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NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Of the Dutch.—There is an apparent incongruity which I have observed in the character of the Dutch men—although unfaithful to their wives and mistresses, they are very jealous of them in their turn. The lower orders are strongly marked with nationality, and sometimes rough enough. When they meet with one who cannot speak to them in their own tongue, they will say, 'Lop na der veriek'—'Go with the lightnings.' The great use of tea, and coffee, which according to Mr. Cobbe's idea, is a failing in England, is here, in his theory be correct, a vice. Never are the tea-kettle and coffee-pot removed from the table of a Dutch family. Were the learned author of the 'Political Register' to return to life, and dedicate his attention to Holland in the same way as he did to England and America, loud would be his remonstrances against the eternal use of those noxious ingredients, as he would call them; and I have no doubt that his demonstrations would go to prove that, for the price of tea and coffee yearly expended in Holland, he would reclaim a second empire from the sea. A worthy man, with whom I conversed, attributed the laxity of the nervous fibre and the skin observable among the Dutch women, to this enervating habit. The total population of Holland, may be two millions and a half, out of which, perhaps, two millions read poetry and history. The literature of France is perused by at least fifty times as many.

Of the Germans.—It is delightful to see in this country the steps to the thresholds of the meanest houses gay with flowering plants; the small adjacent strips of land blushing with peonies and roses, whilst the honeysuckles and eternal creepers festoon the windows of the lowliest dwellings. There is a cleanliness of mind indicated in a taste for these embellishments, that savours of the golden age of innocence rather than of these vitiated times. Sobriety and peace may be said to dwell where Flora reigns. In fact, after the changes of war, the devastations of revolutions, and the corrupting examples of treachery and treason attendant on unsettled politics, there is, perhaps, no nation in the world more pure, more sincere, and more well-disposed than the German. Earnest and warm-hearted in their friendships, they love little ceremony; enthusiastic and romantic, they express themselves with the feeling that issues unadulterated from the breast; they affect no diffidence in communicating their pleasures and their griefs; they have little care to calculate

the convenience of exercising good offices. These dispositions very somewhat in different provinces; those most imbued with the manners of France are said to be the Prussians. I have, in the course of my life, known many Germans, and I cannot recollect any one with whose acquaintanceship I have had reason to be dissatisfied, save once with that of a Hamburg Jew. This nation preserves a peculiar character, I believe, all over the world; and Hamburg is full of the children of Israel. They manage most of its commercial affairs and prosper; jealous and averse to strangers, they regard, with an evil eye all who are not of their own tribe. While mentioning the cultivation of flowers, I omitted to say that the German vegetables are excellent. I may note, in particular, that their asparagus is white from the points, and so tender that generally, the whole that is served may be eaten; whereas in England I have often been obliged to satisfy myself with snapping off a morsel from the end of the vegetable, or if I proceeded further, encountered a bitterness in the mouth, and found the stringy fibres of the stalk about my teeth. The way by which the Germans at Hamburg render the plant so white and tender is, by never allowing it to rise above the bed. As soon as the green heads are perceived sprouting through the mould, they are covered with mats, forced downwards, and kept from any exposure to the atmospheric air. I have been told that in England lettuce is, in like manner, sometimes ripened in cellars, and becomes white by being kept away from the light.

Of Russia.—The climate of St. Petersburg is never good, and endurable only from May to October; but the glare of the white buildings in summer, and of the snow in winter, is most prejudicial to the eyes. The population exceeds the number of 400,000; yet I will engage that in Cadiz, which contains only 50,000, there are more handsome women than in St. Petersburg. Peter the Great when he contemplated the civilisation of his subjects, thought that a seaport, as a capital, would soonest introduce foreign customs amongst them; and the Swedes having made incursions into his empire in this quarter, he resolved, for both their safety and improvement, to build this capital. *** I look upon the Russians as still a *peuple nomade*—a migratory race. They have not abandoned the venerable appendage of long beards—the fashion of their cloths is still the loose flowing robe, bound with sashes, of the Orientals. Their caps and hats, even in the large cities, widen towards the top, in

imitation of the turban. They are classed as a European nation, but bear no resemblance to the descendants of the Latins.—*From Notices of Northern Capitals.*

TRICK! TRICK!

LORD JOHN RUSSELL has at last fairly warned the country, that, in as far as the chief Ministerial measures are concerned, the present session of Parliament is to be abortive. The House of Commons met on Wednesday; and on Thursday Lord John proposed, that after the 14th of May, Government business should have an additional day of precedence—namely on Thursdays—leaving only Tuesdays open for Members unconnected with the Government to bring forward motions. This arrangement was declared to be necessary if bills were to be sent up to the Peers in time for discussion before the prorogation. The House, however, was averse to the concession. Mr. Goulburn reproached Ministers with negligence in the conduct of public business. Mr. Hume intimated that Ministers themselves did not intend to bring forward the measures of which they had given notice. Sir Robert Peel resisted an ennoblement which might become a bad precedent; and could not understand why, if they were so much pressed for time, so very eager to carry their bills into the Upper House, Ministers had delayed the introduction of their Irish Tithe measure, which was now put off from the 30th of April to the 14th of May. Lord John Russell replied, that to suit the convenience of Irish Members, the 30th of April would be given to the third reading of the Poor Bill. He withdrew his motion; but took the opportunity of informing the House, that the consequence of its failure would be, that "measures of great importance would pass that House in the middle of July; they would be at once rejected in the other House; and then it would be a matter of triumphant boast with honourable Members, that they had so obstructed the progress of legislation that they had the happiness to say the Government had not been able to effect any thing."

No doubt, the Opposition will be apt to chuckle at the exposure of Ministerial inefficiency; it will certainly advance Sir Robert Peel's objects, to exhibit the first session of the Melbourne Parliament as a session of Whig blunders and failures; it will greatly damage, and assist in ruining, the public men whom he desires safely and permanently to supplant. But it may occur to persons not leagued with the Tory Opposition, to ask Lord John Russell how it happened, that with three nights out of every five at his disposal, the Ministerial measures were not got through the Commons till the middle of July, or disposed of in some other way? Before he is entitled to charge the miserable results of the session, on the refusal of the Opposition to give him unprecedented privileges, he must prove that he had previously made the best use of the time at his disposal. The fact is, that the Minister has had unusual facilities for the despatch of business. It is not true, as his newspapers have pretended, that factious opposition has done much to retard the work of the session. On the contrary, there has been nothing like a systematic opposition. Charles Fox with five-and-thirty Members, was more troublesome to Pitt, than Peel with his three hundred has been to Russell. The Civil List Bill was almost carried by acclamation. The Canada Bill experienced but trifling resistance; and the entire time of the House for as long a period as the Whig Minister chose to require was granted for the carrying of that Tory measure. The Irish Poor Bill is the only measure that has been carefully discussed; and there was no factious opposition to that bill. Meanwhile, the

discussions on petitions have been strictly prohibited—one of the "Reform" innovations; and the privilege of moving amendments on the Order of the Day curtailed for Ministerial convenience. But then, we had Mr. Grote's motion on the Ballot, Sir William Molesworth's on the Colonies, Lord Eliot's on Spanish policy—all obstructing the course of Government bills. Grant this, and what does it amount to? Out of four months, it will be found that scarcely two weeks have been occupied with these discussions, and others disagreeable to men in office.

So much for past hindrances. Now, what was Lord John's plan for making good the lost time? What was that mighty effort, the defeat of which by the Opposition is to cause the lamentable consequences described by the Ministerial leader? It was simply a proposal that three days more of priority should be at his disposal, than there are under the present regulations.—three days, because on one of his four Thursdays, there will be a Birth-day Drawing-room, and "no House." Trick, trick, is legibly written on the whole affair. It must have occurred to Lord John Russell that "factious Tories" and busy Liberal Members would alike object to his motion: and most submissively he surrendered, having first put in a claim to be allowed to enter it to his own credit in the account of pretences. It is intended to found much on the refusal of the three days. The ready Chronicle had its cue, and asserted that the Tories had made themselves "answerable for the possible postponement of important public questions until late in the session." "At all events," it added, "Ministers will not be to blame. The public will put the saddle on the right horse." Lord John and his journalist are well matched; but we question whether many beyond the pale of "black is white," will yield to the belief, that the failure of the great measures of the session is attributable to the refusal of the House of Commons to give Government business the precedence in three Thursdays in May—three days out of seven or eight months!—*Spectator, a Radical Paper.*

THE LANGUAGE OF NATURE.—There is no language which can speak more intelligently to the thoughtful mind than the language of nature; and it is repeated to us, as it were, every year, to teach us trust and confidence in God. It tells us that the power, which first created existence, is weakened by no time, and subject to no decay; it tells us, that, in the majesty of his reign, a thousand years are but as one day, while, in the beneficence of it, one day is as a thousand years; it tells us, still farther, that, in the magnificent system of his government there exists no evil; that the appearances, which, to our limited and temporary view, seemed pregnant with destruction, are, in the mighty extent of his providence the source of returning good; and that, in the very hours when we might conceive nature to be deserted and forlorn, the spirit of the Almighty is operating with unceasing force, and preparing in silence the renovation of the world.

LITTLE THINGS.—It is a great point of wisdom to know how to estimate little things. Of those which are evidently great, every one can see the importance; but true wisdom looks at these great objects before they have arrived at their full size. She considers that it is principally in this earlier state that they come under the power of man, and can be arranged, modified, increased, or extinguished, at its pleasure; whereas, in a more advanced stage they set at defiance all his efforts. On the contrary, it is the part of folly to wait till evils have attained their maturity before they are attacked; for then that which might at first have been easily, becomes irresistible.

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