

Varieties.

LOVE AND JEALOUSY.—Miss Mitford, in her *Rural Characters and Scenery*, describes how Adam Stokes, a fresh-water fisherman, took unto wife Laurette, the *gentille et jolite fille de chambre* of Mrs Talbot, the esteemed wife of Colonel Talbot, Adam's honourable master. Here was a contrast! Let us see how the fisherman and his gay wife manage to get through their matrimonial state:—"When last I had seen Master Stokes, the fisherman, in his bachelor condition, it was in the week when February ends and March begins; when the weather was as bluff and boisterous as his own bluff and boisterous self; when the velvet buds were just sprouting on the willow, the tufted tassels hanging from the hazel, and the early violet and "rathe primrose" peeping timidly forth from sunny banks and sheltered crevices, as if still half afraid to brave the stormy sky. The next time that I passed by the banks of the Kennet was in the lovely season which just precedes the merry month of May. The weather was soft and balmy—the sky bright above, the earth fair below; the turf by the roadside was powdered with daisies; the budding hedge-rows gay with the white ochil, the pansy, and the wild geranium; the orchards hung with their own garlands of fruit-blossoms waving over seas of daffodils; the coppice tapestried with pausies, ground-ivy, and wood-anemone, whilst patches of the delicate wood-sorrel were springing from the holly-brake and from the roots of the old beach trees; and the meadows were literally painted with cowslips, orchises, the the brilliant flowers of the water-renunculus, the chequered fritillary, and the enamelled wild hyacinth. The river went dancing and sparkling along, giving back, in all its freshness, the tender green of the landscape and the bright and sunny sky; birds were singing in every bush, bees and butterflies were on the wing, and myriads of water-insects added their pleasant sound to the general harmony of nature. It was spring in all its loveliness, and never is spring more lovely than in our Kennet meadows. The fisherman's hut did not disgrace the beauty of the picture. The white cottage, nestled in the green bank, with its hanging garden full of stocks and wall-flowers, its blooming orchard, and its thin wreath of gray smoke sailing up the precipitous hill, and lost amid the overhanging trees, looked like the very emblem of peace and comfort. Adam and his dog Neptune were standing in the boat, which Master Stokes' stout arm was pushing from the shore with a long pole, nodding a farewell to his wife, and roaring, at the top of his voice, his favourite stave of "Rule Britannia."—Laurette, on the other part, was seated at the open door of the cottage, trim as a bride, with her silk gown, her large ear-rings, her high-comb, and her pretty apron; her dress contrasting strangely with her employment, which was no other than darning her husband's ponderous and unwieldy hose, but with a face radiant with happiness and gaiety, as her light and airy voice sung the light and airy burden of a song in high favour among the *soubrettes* of Paris

"C'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour,
Qui fait le monde à la ronde;
Et chaque jour, à son tour,
Le monde fait l'amour."

"C'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour," came ringing across the water in every pause of her husband's mighty and patriotic chaunt, mingled with the shrill notes of Ned, who was bird's-nesting on the hill-side, peeping into every furze-bush for the five-speckled eggs of the grey linnet, and whistling "Oh no, we never mention her," with all his might. It was a curious combination, certainly and yet one that seemed to me to give token of much happiness; and, on questioning my friend, Mrs Talbot, the charming Queen of the Dahlias frankly admitted, that, however it might turn out eventually, Laurette's match did, at present, appear to produce more comfort to both parties than could have been anticipated from so preposterous a union. "Adam adores her," pursued Mr Talbot, "spends all the money he comes by in sailor-like finery, red ribbons, and yellow gowns, which Laurette has too good a wardrobe to need, and too much taste to wear; can't pass within a yard of her without a loving pinch of her pretty round cheek and swears, by every seaman's oath that ever was invented, that she is the neatest built vessel, with the comeliest figure-head, that ever was launched.—And, incredible as it may seem, Laurette loves him; delights in his rough kindness, his boldness, and his honesty; calls him still *un brave garçon*; enters into his humour; studies his comfort; has learned more English during her six week's marriage than she did in six years that she lived with me; and has even advanced so far as to approach, as nearly as a French tongue may do, to the pronunciation of her own name, Stokes, a terrible trial to Gallic organs. In short," continued Mrs Talbot, "of a very foolish thing, it has turned out better than might have been expected; Adam's adherents, Ned and Neptune, fairly idolize their new mistress; poor thing, her kindness and good nature and gaiety were always most delightful; and Ned is, she assures me, a very handy boy in the house, does all the dirty work, dusts and scrubs, and washes, and cooks, and trots about in a pair of high pattens and checked apron, just exactly like a maid of all-work. I send Gilbert to her almost every day with one trifle or another, sometimes a basket of provisions, sometimes my reversionary flowers, (for Laurette can't live without flowers) and, on the whole, I really think she will do very well." This account was most satisfactory; but, happening again to pass Laurette's cottage in the bowery month of June, I saw cause to fear that a change had passed over the pretty Frenchwoman's prospects. Outwardly the picture was as bright, or brighter than ever. It was summer, gay, smiling summer. The hawthorn buds in the hedge rows were exchanged for the full-blown blossoms of the wayfaring tree, whose double circle of white stars, regular as if cut with a stamp, forms so beautiful a cluster of flowers, and contrasts so gaily with the deep pink of the wild rose, and the pale, but graceful garlands of the woodbine; the meadows had, indeed, lost their flowery glory,

and were covered partly with rich swathes of new-cut grass, and partly with large hay-cocks, dappling the foreground with such depth and variety of light and shadow: but the river's edge was gay as a garden with flags and water-lilies, and the pendant bunches of the delicate snow-flake, the most elegant of aquatic plants; and Laurette's garden itself, one bright bed of pinks, and roses, and honey-suckles, and berry-bushes, with their rich, transparent fruit, might almost have vied in colour and fragrance with that of her mistress. The change was not in the place but in the inhabitants. Adam was employed in landing a net full of fish, roach, and dace, such a haul as ought to put any customer into good humour, but which, certainly, had no such effect on the present occasion. He looked as black as a thunder-cloud, swore at the poor fish as he tossed them on the bank, called Ned a lubber, and when, in a fit of absence, he, from mere habit, resumed his patriotic ditty, shouted "Britons never will be slaves!" with such a scowl at his poor foreign wife, that it could only be interpreted into a note of defiance.—She, on her side, was still working at her cottage door, or, rather, sitting there listlessly with her work (a checked shirt of her churlish husband's) in her lap, her head drooping, and the gay air of "C'est l'amour" exchanged for a plaintive romance, which ran as well as I could catch it, something in this fashion:

"Celui qui sut toucher mon cœur,
Jura d'aimer toute la vie,
Mais, hélas! c'était un trompeur,
S'il abjurait cruce erreur,
S'il revenait à son amie,
Ah! toujours il serait vainqueur,
S'il abjurait cruelle erreur."

And when the romance was done, which might have touched Adam's heart, if he could but have understood it, poor Laurette sighed again, took up the checked shirt, and seemed likely to cry; Neptune looked doleful, as one who comprehended that something was the matter, but could not rightly understand what; and Ned was in the dumps. A dreary change had come over the whole family, of which the cause was not known to me for some time afterwards. Adam was jealous."

PORTRAIT OF CAPTAIN CLAPPERTON.—"He was a — smart fellow, Sir; drew well, but was not particularly clever with his pen; he was first of all in the merchant service, and then in a man-of-war, and it was not long before he got on the quarter-deck, but he ran away when a midshipman, and some time afterwards was pressed from a merchantman, and was placed in the same ship he had been in before, where he was a second time made an officer, for he was a thorough seaman every inch of him. He was tall, and strong as a young elephant.—Lord! I remember him springing across the forehatch, and taking our two biggest hands in the ship and rapping their heads together for quarrelling; he could floor an ox, Sir,—such a fore arm! He was headstrong, but of a fine, generous, and brave spirit, and proud as Lucifer of the navy. Once we were lying off Macao, in China, the Captain was on shore, when a typhoon came on; it blew as if St. Antonio had burst his bags, and we