

for many, many years, all trunk and bare dry boughs—not a leaf had ever been seen by the oldest inhabitant. It stood there as a colossal skeleton—a monument of itself—by the sheer strength of its bulk—and was pulled down, at last, by teams of oxen and long ropes, lost, some fair-day, a huge limb or so might fall, and crush several penny theatres, peep-shows, and holiday people. Myriads of snuff-boxes, tobacco-boxes, and fancy boxes were made of the wood—or said to have been made of the wood—and are sold as such to this day, every fair-day.

Orcydon Fair is a good one (especially for the gipsies from Norwood), but more famous as a market for horses, cattle, sheep, and pigs. It presents no special features beyond those already described, with the exception of a tradition, or legend, which used to be very popular with all schoolboys of the district, and elsewhere, to wit, that the green lanes on the outskirts of Orcydon were haunted by a certain "Spring-heeled Jack," who was possessed with a monomaniacal propensity to assault young men and women, and gash them with a fine-edged, silver-handled knife. The anomalous Spring-heeled Jack always eluded pursuit by the swiftness of his running, and the fabulous leaps he could take, clear over high hedges or turnpike gates,—attributable to his wearing india-rubber boots, the soles and heels of which were full of steel watch-springs, as every boy of us thoroughly believed.

Peterborough Market-fair is celebrated for only one peculiarity, viz., its immense quantities of wood-work for farming operations. There you may see piles on piles of axe, hoe, fork, rake, and spade handles; also handles for smiths' and carpenters' hammers; also tyres and spokes for cart-wheels, window-frames, wheel-barrow, and dense arrays of field-gates, hurdles, and fences.

Greenwich Fair was a very great fair. The extinction of this brilliant fair caused much regret to the holiday-making Londoners. It had several marked peculiarities, besides the usual number of large shows. First, there was the noble old Hospital, and the frequent presence of old pensioners in their quaint, old-fashioned, grave uniform of dark navy blue, with the three-cornered cocked hat, knee-breeches, and square-toed shoes with huge plated buckles. To see these veterans, English—Irish—Scottish—Welsh, who had well deserved all the care of a "careful country," wandering about—some with one arm—some with two wooden legs and a stick—some with one arm and one leg, and no stick—and mixing among the young fair-going folks, smiling and laughing at the grotesque groups, actions and noises around them—and now and then showing signs that the eccentricity of their gait and bearing was not entirely attributable to a wooden leg—gave an additional interest to the scene, of a mixed kind of pathos and humor not to be described in an off-hand way. The other great feature was the "Crown and Anchor" booth, which, varying its size at different fairs, invariably put forth its utmost magnitude and fullest splendor for Greenwich Fair. How many swarms had luncheons and suppers there, through the day and night—how many scores of hampers of cold fowls and ham, turkeys and tongues, and hundreds of dozens of bottled ale and stout—is beyond any knowledge possessed by the present deponent; but that between two and three thousand people sometimes assembled therein at night to dance, and that sometimes more than two thousand Londoners were dancing there at the same time, after a fashion, he can answer for, as also for the fact of the whole scene being at such times enveloped in a dense cloud of dust, rising up from the creaking and yielding floors, and that, whatever colored coat you entered with, everybody emerged with a coat the color of whited-brown paper, large black nostrils, and black-semi-circles of dust under his eyes. The "Crown and Anchor" booth was so long that a full band played for dances at the top, by the bar, another at the bottom of the booth, and a third in the centre—and though they often played different dances, different airs to suit, and in different keys, you could only hear the music of your own dance—the predominant accompaniment to each being the measured muffled thunders of the boots of the fair-going Londoners. At these "high" moments it may be supposed that the great majority were of the rougher sex; the fun was too "fast and furious" for the gentler beings of creation—of course with some rather conspicuous exceptions. The last great speciality I shall notice, connected with this fair, was the roll down Greenwich Hill.

Many persons, at home as well as abroad, have never seen that celebrated hill—never rolled down it—and some, perhaps, may not even have heard of it. But a word or two will suffice to make them, in some degree, aware of the pleasure they have lost. A number of fair-going young people of both sexes—but most commonly lovers, or brothers and sisters—seat themselves on the top of this steep and beautifully green hill, and beginning to roll down slowly, they presently find that the rolling becomes quicker and quicker—that they have no power to govern their rapidity, still less to stop and they invariably roll to the bottom. It doesn't agree with everybody.

Of the great cattle fair of Ballinasloe enough has already been said; but of an Irish pig-fair something remains.

The peasant's pig—the "gentleman that pays the rent"—the favored, spoilt son—almost the lord of the cabin—when, for the first time in his life, he finds himself forcibly driven the way his master chooses, which, of course, is the

way he perseveres in objecting to—by the time he arrives at his journey's end, enters the fair in a very bad state of mind. His temper—never, at the best of seasons, half so sweet as his flesh—has become morose, and something is sure to occur to render him savage. Among other things, he is sure to quarrel with the pig next to him for precedence of place, and the immediate consequence—for this pig is in quite as bad a state of mind as that pig—the immediate consequence is a fight. By a fight, we do not mean an ordinary routing of snout to snout, but a savage fight of two wild beasts. They stand upon their hind hoofs, and fight in lion-and-unicorn fashion. It is a fine thing to see a pig under such unusual circumstances, and shows that he is not merely a creature of flesh and crackling—to be roasted, or made bacon—but an animal whose blood, when roused, inspires him to fight to the death against what he considers injuries and insults. The most amusing part of the whole affair is the dismay of the respective owners, and their anxiety to separate the furious combatants, because a pig that has been over-driven in coming to the fair, or in a serious stand-up fight, is always reduced 2d. or 3d. a pound in his market value.

We must now take a turn through Donnybrook. All those who were ever present will bear witness that an Irishman "all in his glory" was there—but not exactly for the reason generally supposed. In the first place, the song, which makes the "shillelagh" the all-in-all, refers to a traditional period. A few fights and broken heads, inseparable from all English as well as Irish fairs, of course always took place, but the crowd was too dense to allow of much damage being done. There was not only no room for "science," but no room to strike a blow of a real kind—from the shoulder, and "using the toes." We saw no blood flow. Something else in abundance we did see flow—whisky. As for the interior, or main body of the fair, it presented no features materially differing from others previously mentioned, but the outskirts certainly presented something very different, indeed,—unique. The fair, as to its great shows and booths, was held in a large hollow, or basin of green ground, on descending into which you found the immediate skirts occupied by a set of very little, very low-roofed, but like booths, where a busy trade was carried on in fried potatoes, fried sausages, and oysters, cold or scalloped. Not a bad mixture; but the cooking, in some cases, seemed to be performed by individuals who had never before seen a sausage or an oyster, and who fancied that smoke and peat-ashes improved the one, and sand and sawdust the other. But cookery is by no means the special characteristic alluded to. It is this; and I will defy the world to produce anything like it. Donnybrook is a village, a few miles only from Dublin. The houses are all very small, the largest generally rising no higher than a floor above the ground-floor rooms, and every house being entirely appropriated to the use of the fair-coming people. The rooms below were devoted to whisky-drinking, songs, jokes, politeness and courtship, with a jig in the middle; and the very same, but with more elaborate and constant dancing, in the rooms above. Every house presented the same scene—yes, every house along the whole village; and when you came to the narrowest streets, the effect was peculiar and ludicrous in the extreme. For observe, the rooms being all crowded to the last man and woman and child they could hold, and the "dancing"—especially above stairs—being an absolute condition, there was no room left for the fiddler. We say, there was no room left for him—and yet he must be among them. There was room for him, as a man, be it understood—but not as a fiddler. His elbow required space enough for another man, and this could not be afforded. The problem was therefore solved by opening the window upstairs; the fiddler sat on the window-sill, and his elbow worked outside. The effect of this "elbow playing outside the window of every upper floor" and sometimes out of both upper floor and ground floor of every house in a whole street, and on both sides of the way—and playing a similar kind of jig—surpassed anything of that kind of humor in action it has ever been my fortune to witness. If that is not merry fun, show me what is. The elbows all played so true to time that if you had not heard a note you would have known that it was an Irish jig by the motion of all these jaunty and "knowing" elbows!

A last word on Donnybrook shall be devoted to one other custom; characteristic of the kindness as well as the humor of the nation, which was manifested in a way never seen elsewhere. Once every hour or so, a large police van was driven through the fair to pick up all the very drunken men who were rolling about, unable to govern their motions. They were not once lifted into the van, and here many of them again found their legs, and you heard the muffled singing and the dull thunder of their dancing inside as the philanthropic van passed along. As they got sober they were set free.

By way of an exception and contrast, take the following. While "high and low" visited all the great fairs, there was only one that was specially patronised by the London aristocracy, and that was Horn Fair. It used to be held on Charlton Green, in Kent, and was the most elegant (if I dare use the word of such things) and fashionable of all these annual merry-makings. All the military of Woolwich attended, as did the Prince Regent, and the rest of the male branches of the Royal Family, from the hour of two till six, but never later, as it was said; but people had their own opinions. Horn Fair was to other fairs what Ascot was to other races,

The impossibility of adequately describing any of these great fairs—and pre-eminently the renowned Bart'lemy Fair—is attributable to several causes. It requires a panorama for its grotesque forms and colors, and expansive variety; all sorts of figures in all sorts of motions and attitudes, which even automatons could not convey much better than the pen; and all manner of sounds combining in one general uproar and confusion,—because all these moving objects, colors, and sounds are going on at the same time, and all in most vigorous conflict with each other, and indeed with themselves. Under such circumstances our best plan will probably be that of giving a few of the most broad, and striking general characteristics, dashed in with a scene-painter's brush, full of color, and almost at random.

Saint Bartholomew's, alias Bart'lemy Fair, was held in Smithfield market-place, which used to be considered the rowdy heart of London. All the butchers' stalls—cattle-yards—sheep-pens—pig and poultry enclosures, and other wooden structures were cleared away to leave a very large open space. This was approached by the different streets, and the white calico avenues of gilt gingerbread stall, toy-stalls, and nondescript booths of all kind, but more particularly for eating, drinking, little gambling-tables, and other similar things, a small scale which would have been lost amid the blaze and magnificence of the main structure. Nearly all round the great open area, the only intervals being the streets, and other avenues of entrance, were ranged the theatres; the menageries; screened enclosures for the horse-ship, robe-dancing, balancing, tumbling, and leaping; the shows for conjuring, fire-eating, dancing dogs, learned pigs, the exhibitions of waxwork, and of living monstrosities, such as the calf with two heads and five legs, the mermaid (whom you were not allowed to examine very closely at the junction line), and the living pig-faced lady, who was usually seen sitting at a piano, in an elegant evening low dress, with a gold ring through her snout. A giant was always there, and both a male and a female dwarf, but never together, being always in rival caravans. The music, so called, was a bedlamite mixture of brass bands, screaming clarionets, and fifes, clashing of hollow-toned cymbals, gongs, bells, triangles, double-drums, barrel-organs, and prodigious voices bawling through speaking trumpets;—now imagine the whole of these things going on at the same time!

Now, imagine it to be night; and all the great and little shows, and booths, and stalls arrayed with lights of all kinds of colors, magnitudes, and, we may add, smoke and odors, as many of them issue from a mysterious mixture of melted fat of various creatures. All the principal shows, and many of the smaller vans, have a platform, or stage, in front, and hereupon is enacted a wonderfully more brilliant, attractive, grotesque, and laughable performance than anything to be seen inside. Portions of tragedies are enacted, including murders, combats, and spectacles; dances of all sorts are given, men and women in gorgeous array of cotton velvets, spangles, and feathers stand upon horses, or promenade with most ostentatious dignity, sometimes coming forward and crying aloud, "Be in time! be in time! All in to begin!" which is subsequently repeated half-a-dozen times before they retire to console with their presence those who are waiting seated inside. Now and then, part of the promised "grand pantomime" is represented on the outer stage, and culminates with a rush of the clown, pantaloons, and two or three acrobats mounted on hobby-horses, down the steps of the platform, and right into the very thick of the crowd below, causing one or two fights in the confusion and difficulty of their return, to the immense delight of those who witness it, and to the great advantage of all the ruffians and other pickpockets here and there collected. While these things are going on below, there are other scenes above—such as high-flying balloons, full of laughing and screaming young men and women; the slack-rope dancers in their brilliant dresses of silver and gold tinsel and spangles, who are perched on swinging ropes amidst the white and scarlet draperies near the topmost ridges of the larger theatres and shows; and, rising over all, the coiling smoke-clouds of the blazing fat-lamps and pitchy torches roll and float upwards towards the moon, every now and then rapidly cut through by the hissing head and tail of a rocket, which presently explodes in brilliant stars of white, green, and red over the frantic tumult beneath.

It only remains for us to take a look at the winter fair which has been held in London at those rare intervals when the frost has been so strong and continuous, that the ice on the Thames, as well as the Serpentine and other metropolitan waters, has attained a solid thickness capable of bearing the thousands of people who assembled there. Innumerable stalls and booths for eating, drinking and dancing, together with swings, peep-shows, puppet-shows, and other amusements, were rapidly erected, or wheeled upon the ice; there were also many little gambling-tables, roundabouts, ballad-singers, and instrumentists, from the humble Jew's harp to the pompous brass band. The many slips and tumbles upon the ice constituted a considerable part of the fun, and was promoted by glassy surfaces of various cross slides, as well as by frequent jerks and sudden pushes with a view to the destruction of an equilibrium. The crowning joy, however, was at night, when a great bonfire was lighted upon the ice, and a bullock was roasted whole. As the form and face of the huge creature changed with the action of the flames and the red heat,

and the head, horns, and eye-balls became inexpressibly hideous, John Bull, far more than his emblematic representative, might be said to have been in his glory, while dancing and whirling in unceasing and rampant mazes round the crackling and roaring flames, while the national divinity, self-basted with black and crimson streams, was fiercely roasting.

THE AUTHOR OF "HOME, SWEET HOME."

America as yet has produced no song writer. No one has done for her what Burns did for Scotland, Moore for Ireland, and Béranger for France. Not even the popular enthusiasm which shook the nation to its centre during the late civil war could give birth at the North to any finer inspiration than "John Brown's Body," and "Rally round the Flag, Boys." In "Maryland, my Maryland," we recognise a spark of the same divine fire which flashes forth in the "Marseillaise" and "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled." The country, therefore, owes no ordinary debt of gratitude to John Howard Payne, who if he did not write enough to entitle him to a recognized place among the authors of this class, has at least given us one song which is already far beyond the reach of chance or change—a household word, sacred and secure. If it is to be secured by wide-spread popularity, we had rather begin the author of "Home, Sweet Home," than all the verses of all the poets our land has known from its earliest age to the present hour. There is little in the song when we subject it to critical analysis, and yet this very simplicity is a precious gem which has snatched it from forgetfulness, and blended the familiar lines with the holiest associations of the fireside. How curious that this humble daisy, this "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower," should grow and blossom into fair renown, when so many monarchs of the forest lie prone in the dust, unnoticed and unknown.

The more important facts of Payne's life require but brief mention. He was born in New York, and at an early age manifested decided literary and dramatic talent. When only thirteen years of age he conducted a small periodical called the *Theatrical Mirror*, which attracted the attention of a gentleman named Seamen, who generously offered to defray the expenses of his education at Union College.

Peccuniary difficulties which involved his father forced him to leave this institution before the completion of his studies, and in order to support his impoverished family Payne went upon the stage, making his debut at the Park Theatre, New York, February 24th, 1809, in the character of young Horval. His success was so unmistakable that he continued in his new profession, performing in the principal eastern cities, and in 1813 went to England, where he received a cordial welcome, and became a great popular favorite. He remained for nearly twenty years, leading a Bohemian life, and figuring alternately as an actor, playwright, and manager, gaining some reputation, but little money.

"Home, Sweet Home," was penned in a garret of the Palais Royal, Paris, when poor Payne was so utterly destitute and friendless that he knew not where the next day's dinner was coming from.

It appeared originally in a diminutive opera called "Clari, the Maid of Milan." The opera is seldom seen or heard of now, but the song grows nearer and dearer to us as the years roll away, for "it is not of an age, but for all time." More than once the unfortunate author, walking the streets of London or Paris, amid the darkness, hungry, houseless, and penniless, saw the cheerful light gleaming through the windows of happy homes, and heard the music of his own song drifting out upon the gloomy night to mock the wanderer's heart with visions of comfort and of joy, whose blessed reality was for ever denied him. "Home, Sweet Home," was written by a homeless man.

In 1832 Payne returned to this country, and after pursuing literary avocations with indifferent success for a few years, was finally appointed Consul at Tunis, where he died June 5th, 1852. One passage in his ill-starred career tinged it with a hue of melancholy romance, and perhaps explains the secret of his restless, erratic character.

Maria Mayo, afterwards Mrs. General Scott, was a great beauty in her youthful day, whose charm of person and of mind made her the acknowledged belle of that venerable State whose soil has been no less prolific of fascinating women than of gallant men. The legend prevails in Richmond that Payne met Miss Mayo and fell madly in love with her. The homage of a poet could hardly be other than flattering, even to one whose shrine was worshipped by scores of richer devotees, and possibly he mistook the smiles she gave him for the evidence of reciprocal passion; but be this as it may, the same old, old story was enacted. He staked his happiness, his peace, on woman's love, and—lost.

Thenceforth life had no attractions for him, and he sought an exile to the barren shores of Africa, as a welcome relief from the bitter disappointment which had crushed out hope and ambition here. The sands of the desert have long since covered the grave of John Howard Payne, and the place where, "after life's fitful fever, he sleeps well," is unknown. "Home, Sweet Home," is a monument which will carry his name and fame to the remotest posterity, and stand firm when offices of marble and of bronze shall have sunk into indistinguishable decay.—*Dramatic World.*