

maun get the Colonel to come and visit the shanty before the winter sets in. He can crack like a pea-gun by the hour aboot Badajos (Badahos, as h. ca's't), Salamanca, and Waterloo!

THE MAJOR.—We shall be delighted to see him. In the meantime, be so good as to present your friend with my respects.—Major Culpepper Crabtree's respects, mind you,—and this volume, which I think he will relish.

THE LAND.—Read the name o't, for I've mislaid my spec's!

THE MAJOR.—*Claret and Olives, from the Garonne to the Rhone: or, Notes, Social, Picturesque, and Legendary, by the way. By Angus B. Reach. New-York: George P. Putman. 1852.*

THE DOCTOR.—I commend your judgment in selecting this work for the Colonel's *devoirs*. Seldom have I perused a volume with more sustained interest.

THE MAJOR.—What a striking account does Reach, (who is one of the most promising writers of the day,) give of the Landes, that strange, wild region of France!

THE LAND.—The Landes! I dinna mind at the present moment anything aboot them?

THE MAJOR.—Mr. Reach shall indoctrinate you on the subject. He says:—

"Excepting here and there small patches of poor, ill-cultivated land, the whole country is a solitary desert—black with pine-wood, or white with vast plains of drifting sand. By these two great features of the district, occasionally diversified by sweeps of green morass, intersected by canals and lanes of stagnant water, the Landes take a goodly slice out of La Belle France. Their sea line bounds the French side of the Bay of Biscay, stretching from Bayonne to the mouth of the Gironde; and at their point of greatest breadth they run some sixty miles back into the country; thence gradually receding away towards the sea, as though pushed back by the course of the Garonne, until, towards the mouth of the river, they fade away altogether.

So much for the *physique* of the Landes. The inhabitants are every whit as rugged, strange and uncultivated. As the Landes were four centuries ago, in all essential points, so they are now. What should the tide of progress or improvement do in these deserts of pine and sand? The people live on French soil, but cannot be called Frenchmen. They speak a language as unintelligible to a Frenchman as an Englishman; they have none of the national characteristics—little, perhaps, of the national blood. They are saturnine, gloomy, hypochondriac, dismally passing away dismal lives in the depths of their black forests, their dreary swamps, and their far-spreading deserts of white, fine sand."

THE SQUIRE.—Faith and troth it seems to me to be six and half-a-dozen between these Landes and Iceland. St. Patrick forbid that I should come to be a squatter in either!

THE LAND.—Is the book entertaining for

the Colonel? You see he disna care for dry reading.

THE MAJOR.—As much so as any novel or romance you ever perused. It abounds with lively sketches of scenery and character, interspersed pleasantly with exceedingly well told legends of *diablerie*, very suitable for a long mid-winter night.

THE DOCTOR.—I was particularly struck with the account of Jasmin, the peasant-poet of Provence and Languedoc—the "last of the Troubadours"—as he not inappropriately terms himself. I am sure you will all concur in awarding me a vote of thanks for reading to you the following life-like particulars, given by Mr. Reach, of this remarkable man:—

"Standing bravely up before an expectant assembly of perhaps a couple of thousand persons—the hot-blooded and quick-brained children of the South—the modern Troubadour plunges over head and ears into his lays, working both himself and his applauding audience into fits of enthusiasm and excitement, which, whatever may be the excellence of the poetry, an Englishman finds it difficult to conceive or account for. The raptures of the New Yorkers and Bostonians are weak and cold, compared with the ovations which Jasmin has received. . . . There is a feature, however, about these recitations, which is still more extraordinary than the uncontrollable fits of popular enthusiasm which they produce. His last entertainment before I saw him was given in one of the Pyrenean cities (I forget which), and produced 2000 francs. Every sou of this went to the public charities. Jasmin will not accept a stiver of money so earned. With a species of perhaps overstrained, but certainly exalted chivalric feeling, he declines to appear before an audience to exhibit for money the gifts with which nature has endowed him. After, perhaps, a brilliant tour through the South of France, delighting vast audiences in every city, and flinging many thousands of francs into every poor-box which he passes, the poet contentedly returns to his humble occupation, and to the little shop where he earns his daily bread by his daily toil, as a barber and hair-dresser. It will be generally admitted, that the man capable of self-denial of so truly heroic a nature as this, is no ordinary poetaster.

Jasmin, as may be imagined, is well known in Agen. I was speedily directed to his abode, near the open *Place* of the town, and within earshot of the rush of the Garonne; and in a few moments I found myself pausing before the lintel of the modest shop inscribed, *Jasmin, Perruquier, Coiffeur de jeunes Gens*. A little brass basin dangled above the threshold; and looking through the glass, I saw the master of the establishment shaving a fat-faced neighbour. Now, I had come to see and pay my compliments to a poet, and there did appear to me to be something strangely awkward and irresistibly ludicrous in having to address, to some extent in a literary and complimentary vein, an individual actually engaged in so excessively prosaic and unelevated a species