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# THE INSTRUCTOR.

No. X.]

MONTREAL, JULY 1, 1835.

[PART 2d.]

## LITERARY DEPARTMENT.



### THE GIPSIES.

We cannot, in this place, exhibit that chain of evidence by which the Hindoo origin of the Gipsies has been established almost beyond a doubt by the learned Grellmann. It appeared perfectly satisfactory to Sir William Jones, who, in the Gipsy vocabulary published by the German writer, discovered a great number of pure Sanscrit words. The Gipsies who have remained in India are at present known under the Persian name of Bazighurs, "players, or actors," and are divided into seven castes, whose uncouth denominations it is unnecessary to repeat, as they all resemble each other, intermarry, and profess to be descended from the same family. They have now become nominal converts to Islamism, but are said to regard as their tutelary divinity the celebrated musician Tansine, who flourished in

the time of Achar. Their notions of morals and religion they principally derive from the songs of Kubeer, a poet, by trade a weaver, who was contemporary with Sher Shab, the Cromwell of Indian history. Kubeer was a Sufi of the most exalted sentiments and of benevolence unbounded. His poems, which are still universally esteemed, inculcate the purest morality, good-will, and hospitality towards all men; and breathe so fine a spirit of toleration that both Hindoos and Musulmans contend for the honour of his having been born of their nation. The Bazighurs have, therefore, it must be acknowledged, an excellent moral instructor; and if they are not more rigid cultivators of honesty than their brethren of Europe, the fault must rest with themselves. Be this as it may, the stanzas of the bard are

for ever in their mouths. To any question respecting their opinions they commonly reply in his verses; as when interrogated concerning their ideas of the state of the soul after death, a poetical Gipsy made answer:—

“Nor soul nor love divine can die;  
Although our frame must perish here,  
Still longer hope points to the sky:  
Thus sings the poet Das Kubeer.”

They believe their souls to be particles of the universal spirit, in which it is after death absorbed. In this life, feasting and drinking constitute their supreme good; and every kind of crime may be expiated by plentiful libations, except, perhaps, the indiscreet disclosure of their opinions to strangers, which is characteristically punished by rubbing the offender's nose against the ground. They call in the aid of a Brahminical astrologer, to fix on a lucky name for their children, notwithstanding that they profess Mohammedanism; and permit the urchins to remain at the breast until five or six years of age. This practice, together with the violent exercises which they are taught in their youth, probably tends to curtail the lives of their women, who generally handsome and engaging, pass the morning of their lives as tumblers or dancing girls. They have no fixed dwelling; but wherever they encamp, erect temporary huts with light mats of sedge or rushes. They go about in companies, like our strolling players, hiring their services for a stated period, generally a year, to a sirdar, or manager.

“In the upper provinces of Hindoostan, the little encampment of these people are frequently very regular and neat, being there formed by the *sirki* (rushes) entirely. Each apartment, though not much larger than a mastiff's kennel, has its own particular inclosure or courtyard, generally erected in such a manner as to become a species of circumvallation to the whole portable hamlet, which, at first sight, reminds a traveller of Lilliput or Fairy Land. The appearance of the people alone can undo the deception, and then even one cannot help wondering where so many men, women, children, and other domestic animals, manage to

sleep or shelter themselves from the storms which sometimes assail these itinerant people.”

The men, who are remarkably athletic, practise not only juggling in all its branches, but perform feats requiring the most consummate agility and prodigious strength. Many of them obtain a livelihood by leading about dancing-bears or monkeys. Others, impatient of the arts of petty roguery, become Dacoits;\* and as such, says their historian, are no doubt often hanged. They inter their dead, he observes, and the only ceremony seems to be to forget their sorrows, by getting completely drunk immediately afterwards. Little more formality accompanies their marriage.

In their habits, the Gipsies are far more uncleanly than the ordinary Hindoos, and devour all kinds of food, even the dead bodies of jackals, bullocks, and horses. They sometimes, in addition to their profession of jugglers, employ themselves in collecting medicinal herbs, and in catching mungooses, squirrels, and the bird called *daho*, which they use as food or medicine. The women practise physic, cupping, palmistry, and tattooing, to which the Hindoo women are still addicted; and usually sally forth in the morning from their encampment, with a quantity of herbs, dried birds, &c., to exhibit their skill among women of the neighbouring villages. Should they not return before the jackal's cry† is heard in the evening, their fidelity is suspected, and they are punished by their husbands. The following song, in which a juggler de-

\* *Daka* means robbery, and in the active form becomes *dukyt*, notorious for their depredations as pirates in the *Sunderbund* branches of the Ganges, by the name *Decoits*. If we may credit very respectable testimonies of the fact, those *Dukyts* are frequently guilty of sacrificing human victims to *Kali*, under circumstances of horror and atrocity scarcely credible. *Asiatic Researches*, vol. vii. p. 465.

† Bishop Heber, in describing the cry of the jackal, observes, “The noise was quite equal to that of an immense pack of hounds with half the rabble of a county at their heels except that the cry was wilder and more diabolical.” Vol. i p. 297.

cribes his feat, will apply equally well to the performances of the Gipsy, whether in the east or in the west:—

“ I from lovers tokens bear :  
 I can flowery chaplets weave,  
 Amorous belts can well prepare,  
 And with cautious speech deceive \*  
 Joint-stool seats to show I'm able :  
 I can make the beetle run  
 All alive upon the table  
 When I show delightful fun.  
 At my sleight-of-hand you'll laugh ;  
 At my magic you will stare.  
 I can play at quarter-staff ;  
 I can knives suspend in air,  
 I enchantment strange devise,  
 And with cord and sling surprise.”

#### INDUSTRY.

(By the Rev. J. Heckwelder.)

“ Seating myself once upon a log by the side of an Indian, who was resting himself there, being at that time actively employed in fencing in his cornfield, I observed to him that he must be very fond of working, as I never saw him idling away his time, as is so common with the Indians. The answer he returned made a very great impression on my mind ; I shall try to relate it as nearly in his own words as possible.

“ My friend,” said he, “ the fishes in the water and the birds in the air and on the earth have taught me to work. By their example I have been convinced of the necessity of labour and industry. When I was a young man I loitered about a good deal, doing nothing, just like the other Indians, who say, that working is for whites and negroes, and the Indians have been ordered for other purposes—to hunt the deer and catch the beaver, otter, raccoon and such other animals. But it one day so happened that while hunting I came to the bank of the Susquehanna, and having sat down near the water's edge to rest a little, and casting my eye on the water, I was forcibly struck when I observed with what industry the mce-

galings (sun fish) heaped small stones together to make secure places for their spawn; and all this labor they did with their mouth and body, without hands !

“ Astonished as well as diverted, I lighted my pipe, sat a while smoking and looking on. when presently a little bird not far from me raised a song, which enticed me to look that way. While I was trying to distinguish where the songster was, its mate, with as much grass as it could hold in its bill, passed close by me and flew into a bush, where I perceived them together, busily employed in building their nests, and singing as their work went on. I saw the birds in the air and the fishes in the water working diligently and cheerfully, and all this without hands. I thought it very strange, and I became lost in wonder. I looked at myself and saw two long arms provided with hands and fingers and with joints that might be opened and shut with pleasure. I could, when I pleased, take up any thing with these hands, hold it fast or let it loose, and carry it along with me. When I awaked, I observed, moreover, that I had a stout body capable of bearing fatigue, and supported by two stout legs with which I could climb to the top of the highest mountain and descend at pleasure into the valleys.

“ And is it possible, said I, that a being so wonderfully formed as I am, was created to live in idleness ; while the birds which have no hands and nothing but their little bills to help them, work with cheerfulness, and without being told to do so ? Has then the great Creator of man, and all living creatures, given me all these limbs for no purpose ? It cannot be. I will try to go to work ;—I did so, and went away from the village to a spot of good ground, sowed corn and raised. Ever since that time I have enjoyed good appetite and sound sleep—while the others spend their nights in dancing and are suffering with hunger. I live in plenty. I keep horses, cows and fowls I am pappy. See my friend the birds and fishes have brought me to reflection and taught me to work !”

## HOME.

To ensure, as far as possible, the society of her husband, at his own fire side, let the wife be "a keeper at home," and do all in her power to render that fire side as attractive as good temper, neatness, and cheerful affectionate conversations can make it; let her strive to make his own home the soft green on which his heart loves to repose in the sunshine of domestic enjoyment. We can easily imagine that even in paradise, when man had no apparition of guilt, no visions of crime, no spectral voice from a troubled conscience, to make him dread solitude, and flee from it, that even then Adam liked not, on his return from the labour of dressing the garden, to find Eve absent from their bower, but wanted the smile of her countenance to light up his own, and the music of her own voice to be the melody of his soul. Think, then, how much more in his fallen estate, with guilt upon his conscience and care pressing upon his heart, does man now, on coming from the scenes of anxious toil, need the aid of woman's companionship, to drive away the swarm of buzzing cares that light upon the heart to sting it; the bosom agitated with passion; and at once to reprove and comfort the mind that has in some measure yielded to temptation. O, woman! thou knowest the hour when "the good man of the house" will return, at mid-day, while the sun is, yet bowing down the labourer with the fierceness of her beams, or at evening, when the heat and the burden of the day are past; do not let him, at such a time, when he is weary with exertion, and faint with discouragement, find, upon his coming to his habitation, that the foot, which should hasten to meet him, is wandering at a distance; that the soft hand which should wipe away the sweat from his brow, is knocking at the door of other houses; nor let him find a wilderness, where he should enter a garden, confusion, where he ought to see order; or filth that disgusts where he might hope to behold neatness, that delights and attracts. If this be the case, who can wonder, that in the anguish of disappointment, and

in the bitterness of a neglected & heart-stricken husband, he turns away from his door, for that comfort which he wished to enjoy at home and that society which he hoped to find in his wife, and puts up with the substitutes for both, which he finds in the houses of other men, or in the company of other women.

United to be associates, then, let man and wife be as much in each other's society as possible, and there must be something wrong in domestic life, when they need the aid of balls, routs, plays, card parties, to relieve them from the tedium produced by home pursuits. I thank God, I am a stranger to that taste, which leads a man to flee from his own comfortable parlour and the society of his wife, from the instruction and recreation contained in a well stored library, or the evening rural walk, when the business of the day is over, to scenes of public amusement for enjoyment; to my judgment the pleasures of home, and of home society, when home and home society are all that could be desired, are such as never cloy, and need no change, but from one kindred scene to another. I am sighing and longing, perhaps in vain, for a period when society shall be so elevated, and so purified; when the love of knowledge will be so intense, and the habits of life will be so simple; when religion and morality will be so generally diffused, that men's homes will be the seat and circle of their pleasures; when in the society of an affectionate and intelligent wife, and of well educated children, each will find his greatest earthly delight; and when it will be felt to be no more necessary to happiness to quit their own fire side for the ball room or the concert, than it is to go from the well spread table to the public feasts, to satisfy the cravings of a healthy appetite; then will it be no longer imposed upon us to prove, that public amusements are improper, for they will be found to be unnecessary.

The affection of woman is the most wonderful thing in the world. It tires not, faints not; dreads not, cools not.

## RELIGIOUS.

## THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

“ Suddenly a star arose :  
It was the Star of Bethlehem.”

“ It was my guide, my light, my all ;  
It bade my dark forebodings cease.  
And through the storms of danger's thrall  
It led me to a port of peace.”

Our state in this vale of tears is a mixed one. Life may be likened to the winds, ever shifting, and never alike. Sometimes it appears as calm as summer evenings are, and again storms and tempests chequer its even surface, darkening every prospect, and rendering scenes, once bright and joyous gloomy and bleak as the caverns of death. But even over all these scenes there is one star seems to brighten. In the absence of all that renders life tolerable, in weal or woe, in joy or sorrow, it still beams out, alone unchanged and undimmed, as though it had found its way from the galaxy of the third heavens. It stands out in peerless beauty, dispensing its blessed light at all times and at all seasons, flinging its hallowed though not brilliant rays across the path of the bewildered ones ; and even in our sunniest moments, when it is forgotten, and we steer wide of its heavenly direction, still it seems to twinkle near the blazing orb that burns when prosperity ruins the destiny of the hour. This is the Star of Bethlehem. It marches before us, shooting downwards its golden brightness, and then again it plays like a thing of life athwart the distant mist that had for a brief moment shut it in black and dark as midnight. O what heart-rending sensations pervade the torn, lacerated bosom of the afflicted, when they see the gigantic shadings of life's fitful picture cover for days this pole star of their hopes. Dark, dark are all present things, though arrayed in the pomp and glitter of this world's splendour. In its absence a night reigns more horrible than ever startled ocean's hardiest son. But O, who can describe the ecstatic joys which inspire those who have groped their way for years without one cheering beam of hope or spark of glimmering

day, when they come out upon prospects touched with divine pencilling, lighted with this Star of peace—the harbinger of all God's promised blessings : With what unutterable satisfaction they gaze upon this token of a Saviour's love as it lights them along in the path of duty, and walking in its brightness, ushers them into the presence of Him who lit up in the moral heavens to be our guide to endless bliss.

## MUSINGS.

“ While I mused the fire burned.”

In the midst of all the differences and strife with which Christendom is filled, it is delightful to think of the order and harmony of heaven. “ I am going,” said the dying Melancthon, “ to leave a world disordered, and a church disorganized, for a church and a world where every angel, and every rank of angels, stand in the very post which God has assigned them.” This is the way in which God's will is done in heaven. Ambition, selfishness, vanity, and pride, will not intrude to turn the gaze of the blessed spirit from the adorable object of its love, to its own petty interests : nor will envy, at the sight of some seraph, burning with more intense love, or rising higher in the praises of its Creator, ever interrupt the perfection of their bliss. Nor will the spirits of the just made perfect be divided into different sects, or cease from their worship and hang up their harps, for the sake of settling any differences of opinion in matters of speculation. Like the mighty rivers, which in their progress visit different tribes and various tongues, and at last unite their waters in the sea ; so from every age of the world, and from every nation, and kindred and tongue, and people, under heaven, there will at last be seen flowing together, the various sects, and parties, and ranks, into which Christians have been divided, till they are lost in the ocean of infinite love.

Evil for evil is bestial, good for good is human ; evil for good is Christian, and good for evil is divine.

## TRAVELS.

## DESCRIPTION OF JERUSALEM.

(From the London Mirror of May 2, 1835)

Jerusalem is yet a considerable place, though rather from its central situation between Arabia, Syria, and Egypt, than its present splendour. Recollections of its ancient magnificence invest its ruins with an interest far superior to that awakened by the most superb and perfect city of our times. Indeed, this interest is untiring, exhaustless, and immortal; though the general aspect of the city and its vicinity be blighted and barren, the sycamore and cedar be no more, the vineyards be gone, and the vine cut off, and the Holy Temple be destroyed—

“The signs are full, and never shall the sun  
Shine on the cedar roofs of Salem more;  
Her tale of splendour now is done;  
Her wine-cup of festivity is spilt,  
And all is o'er—her grae deur and her guilt.  
Oh, fair and favour'd City—where of old  
The balmy airs were rich with melody,  
That led her pomp beneath the cloudless sky  
In vestments flaming with the orient gold;  
Her gold is dim and mute her music's voice,  
The heathen o'er her perish'd pomp rejoice—  
How stately then was every palm-dock'd street  
Down which the maidens danced with tinkling  
feet!”

How proud the Elders in the lofty gate;  
How crowded all her nation's solemn feasts  
With white-rob'd Levites and high-mitred  
Priests;

How gorgeous all her Temple's sacred state,  
Her streets are raz'd, her maidens sold for slaves  
Her gates thrown down, her Elders in their  
graves;  
Her feasts are holden 'mid the Gentiles' scorn,  
By stealth her Priesthood's holy garments  
are worn.”

Yet there is nothing in antiquity more impressive than the scene of desolation which Jerusalem now presents: for its historical interest is not lost in its antiquity, as in the case of the Pyramids and Palmyra. At Jerusalem, hundreds of sites are identified with some sacred event recorded in the Book of Life, in which also are pictured their minutest features. Above all, here the spectator views the spot

where, in the early days of the world, the dread voice of the Almighty had sounded, and where he made His glory visible; here is the scene of much that is venerable in Holy Writ, the Cradle of our religion, and the theatre of most of its grand and important miracles; here he may trace almost every striking event in the pathetic history of the blessed Redeemer, to the spot where he shed his blood for the sins of man, and where he took his final, affecting leave of his weeping disciples, and ascended once more to heaven.” Again, no city in the world has been so often the scene of war: seventeen times has it been sacked; it has been the field of the most brilliant exploits of the Jewish, Roman, and Saracenic arms, and of the romantic bravery of the Crusades.

It would occupy more space than we can spare to enumerate the sieges and attacks, or the captors. The Christians finally retired in 1291, and the Turks have since retained possession. “But this ill-fated City, though its punishment has been so protracted and severe, appears not yet to have atoned for its unexampl'd guilt. A few years back, the plague made fearful ravages amongst the inhabitants, since which it has suffered severely from the army of the Pacha of Egypt; and in July last an earthquake damaged many of the principal buildings.”

The form of the present city is an irregular, oblong square, about three miles in circumference. It is surrounded with embattled walls, and has six gates, three of which are seen in the Panorama; the others being Bethlehem on the west, Zion on the south, and Herod's on the north, are obstructed by buildings. There are no public squares: the streets are mostly straight, but steep, narrow, and unpaved; and the convents, which are the principal public buildings resemble fortresses. The houses are heavy, square masses, two or three stories high, generally of stone; below they have only one small door, and above not more than two or three small latticed windows, (the principal looking into a small,

inner court;) the roofs are flat, and form pleasant terraces; some houses have small domes. There are three rows of arched bazaars in decay; and near them is a street, about half a mile long, with piles of ruins on each side, in heaps twenty or thirty feet high, having the appearance of the remains of some great fire, of which no tradition exists.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

#### HINDOO SUPERSTITION.

The Hindoo sacred books declare, that the sight, the name, or the touch of the Ganges, takes away all sin, however heinous—but thinking of the Ganges, when at a distance, is sufficient to remove the taint of sin—but the bathing in the Ganges has blessings in it, which no imagination can conceive. In one of these books it is said, "He who thinks on Ganga, though he may be 800 miles distant from the river at the time, is delivered from all sin, and is entitled to heaven. At the hour of death, if a person think on Ganga he will obtain a place in the heaven of Siva. If a person, according to the regulations of the Shaaster, be going to bathe in the Ganga, and die on the road, he shall obtain the same benefit as though he had actually bathed. There are three millions five hundred thousand holy places belonging to the Ganga—the person who looks at Ganga, or bathes in this river, will obtain all the fruit which arises from visiting all these three millions five hundred thousand holy places. By bathing in Ganga, accompanied with prayer, a person will remove at once the sins of thousands of births."

#### THE SEA.

The sea is his, and he made it." Its beauty is of God. It possesses it in richness of its own—it borrows it from earth, and air, and heaven. The clouds lend it the various dyes of their wardrobe, and throw down upon it the broad masses of their shadow as they go sailing and sweeping by. The rainbow laves in

it its many coloured feet. The sun loves to visit it, and the moon, and the glittering brotherhood of planets and stars; for they delight themselves in its beauty. The sunbeam retreats from it in showers of diamonds and glances of fire—the moonbeams find in it a pathway of silver, where they dance to and fro with the breeze and the waves, through the livelong night. It has a light too of its own, a soft and sparkling light, rivalling the stars; and often does the ship which cuts its surface leave streaming behind a milky way of dim and uncertain lustre like that which is shining deeply above. It harmonizes in its forms and sounds, both with the night and the day. It imparts sweetness to the music of men, and grandeur to the thunder of heaven. What landscape is so beautiful as one upon the borders of the sea? The spirit of its loveliness is from the waters, where it dwells and rests, singing its spells and scattering charms on all the coast. What rocks and cliffs are so glorious as those which are washed by the chafing sea? What groves, and fields, and dwellings are so enchanting as those which stand by the reflecting sea?

Let young men acquire a taste for reading, and they will have less expensive and more substantial pleasures than those which conduct their votaries to the abyss of perdition.

Lord Craven lived in London when the plague raged in 1663. His house was in that part of the town since called Craven Buildings. On the plague becoming general, his lordship to avoid the danger, resolved to go to his seat in the country. As he was walking through the hall with his hat on, and putting on his gloves, in order to step into his carriage, he overheard his negro postillion saying to another servant, "I suppose, by my lord's quitting London to avoid the plague, that his God lives in the country and not in the town." The poor black said this in the simplicity of his heart, as really believing that there were different gods having power in different places.



The speech, however, struck Lord Craven very sensibly, and made him stop in London, where he was very active and useful during that time of trial, and God was pleased to preserve his life.

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### POETRY.

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#### TO THE MEMORY OF A BELOVED WIFE.

“Behold, thy days approach that thou must die.” DEUT. 31, 14.

Ah, why should sorrow fill my breast,  
My bosom heave a sigh?  
For now the weary are at rest,  
In Heaven eternally!

There, dear Kezia, thou art now,  
From pain and suffering free;  
Lord, may my soul submissive bow  
To thine all wise decree.

And art thou happy?—shall I mourn?  
Nay—selfish would it be  
To ever wish for thy return  
To earth and misery.

But thy bless'd will be done, my God;  
Oh! sanctify to me  
This dispensation of thy rod,  
That I may live to Thee.

Still, still my loss I deeply feel,  
For hard it is to part  
From those we love—or yet conceal  
The anguish of our heart.

Sleep, then, in Jesus sweetly sleep,  
With those loved babes of thine,  
O'er whom, Kezia, thou didst weep,  
And then to God resign.

Meantime, whilst I my course pursue,  
Thy memory will be dear,  
My grief affection will renew  
And claim the heart-felt tear.

Oft will I call to mind thy worth,  
Thy constancy, thy care,  
Thy faithful love, with which on earth  
Naught else can e'er compare.

There we will hold 'communion sweet  
With one another still,  
Whilst I, with fond desire, delight  
Thy wishes to fulfil.

Those tender pledges of our love—  
So very dear to thee,  
Bequeathed—by her beloved—will prove  
A sacred legacy!

These I will bring up in the fear  
And nurture of the Lord;  
And, as thou didst, instruct to hear,  
And read, and love his word.

Thus, when my earthly conflict's o'er,  
My pilgrimage complete,  
May we, my dearest wife, once more  
Rejoicing spirits, greet.

Yes, may we meet! and through God's grace  
May I each trial bear,  
That I, in heaven, may see His face  
And dwell for ever there.

Sleep, then, in Jesus! sweetly rest!  
Until that glorious dawn,  
When all who sorrow shall be bless'd,  
And comforted who mourn!

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