

equally unproductive of incident. For, as he used to tell the story himself, "though both the combatants discharged two very long cases of pistols at each other, neither of them were killed, wounded, satisfied, or reconciled; nor did either of them wish to prolong the engagement." In his last illness, his physician having remarked early one morning that he coughed with much difficulty—"That is rather surprising," answered Curran, "since I have been practising all night." And not long before, having received a slight apoplectic shock, and his physician telling him not to mind it, it would pass away—"I am to understand it then," said Curran, "only as a boyish runaway knock at the door, eh?"

THE CASSET.

Devoted to Select Tales, Sketches from Biography, Natural and Civil History, Poetry, Anecdotes, the Arts, Essays, and Interesting Miscellany.

HAMILTON, JUNE 2, 1832.

HARMONY.—In early days when the art of writing and painting was yet unknown, men had no other way to preserve their history but in verses, which were frequently sung in order to make a lasting impression on their memory. By the help of this tradition they called to mind their origin, the exploits of their heroes, the precepts of their arts, the praises of their Gods, their morality and their religion; yes, their religion itself was founded, established and supported by the help of music. By this, the first legislators of nations were sure to engage, to persuade and to captivate the minds of the people. They well knew that the surest way to gain the human heart was by the bait of pleasure; that duty becomes easy when associated with amusement; that the austerity of virtue needed to be softened, and its lessons made palatable; that wisdom must wear a smile, and reason, when she makes her visit must appear in an amiable dress. They knew that man is a valetudinarian; if, in order to cure him, you mean that he should take some bitter potion, it will be necessary to sweeten the lip of the cup, that he may take a full draught of life and health. Thus Hermes, Trismegistus, Orpheus, the latter Zoroaster, the Gymnosophist, and all the founders of the different religion, knowing the natural taste of man for musical sounds, availed themselves of this sensibility, they gave harmony the first place in the sanctuary: in giving Gods to nations, they intrusted her with the history of these divinities, their hymns, the laws of their feasts, the ceremonies of their sacrifices, their triumphal, their nuptial, their funeral songs: persuaded that their religion placed on the altar by the side of peaceable harmony, would preserve its authority, longer than if engraven on tables of brass

and marble, or propagated by fire and sword.

Here, perhaps, some critic will be ready to interrupt us and say—"we acknowledge the antiquity of music, but what was the music of the ancients? that art must then have been in its infancy, songs without delicacy, voices without taste, airs without sentiment, instruments without spirit, harmony without expression, and sound without sense; to compare such music as this with the elegant music of our days, would be to compare the doubtful light of the morning to that of the sun in his meridian glory."

Such is the blindness of prejudice; different ages are rivals and consequently enemies; the present age has always modesty enough to think itself wiser than those that went before it, and too much generosity to leave any thing to the invention of posterity. But we will take the liberty to say on the faith of a learned critic, with whom we have a slight acquaintance, and is no bad judge in the matter,—“that music was never more regular than among the first inhabitants of the earth; then like a virgin in her lovely prime, fair without paint, lively without affectation, she trod in the steps of amiable nature; since those happy days, too often like an antiquated coquet, she is more studious to recover the beauties she has lost, than to acquire new attractions.”

Can we be so arrogant as to imagine that the first-born of nature, her favorite children, were worse provided in the gift of invention than we? had the ancients no taste for music? when among them, it is certain, that musicians were more honored than at the present day—among them music produced surprising effects, such as are not even to be expected in our days;—nor would gain our belief were they not supported by irresistible evidence. By their music seditions, were appeased:—a stop was put to the most obstinate battles—tyrants were humbled—mad-men were restored to their senses—the dying were rescued from the tomb. If any one shall pretend to doubt these prodigies attended by profane authors. We are ready to appeal to the sacred oracles; here, at the sound of the harp or organ, we see a company of Israelites instantaneously filled with spirit of prophecy, intoxicated by a sacred enthusiasm, and as it were by intuition instantaneously instructed in the history of futurity. After so many notorious facts can we entertain a doubt of the charms of ancient harmony? let it not be said that their music was too simple—had too little variety; for we have already seen the brass the ivory, and every precious wood animated by the breath of harmony.

In those days they understood the use of

many instruments unknown to our music; for where now are the ancient lyres, the Hazurs of the Hebrews, the golden Cysters of the Memphians, the Kynnors of Tyre, the nables of Sedon? scarce are their names handed down to us—their use is irrecoverably lost—but we know enough to convince us that their effects were prodigious; an irrefragable proof that their music wanted neither beauty nor energy. This we think, fairly proves the antiquity of its origin.

RURAL REPOSITORY.—This interesting semi-monthly visitor, published at Hudson, N. Y. by our old friend, Wm. B. Stoddard, is steadily progressing towards perfection.—We have before us the last number of Vol. 8. and as we have in a former number sounded our tocsin of praise, we deem it unnecessary to add any further remarks than a short sentence of the editors prospectus:

On issuing proposals for publishing the Ninth Volume of the Rural Repository, the publisher would renew his pledge to his patrons, and the publick in general, that his unremitting endeavours will be exerted to meet their expectations. The Repository will continue to be conducted on the same plan and afforded at the same convenient rate, (\$1 per annum,) which he has reason to believe has hitherto given it so wide a circulation; and such a durable and flattering popularity as has rendered it a favourite and amusing visitor during the eight years of its publication. As its correspondents are daily increasing and several highly talented individuals will the benefit of whose literary labors he has not before been favoured, and whose writings would reflect honor upon any periodical, have engaged to contribute to its columns, he flatters himself that their communications and the original matter already on hand, together with the best periodicals of the day, with which he is regularly supplied, will furnish him with ample materials for enlivening its pages with that variety expected in works of this nature.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We have received a favor from our friend "D. M. B." It is on file for our next.

"Croaker"—Had better write a treatise on *Frog Soup*;—but, by the by, a slight perusal of Lord Dexter's "Pickel for the knowing ones," would not be an "injury."

"Time's Changes"—Came under our observation, and met with deserved merit. Will the author be as good as his word?

"Love and War."—We shall be under the necessity of filing "Chapt. 1." until our friend sends us the remaining chapters.

RECEIPTS.

LETTERS.—From Messrs. B. K. Brown, James Watson, D. L. Thorp, John Gamble, J. Maitland, J. D. Gilbert, J. Draper, E. H. Whitmarsh.