

very crack references to boast of, and nothing very particu'ar to employ either his teeth or his time, has just accepted a situation as bagman or barker for the Anti-Corn-Law League; and it is in this correspondence, occupying a large space in the first volume; together with the election in the last, that the "dodge," as our hero calls it, is so admirably depicted, so thoroughly exposed, and every shallow artifice and clap-trap cry treated with that derisive contempt it so generally deserves. The author in this part, as indeed he does all through, delights in a humorous style, and in which he proportionately excels; but we are convinced from what we have seen—the sound argument and well-based reasoning that almost invariably accompany his drollery—he might in a more serious strain, and may-be with a greater aim, attack the ills and follies of the day.

The Squire having disposed of this "great 'Umbug," presently gets deep into the mysteries of his present situation, being led on no little by his neighbour, the great Duke of Dunkeyton, who "might be called more than a theorist," for he had some most extraordinary notions about farming and the management of property—a system so peculiar that it generally ended in beggaring the tenants and impoverishing his estates. Still to Jorrock's it is all very fine, for it is all new; and more than that, it comes from a Duke; and, accordingly, having mastered a few of the most important headings, he rattles away on Gipsey manure, Tweddle titles, Nitrate of sober, Guano, Smith of Deanstone, and the intelligence of the day, working his friends into a belief, and half-persuading himself into the idea, that he really knows something of what he is always talking about. We have not, however, space to follow this very original amusing old gentleman in his divers encounters with lords and commoners, peers and ploughman, but must for "further particulars" refer the reader to the work itself—a direction that no man with an interest in agriculture, or a relish for rural life capitally described, will ever regret perusing. In conclusion, as bearing out our opinion that wit and wisdom here travel hand in hand, we will indulge ourselves with one short extract, directed rather at the ever-croaking tenant (we fear no uncommon character) than his should-be-welcome landlord:—

"Instead o' ridin' into a man's fard (Scotch cowman *loquiter*) and axin' if his barn's watter-tight and his missis i' the family way, ye should gan in rammin', and swearing', and blawin' every body up, that comes in your way, and the man will be o'er glad to slip out the front way, and niver say nothin' about repairs."

Still not invariably the best plan, Master Pigg, for we know a worthy baronet who has practised it, till like the Duke, he has "beggared the farmer and impoverished the estate."

THE STARS.—It has long been concluded amongst astronomers that the stars, though they only appear to our eyes as brilliant points, are all to be considered as suns, representing so many solar systems, each bearing a general resemblance to our own. The stars have a brilliancy and apparent magnitude which we may safely presume to be in proportion to their actual size, and the distance at which they are placed from us. Attempts have been made to ascertain the distance of some of the stars by calculations founded on parallax, it being previously understood that, if a parallax of so much as one second, or the 3,600th of a degree, could be ascertained in any one instance, the distance might be assumed in that instance as not less than 19,200,000,000 of miles! In the case of the most

brilliant star, Sirius, even this minute parallax could not be found; from which, of course, it was to be inferred that the distance of that star is something beyond the vast distance which has been stated. In some others, on which the experiment has been tried, no sensible parallax could be detected; from which the same inference was to be made in their case. But a sensible parallax of about one second has been ascertained in the case of a double star, α, δ , of the constellation of the Centaur, and one of the third of that amount for the double star, 61 Cygni; which gave reason to presume that the distance of the former might be about 20,000,000,000 of miles, and the latter of much greater amount. If we presume that similar intervals exist between all the stars, we shall readily see that the space occupied by even the comparatively small number visible to the naked eye, must be vast beyond all powers of conception.—*Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation.*

THE NATURE OF THE SOIL.—In the general examination of the land, the growth of the trees and copses, if there be any on the land, their species, their soundness, the elevation of their branches, and the cleanness of their bark, are among the surest marks of the quality of the soil. The plants which grow spontaneously there, even those that are injurious, afford also a valuable indication; but it is not sufficient that they grow isolated and slowly, but on the contrary, their increase should be rapid and abundant. Thus the corn or *field thistle* (*serratula arvensis*) indicates a rich and productive soil; the butter bar, or great petasites (*tussilago petasites*), an argillaceous soil; the colt's foot, (*tussilago farfara*), and the bramble, a marly soil; the common chickweed and pimperl (*alsine media*), the common sow thistle (*soncus oleraceus*), the charlock (*sinapsis arvensis*), grow on soft and tenacious lands; while the wild radish (*raphanus raphanistrum*) grows in dry and poor lands. The black medick or nonsuch (*medicago lupulina*) is a sure sign of the marly quality of the soil in which it is found.—(*Von Theer's System of Agriculture, by Shaw and Johnson, vol. 1, p. 28.*)

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