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THE SPRING JOURNEY.

O, green was the corn as I rode on my way,
And bright were the dews on the blossoms of May,
And dark was the sycamore's shade to behold,
And the oak's tender leaf was of emerald gold.

The thrush from his lolly, the lark from his cloud—
Their chorus of rapture sung jovial and loud;
From the soft vernal sky, to the soft grassy ground,
There was beauty above me, beneath, and around.

The mild southern breeze brought a shower from the hill,
And yet, though it left me all dripping and chill,
I felt a new pleasure, as onward I sped,
To gaze where the rainbow gleam'd broad over head.

O such be life's journey, and such be our skill,
To lose in its blessings the sense of its ill:
Through sunshine and shower, may our progress be even,
And our tears add a charm to the prospect of Heaven!

In all human institutions there is something imperfect—otherwise they would not be human;—and if every thing went quite right in this world of ours, man would be too happy. We had always thought that the constitution of the British Navy was as nearly approaching perfection as could be possible, considering the nature of the service, and the means to work upon—but, it seems, we were mistaken in so thinking.

We have reprinted the following paper, from Tait's Magazine—the repertory of British grievances—as an amusing caricature on what all Britons have hitherto delighted to honour. We suppose it was written by some disappointed Lieutenant of Marines, who has been turned out of the ward room for a misdemeanour, and has revenged himself by lampooning the service.

BRITISH SHIPS AND BRITISH SAILORS.

CHAPTER I.

The striking peculiarity of the age we live in seems to be the prevalent disposition to rake up all abuses of long standing, and to expose them to the public gaze, leaving it to time to make the due impression, in order to the adoption of the efficient remedies. Amongst other abuses, that of the ill usage of seamen in the mercantile navy is at last taken up, in a very partial manner, it is true, but with considerable activity, apparently by a knot of individuals actuated by human sympathies, and at the head of whom stands Mr. James Ballingall, from whom a work of considerable interest has emanated. I should judge that the article on "Sea Burking" might be traced to the same source; it evidently seems to be the production of a man uniting the various employments of seaman, shipowner, and surveyor of shipping." The ex-

citement of the public mind on the subject is but just beginning; yet I doubt not that it will increase, and that ultimately the cause of humanity will triumph.

The particular portion of cruelty which Mr. Ballingall has taken up, is the fact, that merchants and shipowners are in the habit of sending seamen and passengers to sea in vessels which are but little better than sieves, solely for the lucre of gain. He has made out a clear case, that those who profit by such nefarious doings are four classes of persons—underwriters, merchants, ship-owners and the British Government. The latter personage seems never to be out of the way wherever 'revenue' may accrue, whether morally or immorally. The losers in the transaction are sailors, passengers, and the community at large; and, as is common in such cases, the community loses, perchance, a thousand pounds outright, in order that the above named worthies may gain half or fourth of that sum; just as, for the sake of the patronage of a colony, three times the amount of the actual speculation is frequently wasted. It is for the interest of the above named parties that ships should occasionally be lost; because the underwriter would not otherwise be able to drive a profitable trade; and the merchants, so long as they were paid for their goods, would willingly see the whole raw material of England wrought up and thrown into the sea. The shipowners care for nothing but the wearing out of ships, in order that they may build new ones; and the government dearly loves its revenue. With regard to the sailors, it has long been considered that their natural death is drowning; and pity, until Mr. Ballingall took up their cause, was altogether out of the question. The poor passengers have never yet had any remedy but patience for all the evils inflicted on them in sea transits. Sailors are accustomed to regard them as nuisances on board ship—even worse than marines; and if any accident happens, they usually go to the bottom, as infallibly as the cargo, unless it be timber, or some such matter, which will float the ship while water logged. I once was superfluous enough to pay for a cabin passage out of the port of London; and from continual accidents, owing to the vessel being short handed and ill found, I was harder worked at spar-making than any shipwright in a king's dock-yard. Let no passenger ever go to sea until he has made himself familiar with the use of tools, and, if possible, the art of navigation. It is my most strenuous advice; for only thus will he have a chance to hold his own. The power of knowledge holds good at sea as it does on shore. The sailors and passengers mostly suffer in person, and the community pays the expenses, which it does not grumble at, as the amount is not much in the subdivision. Mr. Ballingall states that the principal cause of ships being lost is their original defective construction; being built unfirm, of open timber work, instead of a solid mass, as is the case with ships of war. In short, the ships of war are constructed so that they would swim without their planking, and the merchant vessels depend entirely upon their planking. In the majority of cases in which ships are lost, striking the ground or rocks is the proximate cause; and ships built for the purposes of war are found not to go to pieces, which is rarely the case with merchant vessels. It is evident, therefore, that the remedy is at hand; but it is one

which requires a greater outlay of capital, and is, therefore, not likely to be put in practice, unless it be forced upon the parties concerned in a way they cannot avoid. Mr. Ballingall thinks that the summary method would be to make insurance illegal. It would be summary assuredly; but I doubt whether it would be effective, or advisable. In the first place, it would be an intermeddling with commerce, which should always, if possible, be avoided; because people can mostly do their own business better than government can do it for them. Self interest makes people sharp sighted. In the next place, the law could be evaded, and would be evaded if it were worth evading. Gambling debts to any amount, whether transacted at Newmarket, or on the Stock Exchange, or at Crockford's, are unrecognised by law; yet, notwithstanding, gambling goes on, and the gambling debts are contracted and paid; and thus would it be with insurance. To attempt to improve the building of ships by abolition of insurances, would be a mere nibbling at the extremities without going to the root of the disease. It is quite clear that the rules for the registry of ships at present in use, afford no indication whatever of the condition of the vessels, and might be much amended. Their only purpose at present seems to be the protection of "British bottoms," against the competition of foreigners; but whether the bottoms be intrinsically good or bad, appears not on the face of the register.

The fact is, that the art of ship building is in a very imperfect condition, both in the commercial and war services, notwithstanding our national boasts about "hearts of oak" and similar clap traps. The construction is unscientific, and the execution is rude. It is an art which is behind most other arts; and it is probably competition alone which will force on improvement. British ships, owing to the peculiar circumstances of war, have enjoyed a species of monopoly on the blue waters; and every body knows that the tendency of all monopolies is to keep things stationary. Take, for example, the packet service of the Post Office. Formerly it was open to competition by contract; and the consequence was, that swift, and safe, and convenient vessels were built, under the superintendence of the very men who afterwards commanded them. But his Majesty's government casting about for fresh openings for patronage, the old channels having been filled up by population pressing against means as in other things, at length cast their baleful eyes on the packet service, and forthwith ordered, that as fast as the existing contracts expired, the vessels should be replaced by ten gun brigs, commanded by lieutenants in the navy, needing good births and possessed of interest.

Having thus taken possession of a particular branch of trade, for the benefit of their proteges, one would have thought that the least the government could have done for the passengers in return was to provide good and safe vessels for them. But they appointed "ten gun brigs," a species of craft known in the navy under the name of "drowning-tubs," or something similar. They were strong enough in their build not to fear their going to pieces: but they were so defective in their mould—of so great a length with so little beam—that, in a sudden squall, it was more owing to the care of Providence than to human skill, if they did not capsiz and drown all on board. They were, moreover, dull sailors; and the unfortunate passengers were liable to have their baggage spoiled by its stowage on the top of the water tanks. A ship is, at best, a prison, with a chance of being drowned: the greatest pleasure in going to sea is the act of making land; but his Majesty's government did what in them lay to make the chance of the drowning into a certainty.

The consequence has been that several of these packets are missing; and the presumption is, that they have capsized at sea, and all on board have perished. It was all very well for the hotel keeping R. N.'s. Drowning was their natural

death, and their gains were in proportion to the extra risk: they did it knowingly; but what had the poor passengers done? Let the thing be once more open to competition, and this grievance will be amended.—One of these packets was formerly on the N. York station; but the price was so high, and the accommodation so inferior to the mercantile American packets, that no passengers would go by it, and it was discontinued. The worthy commander scolded the interloping Yankees in good set terms. It is in spite that our Post Office has now interfered to prevent the Yankees from carrying letters.

After all our boasts, our superiority in our shipping has not been owing to our skill, but to our war monopoly; and other nations are now advantageously competing with us. Our "heart of oak" is getting to be too expensive a material; population is too thick in the British Islands to permit the needful supply; and it is commonly better to manufacture a bulky article, like timber, on the spot where it is grown, if there be the means, than to carry it long distances to make it into ships. The fact that teak ships are built in the East Indies is a case in point. We import large quantities of timber annually; and the expense of it must constantly increase, owing to two causes—a constantly diminishing supply, and constantly increasing competition with foreign builders, who will certainly be interested in keeping back an exhaustible material from rival manufactures, just as the Americans have prohibited the export of their live oak. All hard woods are of slow growth; and in densely peopled lands they are apt to disappear altogether; or if they are preserved, it is more as objects of curiosity than of utility. It is time, then, if the English shipowners mean to maintain a naval superiority, that they should turn their attention to the use of materials apparently almost inexhaustible, and whose supply can always be increased at a short notice, by the application of extra power, without waiting for the slow processes of nature. I allude to our metals—the products of our own soils. It requires no miracle in the present day to "cause iron to swim." Many years have elapsed since an iron steamboat formed a part of Captain Tuckey's expedition to the Congo, in the pursuit of African discovery. At that time it was a novelty; and it was rendered a matter of such fearful risk to put forth an iron boat upon the waters of the Atlantic, that the Lords of the Admiralty, in the plenitude of their sapience, ordered a ten gun brig to be sent to the Congo, in order to "take care of her!" It was, however, found in practice, on the occasion of a heavy gale, that the iron boat was the protector, and the ten gun brig the protegee. Yet, in spite of this, no endeavour was made to ascertain how far iron might be rendered useful in the navy. It was a government business, and governments have ever been the last in effecting improvements useful to human beings, however earnest they may have been in following up the works of destruction. Since that time sundry iron steamboats have been built; and, latterly, the Messrs Mundsley are constructing them for the Ganges, on account of the East India Company. To make the experiments necessary to bring iron vessels to a state of perfection, requires some considerable cost. Private individuals like not the risk of experiments, while they can command a regular trade; they only resort to them when driven to find new resources. The case in point is precisely that upon which a national experiment might be desirably formed; but our experience of government manœuvres is such as to lead us to fear that more jobbery than utility would be practised till such time as we shall possess a responsible government. Thus it ever is in England. Every project of human improvement which we can name must lie in abeyance until we can accomplish a real reform of Parliament, by making that Parliament responsible. However, the spirit of prophecy is not needed to convince us that many years cannot elapse ere iron will be substituted for wood in the construction of ships. Iron

hulls, properly fitted with air tubes, would be unsinkable, even if leaky. I have heard it said that the difference in prime cost would not be very considerable; and the increased demand for iron would tend to increased facilities in its manufacture. The quantity of employment for labour would also be increased; and the expense of it would be compensated by the decrease of shipwrecks, and the increased durability of the vessels. We should produce, by mechanism, a supply of metallic material, to supersede the vegetable material produced by the chemistry of nature, saving thus both time and the interest of capital employed in planting.

But although the law might be made effectual in enforcing an improved construction of vessels, and although surveyors might be made responsible in purse and person for a heedless examination of ships, or for a certificate given for corrupt purposes, still I apprehend that all would not go to the root of the evil. Convictions would be difficult; and false oaths and false evidence would not be wanting, if sufficient purchase-money were forthcoming. We had better go at once to the fountain-head, and cure the evil at its source, without resorting to palliative expedients. The simple fact is, disguise it as we may, that the true "British sailors," the "gallant British tars," are simply the most degraded race in the British dominions. Ay, sir, stare and hold up your hands; but the fact is so, and your astonishment will not alter it. In "his Majesty's Navy" they are better paid and fed, because the expenses come out of the pockets of John Bull; but they are flogged, and abused, and treated as slaves, without an appeal against injustice; and for all this, the only recompense they can procure is the temporary enjoyment of the slave's paradise—inebriation. They are purely animal in their nature; nay, in many cases, worse than the lowest animals; and those who are familiar with their habits will not dispute the statement. It has been the fashion to uphold them as patriots and high-minded men; brave and generous, and utterly unselfish; always ready to relieve the wants of others, and utterly regardless of their own. All this is unfounded. Their patriotism has been the abstract bull-dog love of fighting; and they would have fought equally strenuously, nay, have so done under the *tri color*, or the "striped hunting," as under the Union Jack. They would have fought, British ship against British ship, just as ferociously and unthinkingly as British ship against French ship; and have double-shotted their guns as usual, to make as great a noise, and do as much damage as possible, without being very precise whether the damage were done to themselves by the bursting of the guns, or to the enemy by the discharge, provided the due allowance of grog were served out previous to commencing action, or their courage were freshened during action by a "raw nip;" a custom less talked about than practised, and called "Dutch courage" by way of a blind. Even now, while I am writing, comes *The Times* newspaper of July 22, and the Mansion House Police report gives a case in point. Two hundred and fifty "gallant British tars" had enlisted in the service of Don Miguel, but were turned adrift before they left the river Thames, in consequence of Captain Napier's victory. The boatswain headed a deputation which applied to the Lord Mayor for redress; and that magistrate asked "if they were aware that they were going to fight against their own countrymen, who were serving under Don Pedro?" The reply was in the affirmative. The Lord Mayor again remarked, "As you make such a pounds, shillings and pence affair of it, you would, perhaps, have no objection to fight for Don Pedro?" The reply was conclusive. "If we are all well paid for it, it does not signify whom we fight for."—The fact is that sailors are not reasoning people; they are only guided by excitement, and that excitement exclusively of an animal kind. The well-known story of the Sailor's Three Wishes,—"An island of tobacco, with a river of rum, and—more rum still,"—is a type of them. They are treated like brutes

by those who rule over them, and reasoning faculties are never called forth in them. Prize money has been the prime mover, both amongst naval officers and their men; and what, after all, is prize money but the result of licensed buccaneering? The bare fact of the existence of impressment is a proof of the absence of the power of reflection: no race of men, not morally debased, would ever have submitted quietly to such a degradation as compulsory slavery of a worse kind than that of the blacks in the West Indies. A man of high mind, thus treated, would have sought the opportunity of making a fearful retribution and warning, by sacrificing himself like Curtius, and destroying the "floating castle," and its population of slaves and tyrants, through the agency of the powder magazine."

THE BELLE OF THE BALL ROOM.

AN EVERY DAY CHARACTER.

"Years—years ago—ere yet my dreams
Had been of being wise or witty;
Ere I had done with writing themes,
Or yawn'd o'er this infernal Chitty;
Years—years ago—while all my joy
Was in my fowling piece and filly;—
In short, while I was yet a boy,
I fell in love with Laura Lily.

"I saw her at the county ball,—
There, when the sounds of flute and fiddle
Gave signal sweet in that old hall,
Of hands across and down the middle,
Hers was the subtlest spell by far
Of all that set young hearts romancing,
She was our queen, our rose, our star;
And then she danced,—oh, Heaven? her dancing!

"Dark was her hair; her hand was white;
Her voice was exquisitely tender;
Her eyes were full of liquid light;
I never saw a waist so slender;
Her every look, her every smile,
Shot right and left a score of arrows;
I thought 'twas Venus from her isle,
And wonder'd where she'd left her sparrows.

"She talk'd of politics or prayers;
Of Southey's prose, or Wordsworth's sonnets;
Of danglers, or of dancing bears;
Of battles, or the last new bonnets.
By candle light, at twelve o'clock,
To me—it matter'd not a tittle;
If those bright lips had quoted Locke,
I might have thought they murmured Little.

"Through sunny May, through sultry June,
I loved her with a love eternal;
I spoke her praises to the Moon,
I wrote them to the Sunday Journal;
My mother laugh'd: I soon found out
That ancient ladies have no feeling;
My father frown'd: but how should gout
Find any happiness in kneeling?

"She was the daughter of a Dean,
Rich, fat, and rather apoplectic;
She had one brother, just thirteen,
Whose colour was extremely hectic;
Her grandmother, for many a year,

Had fed the parish with her bounty ;
Her second cousin was a peer,
And Lord Lieutenant of the county.

" But titles, and the three per cents,
And mortgages, and great relations,
And India bonds, and tithes and rents,
Oh, what are they to love's sensations !
Black eyes, fair forehead, clustering locks,
Such wealth, such honours, Cupid chooses ;
He cares as little for the stocks,
As Baron Rothschild for the muses.

" She sketch'd—the vale, the wood, the beach,
Grew lovelier from her pencil's shading :
She botaniz'd ; I envied each :
Young blossom in her boudoir fading :
She warbled Handel ; it was grand—
She made the Catalani jealous ;
She touch'd the organ, I could stand
For hours and hours to blow the bellows.

" She kept an album, too, at home,
Well fill'd with all an album's glories :
Paintings of butterflies and Rome,
Patterns for trimming, Persian stories :
Soft songs to Julia's cockatoo,
Fierce odes to Famine and to Slaughter ;
And autographs of Prince Leboo,
And recipes for Elder V'ater.

" And she was flatter'd, worshipp'd, bored ;
Her steps were watch'd, her dress was noted ;
Her poodle dog was quite adored ;
Her sayings were extremely quoted.
She laugh'd, and every heart was glad,
As if the taxes were abolish'd ;
She frown'd, and every look was sad,
As if the opera were demolish'd.

" She smiled on many, just for fun,—
I knew that there was nothing in it ;
I was the first, the only one
Her heart had thought of for a minute :
I knew it, for she told me so,
In phrase which was divinely moulded ;
She wrote a charming hand ; and, oh !
How sweetly all her notes were folded !

" Our love was like most other loves,—
A little glow, a little shiver ;
A rosebud and a pair of gloves,
And ' Fly not yet' upon the river ;
Some jealousy of some one's hair,
Some hopes of dying broken-hearted ;
A miniature, a lock of hair,
The usual vows—and then we parted.

" We parted—months and years roll'd by ;
We met again four summers after ;—
Our parting was all sob and sigh—
Our meeting was all mirth and laughter ;
For, in my heart's most secret cell
There had been many other lodgers ;
And she was not the Ball-Room's Belle,
But only Mrs. Something Rogers."

A poor man that hath little, and desires no more, is, in truth, richer than the greatest monarch that thinketh he hath not what he should, or what he might ; or that grieves there is no more to have.—Br. HALL.

APRIL 26.

This day, 26th of April, 1731, was interred, in Bunhill Fields burying-ground, the celebrated Daniel De Foe. The memoirs of his remarkable life and times have been lately written, with fidelity and ability, by Mr. Walter Wilson, who says, " His latter writings all lead to the conclusion that he considered himself upon the verge of another world, and was setting his house in order, that he might not be taken by surprise. With a resolute purpose to devote his energies, so long as they continued, to the improvement of mankind, we observe a growing indifference to passing scenes, and an elevation of mind that raised his contemplations to spiritual objects. Those religious impressions which he had imbibed early, and carried with him through life, were sharpened by the asperities of his situation. They became his solace under the frowns of the world, and the staff of his old age. Disciplined in the school of affliction, he had been taught submission to the hand that inflicted it ; and aware of the difficulties that beset a conscientious adherence to the path of duty, he made them a motive for diligence, and frequent self-examination. In one of his latest publications, he says, ' I know not whether of the two is most difficult, in the course of a Christian's life, to *live well* or to *die well*.' In a former work, he has the following reflections suggested by a future state. ' I believe nothing would contribute more to make us good Christians, than to be able to look upon all things, causes, and persons here, with the same eyes as we do when we are looking into eternity. Death sets all in a clear light ; and when a man is, as it were, in the very boat, pushing off from the shore of the world, his last views of it being abstracted from interests, hopes, or wishes, and influenced by the near view of the future state, must be clear, unbiassed, and impartial.' With a mind elevated above the grovelling pursuits of the mere worldling, and steadily fixed upon the scenes that were opening to him as he approached the boundaries of time, De Foe could not be unprepared for the change that was to separate him from his dearest connexions. The time of his death has been variously stated ; but it took place upon the 24th of April, 1732, when he was about seventy years of age."

Shall I, who, some few years ago, was less
Than worm, or mite, or shadow can express,
Was nothing, shall I live, when every fire
And every star shall languish and expire ?
When earth's no more, shall I survive above,
And through the radiant files of Angels move !
Or, as before the throne of God I stand,
See new worlds rolling from His spacious hand,
Where our adventures shall perhaps be taught,
As we now tell how Michael sung or fought ?
All that has being in full concert join,
And celebrate the depths of LOVE DIVINE. *Young.*

HINDOO SUPERSTITIONS.

Gungoutri is the source of the river Ganges, accounted sacred by the Hindoos, or rather the place nearest to its source, which is in the midst of impassable mountains covered with snow. The Hindoos, who worship this river, consider Gungoutri a very sacred place, and a pilgrimage to it highly meritorious. And, indeed, if difficulty alone could render an action virtuous, the journey would be so in a high degree ; for the difficulty, and even dangers, of the passage through a mountainous country, destitute of all regular roads, and where the rude bridges set up by the natives are frequently washed away by sudden torrents, leaving frightful chasms to be crossed as the traveller best may, are more than we can easily imagine. Captain Skinner, an English officer, has taken this journey, and the following passages give an account of some of the horrors of the Hindoo shrine.

"A river as wide as the Thames at Windsor, flowing over an uninterrupted bed, higher than the crater of Mount Etna (for Gungoutri is nearly 13,000 feet above the level of the sea,) would be an interesting object, if it had no other claim upon the mind: but the traveller must feel almost disposed to overlook that, in the extraordinary scenes of superstition that he is destined to witness acted on it.

"Here every extravagance that the weakness of the human race can be guilty of, seems to be concentrated: some, who have been wandering for months to fill their phials at the stream, overcome by the presence of the object of their worship, lie prostrate on the banks; others, up to their wastes in the water, performing, with the most unfeigned abstraction, all the manœuvres of a Hindoo worship. Under the auspices of Brahmins, groups were sitting on the bank, kneading up balls of sand, with holy grass twisted round their fingers, intended as offerings to the Ganges for the propitiation of their fathers' souls, which, when ready, they drop into the stream with the most profound and religious gravity.

"Such faith is placed in its power of performing miracles, that many haunt it for the most ridiculous purposes, convinced that what they seek will be accorded. At this moment a fanatic is up to his middle in the river, praying it to bestow on him the gift of prophecy: he has travelled from a village above Sirinagar, never doubting that the Ganges will reward him for his journey. He will return, he says, a prophet to his native hill, where all will flock to him to have their fortunes told, and he will soon grow rich.

"As I approached the holy shrine, a troop of pallid spectres glided through the woods before me, and vanished like the images in Banquo's glass. I thought I had reached supernatural regions indeed, till a few more yards brought me to a train of naked faquires, whitened all over with ashes: a rope was coiled round their wastes, and their hair hung down to their shoulders twisted like serpents; their hands close to their sides, they glided along with measured steps, repeating constantly in a hollow tone, 'Ram! Ram! Ram!' a Hindoo word for the Deity. If it required any thing to add to the wildness of the scene, these unearthly beings were admirably adapted for it. A person little disposed to believe in ghost stories, would start at beholding one of these inhuman figures rise suddenly before him; and, if one were seen perched upon the brow of a precipice in the glimmering of the moon, with an arm raised above the head incapable of motion, and the nails hanging in long strings from the back of the clenched hand, would doubt if indeed it could be an earthly vision. If the sight of such an apparition could give rise to fear, the deep sepulchral voice with which the words 'Ram! Ram!' fell upon the stillness of the night, and resounded from the rocks around, would complete the scene of terror.

"At Gungoutri there are many sheds erected for the shelter of pilgrims; and as the evening was far advanced, and a storm was brewing, I went into one of them. It was a long narrow building, and the further end was so wrapped in darkness, that I had been some moments in it before I perceived any thing. I was attracted by a low sullen murmur, and went to the spot whence it proceeded. A miserable wretch had just blown a few sticks into a flame; and, as the light burst upon his countenance, I unconsciously receded, and had to summon all my fortitude to return to him again. His eyes started from his head, and his bones were visible through his skin: his teeth chattered, and his whole frame shook with cold: and I never saw hair longer or more twisted than his was. I spoke to him, but in vain; he did not even deign to look at me, and made no motion, but to blow the embers into a fresh blaze; the fitful glare of which, falling on his skeleton form, made me almost think I had descended into the tomb. I found he had come for the purpose of ending his life, by starvation, at Gungoutri. Many faquires have attempted this death, and have lingered for several days on the banks of the river without food.

The Brahmin, however, assures me that no one can die in so holy a place; and, to preserve its character, the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages take care they shall not; and bear them by force away and feed them, or, at any rate, give them the liberty to die elsewhere."

"A small temple marks the sacred source of the river; and, immediately opposite, is the orthodox spot for bathing in, and filling the phials, which, when ready, receive the stamp of authenticity from the seal of the Brahmin, who wears it as a ring upon his finger: it bears the following inscription engraved upon it.—'The water of the Bhagirathi, Gungoutri.' Without such mark, the water would not be deemed holy by the purchasers in the plains.

"I was not able to witness the mystery of their worship, for they protested against my passing beyond the porch of the temple. The sanctum seemed close and unpromising, and I had no desire to pollute it by my touch.

"The comfort my followers obtained, with the advantage they hoped to reap, by their prayers and ablutions at Gungoutri, put them in such good spirits, that they would have followed me to the shores of Kedar Nath. The mention of that place of suffering is enough to make the coldest Christian shudder. A melancholy delusion leads the naked, and frequently innocent Hindoo, to brave the severest torture that the frame of man can possibly be subjected to, with a fortitude that would place him in a rank with the most illustrious of martyrs, were it exercised in a good cause. They wander for miles, with almost a light spirit,—overcoming hardships at every step, that might entitle them to be canonized,—to crown their labours, and to close their days in hunger and in cold, that early mortifies their limbs! Crowds have passed from Gungoutri to that mountain, (the journey is about four days,) and have never more been heard of. Some have been known to repent when yet near enough to return, and to have perished from their tortures beneath a jutting rock, their extremities withered, and their pains increased by the contempt and execration of all who pass them, and the yet keener stings of their consciences, which upbraided them for want of faith, and prospect of damnation! They have an idea that none can find the path to return by, unless rejected by heaven. "A very great crime," said my Brahmin guide, "will induce them to encounter this death."—"What crime do you consider sufficient to need such an atonement?" I asked. "Killing a Brahmin or a cow," was his immediate answer.—A strange association; but they are both held in equal veneration; and not unfrequently the cow is most deserving of it of the two. She does not, at any rate, seek to have such a doctrine believed.

"It does not follow that a full pardon is accorded to the self-devoted victim. They imagine that the elect are permitted to reach a high peak called Brigoon, from which they throw themselves down to a bottomless abyss, across which a sharp stone, projecting from the mountain, passes; should they fall astride upon it, and be equally divided, they are forgiven: other modes of being cut imply a slight punishment. As the frost soon seizes on them, none who have reached any distance in the snow ever return: thence the belief that there is no road back for the accepted. Those who tremble on the verge, perish, as I have said, should they escape being stoned to death by the nearest villagers, who believe such sinful beings would bring curses on them.

"In our progress towards Benares, we kept close to the east bank of the river; and, when distant from it two or three hours, had an amusing variety of travellers towards the sacred city, to enliven the route. The road on the shore appeared so crowded, that I imagined some fair was to be held; but I learned that this was not the case, and the con-

course was by no means unusual. There were even whole families; there was a father carrying two baskets, balanced across his shoulder on a pole; his cooking-pots and meal in one, while, in the other, 'nestled curious there an infant lay.' The little thing sat as comfortably as possible, covered up to its chin in clothes, and turning its black head about in the most independent manner. If I had not seen this sort of travelling-cradle before, I should have taken its inmate for one of a litter of puppies, with its muzzle poked out of its bed. The mother followed, with a bundle upon her head, and a child upon her hip; while two or three other little things trotted away by her side.

"Among other adventurers of the city, was a snake-charmer, who took advantage of a pause in my passage, to sit down on the bank and pipe to his pupils, who reared their crests, and appeared to take real delight in the music. He had two, which he took from a bag, and handled with the most perfect indifference. They seemed to be equally careless about his touch, and occasionally wound round his arms and his neck with great familiarity.

"The approach to a fair or a horse-race, in our own country, cannot afford greater variety or interest than an everyday assemblage in the neighbourhood of Benares, if these be the common objects, as I am assured they are. I saw, also, several of the pilgrims, with whose errand I became so well acquainted at Gungoutri, carrying vessels of that water into the city; they were slung over their shoulders in little baskets; among the crowd was one man with his arm fixed above his head, and his fist clenched, the nails of his fingers grown through, & hanging in strips down the back of his hand.

"So large a town (for Benares contains nearly 600,000 people) must form a grand object from the river; and where all, or the greater part of the inhabitants, are engaged in the cleanly rite of bathing in the sacred stream, the spectacle is, beyond belief, beautiful. Soon after daylight, the daily ceremony begins; and, until the sun grows warm, the crowds at the river, with the parties drawing towards it or returning from it, fill the whole place with animation.

"While I was floating before the Ghauts (steps leading down to the river), in admiration of the scene, it seemed to me like some fairy dream, so unlike was it to any thing I had ever witnessed. The devout, the indifferent, and the profane, are so mingled together, engaged in their different occupations of praying, washing, and playing, that it is hard to say which predominates.

"I could observe Brahmins performing their prayers, and others making offerings; while their neighbours were washing their clothes, and splashing away at a rate quite enough to shake the gravity of any but a Brahmin.

"It was amusing to see a fat old priest waddle from the stream like a turtle, and take up his position on the steps of the Ghaut; while, not far from him, the light forms of the women rose from the water, and stood with their thin drapery floating round them, to comb their long locks,—like mermaids, in all but their want of mirrors. When their hair is nearly dry, they hold their clean robes like a screen round their fingers, and, shaking off the wet ones, draw the others close, and are dressed in a moment.

"The figures approaching the Ghaut, some of them in blue and rose-coloured scarfs, as well as white, with their pitchers on their heads, and their children by their sides, give a still more picturesque effect to the scene. The number of boats that are passing up and down the river, the splashing of the oars, and the song of the rowers, with the screams of the children, who, without their consent to the ceremony, are getting well ducked, complete the picture. The sun was not so high, but that the domes and minarets of the holy city were reflected in the stream below; and it appeared that the town, as well as all its sons and daughters, had fled to the bosom of the sacred river."—*Skinner's Excursions in India.*

SIR NICHOLAS AT MARSTON MOOR.

"'Tis noon; the ranks are broken along the royal line;
They fly, the braggards of the court, the bullies of the Rhine:
Stout Langley's cheer is heard no more, and Astley's helm is
down;
And Rupert sheathes his rapier with a curse and with a frown:
And cold Newcastle mutters, as he follows in the flight,
'The German's hor had better far have supp'd in York to-
night.'

"The knight is all alone, his steel-cap cleft in twain,
His good buff-jerkin crimson'd o'er with many a gory stain;
But still he waves the standard, and cries amid the rout,
'For church and king, fair gentlemen, spur on, and fight it
out.'
And now he waves a roundhead's pike, and now he hums a
stave,
And here he quotes a stage-play, and there he fells a knave.

"Good speed to thee, Sir Nicholas! thou hast no thought of
fear;
Good speed to thee, Sir Nicholas! but fearful odds are here.
The traitors ring thee round, and with every blow and thrust,
'Down, down,' they cry, 'with Belief, down with him to
the dust!
'I would,' quoth grim old Oliver, 'that Belial's trusty sword,
'This day were doing battle for the saints and for the Lord!'

OLD LETTERS.

I know of nothing more calculated to bring back the nearly-faded dreams of our youth, the almost obliterated scenes and passions of our boyhood, and to recal the brightest and best associations of those days

When the young blood ran riot in the veins, and
Boyhood made us sanguine—

nothing more readily conjures up the alternate joys and sorrows of maturer years, the fluctuating visions that have floated before the restless imagination in times gone by, and the breathing forms and inanimate objects that wound themselves around our hearts, and became almost necessary to our existence, than the perusal of old letters. They are the memorials of attachment, the records of affection, the speaking trumpets through which those whom we esteem hail us from afar; they seem hallowed by the brother's grasp, the sister's kiss, the father's blessing, and the mother's love. When we look on them, the friends, whom dreary seas and distant leagues divide from us, are again in our presence: we see their cordial looks, and hear their gladdening voices once more. The paper has a tongue in every character—it contains a language in its very silentness. They speak to the souls of men like a voice from the grave, and are the links of that chain which connects with the hearts and sympathies of the living an evergreen remembrance of the dead. I have one at this moment before me, which (although time has in a degree softened the regret I felt at the loss of him who penned it) I dare scarcely look upon. It calls back too forcibly to my remembrance its noble-minded author—the treasured friend of my earliest and happiest days—the sharer of my puerile but innocent joys. I think of him as he then was,—the free, the spirited, the gay, the welcome guest in every circle where kind feeling had its weight, or frankness and honesty had influence; and in an instant comes the thought of what he now is, and pale and ghastly images of death are hovering round me. I see him whom I loved, and prized, and honoured, shrunk into poor and wasting ashes. I mark a stranger closing his lids—a stranger following him to the grave—and I cannot trust myself again to open his last letter. It was written but a short time before

he fell a victim to the yellow fever, in the West Indies, and told me, in the feeling language of Moore, that

Far beyond the western sea
Was one whose heart remember'd me.

On hearing of his death I wrote some stanzas, which I have preserved—not out of any pride in the verses themselves, but as a token of esteem for him to whom they were addressed, and as a true transcript of my feelings at the time they were composed. To those who have never loved nor lost a friend, they will appear trivial and of little worth; but those who have cherished and been bereft of some object of tenderness, will recur to their own feelings; and, although they may not be able to praise the poetry, will sympathise with, and do justice to, the sincerity of my attachment and affliction.

STANZAS.

Farewell! farewell! for thee arise
The bitter thoughts that pass not o'er;
And friendship's tears, and friendship's sighs,
Can never reach thee more:
For thou art dead, and all are vain
To call thee back to earth again;

And thou hast died where strangers' feet
Alone towards thy grave could bend;
And that last duty, sad, but sweet,
Has not been destined for thy friend:
He was not near to calm thy smart,
And press thee to his bleeding heart.

He was not near, in that dark hour,
When Reason fled her ruined shrine,
To soothe with Pity's gentle power,
And mingle his faint sighs with thine;
And pour the parting tear to thee,
As pledge of his fidelity.

He was not near when thou wert borne
By others to thy parent earth,
To think of former days, and mourn,
In silence, o'er departed worth;
And seek thy cold and cheerless bed,
And breathe a blessing for the dead.

Destroying Death! thou hast one link
That bound me in this world's frail chain:
And now I stand on life's rough brink,
Like one whose heart is cleft in twain;
Save that, at times, a thought will steal
To tell me that it still can feel.

Oh! what delights, what pleasant hours
In which all joys were wont to blend,
Have faded now—and all Hope's flowers
Have wither'd with my youthful friend.
Thou feel'st no pain within the tomb—
'Tis theirs alone who weep thy doom.

Long wilt thou be the cherish'd theme
Of all their fondness—all their praise;
In daily thought and nightly dream,
In crowded halls and lonely ways;
And they will hallow every scene
Where thou in joyous youth hast been.

Theirs is the grief that cannot die,
And in their heart will be the strife
That must remain with memory,
Uncancelled from the book of life.
Their breasts will be the mournful urns
Where sorrow's incense ever burns.

But there are other letters, the perusal of which makes us feel as if reverting from the winter of the present to the spring-time of the past. These are from friends whom we have long known and whose society we still enjoy. There is a charm in contrasting the sentiments of their youth with those of a riper age, or, rather, in tracing the course of their ideas to their full development; for it is seldom that the feelings we entertain in the early part of our lives entirely change—they merely expand, as the full-grown tree proceeds from the shoot, or the flower from the bud. We love to turn from the formalities and cold politeness of the world to the "Dear Tom" or "Dear Dick" at the head of such letters. There is something touching about it—something that awakens a friendly warmth in the heart. It is shaking the hand by proxy—a vicarious "good morrow." I have a whole packet of letters from my friend G——, and there is scarcely a dash or a comma in them that is not characteristic of the man. Every word bears the impress of freedom—the true *currente calamo* stamp. He is the most convivial of letter-writers—the heartiest of epistlers. Then there is N——, who always seems to bear in mind that it is "better to be brief than tedious;" for it must indeed be an important subject that would elicit from him more than three lines; nor hath his rib a whit more of the *cacoethes scribendi* about her—one would almost suppose they were the hero and heroine of an anecdote I remember somewhere to have heard of, of a gentleman who, by mere chance, strolled into a coffee-house, where he met with a captain of his acquaintance on the point of sailing to New York, and from whom he received an invitation to accompany him. This he accepted, taking care, however, to inform his wife of it, which he did in these terms:—

"Dear Wife,
I am going to America.
Yours truly."

Her answer was not at all inferior either in laconism or tenderness:—

"Dear Husband,
A pleasant voyage.
Yours, &c."

There are, again, other letters, differing in character from all I have mentioned—fragments saved from the wreck of early love—reliques of spirit-buoys hopes—remembrancers of joy. They, perchance, remind us that love has set in tears—that hopes were cruelly blighted—that our joy is fled for ever. When we look on them we seem to feel that

—————No time
Can ransom us from sorrow.

We fancy ourselves the adopted of Misery—Care's lone inheritors. The bloom has passed away from our lives.

SONNET.

Forget thee?—then hath Beauty lost her charms
To captivate—and Tenderness grown cold
As the perennial snows of mountains old;
And Hope forsook her throne, and Love his arms.
At morn thou art mine earliest thought—at night,
Sweet dreams of thee across my soul are driven;
Almost thou comest between my heart and heaven
With thy rich voice, and floating eyes of light.
Forget thee? Hast thou, then, a doubt of me,
To whom thou art like sunshine to the spring?
Forget thee? Never!—Let the April tree
Forget to bud—Autumn, ripe fruits to bring—
The clouds to fertilize—the birds to sing—
But never while it beats, this bosom thee.

REMARKABLE CELEBRATION.

The fourth of June was King George the Third's birthday, and, therefore, during his reign, was kept at court, and in many towns throughout the kingdom.

At Bexhill, on the coast of Sussex, where the inhabitants, who scarcely exceed 800, are remarkable for longevity and loyalty, on the 4th of June, 1819, they celebrated the King's birth-day in an appropriate and remarkable manner.—Twenty-five old men, inhabitants of the parish, whose united ages amounted to 2025, averaging eighty-one each (the age of the King) dined together at the Bell Inn, and passed the day in a cheerful and happy manner. The dinner was set on table by fifteen other old men, also of the above parish, whose united ages amounted to seventy-one each, and six others, whose ages amounted to sixty-one each, rang the bells on the occasion. The old men dined at one o'clock; and at half-past two a public dinner was served up to the greater part of the respectable inhabitants to the number of eighty-one, who were also the subscribers to the old men's dinner. The assembly room was decorated with several appropriate devices; and some of the old men, with the greater part of the company, enjoyed themselves to a late hour.

SONG.

FROM LALLA ROOKH.

From Chindara's warbling fount I come,
Call'd by that moonlight garland's spell;
From Chindara's fount, my fairy home,
Where in music, morn and night, I dwell.
Where lutes in the air are heard about,
And voices are singing the whole day long,
And every sigh the heart breathes out
Is tuned, as it leaves the lips, to song!
Hither I come
From my fairy home,
And if there's a magic in Music's train,
I swear by the breath
Of that moonlight wreath,
Thy lover shall sigh at thy feet again.

For mine is the lay that lightly floats,
And mine are the murmuring, dying notes,
That fall as soft as snow on the sea,
And melt in the heart as instantly!
And the passionate strain that, deeply going,
Refines the bosom it trembles through,
As the musk-wind over the waters blowing,
Ruffles the waves, but sweetens it too!
So, hither I come
From my fairy home,
And if there's a magic in Music's train,
I swear by the breath
Of that moonlight wreath,
Thy lover shall sigh at thy feet again.

INTERESTING ANECDOTE.

We take pleasure in giving publicity, for the first time, to an anecdote, which reflects signal honour upon General Jackson, and indeed upon the American character. The authenticity of the story is unquestionable. We heard it from a gentleman of distinguished literary eminence, whose writings have placed him among the first of living authors, and of whom any country might be, as his own is, justly proud. It was related in a company, of whom was another distinguished individual, now representing his country abroad, but at the time to which the anecdote refers, holding a situation near the person of his hero, which enabled him to bear testimony, from personal knowledge, to its truth.

In the year 1824, our informant met, at the table of Gen. Sir George Airey, many distinguished Englishmen, then in Paris. The conversation turned on the pending Presidential election, and fears were expressed that, should General Jackson be elected, the amicable relations between the two countries might be endangered, in consequence of his implacable hostility to England, and his high handed exercise of power, as evinced during his command at New Orleans. The necessity, on the part of our informant, of replying to these observations, was superseded by the prompt and generous outbreak of one of the guests—Colonel Thornton, of the 85th—an officer well known for his frank and gallant character, and whose regiment suffered severely in the attack of the 8th of January. He testified, in the handsomest terms, to the conduct of General Jackson, as an able and faithful commander on that occasion, and declared that, had he not used the power confided to him in the "high handed" way alluded to, New Orleans would infallibly have been captured. As to the charge of implacable hostility, Colonel Thornton declared, that in all the intercourse, by flag and otherwise, between the hostile commanders, General Jackson had been peculiarly courteous and humane; and, to support this assertion, begged leave to mention one circumstance. He then proceeded to state, that on the day after the attack, the British were permitted to bury their dead, lying beyond a certain line, a hundred or two yards in advance of General Jackson's entrenchments—all within that line being buried by the Americans themselves. As soon as this melancholy duty was performed, the British General was surprised at receiving a flag, with the swords, epauletts and watches of the officers who had fallen, and a note from General Jackson, couched in the most courteous language, saying that one pair of epauletts was still missing, but that diligent search was making, and when found it would be sent in. These articles—always considered fair objects of plunder—were rescued by General Jackson, and thus handed over with a request that they might be transmitted to the relatives of the gallant officers, to whom they had belonged.

This anecdote, and the frank and soldier-like style in which it was given, turned the whole current of feeling in favour of the General, and drew forth an expression of applause from all parts of the table.—"For myself," said our informant, "I felt a flush on my cheek, and a thrill of pride through my bosom, and in my heart I thanked the old General for proving, by this chivalrous act, that the defenders of our country were above the sordid feelings of mercenary warfare."—*American paper.*

Petrarch, speaking of beautiful pictures, says, "If these things that are counterfeited, and shadowed with fading colours, do so much delight thee, cast thine eyes up to Him that hath made the originals; who adorned man with senses, his mind with understanding, the heaven with stars, and the earth with flowers: and so compare real with visionary beauties."

The desire of power in excess caused angels to fall; the desire of knowledge in excess, caused man to fall; but in charity is no excess—neither can man nor angels come into danger by it.—BACON.

Let us manage our time as well as we can, there will yet remain a great deal that will be idle and ill employed.—MONTAIGNE.

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