

## THE SOCIAL COMPACT.

BY REV. C. C. COLTON, AUTHOR OF 'LACON.'

Where joy but works some other's wo,  
Each good some other's ill,  
And poverty is drained, the cup  
That overflows to fill:

Where gold a willing servant finds  
In each—in most, a slave;  
And law the just and righteous cause  
Can insolently brave:

Where dungeons unadorned guilt  
In double darkness bind,  
Or from the body loose the chain,  
To brutalize the mind:

Where man is trained to murder man,  
And art destruction schools,  
To multiply the work of death,  
By scientific rules:

Where e'en each gracious element  
That heaven or earth supplies,  
We teach, by knowledge better hid,  
Against ourselves to rise:

This is that boasted thing that men  
The 'social compact' term;  
Of folly, vice, and misery,  
The forced but fatal germ.

This to the Italian's crooked code  
An air of truth supplied,  
And planned for knaves the rich reward,  
To better men denied.

This to Geneva's madman lent  
His triumph o'er the sage,  
And half redeemed the bitter sneer  
Of Swift's indignant page.

Oh! warned by wo, and taught by time,  
Shall Reason, full of years,  
O'er brutes but boast her sole and sad  
Prerogative of tears?

Oh! when will man each boon despise,  
That makes a brother mourn?  
And seek, where it alone resides,  
In others' bliss, their own?

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

It is said of Johnson, that he never could withhold whatever he had in his pockets from the appeals of humanity. His house was ever an asylum for the afflicted; and for several years he maintained three old ladies, who were reduced by misfortune to extreme poverty in the winter of their lives. The following anecdote confirms his general character. Walking one morning over some fields near Litchfield, he met a boy about fifteen years of age, whose appearance exhibited the extreme of poverty and wretchedness. He asked charity of Dr. Johnson, who enquired why he could not work? His reply was, that he could get no employment. "Oh, if that's all," said the doctor, "follow me;" and taking him home with him, ordered his servants to buy him necessaries; "and give him," added he, "one of my coats, which, if too long, cut it shorter, and send him in to wait at dinner." This was accordingly done. We are sorry to add, that he proved unworthy of this kindness, and absconded the next morning, with his new clothes, and a few other articles which he thought proper to make free with.

Macklin and Dr. Johnson, disputing on a literary subject, Johnson quoted Greek. "I do not understand Greek," said Macklin. "A man who argues should understand every language," replied Johnson. "Very well," said Macklin, and gave him a quotation from the Irish.

Authors, though fond of having their own works read, are not often very anxious to hear those of others. Even Johnson appears to have quarrelled with a literary brother on that account, of whom he observed, "I never did the man an injury; but he would read his tragedy to me!"

Dr. Goldsmith, though one of the first characters in literature, was a great novice in the common occurrences of life. Sitting one evening at the tavern where he was accustomed to take his supper, he called for a mutton chop, which was no sooner placed on the table, than a gentleman near him, with whom he was intimately acquainted, showed great tokens of uneasiness, and wondered how the doctor could suffer the waiter to place such a stinking chop before him. "Stinking!" said Goldsmith, "in good truth, I do not smell it." "I never smelled any thing more unpleasant in my life," answered the gentleman; "the fellow deserves a caning for bringing you meat unfit to eat." "In good truth," said the poet, relying on his judgment, "I think so too; but I will be less severe in my punishment." He instantly called the waiter, and insisted that he should eat the chop as a punishment. The waiter resisted; but the doctor threatened to knock him down with his cane if he did not immediately comply. When he had eaten half the chop, the doctor gave him a glass of wine, thinking that it would make the remainder of the sentence less painful to him. When the waiter had finished his repast, Goldsmith's friend burst into a loud laugh. "What ails

you now?" asked the poet. "Indeed, my good friend," said the other, "I could never think that any man whose knowledge of letters is so extensive as yours, could be so great a dupe to a stroke of humor: the chop was as fine a one as ever I saw in my life." "Was it?" said Dr. Goldsmith, "then I will never give credit to what you say again; and so, in good truth, I think I am even with you."

Wycherley used to read himself asleep at night, either in Montaigne, Rochefoucault, Seneca, or Gracian; for those were his favourite authors. He would read one or other of them in the evening; and the next morning, perhaps, write a copy of verses on some subject similar to what he had been reading; and have all the thoughts of his author, only expressed in a different mode, and that without knowing that he was obliged to any one for a single thought in the whole poem. Pope found this in him several times; for he visited him for a whole winter, almost every evening and morning, and considered it as one of the strangest phenomena that he had ever observed in the human mind.

**SENTIMENT.**—What is called sentimental writing, though it be understood to appeal solely to the heart, may be the product of a bad one. One would imagine that Sterne had been a man of a very tender heart—yet I know, from indubitable authority, that his mother, who kept a school, having run in debt, on account of an extravagant daughter, would have rotted in jail, if the parents of her scholars had not raised a subscription for her. Her son had too much sentiment to have any feeling. A dead ass was more important to him than a living mother.

**THE BITER BIT.**—A noble lord a short time ago applied to a pawnbroker to lend him one thousand guineas on his wife's jewels, for which he had paid four thousand. "Take the articles to pieces," said his lordship, "number the stones, and put false ones in their place; my lady will not distinguish them." "You are too late, my lord," said the pawnbroker; "your lady has stolen a march upon you; these stones are false, I bought the diamonds of her ladyship a twelvemonth ago."

**LONDON NOVELTIES.**—A barber in Fenchurch-street has manufactured some wigs which he styles "the acme of kallitriohoplasmia." A baker up in a narrow street in Fleet-street has prepared some vivificaceous biscuits; and a hatter in Leicester-square has invented a nightcap which he designate s by the classical name of a caputgereredormitor.

**A GOOD IDEA.**—In Connecticut they find a use for almost every thing. An old lady in that state is collecting all the political papers she can lay her hands on, to make soap of. She says they are a "desput sight better than ashes—they are most as good as clear lie."

**ADVANTAGE OF POVERTY IN EARLY LIFE.**—An English judge being asked what contributed most to success at the bar, replied, "Some succeed by great talent, some by high connexions, some by a miracle, but the majority by commencing without a shilling."

**RIDDLE.**—The French delight to try the esprit of children by a kind of riddles. For example: A man has a little boat, in which he must carry from one side of a river to the other, a wolf, a goat and a cabbage, and must not carry more than one of these at once. Which shall he take first, without the risk that, during one of his navigations, the wolf may devour the goat, or the goat the cabbage? Suppose he carry the wolf, the cabbage is lost—if the cabbage, the goat is devoured—if the goat, the embarrassment is equal; for he must risk his goat, or his cabbage, on the other side of the river. The answer is:—He must take the goat first, the wolf will not touch the cabbage; in the second passage he carries the cabbage, and brings back the goat; in the third he transports the wolf, which may again be safely left with the cabbage. He concludes with returning for the goat.

**OLD OBLIGATION.**—The duke of Roquelaure was one of those who, as Madame Sevigne says, "abuse the privilege that the men have to be ugly." Accidentally finding, at court a very ugly country gentleman, who had a suit to offer, the duke presented him to the king, and urged his request, saying he was under the highest obligations to the gentleman. The king granted the request; then asked Roquelaure what were those great obligations. "Ah! sir, if it were not for him, I should be the very ugliest man in your dominions." This sally excited the royal smile, while the gentleman, with plain good sense, affected not to hear it.

**THE CAUSE OF STAMMERING.**—"It must now, I apprehend, be granted, that stammering does not depend on malformation or deficiency of structure in either the larynx or the mouth, but that it is produced by a modification of the influence transmitted from the brain; and it is on this principle that the rational and only correct method of curing a difficulty of speech can rest."

**RATHER PREMATURE.**—A peasant being at confession, accused himself of having stolen some hay. The father confessor asked him how many bundles he had taken from the stack. "That is of no consequence," replied the peasant; "you may set it down a wagon load, for my wife and I are going to fetch the remainder very soon."

**VALUE OF AN OATH.**—A Norman was telling another a great absurdity as a matter of fact. "You are jesting," said the hearer. "Not I, on the faith of a christian." "Will you wager?" "No, I wout wager; but I am ready to swear it."

**THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.**—A spider had prepared his web in one corner of my room with great care and skill, and having completed it in the most perfect manner, he retired into its darkest recesses to lie in wait for his prey. Soon, a little thoughtless fly became entangled in the net, and the spider, warned by the struggles of the victim to obtain his freedom, leaving his hiding place, turned one web around him and retired upon some slight cause of alarm. By and by, he again approached the fly, turned another web around him and retired. This was repeated several times, till the fly was fast bound, and incapable of resistance, when the spider fell upon him and deprived him of life by sucking his life's blood.

The thought occurred to me while I was watching this process, that there was a striking analogy between the spider, his web and the fly, and the vender of ardent spirit, his shop and his customers. The spirit vender builds or hires his shop, fills it with barrels, decanters and glasses, all arranged in the order best calculated to excite attention and inflame the appetite; and then a sign varnished and gilded, "waves in the wind," or glitters on the front. He then takes his stand and waits for the receipt of custom. Soon some unsuspecting one approaches and enters. A glass of "cordial" is poured out, drank, and payment is made. Thus the web is turned *uncé* round. By and by, he comes again, and another, and another still. Now the victim may make an effort to escape, but in vain. The web is fixed—the fetters are strong—the appetite is confirmed. There is no hope. His life is given for a prey, and a great ransom cannot deliver him.

But to return to the spider. All his designs and plans from the first moment he spins his thread and attaches it securely, regard only his own personal benefit. Solitary and alone he lives, and spends his life in depriving others of that which he cannot restore. No matter what others may suffer, he is the gainer. The struggles, and the pains, and the tortures they undergo are of no concern to him. His object is gain. And is there no resemblance here? Do not the widow and the fatherless cry, and the land-mourn because of the traffic in ardent spirit, and do not the vendors shut their ears? But once more, the spider preys not upon his own species. He sucks the blood of a different race. But to whom does the spirit-dealer sell his baneful draught? To men—to husbands—to parents. The consequences of the spider's daily depredations upon the insect tribe, affect only the individual victim. The effects of the spirit-dealer extend to a whole circle of relatives—affect a whole neighbourhood—a town—a nation—the world—time—eternity.

**THE POOR MAN'S WEATHER-GLASS.**—A correspondent writes—"It is observed by Dr. Smith, in Sowerby's English Botany, that the scarlet primpernal (*anagalis arvensis*) from opening only in fine weather, and closing infallibly against rain, has been called the poor man's weather-glass. I wish to bear testimony to the extraordinary fidelity of this little monitor, and strongly to recommend it. It is a very common weed in all cultivated land, and flowering during the whole of summer.

**A SPANISH PLAY BILL.**—To the Sovereign of Heaven—to the Mother of the Eternal World—to the Polar Star of Spain—to the Comforter of all Spain—to the Faithful Protectress of the Spanish Nation—to the honour and glory of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, for her benefit, and for the propagation of her worship, the company of Corneliens will this day give a representation of the comic piece called Nanine. The celebrated Italian will also dance the Fandango, and the theatre will be illuminated.

"I say, Jack," shouted a Smithfield drover the other day, to his pal, "these cursed sheep wont move in this veather; lend us a bark of your dog, will you?"

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