

As I have never constituted a son, so my nature has ever prompted me to avoid becoming a satellite; for these also have duties to perform from which I shrink. But while I hesitate to imitate their conduct, it nevertheless, in many instances, calls forth my admiration. Though I do not enjoy the happiness of having my name recorded in any published list of benevolences, yet I cannot the more repress my enthusiasm, as I listen to the gratifying announcement, that Mr. Peter Skroggins, in aid of the society for promoting the science of astronomy among the Hottentots, has contributed the sum of one shilling and sixpence; Mrs. P. Skroggins, one shilling and three pence; Miss Skroggins, ninepence; Miss Maria Evelina Skroggins, sixpence; Miss Honora Amelia Virginia Skroggins, fourpence; and so forth, down to the infantile Master Edgar Theophilus Fitz Eustace Llewellyn Skroggins, whose engagement in certain dental operations, unfortunately compels him to forego the pleasure of attending to the announcement of the somewhat remarkable fact (he is not yet quite one year old), that he has generously given towards the object in question the sum of one penny halfpenny. As I listen to a statement of similar donations on the part of the interesting families of the Scrigginses and the Sprigginses, I am ready to empty my pockets on the spot, or do something equally magnanimous, and to stigmatise the musty old maxim, which inculcates the propriety of maintaining a mutual ignorance of certain matters between the members even of one's own body, as a rule utterly behind the present enlightened age; only I have acquired a troublesome habit of never acting upon first impulses, and by the time I have concluded my reflections upon the subject, the fit of enthusiasm with which I had been seized has gone off.

I have been equally astonished and delighted at the disinterestedness of mankind in various other matters. I have never meddled in Politics. My selfishness will not permit me to sacrifice myself for my country. I have never summoned sufficient patriotism to enable me to carry home a black eye or a broken head from an election in my life; nor have I ever patronized a hatter to the amount of a farthing in consequence of any galarical* display of enthusiasm into which I may have been betrayed, during the triumph of the successful candidate. At political dinners I have too little regard for the welfare of the commonwealth to drink its health to an extent that prevents my going home without the aid of a friendly policeman. Nay, so little of true patriotism burns within my breast, that when the gentleman on my left, whose efforts to promote the sanatory condition of his country have rendered him almost incapable of maintaining the standing posture, has attempted to toast the Bri'tish Co'sshush'n from an

* I est. in myself particularly fortunate in being the first to introduce this sonorous and much-wanted word into the English language. For the sake of my unlearned readers, I may state that it is derived from *galerus*, a hat.—*The Recluse*.