gives notice that money deposited by subscribers to its stock will be refunded on demand.—Mr. Cardwell, late War Secretary, has been made a Peer.—The Queen has sent a congratulatory despatch to Sir Garnet Wolseley.—Advices from the Gold Coast represent that up to the 29th January it was doubtful whether the Ashantees meant peace or war. News having been received that a large force of the enemy was collecting in rear of the British forces, a reconnaissance was made, and this led to a series of battles which ended in the capture of Coomassie.—It is officially announced that the Duke of Edinburgh and his bride, accompanied by the Queen, will enter London on the 12th March.—The trial of the Tichenborne claimant, on charges of perjury committed during the trial for the possession of the estate which has been in progress for 180 days, was brought to a close on the 28th ult., with the conviction of the accused. The jury, after being out a short time, brought in a verdict of guilty of all the charges, and the claimant was sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude. There was great excitement over the verdict.

FRANCE.—The sale of the Conservative Republican journal *Le XXe Siècle* has been prohibited, because of a publication in its columns of an article insulting to M. Buffet, President of the National Assembly.—The French exhibition to be held in 1875 is a private enterprise.—The Court of Appeals has dismissed the claim of Naundorf, who styled himself Louis XVII, pronouncing the man a crafty adventurer.

RUSSIA.—At Yamud, the Turkomans recently made an attack on Russian fortifications; they were defeated, and while crossing the frozen river during their retreat the ice broke, and a large number were drowned. Gen. Kaufmann is to return to Khiva in April.

SPAIN.—Senor Serrano has been declared President of the Republic of Spain.—A despatch has been received at the War Office, Madrid, from General Moriones, stating he is unable to force the Carlists from the entrenchments before Bilbao, and that his own advanced line has been broken by the insurgents. He asks for reinforcements and the appointment of his successor.—President Serrano and Admiral Topete, Minister of Marine, left Madrid for the North. Zabala will act as President during the absence from the capital of Senor Serrano.

UNITED STATES.—The Woman's Temperance Association met with a very encouraging reception at Ithaca, N. Y.—United States imports for last January, from Great Britain, have greatly decreased compared with the same month last year.—Locomotive engineers are in sessions at Cleveland. Though the business is transacted in secret, it is thought the subject of a general strike is being discussed.—A Detroit despatch says information from the Upper Lakes indicates an unusually early opening of navigation.

CHINA.—It is reported that the Chinese Government notified Foreign Ministers at Peking that it cannot guarantee the safety of the lives of foreigners residing at Tientsin, and that the naval authorities here have been requested to send war vessels to Tientsin to insure their protection.