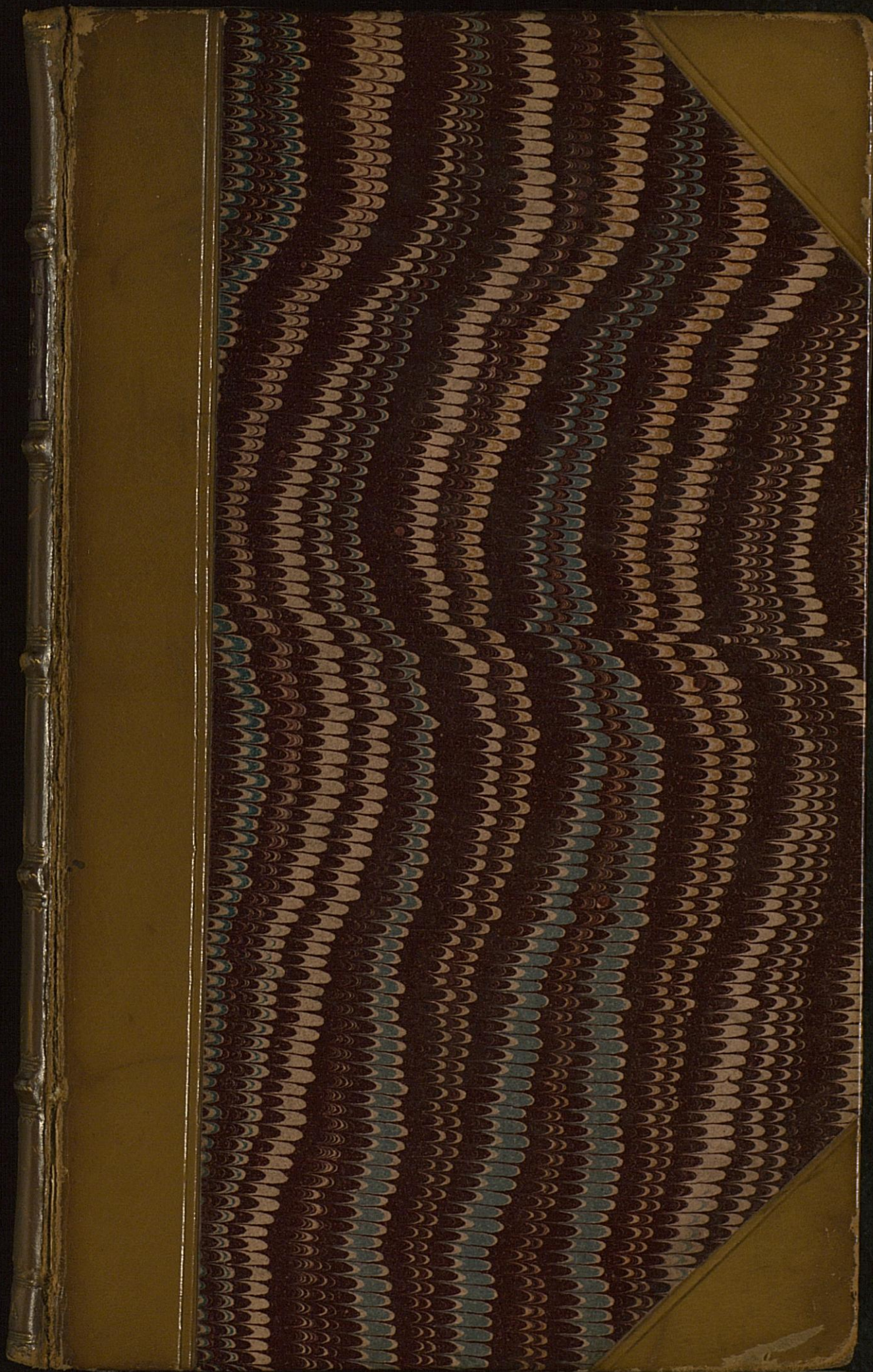
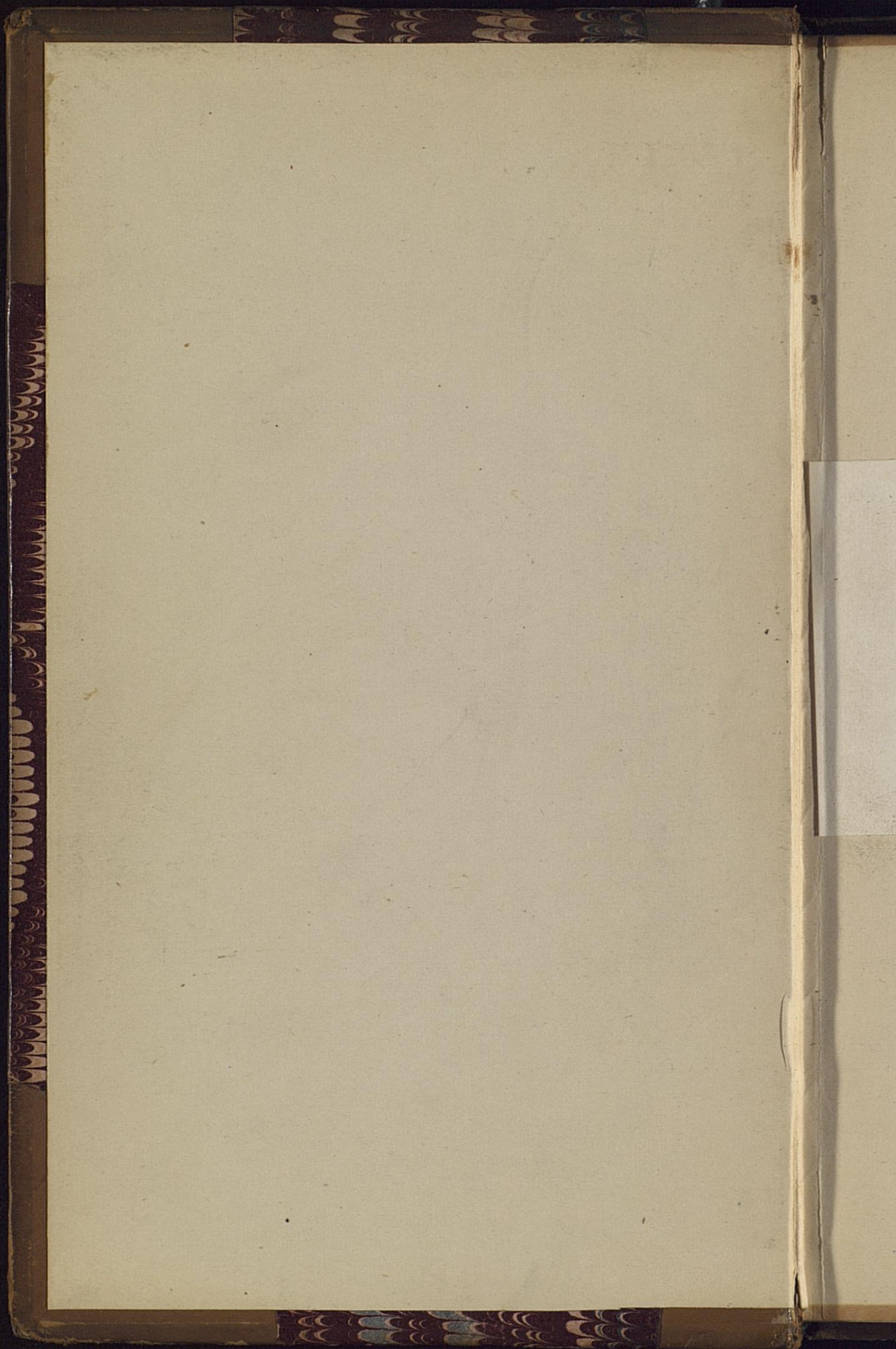




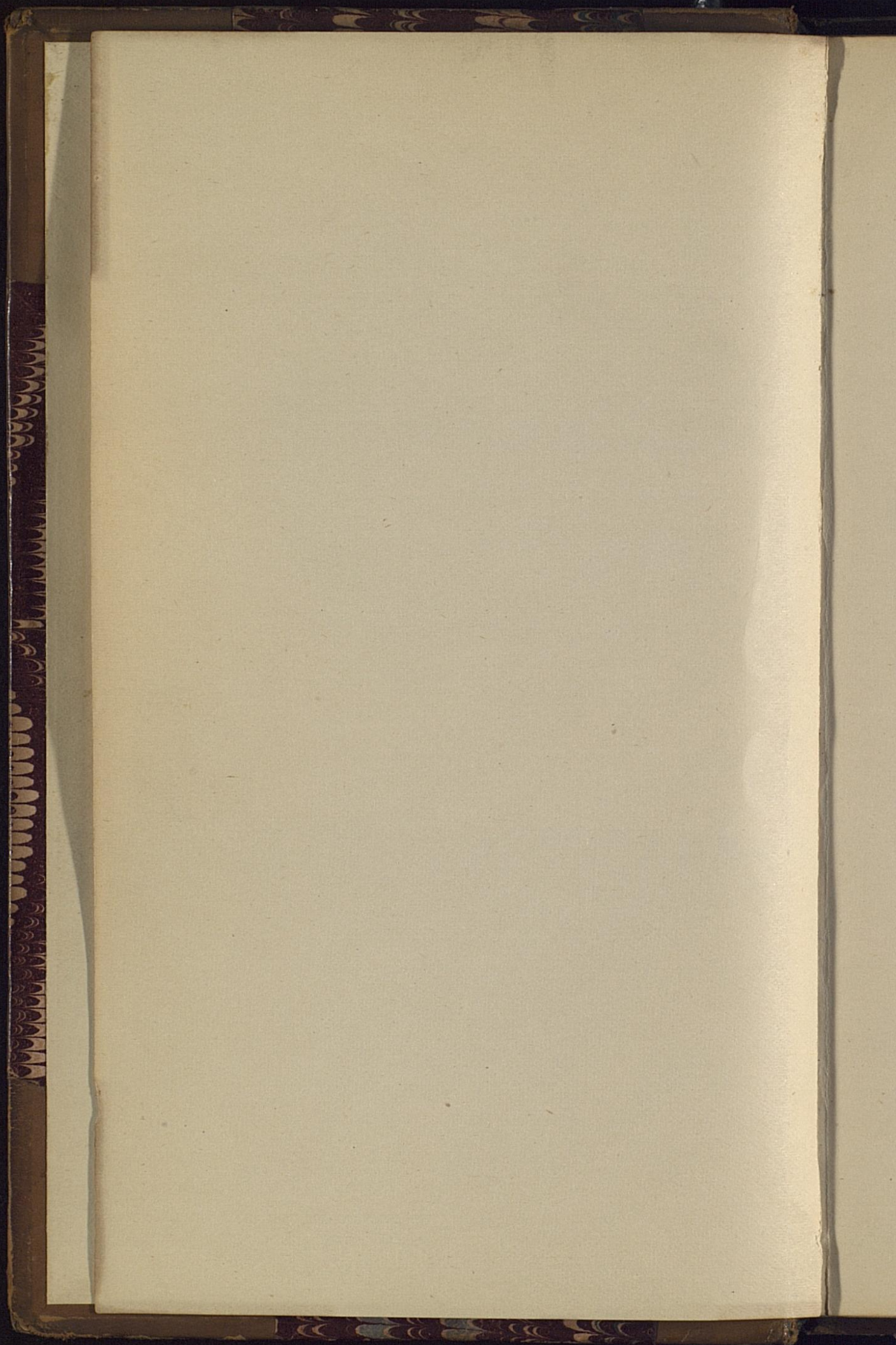


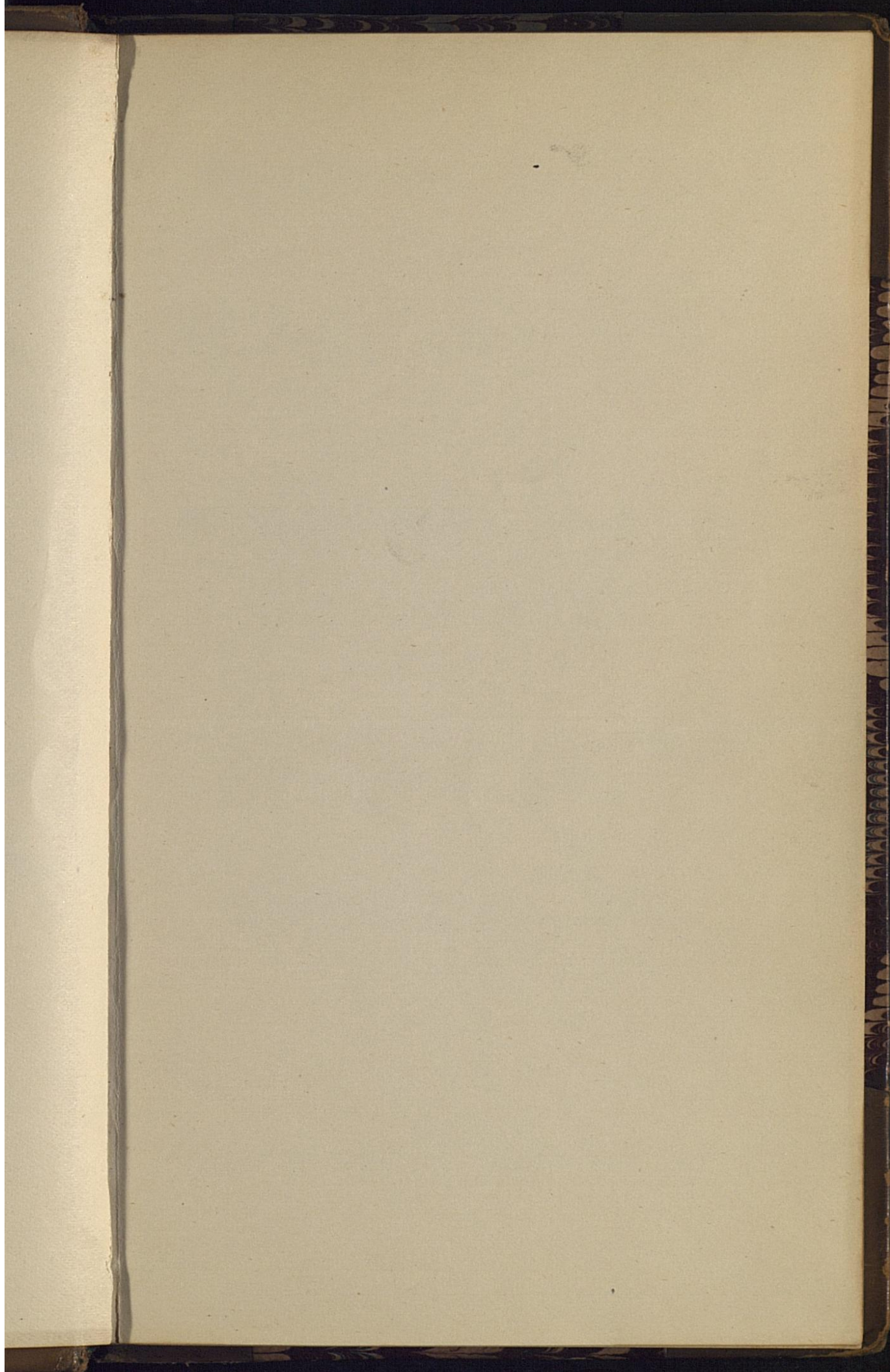
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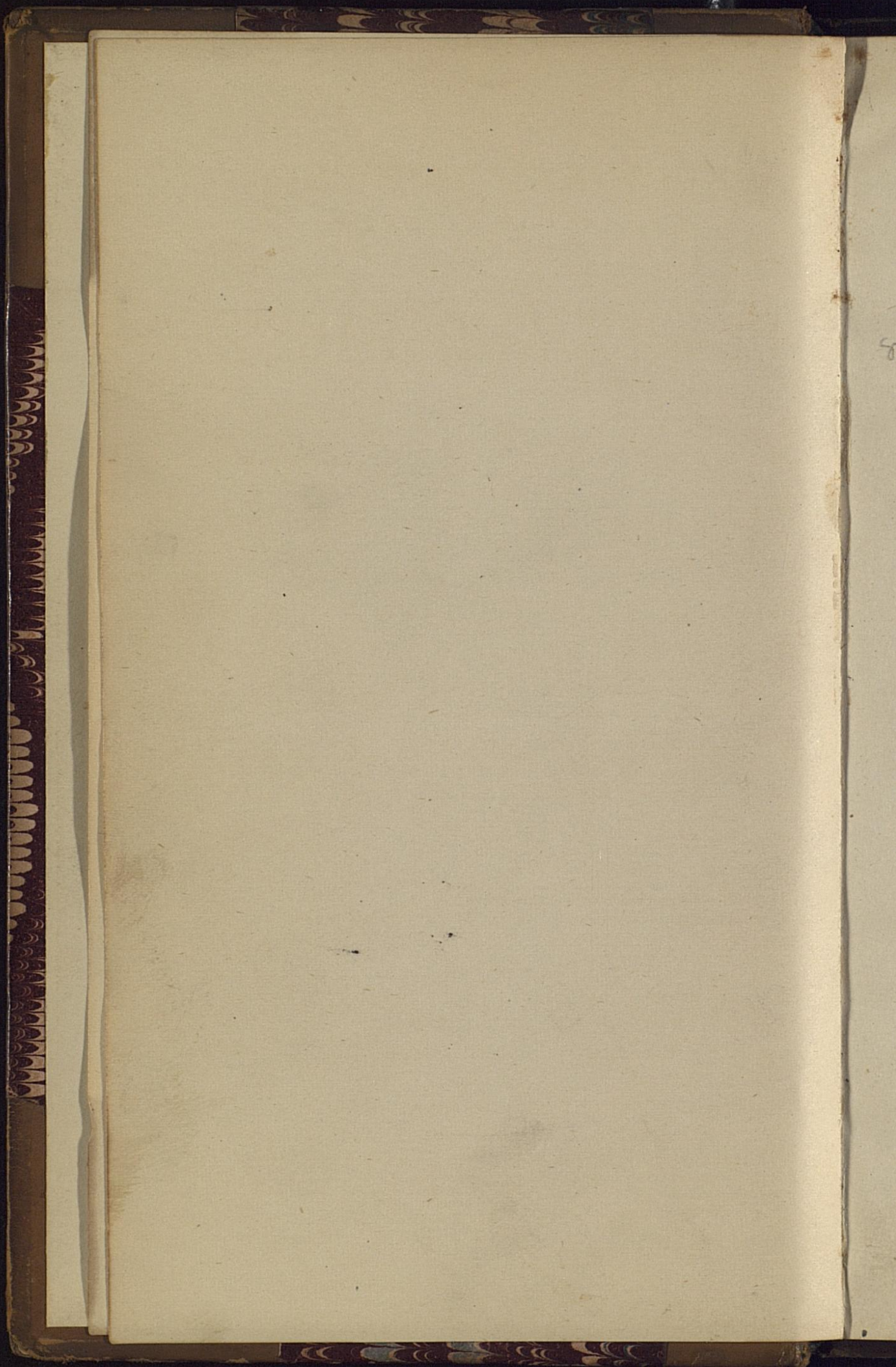
Allen Hamilton

Helen Knight Hamilton

Collection







SIGHTS AND INCIDENTS,
OR,
PLACES AND FACES.

Miscellaneous Etching and Sketching,

BY "ATTICUS"

(ANTHONY HEWITSON),

*Author of Portraits of Local Legislators; the Churches and
Chapels of Preston; Country Churches and Chapels;
Stonyhurst College—Past and Present; and
Joint Editor of the Tyldesley Diary.*

Show me the place.—*Shakspeare.*

Compare our faces, and be judge yourself.—*Ibid.*

PRESTON:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT THE "CHRONICLE" OFFICE.
1875.

15 Nov. 68 x Spec. coll. gift Holman Hamilton

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PREFACE.

The following sketches originally appeared in the *Preston Chronicle*. They refer to "Places and Faces" observed between the Summer of 1872 and that of 1875; and, in the main, they were written under circumstances—the pressure of business and the disquiet of miscellaneous engagements—not very suitable to literary labour. The author offers no apology for their appearance—the bulk of prefatory apologies are either mendacious or maudlin; and as he has not yet asserted his infallibility, he makes no special excuse for shortcomings. If the volume be found useful, let it be preserved; if worthless, thrown away. The hope, however, is entertained that it will be instructive occasionally, amusing now and then, and, as a work, profitable, at any rate, to—the Author.

Preston, September 16th, 1875.

PREFACE

The following is a preliminary sketch of the history of the American people, from the first discovery of the continent to the present time. It is intended to be a general outline, and not a detailed history. The author has endeavored to give a fair and impartial account of the events, and to show the progress of the nation from a state of barbarism to a state of civilization. The history of the American people is a history of struggle and progress, and it is the duty of every citizen to know the facts of their history, and to be able to judge for themselves of the merits of the various institutions and measures which have been proposed for their improvement. The author has endeavored to do this, and to give a clear and concise account of the history of the American people, from the first discovery of the continent to the present time.

By J. M. Smith, 1845.

AMONGST THE SHAKERS.



We had an irrepressible longing one warm, sunny Sunday afternoon, some time ago, whilst in London, to see "the Shakers." We felt sure they were fools—perhaps of the honest sort, perhaps not—and that was one reason why we desired to see them. Whatever philosophers may say, and however much straight-laced people may shrug their shoulders, it is a very interesting sight to see a congregation of harmless human geese, if it be only for the sake of the reaction you get, by comparison, on the side of sense, and for the pleasure you experience in knowing you are not one of them. Blockheads, by their vagaries, only tend to strengthen rational action by the law of contrast; and that is their mission—they are fools in order that other people may be wise. Another reason why we desired to see "the Shakers" was this—we wanted to see how far it was possible folly of the religious order could go, what sort of people those were who did the job in the cleanest fashion, and how much bliss on their side and fun on ours could be extracted out of the job. Mark Twain once met a man in the regions of Frisco who asked him where he could get a laugh, and said he was dying for one; and we were somewhat in that same plight; but our joy had to be of a seriously-comic type, for the day was Sunday. And of all the days in the week Sunday is the slowest, the saddest, the stupidest in London; so that of itself was a sufficient inducement to get near some kind of a Momus, even if he had a dash of theology in his programme. We

had a friend of the male order of creation with us, and what the thoughts in his mental apparatus were, we know not; but the foregoing were current in ours. After indulging in a cheap go-ahead tea, in one of the converging streets of Westminster, we sallied out for the Shakers. "Whereabouts do the Shakers meet?" said we to a sharp-looking London youth at the parliamentary end of Westminster Bridge, and he mentioned some distant place on the other side of that arched and notable structure. We posted to the other end, enquired again, received a weak reply, felt dubious, then hailed a 'bus conductor, and, with a smile in his eye, as if he knew we were after something either not over serious or very much so, he replied—"Oh, they've gone to Chelsea—gone some weeks since—the shop was too hot up 'ere for 'em." Chelsea thereupon became our cynosure; we were back again over Westminster Bridge immediately, and in a few minutes Father Thames and his dog saw us steaming away from the pier there. It was splendid sailing up the river that bright Sunday evening: the water was gently studded with steam and sailing boats; St. Stephen's rose up majestically on the right; St. Thomas's Hospital—then in course of erection—looked elaborate and massive on the left; and the Thames stretched out far ahead, with bridges crossing it at intervals. After halting at and leaving in the rear several landing stages, we finally came to Cardogan Pier, and in a moment or two afterwards were within the borders of Chelsea and within a good stone throw of Thomas Carlyle's house. But we were more bent upon curiosity and sensation than reflection and philosophy, and after a variety of inquiries, and sundry turnings, we found ourselves in a small, out-of-the-way, semi-barbaric region, on the north-western side of Chelsea, called Little College-street. If there ever were a college in this street it must, judging of the locality—the dingy houses, the strange grimy-looking children, and the idle hanging-on adults—have been a very little one, with very diminutive influence. Our inquiries for this street—we had to keep inquiring, so mysterious and tortuous was the way, until right upon it—made youngsters and upgrown people, too, smile and prick their ears; they saw at once that we meant Shakerism, and that was evidently the synonym of

something very ludicrous and contemptible in even their benighted minds. Street architecture got commoner, and little lads and lasses got noisier and dirtier, and upgrown folks looked rougher, the nearer we got to the desiderated tabernacle. At last—after passing two or three men selling satirical songs and hymns about the Shakers, and after walking under a sort of hayloft-floor surmounting a narrow passage, we sighted, perhaps fifty yards ahead, in a small thoroughfare, a few people hanging about the front of a barn-like building, with windows newly driven into its walls. This was the temple of the Shakers—the mysterious new sect whose worship consisted of dancing, and jumping, and hugging, and kissing, and all that sort of fine midsummer-night madness. A serious-looking man stood at the door of the building, and we understood from him that, owing to the troublesome congregations and disturbances there had been in the establishment, a charge for admission—the money to go towards defraying the expenses of the place—was made. Threepence each was the charge; we paid the money like lambs; and “walked in.” The congregation at this particular time was slender—strikingly solemn and quiet in some quarters, and quite inquisitive and inclined to be lively in others. We took our stand amongst the latter portion of the congregation, and gazed about with no small amount of curiosity. The “chapel,” or whatever might be its name, was about as plain and unsentimental as an unraked haystack. The walls were rough and whitewashed, the woodwork of the windows, some of which had evidently been smashed with stones, was unpainted; the roof was common and open to the rafters; and the “furniture” consisted of a number of common forms, some being ranged in a square, some parallel, and some mounted upon the steps of a low, open gallery at one end. The square, if one may speak like an Irishman, was, as we afterwards found, the “charmed circle,” for here the majority of the Shakers congregated, and here the great bulk of the dancing and kissing was done. People kept dropping in; but many of them seemed to be of our sinful stamp: they had just come to look on, to get a sensation, to laugh, to wonder, and to go away smirking and mystified. The “regular” congregation—those who might be set down as Shakers, or in a shaking state—would number about 40;

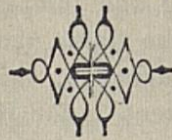
and they were of all ages and conditions—young, aged, middle-aged, and mainly of the working class order. Whatever they could have got into their heads to join such a denomination was the predominant mystery. They had an earnest, serious look—greeted one another with a kiss as they entered, sat down upon the forms sedately and solemnly, then coolly turned on one side, and, smiling pleasantly at the adjoining person, closed in, and gave that said person, whether male or female, a kiss. After the osculation they sat still—musing, turning their thumbs, and occasionally smirking right out into something very near a full, open laugh. At half-past six o'clock a thin, saffron-featured woman, with a quick eye and Yankee cheek bones, came to the front of the platform and gave out a hymn. She had a sharp, keen look, and was evidently of the impassioned, strong-minded type. Perhaps she would be somewhere about fifty years of age, and she wore an air of shrewdness—of mental dexterity and coolness which at least commanded respect. Very soon after the singing had commenced, a shoemaking-looking fellow, with a considerable quantity of hair on his head, who was seated near the sacred "circle," began to make a stir with his feet as if he had got the cramp in them; directly afterwards he appeared to swoon over; then he jumped up and began dancing—lilting up and down rapidly, and turning now and then; in about a minute he was got within the "circle," and he had a spell of jumping and turning for about twenty minutes. How he stood it—why he did not sit down or fall down, and confess that he was flogged with the job—was to us a mystery. His endurance was really amazing: he was never still a moment during the whole of the twenty minutes; he panted, sweat, jerked, jumped, and wheeled about, and his hair flopped up and down as if St. Vitus had got him right. At length he quietened down—went slower and slower, like a train when it is approaching a station platform; and finally he sat down upon a form and was himself in almost no time, showing no great signs of exhaustion, and directly entering into conversation with a young man adjoining. There was much smiling, which sometimes resolved itself into audible laughter, whilst this man was jerking and gyrating—we mean on the part of the spectators, who clearly con-

sidered the fellow a "gone sparrow," and no mistake. Whilst he was dancing about, the singing was kept up, and it not only invigorated him, but seasoned others for a like performance. It mellowed them down into a half sentimental, half hysteric frame. Quickly, after the man had got seated, there came a sigh and a short stifled scream from a young female—a girl of perhaps 18—and she soon began jumping, and was conducted into the circle where she rattled away amazingly. She was followed by a young man, who was first seized with a kind of fit, and then with a spasmodic jerking. They danced together vigorously, and now and then collided and kissed. This kissing caused much mirth amongst the bystanders. Another young woman was next "seized:" she fluttered faintly on the form, a young woman held her head, nursed her a little, and then off she went into a dancing attitude, and dirlled about merrily on the floor—followed (this seemed somehow to be a sort of inevitable consequence when a female got up) by a man, who joined in the romping. There were now two couples on the floor, and others were in a state of preparation—kissing one another on the forms, pawing one another's faces, leaning upon each other's shoulders, and generally getting into a most comically uneasy and moon-struck condition. A portion of Scripture was read about this time, followed by another hymn; and the music and dancing seemed to act in a talismanic manner upon those who were disposed to somnific and saltatory performances. Four couples were at length whirling and jumping upon the floor; the singing was brisk; the kissing was brisker; and the laughing which would have been awfully out of joint at an ordinary devotional meeting, but which could not be avoided at *this*—was brisker still. "Stir it up—go it"—said a smart, swellish young fellow, as he stood gazing at the dancers kissing and wheeling and flinging themselves about. "Oh Crickey—look at the cove," burst out a quick-witted Cockney youth when a heavy set man in the circle smashed in with a kiss upon a good-looking young woman and then whizzed her round in a double-quick waltz fashion. Both seemed to like it, and they drove on merrily. "She's a-going" one heard every now and then, from some critical spectator as a young or old female began to drop over; and

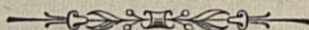
by and bye on turning on one side we espied the Cockney youth peering in amongst the spectators at the higher end, and, pointing to a young fellow there, heard him say "He's a-going." That young fellow—whom we had been eyeing for some time—was a strong-built, red-necked individual, like a bricklayer, and whether foxing or in earnest we can't tell, but he was being attentively "nursed." He had a hiccuping motion about the throat every now and then as if bordering upon a convulsion (they all showed this symptom before getting into the dancing attitude); but he did not seem to get on with the job properly, and never, so far as we observed, "went off." Two strong, plump, young women at the lower side of the "circle" had a desperate struggle of the interlocked sort: one began to swoon; the other nursed her; then she commenced swooning; and then they began hugging each other on the form—a species of sitting wrestling match: they caressed and squeezed one another, swayed about, perspired, and struggled in this way for perhaps fifteen minutes. The conflict was of a most seriously-ludicrous character, and did really seem to be, as a wag near us whispered, "a sheer waste of force." As a rule, the kissing and the squeezing of this strange religion was of the natural kind—that is to say, the males would kiss and hug the females, and *vice versa*. What this had to do with religion we can't tell; but it formed the chief part of the programme, and the devotees—those who "went off" properly into dancing, gesticulating, &c., seemed to throw their whole heart and soul into the work and to enjoy it. The bulk of the females—at any rate the younger ones—were good-looking and well dressed, and they were on all occasions duly attended to by the males. Not once did a comely young maiden figure long in that precious circle without being speedily joined by some one of the other sex; and that made the business rather suspicious. In the gallery there was a very good-looking young woman, with a heap of style about her—ringlets, ruffles, bib and tucker, &c.—and we had a notion that she would, owing to the superiority of her look, be firm enough and sensible enough to keep out of the dancing ring; but she at length began to turn pale, to chuckle in the throat, and to swoon over; and when in a semi-unconscious state she was nursed a

little by a young man, and then guided down, like a mesmerised subject, into the circle, where she directly became very lively and eccentric. She jumped, and wheeled, and danced—danced till she panted, danced all her ringlets straight out until her hair came over her face and had to be thrown back by some of the brethren. Occasionally she would stop a little; but she quickly resumed her jumping and arm-flinging, and one or two males did not forget to attend to the osculating part of the business. During the proceedings a little girl was “seized”—began jilting and dancing, and this was about the most painful part of the business. We could stand the young men and women and the older hands going through this oscillating, saltatory tom-foolery; but when a quiet, neat little girl, about eight years old, was allowed to enter into the nonsense, it did seem too bad—cruel, and, as we thought, positively vitiating. The female conductor, with whom our friend conversed once or twice, appeared to think the whole of the exhibitions very wonderful and excellent. She alleged that the dancing, instead of weakening actually strengthened those who participated in it; that it was the spirit of God operating upon them; that influence of this kind, direct from the great Author of Life, was infinitely superior to the recognised afflatus of modern Spiritualism; and that she on one occasion was under the “influence” for three hours, dancing and jumping all the time, and was more refreshed at the finish than at the beginning! Of course, it was all a delusion, this mercurial Shakerism; but the brethren went in for it keenly, and some of them vehemently. When we left—train arrangements compelled us to go about 8 o’clock—the Shakers were playing high jinks, and no mistake. There were twelve persons, young and old dancing; there were others sitting on the forms leaning upon each other’s shoulders, passing their hands under each other’s chins, &c.; some were singing; some ejaculating wildly; some twitching and groaning; whilst kisses were flying in all directions—there was a fire of them—long, short, subdued, noisy, and effervescing; some, too, which seemed to be driven right in, like a tenpenny nail hammered up to the head; and we have a strong idea that very many present as spectators had a strong hankering to be in at that game. One young fellow near us could hardly be held back. “I’ll have a

go " he said to his comrade, when the game was at its height ; but he was, after some difficulty, persuaded off it. He was not a Shaker ; but had a lively faith in kissing. How the proceedings wound up after we left we cannot tell ; but we saw enough to convince us that Shakerism was a delusion, that its more vehement manifestations were based upon physiological weakness, and that it would have been a dismal affair all through, if something very much akin to a heap of courting and caressing had not been thrown into it.



A DEEP HOLE.—ON THE BANK OF IT.



Rogues, holed pockets, and draw-wells are deep ; love is deep when you are over head and ears in it ; sleep is deep when water has to be thrown upon you to waken you up ; but a hole half a mile deep—"straight up and down," with no halting place nearer than the bottom if you should happen to tumble in—is deeper still. We have seen even a deeper hole than that, but it was about 240,000 miles off—a very safe and comfortable distance ; that particular hole was in the moon, and as we looked at it through a telescope the information conveyed to us was that it was about three miles deep ! The special hole we have now to deal with is much nearer home than that—is on "this terrestrial ball," as Dr. Watts would say ; and being about half a mile from top to bottom is quite deep enough for ordinary mortals to deal with and talk about. It is about 17 miles south of Preston—on the outskirts of Wigan ; and, speaking plainly, is a coal pit. It is the Arley Mine—one of the Rose Bridge Collieries. Its depth is 815 yards—close upon half a mile ; and it is the deepest perpendicular mine now worked in the world. Out of curiosity we one day went to see this extraordinary insertion in Mother Earth—to view its surface and surroundings, to descend it, to see what was going on below, and then to get out of it as fast as possible, and chuckle in the consciousness that we had managed what the Yankees would call a "big thing." And we were quite successful all through—going down and coming up with fear and trembling, and rejoicing as if we had got a new skin with never a hole in it when we stood on terra firma and saw day light again. What we noticed on the way and above this marvellous hole must form one chapter ; what we observed and experienced in the shaft and below will constitute materials for another. Going to Wigan on a wet or murky day is something like going into a cellar without a light ; but we were favoured with particularly fine

weather, and there was consolation of no insignificant order in this circumstance. On moving—by train—up an incline, called “Coppull Brow,” we had clear indications of what had to follow: we here met with the “shadows” of “coming events:” at the side and in the distance there were coal heaps, elevated wheels whirling round in couples; tramways, brawny men, sable as chimney sweeps, on bank tops; and now and then a few females, connected with the pits, with faces beautifully smudged, but chiefly conspicuous on account of the trousers they wore. Wigan station was quickly reached after this; and on getting to the town it seemed to be all hill and hollow, with an everlasting amount of irregular antiquated masonry about it—little stone houses built at all angles and of all shapes, with a heavy melancholy-looking church tower on the higher side, a few large new manufactories, &c., on the outskirts, and some beautiful-looking gentlemen’s seats, on commanding, wood-crowned eminences in the distance. We were soon out of the station, and in due time rattling through Wigan in a cab—up streets, down streets, round street corners, and through a dense, swarthy, begrimed population, clearly indicating the contiguity of coal mines, and the wives and weans of colliers. The children in some of the side and out-of-the-way streets had a tag-ragged and barefooted appearance, but they all seemed cheerful, and through the dirtiest visage there came a gleam of content. Of course, content is a comparative thing; some people are happy in lairs approaching pigsties; some are blued-up in palaces; these Wiganers, whom we passed, had evidently dispositions belonging to the former category, with a come-day-go-day easiness about them, and, amongst all their begriment, were quiet and civil. Our journey in the cab was along a series of streets paved in the old Cyclopean style, and considerably rougher than a corduroy road; and a humming, whizzing noise which came from one of the wheels of the vehicle did not add to the pleasure of the situation; but it was soon over: after many windings and up and down positions, we reached what seemed to have been in the past the entrance gates to a neat gentleman’s seat beyond, but which now wore a more business-like air—impinging upon coal heaps, and chimneys, and steam pipes, and really forming the residence of a colliery manager—

Mr. Bryham, whom we afterwards found to be a most courteous intelligent gentleman, of the go-a-head and energetic type, and just the person for such a position as that occupied by him. On approaching this place, we felt we were nearing no common concern: there were locomotives belonging to the works screaming and flitting about; there was a huge embankment jutting outwards, like part of a new railway towards Wigan, but actually the "tip heap" of the refuse, &c., from the pits; there were plain and iron-bound chimney stacks smoking beyond, with iron pipes jutting up alternately and belching out steam; there were men and women moving about in various ways; and above all these were large thin-spoked iron wheels turning rapidly in different directions, and carrying the ascending and descending ropes of the mysterious shafts below. We in due time arrived at the office of the manager, presented our "credentials," and had a brief chat. This office is a business-like place, and a curiosity as well; the instruments therein visible showed that it had telegraphic communication with sundry places—some not far off, others more distant, in connection with the concern; whilst above, in a small room, there was a species of geological collection—at any rate a collection of strata, in a long glass case, being specimens of the different beds of earth, rock, coal, &c., passed through in sinking the pits belonging to the establishment. On leaving the office we turn to the left, and the first place that attracts our attention is a lamp-house—a building set apart entirely for storing, giving out, taking in, replenishing, and keeping in proper order the Davy lamps of this great colliery. There were about 1,100 lamps in it; and if a man might not here be allowed to "take his Davy," we should like to know the place where that particular thing would be allowed. Did you ever see a Davy lamp? If not, we will put in a word for you on the subject: a lamp of this sort is about a foot long, two inches in diameter, with a brass bottom and cap, and side stays to preserve it. The body of it is made of a thin, gauze-like metal, through which light is emitted; but the perforations are so fine and so well arranged that no actual flame can come through them, and this prevents ignition, and thereby explosions, in case gas is met with in pits. If you had, say, to turn a stream

12 A DEEP HOLE.—ON THE BANK OF IT.

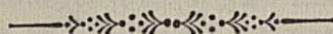
of common house gas right upon one of these lamps when lighted, there would be no ignition. The point of contact resulting in combustion is prevented by the gauzy nature of the covering. We saw this experiment tried, and it was quite successful. Each lamp is locked at the bottom, the keys are kept in the office, and this prevents the men from opening the lamps and exposing themselves and those about to danger. Just before leaving this luminous department, a rough-spun, homely fellow handed a lamp through a little window to the man in charge, and said, "Con't tell what's up with this here—it keeps gooin awt about noon every day." The man looked at the lamp and, with a sparkle of fun in his eye, said, "It's a society lamp this"—meaning that it didn't like much work. The collier laughed; we all did; and away he went. At the top of the brow the scenes were of a brisk and lively character; and the appearance of women and lasses amongst the number working gave a curious variety to the picture. Now, we are distinctly of opinion that there are some things females were never intended for: it is said that ducks were never intended for singing or running; and it is clear to our mind women were never intended to wear men's trousers and work at coal pits. There is such a thing as women "wearing the breeches" at home; but that has nothing to do with coal pit work. What we have described is a common thing about Wigan; and the tender sex seem to like it; so what can you do? At the colliery we are now at there are about 30 females, young and old, employed. Formerly, women were permitted to work in pits; now they are only allowed to work on the banks; and the change, though not as full as we could like, is a wise one—a remove from say barbarism to semi-barbarism. We hope the day is not very far distant when a further remove from that stage to civilisation will be effected. Canaries in sheep pens, eggs about the feet of cart horses, or pianos in hay lofts, are not more radically out of place than women running about in trousers, pushing coal waggons on pit banks. It is altogether at variance with the "eternal fitness" of things. But we must, for the purposes of description, take matters as we find them. There were on and about this colliery bank perhaps 30 females—some were running down to tramway heads with full waggons of

coal; others were pushing empty waggons back towards the shafts—one, a stout-armed, broad shouldered wench, was pushing six or seven empties up an incline, and she never flinched until the far end had been reached. On looking over the side of an embankment where some coal was being tipped with a heavy crash into a circular seive driven by steam, we saw a couple of females below standing upon a railway waggon: they were as black—as black as—well they were very black; but they smirked, and shouted, and threw coals about, and appeared to think no more about the affair than you would about putting your hat on. They were used to it. Unnatural as the situation of all these females was, none of them seemed to think much, if anything, about it. They were good-looking, as far as one could fairly make this out by burrowing through the coal dust and Ethiopian smudginess of their countenances; and though a poet would not have gone into raptures about their ruby lips and the roses playing thereon, he would have been struck with a considerable amount of “pearliness” between them; their teeth—through contrast with the general blackness surrounding them—came out, in white relief, like the biters of corpulent niggers. All of them were dressed after one uniform fashion: they had coloured handkerchiefs and hoods upon their heads, a dark print frock tucked up in front, just above their knees, giving off a comical-looking tail piece, and below fustian trousers—not bloomers, but close fitting common pants. The weekly wages of these females who work about 10½ hours per day are 12s. There was no unseemly familiarity, and we heard no vulgarity of speech: occasionally the men and the lads would smile at the women and the lasses—a very natural sort of thing at any time; but beyond that all was serene and orderly. We have seen more roughness at a pious and straight-laced tea party than we observed amongst these strange, blacked-up, oddly brought up colliery folk; and though some of them could neither read nor write, and looked more like natives of the land of sulphur, than inhabitants of a temperate, enlightened zone like this, they were all very civil, and very cheerful—far more disposed to laugh than to snarl, and always willing to give a steady, kindly answer to a square, legitimate question. There were two or three pit mouths on the summit

of the bank where they were working. The greatest one got most of our attention. Like the others, it was surrounded with iron bars, and had sheets of iron on the ground adjoining, in order that the coal waggons might be more easily moved about. Every minute and a quarter a cage containing four trucks or waggons, each holding on an average say about $7\frac{1}{2}$ cwt., was brought to the surface of this shaft—the chief shaft, nearly half a mile deep. The ascent and descent were of course simultaneous, and occupied about a minute; the engine was working with 10lbs. less than the ordinary steam pressure, else the “journey” would have been performed more quickly; and the quarter of a minute was taken up in hauling out of the cages the full waggons and replacing them with empty ones. Out of the mouth of the pit there came a dull, warm smoke, from the furnace below, which opens into the shaft. There was something unearthly about that hole: it seemed like the mouth of Pandemonium—so grim, so hazy, so awfully deep; and yet far away down, below where the furnace fires were roaring and the smoke driving into the shaft, there was clear air, and scores of men and boys working, and a world of industry in full swing. The shaft was divided by a wood and iron frame, and in these two sections the process of ascent and descent was carried on. Wherever all the coal that came up could come from seemed a mystery; cage after cage, ton after ton, kept landing at the surface; and yet what we saw—about 60 tons would be brought up during the hour we stayed on the bank—was only what had been going on for days, and months, and years. To a man connected with the pit, who was standing by, we said, on noticing this great output (from only one pit, bear in mind), “Well, there must come an end to this coal getting—it can’t go on for ever like this;” he lifted himself up earnestly, put on a seriously philosophic look, and we almost thought he was going to say, so solemn was he, that in about a year or eighteen months there would be a finish to our fire-making; but the oracle was really generous: “Yes,” rejoined he, “it’s reckoned that in about a *thousand years* it will be exhausted.” He thought that something dreadful; but we were particularly easy, feeling confident that very few of us now using coal would require it when that crisis came. It is bad

policy to meet trouble half way ; it is worse to go the whole journey and make yourself miserable to-day because somebody may be in a quandary about coal in ten hundred years. We have no right to be extravagant with our present supply ; but if it were done to-morrow human ingenuity would not be done, and while that remains there will always be something to drive engines and bake pies with. Reverting to this deep pit and its output, we may remark that as soon as the waggons are taken from the cages, they are separately run upon an adjoining weighing machine. Attached to each waggon there is a metal check or tally, bearing the number of the collier who has got the coal and who will have to be paid for it. The tally number is shouted out by a boy who also gives the weight which is indicated by machinery ; and three men seated within a contiguous cabin check the weight by means of an indicator on one side, and put the numbers on a large specially prepared sheet of paper. One of these men checks for the colliery owners ; the other two check for the miners, and are paid by them, each miner contributing a certain sum per week, whilst the surplus, if any, goes towards the wages of those checkers at other collieries wherein the number of men employed is not sufficient to raise by the levies made the requisite remuneration. The checking goes on very serenely ; occasionally there is a difference, and then the waggon is re-weighed ; but from what we saw the rival checkers were in a very harmonious mood—worked together calmly—and never once called for knuckle dusters. There is no absolute stipulation as to when the colliers shall begin and cease work ; but as a rule they commence descending about five in the morning—“ wet ” ones coming later—and they finish early in the afternoon ; the bulk emerging from their cimmerian labours between half-past two and four o’clock. They are as cheerful under ground as above it ; and we noticed none of the heathenism which some how has got associated with those connected with coal pits. They are a plain, hearty, cheerful lot of fellows—will be civil to you if you are inclined to be so to them, and on the other hand would have no objection to be rough and to thrash you handsomely if you turned awkward or put on airs ; but in the main they are quiet, with a clear streak of humour and good fellowship in their composition.

A DEEP HOLE.—DOWN IT.



Our last article was devoted to a description of what we saw on the banks of the deepest perpendicular coal pit in the world—the Arley mine, near Wigan ; in this we shall give some account of what we saw at the bottom of it ; but before doing so, we must say just a word respecting the ponderous and rapidly-going engine which let us down this most singular hole. We find it, after a short round-about journey, in an adjoining building. Here there is a large oblong edifice set apart entirely for the purposes of a gigantic mass of mechanism : big wheels are going round, pistons sliding rapidly, cranks moving, shafts turning, and altogether we have here an engine which, when full steam has ruffled its temper properly, is equal in power to 700 horses ! Only think of that—of a kick from such a thing as that, if it were possible. One horse, when its mind is moderately disturbed, can easily damage a man's osseous framework for life with a single hind hoof ; but what might not an animal do, in a wicked humour, if seven hundred times as strong. Let us be thankful that there are no kicking propensities in the particular "creature" we are now inspecting—that it is under absolute control, and can be made to go or stop, to move with tremendous speed, or just stir as if it wanted to go to sleep, or entirely stop for any length of time, by simply pulling one or two plain iron handles. This engine works two mines—the deep one and another adjoining. It is of the high pressure horizontal kind ; its chief driving wheel is about 82 feet in circumference ; and if it could have run on a level road, at the point of its maximum motion, when we were present, its speed would have been something like 40 miles an hour. But the full pressure of steam was not on at that time : if it had been the speed would have been equal to something like 80 miles an hour. Talk about force—about the strength of a pugilist's muscles or the power of a railway locomotive—

why, that would count as the mere bite of an infant flea by the side of an engine as strong as 700 horses going at the rate of 80 miles an hour. A concern like this, if it could be put upon wheels, would knock a town to pieces in five minutes. The machinery we are now describing is worked and controlled by one man; it is easily started, easily stopped, and should he ever make a slip, and allow the engine to run too far before slackening speed, he has only to pull a small handle within arm's length, when there is at once brought into full play a steam break, which will almost instantly stop the engine. The break consists of a strong iron band, which runs round one side of the main wheel, and when put on it squeezes down tightly and thus stops the whole mechanism. Talk about squeezing! there is enough force in this break for the loving and courting of a whole county, with lots of grip to spare. The different positions of the cages in the shaft are indicated to the driver by a pointer upon a figured dial plate, so that he knows when to start and stop easily, and has no difficulty whatever in keeping everything in its right position. The friction upon the bearings of the chief driving wheel was evidently considerable, for though the machinery here was well oiled, a constant stream of water from a small pipe was required to keep it cool. Everything in this department was scrupulously clean, and there was a general air of order and system about it creditable to the establishment. But it is time to be going down the shaft—down the pleasant little hole only about 16 feet diameter and only half a mile deep! Wouldn't you consider it a pleasant place, gentle reader, if you were approaching it? We, and those with us, a neat medley altogether—a parson from a vicarage, a newspaper editor, a master mechanic, and a photographer (we only needed a lawyer and a doctor to complete matters)—well, we marched from the engine-room to the pit shaft, for all the world like a small gang of smugglers or convicts, for we each wore a dark blue linen jacket, a close fitting blue linen cap (supplied at the office, so as to preserve our broad cloth and beavers), and we each carried a lighted Davy lamp. We were really comical to look at, and if some of our friends at home had seen the picture just then, they would have sworn it was all over with us. Into a large iron cage at the top of the shaft we were

directed ; it had an angular iron cover, and we crept into the higher compartment quietly, wondering whether all would go right—wondering whether the rope was sound, whether the cage was safe, and amid all our crude notions respecting the gearing, whether, if even all were pronounced square at the beginning, something might not get a twist or snap ere we reached the bottom. As we stood at the top, in the cage, the feeling that we were right over a hole half a mile deep crept over one and clean into one's bones like a new kind of rheumatism. Any one anxious for a full square sensation of the tremendous, mixed up with the awful, need only get into one of these cages, and in five seconds after it has begun to descend he will conclude that the dose is perfect, and that he wants no more of it. After a sign had been given that all was right, the cage we were in lifted up a little, and then sank down and away we went. The very first feeling on beginning to descend was, that the cage was leaving us—dropping from under our feet—and we held to it as if we were in some kind of a swing. The sense of downward motion was for the first 100 yards very acute ; but directly afterwards we seemed to become reconciled to it ; and when at its greatest intensity—a motion equal to something like a mile a minute—we felt nothing of it. We could hear enough, for the cage ran down iron rods fixed at each angle to keep it square ; but the first sensation of falling had vanished, and yet that did not bring relief, for it was now supplemented by this thought—that we were dashing down, in the dark, at an awful rate, to we knew not whither—descending frantically, as if we had at last fairly got into the shaft of the “bottomless pit,” and no mistake. For 600 yards or so the journey really amounted to a descent down a huge chimney. The furnace flue enters the shaft at that distance, and, of course, smoke is emitted therefrom to the surface in one continuous volume ; but it is neither dense nor unpleasant : at first, on beginning to descend the shaft, we experienced a slightly warm, half-smothering feeling ; but it left us, and as we dashed along we forgot all about it. The cage we were in had to pass the outer mouth of the furnace, where a dull heavy flame enters the shaft ; we had to that extent to literally pass through fire, and we did the job as effectually as Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego could have done. The speed we

went at when passing this Tartarean furnace mouth was so great that the fire could not get at us; we shot through it like a ball; and before you could have said Jack Robinson we were scores of yards below it. When perhaps 90 or 100 yards from the bottom of the shaft the speed began to slacken, and the funniest feeling imaginable came over us when this process set in. Though still descending at a brisk rate, we had the sensation of ascending—going up the shaft again; the quick interruption of the downward momentum of course created this sensation, and it never entirely left us until we reached the bottom and came to a positive stand-still. The descent was accomplished in about fifty seconds, and we seemed to have gone through a new world of space and matter in that brief period. And there can be no doubt we had passed through much; we had gone through 243 different sections of material. Beginning with soil, we passed through formations of clay, shale, ironstone, grey rock, freestone, earth, bass, burr stone, &c.—all taken note of during the sinking and extension of the shaft. Proofs of the strange upheavals and turmoils, of the extraordinary changes and revolutions worked in mother earth by Omnipotent power in far away prehistoric ages were demonstrated by the strata we passed through. Nearly 40 yards below the surface there were, amid light blue shale, *fossil ferns*—how did they get there? Ninety yards lower there were vegetable fossils—when were they growing? One hundred and ninety-two yards lower still (or 322 yards from the top) there were more fossil ferns—where had they come from? Thirty-six yards below these fresh water ferns presented themselves—where ran the stream they grew in? One hundred and twenty yards farther down fossil ferns were again found. And two hundred and seventy-five yards below them (or 753 yards from the surface of the earth) a *cockle shell bed* was actually met with! On reaching the bottom we found ourselves on a high stage, and descending from this we proceeded to a small room adjoining, sat down a little, got our breath, for it had fairly been knocked out of us, and accustomed our eyes and ears to the dim atmosphere and curious sounds prevalent, prior to further adventure. A son of the manager was with us, so we felt in safe hands. On leaving from the room named, with our Davy lamps, we

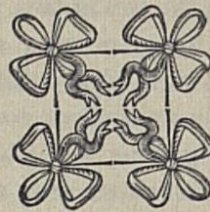
found ourselves in a strongly-propped, broadly scooped-out place—black at the top, bottom, and sides, with waggon rails at our feet, and doors in all directions. We took a course to the left, which was high in some parts, and so low in others that we had to stoop. Occasionally we met with doors, which banged to of themselves, and which were necessary to regulate the air in the workings. Several times we met lads half naked pushing “tubs,” containing coal, along the iron rails. At one part we noticed a side hole, grim and chaotic—this was an abandoned working. Farther on, and after sundry collisions with the top, the roof being always harder than the hardest pate struck, we encountered a number of men, looking like savages or men whose fate had been sealed in Pandemonium. They had each a lamp; they were each half-naked; and they were all hard at work—some standing, some kneeling, some lying on their sides picking under low massive ranges of coal. The men who undermined the coal, tested the mass every now and then to see if it were ready to fall; this they did by striking the face of it, and according to the sound given off they formed their opinions as to its readiness for coming down. Great heaps—not in broken pieces, but in large solid masses—were here and there lying at the sides; they had given way to the undermining of the pickers, and would consequently have to be broken up into fairly-sized lumps, in order that they might be removed in the “tubs” to the pit shaft. The whole of the miners in this, and in the other parts of the pit, seemed to be a cheerful, peaceful set of men; and they were particularly so when some of our party did a little picking, just for the sake of saying that they had got coal in the pit, and then handed them a solatium in the shape of current coin. The atmosphere seemed quite pure here, and though the temperature was a little higher than in the outer world it was not at all oppressive. On leaving this quarter of the mine and retracing our steps towards the bottom of the shaft, an experiment, for the sake of seeing whether there was any gas in the working, and of showing us the usefulness of the Davy lamp, was made. On holding up the lamp to the roof, a slightly blue flame was the result: there was gas in that part, but it could not get to the light of the lamp—the gauze work prevented it. When we got to the shaft we sallied

up another working, where we met with a number of ponies—smart docile little animals, quite at home in their underground quarters. Some of them were in a compact, well-constructed, comfortable stable ; others were drawing waggons, and it was curious to see them regulate their heads according to the altitude of the parts traversed. Ducks, when swimming through low roofed holes or under the branches of overhanging trees, lower their heads, and they are so accustomed to do this when anything is above them that they would actually hold their heads down a little if they were swimming under a bridge with an arch fifty or a hundred feet high ; but these ponies, whilst obviating all the difficulties in the roof, displayed more discretion than that. When the roof was high they lifted up their heads to the natural level, when low they lowered them and shaved beneath in most accurate style. If the changes from high to low were sudden they would regulate their necks accordingly ; a man, after passing some distance where the roof was high, might very easily, when the roof became suddenly low, run his head against the coal—some of our party were adepts at this colliding ; but the ponies always “sailed clear.” After inspecting the ponies and the stables we hurried on to the furnace. Our course was along a tortuous passage, with as much wind in it as a fairly developed storm. It blew you just as you may have been blown at some watering-place whilst walking along the shore in a gale. If half-a-dozen windmills could have been put in that passage they would either have gone round or fallen to fighting amongst themselves. There were several doors along our route, and the wind blew so strongly that we could hardly open them. By and bye we turn a little to the left, open another door, and there we see two of the most tremendously red-hot, white-heat, madly-blazing fires that we ever beheld. It was simply fire gone crazy. The furnaces were enormous in size, and wild with flame. They ran into the coal breast, were encased with stone or brick, were fed in front like boiler furnaces ; and the coal they consumed must have been enormous. Why the whole place was not set on fire and transmuted into a heap of small ashes by this unearthly furnace, seemed a mystery. Any sinner of the orthodox school, who wishes to have some idea of his

ultimate fate, if he does not mend his ways, ought to see this fire ; and if it does not operate in a salutary way upon his feelings, why, then, all we can say is, that it will be a "burning shame." Some of the old brimstone preachers should have had a peep at this fire : it would have been food for imagery—would have strengthened their figures of speech, and increased their sources of illustration. We felt no small sense of relief on leaving this department—the place was so hot, the flames were so fierce ; and we quickly wended our way towards the shaft. It was surprising to find the roads, &c., of this deep pit so dry. In one part there was a little water—water apparently containing bay salt in solution ; but the general workings were dry ; and if they had been deeper they would have been dryer still ; the theory being that the lower you get in the earth and the farther you are from water. Owing to the disengagement of gas, a curious fact presents itself in the floors of this as it does in those of all other pits ; the floors of the workings keep rising ; and if not periodically lowered they would in time swell up so much as to either close them or make it impossible to traverse them. There were men working in various parts of the pit ; the passages for them branching out in various directions ; but we only patronised the parts named—a dose quite sufficient for visitors. And now we must ascend ; the idea is refreshing ; but it would be still more agreeable to know that we were safely at the top. Into a cage we and those with us again get, and in a few moments we are off at railway speed. Nothing can fall upon us, for the cage is covered with iron ; the rope will surely behave itself well, for it is about half an inch thick, six inches broad, and made of steel wire ; and it is not likely we shall be drawn over the top of the head wheel, even if the engine man should forget to look at his indicator, and neglect to put on the steam break, for just above the cage there is a copper bolt and a conical spring, and if the cage should be run up above the shaft a place will be reached in the stage where the copper bolt will be cut, and the cage will then settle back upon the conical spring and remain there firmly and safely. We move up the shaft faster and faster—past the furnace mouth, up and up, through a region black as night—when, lo ! in a moment we feel that the cage is going down again ! Is it really falling back—

has an accident happened? It must be descending; we can *feel* it; what is the upshot or downshot going to be? Thinking—feeling—apprehending—made up a terrible business at this particular moment; when, what opine you—why, in another moment or two daylight, sweet and refreshing and beautiful appears, and directly afterwards we find ourselves at the top of the shaft. The sensation of falling referred to was caused by the slackening of the speed: we seemed to be going back, just because we were almost instantly put upon a slower rate of motion. Those who regularly go down and up the shaft of course take no notice of these things; but visitors like ourselves get keenly flogged and perplexed by them. On getting out of the cage, at the top, there was a crowd of people, and, pointing to one of our party, a youthful collier shouted out, "That's 'im!" We could not make out the meaning of this crowd and this ejaculation; but in a short time it came out that one or two bailiffs were waiting at the top of the pit for a miner below whom they wanted. Perhaps he had gone down to get out of their way; for there can be no doubt that when you are in a coal pit—particularly one nearly half a mile deep—you are fairly out of the reach of bailiffs. The representatives of the law who stood at the top of this pit were wiser than a bailiff whom we have heard of who once made up his mind that he would not wait till a collier he wanted came up, and who accordingly went down for him. The result was, that the bailiff, on getting to the bottom, had all his clothes torn off, was then rubbed over with coal dust, and then sent up the shaft again with his skin on and nothing else—probably a wiser, but certainly a nakeder and blacker man than when he descended. After leaving the deep pit we went down another adjoining shaft—not so deep as that we had visited, but quite far enough down: and the principal sight we had in it was obtained up a short tunnel-like place, which opened out to the shaft of the deeper pit, and enabled us to see the cages as they passed up and down. The speed of them seemed terrific; they shot past, amid sparks and smoke, like demons belonging to the lower regions; and although we had only gone up that same shaft a few minutes before we had no idea then that we were rushing ahead at a rate so awful. Limited mail-travelling seemed slow and child-like to it. At length

we emerged from this second shaft, each of us beautifully begrimed, and all of us like amateur chimney sweeps. A revel amid water, and soap, and clean towels, at the manager's office, soon restored things to their ordinary equilibrium; and in due time we were on our way home again, reflecting betimes upon what we had met with, and convinced that if we had not seen the seven wonders of the world, we had seen the eighth, in the shape of a coal-pit.



TO PILLING AND ITS GULLS.



Going to Pilling sounds very much like going to some *Ultima Thule* made up of dim yokelism and peaty isolation; but when we went to inspect its "Gull Island" we found that we still kept within the pale of a tolerable civilisation—got perhaps into vague latitudes occasionally, but were never far from cultivated fields, courteous people, roast mutton, and contentment. It was one bright morning, about the beginning of June, when we, along with three other equally inquisitive sight-seers, proceeded to Pilling for the sake of its gulls; and at that time the Garstang and Knot End Railway was in working order—a living, breathing affair, not a dead, rail-rusted, grass-grown concern, to smile at and wonder about, as it now is. In about 25 minutes after leaving Preston, we were at the Garstang and Catterall Station; and a move of a few yards, after leaving the main line there, brought us to a train standing on parallel rails, whose destination was the arcadian land of Pilling. Now, that train was of a curious kind—not one of your long, elaborate, complex concerns, with head, tail, and central vans, and carriages of many colours, bearing the enigmatical initials of distant companies, drawn by a gigantic and high-wheeled locomotive: no, it was a train made up of a couple of elongated, Yankee-looking carriages—something like a pair of new omnibuses pulled out to three times their regular length—whilst at the front there was a fanciful little engine which looked more like a mechanical toy than anything intended for pulling big carriages or heavy waggon. That engine was in the habit of breaking down, through over-strain, about three times a week; but, somehow, it always came up smiling again, ready for any storm, and on this particular morning it seemed as full of "go" and courage as a prize bantam. We got into one of the carriages—the entrance being at the end—without a

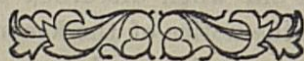
ticket; others followed suit; and for a few minutes time was whiled away in looking at its interior and at the little line it was made for. It seemed like an elephant on a squirrel track, so big was its form in comparison with the size of the line, which was only single railed and altogether a neat and striking illustration of liliputianism and gimcrackery combined. Directly after the train started, a young man in official garb, went to one corner of the carriage, unlocked a box (this was the "booking office"), gave out tickets, and took pay for them. There was smiling at this sort of thing; it was so beautifully "hole and corner" in character; but the official wore a grave look, and appeared to think it a very correct and sagacious arrangement. By-and-bye, we wound round the ruined pile of Greenhalgh Castle; then got to Garstang Station; and then ahead over a long stretch of flat land, until finally we arrived at Pilling Station. The railway stopped here—the rails ran into a field as if anxious to go forward somewhere, but unable to come to any definite conclusion on the subject. A facetious writer once said that this railway was called the Knot End line because it did *not end*. That was putting an end to a knotty point at once, and we are willing to give way on the question. On leaving Pilling Station we made inquiry for the "Gull Island," that being the name of the place where the gulls most do congregate in Pilling. We were directed to some place, which we knew nothing of, about a mile and a half ahead—towards Preesall, an elevated locality due west; and away we went—along open cart roads, over stiles, through fields, and by the sides of ditches. In this part ditches appear to be substitutes for fences; they are deep and broad; they divide meadows, fields of grain, potatoes, &c.; but at a distance they cannot be seen, and the land has the appearance of one general variegated plateau. The flatness of the ground and the character of the soil all tend to confirm the theory that at some time this portion of the country has been submerged with water. As we proceed—driving on without chart or compass, and wondering how many more ditches and stiles will have to be encountered ere the end is reached—we see in the distance, towards the left, gulls wheeling and swooping about in the air, and they are so numerous that we fairly conclude the "Gull Island" cannot be far off

that place. We also notice in the distance, as the onward march is proceeded with, one or two men, who look straight at us with a suspicious kind of gaze. There is no regular road where we now are; the thought crosses us that we may be promptly ordered off; but still we halt not. When in doubt, whilst travelling, the best plan is to "go on," and whilst on land you have no business in by far the safest "move" is to look as if you had—to neither run away, nor stand, nor appear guilty, but to put on an air of consequence, as if you were the first cousin of the landlord, and then pull out a note book and pencil and jot down something neither you nor anybody else can understand. We offer this advice gratis, with the proviso that it won't work when you are after game or mushrooms. The nearer we got to the men referred to and the closer we got to the sea gulls; but whilst the former began to wear an air of serenity, the latter grew very noisy. The men were "keepers;" they could by this time see that we had simply come to look at the gulls; and one of them came up and walked with us to the "island." In a few minutes we reached that particular place, but it was no more like an island than a pinfold is. The interior was formed of tall tangled grass and heather in a perfectly wild state; and the surroundings consisted of low thick brushwood and matted grass, with a dry ditch running round perhaps half of the general enclosure. It was at the height of the breeding season when we visited this place, and shoals of old birds rose and hovered about when we got to the side of the "island." They screamed, and wheeled about, and swooped down just over our heads, and created the most extraordinary confusion you ever heard. If the short-witted fellows engaged on the Tower of Babel had been let loose for the distraction and punishment of our special tympanums at this place, they could not have created half such a chaos of bewildering noise as these precious gulls. The sky above was thick and fairly seethed with them; and they seemed to set one another off, and get into fits of noise, if we even coughed. Sometimes they would settle down considerably, leaving just a few odd birds overhead to do the screaming and saucing work; then, when we stirred a little nearer, they would rise like a cloud, become as crazy as uncorked

soda water, and whirl about in every direction. When all were fairly up—properly roused—they seemed as thick as snow flakes in a winter storm; and they all kept very near to the “island.” A few sailed off perhaps 50 or 100 yards; and stray ones, which had been roaming off in the distant fields, floated in now and then; but the great mass, during our stay, kept very close to their “island home.” Some flew only a few yards from us, and the shyest of the mass would not be more than 50 yards off. Altogether there would be, in the shape of old birds—well, not as many as the Kentucky man’s drove of wild pigeons, which was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles square and half a mile thick; but perhaps 2,500 or 3,000; and when it is remembered that the area within which they were flying was not more than about 40 yards in diameter, it may be taken for granted that they made up a pretty throng and lively picture. The birds whilst flying over us were very mannerly to all the party except one—a gentleman wearing a light summer suit, which seemed to constitute a special annoyance to them, for, independent of other inconveniences, certain of the feathery tribe periodically swooped down towards him, screaming all the while, and passing so close that they only just cleared his hat. On climbing over the fence and getting into the “island”—right amongst the birds—there were high jinks and no mistake. Every old bird was up—they were above us, at our sides, sweeping before our faces, flying round us, we seemed to be amid a whirlwind of gulls—to be fairly lost, and deafened, and dumfounded with them. Whilst all around and above was seething with elderly gulls, all below—on the ground—was alive with young ones: they were running and creeping about in scores and hundreds. Some of the young birds were lively—they ran in and out of the dry thick grass as sharp as crickets; others had just begun to walk; several were leaving or just peeping out of their shells, apparently puzzled to know where they were; and many were cracking their shelly abodes in readiness for a *debut* upon mother earth. The nests were common rough indentations on the ground, made up of dry grass, and indicating none of that skill and care noticed in the abodes of some birds. The young gulls were of a peculiar colour—dark, mottled, half-hairy, and looking more like small newly-bred animals of the rabbit, or rat, or ferret type, or

say a mixture of these, on two legs, than birds. The eggs and young birds were very numerous—we could hardly stir for them—and considerable care had to be taken, in passing through the “island,” for fear of stepping upon some of them. The gulls come here to breed every year, and have done so for a long time. Formerly, according to a description of the place given by Mr. W. Dobson, these gulls had their annual assembly and breeding ground at Walney Island; but about 30 years ago, being disturbed through some cause, they abandoned that place, and took up their quarters at Pilling—on land belonging to the Rev. Dr. Gardner, of Skelton, in Yorkshire, and his brother, the late Henry Gardner, Esq. Since their location at Pilling, they have been regularly protected from the depredations of mischievous youths and poachers by one or two keepers, and there is wisdom in thus guarding the “gull island,” for its feathery inhabitants make themselves useful in destroying grubs, worms, &c., on the adjoining lands; indeed, do much of the insect killing and scavenging of the whole district. These gulls are of the black-headed sort; the country name for them is “petches;” they arrive each year at the “island” in March; begin to deposit their eggs in the following month—some of them are a little later—and when the process of incubation has been completed, and the young birds have got sufficiently strong on the wing, they and the older ones make off for the sea, and are observed no more in the district till the succeeding spring. There is, or was up to a late period, a colony of gulls on Winmarleigh Moss; and there is now a yearly congregation of them, on the estate of Mr. Ormrod, above Scorton. We stayed at the “Gull Island” about an hour, and on our road away from the place had occasion to look round two or three times at it. The gulls kept rising in shoals and screaming—a proof that they were being disturbed by something. Now and then their eggs and young ones are attacked by hawks, rats, crows, &c., and certain marauders of this class might be “trying it on” as we left; but the gulls create such a din when disturbed or attacked, that they easily attract the notice of the keeper, who sallies off to the island whenever such signals are given, and affords them the requisite protection. Our return walk lead us through numerous unknown roads and most crooked

lanes; but we at length found "consolation" in the mysterious regions of Pilling. A comfortable hostelry was reached; tea with a splendid leg of roast mutton and other substantial adjuncts, soon gave content to our feelings; and the genial waiting of a coy, bucolic maiden, made us imagine that if there were really any elysium in Pilling it was this. A walk after tea, along sundry devious lanes, brought us to the delectable railway terminus at Pilling. The train was waiting; it was an excursion train—imagine what a powerful excursion it must have been when two long carriages, equal to about four ordinary ones, did the running business; the station platform was deemed tremendously thronged—there would be about 50 persons upon it; and altogether this part of Pilling seemed to be in a state of unique excitement. The hobbledyhoys crowded upon gate tops to see us; rough-headed, tan-faced little lads and lasses peeped here and there and everywhere, at this mighty excursion of 50; and if, say, other 50 had been here the sensation would have been so great that Pilling would never have recovered itself. The train after waiting about a quarter of an hour for stragglers, steamed away, and we are not certain whether it did not halt once or twice, where there was no station at all, to let down or pick up people; for it is said that it was not an uncommon thing on this line to halt almost anywhere when a person wanted to get into or out of a train. That was a very convenient mode of travelling; but desperately slow; and travelling on this line has even become slower still, for there is now at the time of writing (in the summer of 1874) none at all; and whilst the rails are gradually becoming covered with grass and fading out of sight, the little engine is, we suppose, clapping its wings for glee in some corner of the globe at the thought that its agonising struggles on this marvellous Knott End line have ended.



FOUR DAYS IN THE NORTH.



CHAPTER I.

Once, and not very long ago either, we decided to have a run into the North—to get into the heart of Scotland by breakfast time on a Sunday morning, to look about us, and see what the Scotch were like on the “Sahbaith,” to whistle somewhere during the day in order to test the feelings of the unco’ guid, and see if they would give us a lecture on our sinfulness, then to have a sail on the Clyde, and afterwards, on subsequent days, to hurry westward and northward, and, on the whole, have a fine time of it in the land of pibrochs and usquebaugh. But “the best laid schemes o’ mice and men” do certainly “gang aft a-gley.” When three o’clock on the Sunday morning arrived—train time—we were sleeping like a top; it was too late to dress; too late to catch the northern mail; too late for anything except to go on sleeping; and we went on; but only for a few hours; for though disappointed of the journey we had arranged, we were determined to go somewhere that day—to go north as far as possible—by rail, by anything,—in a sedan, before being entirely foiled. A strong Scotch afflatus was somehow upon us; and at ten minutes past eight o’clock that morning we were at the Preston station with a ticket in our hand for Carnforth,—the utmost northern point we could reach by train until about six o’clock at night. What exquisite railway accommodation!—no means of getting further north of Preston than Carnforth from 8-20 in the morning till 5-55 in the evening. And this, too, on the greatest line—the London and North-Western Railway—in the country. If somebody had wished to make you a present of £5,000 a year, if your grandmother had been on fire determined to let no one extinguish the flames but yourself, if the Mosaic and Mahomedan paradises had been combined and waiting to receive you, in any particu-

lar quarter north of Carnforth, that Sunday morning, you would never have reached them, if it had depended upon ordinary train accommodation. It is deemed very necessary to facilitate the transit on Sundays, on this special line, of any quantity of merchandise—anything ranging from rod iron to treacle; but the moment you begin to talk about the transit of men and women you are landed in a quandary, and find out that the convenience afforded is a mere burlesque, and as closely approximating a nonentity as it is possible to make it. At length the train moved; the morning was fine; Preston looked quiet, and murky, and sleeping as we emerged from it; and the company in our compartment were just about as lively and humorous in conversation as a row of oysters. When time-honoured Lancaster's spires and towers came into view we were somewhat relieved; and the conversation of certain new comers who entered the carriage here gave additional improvement—variety at any rate—to the situation. That conversation ranged from oilcloth to integrity, and it only came to a standstill when Carnforth had been reached. On arriving here we soon ascertained how long we should have to wait before a train would arrive and take us farther north. It was only ten hours and a quarter off the time!—and then we could go on just to Carlisle, and on landing there be just in time to ask for the nearest hotel and walk up stairs to bed. There was a red-looking, nineteenth-rate-seeming train standing on another line of rails at this time, and we decided to go by it to Barrow. Getting to the north, we thought, on taking a seat in this red-looking train is a curious affair, certainly; but we were determined to be reconciled. The company was humorous and cheerful, and the out-look was pleasant and surprising. Fifteen years before this particular Sunday morning, when we were somewhat more familiar with Carnforth, it was a tiny, grey-looking, irregular village; now it seemed to have all the accompaniments and auxiliaries of a busy, commercial, enterprising place. Huge furnace towers, with an immense chimney above them; new rows of cottages; a railway to Furness; another railway, crossing above, and joining a Yorkshire line eastward,—large sheds here and there—all told of the prosperity and industry of the place. Carnforth was originally called Kerneford, and

then Carnford. Its name occurs in old documents prior to the time of Henry VII, and during that monarch's reign it was held as part of a knight's fee by Sir James Laurence. Carnforth was once the scene of a great aquatic or tidal disruption; great quantities of land have at time and time been washed from its western borders; and the removal of a portion of its soil sometime ago brought to light the remains of an ancient shipyard here. When Charles II went to Scotland his army was encamped for an entire day here; and it may be worth while stating that formerly there stood in this locality a tree, which, "according to rustic superstition, received so much virtue from plugging up a number of living shrews, or field mice, in a cavity prepared for their reception in the tree, that a twig cut from it, when freely applied to the backs of disordered cattle, would cure them of their maladies." Resting down in a hollow a little northward you see the small village of Warton—a "preti streat for a village," as old Leland says—with its grey church tower rising quietly above; whilst to the left you have Warton Crag—a sloping limestone eminence, supposed to have been the site of a British fortress. In about a minute after the train started, it stopped—at a sort of improvised way-side station; and if this sort of thing were going to be any index of the journey it seemed to be pretty clear that Barrow would be reached some time that day or the next. We are soon off again, however, and the country becomes more charming—a mixture of the romantic and the pastoral—little woods, sharp eminences, pleasant meadows—and altogether something quite Swiss-like in appearance. The conversation of those in an adjoining compartment is edifying whilst we travel along here: it refers to ale and tea, rather a singular mixture, and the leader in it is a weather-beaten, elderly, strong-voiced man, who says he has got some tea in his pocket for two old women in Cartmel, and that it will make them jump for joy when he hands it in. "Whoase sum hot watter?—we'll hev a brew ov tea now," said a country fellow, when he heard this; but the old boy was equal to the occasion, and intimated that the interrogator would get into hot water himself if he bothered about it. "Give me sum ale afore tea," shouted another fellow of the bucolic type, but the old boy soon settled his notions

by saying—"Nay, nivver; I've tried booath—hed sumtimes bout sixteen pints ov ale in a morning but I nivver had to drink that mich a tea afore being satisfied." We are now at Silverdale—a pretty and most romantic locality, at once the very picture of snugness and beauty. At Silverdale, which once belonged to the Yealands, there was formerly a huge rocking stone, and there is now a tarn in the locality supposed to be fed by underground springs. The train starts again—reaches sweet little Arnside; rumbles over the long bridge crossing the mouth of the Ken; winds round to Grange—a beautifully picturesque corner; then gets to Kent's Bank—a station for the adventurous oversands coaches some years ago; and moves on again briskly. We catch a glimpse of Holker Hall, further on—a stately edifice standing far back in a shady park, and bearing distinct traces of the restoration necessitated by a fire which occurred there a few years ago. This hall—one of the seats of the Duke of Devonshire—was in the reign of Queen Elizabeth the family mansion of the Prestons; afterwards it went, by marriage, to the Lowthers; subsequently it passed to the Cavendishes. The next object of interest striking the eye is the monument to Sir John Barrow, rising up lonely and strong, on a bleak hill top, near Ulverston. This monument was erected in 1850; it is built of native limestone; is 100 feet high; "similar in appearance to Eddystone Lighthouse;" and cost £1,250. Up to this time, since leaving Arnside, we have had continually in view Morecambe Bay—the railway skirting it most pleasantly all along; but now, after passing Ulverston—a grey, indented, antiquated place—we run in-land, getting views periodically of iron ore mines, the head gearing of which juts out in the most unlikely places—on hill sides, on hill tops, in meadows; and the scene is more or less like this until we reach Furness Abbey Station, when all undergoes a charming transmutation: fine shadowy trees environ the place; on one side, perched high up in charming seclusion, there is the residence of Sir James Ramsden; on the other the old Abbey rears its rugged and venerable masonry—powerful though in ruins, noble though shattered, and reproaching more potently than the strongest language could do that ruffianism and vandalism which in the past had no conception of either the majestic

or the beautiful, and which in its demented and savage zeal thought it was best serving God by destroying both. In the immediate foreground there is the Abbey Hotel—a genteel, long edifice, built of stone, having more the appearance of some gentleman's residence than of a place set apart for the accommodation of visitors and the gratification of people plagued with thirstiness. There are many beautiful places in the North; but we know of none more exquisitely serene, more delightfully isolated and sheltered, more naturally set apart for the spending of a happy, quiet day than this particular place called Furness Abbey. It enjoys all the advantages of repose, picturesqueness, and historic association, and if these things, with proximate facilities for good eating and drinking, do not bring consolation to weary souls, then they require the Blue Mountain blacksmith's remedy for impiety—should be put under a pump and brought back to nature and faith with a powerful dose of cold water. We had not long to wait at Furness Abbey station; but it did not matter much, for a previous visit to this quarter had made us familiar with the place—we knew the history of the abbey, which was founded in 1127, and built by Cistercian monks; we had seen the lofty ruined windows, the deadly nightshade, the fishing streams, &c., associated with this venerable pile, and had even examined its boundary walls, which originally enclosed 65 acres of land; so that on this occasion a simple look out of the carriage window was sufficient. The old trees seemed as shadowy and noble as ever; the ruins rose up venerable and beautiful; on the highest part of the masonry there were two or three daring sight-seers; in the grounds below there were quiet couples strolling about in that tenderly lackadaisical, sweetly moon-struck manner which is invariably associated with love, and blushes, and kisses; and in the hotel rooms there were certain parties nursing novels and looking through the windows. A few miles of further travel, along what seemed to be a most curious, sinuous railway track, brought us within sight of Barrow—an expansive, hazy looking place, apparently more like a newly run up Californian settlement than a Lancashire town. The nearer we got to the place, and the larger, denser, and more complex it became: high chimneys, ship

masts, steamer funnels, and an eternity of timber in yards, in docks, and on bank sides, with a strange inextricable mixture of railway waggons—these formed the picture of Barrow as we entered it. The station we landed at was large and lofty, with a smack of artistic bespanglement in it quite refreshing. Although it was Sunday morning, the station when the carriages drew up assumed a busy air: there were young fellows on the platform, with dogs under their arms, waiting for "pals" expected by the train; there were women in florid shawls and highly-decorated bonnets looking out for relations or friends; and what with the shouting of porters, the banging about of milk kits—(Barrow was only getting its morning supply of milk at this time, although it was nearly noon)—the whimpering of dogs, the ejaculating of friends—"Aa, Jim, how are ta?" "Bless me, Liza, I hardly knew thee," and "D—— it, Bill, why didn't ta cum yesterday," &c.—as they met each other, the scene became at once lively and varied. What we saw in this northern Frisco during our short stay, how we eventually got into Scotland, and what we noticed there, must be reserved for future chapters.



CHAPTER II.

We are now at Barrow. It is Sunday—time 11-30 in the forenoon. The place has a dull look as if it had only just awoke and were rubbing its eyes; a few children may be seen here and there on the parapets; men are standing at doorways—some smoking in their shirt sleeves, some killing time by watching people pass, and others are hanging about apparently as much out of their natural element, whatever that may be, as fish out of water. The town is dusty and red; and the bulk of the working men and youths we encounter in passing along the streets have the same appearance. Some of them only require just another dip, and then they will be of the Indian hue. It is the iron or iron ore they work amongst which causes this redness. The toilers of Barrow are considered to be a semi-barbaric, illiterate class; but we set them down as a “well red” lot. It is said that the “days of miracles” have gone; but Barrow is a refutation of this. We have seen no place which has undergone such a transmutation. It has grown, burst into life, been run up into bigness and importance, with marvellous celerity. The gourd of Jonah was a pretty extensive article for one night's growth; but in the ratio of its size and consequence Barrow has outstripped that curiosity. Forty-eight years ago it was a tiny, antiquated place—made up of about half-a-dozen houses, with two or three wooden jetties for coasting craft; twenty-eight years ago, it had only 300 inhabitants. Now it has streets and squares—rows of shops and houses—public buildings, hotels, stores—iron works, ship yards, immense docks—and a population of 31,000! From a dozen houses, with not more than 60 persons, to a large active town containing 31,000, is a transformation so tremendous that it looks as if the place had been subjected to some sudden talisman of mystery and magic rather than to the normal laws of expansion and progression. And yet there Barrow stands: an out-of-the-world little fishing village 40 years ago; a brisk, seething, populous town to-day. The population is a curious olla-podrida, a

mixture of metal from all quarters—English, Irish, Scotch, and we know not what besides—a medley of mortals probably given more to hard working, heavy drinking, betting, fighting, and similar recreations than any other equal number of human beings in the kingdom. But the place has its civilising agencies: whilst it has its drinking places, and betting cribs, and rowdying dens, it has also its schools, churches, chapels, reading rooms, &c.; but the gentleman with the tail has got “the pull” here, and when he gets a really good footing in a place it takes a heap of force to turn him out. When half-past 12 at noon had gone, the moodiness, the heavy, somnolent aspect of the town began to disappear; the public-houses and dram shops began to receive their congregations; and old Bacchus, with Silenus and the nymphs, had innumerable devotees. One public-house, which we entered, was actually crammed with men drinking and smoking. Several of the streets through which we passed were calm and respectable; others looked more like San Franciscan than English thoroughfares. Much new building seemed to be going on—all indicative of prosperity; and we saw not a single house to let. On every hand, in the principal portions of the town, there were signs of industry, enterprise, and money-making; and if one had not known the fact, one might have easily surmised it, that the Duke of Devonshire and Sir James Ramsden were veritable mundane deities here. Streets and hotels bore their names; signs and architectural ornaments bore their arms; everywhere nearly we met with something reminding us of Devonshire or Ramsden, and occasionally the word Buecleuch—the name of another local mundane deity—would crop into view. And these men deserve the honour paid to them; for they have been chiefly instrumental in expanding and building up the fortunes of Barrow. A long wandering ramble brought us at last to the docks—splendid and capacious basins, containing numerous fine ships; and crossing a bridge of iron we wended our way to a point facing Walney Island, where there was a small humpty-dumpty sort of steamboat lying. She had been chartered for an excursion to Morecambe—a piece of information we obtained in the town; she was waiting till the tide floated her; and we boarded this antique craft determined to go across the bay with her.

There was a crowd of people on the pier above; and one or two policemen "on duty," of course, dropped down upon the boat occasionally, for the purpose of seeing that there was no drinking on board, but somehow they each came out of the cabin wiping their mouths and clearing their moustaches of something! One of them—so devoted was he to the discharge of his "duty"—returned, after leaving the vessel a few minutes, went below, and then reappeared stroking his moustache in the aforesaid fashion. But then he was "on duty," you know, and if he had been tasting anything under deck it would only be milk or water. After waiting for about an hour—marching about on deck, eyeing sea gulls as they swooped round the pier end or made a fuss in trying to settle on the water, quizzing the policemen, looking at a huge congregation of huts (used through scarcity of accommodation in Barrow) on an elevated piece of land in the background, examining the tide as it slowly rose on the beach and lapped against the sides of the vessel—after all this and much more, a steam whistle was blown, "This way for Morecambe" was shouted out, more whistling took place, more shouting, and eventually the boat splashed her paddles, made the water boil with foam, and we were off! It was a delightful sail up the channel: the water was clear and unruffled; the sun shone down warm and bright; a sailing or a rowing boat now and then passed by our side; and as we glided away, leaving a long trail of smoke in the rear, Barrow came into view clearly and fully, with its chimneys, and streets, and workshops, and mast-heads—its timber and ship yards, and manifold centres of industry. In the distance to the left there is a long level embankment—this is a railway; and further out, facing the water, there is a heavy, dark mass of pile work—this is Piel Pier; and whilst a gigantic steamer rests against its side, another boat, majestic in look, is steaming up from the sea. In the distance, on the other side, there is a sailing boat, and the waving of a hat or cap by a man in it induces our captain to slacken. Some one, we learn, wants to get on board and proceed to Morecambe; so our steamer is stopped, drifts towards the sailing boat, and when close up, out there jumps from that craft a rough-headed young fellow, with a dog in his arms, and in a moment he is with us, leaving

his boat to a companion ; and off we steam again. The new comer was a sprightly jewel : he did nothing but make jokes, swear, sweat, drink, and talk about racehorses. If there had been any superstition on board, the conclusion arrived at would have been that we should have gone down with such a beautiful importation as this ; but the water kept calm, the steam kept up, and the paddle wheels went round just as sweetly as if he had been the Archbishop of Canterbury or the venerable head centre of the Vatican. In a few minutes we find ourselves gliding past Piel Island or the Pile of Fouldry—a grey, low set, narrow piece of land, on which stand an inn and the rugged ruins of a castle. Here it is supposed the Danes had a fortification ; and on this island, in the time of King Stephen, a castle was built. It was a convenient place for woollen smugglers in the reign of Henry VI. ; and it was here, in the time of Henry VII. that Perkyn Warbrecke joined Sir Thomas Broughton in his scheme for dethroning the King. The Burghley papers of 1588 state that between Milford Haven, in Wales, and Carhill, on the borders of Scotland, “ther is not one good haven for greate shypps to londe or ryde in” except the Pile of Fouldry. At the date given the Pile is described as an “old decayed castell,” belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster, in Furness Fells, “wher one Thomas Prestone (a papyshe Atheiste) is deputye stewarde.” The water became deeper and more sea-like after passing this island, and a young man near us, who had sailed this way before, said that we should now have it rougher ; but it maintained its general serenity. Though the weather was fine there was considerable haziness in the distance ; and a fair amount of that same thing was in rapid formation below—caused not through any atmospheric influence, but by too close an acquaintance with corkscrews, bottles, and glasses. Piel Island, as we left it in the background, was a strange object to the eye : its grey, irregular ruins stood up in bold relief, picturesque and mysterious in shape ; but every revolution of the paddles decreased their scenic effect after a certain point had been reached ; they became fainter and fainter, and finally melted away in the horizon. The disappearance of scenery in the rear induced a keener look out ahead than had previously been indulged in ; but for a time not much could be made out. Something seemed to face us many miles away ; something

jutted out seawards many miles to the right ; and as the weather still kept hazy, the question was raised as to where we were, and in what quarter our destination lay. The man at the wheel had, we learned, been only accustomed to a fishing boat, had not crossed the bay for some years, and a suspicion got up that he did not know the way, and might be landing us upon either a sandbank or at some sea side place miles away from the right spot. The captain appeared to have a better notion of our whereabouts ; but he did not look quite satisfied—the way in which he peered about was not at all pleasant ; and matters were not much improved when both of them made an inspection of a swivel compass over the cabin, and found that it would not work. The needle of that mystical compass seemed to be in about as deep a state of obfuscation as the captain and wheel-man ; it quivered and danced about and would settle down to no definite point. “That’s a precious fine compass to sail out with,” said we to the wheelman ; and he rejoined in this paradoxical fashion : “Th’ compass is reet enuf—ther isn’t a better—only it’s got out of order.” That *only* was a sweet proviso. When it was found out that the compass would not work—could not make up its mind to tell a plain tale—there was more looking about and staring forward amid headland points and misty vacuity. And how comical all this was : it was not as if we were being tossed mountains high in an angry ocean hundreds and thousands of miles wide : everything save the paddles was as mute as a mouse ; and this was certain—that we were not more than seven miles from land. Practically speaking, ours was not the grave case of a tempest in a tea-pot, but a solemn mystification and muddle in a thimble. Ultimately the wheel-man, looking south, said, “Yon’s Fleetwood, be gor,” and then hauling the vessel’s head round to the left he ran her on for a mile or two, and the buoys encountered speedily put us on the right track. Heysham, standing up with a square dark front, was then sighted ; then we espied Morecambe ; and away we went up the channel, which in some parts was as crooked as a corkscrew ; but the wheel-man dodged us well round all the corners, and in about three quarters of an hour our tiny craft turned her bow into a square, dock-like place, called the Old Pier, and we were now at Morecambe. How to get

out of the vessel when she had been pulled up to the side of the huge wall here, presented itself as the next problem, for the tide had gone down so far that we were several yards below the regular landing place. A ladder was then lowered down to the boat, and it was intimated that we should have to climb up it. "How will the women manage?" said one sage individual, who had evidently arrived at the sound conclusion that Nature never intended them to climb 15 or 20-barred ladders. The women looked at one another and smiled; there was a clear hitch; and when one strong-tongued creature amongst the lot said, "Blest if I'm going up that here affair," all was over: the ladder was removed, the vessel was hauled further down, and by the use of an inclined plank we were all soon on shore, and, in ten minutes or a quarter of an hour afterwards, in the chief street of Morecambe. In recent times Morecambe has come wonderfully to the front as one of Lancashire's watering places. In the past—twenty or thirty years ago—it was only a small, old-fashioned fishing village, bearing the name of Poulton, with a population of a few hundreds; now it is a smart, busy, breezy watering place, all new and fashionable to the front, with a population roll in ordinary times of between 2,000 and 3,000. In summer the number is much increased by visitors, and the place has then a bright, vivacious appearance. Morecambe, or rather Poulton, is an old place: in Saxon times it was known as Poltune. Soon after the Norman conquest it was owned by one Eiward or Esward, and it was given to his son subsequently by King John. At one time it was considered a manor; but it has now none of the "rights" of such a place. In 1848, a railway to Morecambe was opened, and the town has gone on progressing ever since. At the time of our visit the "season" had just set in; and, Sunday though it was, there was for ever of "life" astir. Yorkshire people mainly patronise Morecambe; and we had not been long in the place before we encountered some of that ilk. You can find them out quickly by their talk; they work up their r's heavily and turn their e's into i's—call ever "ivver," and never "niver;" but they are a hearty class, and withal wonderfully shrewd, as long as a rope walk in their wits, and prepared for any amount of mirth or banter. There is a beautiful promenade in front of Morecambe; an excellent pier projects from

the centre of it; and at the end of that pier there is often fun enough to stock a pantomime or village fair: The scenery which Morecambe commands is varied and panoramic: the bay in front is expansive and charming; across there are the rough hills and fruitful vales of Furness; away beyond, backing up to the sky in long-reaching, serried majesty are the purple mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland; whilst in the opposite direction we have Lancaster's grey massive towers, with wild moors behind, and Ingleborough keeping lonely watch to the left. Southport, Lytham, and Blackpool have their charms; but in beauty and variety of surrounding scenery Morecambe surpasses them. With Morecambe we wind up our first day in the north. We are still a long way from Scotland; but we shall get there by and bye.



CHAPTER III.

If Darwin, the natural philosopher and theoriser, had seen us on the morning of our second day's out in the North, and had known where we had come from and purposed going to, he would have come to the conclusion that we had descended, not like himself and the rest of people, from a monkey, but from a carrier pigeon. Birds of that species, when let loose for a distant journey, generally wheel round once or twice and then away they go! We rose with the "land of brown heath," &c.—Scotland—as our destination, moved on to Lancaster, then on to Carnforth, then round to Barrow, then round to Morecambe; and now, after being "on the wing" for a day, we again put in an appearance at Lancaster, spend an hour there, and at 11 5 in the forenoon depart by train for Carlisle. There was no mistake about our northern passage this time: Carnforth, beyond which we could not go for ten and a half hours on the previous day, formed only a minute's halting place; the limestone heights near Burton and Holme appeared in a few minutes afterward; then the pastoral region of Milnthorpe came into sight; and when Oxenholme had been passed we soon found ourself amongst the bleak, precipitous hills which characterise the centre of Westmoreland. It was splendid dashing along a quarter so wild and romantic—hills capped with mist above, valleys green and smiling below, and occasionally a sharp deep ravine within a few yards of the railway side, which, we must confess, did not add to the bliss of the general situation. But locomotive engines are of the pachydermatous order: when the steam is up they are neither sentimental nor apprehensive; their business then is to go ahead; and our engine seemed to tear onwards quicker than ever when an odd or a particularly dangerous part was being encountered. By and bye, Shap Fells put in an appearance. How cold, and wild, and uncivilised they look! The men who first crossed these dreary and forsaken-looking fells must have either had uncommon courage or been impressed

with something extraordinarily excellent on the other side; for they are the very picture of bleakness—seem to be fit only for hermits, or witches, or wild beasts. It is said that these fells once formed part of the old forest of Inglewood—a wild place wherein Edward I., whilst on his way north to fight the Scots, halted for an entire day in order to enjoy the sport of killing deer. In the days of William the Conqueror Shap Fells were stocked with deer and wild swine, and infested with many wild animals. Half an hour's run from Shap brings us to Penrith—a pleasantly-situated place, with rich woods in the background and quaint masonry in front. This town—called “Peereth” by north country folk—possesses many historic associations. Penrith has not had quite as many lives as a cat; but it has stuck to this world with singular tenacity. In the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II. the kilted Scots sacked and knocked it to pieces four times; and yet they did not quite take the breath out of it—a tiny bit of vitality remained; the town grew up again; and now, if you had to see it (keeping your eyes shut as to the castle), you would say that it had always been a serene little spot, with a smile upon its countenance, just as if it had never known any trouble in its life. As to the Castle, it was erected by one of the Nevilles, and for a period Richard III. lived in it. The land passed through on leaving Penrith is pre-eminently rich and pastoral—unequalled for grazing and general agricultural purposes by anything we had previously seen along the journey. “Merrie Carlisle” was reached soon after two in the afternoon, and here we halted for an hour and a half. Very substantial and clean-looking is Carlisle; it is an old-fashioned, steady-going place; and the phrases you hear—“noo,” “thoo,” &c.—with the clickety-clack you catch in the mode of pronunciation are clearly indicative that you are not very far from “Skotelan.” The bulk of the buildings in Carlisle are formed of a reddish and apparently very soft sandstone; and the Mayors of this border city seem to have been very fond of having their names stuck upon all those public edifices, big or little, erected during their tenure of office. In some parts you can hardly turn without seeing a Mayor's name; and if it should at any future time be decided to erect even a public hen roost in Car-

lisle the name of the Mayor will have a conspicuous place upon it. We noticed one or two fine monuments in the city; and the number of superior shops—shops well filled with first-class looking goods—was quite surprising. The castle of Carlisle, which is close to the station, is not a very imposing edifice: it is a broad, heavy-bellied structure, and so irregular in form that it seems to spread all over one side of the town. Probably it is a good castle; but it is very unlike one; and it is so low set that nobody need ever be afraid of its being blown over by the wind. North of the castle (within which, we may just remark, Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned after the battle of Langside), there is the cathedral—a far finer and much more imposing building than we expected finding. At a distance, with masonry intervening, it has a dull, heavy aspect—is defective in power and stateliness; but an inspection of it dissipates this notion. It has no elaborate tower nor stately spire; but it is a massive and powerful building with a majestic and venerable interior—contains much fine carving, a splendid chancel window, several mural tablets, and is altogether an edifice well worth inspecting. But Time is on the wing, and we must hurry back to the station. A roundabout way along what appear to be the ramparts of the castle takes us there in a few minutes. And now we book again, take a seat directly afterwards in a train for Dumfries, and there exercise our mind much in trying to solve the question when that same train intends starting. In fifteen minutes it moved, and we were consoled—with one exception: there was a young woman who would keep the window open, and she persisted in doing so for about half a mile until she had flung a kiss right up a railway siding to a stoker who was sitting upon a locomotive tender. What the stoker did with it we do not know. The country was exceedingly rural and pleasant north of Carlisle, and as we wheeled westward we had occasional glimpses of Solway Firth. We caught a view, too, of Gretna, at which all the odd runaway marriages used to take place, and had pointed out to us the very quarter where the notorious old blacksmith used to launch fugitives upon the sea of matrimony. When the train had travelled about twelve miles, there was a change in the company, and amongst those who got out was a female whose “luggage”

was peculiar. She had a heavy, uneasy baby ; she had eleven sticks of rhubarb ; and she had three long strips of wood crossed on the floor, which could not be got out of the compartment until both doors had been opened. On leaving this station, the train mended its speed considerably, and after passing through a fertile and purely agricultural country extending about 20 miles, we landed at Dumfries. On entering the place by railway it seemed as if we had arrived not at a town, but at some congregation of picturesque, garden-environed, villa residences. Trees laden with foliage, thickly-planted shrubs, golden laburnum flowers, with bushy intervening hedge-rows, spoke rather of an elegant opulent isolation than of a town with a population of about 16,000. But we were only now at the outskirts of the place, and subsequently discovered that this was one of the fashionable parts, enhanced, too, by the grounds of a professional florist. Now, why had we halted at Dumfries? We knew nothing of the town ; we were acquainted with nobody in it ; not a soul was there amongst all its 16,000 people, whom we had the least knowledge of. But this we did feel sure of—that somewhere in Dumfries there lay the dust of one of the rarest and finest, and yet one of the most wayward, of mortals ; that in some quarter of this old town there was the tomb of him whose genius had met with universal approbation, and whose songs had made him immortal ; a man of humble extraction, who recounted the joys and cares of common life in a music all his own—who wove the garland of poesy around the fire side and the festive board ; whose muse embraced and gave a new charm to the mountain daisy and the rippling stream, to the melody of birds and the waving corn, to the pleasures of friendship, the delights of love, the glory of independence ; who sang about fairs, and merry making, and revelry ; who lashed cant, and denounced hypocrisy ; and amid all his errors, defended the virtues of humanity, kindness, and freedom ; who was a man, and a perfectly *human* poet,—“not great like Goethe, in the stars, or like Byron on the ocean, or Moore in the luxurious east,” but a warm-hearted, completely natural being, who knew that he was made of flesh and blood, and that other people were made of the very same materials. Our mission at Dumfries was to visit the tomb of Robert Burns. On

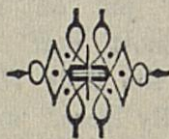
emerging from the station—a clean, genteel place—we rounded to the right, passed along an ancient winding street wherein children were running about barefoot, came to an open space containing a fountain, then moved northwards, by a most ancient rickety edifice, called the Town-house, designed by Inigo Jones, and after eying a dingy monument beyond representing Charles Duke of Queensbury, we mounted a sort of “flat,” partook of refreshments, and then wended our way to the other end of the town—to St. Michael’s or the old Church, in whose graveyard reposed the remains of Burns. The factories were “loosing” as we proceeded thither, and many young women and girls were returning home with cans, &c., in their hands. We were disappointed with their appearance; they had not the bloom of Scotch lassies about them; were rather haggard and attenuated in form and feature; and one smart Lancashire mill girl would have won a lover from the best of them. The tower of a grey old church standing at the top of a brow eventually presents itself; this is St. Michael’s; but we had some difficulty in obtaining ingress to its yard: we went to the house of the sexton, who had the keys, but he was out; we looked about, could learn nothing very definite of him, and were just on the point of climbing the wall in front when the thought struck us that we had better scale it behind; so we walked up a narrow circuitous road at one side, passed to the rear of a school house, and there found in a garden the sexton—an aged man—who quickly brought upon the scene a young woman, and she, with keys in hand, undid the heavy iron gates and went with us into the churchyard. Now, this yard was one of the most curious and melancholy places we had ever seen. Half round it, close to the boundary wall, there were huge monumental stones, standing upright—some stones were even placed upon the outer side of the wall facing the street, whilst the yard itself seemed to be fairly running over with tombstones. The ground was literally filled with them. A stone appeared to have been put up or laid down to the memory of everybody who had been interred in the place; and our feminine cicerone gave us to understand that it was a vital point with people there, however humble in circumstances, to have one put over their deceased relatives. At the bottom of the yard there was the monu-

ment of Burns. It is a strong, massive structure—a mausoleum, in fact, consisting of a large dome, supported by Ionic pillars, the front being approached by half a dozen steps, and the whole surrounded by iron rails. Our guide unlocked the rail gate, then unlocked another iron gate forming the door of the mausoleum, and in a moment afterwards we were standing, with head uncovered, very near the ashes of Scotland's greatest peasant bard. The ground was sacred. How his songs leaped into memory and his rare fancies floated around us as we stood there mute and motionless! The brain which coined all those rare verses was mouldering, the hand which gave form to them had lost its cunning, and yet how conscious we were that Burns, in spirit, was still living. The soul of his lines endures; the vitality of his songs remains stronger than ever. "How many Bonny Doons, and John Anderson, my Joes, and Auld Lang Synes all around the earth have his verses been applied to." The interior of the mausoleum contains not only the remains of Burns, but those of "Bonny Jean," and many members and relatives of his family. At one side there is a mural tablet referring to some of the latter; at the back, looking towards the door, there is a large marble slab, bearing a representation of Burns holding a plough, with emblematic scroll work, &c., above. The attitude of the poet is commanding and inspirational. When a due inspection of the mausoleum had been made, we entered the church, and were shown the place where Burns, when he visited it, used to sit: it was at the back part, in a line with the door, and had a pillar in front of it—he was not the man who cared to place himself "on exhibition," or put on a rigidly righteous front in the uppermost part of the synagogue; that business he left for the Holy Willies, and those fine dames "ty'd up in godly laces," whose character he so well knew and whose picture he has drawn so graphically in his verses. As we were leaving the church the young woman, who had been officiating as our guide, interested us by stating that she hailed from Lancashire, and then completely dumfounded us by saying that she was the wife of the old sexton! This was a real case of spring and winter; but we could not help such a clashing of the seasons. Subsequently, she accompanied us to an adjoin-

ing street, where we saw the house in which Burns lived and died. It was a plain, respectable building, with three steps up to the front door, and when Burns was its occupier the rent of it was £8 a year. We were loathe to leave this locality; its associations were so rare, its memories so precious; but train time could not be postponed and we had made up our mind to reach Ayr—80 miles further north—that night; so we retraced our steps through Dumfries—a quaint beautifully situated old town—and left the station there soon after eight o'clock. The journey was through a rich and most picturesque country—a magnificent grazing valley, with wild moorlands to the right and gently sloping hills walling in the horizon on the opposite side. For agricultural fertility and pastoral beauty, the land all along here seemed to be unique. At a quarter past eleven o'clock we reached Ayr—

Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses
For honest men and bonnie lasses.

The town looked sombre, but then midnight was approaching; and as we were tired we simply looked out for lodgings, found them at one of the hotels in the main street, wherein we just called for a "night cap," and then went aloft to Morpheus.



CHAPTER IV.

Our night's slumbers in Ayr were neither prolonged nor tranquil. It was between eleven and twelve at night when we "drew the curtains," and at four next morning two Scotchmen in an adjoining room began talking, and haggling, and blustering about something, in a style so loud and bellicose that we were thrown completely out of tune for further sleep. Now and then we just got upon the edge of a dose; but no sooner had we done so than this precious couple of cantankerous Scotchmen broke out into a new dispute; and so they kept on, talking an everlasting lot of gibberish, nineteen-twentieths of which was as unintelligible to us as the lingo of Red Indians, till seven o'clock, when, with a subdued benediction on our lips for their continual happiness, we got up, ordered breakfast, and, whilst it was being prepared, had a stroll through the higher part of Ayr. The morning was heavy and hazy; but there were several people stirring—some, chiefly children and young females, gliding about without either shoes or stockings, and others, mainly elderly people, engaged in removing furniture. Going barefoot is evidently a considerable "institution" here, as it is in other parts of Scotland, and it is surprising to notice the respectability of those believing in it. There were, to be sure, representatives of the tatterdemalion order amongst them; but not a few were of the tidy type—fairly-dressed working class individuals; one girl we noticed had her hair flowing behind in the fashionable style, and it puzzled us to know what she at any rate wanted with bare feet. The furniture-removing people seemed to be at work all up and down Ayr; we observed some of them busy with trucks and hand-carts the previous night, and this morning the job was renewed with vigour; heaps of people were shifting goods; and as the day progressed we began to think that nearly every body was going in for this sort of thing; there were carts of all kinds containing as many odds and ends as ever Noah's ark had in it; and they were in every street and alley in the town. It happened, as we subsequently learned, that this was the particular time of the year for

tenancies expiring, and for people changing premises; and the scenes we saw clearly proved that either the people of Ayr were a very mercurial class, or else that there was some special hidden luxury in changing quarters and dragging furniture about the town. During our early morning ramble the first "lions" we saw were the "twa brigs of Ayr," made famous by the genius of Burns. We walked over the older one—a grey, high-backed, narrow edifice,

"Where twa wheelbarrows tremble when they meet ;"
and from its summit we had a full fair view of its modern compeer, the young "conceited gowk," calculated to illustrate, according to the logic of the "auld" article, that "Architecture's noble art is lost ;" whilst the waters of the river Ayr flowed calmly and broadly beneath towards the sea. The "auld brig" is, indeed, a very ancient structure ; it was erected about 600 years ago by two sisters. The "new brig" is a modern affair, having been built towards the end of last century. On returning to our hotel we partook of a hearty breakfast, and then sallied forth to inspect the chief objects of interest in the town and district—particularly those associated with Burns. On the left, as we pass up the main street, there is a heavy massive structure called Wallace Tower, erected in memory of Scotland's great hero, in 1832. We were anxious to view the interior of this tower, chiefly because there is shown in one room of it a Bible which Burns gave to Highland Mary ; but the furniture removing craze had reached even this place. The old keeper of it had taken his goods away ; the new one had his at the door when we reached it, and as he could not show us through for three or four hours, we posted on and visited the Tam o' Shanter Inn, which is situated in the same street, and not very far from the Tower. This inn is a small thatched place—like an antique, rural public-house—with a neat, clean front, and a huge sign over the door bearing a representation of Tam o' Shanter and his horse. It was here that Tam used to sit, and chat, and drink with Souter Johnny ; it was here where

The night drave on wi sangs and clatter,
And ay the ale was growing better ;

where "Souter tauld his queerest stories," and where

Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious.

On entering the inn, we proceed a few paces up a lobby, and then turn to the left, where there is a small, cozy-looking kitchen. This is the very room where

Ae market night,
Tam had got planted unco right,
Fast by an ingle bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats that drank divinely.

There were two or three females belonging to the house in this room, and one of them was engaged in the very necessary, but unpoetical, business of washing-up pots. The landlady was a tall, sharp-witted body, but very civil and chatty, and at our request she ordered one of the servants to show us the room wherein were to be seen the chairs which Tam o' Shanter and Souther Johnny used to sit in. We accordingly marched upstairs, and there found a quaint, wainscotted apartment, with a low ceiling, and sundry pictures and busts around it. The two chairs were broad bottomed, armed, and made of oak, but they appeared half spoiled owing to certain idiots, whilst visiting the place, having carved their initials upon them. They were fairly studded with letters; and this stupid cutting and scratching had been carried on to such a pitch as to necessitate the putting up of a printed paper threatening those guilty of similar vandalism with legal proceedings. At the back of each chair there was a brass plate referring to the two cronies who used to sit in them. On retracing our steps to the rooms below, the hostess showed us the "landlady's caup"—a wooden cup in a very shattered state, with a strip of silver round it, and used here when Tam and Souther were in the habit of visiting the place. Then, with an eye to business, the hostess showed us some photographs of the house, &c., and we bought a couple. Thoughts of Auld Kirk Alloway, the cottage in which Burns was born, &c., next came to the surface, and under their influence we moved off to view them; the distance being about two miles. The road we took was a very pleasant one. It ran in almost a straight line, along the banks of Ayr, for upwards of a mile. The river and the widening bay looked dreamy and beautiful. In the distance, on one side of the bay, there were the ruins of Greenan Castle, whilst far away seaward Ailsa Craig rose lonely and dimly out of the waters. In a short time after this we turn to the left—into a richly-wooded, pastoral district, and having traversed the road some distance in this

direction, we wheel to the right, and obtain a glimpse of the massive domed monument to Burns, at Alloway. Every step now brings us nearer to the heart of this poetically enchanted locality. The monument, surrounded with trees, rises more definitely to the view, and wears a more imposing and elaborate aspect; the cottage of Burns is on one side, to the left, and we shall notice it on returning; and though we cannot see either the Brig of Doon or the celebrated Kirk in the neighbourhood, both must be somewhere very near. In five minutes we are immediately opposite a grey, ivy-grown, roofless ruin, standing close to the road, and surrounded by an ancient burial ground. A few steps lead up to the ground; we ascend them; and are now in the presence of

Alloway's auld haunted kirk—
the ruin immortalised by Burns, wherein "ghaists and
howlets nightly cry." It was here, as the story goes, that
Tam o'Shanter pulled up on his grey mare Meg, noticing
in the old building

an unco sight
Warlocks and witches in a dance;
the music being played by that "towzie tyke"—the devil
—who

screw'd the pipes, and gart them skirl,
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.

Tam might well stand astonished and spell bound at a sight like this, and one can excuse him when, eyeing the liling of Nannie—"a souple jade she was and strang"—he roared out, "Weel done, cutty sark!" Auld Kirk Alloway is a perfect ruin: the windows are all out, the roof is off, the general masonry is grey and shattered with the shocks of Time, and it has a most venerable, mediæval look. In the yard, just within the entrance, there is the grave of Burns's father; on the eastern side a stone marks the last resting place of that "ancient, trusty, droughty crony"—Souter Johnny; whilst in the kirk itself there is the tomb of Lord Alloway. All about this place—this old yard, this crumbling ruin—seems, and, in fact, is, consecrated for all time by the muse of Burns. Just after we had left the yard the old sexton appeared upon the scene; he wanted to show us through the place again for the sake of securing his usual *douceur*; but we had seen as much as we cared for, and as our time was limited we declined the offer, and he looked

the very picture of Rachael when she made up her mind not to be comforted. After glancing at the monument to Burns on the opposite side, we passed down a narrow, ancient, winding road to the "Brig o' Doon." This was the lane along which Tam o' Shanter galloped, followed by the witches,

Wi' mony an eldritch skreetch and hollow.

The brig is within a good stone-throw of the kirk: it is a narrow old structure, rising high in the middle, like all ancient country bridges, and the Doon which it spans is a beautiful stream. The place seems to be very like the Hodder—at the part where that river is crossed by the old bridge—and the scenery generally has a close and striking resemblance to that noticed there. It was this quaint Brig o' Doon that Tam o' Shanter had to cross when followed by the lurid legion whom his "cutty sark" exclamation roused at the Kirk; and it was the "key-stane" of it that he just managed to reach, with the loss of Maggie's tail, when he freed himself from their fury. The sides of the brig over the "key-stane" have been chipped and broken off in all ways by persons visiting the place desirous of taking away with them some memento of Tam's thrilling escape. The "banks and braes o' bonny Doon" are beautiful here—finer from the Brig than perhaps any other part. We stayed on the Brig for a while, thinking of Tam o' Shanter, of the auld kirk which peered up behind, of Burns, who had sauntered along the walks here many a time, and of all the beauties sung so charmingly by his muse; but none more finely than the very poem whose chief situations we had seen. What a natural and yet what a peculiar humour—"what a riot of fun in Tam o' Shanter"—a poem written in a single day,—“Since Bruce fought Bannockburn” to quote Alexander Smith, “the best single day's work done in Scotland.” Afterwards we retraced our steps past Alloway's Kirk, and on to the cottage wherein Burns first saw the light. It is a long, whitewashed, thatched building, only one storey high, with three plain windows and a couple of painted signs to the front, one intimating that this is the cottage within which Burns was born, and the other—there is only one step, as usual; between the sublime and the ridiculous—that ale and spirits are sold here. On the west side there is a cottage connected with

the thatched one—(there is a communication between them)—and many people have evidently had the idea that it is part of the original structure, for they have written their names all over its interior: the ceiling, the side walls, the windows, are completely covered with initials, names, and dates; there was not a square inch in the place available for scribbling which had not some scrawl upon it. Periodically the walls and ceiling are white-washed; but they gradually get filled with writing again; and so the writing and whitewashing, and whitewashing and writing go on from year to year. The room in which Burns was born adjoins. We first entered the scribbling department—for that is the fittest name we can think of—and then walked through into the more notable apartment. It had a rustic, kitchen-like appearance; and in one corner there was a square indention in the wall, about 4 feet broad, 5 feet high, and 6 feet long. *This* was the place—this hole in the wall—wherein Burns was born! What a curious, what a plain, common, queer recess for a genius of universal attraction to be born in! It is not uncommon, in Scotch country places, we learned, for people to sleep in beds in recesses of this description; but they are as uncivilised as they must be hard; and remind one more of ship bunks than regular domestic beds. They are, however, warm—"varra wairm and snug," as a Scotchman, drinking a glass of ale in the cottage, told us; and in a cold country like Scotland this is no mean recommendation. The very same old fire-place and grate in the house when Burns lived here are still in use, and an air of cozy antiquity runs through the apartment. Adjoining there is a room set apart for the sale of souvenirs—photographs, boxes, &c., and a brisk trade we suspect is done in them. There is a visitors' book also in this room, and we signed our name in it with the worst ink in the universe. We gave the young woman in charge of this place a mild scolding for having such ink—it was like a decoction of tea leaves and marigolds—and told her we would present her with a bottle of genuine black if she ever visited Preston. At the rear of the premises there is an elegant hall or banqueting-room: it was opened during the late centenary festival of Burns, and has since been used for an annual commemorative dinner. Altogether it was a pleasant thing to

visit this shrine of Burns's nativity. Its very humbleness gave a charm to it. If it had been a lordly mansion, splendid with carvings, and pillars, and frescoes, with rich silken hangings in its rooms, and massive mirrors on its walls, it could not have been more attractive to us; but it was as plain as a wayside cottage could be—as plain now as it was when Burns saw the light in it, and a proof that he at any rate came into existence with no silver spoon in his mouth; proving too, that there was genius *in him*, else, with such surroundings it would never have manifested itself; that he was by nature a poet; and that in the realms of talent there is no aristocracy. That small square hole, in that old thatched cottage, near Alloway, is one of the world's curiosities: for the faint birth cry heard there in 1759, came from one whose poetry is now treasured in every reigion of thought, whose rich heart beatings find a response in every abode of civilisation, and whose rhymes derive their charm and excellence, not through any mystic transcendentalism or elaborate erudition, but by their patriotism, humanness, and love. The verses of Burns are the poetry of love, and life, and humanity,—a poetry so “intensely humane” that it must “come home to the bosoms and businesses of all other men—powerfully to the happy, more powerfully to the miserable, who are ever in the majority.” He was a domestic and social man—strong in passion, warm in affection; unsteady, wild, and yet noble and generous in the foundations of his nature,—enamoured of the beautiful, but seeing nothing more lovely than home life, which, after all, is the reallest of life; his ideal, which deserves to be written in letters of abiding light, being—

To mak a happy fire side clime
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.

We left the cottage reluctantly, wended our way back to Ayr, and after getting dinner there, moved off to the railway station for “fresh woods and pastures new.”



CHAPTER V.

On reaching Ayr railway station we took a ticket for Edinburgh, and that meant a journey right across Scotland—from the south-west to the north-east—from Ayr's charming bay to the meandering waters of the Firth of Forth. The platform of the station was throng—throng with farmers, and cattle jobbers, and young women, and stray, hard-featured Scots. The young women formed a "prominent feature in the landscape;" they constituted a striking element on the platform; they were just of the same make as many we had previously seen; and they forcibly reminded us of the lines of Burns which refer to "Auld Ayr" and "bonny lasses." Now, as in the days of the bard, who was no mean judge in this matter, these "lasses" are a commendable species—not pale-faced, nor simperingly sentimental, nor flat as the drapery of a shower bath, nor rigged up with an eternity of gimcrackery, nor padded all over to disguise defects or deceive admirers; but strong, energetic, healthy-looking creatures, needing neither "panniers" nor stuffed smocks, and proving to us that when Natural Laws are fairly respected the result is always creditable. Superciliously mawkish and daffy-down-dilly people living in an atmosphere of superficialism may consider this a digression—perhaps something impinging upon the "delicate;" but their ideas belong neither to the air, nor the earth, nor the waters under the earth; we take it as an axiom that wherever you see healthy, sprightly, well-fashioned women you have a right to mention the fact, for it is a sign that all is going on wonderfully well where they come from; that sense prevails there; that wise fathers and sagacious husbands will be somewhere about; and that there is yet some hope for the comfort of future generations. This morsel of philosophising has all sprung out of those two lines of Burns concerning Ayr, its men, and its lasses; and we shall now abandon the subject. There is a train coming; there is a fuss and bustle amongst men, and women, and children, and luggage; the train glides up, and comes to a stand; doors are opened; many people leave the

carriages, more enter them ; doors bang to again with an angry quickness ; the engine whistles ; and now we are off. Not a soul do we know in the compartment of the carriage ; but we are not disconsolate—two Scotchmen near us speedily get into a discussion as to the relative merits of water and whiskey ; they pepper each other right and left ; the advocate of a “wee drop” seems to be the victor ; the fun gets fine, still finer, and almost furious, when the train slackens speed, glides into a station, and the word “Troon” is the cue for the “wee drop” belligerent to get out. Up to here our route has been close to the sea, with the Isle of Arran in the distance ; and so it continues till we reach Irvine, when the remaining combatant—the water advocate who, by the bye, according to his own confession, once made money as a publican—disappears. The train halts for about half a minute at Irvine—a little place, just on the edge of the water, and about as quaint in appearance as a Queen Anne farthing or a washed-up mummy. And yet Irvine is a spot we must not lose sight of. In 1782, when Burns was just twenty-three years old, Irvine was the place which he selected to live in, “partly through whim and partly,” as he says, “that I wished to set about doing something in life.” Here he joined a neighbouring flax spinner “to learn his trade and carry on the business of manufacturing and retailing flax ;” here, whilst “giving a welcome carousal to the new year” their shop was accidentally set on fire by the drunken carelessness of his partner’s wife ; and Burns was left “like a true poet, not worth sixpence.” But amid all his mishaps he was ever hopeful, and so after this unfortunate fire at Irvine he comforted himself. A man of unctuous piety would have gone in heavily for prayer ; a modern rascal would have liked such a fire, because it would have brought up insurance money ; a fool might have hanged himself when left “not worth a sixpence ;” but Burns squared up his soul in this lively style :—

Oh why the deuce should I repine,
And be an ill foreboder ?
I’m twenty-three and five feet nine,
I’ll go and be a sodger.

We like that ; it is hopeful ; it means weathering the storm in some fashion ; and there is at the base of it a spirit willing to “make the best of a bad job,” which we admire

quite as much on account of its common sense as of its philosophy. But the train waits not. We leave Irvine, and stop at all manner of queerly named stations—awfully Scotch, and curious, and dry, until we pass Loch Winnoch and that—the sight of it—appeases our thirst a little; but the Loch gets fainter and thinner, until it ends in a river, and then, excuse the Hibernianism, becomes dry land, and by-and-bye we reach the region of shawls! We are now at Paisley, the town in which Tannahill, the poet, who wrote “*Jessie the Flower of Dumblane*” was born, and wherein for a time he worked as a weaver. All over Christendom Paisley is known—known for its shawls if for nothing else—and the train we are in is now halting here—halting right opposite a big and seriously strong prison: the walls of the prison are just below, and the town stretches out in all directions from it. Paisley has a steady-going, mind-your-eye, appearance. It looks, as it is, a business place; and though we see no shawls in the process of manufacture, or fluttering in the breeze from windows or hill tops, we have a profound conviction that this is the place where the “real genuine article” is made. At any rate it is Paisley: a sign right opposite says so, the people in the carriage say so, too, and if the people and the sign are misrepresenting facts as to this shawl region, then indeed, are we amongst a shoal of deceivers. A tolerably straight run brings us to Glasgow; we are there in about twenty minutes; and the only opportunity of inspecting it is that presented to us by a short ramble upon a platform, and a quick eyeing of things from a carriage window. Glasgow seems a big, dim, intensely-throng place. We get glimpses of its iron furnaces in the outskirts, its warehouses towards the centre, its maze of streets, its mass of masonry, its great thoroughfares lined with splendid shops, its towers and spires, its river and its fine bridges, and we come to the conclusion that it is a marvellous place. Even in this quick passage through Glasgow we did not expect being so impressed with its business and its vastness; and yet in the twinkling of an eye we could see that it was a city tremendous in its industrial forces, and great in all its bearings. Everywhere there were the signs of life—of a great uproar, and din, and confusion of life—of life made amazingly earnest by the struggling of nearly half a mil-

lion souls. We had heard of Glasgow, and its picture came with panoramic effect before us—partly like a dream, for we were in it but a few minutes, and yet with the crash of an immense reality, for its form and pressure were upon us; and though elated by its greatness and magnificence the fire of our enthusiasm was paled through the scenes presented in its dens and back quarters. We looked wonderingly at the place—saw its fine edifices, its noble thoroughfares, and then there came a gloomy and dull array of back streets, and the rear parts of back streets, which made the scene dismal. We saw “flats” with lines stretched across to hooks in opposite walls, bearing miserable old skirts, and quilts, and clouts—we saw poor little children playing in back yards, and dim-looking stockings and shirts swinging above; we noticed all sorts of vile tag-raggery of the grimmest washing, intimating the most helpless and wretched household management, and we could not reconcile these things with the power, and prestige, and enlightenment of a huge city; and as we left the thought was saddening that here was the greatest and most opulent of northern towns, with an outer crust of penury, and wretchedness, beggaring all description, and quite upsetting all one’s ideas of normal order and propriety. But we leave Glasgow in its splendour and squalor, to look after itself; we take our seat in a small carriage connected with a little train—only one carriage; we are run up hurriedly past many points and sidings, through the rear part of the city, and in a couple of minutes find ourselves at another Glasgow station, where there is a union of carriages, and then we start in good earnest again. The route is direct, and the scenery is of a mingled character—tarns and towns, villages and moorlands are passed, whilst now and then in the distance there are bleak hills and romantic glens. In an hour after leaving Glasgow we sight Edinburgh with her palaces, and towers, and monuments; and the train soon lands us at a station in a sort of ravine where the tickets are collected. The moment the carriages moved from this place there jumped into our compartment a hump-backed wretched-looking little lad, who turned out to be a singer, for all the way along a tunnel which we afterwards went through, he sang ballads, &c., in a most

enthusiastic fashion, and as soon as we emerged into the light he went round with his hat and got a few coppers for his "melody." An old canny Scotchman whom the lad confronted for a bawbee could see no fun in either his songs or his begging, and told him in the coolest and most serious way to "gae and be a taylor." The lad could not see this; it was easier riding and singing than sitting cross-legged upon a board; so he quietly ignored the advice, and resumed his begging until he had "done" the carriage. He evidently "worked" the trains on this short tunnel route—went up with one and down with another—and seemed quite at home in the business. We landed at the Waverley Station, ascended the steps promptly, and in a few moments were in Princes-street—a long, level, splendid thoroughfare—which seemed to be all alive with parsons and Preston people! The coincidence was curious, and a stranger unacquainted with the circumstances of the case might have been tempted to think that each of those people had brought a special chaplain. Some of them, perhaps, needed one—nay, some of them would have required many to keep them square and proper; but there was no connection between the parties. An annual gathering of parsons from all parts of Scotland accounted for the predominance of white neckcloths and black coats; and a cheap trip from Preston accounted for the other individuals. The latter class we were glad to see—they formed an agreeable oasis in a strange desert; but the former swarmed in such numbers—were met with so often (nearly every third person you encountered seemed to be either a parson or the relation of one)—and they wore faces so desperately serious and solemn that we sighed for some relief, and went into an eating-house for change and consolation. But there were parsons there, and so necessity compelled us to become reconciled to their appearance. After tea we mounted Calton-hill, a rugged eminence on the eastern side of the city, commanding a view at once wide-reaching and splendid. Talk about sights and scenes: the view here is absolute in richness and beauty. We know of nothing equal to it. Around you, on the summit, there are monuments; in front, down below, there is a world of masonry—houses, shops, spires, steeples; in the distance, piled up

in rugged majesty and strength, there is the Castle; to the left, resting low down, there is Holyrood Palace, with its towers and turrets; beyond, rising wierdly and massively, there is Arthur's Seat, resembling in outline a couchant lion; whilst rearwards there are Leith and Portobello on the shores of the Firth of Forth. We rambled about the summit of the hill for a while, and made a close inspection of the most prominent object upon it—the National Monument. This monument was started to commemorate the heroes who fell at Waterloo; but owing to a deficiency of funds it remains unfinished; and with its tall white columns it reminds one neither of a monument nor a building, but of some antique Grecian ruin. On leaving the hill we descended a road on the northern side, whence we had a fine view of the "new Town," an addition to "auld Reekie" made at the close of last century. On reaching the road at the top of Princes-street we spied an old burial ground, which we had on a former occasion inspected. This burial yard contains many graves, and at one end the mausoleum of Hume the historian. We were not disposed to saunter about the town much, for we had done a hard day's work even though on a pleasure trip; we had inspected Ayr in the morning; had afterwarde walked several miles, to Alloway, &c.; had next journeyed about seventy miles; so that after a stroll upon Calton Hill we were wonderfully tamed down and quite prepared for rest. But we found none till midnight; for we had now with us several Prestonians, and though we got to our hotel soon after nine o'clock, it was altogether a case of toddy and smoke and garrulous gossip till eleven; and then there commenced a rambling about in the rooms above for the correct apartments allotted to the company—nearly all excursionists; and what with the mistakes which took place, the hunting here and there for all kinds of things, and the occasional outbreaks of laughter which ensued in numerous quarters, it was quite twelve—indeed a little after—before we reached quietude and dreamland.



to Edinburgh. In less than a quarter-of-an-hour our carriages had wheeled sharply round to the left, and we were now in as pretty and as shady a lane as you could imagine, and in the immediate neighbourhood of Roslyn. Soon we came to a halt, on what looked like a village green, bordered with grey old houses, and having at one corner the Roslyn Inn. At this hostelry we leave the carriages, treat the drivers—these drivers are never tired of whiskey—and subsequently walk down to Roslyn Chapel. A heavy, high wall prevented us from seeing any part of the building except the top of it; and as 10s. seemed rather a heavy price for the party to give in order to secure admission—it was 1s. each—there was a consultation, and it was decided that we ourself should first pass in, and then say whether the view was “worth the money.” We walked through a doorway, along a footpath, and on looking up were confronted by a semi-ruined building, completely studded with carvings—a gem of antiquity; indeed, “one of the most highly-decorated specimens of ecclesiastical architecture in Scotland.” If carvings had been rained upon, and into, and all over this edifice, it could scarcely have been more elaborate or ornate. We had only been in the building a very short time when the remainder of the party, too impatient to wait for our report, appeared, and the general tour of inspection thereupon commenced. Figures, faces, heads, curious animals, and floriated decorations in stone seemed to prevail everywhere. At the sides, at the ends, on the pillars, above the pillars, in the roof—all over—there were carvings and inscriptions. This chapel, which is situated about seven miles from Edinburgh, was founded by William St. Clair, third Earl of Orkney and Lord of Roslyn, in 1446. He was closely related to Royalty, and filled some of the principal posts in the State during the reign of James II. During the revolution of 1688 a mob from Edinburgh despoiled a portion of the chapel; but next century General St. Clair restored this part; and subsequently the Earl of Roslyn continued the work of reparation, begun by his predecessor. It has been well said that this chapel “combines the solidity of the Norman with the minute decorations of the latest species of the Tudor age,” and that it is impossible to designate the architecture of this building by any given or familiar term. All the

skill of Scotland was taken advantage of in the designs of this chapel. The founder brought to the place as many master masons as he could get from the entire country, secured designs from them, in a competitive form, and selected the best of the lot; the chapel built being in harmony with it. The roof is lofty and beautiful with carvings; the chancel is heavy yet almost gorgeous in elaboration; but the chief object of attraction in the edifice is the "Prentice's Pillar"—a strong fluted column at the south-eastern end of the chancel, bearing a spiral, floriated decoration. The legend—which is not supported by facts—concerning the "Prentice's Pillar" is this: that the builder who had the erection of the chapel in hand was unable to finish the design of the pillar; went to Rome to study a similar column; found on his return that one of his apprentices had in his absence mastered the details of the plan and finished the pillar; and was so aggravated or "stung with envy" at this, that he killed the apprentice with a mallet. An architrave connecting this pillar with another adjoining bears this curiously laconic inscription:—"*Forte est vinum, fortior est rex, fortiores sunt mulieres; super omnia vincit veritas;*" which being interpreted means this—"Wine is strong; the King is stronger; woman is stronger still; truth conquers all." All the Barons of Roslyn who died up to the time of King James VII. were buried here in their armour; and the place is now pointed out where some of them rest. Sir Walter Scott's ballad of Rosabelle bears upon these olden knights. The belief was, that on the night preceding the death of any of the Lords of Roslyn a great light shone over the Chapel; and Sir Walter, in the ballad named, says:—

O listen, listen, ladies gay,
No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam:
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

Seemed all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffined lie,
Each baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

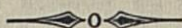
There are twenty of Roslin's baron's bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;
Each one the holy vault doth hold;
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

There are one or two deep cell-like places below and at one end of the chapel, and after our party had seen them, without being much madder or wiser, we made preparations to leave. There is service in this chapel every Sunday; the interior of the place being very clean, and though antiquated, in excellent order. The western end of the building seems to have been either never finished, or despoiled at some time and never repaired; but this does not interfere with the beauty of the interior, and rather enhances the exterior as a "ruin." Below, and standing lonely and rugged upon a rock, there is Roslyn Castle. It has a wild, romantic, desolate look. This castle, which we visited, is on one side of the beautiful glen of Esk. It has a battered, wrecked, broken down look. The approach to it is by a bridge which spans a deep rocky crevice. For a long period this castle was occupied by the St. Clairs, Earls of Caithness and Orkney. In 1544 the Earl of Hertford burned it, and in 1650 its garrison was defeated by General Monk. At present it is a perfect ruin. It stands upon a rock, and has at its base a triple tier of tremendously strong gloomy vaults. We looked through its dim vaults, into which a faint light flows from narrow slits in the outer walls, and then made a partial descent into a beautiful glen which the castle overhangs. The old building wears an air of romantic melancholy. There is nothing elaborate in its architecture, nothing externally striking except this—that it is in ruins now, that it must at some time have been a most powerful structure, and that its situation is beautiful. The business of ascending from the base of the Castle, in the glen, to the summit near the chapel, was tortuous and tiresome,—awfully hot work, too, for the sun was shining right upon us; but genial company, with a running fire of jokes, eased matters much, and when the inn at Roslyn was reached we secured the requisite solatium. But there was not much time to wait here; in ten minutes we were off again—up hill, and down dale, and by the side of hills, descending lower and lower, until Edinburgh was reached. This was a fresh route on the south-western side of the city, but it was very charming, and on reaching

the cab stand in Princes-street, the only regret was that the "out" had come to an end. Dinner followed, then a ramble to the west end, then tea, then a rush to the railway station. Our train glided from the "Modern Athens" at six o'clock; it was a quick-moving, lively train, and was soon in full swing; Leith and Portobello directly came into view, and then faded out on the left; then came Galashiels, with its woollen manufacturies; next, resting serenely in an umbrageous vale, Melrose with its stately and exquisite abbey — Abbotsford, the palatial seat of Sir Walter Scott, being to the west, but hid by a hill; and then winding round the sides of bleak, wild fells, we reach Hawick, noted for its "gills," which are equal to pints; by and bye we pass Riccarton Junction, and then away we go at a rate of the most terrific character — making one feel every now and then, as the carriage jerked and oscillated, that we were all going to be sent to chaos in one general heap; but everything kept right; we sighted the "border city" (Carlisle) at 9-20; and at 12-30 reached Preston, with never a bone broken nor a muscle shrunk, pleased with the companions we had met with, and bringing home with us an impression of the North — of its scenes, sights, beauties, and historic associations — which will never be effaced, and which, if it undergoes any change, can only be in the direction of a higher and stronger regard for old Scotland.



A TALK AND A SMOKE WITH A PHILOSOPHER.



Our last article brought us out of Scotland ; this takes us to Chelsea, and strange to say, brings us into the presence of a Scotchman—a strange thinker, a unique and isolated philosopher, whom Russell Lowell, the American, graphically describes as one possessing a nature “rare in these latter centuries, capable of rising to a white heat, but once fairly kindled he is like a three-decker on fire, and his shotted guns go off, as the glow reaches them, alike dangerous to friend or foe.” This description refers to a man who is now bordering upon 80 years of age, who was bathing the other week, according to the reports of newspaper gossips, at Portobello, who generally lives “alone in his glory” in Cheyne-row, Chelsea, and who goes by the name of Thomas Carlyle. Did you ever hear of that name?—perhaps you have ; did you ever read any of his grandly-grotesque, eccentrically-earnest writings?—may-be you have glanced at some of them ; but did you ever see him, and did you ever talk to him—we suspect not. Well, now, we have seen him, and chatted with him, and even had a pipe of tobacco with this venerable and world-renowned philosophic singularity. And we found him, just as we should find you, not a marvellous mystery more inexplicable than the Egyptian sphynx or more unapproachable than the Lama of Thibet, but a genial human being, with a thorough knowledge of yesterday and to-day, and a full consciousness that he was made of flesh and blood, and that he was not so very wonderfully different from other people. We had often desired to see this thoughtful, curious Scotchman—this Dumfriesshire man, who studied at Edinburgh, who afterwards taught mathematics in Fifeshire, who subsequently devoted himself to literature, and who now ranks as one of the world’s curiosities and greatest mental forces. Perhaps it was presumption, happen impertinence,

on our part, to desire communion with a man possessing a reputation so extensive; but we made up our mind to see him, if that were possible; and we were fully persuaded that whatever he might be he could only be mortal. We have never yet seen on earth anything transcending the "adamantine basis of manhood"—that is one of Carlyle's phrases; and when we do, we shall either ask for wings so as to be an angel, or solicit divine power and be above wings altogether. A while ago we were in Chelsea, and out of curiosity we asked a cabman, standing near Cadogan Pier, where Mr. Carlyle lived. That cabman seemed to know all about Carlyle, for he replied, "He lives round the corner—in the next street." But it so happened that we had not time to go there; our mission was in another quarter; so we just thanked the cabman and disappeared. We went to the tabernacle of the "Shakers," whose exploits and peculiarities we have already described; and we are constrained to think now that Chelsea, as it then stood, ranked amongst the most remarkable of places, for it had the most peculiar set of fools we ever saw or heard of at one end and the most extraordinary philosopher at the other. Between wisdom and tomfoolery, as between the ridiculous and the sublime, there is only one single step; and Chelsea was the scene of this contrast when we patronised it. Some time afterwards, business and pleasure again found us in the region of Chelsea, and we decided this time to hunt out the famed philosopher of that district—the author of "Sartor Resartus," and of thirty other strange and wildly powerful volumes sent out to the world. Well, on reaching Chelsea, close to Cadogan Pier, we rounded a corner, and in a few moments got to the end of a street called Cheyne-row, where Carlyle has resided for 40 years, and which seemed to have been a select and somewhat isolatedly-genteel place at one time, but now mixed up amid all kinds of houses and shops, and having at its chief corner a big and rather loudly-painted dram shop. A girl with a jug in her hand—it looked wickedly like a drink jug—was nearing this dram shop as we entered the street, and we said to her, "Where does Mr. Carlyle live?" In a moment, as if she knew all about Carlyle, she replied, with her finger pointed up the street, "Yes, up yonder; No. 5; the second

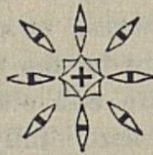
of the large houses you see." We walked onward, up the street, and thought on the way that this was rather an odd quarter for a philosopher and world-famed writer to live in; but its reminiscences and associations are the charm of it to him. In this row Leigh Hunt used to live; close by Daniel Maclise once resided; and in by-gone days several artistic and literary men had their quarters hereabouts. But now all is changed, and the locality seems to be no more like the abode of intellect, and talent, and taste, than a sleepy back street or deserted timber wharf. On one side there was a quiet, loosely-set, row of dwellings; the other side appeared to be mainly made up of a long wall with a big, bald, block of buildings in the centre, standing back a little, looking like stables below with habitable common bed-rooms above. Carlyle lives opposite this place in one of two houses having a small, heavy porch supported upon pillars. These two houses are the best in the street, and when the district was less built up and more thinly inhabited would be reckoned superior dwellings. But there is nothing "surprising" about either of them now: they are homely, sedate, mildly substantial houses, and this is all one can say of them. On getting to "Number five" we mounted the two or three little steps in front, under the open porch, and rang an old-fashioned little bell. We were slightly tremulous; we could not tell what our reception would be like; perhaps it might amount to something agreeable,—perhaps it might be an intimation that Mr. Carlyle could not be troubled with mere "lion"-hunting persons, and that we had better disappear; for we felt that all sorts of people out of prying curiosity, or blind "hero-worship," or an unquenchable passion to rub against strange people, must have played the very deuce with the bell we had rung, and must in the long run have amounted to something very much akin to a nuisance. And Carlyle, according to our impression, was not the man to quietly sit down with this kind of thing, and must, in fact, have become heartily tired of it. Two good anecdotes, illustrative of this "boring" business at this very place, strike us, and as they are too choice to be lost, we will reproduce them. Once a young sentimental lady, with a regard for either philosophy or odd phraseology, called to see Carlyle: she was taken into a room; Carlyle shortly afterwards sat down beside her;

they looked at each other, viewed each other from head to foot, but neither of them spoke a word—the lady was dumfounded, and Carlyle was purposely reticent; but at last he broke the silence and said, “Now, have you seen me—good afternoon,” and informed her that the door was close to, and that if disposed she might go. She went, utterly confused, not knowing what to think of *such* a philosopher, and determined, we suppose, to either never visit the place again or to only go when sent for. On another occasion a smart Yankee gentleman, with notes of introduction from one or more American authors, rang at the door, which on this occasion was opened by Carlyle himself; but the Yankee did not know the philosopher, so he just said—“Is Mr. Carlyle within?” Tired with visitors—at any rate wanting none that day—Carlyle roared out, “No, he is not,” and banged the door to in a rage, leaving the Yankee to wonder what strange man was living at the house, and how it came to pass that Carlyle should leave in the place such an extraordinary person to attend the door as the one encountered. Well, directly after we had rung the bell a fat, dingy little servant girl came to the door. She had evidently been cleaning up in the kitchen, and to this adipose, smoky-looking little servant we handed our card. Directly afterwards a matronly, middle-aged, well-dressed female of the keen-eyed and shrewd-headed type came to the door, and told us that Mr. Carlyle had “just laid down,” and could not then be seen. We replied that we would look in next day, bid her good afternoon, went down the street somewhat disappointed, then returned to the philosopher’s, rung the bell again, saw the sharp, middle-aged female, and asked if it were probable Mr. Carlyle would be at liberty at two o’clock on the following afternoon. Her answer was that he usually went out for a walk at three, and that two o’clock would be a likely time to catch him. Well, then, at two o’clock the next afternoon we paid a second visit to No. 5, Cheyne-row, rung the little bell, were quickly confronted by the small fat servant, who seemed to be just as facially grubby as on the previous day, and to her we handed our card again. She took it to some place down stairs, and we stood in the lobby—a plain, narrow passage, needing paint, and having on one side, hung upon rails, a

waterproof coat, a walking stick, a hat, and an ordinary coat or two. Thought we now to ourself—if we have not seen the “Chelsea Philosopher,” here are, at any rate, some of his clothes. We had not to stand in the lobby long, and when the servant re-appeared she said “Mr. Carlyle cannot be seen for twenty minutes; will you please go into the dining-room.” This apartment was on the left of the lobby, and when we entered it this at once struck us—that the room was remarkably clean and plain, that its furniture was very ancient and simple, and that it was far more like a three-fold library—three rooms seeming to have been thrown into one, with books round the principal portion of the walls—than a dining-room. We felt nervous, for we had nothing special to say to Carlyle when he appeared on the scene; nothing particular to ask him; indeed, we simply wanted to meet him, and having no previous acquaintance with him, and being without a note of introduction from anybody, we felt in what may be termed the palpitating state. But the 20 minutes gave us time to quieten down into something like a natural equilibrium, and to collect our forces a little. If Carlyle had pre-arranged matters, through a prescience understanding our condition, and had said to himself “I will give this fellow from the north twenty minutes to cool down in and nerve himself for me,” the time could not have been more gratefully appreciated nor more seasonable in its duration. We did get cooled down and had a quiet look round. The room we sat in was the middle one opposite the door which was open, and it was without a table; the remaining space of the “dining room” was formed of an apartment open to that we were in, facing the street, and containing a very clean old-fashioned broad table with a cloth over it, four or five ancient looking chairs, a considerable number of books, and a few pictures; on the other side there was a very small apartment containing books and pictures, having a little table in the centre and open by a doorway to the place wherein we were seated. But we moved into neither of those places, and yet could see no sin in keeping our eyes open. Close behind where we sat there was a number of books, mainly German; on our right there was a large quaint-looking oil portrait of Martin Luther, with an open Bible in his hand; and

beneath this, on a side table, there lay a pile of books, the topmost being a life of Voltaire. In front of us, near the door, there was an old-fashioned folding screen, ornamented with print pictures of all kinds, varnished over. Near this, and against the wall, there were hung a few engravings and one or two old portraits. On our left, over the doorway leading to the little room named there was a stern, large, grimly-shaggy lead pencil looking portrait of Carlyle—just the face looking down at us with the thoughtfulness of centuries, and with a head above it as rough and rugged as a fell rock. Over the chimney-piece of the small room, facing the door, there was another portrait—apparently one of Carlyle in his younger days; so that we had old and young Carlyle looking at us at the same time, and the real Carlyle in a room above. Occasionally we could hear his tread on the room floor. We also noticed upon the chimney-piece a small medallion, in a plain old-fashioned frame, of Oliver Cromwell—one of Carlyle's chief heroes. We had never been in such a clean, serious, quietly-learned looking place, nor in one where everything was so plain and primitively substantial. There was no flash, no artificial piling up of pictures, no superficial or æsthetic arrangement of furniture for the sake of "show" and "effect;" all was sedate and old-fashionedly respectable. After waiting here fully twenty minutes—looking at the books, at the engravings and portraits—glancing at the ancient furniture and occasionally scanning, through the front window, in the distance, the top part of an old church tower, made of brick, and originally belonging to a very olden religious order,—after this we heard rather heavy, yet moderately quick, footsteps—somebody was coming down stairs—and in a few moments there stood before us a tall, quaint-looking, somewhat powerfully-built man—aged, erect, earnest, with a business air about him, as if he wanted to be at the bottom of our mission at once. This was Carlyle, the great essayist, the fiery rhapsodist, the finely eccentric philosopher—the friend of Goethe and Coleridge, of Mill and Emerson, and all the chief lights of this century—a man with perhaps the hardest and ruggedest intellect in Christendom, known all the world over for the singularity of his style, the pro-

foundness of his thoughts, and the daring energy of his writings. The way in which he received us, the themes upon which we conversed, and the manner in which we passed half an hour in his company, must be reserved for another next chapter.



CHAPTER II.

"Well, sir," said Carlyle, when he appeared upon the scene, "is there anything I can do for you?" His voice was strong and clear, and it swept into us with a powerfully authoritative effect; and yet the question was not an unkindly one; but it came out so directly, was upon us so instantly, touched the pith of the business so swiftly, that we felt well-nigh "cornered." We suspected that he might first have said "good afternoon," or have excused himself a little for being so long; but Carlyle is not the man to do his business in a roundabout, conventional style. Well, the moment the interrogation had been put we experienced a slight sense of perplexity; but presence of mind succeeded it instantly; we thought it best to make no mawkish or vamped-up apologies; indeed, as he was direct, we decided to be so, too; so without any hesitation we replied, not in the journalistic, but first person singular style—"I've come without any introduction, Mr. Carlyle, and am glad to see you." "Humph," rejoined he, in a rather growling tone, and then he wheeled half round and walked towards the front window. The crisis, we suspected, had now come, and we expected—so tired must Carlyle be with mere "lionisers"—that the next remark from him would be to the effect that we had evidently no real business at all, and that as his time was precious we had better depart. But, listen—in half a moment, the powerful lion, with his ominous growl, turned into one of the most pacific and genial lambs you ever met with. "Will you take a chair, and carry it into the garden?" said he. We nodded an assent; looked for a chair; then moved into the garden (a small, oblong, semi-dilapidated plot in a line with the lobby, and just behind the house), and bothered ourself considerably concerning a chair. We could see no chair except a species of superannuated one at the top end of the garden; perhaps it was a very good chair, but it seemed too venerable and weather-beaten for

our liking ; so we turned round, met Carlyle, who was coming out of the house, then followed him up the garden, and, noticing his disappointment respecting this chair question (he looked about, but could find nothing suitable) we volunteered to solve the problem, and that was soon done ; we walked back into the lobby of the house, got hold of a couple of chairs, hugged them out, upon some flags, facing the garden, put them down opposite each other, and both of us were soon seated. Carlyle at once began smoking tobacco, out of an old-fashioned, white, churchwarden pipe (the best and healthiest kind of pipe yet discovered) ; and on perceiving a desire on our part to keep him company, he promptly intimated that he could find us some tobacco ; but we had both a pipe and tobacco in our own keeping, so we spared him the trouble of going into the house, and in a few moments there was a genial cloud rising from each of us. We now felt easy and at home ; this was clearly the "calumet of peace" we were smoking ; and if the world could have just looked down into that garden for a moment it would have said that "Old Adam" and "Young Orlando" were managing matters beautifully, and that some curious effort to revive the friendship of Tam o' Shanter and Souter Johnny was being made. The ice melted rapidly ; the coolness and grumbling, primarily experienced, were, as if by magic, resolved into sociality ; we got upon excellent terms—nay, upon smoking terms—with Carlyle in no time ; and the current of confidence and kindly feeling was never once disturbed. But what had we got to talk about ? We had called upon Carlyle, induced him to leave the house, were seated with him, within a couple of feet of him, and what in the name of fortune and the gods of Egypt were we going to say to him ? Well, now, we said nothing—"Silence is golden"—(that is a Carlylism), and the grand old man drew himself out in his own style, and just after his own fashion. If we had begun to be fussy, or inquisitive, or garrulous, he would have "cut it short ;" but we in the main consented to be the audience, and he in the main went in for the rhetoric. Prior to describing our conversation, let us say a word about Carlyle—about his *personnel*. Many writers have described him : this is our portrait, drawn in perhaps a loose, inartistic fashion : He was tall, muscular, bony, and must in his early days have been a man of im-

mense vital energy. If he had been made a ploughman instead of a philosopher, he would have beaten the whole country side in working, or wrestling, or fighting. He wore an amber-coloured, neatly-patterned, aged dressing gown; had on his head—as if pitched on by somebody—a broad-brimmed, huge-looking, slouched hat, of the “billy-cock” type, and it seemed much too big for him; and he wore on his feet thick-soled, buttoned-up, felt boots. His hair was of iron grey colour, quietly drifting into white, and it was very rough. Combs, it was certain, Carlyle cared little about, for his hair was thick, long at the sides, came forward in easy disorder upon his forehead, and had no sign of any “parting” in it, except what might have been formed by his hands, or accidentally made by the wind. His features were well defined—indicative of much inherent power; were strongly contemplative; and there was the cliff-like brow, which Emerson speaks of, still visible and paramount. His look manifested an air of isolation, of determined mental independence; and a stern sadness, with immense strength of will, and a disregard for everything of the canting and conventional order, permeated it. There was no mistaking the fact that this man cared nothing for a thing just because other people thought something of it—cared only for a thing in the ratio of its harmony with unmistakeable truth and the principles of universal integrity. There was a ruddiness, a bronzed hardness and healthiness about his face which we did not expect to see; and his look, voice, and demeanour evinced the possession of much physical vigour and durability. We expected finding a decrepit, shambling, worn-out, dreamy old man. We anticipated meeting with a languid, time-stricken individual, manifesting nothing save vague eccentricities and the relics of former greatness; but instead of this we met with a strong, comparatively straight-built person—steady in step, hale in body, well-balanced, and even at times finely-vehement, in mental power. He had a calm, lightish grey eye, with a fleecy undefinable iris—a very cool, placidly-earnest eye, with no cringing or fiery folly in it; there was a serene, intractable depth in it, and if we had viewed it for an hour under a microscope we should still have been puzzled to have got to the bottom of it. We may also say that he wore a beard and a moustache—not,

however, long and broad, but thick and bristly—grey certainly, but lacking the “flow” of hair which one somehow associates with the chins of venerable philosophers, and indicating a determination rather to condense than to run to seed in the mediævally-learned fashion. The conversation we had was brisk, and the subjects of it varied. “You come from Preston?” he said, and on replying in the affirmative he rejoined—“Priest-town—are there many Roman Catholics in it?” We replied that there were between 30,000 and 40,000 in the town, and this seemed to impress him with the idea that Preston was not a very promising town. Identifying Preston with a murky, densely-smoky atmosphere, he next began speaking upon the evil of what we recognise in large towns as the “smoke nuisance,” and said that all who polluted the atmosphere with smoke were enemies of the people’s health, and ought, in every case, to be prosecuted. Afterwards, and slightly shaking his head, he intimated that we were living in strange times. “England,” he observed, “is passing through a great and severe trial; but it will be all right in the end. Nothing will perish which is worth keeping—good must be the ultimate result of all England’s sufferings and trials. It is impossible for evil to be the result of it.” His notion of there being “some soul of goodness in things evil”—at any rate of the final working of the natural laws for the clear benefit of humanity—was very absolute; and the optimism involved in his allusions was most marked and definite. His general references to England were hopeful in tone; but he appeared to have a conviction that her trials, if not sufferings, would be great. From this question we dropped to that of our Parliament. In the House of Commons, he said, there was too much talk—too much of what he called “jannering” and “jabbering,”—too many men in it whose primary object was “business” and “self.” He had seen somewhere a statement understood to have been made by Mr. Gladstone as to the Liberal Government being an “unexampled” one, and he expressed his astonishment and contempt at the idea. He said there was some good—at any rate less mere noise-making and empty, canting, speech-delivering—when a *King* had command of, or appeared in, Parliament; but now, he seemed to think, the “jannering”

and the "jabbering" had turned the affair into an unwieldy piece of sham, of time-serving shallowness, and sentimental uselessness. "I would recommend you", said he, "to condemn, in your writing, this state of things." Speaking of London—its business and street traffic — its immense concentration and ramification of life, trade, and general activity—he expressed his wonder at the "machinery" sustaining it working so well. That it did not break down and bring matters to a dead lock, that some disruption did not take place, that some cog in the huge wheel did not break, throwing the whole affair into confusion and chaos, surprised him, and well-nigh amounted to a mystery. And yet with all the seeming regularity and order of the thoroughfares, mishaps, he said, were frequent. "Froude," he remarked, "told me one day that about 300 persons are killed in the streets every year." The hollowness and disingenuousness of many business and commercial transactions evidently impressed him much, and he both lamented and denounced —on this point his observations were specially incisive— the delusion and dishonesty of the limited-liability-company-manufacturing system. He smiled at the wretched gullibility of the public in this matter, and condemned in keen and earnest terms all those engaged in working up sham companies. "Whirlwind mining companies," said he, evidently referring to some "prospectus" — "what a delusion and piece of dishonesty these things are." He said he got about two prospectuses of new limited liability companies every week; and appeared to be both amused and aggravated by an incident mentioned to him by either a postman or the person actually engaged in carrying the freight to the post-office—that incident being this, that one day actually 28,000 prospectuses of some company were taken by a man to the post office in a wheelbarrow or handcart. "Whirlwind Mines!" he repeated once or twice with an air of lofty scorn—"it is surprising how the people are deluded." We condemned the system as downright robbery; and afterwards he rose to his feet, a flash passing from his eyes at the time, and said—"It is most immoral; in fact, sir, it is damnation!" In many parts of his talk his imagination and indignation glowed with heat; great emphasis and earnestness were at times brought to the surface; his own

peculiar style appeared at intervals most unmistakeably ; and if we had been taken into his company blind-folded, not being aware previously where or to whom we were going, we should have found out, by the particular phraseology and earnest ring of the man, that we had got into the company of Thomas Carlyle. He had in his talk a very palpable Scotch accent, and he put on no airs of refinement or pedantry in anything. His manner was simple, firm, and yet, to us, very agreeable. Carlyle finished his pipe before we had concluded ours, and noticing that the ground was somewhat damp we offered to "drop it," and set him at liberty ; but he appeared to be in no great hurry. "Finish your pipe," said he, and we did so, our conversation being agreeably kept up in the meantime. Finally we tapped the ashes from our pipe, rose, shook hands with Carlyle, and withdrew ; our interview with him having been of the most successful and agreeable character, and one we shall long remember on account of the perfect freedom and geniality manifested by the old philosopher. How we "managed" him and secured such a remarkably pleasant interview, considering that he had never seen us before, may seem a mystery ; and yet there was very little mystery about it. We went the right way to work : a mixture of sagacity and diffidence operated as the leading cause. We manifested no particular spirit of inquisitiveness ; showed a willingness rather to listen than to talk, or stare, or walk round the old man, or view him from head to foot in an idiotically lionising fashion. That was quite avoided by us ; and that was the very reason why he at once became chatty and familiar. We can conceive of some people who visit Carlyle, beginning at once, after having secured a seat in his presence, to laud or question him—to indulge in all kinds of half-impertinent, half-maudlin interrogations—to question him in all sorts of ways about his health, age, writings, literary connections, and reminiscences—to express their opinions respecting his works, and endeavour to draw him out by criticising them ; and we can easily conceive all this irritating the old thinker, making him either uncongenial and impatient or cold and reticent ; but we quietly avoided this kind of business—asked him never a single question about himself ; nay, did not put a single question to him on any subject ; and through this he drew himself

out, in his own way—showed no hesitation in talking, seemed to keep back nothing, chatted in a surprisingly friendly and spirited fashion, and left upon our mind, by personal contact, an impression we had previously formed by perusing his writings—that he was a singular, yet warm-hearted, strong-minded man, with a hatred of cant and humbug in every form, a thorough believer in the ultimate winnowing out of all the chaff and rubbish infesting society, and in the perfection of humanity by a close adherence to the great natural laws and forces regulating, through Divine wisdom, the universe.



CURIOSITIES AND COFFINS.

Lonely, yet picturesquely, there stands on the north-western edge of Lancashire a singular little place called Heysham. It is about three miles south-west of the watering place of Morecambe; it faces the beautiful bay going by that name; and on account of the varied and charming scenery it commands, and the antiquities it possesses, it is entitled to special notice, and worthy of the attention of all who hunt after either the curious or the beautiful. "What's your fare to Heysham?" said we one Sunday afternoon, whilst staying at Morecambe, to a rough and ready looking carriage driver standing near a semi-dilapidated conveyance and a worn-out horse, on the promenade side. He answered, like a ready reckoner, "Four shillings," and as the company we were with numbered four, we took him at his word, and in a minute afterwards were on the move Heysham-wards. For upwards of a mile and a half the road was level and easy—skirted the shore meanderingly, passed pleasant villa-like residences and terraces; and then it became narrow, antiquated, hilly, and hollowy. We rode by a couple of "tea and strawberry gardens"—lively places, no doubt, when the "season" is at its height; but at the period of our journey—the "fag-end" time—remarkably dull and deserted, with never a strawberry to be seen and never a tea drinker visible. In a while the driver, who had been assuming a very contemplative and silent aspect, broke the stillness by saying that his horse and carriage were going to be sold in a few days—the "season" being over—and that he would take £20 for them. We made no remark about the vehicle; but one of our party expressed a decided opinion that the horse was worth about £3, and that roused the latent fire of both the driver and his steed, and as if to manifest the metal of the animal we found ourselves directly afterwards actually going up a hill on the galloping process. At the top of that par-

ticular hill the scenery was fine: right in front there was a dark, rocky eminence, faced and crowned with foliage, with the quaint old village of Heysham nestling below; far ahead, and running out like a thin line into the sea, Fleetwood presented itself; northwards there was the bay of Morecambe—wide, and placid, and beautiful; with Blackcombe, and Coniston Old Man, and Helvellyn, and all the other fine mountains beyond; and, in the rear, eastwards there was “time-honoured Lancaster,” with a sable background of moor and hill. The scenery was, in a word, wide-reaching and exquisite, bringing to one’s mind the fact that people need not travel all over creation for beauty and variety, that we have much of each close at hand, that there is a large stock of the delightful in England—nay, in Lancashire; and that until it has been properly examined, we need not be in such a passionate hurry to wander through infinite space for more. Scenery, like charity, should begin at home, and if it doesn’t, so much the worse is it for our taste and our choice of situation. We were no sooner up the hill named, whence all this beauty was perceptible, then we were going down it—down the other side, and right into the odd, rock-sheltered, cornered-up village of Heysham. And it seemed to be a race against time—certainly against the sermon in the church, for if that piece of sublime somniference were over, and if the people had gone, the church which we wanted to look into would be closed, and the church-yard containing sundry curiosities which we were anxious to inspect might be fastened up, and the old stone coffins beyond, which we had come purposely to see, would be a positively sealed-book. Indeed, we were doubtful about the coffins, even if the church and the yard were fully accessible, for a report which weighed somewhat heavily upon us—that these curious coffins could only be seen at certain times on week days, and were totally closed to the public on Sundays—appeared, at first sight, to settle the matter; and yet we were hopeful. The driver drove on—made old Pegasus lively, to the point of a sweat; but the scenery on the road now became disheartening: we met the people leaving the church—they were coming away in long, straggling droves; and it needed some nerve to rush through them in an open carriage drawn by an old horse

working at high pressure. That crowd of folk we encountered must have considered us—our party—a sadly-benighted, Sunday-breaking confraternity—a wild heap of sinfully-rollicking, unscrupulously-jaunting, cheap trippers; and yet our thoughts and feelings were quite as good as theirs—a reverence for age, a desire to get a glance at old-world solemnities and curiosities, to ponder over the past and drink in the earnest lessons of time with its vicissitudes, and age with its changes, formed the motive which impelled us to confront the bucolic masses, and pass them indifferently. In a few moments the driver pulled up at the door of the village inn; we left the conveyance, caught the clerk in the very act of locking the church door, politely requested him to let us look into the building, and that said official, after wondering what in the name of the world and his wife we could mean by making such a request, at such a time, lazily undid the door and permitted us to enter. This church which has recently undergone extension at the western side, and which stands close to the sea, is an early Norman building. The nave (supposed to occupy the site of a Saxon church) and the southern aisle, are the oldest and most original parts of the edifice. The walls of the old portion are formed of red, irregularly-built, sandstone. At the west end there is a small, circular-headed, walled-in door way, indicative of Saxon construction; and not far from this is a stone slab, murally fixed, which must at some time have formed the gravestone of an ecclesiastic or knightly warrior; at the opposite end the only curiosity was a crumbling chalice, fixed, with a glass before it, in the aisle wall, and supposed to be very ancient. But it was not so much the church we wanted to see as the curiosities on a rocky eminence beyond it. "Can we get up there?"—pointing to that said eminence, said we, somewhat obsequiously, for we knew we were out of time, to the man with the church key, and he shook his head like a Greek oracle and said, "Its closed to-day—I can't let you through—its private property." We asked whom the place belonged to, were told that it was the clergyman's, and handing our card to the oracle, we said, "Take that to him, and ask him if he can oblige us." Away he went—up a gravel road, through the churchyard gate, into the

parsonage; and after waiting a few minutes he reappeared—didn't go round by the gate and come down the gravel walk, but crossed a hedge, like an antelope, hurried towards us, said "Its all right," and, after mentally applauding the parson, we followed the hedge-scaling official, wandered up a hill side, threaded our way through what seemed to be massive rocks and rickety walls which had tumbled down in one or two places—went up steps, and round corners, and past climbing ivy, and all sorts of wild foliage, and finally landed upon a solid, rocky eminence, with ruined masonry here and there, and commanding a sudden, splendidly-expansive view of the waters of Morecambe Bay and the Irish Sea. The transformation was—pardon the simile—quite of the Jack-in-the-Box kind. A minute before we were amongst gravestones, ancient inscriptions, lumps of stone, narrow walls, antiquated rambling steps; now we are up, on an eminence, on a platform of rock, with the sea stretching out as far as the eye could reach in one direction, and with hills, and vales, and a world of variety in every other direction. For a few moments we revel amid the fresh, bracing air—the sharp, blood-purifying breeze which flies round this solitary, rocky headland; and in its rough, irregular whistle we hear a music carrying health and vigour in every note. The breeze flying round this old time-worn promontory comes to us—not thick, and warm, and hazy, as you get it in towns, streets, and squares, but fresh, and cold, and splendid—comes to you like something intended to go into you, and down you to the toe nails, and through you—comes to you as if for the very purpose of convincing you and those solicitous about your pulse, and physic bottles, and pill boxes, that God Almighty intended you to breathe freely, and had sent this special blast of air to get into your lungs and make you use them. Upon the surface of this rock, to the right, and perching just at one corner ready to topple over the precipice, upon the beach below, there is an old ruin—the remains of what is conjectured to have been a chapel or an oratory dedicated to St. Patrick, and erected in the early Saxon times. It is a very plain, grey, time-stricken bit of masonry—just a remnant, devoid of all decoration or architectural effect, but sufficiently definite to show the character of the edifice,

which must originally have been exceedingly strong and very small. It is 24 feet long, $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, and the stonework, which is very rough and far worn, is held together by mortar made of burnt sea shells. This mortar seems as hard as the stones and is likely to last quite as long. The particular name of the saint to whom this chapel was dedicated somewhat associates the place with mariners. St. Patrick was the "protecting saint of navigators in the Irish Channel." During the Saxon era sailing along the shores hereabouts was a perilous affair; the channels were not fully understood; wrecks often occurred: it is stated that a chapel was erected on this Heysham rock as a guide to sailors, and that at night time a light was exposed from one of its windows to assist them in their calculations, and warn them of the rocks and shoals in this part of the bay. On the opposite side of the rock there are more ruins—larger than those referred to, and, if not ornamental, possessing good architectural proportions, with a well-shaped and pretty large eastern window. Between the ruins, and at the opposite ends—east and west—of this rocky eminence, the principal curiosities, to ordinary sight-seers, are observed. These consist of eight coffins cut out of the solid rock. Six of them are in a row, at the western end; the remainder—close together—are at the eastern side. They are indeed curious relics of the sepulture of by-gone days. Lead coffins—coffins of oak and iron—coffins formed of blocks of stone, hewn hollow like troughs, are considered strong enough and lasting enough; but coffins like these at Heysham, forming part of, and chiselled right out of, an immense rock approach, one would think, the maximum point of endurance and solidarity. For a moment let us examine these coffins. They are all empty, and the lids have disappeared. Of the six at the western end four are of a tapering form, with semi-circular indentations at the top parts, for the heads of those who originally occupied them; the fifth is of an elongated, oval form; and the sixth is of a plain oblong kind. Five of the number have square holes sunk just above the head, and it is thought that in these holes there were at one time crosses, placed after the modern headstone fashion, as observed more particularly in Roman Catholic burial grounds. The two coffins at the other side of the rock are

of a plainer character, with neither cross nor head holes; and one of them is quite small, having evidently been intended for a child. The depth of these quaint coffins is about a foot, and even the largest of them seems scarcely capacious enough for the corpse of a good sized adult; but if an experiment were made we suspect that the proportions would be found not far wrong. One day, we were told, some visitors expressed a doubt on this point; but it was soon settled, for a man who was present pulled off his coat, laid down in one of the coffins, and found, though he was nearly six feet long and moderately stout, that the "fit" was "beautiful." That was rather a grave experiment. As to the age of these coffins, that is a point which cannot be definitely settled; but it has been conjectured that they are "by no means of so old a date as the chapel, which undoubtedly belonged to a period previous to the Conquest, whilst the stone coffins might be assigned to the 14th century." It has furthermore been conjectured that this spot was in olden times a species of fortress, that it was more convenient to hew coffins out of the rock, which is soft, than carry away the dead, and that this particular portion of the eminence formed the cemetery of the garrison. This supposition seems rather far-fetched; such a mode of interment in rock would be too troublesome and costly for mere garrison occupants, unless they were persons of rank; and the probabilities are that the coffins, with their head crosses, belonged to some of those connected with the religious order located here. Whilst looking about, on the rock, we noticed a heavy square block of stone in the centre, and on asking the church clerk what it was, he dumfounded us by saying—"That's part of a cheese press!" And so it turned out to be—the top block of a modern cheese press! What a ludicrous incongruity amid venerable ruins! The object of it we could not divine, unless some one had decided to have it carried up and fixed as a sort of seat. Only what an oddity! If somebody had told us that we should meet on the top with a guano cart, or a corner cupboard, or an antediluvian frying pan, we could not have been more surprised—nor amused—as we were at the sight of a half ton cheese press block in contiguity with coffins and chapel ruins. Probably there was some use for this cheese press top in this special

quarter; but after all it hardly looked "the cheese" from our point of view. On getting to the bottom of the steps we walked on a little, and then crept through a small Saxon door way, removed from some part of the ground and fixed here for antiquarian effect. It stood right opposite a similarly shaped, walled-up doorway, connected with the ruins on the south-eastern side of the rock above, and on looking through the window in this quarter, previously referred to, we noticed what seemed to be a couple of stone-built, slated sheds inside the nave of the ruins. "What are yon?" said we, pointing to these sheds; and the clerk, determined to give us yet a keener surprise than he administered by the cheese press stone, answered, "They're pig sties." "Oh, carry us home, after that," rejoined we—"What a spot for pig-sties!" "Aye," continued he—"Them there's pig-sties for sure; and there used to be a bull or two kept in 'em!" Talk about antithesis, about extremes meeting, about a lot of sublimity just a quarter of an inch from a heap of ridiculousness, why there was the very quintessence of these serio-comic discordancies here—in that precious cheese-press keeping company with coffins, and in those pig and bull sheds nestling in the very bosom of an ancient chapel. Having duly regaled ourself with these antiquities and oddities, we had a look through the churchyard, and found that it contained several curiosities worth noticing. In one part, near the central pathway, there was a stone coffin, in the shape of a hollowed-out block of stone; in another a curious stone on which were represented a sword, a harp, and a cross; on the higher side of the yard there was the column of a cross, bearing emblematic carvings indicative of Saxon origin; and on the side of the road leading to and not very far from the church door there was a long massive stone of very curious and antiquated workmanship. The top part of it is slightly arched; at each end the head of some wild animal—a lion or a tiger—is represented; whilst on the sides there is a medley of grotesque, primitive, carved work, representing men and animals. The clerk's views as to the meaning of this stone were somewhat hazy; but he spoke in a knowing kind of way as to its ownership. He said the stone belonged to a man near Carlisle—that it referred to the ancestors of that man; but how it came into

his possession, and how he knew that it concerned his ancestors we cannot tell; for the stone is unmistakeably of Saxon origin, and according to Baines it is "one of the most remarkable remains of Christian antiquity in Britain." We left the churchyard, pleased with its curiosities, and in half a minute were in the village of Heysham—one of the quietest, coziest little places you ever saw—sleeping close to a rock, and looking as far removed from the world and its bustle as if it were in some corner of the moon. At the inn where our conveyance was waiting we endeavoured to get some refreshments; but the house, under the new law, had only a six days license, and the landlord was prevented from selling alcoholic compounds on a Sunday. "Can't we just have a drop of something lively?" said we to the landlord, who was standing at the door—for we felt rather chilly through rambling in the churchyard and on the rocks beyond; but he did not comprehend us, for, after saying "Oh, yes," he intimated that we could have either ginger beer or gingerette in any quantity. We smiled, told him he wanted to get us into the hands of the doctor; and whilst he was looking serious and perplexed, and mentally anathematising his six day's license, which was spoiling his Sunday custom, we drove off, and by the aid of old Pegasus were soon at our head-quarters in Morecambe.



SOUTHPORT AND ITS "SIGHTS."



CHAPTER I.

"What everybody says must be true;" and this is what everybody has got to say about Southport—that it is a "wonderful place," a "beautiful place," a place "you ought to see," including a variety of other eulogistic terms all going to prove that if Southport be not, as some people have christened it, "the Montpellier of the North," it is a decidedly smart, handsome town. Although we have resided for nearly twenty years just 22 miles off Southport, we were never at the place until October, 1874; so that we have not monopolised its streets much, nor worn out its promenade much, nor fatigued its donkeys to any serious extent. A "guide" we have partially perused says that Southport is "in 53 degs. 38 min. 40 secs. north latitude; and 2 degs. 59 min. 45 secs. west longitude." That is a rather learnedly mystical exposition of its situation; and if Southport had been the central pivot of Mercator's chart, or the most vital nautical place in the universe, it could not have commanded a more elaborate geographical definition. Now, we shall go in for neither the degrees, nor the minutes, nor the seconds, nor the other complex items, but simply say that Southport is situated on the western coast of Lancashire, about half-way between Preston and Liverpool; and that from either place it can be reached by train in about an hour. A Churchtown man, who believed in public-house keeping and fiddling, and who rejoiced in the plain, unpoetical name of William Sutton, was the founder of Southport, in 1792. When it was quite a wild, barren spot—devoted mainly to sandhills and the occasional shrieking of sea gulls—with not a dwelling upon its soil—dead as a door nail in winter, but visited periodically in summer by bathers, who dropped down in carts and conveyances, partly for the fun of the thing and partly to take the salt

water inwardly and outwardly, in the orthodox fashion—he conceived the notion of building a public-house in this quarter; he erected one; and ever since then Southport has gone on improving, until it has now become a beautiful, fashionable watering-place, with a normal population of about 20,000. Well done, Sutton!—if there was not much grit in thy beer, nor much melody in thy fiddle, there was at least prophetic sense in thy selection of Southport as the "right place" when that small public-house was commenced in 1792. This is as much as we need say of a preliminary character. Luckily the weather was fine, we had a bright day, which seemed to have been cut clean out on purpose from a heap of dull, rainy, misty weather, when we visited Southport, and we had, in addition, a companion of the genial type—a decided "Josephus Molitor," whose shield bears this inscription, "With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come." So that we were right—weather capital on purpose; sky serene just because we were going to Southport; and a companion as lively as if he had come out of a champagne bottle. The scenery on the way was nothing extra: it was about as romantic as a table top—flat as a five-and-sixpenny mattress—and never intended to get anybody into a state of poetry or excitement. Going to Pilling is a pretty flat affair; tumbling in a street is a flatter; but—after you have passed Burscough—travelling to Southport is like looking at a disconsolate spirit level, stretching out right and left, and ahead, to the horizon, and unwilling to stir for the edification of anybody. A brief view of Marton Mere—a long, lake-like place—relieved matters a little; but it was so deep down, so level with everything about, so persistently flat, that we derived no joy from its waters. The only thing that relieved the monotony during the early part of the journey in this direction was the sight of a youth drawing water out of a well on a principle which might have been considered smart about 5,000 years ago, or at the time when the Egyptians were settling on the banks of the Nile, but which did look inexplicable in these days of science and pumps. He was at the back of a farm house, and was pulling water out of a deep well; not by means of a bucket and string, or revolving winch, but by the aid of a long pole with an iron scoop at the end of it; this he let down and then

drew up in a style of the most primitive and child-like type. We suspect that the people living in that farm house discard knives and forks, and paint themselves blue, and wear the skins of wild animals, like our noble British ancestors. Amid all the flatness hereabouts encountered, this lad, with the perpendicular water ladle, constituted a relief; and when we got farther on, a station master, or an official dressed after the manner of one, made a slight addition to our scattered and scanty joys. "How far is it to Southport?" said we to him, as he came to the carriage door and collected our tickets; he seemed perplexed—wore a calmly bewildered look; and then broke the silence by saying—"Well, I really can't tell; but you'll be there in about three minutes." Now, a man who lives within a three minutes' ride of a place, and who has no idea of the distance thereto, must be a genius; and we put down this man as one of the coming lights of the age. An intellect so transcendent as his has no right to be wasting its forces a mile and a half from any town. It is sinful for him to exhaust his talent at such a place. Just as the clock reached 12 we reached Southport, and were impressed at once with the capaciousness and cleanliness of its station. There is nothing astonishing about its architectural proportions; but it is a broad, well arranged, extensive edifice, and it produces for the place a good "first impression." After a cursory survey, we move off—pass on to the right, and notice that the town is busy; turn to the left, and notice that the town is not only busy, but wears a genteel air; and, seeing the pier ahead, we decide to polish off that "lion" before encountering anything else. We walk down past cab-drivers; we walk up past men busy with building work; we cross the promenade, get a view of the pier, and mentally exclaim, "What an awful length it is": it runs out and out, away on, over the sands, and at the far end appears to look disappointed that it has not been able to cross the water, and wind up somewhere in the Isle of Man. We never saw such a projection—such an illustration, not of "linked sweetness," but of wood and iron "long drawn out." And yet it is an excellent pier; permits of a splendid walk, takes you finely to the sea, and causes a heap of fine bracing influences—wind, ozone, and

all kinds of things to be blown at you, and through you, and over you, as you traverse its route. A company of niggers playing "Pompey" and "Cæsar" made us happy for a few moments, as soon as we passed the pier gates. They were down, at one side, on the sands—blithe, strapping young fellows, blackened up, and going through all sorts of wild antics to make people laugh and raise money. They created much of the former; but little of the latter seemed to be stirring. It was surprising to notice how ready the crowd was to laugh—to keep laughing; it was equally surprising to see how cheaply they got the laughter. The "niggers" would have to be kept by somebody; but nobody "shelled out;" and if a hat went round it rotated in our absence; else we would have given something—copper certainly—nay, perhaps a copper boiler or kettle, if we had had one to spare. Having duly regaled ourself with the niggers, and having patiently listened to the strains of an organ grinder, who appeared to be playing for love, for nobody offered him anything, we rambled down the pier, which is nearly a mile long. As compared with some piers it is narrow; and its extraordinary length increases its thinness to such an extent that at the finish it looks almost like a thread jutting into the sea. On one side of the pier there is a foot-walk or promenade; on the other there is a tramway, along which runs backwards and forwards at regular intervals an open car capable of carrying about 50 people. A wire rope passing over central pulleys is attached to the car, and the motive power is obtained by an engine fixed midway on the pier. We preferred walking down the pier; the air was bracing; but the view was somewhat monotonous—sand to the right, sand to the left, with the sea spreading out dimly ahead and gradually mixing with the horizon. When the weather is very clear views of the Westmoreland and Cumberland hills can be obtained; but though fine during our visit, it was hazy, so that water and sand constituted the general programme of scenery. There were donkeys saddled and donkeys in carriages moving about on the sands in various directions; and there were actually two cows "grazing" in one part amid a few tufts of green stuff looking like a cross between wire and sea weed. The animals would not derive much consolation from this; and unless an experiment

were being made as to the easiest way of feeding cattle upon nothing, and of finding out how much milk and butter would be the upshot of such a sagacious piece of business, we do not see what could have been the object in putting these cows upon the sands. Happen they were of a consumptive character and needed ozone; and may be if we had gone nearer to them we should have found each wearing a respirator. Our ramble down the pier was easy, and it would have been serene too had it not been for the whirring whizzing noise of the tramway pullies, which "carried on" like an array of scissors-grinding machines. But we were patient, gradually got used to the noise, and refreshed ourself with the pure air, until at length we reached the first head of the pier—a broad expansive well-sheltered place, succeeded by a small extension, backed up by an orchestra (a sort of second pier requiring another penny for admission to it.) But we were satisfied with the first pier head; so we just looked about and cracked a joke with a tall, elderly man, in the turn-stile box at this end. He looked like an old soldier—had shrewd features, had his hair well parted, and, tempted to interchange opinions, our genial companion, smiling at him, said, "Been in the army—eh? The old turn-style official, with a sparkle in his eye, rejoined—"Yes, left my commander-in-chief in bed this morning, and hope *she's* all right." That settled matters so far as "the army" was concerned; and we dare say that if the navy had been brought into question we should have received equally important information on the subject; so we laughed, bid the old fellow good day, quizzed some photographic pictures, and then entered the tramway car for the purpose of riding up the pier. The car contained a miscellaneous company—little children in the arms, young couples looking as sweetly at one another as turtle doves, blooming females in superb dresses, and elderly people as mum and sedate as Quakers. The car rattled along at a brisk pace, and in a few minutes we were at the end of our journey, pleased on the whole with the sights and scenes encountered, and prepared to do more "lionising" when we had given our gastric juices something to play upon, in the shape of lunch, at an adjoining hotel.

CHAPTER II.

An easy walk along the Promenade—perhaps a quarter of a mile from the establishment where we attended to gastronomy and looked after Number One—brought us to the Winter Gardens of Southport. We were somewhat puzzled to know what these "Winter Gardens," represented as forming a striking portion of the "big things" of the town, could be like. Summer gardens, with roses blooming, and birds singing, and fountains playing, we could understand; they are in the natural order of things; but Winter Gardens—the synonymn, to us, of shrivelled trees, and dead cabbage stalks, and frozen-out robins—we could hardly comprehend as being anything at all like a resort for people bent upon bliss and general enjoyment. And yet, after all, we had some idea that by means of much artificialism, and theoretical dodging round corners, and æsthetic straining at gnats and swallowing of camels, the thing might be so arranged and got up as to be presentable, and even pleasurable. We were not mistaken. The Winter Gardens of Southport constitute one of the pleasantest and most interesting places we have ever visited. At a distance these Gardens, with their buildings, look elaborate and curious; close to they give you the idea that they belong to the Crystal Palace family—a sort of costly, intricate something which the Sydenham article has stood godfather for. They are on an eminence, and in a hollow; are surrounded by a massive, substantial wall; and convey to you at once the notion that those who built them understood the theory of both business and pleasure—knew that money ought to bring in so much per cent., and that if anything could haul up that kindly and solacing ingredient it would be something providing intelligent, rational enjoyment. Furthermore, these Winter Gardens remind you of another thing—the importance of making sea-side places, which are all ablaze in summer with visitors and cash, and dead as a second-hand tombstone in winter, attractive for the public all the year round. Feasting when the weather is warm, and

fasting and pulling faces when it is cold, is the rule of life amongst those who live and look after the public at watering places; but the winter-garden idea, if extended and adopted, may obviate to some extent that condition of things; and no doubt the "enterprising spirits" of Southport thought in this way when they decided to make the place we have now got to. After looking about for a moment we approach a species of gate-house, or lodge, confront a turn-stile there, and are told by a lively young maiden who sits "at the receipt of custom" in this special quarter that if we wish to proceed we must pay for admission. We told her she was handsome, but that did not melt her—said she was a wonderfully sweet creature to occupy a post so worldly, but that did not make her say "Pass on;" she smiled, stated that the Gardens were worth seeing, and when the required sum was put down permitted us to go through, and replied blandly to everything we asked her. And what we did really ask her we have now almost forgotten; but she was uncommonly civil—made it out that the place was excellent, and might, if we had pressed her, have even admitted that the North Pole could be found somewhere in these famous Winter Gardens. But we heeded not the North Pole question; we walked up a winding pathway, past evergreen plants, lumps of rockery, stray rhododendrons, and other pleasant oddities, until we reached a long natural platform of earth and green sward in front of a heap of ornamental architecture, and commanding a view of what we considered were the "gardens;" for our idea of the "gardens" was an outside idea; we expected seeing something in the shape of gardens in the open air which would have the attribute of fascination about them when the snow was coming down, and the winds were blowing high, and that was just the part on which our young and innocent mind was deceived. The fact is, we had no right to expect anything of the sort. A winter garden does not mean a place wherein blossoming beauty runs into a revel and an ecstasy in the open air when the wind whistles, nor a spot wherein lilies smile and wink at each other upon the ice; winter gardens mean a little outside and much within—a trifle out-of-doors and everything else under cover. The surrounding grounds of this place appeared to be moderately extensive, to be laid out with much

taste, and to be agreeable enough in summer with a warm sun and a blue sky; but the interior of the fine buildings here—the inside of the glass-roofed and complicated mass of architecture met with here—*that* forms the winter gardens. We pass on, encounter at once a species of lounging or promenading room, very extensive in proportions; and then, going on to the right, we enter the conservatory—a light, lofty, gigantic place,—full of plants of the most curious and eccentric shape, with a congregation of foreign birds distributed here and there, and stationed all over the place—parrots perched on isolated stands, looking as subtle as rogues; macaws mounted in the same way, with one eye open and the other shut, ready to break out into the wildest state of noisiness if anybody made a disturbance; and little hopping, chirping birds, doing their best to be lively, but altogether unable to get into full spirits, and proving indisputedly that things made for warm regions were never intended for cold ones, and that Africa, rather than the winter gardens of Southport, was the place for these feathered peculiarities. Still, with this drawback, the conservatory looked fine: it was majestic in style, appeared luxuriant and oriental in its wealth of foliage and flowers, and gave us a feast long to be remembered—a feast of singular beauty, rich in variety, opulent in taste, and altogether equatorial in effect. How such a multitudinous array of plants, and flowers, and birds, had been gathered together in Southport was a mystery; but there was the fact—a mere glance convinced us of its reality, and if the public, in the sere and yellow leaf of its winter dullness, were not regaled with this place of greenness and recreation, then we thought the public must be either a fool or fit for the kingdom of heaven. But we have no time to stop here: the parrots look learned and heavy; the macaws won't smile; the flowers obey a law of beauty and bloom on; the strange-leaved plants are minding their own business; and so we depart—leave the conservatory, pass through the lounging and walking place, enter what seems to be a magnificent concert room, with chairs all ranged in order, with bills hanging here and there, and bearing the names of famous singers, with a sweeping gallery above, bearing upon its walls a long array of paintings and pictures, and after sundry inquiries go below—down steps, round

corners, and after paying a trifle to somebody in a boxed-up receptacle devoted to cash, find ourselves in a subterranean quarter—a quarter below the ground, and yet neither grim nor dismal, but mildly light, airy, extensive, and called "the aquarium." This place we liked much, for this was the most interesting part of the whole establishment. If we had gone down in a diving bell—encased all over, with pipes radiating from us in all directions, and with a bull's-eye glass in front of us for taking observations, we could not have been able to look more amongst water, could not have seen so many fish, nor so much curious aquatic life as we did in this aquarium. The place has, on first entering it, a subdued, cloistered appearance; but it mends as you cultivate its acquaintance, until at length you not only take much interest in it, but even like it. The aquarium is centrally supported by pillars, near the middle there are seats ranged, and at each side there are large glass-fronted divisions, full of water, and containing a great variety of fish—eels, trout, perch, crabs, lobsters, &c., the name of each species being fixed upon a card at the sides of the tanks. As we walked along we came to one tank which seemed to be the source of much attraction, and on getting to the front we found that this was the abode of an octopus—the strangest, ugliest-looking, most eccentrically-formed creature that you could dream of if you were neck deep in "the blues." And yet it must have some mission in the deep, else it would never have been made. It is a dark, irregular-backed thing, with a whole army of feelers and suckers shooting from it, and it might have known that we were coming and desired to have the best possible view of its construction, for on getting up to the tank, it had fixed itself with all its complexity of tubes and pipes and suckers right against the glass, and it was busy with two crabs which for once in their life had got into a terrible fix: the octopus seemed to be hugging them to its breast, if it has one, and their claws and biters were all fastened as securely as if they had been in an iron vice, for they could not stir, and a slow process of killing was, we could see, going on. It is a pity mediæval theologians never came across the octopus: if they had, it is certain they would have symbolised it as the devil, instead of the horned and tailed gentleman who

now represents that character, for he is a respectable and rather handsome kind of fellow compared with this extraordinary fish. Passing on we meet at the opposite end with a range of tanks, which are in the aggregate 70 or 80 feet long, and so formed that there is a direct passage through the whole of them. These contained a large number of sharks, and they sailed past in a sort of processional order, from one end to the other,—hardly ever deviating from a straight line, and apparently deriving much pleasure from the regular "runs" they made. On the eastern side of these there is a series of tanks (all containing fish, marine plants, &c.) fixed on tables down the centre, and at the sides. Whilst sauntering about here, we noticed a crowd at the opposite end of the building, hurried off, and found that a small company of fine-looking seals were being fed here. We had seen them before on passing, and then they were evidently under the impression that it was dinner time, for two or three of them climbed out of the water upon the bank, and with their large round eyes looked up plaintively at the bystanders for the bestowal of some favour. Now, when the feeding was going on, they assumed an air of much activity. Fish were thrown into the water for all of them, by a keeper, and they rolled about, and dived after, and seized their food with great dexterity. Whenever a fish was thrown to one of these plump, large-eyed seals it did not rush along the top of the water, sail after it, and then make a grab, but it dived down, right below the fish, then snapped it, and did the swallowing part of the business in a moment. In one part of the aquarium—near the shark tanks—there is a pit of a somewhat sombre and irregular character, and on looking over its bank we espied, lying lazily at the bottom of it, an alligator looking the very picture of dismalness and mischief. Each of the tanks referred to is regularly supplied with sea water, which is constantly injected at the top—seething and foaming, and almost like a small steam jet, as it forces its way into the body of the tanks. Hours might be spent in this aquarium: it is clean, comfortably warm, capacious, and altogether a very surprising and agreeable spot. We had seen aquariums before, but they were the merest of toys compared with this; here we have a most spacious, admirably-arranged

place, where you may take your ease on seats and watch the movements of the fishes, or promenade round the tanks and inspect all their curious contents at leisure. Success ought to accompany an enterprise of this sort,—it is so novel, so interesting. On reaching the open air on the eastern or principal side, we encountered a fountain, around which several persons were standing: we were curious to know what they were after—was it some huge fish in the water, or some strange amphibious reptile in a box or kennel at the opposite side? In a moment afterwards the mystery was settled: we observed at one side a large seal with a wet, shiny skin, and as soon as ever the keeper came it recognised him, splashed into the water, and swam towards him. This keeper gave it about half-a-dozen fish—threw them, at short intervals, in different parts, and the seal bounded and dived after them—never missed one—and was even a better hand at swallowing them than those we had seen in the aquarium. But we must now leave, and in a quarter of a minute we are walking out of a handsome gateway, and find ourselves in one of the longest, airiest, broadest thoroughfares we ever saw. This is Lord-street: it is 1,397 yards long, 250 feet wide from house to house front, and has a carriage and tram way down the centre 35 feet 3 inches wide. On the western side there is a good parapet, with shops, &c., standing well back, so that people can look into the windows without in any way impeding the pedestrian traffic; on the opposite side there is a parapet, backed by a beautiful promenade, and the houses stand off perhaps 30 yards, upon elevated ground, with grass plots and flower gardens in front. This street is of itself a most imposing thoroughfare, and the structures lining its sides—they include the best and largest in the town—give it a fine and beautiful effect. On the right, as we traverse the street, we meet with a massive and handsome edifice, with a fountain in front—this is the Cambridge Hall, recently opened by Home Secretary Cross. We spent a few minutes in this building, which is extensive and elaborate in its apartments, and had a glance at the great room above, which is immense in its proportions and rich in its decorations. Near it is the Town-hall, a mild-looking, comparatively plain building. At length, tired with walking, we engage an open

carriage, and drive down to Hesketh Park—a pleasantly sequestered place, 30 acres in extent, and opened in 1868. We had not time to enter it, so we drove back, crossed to the right, rounded to the promenade by the Convalescent Hospital, established in 1806 as a "strangers' charity," passed to the end of the promenade, then bade the driver "good afternoon," and killed time for about an hour by inspecting the buildings, &c., at the western end and the shops in the centre of the town. They all seemed smart and quite up to the high-water mark of sea-side commerce and architecture. If we had had more time on our hands we should have made an internal survey of several of the institutions which the town seems to abound in—about 20 altogether, in addition to those named. And we might have dropped into one or two places of worship, just to see what they were like, for some of them had excellent exteriors, and they evidently flourish in Southport. Whether the people are religious or not we cannot tell, for places of worship by no means indicate, in their numeric force, the reality of people's virtue. There is a rage now-a-days for building churches on the generous plan—a plan which some people look upon as an attempt to bribe Heaven quietly and get to glory snugly; and some of these Southport churches and chapels may have been run up on that same principle; but we know not, and all that we can say definitely about them is, that there are nine and twenty places of worship in and about the town, and that two or three new ones are in course of construction. Plenty certainly. A wonderful place is Southport—wonderful in its streets, its institutions, its promenades, its edifices, its churches and chapels; and amid all these high influences kindly disposed, not towards the nectar of the gods, but—why, Longton ale! Who would have thought that; but it is so. Finally we retraced our steps to the pier entrance, had another laugh at the niggers, and made to the station for home again, soon after one of them burst out in this antithetic style of eloquence—"If there be anything I love and hate, anything I could like to eat, anything I could like to smash, and then make all right again, it is"—well, we were wondering whatever it could be, when he ejaculated—"it's a woman!"

TO THE ASHES OF DE FOE, JOHN BUNYAN, WESLEY, &c.

CHAPTER I.

A quick ride from the British edge of the English Channel brought us, one Sunday forenoon, to Cannon-street Railway Station, in London, and in a minute after we had quitted that terminus, the question for solution amongst those we were with was, "How shall we spend the day?" Whilst the problem was being pondered over, we espied something like a drinking fountain inserted in the wall of a church hard by; we were curious to know what that curiosity meant; we walked up to it; the church turned out to be St. Swithin's, designed by Sir Christopher Wren; and that which looked so much like a drinking fountain, resolved itself into nothing less than the *locale* and head quarters of the famous "London Stone." In 1798 this stone was removed from the opposite side of the street, encased amid stone work, against St. Swithin's Church, and so it remains to this day. It is supposed to have been a Roman milliarium; it looks like a rough, big, battered cobble; but it has peculiar historic associations. This was the stone which the notorious Jack Cade hit with his sword whilst travelling through London with his band of revolutionists and leeches, and it was whilst halting on this rude block that he exclaimed "Now is Mortimer lord of this city, and here sitting upon London Stone I charge and command that of the city's cost the priory conduit run nothing but claret wine this first year of our reign, and now henceforth it shall be treason for any one that calls me other than Lord Mortimer." By and bye—the question as to how we should spend the day being still unsolved—we found ourselves in Bread-street, and we were reminded of Preston almost instantly after we had entered that thoroughfare; for here we found the London houses of "Messrs. John Hawkins and Sons," and "Messrs. Horrockses, Miller, and Co." We felt somewhat at home here; but

"Bread-street" sounded oddly. What a curious name for a street; and yet not so curious when we get at the bottom of the business; for in ancient times there was a bread market here. In 1302, during the reign of Edward I, an Act was passed preventing bakers "from selling bread in their shops and houses, and restricting the sale of that commodity to the market in this street." Just as we were emerging from this quarter we looked up, and noticed on the right hand side, at the corner, a tablet referring to poets; we read it, and afterwards discovered that the building it was fixed against was a church—All Hallows—and that in this edifice Milton, who was born in Bread-street, was baptised. Just for the sake of Milton we looked into the church, and found it a very dull, tenebrific, antiquated place, fit enough for orthodox, sleepy souls, fond of high pews and easy cushions, but not at all harmonising with our idea of a spot so closely identified with the secretary of Cromwell and the author of "Paradise Lost." In an hour afterwards we found ourselves—where think you?—under the dome of St. Paul's, during service time, and close to a band of Chinese or Japanese, who, with their bare, copper-coloured, whiskerless faces, were listening intently to some grave cleric reading the Psalms. There was a large congregation; but we had no time to remain in their midst; we eyed the whiskerless, shiny-faced "heathens" as they sat upon the forms pricking their ears at western theology; we glanced at the crowd, and saw the "dim religious light;" we repeatedly met with the statues of fighting men—admirals, and generals, and captains, and all sorts of naval and military people in marble, and wondered what they of the bellicose and gunpowder ilk could want in this great temple of Christianity, whose shibboleth is, and has been, "Peace on earth, good-will toward men." But that was too straight-laced and Puritanical an idea. Life is a struggle; and man must fight in some shape or other as well as sing and say prayers. He has had to do so from the first; he can't avoid it now, and never will. Primarily he had to fight the elements—do battle with rain, and hail, and cold, with thunder and lightning, and all manner of inclemency, for the direct sake of individual comfort; then he had to fight his unruly neighbours, for they did not understand him, and he did not understand them,

and they had to quarrel all round and bruise one another right and left before they comprehended each other; then, when they had arrived at a common understanding as to their individual and combined welfare, they had to fight with lions, and tigers, and all sorts of vicious and violent things, varying from spotted snakes to unscrupulous bears; then, when the notion of society was conceived, they had to defend themselves against outsiders; then after society had been consolidated the "storm" was against tribes; then against countries and kingdoms; and so this fighting and bruising process proceeded until we come down through flint and bronze, through wooden and iron ages to our own—through pre-historic, historic, mediæval and later eras to the fighting times evolving and necessitating the men whose white marble statues we behold in St. Paul's Cathedral. Through the refined moral spectacles now worn, we look upon these men as the exponents and champions of a shockingly cruel and awfully insensate period; we think that a Christian temple is no place for the perpetuation of their figures and their names; but we are enjoying the privileges, and rights, and liberties they won for us; the peace we possess, and the easy fire sides we sit around, and the carpet slippers we moralise in, are all the fruit of their enterprise, and daring, and fighting; and this fighting work will have to go on for ever—not against wild beasts, for we have conquered them; nor against nations, for in the main we have pacified them; the physical part of the business has been accomplished; the battle now, and the warfare in the future, will be against moral and mental enemies—against ignorance and sin—in favour of advancing light, greater harmony, completer happiness; and thus the combat will go on for ever. Light, harmony, happiness!—these form the pole star of the race, and for these, when baser quarrels have dropped, the great struggle will be maintained. We only make these observations by way of excusing the apparent inconsistency which broke in very heavily upon us when we entered St. Paul's Cathedral, eyed the "heathens," and confronted the statues of warriors. As an abstraction we have no faith in fighting; but we like it, when ruffians are hovering about; we like it ever so much when they are touching the skirts of the nation; and thus it is that we honour the men who figure in the temple of St. Paul's

Cathedral: their fighting has magnified the greatness of the "tight little island" called England; and their gunpowder and steel—awful and wicked as we may look upon them in these days of special grace and oily complacency—have enabled us to sit at home peacefully, and say our prayers comfortably. But we must proceed; and we do so—through this street and that; down this alley and up that entry; along one thoroughfare and into another; and the strangest part of it all was, that everything seemed as silent and enigmatical as an iceberg. London, we generally associated with all that is seething, and lively, and boiling over with life; but on a Sunday it is about three and a half times as quiet as an empty beehive—calm as growing grass—as solemn in the city part of it, as a night cap, waiting to be washed. We had heard of "London on a Sunday;" and this run of ours through the city part of it amounted to a direct demonstration of its solitude. Everything seemed as quiet as you can imagine Jerusalem was after Titus had done all the business Flavius Josephus attributes to him. But this did not daunt us. We went on and on, taking near cuts through back and side streets and passages, until we got into a thoroughfare which brought us face to face with the Guild Hall, the great municipal head centre of the city of London. Thoughts of "Dick Whittington" should, as a matter of course, here arise, for amongst those who contributed towards the early status and elaboration of this edifice was Sir Richard Whittington. "Gog" and "Magog" have here their *locus standi*, too; but it is Sunday; we cannot enter; we have no time to enter if we could; hence, we proceed, past that grand temple of "lucre"—the Bank of England—on the right, get into Moorgate-street directly afterwards, and at length discover that we are in City-road, and in the direct track for one of the most interesting cemeteries in the world—that of Bunhill Fields. And what, some people may be inclined to ask, is there in that place worthy of a visit? There is much. Quoting the words of Mr. Charles Reed, F.S.A., we may remark that "in this burying ground are interred men whose memory and writings are amongst the most precious of our national heirlooms; some of the most fearless asserters of civil and religious liberty at critical periods of our history; notable men of

all professions and of all religious communities; divines, artists, reformers; a crowd of worthies and confessors whose learning, piety, and public services not only adorned the age in which they lived, but have proved a permanent blessing to the land, and whose names the world will not willingly let die." The road we are moving up is long and broad, and, Sunday though it be, is full of life—mainly life of the "unwashed" kind; whilst every now and then tram-carriages and 'buses increase its activity. After a lengthy walk we reached a square, railed enclosure to the left, about five acres in extent, and full of gravestones. This is the cemetery we are in search of—the spot containing the ashes of the author of that finest of stories, "Robinson Crusoe;" the place wherein repose the remains of John Bunyan, and a host of celebrities and curiosities whom we shall in another chapter refer to. Somehow, the gate of the Cemetery was locked, but we got an intimation that it would be opened at one o'clock in the afternoon, so we strolled off in the direction of "The Angel," in Islington, passing one or two Jew's shops which were open, and saw sundry curiosities, all oddly at variance with one's northern notions of Sunday life. We halted for a time at the junction of Pentonville road—a junction where five thoroughfares converge—coming from the north where London life is modern, from the west with its parks and palaces, from the south, where the wealth and business of the metropolis are concentrated. Each of them branched off to fine or curious places, and one of them would have taken us, by a short diagonal cut, south-west, to a spot which was once of wonderful consequence—to old "Battle Bridge," where it is stated Julius Cæsar, Mark Antony, and Cicero were encamped for two years, and where the great battle in which Queen Boadicea so disastrously figured took place. But our "mission" was a visit to Bunhill Fields Cemetery, so we retraced our steps along City-road, reached the gates just as the "keeper" was opening them, went through the ground with him, and what we saw there, and in a chapel opposite, which we subsequently visited, will next be described.

CHAPTER II.

The gates of Bunhill Fields Cemetery were now open. And what a strange plot of ground they permitted us to enter! Not a common plot of ground; not an ordinary cemetery; indeed,—and this is a rather powerful expression—one of the strangest pieces of ground in the world. Into this place there were once removed from the chancel of Old St. Paul's "more than 1,000 cart loads" of human bones—a grim deposit which, it is conjectured, originated the name Bone-hill or Bunhill Fields; and into this particular spot the dying and the dead were alike thrown amid indifference and phrenzy during the plague of 1665. Speaking of this ground, De Foe says—"I have heard that in a great pit in Finsbury, in the parish of Cripplegate, it lying open then to the fields, for it was not then walled about, many who were infected and near their end, and delirious also, ran wrapt in blankets or rags, and threw themselves in, and expired there, before any earth could be thrown upon them. When they came to bury others, and found them, they were quite dead, though not cold." After this terrific plague the place was enclosed, leased by the Corporation of London to Dr. Tyndal, who transformed it into a cemetery for the interment of people irrespective of creed, and by-and-bye it resolved itself into the principal metropolitan Nonconformist burial ground. Our main object in visiting this cemetery was to see the graves of that great master of allegory, Bunyan, and that prince of story-tellers, Daniel De Foe, the author of Robinson Crusoe—a book unequalled in the charm of its incidents and in the great natural lesson it teaches to the English-speaking race. Books more eloquent, infinitely more erudite, far more ponderous, have been written than this, but none ever came from the brain of man teaching so marvellous a lesson in the domain of adventure and self-reliance. What every age has wanted, what this age pre-eminently wants, is a full conception of the importance and virtue of fighting against difficulties—of overcoming

obstacles—of adhering firmly to the great principle of self-reliance. We have now-a-days missions and institutions for all kinds of things—for keeping people in every way, for buying them blankets, and bibles, and gruel, and new hats, and physic, and shoes, and hymn books, and God only knows what, all tending to make strong men weak, and lame dogs yet more limping. We want Robinson Crusoes amongst us—men prepared to keep themselves, to overcome difficulties, fight against long odds, face all kinds of foes, get hold of something rather than loaf about or cling to anybody when the ship is sinking, and push out, strong-armed and bare-headed, when she goes down, determined to land somewhere on the shore, and then to fight round against all comers, and win security and comfort by the exercise of common natural courage and natural common sense. We like Robinson Crusoe, apart from the charm of his adventures, just because he never would “give in”—just because, however wet his shirt might be and however hungry his stomach was, he held on, bravely and firmly, to the last plank—never lost heart, always thought that if he did not look after himself nobody else would—never whined and pined about some philanthropic society to put clothes upon his back and meat into his mouth, but took the right way for getting both by his own efforts, and thus most excellently proved that God does in real earnest, by natural laws, help those who are willing to help themselves. In our schools we have all sorts of books for the edification of tender plants—books about geography and history, about science and poetry, about benevolence and flowers, about creeds and saints; but we have none specially inculcating the duty of single-handed fighting, paddling individual canoes through the deepest waters and down the stormiest rapids; and we do solemnly assert this, that if we had the handling of school books, we would insist upon every child in the empire reading Robinson Crusoe. Having said this much we proceed into Bunhill Fields Cemetery. It is a flat, bleak-looking place, and the first stone we meet with of any interest relates to John Bunyan. How many fire sides has his *Pilgrim's Progress* stirred with wonder; how many imaginations in every city, and town, and hamlet, has his rare allegory moved by its conceptions, and fired by its marvellous similitudes! According to Southey, many

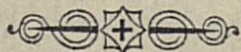
Dissenters have been interred in Bunhill Fields Cemetery, just on account of Bunyan. They regarded this place "as their Campo Santo, and especially for Bunyan's sake." Formerly there was a stone over the grave of Bunyan, containing an inscription which, after giving his name, and referring to the book he wrote and the period of his death, wound up in this highly doggrel style—

"The 'pilgrim's' progress now is finished,
And death has laid him in this earthly bed."

An altar tomb, over his remains when we visited the cemetery, was substituted for this monument in 1852; the centre being occupied by a reclining figure of Bunyan, and the panels bearing figures emblematic of scenes from the Pilgrim's Progress. But we must move on; for the "keeper" accompanying us understands what "business" is, and knows the value of time. Directly after leaving Bunyan's tomb we meet with a stone referring to Daniel De Foe, the author of Robinson Crusoe. Strange to say, though this stone alludes to one of the greatest of England's favourites, it does not indicate his exact whereabouts. Daniel was interred somewhere in this piece of ground—nobody knows where—"with his second wife," and all that this stone can do is to record the fact of his burial. We regret this vagueness; and yet, wherever De Foe may be, he sleeps well; and if he be not sleeping, then he occupies a rare place in the hidden region of activity and light. Contiguous to the spot we are now at, there is an upright stone, which we have seen in engravings and photographs, and which refers to "Susannah Wesley," the mother of John Wesley. An uncommon woman she must have been, for she gave birth to a man who stirred England to its depths when the country was in a state of spiritual stupidity,—a man whose followers are now numbered by hundreds of thousands. As we proceed through the ground we encounter the graves of a host of celebrities. Amongst the persons lying here, in addition to those named, are—Charles Wesley, the first person called a Methodist; Richard Cromwell, the inanimate and helpless son of the famous Oliver; Lord Deputy Fleetwood, the son-in-law of Oliver; Dr. Watts, the honest, yet weak and watery, hymn writer; Dr. Goodwin, who attended Cromwell on his death bed; Dr. John Owen, vice-

chancellor of Oxford at the time of the Commonwealth, and the preacher of the first sermon to Parliament after the beheading of the unfortunate and vacillating Charles I.; Dr. Rees, editor of the *Cyclopædia*; Neal, the author of the *History of the Puritans*; Stothard, the Royal Academician; Dr. Lardner, author of the *Credibility of the Gospel History*; &c. Towards the centre of the ground there rests Fontelroy, the banker, who was hanged for forgery, in 1824, at the Old Bailey. It is said that his remains, which ought, according to custom, to have been interred within the precincts of the gaol, were smuggled away by his friends and buried here. Not very far from the grave of Fontelroy there is a huge box tomb, and by way of giving prominence to what is of itself a grotesque and unsightly affair, it is fixed upon an elevation. This great box tomb, which is about seven feet long by two and a half or three feet deep, contains the remains of a woman who died of dropsy, and the inscription upon it enters into particulars as to the scores—hundreds, we believe—of gallons of water taken from her during her illness. After inspecting this very refreshing piece of sepulchral masonry, we wandered to the north-east corner, which was full of the graves of notable Nonconformists and divines; and having glanced at the inscriptions, we made towards the gate again, and passed, close to the street rails, a monument to the memory of Hardy, who, along with Horne Tooke and others, was tried for treason, in 1794. Hardy lived in hot and perilous times, politically speaking; and his monument bears not only a prolix, but “somewhat defiant semi-political inscription.” It has been asserted that George Fox, the founder of the Quakers, was interred in this cemetery; but this is a mistake. The remains of this finely eccentric, wonderful man rest in Coleman-street, which was connected with Finsbury Manor Farm, and was secured by the Friends, as a cemetery, prior to the death of their founder. We spent about an hour in Bunhill Fields Cemetery, and then walked across City-road,—immediately opposite,—to a Wesleyan Chapel there, which figures prominently in the annals of Methodism. It is a substantially built edifice; the first stone of it was laid by the Rev. John Wesley, in 1777; and when erected it became what has been termed “the headquarters of the Society of Methodists.” Its interior is

capacious, and there is an air of imposing solemnity about it, heightened by monumental marble, which creates a strong and serious first impression. In a vault in this chapel Wesley was interred. We saw the vault; it is at the higher end of the place; and, singular to say, it was constructed under the supervision of Wesley himself, for his own body, and those of any itinerant preachers connected with the denomination who happened to die in London. Southey, in his "Life of Wesley," says that the venerable preacher during his final illness observed—"Let me be buried in nothing but what is woollen, and let my corpse be carried in my coffin into the chapel." And, in accordance with his will, this was done by "six poor men, each of whom had 20s." In the yard at the rear and side of the chapel there are monumental stones to the memory of several eminent Wesleyan divines; and whilst we were looking round there came upon the scene sundry visitors, apparently strong Methodists, who looked upon this chapel and grave yard as a veritable Mecca, not perhaps containing anything in the shape of a sarcophagus hanging magically between heaven and earth, but as a spot where rest the ashes of men famous for their sincerity, piety, learning, and eloquence, whose books they had read, whose hymns they had sung, and whose words they cherished as amongst the most precious and saving of utterances.



AN ANCIENT COURT.



Very lately we had a round of amusement amongst a number of genial Gothamites who constituted in the aggregate a Court Leet. It was in a rural corner of North Lancashire, where the lads and lasses are blithe, where the men believe in hard work and heaps of John Barley-corn, and where the elderly dames "go on awful at nights"—as bad as Tam o' Shanter's wife—if "our maister" does not land up at a reasonable hour. To this Court Leet we went by invitation. "It'll be on next week—will yeagh cum?" said the Clerk of the Court to us one day whilst having in his eye the annual gathering of the members; and when he said "If th' train can't bring yo hoame, yeagh's cum i' my fifteen shillin' shandray," we felt overpowered—defeated by something more potent than logic—and bowed an assent in a twinkling. That shandray was irresistible; Agamemnon could not have stood out against it with success. Now, before we proceed further, let us say just a word about Court Leets in general, and the constitution and main object of the Court Leet we visited in particular. Courts of this sort are of ancient origin; they go as far back as the Anglo-Saxons. The "original intent" of such courts was to "view the frank pledges, that is, the freemen within the liberty" of hundreds, lordships, or manors; and in addition to this their object was "the preservation of the peace and the chastisement of diversminute offences." The jurisdiction of a Court Leet "is the same as that of the Sheriff's Tourn, or ancient County Court, and extends from common nuisances and other material offences against the peace and public trade, down to eaves-dropping, waifs, and irregularities in public commons." Town people know nothing of these courts now-a-days; they are entirely confined to rustic localities; and their object mainly refers to the protection of the rights and duties of neighbouring farmers. The court whose annual gathering we patronised has chiefly to do with water courses. Its

officials are—"jurymen," who form the general court; "barley men," whose duty it is to assess damages if stray cattle get into wheat, oat, or barley fields; "fearors," who settle disputes; a species of surveyor, who goes round the district periodically and insists upon those belonging to the "Court" keeping their water courses in due order; a "constable," who never apprehends anybody; a "steward," who attends to legal matters; "house searchers," who would prefer a decent cupboard or a well-filled cellar to any amount of brick and mortar inspection; and a clerk, who considers that ale is the best physic out between here and the belts of Jupiter. Now, it was with a court composed of these elements that we had to deal when we accepted the foregoing invitation. We reached the hostelry where the meeting was being held, after some difficulty, for on the road rain came down drizzling, and darkness, too, set in; but these we heeded not. "Is Smiler, the clerk, here?" said we, on arriving, to the landlady, and she told us he was. "Tell him he's wanted," we continued, and in a moment afterwards down came Smiler wearing corduroy trousers, a waistcoat with two buttons off, a head as rough as a hedgehog in a passion, and altogether a very unsophisticated, lively jewel for the diadem of a court-leet. He told us they were throng at dinner up stairs; we persuaded him to hurry back without delay; and on assuring him that we would join the gay and festive throng afterwards, he disappeared. In a few moments, however, down came another party—rubicund featured, pretty smartly dressed, and with the hair on his head tolerably smooth, and he ejaculated, "Yeawn to coom up stairs, and hev yeawr dinner." We went, took a seat, listened, heard no discordant elements—noticed a marvelous silence—and said to Smiler, the clerk, at our elbow—"Your'e awfully quiet." "Aye," replied he, "It's feeding time—we're tucking in—and it's wonderful how that quietens fooak." We followed suit vigorously; but long before we had finished, a man opposite threw up the sponge, refused plum-pudding, and said—"I'm done now—awve only an appetite for ale." And when the ale was brought, he smiled at it, and supped. Eventually everybody—the gathering numbered about thirty—had experienced a gastronomic quietus; and then there was a

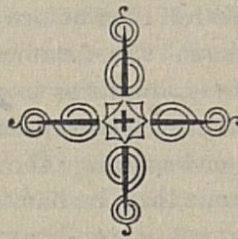
general move down stairs. We looked round ; recognised nobody of consequence save the steward—the Coke upon Lyttleton of the gathering—and after a spell of joking with him, we reciprocated friendship in a sinful compound called whiskey. Surely, thought we, this is a strange court-leet ; but the real business we imagined would begin by-and-bye. Friend Coke bid us good night—he had an engagement in a neighbouring town ; we stood alone by the fire ; then there was a heavy, lumbering thump of feet up stairs ; all the court-leet men re-appeared ; they took their seats upon forms ; put their hats into all sorts of curious places—on the tables, under the tables—all over—and whilst they were respectively finding their quarters that important and ancient Court Leet official—Smiler, the clerk—was, to our astonishment, handing decanters round, and filling glasses with rum and whiskey. A sandy-whiskered young gentleman, nigh unto us, felt about as uneasy as we did regarding the real business of the meeting. He could not conceive who was going to be the chairman ; he kept exercising his brain as to the object of the meeting ; “ When will it start ? ” said he frequently ; and at length he broke out into a half sardonic grin, and said—“ Well, this is a devilish funny meeting, and no mistake.” We did not wish to disturb his conception of the meeting ; “ It is,” uttered we ; and then somebody said—“ We want a chairman.” One might have expected that in an ancient court like this everything pertaining to the office of chairman would have been pre-arranged in the most cut-and-dried fashion ; but chaos prevailed ; everybody was looking about ; everybody was in a state of expectancy and dreamhood as to somebody else. All the ordinary officials had long ago been appointed in the regular and orthodox fashion—the jurymen had been “ sworn in ; ” the “ coursers,” and “ barley men,” and “ fearors,” &c. had duly received their appointments ; but a chairman to supervise and consummate the ultimate proceedings seemed to be something as undefinable and unreachable as the Man in the Moon. We naturally expected that a serious, matter-of-fact, business meeting was about to be held ; that amid the halo of a venerable court like this something approaching a sedate decorum would be observed in the appointment of a president. But this was not so. There were stray cries for the “ fore-

man ;" then there was shouting for him ; then the general wish of the meeting was concentrated upon him to occupy the chair ; but the foreman, who sat in one corner, in a grey topcoat, kept shaking his head ; and then one or two men went to him, seized him by the coat collar, and tried to pull him out, and "run him in ;" but the foreman held to his seat ; and the topcoat, notwithstanding the violent pulling it underwent, preserved its seams—looked as compact as the shield of Ajax ; and the result was that amid all this obstinacy and mystery a further survey had to be made for a chairman. The "Constable" of this ancient and reverend court leet was then named ; but he stirred not. He sat in a solid lump and sat innocently ; and when Smiler the Clerk said "make him drunk and then we can do as we like" there was a roar of laughter. At length and after much tribulation a chairman was secured : he was a bulky, serene man, who sat in a corner ; it was said that he had carved two tough geese with a blunt knife ; that was his chief recommendation ; and he began his duties, as Commander-in-Chief of this bucolic and eccentric confraternity by handling decanters and filling up glasses for everybody presenting them. He was most assiduous in looking after glasses ; not a glass came to him which he did not quicken into a powerful dose ; and when everything was about ready for drinking, Smiler the Clerk, smacking the constable on the back, ejaculated—"Let's make him drunk, chaps, and then we can do as we like." The Constable looked round and looked serious at this ; but when Smiler, soon afterwards, said "If we get th' Constable a few glasses into him I dare hit him right over th' face and he wont take me up" there was a general burst of laughter ; for it was clear that Smiler had a great latitude ; and that the Constable was a very malleable and harmless creature. At length the gentleman who had carved the tough geese with the blunt knife looked round here and there ; and after exhausting his ingenuity in filling glasses he began to make a move concerning the "business" of the meeting. Nobody seemed to know what it was ; everybody was looking at everybody else ; then a system of smoking began, the pipes being lighted by candles which were pulled out of tin holders hung round the room ; and when the candles had been handed about, and a full cloud

raised, the chairman threw a ray of light into the mystery surrounding the general situation by proposing, without any comment whatever, the health of the Queen and the Prince of Wales. Then a dark-haired man, in one corner, who had been at a funeral somewhere, and who had got considerably freighted with liquor, broke out into a state of humorous noisiness concerning the sleepiness of the "water coursers," the toughness of the geese which had been eaten, the contented look of the "constable," and the impropriety of the clerk coming to the meeting in such an eccentric waistcoat as that he sported. "Ne'er mind th' waistcoat," said the clerk, "it's a reet un; a few buttons are off, and when my wife said as I'd better put on another I said, 'Nay, it'll save me unbuttoning at th' dinner.'" The chairman subsequently made "the speech of the evening"—a speech which occupied about a minute and a half. It referred to water courses, to the importance of keeping them clean, and he wound up by asking if anybody had got any fault to find or suggestions to make. There was silence; then the dark-complexioned man got hold of the chairman's arm and began shouting about lean cows and fat pigs; then he sat down; and the chairman taking a full breath, observed—"Well, if everybody's satisfied, we'll go on with our drinking." And so they went on; but the business did not consist altogether of drinking. When the glasses had been replenished, two young fellows sang songs, the subject theme of which was courting; by and bye—after the clerk had filled up many glasses, from decanters which he walked round with—a tall young gentleman rose, went towards the fireplace, and began the Shakspearean recitation, "Now is the winter of our discontent." The language and the gesticulation indulged in stunned the Gothamites; they could not get fairly at the pith of the thing; they wanted something plainer and rougher; and the dark-complexioned fellow in the corner, growing impatient and mystified, roared out that he did not like what was going on. But the young gentleman was undaunted; he walked to the obstructionist, became highly tragic in posture, and the two then entered into a very wild and ludicrous combat: the man who was dissatisfied shouted about all sorts of things; the reciter endeavoured to drown his voice by throwing more steam into the recitation; and in the end the shouting—

almost reaching a screaming point—was terrific. General laughter succeeded. This we thought was a fitting time for the “constable” to interfere; but he sat as placid as a log, with a face as red as a tulip; and when we inquired after him, Smiler, the clerk, ejaculated—“Oh, th’ owd boy’s doing nought; we’ll get him fuddled, and then we can do as we like.” But there was no necessity for that; the “constable,” whilst something less than “half-seas over,” was indifferent enough—let affairs go on as they liked—and rather enjoyed than checked the riotous fun of the evening. The “foreman of the jury”—the chief official, took everything with the same ease; and occasionally, when he held a short pipe in one hand and a lighted candle in the other, for smoking purposes, he looked the very picture of bucolic serenity. “Now, sup up, chaps,” said the clerk, and when a person close by remarked that he could “do with another,” he rejoined, “That’s reet—we watter ceawersers like a good fo (fall).” Then there was more vocalisation, if one can squeeze in such a term, and the songs were of the heavily-strong type—of the type akin to “The New Policeman,” “Ellen Taylor,” and “Barbara Bell;” and finally, when the fun had got “fast and furious,” it was discovered that the decanters were empty; and that there were no funds in hand; so what was called “a tewitt” was made—the hat went round, and something over twenty shillings was the result. The “business” of this most delicious Court Leet was then resumed, until, at the finish, everything got marvellously otiose and chaotic. We left long before that time arrived; but being curious about the termination of this odd annual meeting, we made inquiries in an “official” quarter and learned the result. The tail end was made up of singing, and shouting, and supping; the dark complexioned man became so boisterous that he had to be put out; the gentleman who recited got so top-heavy that he tumbled over a form and nearly fell into the fire; and then, on leaving, some of the goodly company, rolled down stairs; and on getting outside, and whilst proceeding homewards—“the air” takes hold of people, you know—a “juryman” slipped on the road and two of his companions fell over him; another juryman tumbled somewhere in the dark and knocked his shoulder out; and it is said, but this we cannot vouch for, that four of the confraternity got into

wrong houses, pulled their shoes off before they discovered the mistake, and then, jumping up in a state of mental bewilderment, walked home barefoot ; and even managed to lose their hats on the road. Talk about "our ancient institutions," about conserving the customs of the good old times—why here we had a court whose origin is lost in the dimness of antiquity, whose mission is to annually appoint water coursers, &c., and whose members indulge once a year in the momentous business of singing, and supping, and lighting short pipes with candles, and in competing with each other on the road home in all kinds of antics and hedge side gymnastics. Not many old-world institutions can boast of such a glorious mission, such a sublime object as this ; and, of course, nobody can for a moment doubt that it ought to be preserved. At any rate, the "water coursers" are clear enough on the point, and the gentleman who had his shoulder knocked out would even consent to have the other dislocated rather than forego the lofty recreations and ennobling pleasures of this exquisite meeting !



CURIOUS QUARTERS.

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That very peculiar thing which is called the "modern mind," runs in a highly scenic and sensational groove. It is not content with the old-fashioned, natural order of things; it devours the "extraordinary;" relishes the "wonderful;" seems to even extract a lively joy from the outrageous. In addition to these oddities, it even believes in fun; but the amusement coming within the category of its mirth is too highly spiced for those who have been accustomed to the genuine article, and the excitement it relishes is more analagous to that of the contortionist than to the humour of the traditional "Yorick," or the kindly vagaries of the orthodox "Joey." All of us who are soundly constituted, like amusement; each one of us having anything at all approaching a good digestion waiting upon appetite, relishes a round of mirthfulness; the bulk of us want something to laugh at, and will go whole leagues to find material providing it, if it cannot be secured at home; and this is right; but that particular thing called "the age," and that most singular thing termed the "mind" of it, desiderate in these latter days a new physic: "the age" and its "mind" want peculiarly concentrated ingredients—want much, want it strong, desire essences, quintessences, and whatever will contribute towards highly worked-up sensations and intensely strong amusements. That being so, we are led to consider one phase of modern "sensation," and one form of "amusement," which "the age" indulges in when it gets about 210 miles south of Preston, and has money to spare—when it travels up to London, shaking an eccentrically loose leg there, and wants to see a heap of wonders "on the quiet." Were you ever in London? Of course you have been there. To say that you have not, is to confess that you are green beyond goslingism, daft and soft beyond all chance of hardening. We have all been there; each of us knows much about

its wonders; everybody has been amongst them; ignorance of them is unpardonable. But how many people who have been to London have told all about what they experienced there—all about what they *paid* to see—all about what they actually *saw*? Crowds of us have been in the great capital—sinners have been there in abundance, saints have been there, too, in respectable numbers; but they have all seen something, or wanted to see that said something, which they say very little about except “confidentially;” and if they did not thoroughly inspect the entire lot, depend upon it, that was no fault of their own. Amongst the many places in London sundry saints and divers sinners have seen may be enumerated a Moorish-looking edifice adorned with verandahs, and towers, and turrets, on one side of Leicester-square, called the Alhambra. Those of our readers who may be in the habit of distributing tracts will turn pale at the mention of such a name; and those of them who have distributed none, but think somebody else ought to do so, will probably look aghast. That we cannot help. Looking aghast and turning pale are constitutional affairs—depend upon the state of your nerves, and are matters of taste, largely regulated by education. We respect the aghast school of people, and desire to be tolerant towards those who throw up their hands and wish to out-do the lily in paleness when their virtue is at stake; still we must confess that not very long ago we coolly walked into that strange place called the Alhambra, and on the following night actually patronised a dim “Judge and Jury” place contiguous thereto. We went—if a moral polish has to be put upon matters—because we desired to know, and by that means to describe, if the opportunity occurred, certain aspects of “fast” London life; we went—if a natural interpretation of affairs has to be given—because we wanted to see many things which people have no right to see, and which, on that account, they are all the more anxious to observe. Through a bright and palatial-looking entrance we passed, when we walked into the Alhambra. Lamps shone in profusion; there were lights here; mirrors there; elaborate artistic decorations everywhere. Chandeliers—lustres—crimson curtains—statuary—paintings: these formed the programme; and then there were

smartly-dressed young females in this direction—as if they had gala business on hand; and liveried young men in that, as if they belonged to opulent or aristocratic families; and amid all this maze of gilded gingerbread, and brass lacker, and bedizened æstheticism did we pass—after paying our admission money—until we reached a place, far on to the left—in the pit—where we felt, for a moment, moderately comfortable, but in which we soon became uneasy. The tiers of boxes sweeping round, with their splendid hangings, looked magnificent; the ceiling, with its constellations of light—its flashing gas burners all over—had an affinity to fairy-land; the decorative painting, which seemed to crowd out the place, was Oriental in its profuseness; but we were in a corner,—too much on one side, too low down, with too many people before us, and with far too many seeming much more comfortable than we were all over; so after looking about—at the dazzle of light, the world of decoration—we gently said to a friend, “Let us be out of this and aloft;” and so we departed, paying something additional for fresh quarters, in a bye-part of the establishment, and in a few minutes afterwards we were amongst semi-circular tiers—not too high where the “gods” were penned up at a giddy altitude, nor too low down where enigmatical swells might occasionally be seen between flowing curtains; but in a medium quarter where we could see the multitude and the house with ease and comfort. As we passed along this spot, and looked into that, during our movements, anterior to securing a final resting place, it was surprising how curiously you dropped upon people whom you knew, and whom you never suspected finding in this peculiar Walhalla. What could *they* want here, thought we, and who would ever have imagined anybody like *them* would have been passing a night of it in this sensational symposium, we were tempted to mutter. Now and then you came across a friend from the north, whose cool intelligence and settled moral convictions—when at home—made you twist your imagination all to pieces in order to divine his mission here; occasionally, and as if by the utmost accident, you confronted a quiet uxorious acquaintance, and “What, in the name of fortune, brought you here?” was the natural interrogation. Of course they had all come

here, not because they cared a cent for the place, but because they had just promised to meet a friend or two, or expected meeting them, or because—well, we can't tell what, but all very weak-kneed and gelatinous in the character of excuse making; and, yet, all calculated to make one smile right up one's sleeve to the very shoulder blade, if only by way of showing what a curious world this is, and what funny arguments even some of the best of folk will at times resort to when trapped. More than once have we thought that if there be such a place as the orthodox region of sulphur, something very much akin to this same sort of surprising encounter and shuffling excuse making will ensue. We never intend going to that quarter; but if anybody ever does—if, for instance, you, dear reader, should by chance land there, depend upon it you will meet with all sorts of people who wore wonderfully correct faces here, and went to church often, and frequently got their names into subscription lists for all kinds of delightful things, and were looked upon as models; and when you see them you will say—looking into this corner—"What! have you got here?" and then casting a glance into that, you will exclaim, "Nay, can it be, you are surely not here!" and if mendacity be a permissible thing, depend upon it they will say that they have not come to stay, have made a mistake, never meant to get into such a place, have been deceived into visiting it, or that they are as much surprised to see you there as you are to observe them. A benighted man, too fond of displaying a desire for courting a species of widow woman, happened to sit just behind us, and the couple periodically made an unnecessary if not unconventional stir; and we disliked the stir, and protested against it, but when we turned round and looked indignant the widow woman did so too, and we had no remedy but patience. After all it appeared a glorious place,—the light of magnificent gasaliers came down in wonderful beauty; there seemed to be paintings everywhere—the roof high up, the galleries and boxes all round, the stage, all appeared to be immersed in dreamland. By-and-bye the entertainment—we have forgotten what it was—began: there was playing by a fine orchestra, there

was acting by a moderately fine company, and laughter throughout the place. There were elderly, cute-eyed men, with stronger imaginations than bodies, present; there were indifferent, respectably-careless, middle-aged folk in attendance; there were a few sedate-seeming people here and there quietly seated; and there were sundry young individuals amongst the throng, prepared for anything however "hot and wet" it might be. After the first piece had been enacted and applauded, we, along with some of those forming our company, adjourned like other thirsty human beings to a refreshment department in the rear. It was a spacious and splendidly arranged place—more like a gigantic admixture of some fine dining and drawing-room than a theatrical bar; all was bright, and dazzling, and handsome; but, after all, it did seem to be more of a Dead Sea apple than a genuine piece of fruit: the room was exquisite—appeared to be all that taste could desire or skill invent; the waiting was prompt and polished; the liquors were up to the mark; but there was *such* a company in that room as we never expected, and do not again desire to see. It was a wonderful amalgamation of beauty and badness, of rich dresses and bright eyes, and depraved hearts. Harlots, marvellous in attire, with cheeks rouged to perfection, and long "golden curls"—the bulk artificial—were present; and there were swellish young fellows lounging and chatting with this peculiar class—nonchalantly, serenely—as if it were a very proper and legitimate thing to do; and nobody seemed to wonder at the familiarity displayed. After all it was a very shocking sight: all these handsome young women on the road to destruction; all these young men smiling at venality, and shouldering up to vice, and looking as free and unabashed in the business as if it had been a christening or a dinner party. What the fair forms and bright eyes would be like—what sort of capers their patrons would cut in the course of time, we knew not; but the thought came heavily upon us that if say, in seven or ten years from that time, we could just get a peep at all this gay, dashing, galaxy of wickedness, it would be a heap of dishevelled, dingy wretchedness, whilst the "patrons," instead of being nimble, and serene, and fashionable in attire, might be mere loafers or prematurely broken up

beings, lamenting wild-oat sowing and sighing over lost purses and reputations. On returning to the theatrical part, all was aglow on the stage—the boards were crowded with female dancers, and the extravagant antics they indulged in, the extraordinary whirling, and flinging, and twisting, and bending they went through, was simply tremendous. There were 50 or 100 young women in “tights,” with gauze-like girdles, all going it as if they had got wildfire in their feet—all dancing as if they wanted to throw their legs into the air or through the ceiling; and the audience giggled and laughed—elderly folk as well as young ones—and thought this a splendid affair; but as compared with genuine, old fashioned theatrical business, it was a mere ollo-podrido of terpsichorian craziness—a piece of modern sensational, eccentricity and wildness, which we could not have thought possible, and which at its finish simply astounded us. We believe in dancing and all that comes within the fair category of romping; but we do not think a multitude of women have any business to make a desperate effort, before a great houseful of people, to throw their heels, and toes, and legs, right into the sky and up to the moon, if that were possible; and the modern stand made against this sort of business is quite in the right direction, and will, we hope, be successful.—Near the place we have described was a man parading the parapet with a species of square paper lantern on his head, and as he represented one of the “institutions” of the greatest city in Christendom, we patronised his establishment. After paying the usual entrance fee we passed into a dim, dingy room, awfully in want of an audience; with forms and benches fixed in parallel order, and with a small stage-like drop-scene in front. By and bye the curtain rose, and there, fixed upon a pedestal, was a fat statuesque sort of woman who, along with a companion, did the *poses*; but they occasionally laughed and winked at one another, and that made affairs ludicrous. Eventually, a “judge and jury” trial, full of forensic moonshine and strong *double entendres*, was commenced, and we finally got so tired of the place and the entertainment, that we left before the conclusion, and thought that if there were strange places in heathen lands, there were very benighted ones in the great head centre of English light and liberty.

TWO LANCASHIRE WATERING PLACES IN WINTER.



We all know what watering-places are like in summer—particularly the Lancashire ones: how Morecambe brims up and runs over with garrulous fishermen and long-witted Yorkshire folk; how Blackpool is crammed and jammed with trippers—genteel from Manchester, hilarious and fond of ale and long pipes from East Lancashire—with donkeys and horses flitting about, and with fat, and lean, and buxom, and serious parties from all quarters, either looking at or patronising them; how sedate, and select, and half-aristocratic Lytham is; and how full of life and sunshine the balconies and walks of Southport are; but did you ever visit any of them in winter—ever see any of them when it is not light till nine in the morning, when gas-burners are in play at four in the afternoon, and when the snow is on the ground all day and all night long? It is wonderfully fine lounging at them when the sky is blue, and the sunbeams are dancing upon the rippling waters, and the piers and promenades are crowded with life and beauty—when there is singing here, and dancing there, and playing in every direction; but when the winter winds have swept over such places, and when you have either to put lined gloves on, or blow your finger ends to keep them warm, then the scene is changed with a vengeance. Next to standing alone on a hill top, amid mist which you cannot penetrate, or rambling in a cave without a light, commend us to a watering-place in winter if unadulterated dismalness and unsophisticated desolation are required. One of our Lancashire watering-places—Southport—has endeavoured to obviate such a dull state of things; but the others are still as reticent and sad in winter as the pelican of the wilderness. Now it is not our intention to either praise or blame them for this condition of things; we know their chief temptations to life and popularity are in summer time; and, therefore, we

shall not denounce beyond redemption any of them for mere winter dulness; all we purpose doing is just to describe that dulness—to give those who only know what watering-places are in the warm and serene days of summer a picture of their appearance when the mercury of the thermometer stands low down in the glass, and when the sun either refuses to be seen or peers, through a murky atmosphere, like a ball of red distant fire. Recently we happened to visit two Lancashire watering-places when snow and ice were general, and when only three classes of persons—fools, philosophers, or people after money—would have gone near them. A sort of special train, containing about twelve upgrown persons and two babies—all picked up at Poulton—landed us at half-past three o'clock one winter afternoon at Blackpool. It was awful travelling—snow outside, windows all frosted up, hardly anybody in our carriage, and none known to us; but amongst those constituting the passengers there was a baby, and that small member of the human family kept matters lively. Depend upon it, wherever there is a healthy baby you will be kept alive: it will either attract your attention by tormenting its mother as much as possible, by making her turn it, and twist it, and dandle it in every mortal way, or it will excite your attention by making a sad mistake, and claiming acquaintance with you on paternal grounds. When we landed at Blackpool and left this empty train—if the time had been summer every carriage would have been crowded to almost an explosive point—we hurried into the principal street, and there saw—not carriages waiting in processional order for patrons, nor carriages plying in this direction and whirling round corners in that, nor lines of pedestrians, nor crowds of visitors with children at their sides, blowing cheap trumpets and hammering miniature drums;—no, we did not exactly encounter such a scene as this; we saw one carriage, two human beings, and a robin in the main street. If we did not exactly see the robin, it was somewhere about. By an inexorable law, based upon snow and desolation, it would not be far off. Down this street we went: shops closed, shops half closed, shops which looked as if they were neither half open nor a quarter shut, “apartments to let” (as if anybody could for a moment even dream of such things), window blinds down,

blinds neither up nor down, blinds in a sort of humorously despairing mood—quite disposed to come down on one side, but anxious on the other to remain up—shop windows with something in them, other shop windows indifferent on the subject: this was the picture. And it got quite serious until we heard a laugh, turned round, and noticed three men, who had come from somewhere, giggling at two youngsters sleighing in a soap box along the parapet, just behind us. Right to the front of the pier we proceeded; but never a soul was there visible. The ornamental fountain just to the rear looked as disconsolate as a frozen-out Dutch barn; there was nobody on the pier; nobody near the pier; nobody on the promenade; nobody anywhere when we got to this particular part of Blackpool. Universal silence prevailed; and as this did not suit us, we walked down the promenade, when the silence became more palpable, and, if possible, more complete. Nothing seemed to stir except the sea; it, alone, manifested vitality; and just as the ticking of a clock, when you have been alone in a room, has taken the dead stillness out of things, and relieved by a sort of companionship the vacuity of the situation, so the dim waters before us—dim and dreary because enwrapped in mist—seemed at their edge, as they curled and broke upon the shore, to give life to the scene. How lonely, yet how full of strong irresistible power, were those waters—tumbling inwards, drifting backwards, rising, falling, spreading upon the beach with a sad, plaintive cadence all their own, and reminding one of a finer and more majestic Power behind this great embodiment of motion, whose will regulates the world, and who holds the waters of the great deep, even in their wildest anger, as a drop in the hollow of His hand. We moralised thus for a few moments, and then began to ramble down the promenade; but everything seemed to be as cold and serious as if struggling under the vaticinations of the prophet Jeremiah; we could not stand the pressure of such an amount of desolation: thinking could not rescue us; philosophy did not buoy us up; the moralising afflatus even left us; we could see nobody; we could hear nobody; and we did what—deliberately walked into an hotel and asked for the most innocently alcoholic drink in the house, with hot water and sugar. There appeared to be scarcely anybody in the house—we saw just one customer, and the barman, who was sitting near the fire,

with a glass of beer on the chimney-piece, and as the water he brought as an auxiliary to our drink was neither hot nor cold, the consolation we expected was microscopical. The sugar was right, but the "hot water" would scarcely have tickled your epidermis if a bucketful had been thrown upon you. But then it was winter, and during such a season at Blackpool we presume that even boiling water loses its hotness. After sitting for a short time we disappeared from this establishment; but we were still in a dilemma: we wanted to go to Lytham; it was thirty-five minutes off train time, and how could life be prolonged for such a period as that? The hotels seemed disconsolate; the beach looked sad; the people you met either shivered or wanted to do so; the shop windows had a congealed, deadly-lively appearance: and in even provision shops and eating houses—the most comfortable places we could think of—a species of solemnity reigned. The hams, as they hung in doorways or from ceilings, looked patient and stupified; the pies in the window bottoms were sorrowful; the boiled stuff looked frightened and serious; and then when we moved off—if we encountered a photographer's window, bright and animated in summer, it seemed opaque and frigid now; whilst the drapers' shops would have starved you, to look at, if there had not been gloves and mufflers on view; and the fruiterers' shops would have given you the colic with their pale oranges, if you had not shot past in a moment; and the fish stalls and fancy bazaars would have ruined you for life if they had not been either partially empty or closed up. Under circumstances like these, we hurried off to the railway station, determined to kill time there till the train started. The station looked empty—not a carriage in it—not a living thing upon its platform; but all of a sudden we cast a glance on one side, and saw two railway men in a little hugger-muggering place like a corner cupboard upon the ground, and we just looked into their quarters; they seemed like a cheap edition of Patience on a monument smiling at Grief: their den was dim; no light except an uncertain flicker from a fire in front shone upon them; and after just peeping in, and wondering how they maintained their equilibrium and passed their time under such dull and monotonous circumstances, we inquired when the train would start. "It was 25 minutes late yesterday," said one of them, and

as it then wanted at least 20 minutes off the correct hour for starting, we turned round, walked out, then turned round again and noticed a marvellous transformation: the little shanty containing the two railway men was lighted up; one of them began singing a love ditty, and we concluded that as now they were in a happier vein we would join them; so we retraced our steps, took a seat at the far end, and chatted a few moments; but there was such a fierce leakage of gas, from a sickly meter under the form, that we left, considering it was better to be half starved to death outside than to undergo a slow process of poisoning within. So we had another ramble into the town; but a silence almost akin to that of Balclutha's walls still prevailed; darkness was setting in, and the shop windows looked more unconcerned about this world than when we previously saw them; there were lights in dram shops and eating houses; but an air of emptiness reigned supreme; the town was, in fact, in a state of hibernation; and, unable to extract pleasure from anything, we quietly walked back to the station, found another little room there much more comfortable than the gaseous apartment; and in ten minutes we were riding away from Blackpool, in a long empty carriage, the windows of which were so frosted up that we could see nothing through them; and perhaps that was an advantage, for in summer time the out-look between Blackpool and Lytham is not so very exhilarating: it is mainly made up of flat land on one side and miles of sand hills on the other; and we presume that snow and ice would in no way throw a new beauty upon it. In about 20 minutes the train came to a standstill, and though we were neither opposite a station nor in sight of one, it was certain, notwithstanding the mist which prevailed and the sombre evening shadows which had set in, that we were very near Lytham. An elderly man wanted to get out of the carriage and walk on; but walking under such circumstances was not a safe piece of business, so we induced him to be patient a little; and in a few minutes the train moved again, and we landed at Lytham immediately afterwards. The new station here—a light, elegant, commodious building—relieved the dullness of the situation somewhat; but the moment we got outside another edition of Blackpool presented itself. We noticed an empty omnibus

running off, on one side, somewhere, and suspecting that there was a road up to the town in that direction—the mist and snow prevented us from taking accurate observations—we followed it, walked along the side of a wall, amid snow almost up to the ankles, and to our satisfaction eventually landed in the town. Two or three children sliding, with a little dog barking at you now and then, and a few fishermen looking as blighted as frozen-out gardeners, were the chief sights encountered. The streets had a sombre, naked appearance; the hotels wore lonely visages; and it was not until we slipped and tumbled, in rounding a corner, that we at all became lively, and shook off the torpor of the situation. On returning to the station, after discharging the duty taking us to Lytham, we had the satisfaction of learning that our train would not start for forty-five minutes, and that it might and in all probability would, be late; so we waited in the best way we could—sat in a room near a dying fire and read a newspaper; then went out and walked the platform; then drifted into a room higher up, and stayed all alone there for a while; then went back to the room first patronised, and read a little more; and in this way we killed time until the train came up and hurried us homeward. We shall never patronise watering places in winter again unless forced, or until they are accompanied with attractions like Southport. As now situated, they are the very emblem and personification of dismalness. Anybody living in them in winter must either sleep much or drink much, or ruin their eyes by continually looking into kitchen and back parlour fires. We are glad Robinson Crusoe did not, after being wrecked, swim up to a watering place in winter; if he had done so, he would either have taken to drinking or to sleeping, and the world would thus have lost the benefit of his enterprising and industrious example.



AN HOUR AT ABBOTSFORD.



"We must see Abbotsford," said we once to a lively Lancashire party of sight-seers, during a hop, skip, and jump visit to Scotland; and a seconder to that imperative proposition being speedily at hand, we subsequently faced the chief enemy—Time;—looked into, and over, and through him, and cut, and carved, and made him right, and "did" Abbotsford and its sights neatly. An afternoon train landed us serenely at Melrose; and "How the devil far are we off Abbotsford now?" said a Crispinian soul forming one of the company. We replied that this was a sort of classic region, that the language must be parliamentary, and that Abbotsford was away round a contiguous hill side, and might be three or four miles distant. Melrose is a little picturesque place, in a hollow, with a river winding through it, and a beautiful ruin—the famous abbey—standing like a venerable, time-stricken sentinel on one side. And when our party had looked at the little picturesque place, and tasted its beer, and smiled at its maidens, and driven a bargain for a conveyance, to take us on to Abbotsford, it was decided (until the horses were got in readiness) to inspect the abbey. An elderly, gaunt-looking, cut and dried sort of female, who oozed out of a cottage hard by, with two or three keys dangling in her hand, showed us into the abbey, and explained, in a solemnly condensed style, its wonders and peculiarities. But we could learn little from her: she gabbled away about "Sur Walter;" she pointed to a little stone, and said something about "Old Mortality;" and after running through other items in a quick semi-electric fashion, we left her. The admission money had been previously paid—it was paid at the entrance—and perhaps that was the reason we drifted so quietly and swiftly from her, viewing everything as we liked, and landing in the course of a few minutes in the street again. "What a splendid old building!" "What a venerable

ruin!" "What beautiful workmanship!" were exclamations frequently indulged in as we traversed the interior of the abbey and its precincts. And the exclamations were founded upon fact. Grey and stately, shattered and beautiful, stands Melrose. What it is like by moonlight Scott has told us; the picture it presents by daylight—lofty arches, noble columns, rare carvings, grand old windows, with quaint and venerable tombs below, carrying one back to the days of abbots and knights—we could see for ourselves. And whilst thus reflecting upon the abbey, and stirring into beauty its olden masonry, there came a cry, "Now then—horses ready—we're off;" and so we hurried to the hostelrie where they had been engaged, plunged into a conveyance, and were "going it" directly. The road was pleasant: it passed cottages, meandered in and out of rural scenery, and gave us occasional glimpses of the Tweed, which both diversified and refreshed the landscape. Anticipations of Abbotsford, gradually developed into excitement; Jehu with his team kept pushing ahead; round a hill side we glided; then on a rambling, rural lane we proceeded; and it is impossible to conjecture what some of the company fancied we were coming to. If they had not been primarily charged, probably some would have suspected that we were on the threshold of a venerable cottage, or an antiquated castle, or a dim and broken-roofed hall; but the sentimental "agony" had been well and duly piled beforehand; the most opaque had been informed that Abbotsford was the noble residence of a splendid man; and therefore they all expected something fine; perhaps not something like the transformation scene of a pantomime, but, at any rate, a splendid building. Well, if the actual fact did not exactly come up to a very sublimated point, it nevertheless revealed a wonder. "It's yonder," said a man at the fore end of the conveyance, excitedly; "Aye, by gum," uttered another near him vehemently; and then there was a universal turning round of hats and bonnets, and there was no mistake in the business after this. Abbotsford had been sighted, and no mistake. There it stood—rather low down, but stately and beautiful. It seemed to rest at the base of a hill, and it stood there with a subdued majesty—did not shoot up defiantly amid spires and towers, but crept up through a mass of delightful foliage,

and revealed gradually and serenely a battalion of gables, and turrets, and chimneys, with a wide-spreading, handsome front, looking calmly and classically down to the waters of the Tweed. Like a picture in stone there it stood—the dream of one of the princeliest of writers, the ideal of one of the bravest and most fertile of authors. Scott, its founder, was no common man. With a tinge of the blood of the Buccleuchs running in him, and with a nature whose instincts and aspirations were for ever welling up on the side of traditional bravery and ancestral glory, Sir Walter was at once a great-hearted Scotchman and a most romantic dreamer. His chief object was to establish an honourable name and a high family reputation; the former came in due course by the strength of his brain and the lustre of his genius; and with the view of realising the latter he constructed Abbotsford; but in its erection and elaboration, more of variety than of wisdom, more of weakness or recklessness than calm sagacity and judicious care, appeared to predominate. He bought the place when it was originally very small: its name was “Clarty Hole;” and, barring its situation, there was nothing attractive about it. First he made a cottage here; then his plans widened out: he purchased land around it, until eventually he was the owner of a substantial estate. Most of this property, we are told, was “bought at extravagant prices, at a time when he was under the passion of his old idea of territorial aggrandisement;” and, furthermore, it is remarked that “his well-known sagacity in bargain making was reduced to little better than persuasion to induce people to accept his money for what, in some cases, was not half the value of what he offered.” After this he built the mansion of Abbotsford—a splendid, palatial-looking edifice of stone, commanding a beautiful view of the Tweed which curves round the front; and then he began furnishing it—adorning it with all sorts of curiosities; so that in the end “the place became a show, and at the same time a kind of *hostelrie* where the greatest men in Europe were proud to be received and partake of the princely hospitalities” of its founder. After building up and arranging a place so splendid as this, ill luck came; a certain connection with an unfortunate printing firm which Sir Walter had formed, resulted

in failure—his liabilities amounted to nearly £150,000; this aroused him from the magnificent reverie he had been indulging in at Abbotsford—re-harnessed him for work. He refused to compound with his creditors, decided to pay them in full, and though he still retained Abbotsford, work, not an opulent leisure, constantly confronted him. He wrote—toiled, subjected his brain to an immense pressure, and paid off his creditors in the way he had determined upon; but the work, splendid though it was, exhausted him—shattered his strength, and “brought his life to a termination long before Nature’s time.” We wonder how many men would do that sort of thing in these days. On landing at Abbotsford, we walked through a gateway, proceeded down a sort of back road, shady and beautiful with foliage and rockery, and on getting to the end of the mansion, which only came fully into view when we had got right upon it, we rang a door bell, and forthwith there appeared a trimmed up, butler-locking gentleman in black, who admitted us into the hall in a very formal and serious style. The richness, the curious elaboration, the love of antiquarian and historical things which the founder of this rare mansion had, immediately came into view. There were stags’ heads, engravings, paintings, old shields, the skins of animals, and ancient carved furniture all round. Carved oak from the palace of Dunfermline faced the walls of the halls, and appeared overhead in antique designs. Along the cornice there were armorial representations of old Border families; hanging against the panelling of the walls there were time-worn and many-shaped pieces of armour, guns, crossbows, spears, &c.; whilst the floor we were treading upon was fashioned of marble from the north-west of Scotland. Everything seemed to be loaded with curiosities; and as the time at our disposal was very limited, we could only just give a swift, passing glance at them. In a few moments we reached the armoury, a strange, bewildering, marvellous place, running right across the house, like a broad passage, and as full of curiosities as a museum. The walls were crowded, surcharged with weapons of every conceivable shape, make, and size: pikes, bows, guns, lances, daggers, pistols, helmets, belts, shields—nay, there seemed to be every kind of ancient weapon represented

in this place ; a savage fond of tomahawking and scalping would have considered this a sort of heaven in which everything for facilitating the purposes of his vascular imagination was present ; and to even a civilised being it was a curiosity—a source of instruction ; for it showed well nigh all the devices men have resorted to in the business of fighting—a world of devices certainly ; and it proved to a certainty that if people now-a-days are perplexed in finding out instruments of slaughter, they are not nearly in so strange a plight as those living in the “good old times” must have been. The multiplicity, the variety, the oddity of construction, the strangeness and costliness of the workmanship here displayed in these muskets, and ancient pikes, and bows, and armour plates indicated not only the progress effected in style—from the rude to the ornate ; but likewise showed the immense change which has taken place since the time when the best of these weapons were made and the days in which we now live. The choicest and most effective guns, &c., in this curious armoury would now be looked upon by fighting men as mere specimens of elaborate gimcrackery, suitable for child’s play, but utterly useless if “real business” were meant. At one end of Abbotsford’s singular armoury there is the drawing-room—a spacious apartment full of carved furniture, cups, snuff boxes, &c. In one part we saw a glass out of which Burns used to drink his toddy. On the opposite side of the building there is the dining-room, a magnificent apartment containing numerous fine pictures of royal and lordly personages, as well as a number of drawings by Turner, Thomson, &c. We will now turn into the library ; it is reached in a few moments ; and when reached what a great and learned place it seems. The roof is of carved oak, elaborately designed ; the sides and the ends are all filled in with books. What a concentration of thought, what a world of mind, all in repose, in this room ! Books everywhere—ancient, modern, by writers in every domain of intellect,—and all in most excellent preservation, all well bound, and apparently looked after with most scrupulous care. There are about 20,000 volumes in this library, and many of them, it is said, are of a rare and costly character. Immediately contiguous to, and connected by a doorway with, the library there is the great novelist’s study, just as he left it,

and looking as if he had not been long gone. There is the writing table he used, the chair he sat in—planted exactly where he used them—and, altogether, these things are invested with a strange and pathetic reality, reminding one of the work done on them, of the dreams and romances, the rare visions and bright imaginings which used to spring into life here, and which have since spread like a charm into the wide world of fiction, and given their author an abiding name in the annals of poetry and romance. The chair is a plain one, covered with black leather, and it is fastened closely up to the writing table, for the purpose of keeping visitors out of it, and consequently preserving it in good order. There is a small closet near the study, which contains one of the most interesting curiosities in the building. Here we have a glass case, and beneath it some quaint, queer old clothes—a green coat, a pair of plaid trousers, a broad-brimmed huge hat, two strong shoes, and a walking stick. These were used by Sir Walter up to the period of his final illness. But Time is moving; so we hurry through one or two other rooms, make a running inspection of books, punch bowls, snuff boxes, and cognate things, and then proceed to the entrance hall, where we stir up our inquisitiveness, revel amongst the things here located, and then sign our name, along with the remainder of the party, in the visitors' book. It was an interesting book that; it contained many names—names of people from all parts of the kingdom, and of people from distant lands. In one or two parts we saw the signatures of persons hailing from the Continent, America, and Australia—persons enamoured, like all who visit Abbotsford, of the writer once occupying it, and all brought here out of regard for his memory and admiration for his works. The return journey to Melrose—three miles from Abbotsford—was quickly and pleasantly performed; and after sauntering about in the village a short time, tasting ale, buying views of the locality, eating pies, and cracking jokes, we went to the station, got into a train, and hurried away.

TO A CASTLE.

—o— CHAPTER I.

Yes; "to a castle." Some people, in these northern regions, often get to such a place as a castle. They get to all sorts of places and things before reaching a masonic climax like that—get to fighting, get to other people's pockets, get to pawn shops with goods not exactly their own, get to windows and into back kitchens, and then to drawers belonging to other folk, then get to a police station, and finally, particularly in this part of the world, and particularly if they are females—get to a castle. Yes, they get to a very powerful, and majestic, and historic place, just on the southern side of the river Lune, which stands upon, or very near, what was once a Roman camp, which afterwards became the property of sundry ducal and regal people, and which for a long time has gone by the name of Lancaster Castle. In ancient times great people alone occupied castles; but in these modern days the scene has been changed, and the very worst—the most wayward, the most cunning, the most venally poverty-struck and viciously crafty get into them. From being the head quarters of kings, and dukes, and barons, several have become the habitations of the thriftless, the vagabondish, the dissipated, and the disreputable. And they are made so strong and massive that they are just the places for such sinners. The great majority of human beings who visit Lancaster Castle go there against their will—they are sent in handcuffs, and cannot get out of the dilemma on any account. Twenty or thirty years ago persons in debt, anxious to schedule their creditors in as easy and comfortable a manner as possible, were very anxious to go to this Castle: they first became idle and dissolute, borrowed much, went in strongly for credit, dodged, deceived, told lies, then cornered themselves, then conjured up bright and beautiful views of Lancaster Castle, then mystically communicated with some cute and curious lawyer, then got to "the Castle," and then after indulging in a few weeks of methodical

idleness, passed through a process of hard swearing and dim cross-questioning, and re-appeared in the world "out of debt, out of danger"—innocent as new born babes in their own estimation, and prepared for any amount of law if people hinted at their rascality, and for any amount of trickery if chances were favourable. It was a fine kind of thing going to a castle in those days—a very exquisite sort of thing visiting John o' Gaunt's pile in those times; for you had only to do as you liked at home, then wink at a lawyer in Lancaster, and finally pass through a thin-bottomed crucible in the Castle, and proclaim yourself free and pure as driven snow the moment you reached its door again. After doing as your own perverted imagination liked at a distance—at home—you could go quietly into this excellent old castle, and either keep yourself on anything you liked by smuggled money, or pull a sadly-injured face and work a little at your own trade, and get somebody else to keep you till court day arrived when (the lawyer having duly attended to matters outside) you had only to lie in the most powerful and accomplished manner and thus secure fresh air and freedom. Lancaster Castle was the place many poor souls afflicted with a moral squint went to when this reign of impecunious bliss prevailed; but now-a-days only criminals around whose necks certain vices hang, and debtors whose failures are tested by a searching fire of investigation, are sent to the place. Nobody as a rule goes to this castle in these days voluntarily; but we went on that particular platform of freedom one day. We landed at the "good old town" by a quick train, turned (after leaving the station) to the left, noticed a world of improvement—noticed a broad, well-arranged, excellent street, instead of a cramped, uneven, squirrel track which formerly prevailed—and then on turning up, past the Mechanics' Institute, beheld a transformation in progress which everybody must have desired long ago, but which has only been commenced very recently: several cottages have stood, for we know not how many years, almost directly in front of the Castle gateway—they have, ever since their construction, very seriously detracted from and impeded that fair view of the Castle which lovers of the historic and the picturesque desire; and when we beheld

them in course of demolition the conclusion forced itself upon us that Progress had not yet stopped in "time honoured Lancaster." We were given to understand that this change was being accomplished by means of a voluntary subscription; and this statement made all the more acceptable the fact that lately our respected and venerable neighbour (R. Townley Parker, Esq., the present Constable of the Castle) had given a sum of money towards the removal of certain cottages hereabouts—the cottages in question evidently being those which had for so long a time blocked up and marred the front view of the Castle, and which we now observed on their "last legs" and verging upon a final crumble. After a medium puff and a moderate blow—for the way up to the Castle is rather a trying one to air tubes and lungs—we reached the fine old front door of the edifice; and, lifting a heavy, pump-like handle, we knocked thereat. Something akin to a world of thought prevailed whilst we were waiting for a response—it was a sort of dream giving you the incidents of years in the space of moments: there were the old castellated towers in front, the knightly statue overhead—the dark-grey, massive walls, with their narrow windows for archers, the portcullis slit, the holes for missiles beyond, and the Titanic panelled doorway in front. This part—the pavement here—was a strange spot; for here how many adventurous, violent, and unfortunate beings had stood in the past—handcuffed—trembling, wondering, perhaps cursing—some never to re-appear except on the hangman's scaffold in the rear; many never to come out again except in chains for the hulks or distant transportation; and a certain portion destined through the peculiarity of their crimes to remain to the end of their days in gloomy cells within the great walls before us. Aye, and in regard to sinners out of the criminal category, what a motley, unscrupulous crew of mortals must have waited on these stones for ingress to the great building. Some of the tribe were no doubt honest—their only crime being misfortune; but how many were mere improvident dodgers—commercial sleight-of-hand men—cunning, crafty jokers whose high ambition was to polish-off their creditors, return home, and begin business again. Very soon after we had banged the knocker, a little door in the great one was opened, and we were confronted by an elderly, roseate-

featured man, buttoned-up in dark blue clothes ; and to him we handed a note of introduction to the governor. " Out, sir—and wrong time, too," rejoined the good-looking, buttoned up, elderly official ; we inquired about the right time, were told that it was two o'clock in the afternoon, and on receiving an intimation that all would be ready at that hour, we moved off, made an external survey, and thought somewhat more about the Castle. A very old, and venerable, and majestic pile, indeed, is this Castle,—rugged and commanding in appearance, uncertain in origin, but clearly bearing traces of Roman and Norman handiwork. Three of its old towers,—the Well, the Dungeon, and Hadrian's—are thought by some to have been constructed by the Romans ; others ascribe them to the Saxons ; whilst others again do not consider that any part of the present edifice is older than the Norman Conquest. It is probable that the castle stands upon the site of an older edifice—an edifice much less and greatly inferior in appearance, dating probably from the Roman era. The ground work of an old tower was met with many years ago, when the foundation of the great north boundary wall was being sunk, and there can be no doubt that the altitude of the Castle hill would induce the Romans during their settlement in this locality to construct a building of some kind for watching or defensive purposes hereabouts. We wandered round the Castle terrace, on leaving the gateway, and for a few moments enjoyed the wide-reaching scenery here presented to the eye. To the left, amid dark thick woods, there was Ashton Park ; beyond, the masts of Glasdon appeared ; still farther, and creeping out to the sea, there was Fleetwood ; whilst directly in front there was the river Lune curving quietly round the beautiful point of Sunderland ; and beyond this the picturesque bay of Morecambe. After many turnings and windings on the terrace—it is a wonderfully crooked affair—we descended a number of steps, crossed to the church-yard, and therein whiled away more time. The castle, viewed from this part, looks very massive and serious, — a huge heap of masonic monotony, about as attractive as two or three hundred houses all crushed together and heaped into one gigantic lump, with a square chimney-like tower and a bare colour pole surmounting it.

On nearing the Parish Church, which stands on the crown of a hill, immediately north of the castle, we noticed that the principal door was open; so without any ceremony we marched in, and were pleased with the interior: it is stately and spacious, contains some elaborate mural monuments, and is very effective in appearance; but we did not enter this edifice for the purpose of giving any particular description of it: the building just came in our way; we were curious to see what its interior was like and what was going on at such a time of the day. We soon got an impression of its formation, ornamentation, &c.; and we almost as quickly found out the business being transacted within its walls. In a pew up the centre there were two or three men and women huddled round a person in white, and when we heard that person saying "blessed is the man that hath his quiver full of them," we knew there was a child in the affair—and that somebody in the old town was that very afternoon going to have rum in their tea. We left the church quite satisfied with its stained windows, its monumental marbles, its pillars and arches, and with the little baby which had caused this large building to be opened on its small account; and then walked to the eastern entrance, where there is a broad, deep flight of steps. On the northern side of these steps, and just at their base, there is a curious little wiend, or passage, running in front of a few dim, old-fashioned houses. This is Gardyner's Chantry, founded in 1485, by one John Gardyner, of Bailrig, near Lancaster, for the support of four poor people. According to the foundation deed, this was termed "the perpetual chantry of John Gardyner, in the church of the blessed St. Mary, of Lancaster." Each of the occupants of this chantry had 7d. per week allowed for life, and 2d. per week "for a woman to attend on them." But we have no time to spare for this worthy and venerable chantry; so we descend into the town, then proceed to the western boundary of it, and at six minutes past two o'clock exactly, we are at the door of the Castle; we give a knock at the small pump handle before named; and what followed we will now describe.

CHAPTER II.

In a moment, after we had operated upon the gateway door of Lancaster Castle, by means of the cold, serious, heavy knocker which has clung for so long a time to that old and gnarled piece of joinery and ironmongery, the little hinged door so closely associated with it flew back, and the healthy-featured, buttoned-up gentleman before alluded to re-appeared. He came to the door like an official "institution"—like a rubicund fixture, with a certain knowledge of everybody who had ever gone into or come out of this olden edifice—nay, like an original sentinel who had come over with Julius Agricola in the year 70, and had lived and bloomed ever since, on beef-steaks and ale posset, in a little snug nest on the left hand side of the gateway. Of course he did not come over with Agricola, nor had he led such a gastronomically joyous life as that hinted at during the intervening centuries; but he had nevertheless an ancient appearance—seemed to belong to the Castle partly as much as the stones, and the doors, and the bolts, and the bars which confronted us. "Good afternoon," said we, and when he uttered a response and quietly tipped his head backwards, meaning thereby "come on," we passed through the little doorway, gazed here and there—at the shadowy gateway above, at the sad, ponderous stones on each side, at the rails, and the cold, lofty, irregular masonry beyond—and the predominant thought was, that this was the threshold of a serious and isolated world in miniature—a world "got up" on purpose for delinquents, and only intended for the casual glances of the free and the civilised. The elderly, buttoned-up man who let us in, quickly handed us over to somebody else; he made sundry movements, almost mesmeric in their mystery; and forthwith there emerged from a dim and cabalistic place on the opposite side of the gateway a younger but equally buttoned-up and official-looking personage, with a bunch of keys in one hand and a candle in the other, and in him we

recognised a man familiar to us nearly 20 years ago. "Nay, by the geese of Socrates," said we, "is that you?" and with a sparkle in his dark eye he responded "Its nobody else." Old acquaintance—not in the Castle, but in the outer world, when youth and beauty were upon our cheeks—excuse modesty—had made us very familiar with this official, and this accounted for our freedom and our outburst as to the geese. We shook hands, talked for a moment about olden days, and then he began to show us the "sights." We wheeled round to the right, and after unlocking a small round-headed, worm-eaten door, in one of the oldest parts of the Castle, he struck a light, and we followed him into a dim hole, down a number of black, damp steps, until we reached an underground dungeon. If you can by a stretch of imagination conceive of one place more dismal than another, between here and purgatory, or between purgatory and perdition, for the confinement and chastisement of guilty souls, you would only be able to conjure up and picture a place like this. Here the worst of criminals must have been confined. And what a spot for even the damned, saying nothing of mortal men who had not yet "shuffled off this mortal coil," to be put into! Many feet below the ground—dark as Erebus—damp, cold, and dismal; not a window, not a ray of light, nor a breath of fresh air—everything black as midnight, cold and clammy as the fingers of Death, with a low pointed roof, with strong iron rings on the floor to which poor wretches were fastened, and with a doorway indicating double iron sheets and double locks. The notion of making sinners safe must have been a very strong one when this dungeon was planned. In a den so low down and dark as this, and with doors so tremendously strong, nobody—not even Milo of old—could by any possibility have got out of it; but the officials evidently suspected every particular delinquent to be a Samson; and hence they not only put them in a place which could not be got out of, but by way of making assurance doubly sure chained them to the floor as well! We have referred to the pointed roof of this Hadean hole, and this gives us an opportunity of alluding to the style of its construction. The angle of the roof appears to have been originally supported by a mass of sticks or wicker-work. Long lengths of sticks

seem to have been first laid over the intended roof—then plaster has been covered over them, and in time the lime, or composition used, so hardened as to form a solid roof, and sustain itself without the sticks; for the latter have all been taken away—picked away—but the marks of them are now very palpable. The roof is grooved and marked by them in every conceivable way, and the thick overhanging mass of plaster is almost as hard as stone. After a sigh and a shudder for the poor, misguided, maltreated wretches occupying this Cimmerian den, we ascended the steps, had our attention directed to a gloomy hole on the right hand side, at the top—a hole leading down to a well and giving to this particular part of the Castle the name of “Well Tower”—we reached daylight and felt glad—glad that the era of barbaric punishment had ended, that a den once needed as a necessary adjunct in the days of darkness and cruelty could now only be shown as a relic and a grim curiosity—glad, in fact, that civilisation had so far advanced as to make, what at one time was a sad necessity into a foul and terrible dungeon of violence and cruelty. In a moment after leaving this ancient abode of chastisement we were confronted by a number of small windows on the opposite side of the Castle yard, and when our cicerone remarked—pointing to a narrow little window here—“Do you see that?—that is a Roman altar”—we beheld a plain strong stone pedestal, broken on one side, and could see by its conformation that one or more of the gods of Pagan days had been worshipped around its base. This Roman altar was found amongst the rubbish removed from the southern side of the Castle when the present female penitentiary was constructed. Then our guide unlocked a small ancient door in this quarter, and we ascended some steps, which had been worn hollow and cased over with wood, and they led us to the rooms in the upper portion of the Gateway Tower. The first apartment we entered was gloomy, lofty, strong, and empty. This formerly constituted the head quarters of the Constable of the Castle, and if he ever enjoyed himself in such a place as this then he must have possessed a most benign and sunshiny disposition, for as an abode it is fairly calculated, with its heavy walls and sad, grim ceiling, to chill the spirits of any ordinary mortal: but it was perhaps more

cheerful in the past than we suspect, for we noticed that at the far end there is a blocked-up aperture, and if that were open a good south view of the old town could be obtained. In this room Henry IV. once held his court, and we hope he enjoyed himself, although we have our doubts upon the question. Adjoining this room there is another apartment of precisely the same size and shape, and it was in olden times used as the household chapel. There was nothing in it when we paid our visit except a few old rusty spikes and muskets at one end—stored up, and considered essential in past times for defensive purposes—in case there was an *emeute* in the Castle, or an attack by some rough mob outside. At the far end of this room there appears upon the wall a tall, dark place, as if it had been burnt or subjected to heat of some kind; and we should never have found out what it referred to if our official pilot had not come to the rescue. “D’ye see that?” said he, looking up at the black mark. We gave him an affirmative reply, and then he stated that in old times a cross for religious purposes was fixed there. We at once saw this. How easy it is to see things when they are found out for you! Yes, there had evidently been a large cross fixed here; there was a long dark mark on the wall, made by the shaft of the cross, and at the top there were collateral marks caused by its arms. Very soon after we had inspected this portion of the ancient chapel, we experienced yet another proof of the quick way in which you sometimes get from the sublime to the ridiculous. The marks made by the cross were, as stated, shown to us, and then, what think you was pointed out?—a dim place, on one of the side walls, which had formerly borne a painted representation of “The Jolly Smuggler.” “And it was a capital, good picture, too,” said our guide, who suspected that it must have been made in the old smuggling times by somebody either imprisoned for cheating Government, or enamoured of that kind of surreptitious enjoyment. There were no traces of the picture beyond the dark patch referred to and a few scratches made during the effacement of it. The greater portion of the walls here have been scraped bare and excellently pointed. This work was begun several years ago by a local stonemason, who was sent to the Castle for some offence, and it was completed by other men subsequently imprisoned

here. We left the old chapel by a narrow and immensely strong corridor—strong enough to have confined prisoners if they had been powerful as steam engines and subtle as Diabolus, and not only found everything clean and well pointed here, but noticed a curious inscription on the left side, which was brought to light when the walls were being cleaned a few years ago. The inscription—made by some prisoner and scratched out of solid stone by a nail or a knife of some kind—was cleanly executed, and ran as follows:—"John Bailey, committed Aprill ye 15th, 1741, by Brindle, for kissing ye"—then followed the figure of a fiddle, about the ordinary violin size, and capitally carved out of the stone. We now pass to the end of the corridor, retrace our way down the wood-covered steps, and proceed to the opposite side of the gateway—enter a little sombre room there, and (a candle having in the meantime been lighted) we pass into a still more sombre place adjoining—a place separated by a heavy, dark, wooden screen, and about the most extraordinary and terrible place you could well think of. If one had not known that this was part of Lancaster Castle, there would have been a strong temptation to suspect that it was a remnant of the Spanish Inquisition, or of some mediæval hole noted only for its dismalness and its torture. Suspended from the roof and walls, at all altitudes, there were chains and ropes of all sizes and shapes. Some of the chains were immensely strong—strong and ponderous enough for the anchor cable of a ship; others were of a slenderer description; all of them looked grim and terrible; and they had been used for chaining prisoners in the cells of the gaol. Then there were the ropes which told even a more terrible tale: they had been used for swinging condemned wretches into eternity—they were hanging ropes; and everyone of them had strangled somebody! At the time of their use hanging was a common affair; at nearly every assize men or women had sentence of death passed upon them for offences which—in many instances, at any rate—would now only be treated with penal servitude; the county, in those halcyon days of Jack Ketch, provided the ropes; and this accounts for the number of deadly halters congregated in the room described. We did not care to stay long in this place; a brief inspection was sufficient;

and after withdrawing we went into one corner of the adjoining room, and there saw the "keys of the Castle"—two curious keys, one made for Edward III. and the other for Queen Elizabeth, when they respectively exercised regal authority over the building. Neither key is used now; they are deposited in a small box bearing an inscription as to their history; and are more for ornamental or formal than real or practical purposes. The key of the Castle in actual use—that belonging to the gateway door—is the most ponderous article of its kind we ever saw: it is about as thick as a six-barrelled revolver—indeed, does not look very unlike one—and is heavy enough to be used as a weapon, saying nothing of locking and unlocking doors. We next emerged from the Castle—out of the gateway door—and walked up the terrace with our guide, with the view of inspecting other portions of this ancient and curious edifice, but our account of them must be reserved for another chapter.



CHAPTER III.

As we proceeded up the terrace of Lancaster Castle, we were reminded of bygone days. Just over the wall, to the left, there is an oblong, railed-in piece of ground, containing a portion of the old castle ditch. It is now covered in; we recollect the time when it was open—at any rate when there was a long basin of water here, black and slimy in appearance, and fit only for the generation of tadpoles or the revelling of snigs. Some persons have conjectured that this ditch was made by order of one of the Roman emperors, about the year 124; whilst others have expressed an opinion that it was formed at an earlier period, when the Romans originally garrisoned themselves in this locality. On the opposite side there formerly stood the Dungeon Tower—demolished in 1818, when the present penitentiary for females was planned—and supposed to have been the oldest portion of the castle. It was a quaint, queer old tower, and the makers of it evidently intended that whatever else might be unsafe about it, the floor should be strong enough—should never fall through, if giving way were ever likely, should never be torn up by the incarcerated if that little game were ever attempted, and should last for ever and ever if that were possible; for it was formed of big stones, 24 inches long, fixed on end, and then fastened together with iron cramps! A little higher up the terrace we pass a piece of masonry called Hadrian's Tower; the outside is all new now, and internally there remains nothing of an antique character except a dilapidated circular staircase. Although this tower is named after one of the Roman emperors, it is not known at what period—whether Roman or Saxon—it was first erected. But we must proceed and get into the castle—a task very easy of accomplishment; for our guide has keys with him, and after making a short turn to the right we enter a small door in a corner, and in a moment afterwards find that we are in what rustic folk living about Lancaster term the "Nizey-Prizey (Nisi Prius) Court. It is a spacious and elaborate place—imposing in

its proportions, beautiful in its details, and altogether one of the finest and handsomest courts in the kingdom. Its foundations stand upon a portion of the old castle ditch ; but this we forget in viewing the noble swell of the roof—a kind of classic shell in stone, graceful, majestic, and resting upon stately clustered columns. Over the seats set apart for the judge, &c., there is a marvellously-intricate, finely-gothicised canopy, all in stone, and one of the best achievements in masonry which the country can boast of. This hall will hold about 2,000 people, but only on rare occasions is it filled. During exciting political periods, when nominations for the Northern Division of the county are held here, it musters a pretty full company ; but on other occasions—at assize times—when it is patronised, the company occupying it is generally very meagre. The “draw” is on the “other side,” where robberies, and murders, and all sorts of outlandish affairs, tickling the proletarian palate, are investigated. This court is mainly doomed—at assize times—to the sad prosaic process of trying right of way, ejectment, trespass, and cognate cases, with a few dismally intricate watercourse disputes thrown into the bargain ; and the bulk of those attending it are lineal descendants of Job—people who could stand to be rained upon, bare-headed, under an ancient and venerable spout, for a whole day. We admire their patience—always did—but we could not like to live with them ; for they belong to the fossiliferous period, to the long-horned and pachydermatous tribe, and would in all probability enter a protest if one breathed more than once every ten minutes, or sneezed more than twice in a decade. A blessing hangs somewhere in the intricacies of this mysterious universe over the patient souls who sit all day long in this Court, listening to nothing ; and we hope they will, as time progresses, get to a point of bliss, for they deserve it. But we must get along. Just before leaving this court our guide directs our attention to a picture—one of two hanging on each side of the seat of justice. It is the picture you see to the left—a picture worked up just as if the whole thing were fixed on a cunningly-contrived pivot. Which-ever way we looked at that picture the form it depicted looked right at us ; and we are not quite certain whether, if we had gone into the governor’s best parlour, or the last house in Gardyner’s Chantry, below the Church

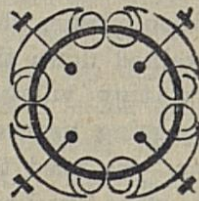
steps, it would not have confronted us with equal precision, if space had been made for ocular purposes. Just look at that said picture the next time the patience of Job takes you to the place. After leaving this fine and most imposing court, we struck out to the left, passed a door, went up some steps, revealing to us the grand jury room—a quaint apartment containing some excellent chairs, made on purpose for the Queen when she visited the castle some years ago; and then we descended in a moment—*Facilis descensus Averni*—to the place wherein all the condemned criminals, since the beginning of this century and up to the passing of the private execution act, were taken prior to being hanged! A sad and terrible place, certainly. Trembling, and praying, and agonising of body and soul, must this place have witnessed! Lancaster Castle is very closely associated with the dreadful process of hanging; but it must not be imagined that all the executions enacted at this old town took place at its castle. Up to the year 1800, condemned criminals upon whom no mercy could be shown were put into carts containing their coffins, which they had to sit upon—a rude and cruel ordeal—and conveyed to a place a little above the present Grammar School; and at that time there was no “drawing of the bolt”; for the cord was first put round the criminal’s neck, and the cart was drawn away, on the lynch-law and horse-back style of Americans, and the victim had to swing out his existence as quickly as possible. After the period named—that is to say when 1800 dawned—the condemned at Lancaster were executed behind the castle, came into, as their last halting place, the apartment we have referred to, then passed out at one corner, and were then sent into eternity. From that time up to the present, about 192 persons have been executed behind the Castle; the greatest number hanged being in 1800, when *eleven* persons were executed at one time! Whilst in this room of horrors we put various questions to our guide, and by and bye met with the chair upon which Jane Scott was wheeled out upon the scaffold. Jane Scott was hanged on the 22nd of March, 1828, for the murder of her mother at Preston, and she was so weak and emaciated that a chair had to be specially made on which she could be moved upon the scaffold for execution. Her body was afterwards “given to the surgeons for dissection,” and some years ago her skeleton

was "on exhibition" at a house in Walker-street, Preston. The chair we saw—it was pointed out to us and moved about by our guide—was the identical article on which the wretched young woman Scott was wheeled out upon Jack Ketch's scaffold in 1828. It was a rude, plain affair—strong and high, like a child's table chair intended for somebody upgrown—and it ran upon castors. If our inquisitiveness had been of the cruel and implacable type, we might after this sight have asked to see the gallows and its grim appendages; but we wheeled round with our guide, and directly afterwards found we were in the Crown Court, considered by some to be a pretty fine Court, but, from our point of view, a somewhat heavy, shadowy looking place. Probably it is a good Court—an excellent Court—it is pretty high and spacious; but, in our estimation, it had a heavy and depressing appearance—looked stiff, gloomy, sad. And, perhaps, it had a right to look so. The chief curiosity in it was a branding iron behind the dock—a long piece of iron, with a wooden handle at one end and the letter M at the other. Contiguous to this piece of iron were two iron loops, and they were, at one time—at a time when brutal fierceness was the supreme panacea—used for holding the hands of delinquents, whilst the long piece of iron was heated red hot and its impress—(the letter M—meaning malefactor)—burned into the hands of the unfortunate sinners. We need hardly say that this iron brand is not used now; it is only preserved as a relic of the stupidity and barbarism which permeated the jurisdiction of by-gone times. No doubt it was considered a right thing then—enlightenment is progressive, improvement comes by gradations; but however correct burning and branding were in the past, the conclusion we have somehow arrived at now is, that such like things were a "burning shame." From this court we proceeded to the rooms in the rear, into the barristers' apartments—quarters set apart for robing, the consultation of books, &c.—and then got to a small, square, spot, in which formerly the Crown Court business was conducted. The present Court is about eight times as large, and there must have been much crushing, and pushing, and elbowing in this small room when the work of the assizes was managed in it. Farther on we peep through an aperture into a circular, galleried place, filled in all round with "pigeon holes," and con-

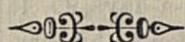
taining at the bottom some plain, ancient furniture. This was formerly the record-room of the Palatine, and the holes noticed used to contain for ever of documents—parchments of all sizes, papers of all kinds—ancient and modern; some readable, others surcharged with Latin, Norman French, and all sorts of eccentric scrawls. These records were removed to London in 1874, and some idea may be obtained of their number when it is stated that they weighed about ten tons! The process of rising was next indulged in. We went up the staircase of Hadrian's tower—an awfully dark, antiquated, spiral passage; but on reaching the top our toil was fully compensated by the beautiful scenery which presented itself on the western and southern sides of Lancaster. Passing along some rickety planks and then over a parapet of stone, from which there was a full view of the female penitentiary and the large open yard of the Castle, we entered a doorway at the south-western corner of the great keep—a lofty square pile of masonry in the centre of the Castle, which adds much to its general massiveness, and which goes by the name of "the Lungess Tower." The base of this tower is of Saxon origin, whilst its surmounting masonry is in the Norman style. During the 15th century, prior to which time the tower had either fallen into decay, or been considerably battered, it underwent restoration; and the probability is that this was effected in 1585, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and when Richard Ashton, Esq., was the High Sheriff of the County. A stone fixed in the northern wall near the top contains these letters and figures: "E R 1585 R A"—the former initials referring to the Virgin Queen named, the figures to the period of the restoration, and the latter initials to the High Sheriff. This huge keep is 78 feet high, and at the south-western corner of it, rising ten feet higher, there is a square tower called John O'Gaunt's chair. From the summit of this keep there is one of the finest views in England; it spreads out so widely, sweeps round so splendidly, commands such a variety of scenes, that something more akin to dream-land than reality is associated with it. In every direction the view here obtained is fine. Westward there is the Lune flowing quietly down to the sea; then the heights of Overton and Heysham, with the watering-place of Morecambe beyond; with the

placid bay of Morecambe beyond that; and towering up skyward, filling the horizon in majestic processional order, the hills of the Lake district; eastward there are lofty and long-reaching moors, dim and isolated, with lonely roads passing through their defiles, and with nothing indicative of life on their surface; southward there are the stately buildings of Ripley's Hospital and the Royal Albert Asylum; and further on the hills of Scorton and Bleasdale, with the plateau of the Fylde stretching to the right, the outlines of Fleetwood terminating the boundary, whilst the inner scenery is made up of water and sand and picturesque prominences; northwards we glance on one side at the fine bridges above Lancaster, and at the beautiful vale of the Lune, the former being amongst the handsomest structures of their kind in the country, and the latter unsurpassed in loveliness; then we face the north, directly, and observe Silverdale with its woody peaks and pleasant dells, Warton with its white, round-headed crag, and Farleton with its long sloping knot; the blue, curiously shaped form of Ingleborough stands up in lonely power on one side, and away as far as the eye can reach there are great mountains and fine valleys, making the whole scene rare in beauty and splendid in effect. Nestling, so to speak, just below where we are standing, there is the quaint old town of Lancaster, with its spires and many-shaped buildings. We look right down upon the place—upon its roofs and streets—and little Lancaster, which rests serenely in a hollow, looks like the very embodiment of quietude and antiquity. Once upon a time, when a little lad, and when we periodically walked down the beautiful valley of the Lune, from a tiny village near unto Ingleborough, with a steady-going venerable old man whom we called "grandfather," we used to think there was hardly any place on the globe like Lancaster—that it was about the biggest and finest town in the world; but that dream has passed, and now, as we stand upon the massive Norman keep of Lancaster's ancient castle, and glance down upon the town, whilst we like the place and cherish our memories of it, we are tempted to consider it quite a diminutive and time-stricken spot. The last sight worth recording which we saw from the tower was the queerest: whilst standing against the battlement, on the eastern side, we looked over, down to the ground, and there noticed, what

think you?—half-a-dozen men, in prison for hard labour, walking round a small yard, saying never a word to each other, and engaged in the business of lifting up, then carrying a few yards, and then putting down heavy balls of iron. This may be deemed very proper hard labour in the estimation of the authorities; but, like crank work in prisons, it is wonderfully useless. If these men had to carry iron balls for ever they would never earn a farthing. Prison labour ought to be made as remunerative as possible; something should be got out of every able-bodied delinquent sent to prison, and if possible more ought to be got out of the hard labour class than any other section, for they are the greatest sinners. We left the tower by the same route which took us up to it, and on regaining the flags of the terrace chatted for a few moments with our guide, then mollified him with a coin of the realm, then shook hands, and departed.



LUNESDALE.



For at least half a dozen reasons, which we are uncivilised enough to keep altogether from the reader, we decided one morning to visit a cave! And we went all alone, too, —didn't go with a noisy, loud-laughing, sandwich-devouring body of excursionists—didn't even take a mutual friend; it was a single-handed business; so you may be sure that what a deceased ex-Lord Chancellor would have termed the article which we call "our mind" was pretty stiffly made up on the job. We scampered away from Preston in a fast moving train; reached Lancaster in about half an hour; and soon afterwards found ourself gliding up Lunesdale—that was the way to the cave. And the route up Lunesdale was one of the most historically-interesting and serenely-picturesque that you could well imagine. We have travelled in many fine quarters and seen many exquisite places, but for a lot of old-fashioned spots, running in processional order, and for graceful, varied beauty, all concentrated in one fertile vale, give us, thus far, at any rate, Lunesdale. Bridges—before we get into Lunesdale—first attract our attention. Lancaster seems to have always had an itching for bridges. In the time of the Danes it is suspected there was a bridge across the Lune at Lancaster; and in the reign of King John the abbot of Furness, who had fishing rights at Lancaster, had to contribute so much towards the maintenance of a bridge here. Whilst rounding the Vicarage—on the Midland line—we pass under a bridge; then we go over a bridge which runs over Bridge-lane, near to the site of an old bridge which used to cross the Lune; then, whilst travelling over more bridges, we confront one carrying a line of rails to Morecambe; then on looking to the left, we spy a huge bridge over which the Lancaster and Carlisle railway runs; directly afterwards, on leaving Green Area station, we go under a bridge erected in 1788 by the county

of Lancaster, at a cost of £14,000; and in the distance we can discern two or three bridges—one spanning the Lune, carrying the canal on its back—the Aqueduct—which cost in its construction the sum of £48,000. So that, on the whole, Lancaster has been, and still is, fairly blessed with bridges. Between the two last-named bridges we have a fair view, on the western side, of Skerton—a rough place, now-a-days, so far as its inhabitants go, and an old place, so far as history is concerned. Skerton was in existence when the Domesday survey was made, and at that time it was possessed by a Saxon Earl, named Tosti. It is now possessed by those who will pay the most for its antiquated, attenuated masonry. We pass its salmon locks and its mill—with the small building just behind in which Fletcher Housman used to preach, in a finely eccentric style, to a diminutive congregation—and then wheel round, close to the lake-like waters of the Lune, under the Aqueduct. Bulk stands out isolately and heavily eastward; and in passing it we may just remark that however Bulk-y it may be now, it did not always rejoice in such a ponderous name. In old times it was termed Newton, and 60 acres of its land were, in the days of Edward II., granted to the prior of Lancaster. We are now in Lunesdale, and the river giving the vale that name is broad and placid hereabouts. It flows along smoothly, darkly; but we have no sooner looked fairly round than we catch a glimpse, on the opposite side of the river, of Halton Hall—founded by the Dacies, successors of the Gernets, who lived under the *regime* of that stout Norman baron Roger de Pictou. Halton Hall is now a calm umbrageous residence, elaborated by wings and transom windows, with two or three pleasure boats moored in front. Directly after passing the hall we get a view of Halton Church—a modest-looking building, with a grey tower—rebuilt three times, and supposed to be of Saxon origin. In its yard there is a Saxon cross, but the Puritans, in their strait-laced zeal, turned it into a sun dial. A remarkable lawyer must have lived, or been interred some time, at Halton, for in the yard there is a stone bearing this peculiarly encomiastic reference to him—

He was—but words are wanting to say what;
Think what a man should be; though an attorney, he was that.
We like *that*; and presume that *that* attorney never
went vehemently in for his six-and-eightpence. The vil.

lage of Halton stands beyond, at a considerably higher altitude, and teetotalism does not flourish much in it; for during this very Lunesdale "out," we encountered a gentleman in the alcoholic line of business, who intimated that one of his best customers was an innkeeper at Halton. The *ergo* of that is, that Halton sups. And Halton may be excused a little if it does; for it is not a new-fangled, modernly-executed, village, but an ancient and venerable place. The Romans during their northern incursions either passed through or were located in the neighbourhood of Halton—remnants of the Roman epoch have been found hereabouts; so that in judging of Haltonians we must be mindful of their ancientness and modulate modern philosophy—alcoholically speaking—with moss-grown-antiquity. As the train waits for a few moments here, opposite a long, narrow, wooden bridge, the quick wash and monotonous flow of the waters from a mill weir above, slightly disposed us to a reverie—we become patient, pliant, thoughtful; but no sooner have matters assumed this philosophic mood, than we are reminded of romantic and bucolic scenery: the train progresses—we have thin-branched trees and hazel-nut bushes on one side, and the river with its shallow, broad-flagged bed on the other, reminding one of Spenser's lines—

After came the stony, shallow Lune,
That to old Lancaster its name doth lend.

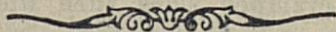
For a moderate distance the route was charming and serious here. There were quiet nooks and corners and shady declivities to the right, where birds might mingle their melodious voices and warble their music all day long; and on the opposite side there was a narrow long wall, with water and rocks below, down which the break of an axle or the snap of a wheel tire might any instant precipitate us. How the delightful and the serious keep company! But the train went on, and in a couple of minutes at the most we were in a delightful part of Lunesdale—at the "Crook of Lune"—which for immediate beauty and remote scenery stands amongst the rarest places in the country. The river winds round this place as if it were enamoured of it, and determined not to leave it. As we glide across we pass a woody, insular-looking eminence—the site of the old hermitage which William de Lancaster granted to Ashalcross, Cove, and the fishery in the Lune, and now bearing on its wood-fringed summit a

villa-like residence, designated, in memory of the past, "The Hermitage," and occupied by John Sharp, Esq., solicitor, of Lancaster. It is a beautiful residence, delightful enough in its surroundings and associations to make its present owner even more excellent than the lawyer whose praises are sung so quaintly in Halton Churchyard. Quernmore, formerly constituting an ancient forest, lies to the south-east; and the lands of its "park" slope down, in varied beauty, close to the Crook of Lune. In old times Quernmore Park was the seat of a Catholic family named Clifford; then it went to the Gibsons, and in 1832 to the Garnetts, its present owners. From the lands of this park there is a splendid view of Lunesdale: "Every feature," as Mason, the friend of Gray, the poet, remarks, "which constitutes a perfect landscape of the extensive sort is here, not only boldly marked, but also in its best position." And this is so: you have hill and vale, mountain and defile, wood and river, all beautifully blended. On a summer evening (we have seen this vale at such a time), when the sun is sinking to his rest, the picture is pre-eminently charming: the flanking foliage is touched with light and shade; the river, as it meanders down the centre, glistens here and there with a silvery light; tiny villages, venerable halls, and rich farmsteads are brought out in delightful relief; the windows of Hornby Castle, which seems to stand like a sentinel at the head of the vale, burn with a rich crimson glow; whilst the hills on each side and beyond, with Ingleborough towering up in the distance, are wrapped in a dim purple beauty. After passing the Crook of Lune we soon halt at Caton, a flat-looking, quiet village, which once belonged to the Gernets (ancient foresters of Lancaster), and which as early as 1266 had two mills, one for corn and the other for fulling cloths. Caton is not long left before we encounter more curiosities. Perching amid slanting fields, half way up the northern side of the valley, there are a few grey, quaint-looking houses, with a tiny old-fashioned church beyond. This is Aughton (pronounced Afton.) There was a church here prior to the Commonwealth; but when a survey was subsequently made—in the middle of the 17th century—it appeared to have been "left out in the cold" very considerably; for it had neither a parson nor funds to keep

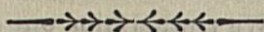
one. Aughton's chief peculiarity is a gigantic periodical pudding : the people of the district go in for an enormous one—a pudding huge enough to fill a cart—every 21 years ; and from one generation to another its praises are sung and its gastronomic glories remembered. On the opposite side of the valley, on a level with its base, and perhaps two or three hundred yards from the railway on which we are travelling, there stands Claughton (called by the natives " Clafton"). It is a very microscopical place, and a very old one, too. Mention is made of it in the Domesday Survey. Claughton is the least parish in Lancashire, and the rectory it possesses is the smallest in England. As we pass it, a prominent building—Claughton Hall—attracts the eye. It is a somewhat bulky, rather stately and venerable edifice ; but evidently much out of repair. Ivy covers the end of it ; many of the front windows are broken ; and the spirit of dilapidation seems to have taken up its quarters here. It is said that at one time this hall was a nunnery, but there is no clear evidence on the point. The probability is, that it was either built or inhabited by the Crofts—an old family, with manorial rights in the district dating as far back as the 15th century ; for their arms appear upon a shield over one of the doors. The architectural proportions of the front part of the hall are bold and quaint—formed of tall, strong side towers, with oblong transomed windows in the centre. The church of Claughton is a little, venerable building, and one of its bells is reported to be the oldest in the kingdom ; the date it bears being 1296. In a few minutes we get to Hornby, and leave the current of the Lune, which runs up northward, for that of the Wenning, which takes an easterly direction. Hornby is a pleasantly situated, serene, little spot. Dr. Lingard, the famous Roman Catholic historian, lived here 40 years. The Castle of Hornby stands just in the rear of the town, on a commanding eminence, with a beautiful back ground of wood. Probably no castle has had a more checkered career, so far as ownership goes, than this. It stands upon ground once occupied by the Romans ; it is conjectured that the first structure erected here was a species of Roman mansion ; as early as 1226, if not further back, there was a castle here ; and Hornby castle has since been successively owned by the Mundens,

the de Burghs, the Longuevillers, the de Nevilles, the Harringtons, and the Monteagles: in 1789 it passed into the hands of John Marsden, of Wennington; after his death there was a struggle as to its ownership, &c.—a great trial took place which ended, in 1838, in favour of Admiral Tatham, who, however, did not long live to enjoy the triumph, for in two years afterwards he died, when the castle property went to a relative, Pudsey Dawson, Esq. In 1859 that gentleman died, and his heir, owing to pecuniary encumbrances upon the estate, sold it to a Bradford manufacturer—John Foster, Esq.—who is its present owner. There is a good view of the castle as you enter Hornby by rail, and a very effective one just after you leave the station. The village of Wray, wherein Geoffrey de Nevile had a grant of free warren, in 1280, next crops into sight, on the eastern side; and then Tatham, on the opposite side, with its plain, light-coloured church, which was in existence—not in its present form—at the time of the Conquest. Next comes Wennington, with its shadowy trees, and its Tudor-shaped Hall (the seat of W. A. F. Saunders, Esq.) peeping up among them in the rear. Matters got rather lively, partly through music and partly through ignorance, whilst halting at Wennington station; for out there jumped from one of the carriages of the train, a young fellow who began playing a tune on a tin coffee pot, whilst into our compartment there rushed two or three well dressed men who wanted to know if they were “right for Bentham.” Seeing that there was only one railway to Bentham, that Bentham was only about three miles and a half off, and that there were about half a dozen officials on the platform ready to enlighten anybody's darkness, they need not have disturbed the compartment with such a tremendous problem as that. By the side of stony-bedded Wenning, past trees and brush-wood, cottages and farm-houses, we rush on until High Bentham (another ancient place mentioned in the book of Domesday) is reached; and then having seen so much outside, we make an internal survey. The train glides out; the passengers in our compartment have been greatly reduced; we are alone with whom, think you?—a blue-eyed, golden-haired lady?—no; a swell with a weakness for an eye glass?—no; a comfort-

able yeoman, like some to be found in this region?—not exactly; no, our “companion” is a sun-burned, heavy-booted, brawny, red-handed navvy, wearing a loose, soiled “slop” instead of a coat, and with a small cap on his head. Some people would have been afraid to sit alone with that gentlemen; but when we had eyed him fairly, we began joking him. We trotted him out into a short conversation. He said he had come from Barrow, and was going to some place between Settle and Skipton. We hinted that he was a native of the South of England, and when he replied, “Yes—Huntingdonshire,” we rejoined, “Why, Oliver Cromwell came from there.” He smiled, gave a sort of assent,—although we should think he knew no more about Oliver than about Cornelius Nepos; and when we further remarked that Oliver was a powerful fellow—soon got to be a “ganger,” and that he (the navvy) would be following suit, he smiled beautifully. At length we reached Clapham, and on leaving the train we turned round to the navvy, bid him good day, and, as a wind-up, pathetically said, “Do not forget Oliver, now.” We then made our way to Clapham Cave, and what we saw there, will be told in the ensuing chapter.



CLAPHAM CAVE.



CHAPTER I.

On leaving Clapham Station we proceeded to an hotel, right opposite, rejoicing in the eccentrically-aerial name of the "Flying Horse Shoe"—there was a horse shoe, with a short wing on each side of it, emblazoned on a sign over the door; and having remained here for a few moments, we moved off in the direction of Clapham, along a road which, at its commencement, might have been made by some enterprising spirit competing for a prize offered to the man who would make the most crooked thing in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Clapham is a mile and a quarter from the railway station; but for some time it remains hidden from the view. Ingleborough stands up lonely, and bleak, and strong in front; and to the right there are high banks and ridges of limestone; whilst up the centre there runs a winding ravine giving a relief to each flanking altitude, and a prominence to all the broad hills and ancient rocks which wall in the horizon. In about ten minutes we arrive at an eminence in the road from which we obtain a view of Clapham—a tiny village, nestling up in a corner, with trees behind it and hills beyond. No sooner do we get into Clapham than we inquire for the Cave guide, obtain a knowledge of his whereabouts, walk over an old-fashioned bridge, with iron-cramped sides, then wheel to the left past ducks swimming in a shallow stream, and by the base of an old market-cross, which has seen more life than can be found here now-a-days; and, finally, we meet with the guide, who conducts us to the Cave. The road we traverse is not that which the bulk of visitors take: it is a private road, and very beautiful, for it takes us past shrubs and trees, along the edge of a pretty ravine, at the base of which there is a long, narrow, artificial lake; and as we rise higher and higher the scenery becomes more picturesque and romantic—the ravine is deeper, its waters

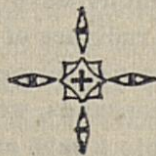
more dreamy, the hills wilder, the rock bolder, the solitude grander. Then, after reaching the brow of this pleasant pathway, we descend, pass through a gate, walk along a small field-like patch of ground, level with the base of the ravine, which is here comparatively wide, and then, on looking to the left, we discover that we are close to the Cave. A few yards of additional walking brings us to its entrance—a broad, massive, slightly overhanging breast of bare limestone—eight or nine layers of stone thick, surmounted by trees, and about sixty feet high—with a low, dark archway at the bottom. That cimmerian-faced archway is the mouth of the Cave. We walk forwards, pass along a plank crossing a small, stony current of water, and then come to an iron-railed gate, put up here to prevent people of the “unauthorised” sort from getting into the Cave. We are now at the entrance, and just as you meet with the names or initials of every Snooks, or Snodgrass, or Robinson, at every particular or wonderful place under the sun, so do you encounter them here. Scratched into the face of the rock there are the names, and initials of fiftieth or sixtieth rate nobodies, labouring under a strong pressure of personal vanity that their names were worth preserving, or under a still stronger delusion that at some time somebody would think something about them. The old guide—a venerable, white-whiskered, wonderfully intelligent fellow—unlocks the iron gates, lights some candles which he has stuck into the end of a sort of perforated shuttlecock board, then lights another candle at the end of a narrower piece of wood intended for our edification, then takes our top coat, which it is deemed advisable to leave behind, and hangs it upon a nail driven into the crevice of an adjoining rock, and then after he has closed and locked the gate, we take up our respective “candlesticks” and proceed. What will it be like?—where are we going?—when shall we return?—shall we ever return?—these are the sweet, awkward, odd little questions which come up, as if by side, and front, and back winds to mystify us; but the old man before us has courage enough to proceed, and surely one many years his junior ought not to be afraid; so we walk inwards—past a painted board, requesting visitors not to injure the “stalactites,” and signed by a name familiar to us a quarter of a century ago—“Farrer”—the name of a

gentleman residing at Clapham, the owner of the cave, and of adjoining lands, who has taken much pains in his time to investigate the peculiarities of this cave, and open up its curiosities and wonders to visitors. We move on with our flickering lights into the midnight darkness of the cave. The roof is pretty lofty ; the sides are rugged ; and the sound of water—running, rushing, dripping, and flowing along a course close to our feet—alone pervades the place. Stalactites in phalanxes, in broken rank and file, in clustered heaps, in weeping isolation, hang from the roof, whilst at the sides there are great fantastic heaps of stalagmite—lumps in unison with sealed-up holes overhead, lumps battered, and thrown about, and twisted, and smashed as if the spirits of "Chaos and Old Night" had at some time taken a run through the place during a holiday revel, making beauty and mischief all along it, alternately, and then in a moment disappeared, without cards, leaving that small atom called man the task of solving their eccentric vagaries and unravelling their wonders. The road for a time is comfortably high ; then as we walk on this side and on that, crossing the stream of water at our feet occasionally, we get to a part where it becomes still higher. We are now leaving the Old Cave—that is to say, a part of this subterranean passage "known for ages ;" and soon afterwards we reach the new part—a continuation of this underground curiosity opened up, through the breakage of great stalagmitic formations, between thirty and forty years ago. The first strange thing we meet with along this new route is what is termed "the fleece"—a huge mass of stalagmite hanging to the roof, broad and wavy at the top, with flowing, icicle-shaped pendants below, from which water is trickling, and remarkably like a fleece of wool. On each side there are great masses of stalagmite—heaped up, in tons, and as variously-shaped as the imagination could devise ; and at intervals we meet with many-formed stalactites. Soon after this we encounter a round-headed mass of material, rising many feet from the floor, which the guide, as he hits it with his stick, terms "the beehive." And for all the world it is like a beehive. It is circular, has a round head, and has parallel, horizontal lines and marks exactly analagous to the conventional abode of "the busy bee." Passing this,

we are soon in the presence of a curiosity, which the guide turns into music with his walking stick! Probably there is no place in the universe so expatriated from music—according to that singular thing which metaphysicians term the “association of ideas”—as a cave. You would expect music anywhere—on a factory chimney, in a valley, by the side of a lake, on a canal boat, in a shilling-a-week attics, down a moderately-deep coal pit—before anticipating it in a long, black cave; and yet the spirit of music, covered by hills, hemmed in by rocks, and enwrapped by darkness deeper than night exists here. It is said that there is no cloud without its silver lining, and so there appears to be no darkness, even though it be the very essence of blackness itself—the Hadean blackness of a cave—without some beauty or some pleasure, awaiting only the spirit of patience and the touch of enterprise. The guide, who was a few yards before us, stopped all at once, ran his stick over four or five fluted, curtain-shaped stalactites at the side, and forthwith there came a music akin to that of church bells. The gradations of tone were very surprising. “Pillar Hall” is the next point of interest we reach. Here the roof is loftier than in any other part of the cave. It has a fine, fantastic, gothic look; stalactites of all lengths and shapes hang down; stalagmites rise in varied altitudes at its sides; and the general conformation and details of the place give it a weird, ecclesiastical appearance. In this quarter there is a singular stalagmitic formation termed the “Jockey’s Cap.” Its name is not ill chosen, for the shape of this stalagmite exactly resembles that of a jockey’s cap of immense size—it is about 10 feet in circumference, and two feet in height—all formed by drops of water giving off carbonate of lime! But its size is nothing in comparison with some of the stalagmitic deposits here. The sides are walled up, in some parts almost to the roof, with gigantic masses of stalagmite, which have all been formed in the same way, and which must be exceedingly old. A correct estimate cannot be given as to the age of these formations, for their construction depends upon the volume of falling water which sometimes runs quickly, then slowly, and which may be occasionally turned from its course by the fissures above becoming blocked with stones, or the creation of new fissures at a higher level which would tend to

drain off in some other direction the descending current. All the surrounding and surmounting rocks are of the limestone order—an order in which caves are most prevalent. Some people—the bulk, in fact—wonder how caves are made; indeed, they have an idea that they have always been in existence; but this is a delusion. Caves are formed through the action of water. Rain descends upon the hills above, sinks into the ground through the fissures which always abound in limestone, eventually finds a basin, then the pressure from above causes the pool below to swell over into the nearest horizontal passage, and the upshot of this action is a cave. As to stalactites and stalagmites, they are, as previously intimated, formed by the carbonate of lime; the carbonic acid in the descending water dissolves the carbonate in the stone, and a portion of the residue, during the lingering dropping process above, attaches itself to the roof and makes stalactite, whilst the remainder falls upon the ground and becomes stalagmite. Thousands—nay, tens of thousands of years—may have elapsed during the formation of these strange pendants, and columns, and blocks in Clapham Cave. In illustration of the slow manner in which they are formed we may for a moment refer to another cave. In the South of England there is a singular place called Kent's Cavern, and in one part of it there is a stalagmite, which has only increased in height the 20th of an inch during 250 years; and as its general altitude is five feet, the inference to be drawn is that it has taken 300,000 years to form it! But the process of formation varies. In Clapham Cave the deposits appear to have been somewhat rapidly made—a circumstance which reduces its antiquity. Still the reduction is only a comparative affair; the cave, though it may not be as old as some, is a very ancient one, and much prettier than the bulk of such places. But though pleasing as far as we have traversed it, rather more serious things are now met with. After going through Pillar Hall, the footpath rises rapidly to the right; there is then a sound of falling water—a rush of it along the floor of the cave, and then we here it tumble and splash somewhere. We have to be more mindful here of the road on which we are walking than of anything else. "Be careful," says the guide; we walk cautiously; then meet with an iron rail

at the side, which we grasp; and after proceeding a few yards—the road descends quickly here—we find that we are in a hollow, within a foot or two of a deep, gloomy, suspicious hole, called the “Abyss.” It is into this hole that the rushing water falls, and away it travels under ground, and comes out at the mouth of another cave 30 or 40 yards from the entrance of that we are now in. Just beyond the abyss there is, on the left side, a dark opening in the rocks—like the mouth of a cave; but it is unexplored, and will long remain so, for it is to a very considerable extent blocked with huge stones and stalagmite. A passing glance is all that we can afford for this place, and we move onward with our flickering candles into darker regions, if possible, and more mysterious passages. We are now about 300 feet from the entrance, and about 90 below the surface of the surmounting hills; but we have a further distance of between 400 and 500 feet to traverse,—along a route strange and interesting—and we shall give particulars of its scenes and incidents in our next chapter.



CHAPTER II.

We struck up a conversation, for the guide was very communicative, on passing the unexplored hole, on the left side of the cave, about the temperature of the place. Outside and inexperienced people might easily suspect that such a passage as this amid rocks and beneath a big hill was very "close"—a sort of sweating, panting, semi-suffocating region, where a periodical halt was necessary for fanning and breathing purposes. But that is all a delusion. Atmospherically speaking, we were hardly ever in a pleasanter spot: the air was calm, even, and quite pure, and it preserved this character, in the main, throughout the whole of our route. The guide told us that the temperature was generally about the thermometrical figure of 49, and that it never varied, winter or summer, more than about two degrees. Life, in a cave like this—if it were not so dismally dark—would be comparatively refreshing. If such a place could only be turned inside out, it would be thronged in winter, and would have to be lengthened in summer; for here you are neither frozen nor burned—here you need neither ices nor overcoats. The light we had only came from candles; but in a quarter of the world so black as this even their weak rays were wonderfully comforting; and if we had sat down and reflected a while we might have been inclined to bless their inventor. In the radiance of the day, when the sun is riding high; in the night-throng of the city, when gas-lights are burning in thousands, we are apt to despise the candle; but only get into a cave and then you will pass a benediction upon even its pallid and decrepit flickerings. "Hail, candle-light," said Charles Lamb, who looked upon it as "our peculiar and household planet;" and it was just that particular sort of luminary before the era of gas. In some caves human beings used to live; perhaps not in this identical one at Clapham did anybody reside; but that mortals took up their abode in such places elsewhere is clear; and what a time they must have had of it—particularly at nights, for they had not even the despised

and antiquated candle! Neither the rush-light nor the long six was known then; and wanting their light, quoting the words of "Elia," "what savage, unsocial nights must our ancestors have spent, wintering in caves and un-illuminated fastnesses. They must have lain about and grumbled at one another in the dark. What repartee could have passed when you must have felt about for a smile, and handled a neighbour's cheek to be sure that he understood it." Men of the troglodyte order would have been glad of the long sixes and the shuttle-cock board candlesticks we possessed; and we, in our rambles, revered them. Having conversed somewhat about the temperature of the cave, the guide, who kept hitting his walking stick against places which were wet or awkward, for our benefit, moved on—past immense stalagmites and strangely hanging stalactites; and by and bye he bade us halt a little. We obeyed; he moved behind a broad-shaped stalactite, heavy with running water—water falling as if it had been divided or combed out into a multitude of jets; and as the light played upon each falling stream, and glistened upon its bursting spray, the scene became magical and beautiful. A little light worked the wonder. Without it, that streaming, falling water with its weeping, chilling sound, would have been a mere maze of din, and wetness, and dismalness; but when the light of the guide's "long sixes" was cast upon it, lo! a magician's wand seemed to have been waived, and a crystal picture—a "water-colour" drawing, one may fairly say—was the result. The guide then proceeded, pointing out, here and there, peculiarities in the roof, at the sides, and on the floor; and if he had gone on explaining for a year the probabilities are that he would not have exhausted the subject. In some places the stalactites of the roof were gradually approaching stalagmites on the floor; in others a union had been effected; in this place there was a sharp-pointed pendant all alone, with nothing to sympathise with it below; in that a column or spire rose from the side—solitary and independent, and looking as if it had grown out of the rocks, rather than been formed by years and ages of dripping from above. Occasionally we met with them in perpendicular connections between the sides or the centre of the cave and the roof, looking like threads of alabaster or twisted ropes of stone. And the

fact that there must have been some great changes and some tremendous "wear and tear" in the cave, several times struck us. Blocks of stone—of stalagmite—had, at long intervals, been broken or removed by the hand of man; but an infinitely more patient and greater force had tunnelled and hollowed out this cave. We are now in a part of it ranging, for a distance, perhaps from seven feet to ten feet high, and the great bulk of this space has been worked out by the action of water. At some time—probably thousands of years ago—it is quite evident that the floor of the cave was within a few inches of the roof. There are ledges on each side—high up—which show that in the far-away past the water had only just room to move along there; perhaps a wild-cat, if it had been of an enterprising disposition, could have run along the place, or a rabbit, if it had been frightened out of its senses, might have scuttled up it. In time, however, the floor along which the water coursed became deeper—a side ledge at a lower altitude marks its level; then, as years advanced, and as more room was made for the action of the water, the channel (through the stones and *débris* pushed forward and the friction thereby caused), became deeper still; until at last we find the passage of the cave as at present observed—a species of deep trench, many feet from the roof, worn out of strong, thick, solid rock! In a very few minutes we reach an ominous and most uncomfortable-looking part of the cave. Instead of the roof being lofty and spacious as heretofore, it now gets shallower, then it gets very low, and the floor seems to be formed entirely of sand. The guide stoops, pushes on, and we follow; he stoops still more, proceeds, and we keep in his track. The roof, a tremendous mass of stone with an unpleasant downward bend, is inclined to touch our back; but we "stoop to conquer." We are now in a part of the cave where the roof is about three feet from the floor, and we are thankful to Heaven that we are not fat. A man of the Falstaffian order would have had to fall upon his knees here, for the sake of either praying or creeping, or both; and, as it was, we, of the Cassius ilk, felt very serious and had to lean down, with one hand paddling amid sand, and with our back in close contiguity to the roof. "When is it going to mend?" said we anxiously, and, as we kept creeping onwards,

we were perplexed to know whether we should reach some lofty place quickly, or have to scramble on our "all fours" ere we got through this cavernous crucible. This was the only down-right uncomfortable place we had met with during our passage; the roof was not only low and somewhat threatening, but the place seemed to lack breathing room. And yet there was no real need to be alarmed. The old guide crept ahead in a very nonchalant easy style, and eventually when we saw him stretch a little, and then rise straight up, and were in a few moments able to imitate his example, we experienced immense relief. Yet this feeling soon faded away, and was supplanted by another giving us this impression: that now we were fairly blocked out from the world, fastened up for a period in a Titanic prison, with rocks everywhere—on each side, behind, above. At this particular part of the cave the rocks overhead would be about 150ft. in thickness. Rather a heavy covering, and just the very place for people afraid of the sky giving way. The roof now became lofty, and in turning to the right—the drift of the cave had been in that direction all along—it had quite a curious and yet very regular appearance. It stretched high up, was comparatively narrow, inclined on each side towards an angle, with a flat top, and it preserved this sort of elongated conical shape as far as we could get, which was not very far. When the point to the right had been turned, the guide touched with his stick another lot of fluted, fern-like stalactites, and out there came from them a bell-like series of sounds—just like the limited, primitive melody you get from the belfry of a small country church steeple. A few yards more walking brought us to a sort of broad circular stalactite, surmounted by one similar in shape, but of less dimensions, and, in this combined form, termed the "Lady's Cushion." It has a rich, creamy, velvety aspect, and though hard as stone—indeed, it is a species of stone—its plump, round look gives it rather the appearance of something soft and easy, than of a cold, damp, heavy cave deposit. "This is the far end," said the guide, after we had looked at the "Lady's Cushion;" but he only meant the far end in that direction. We turned round, passed on the left a great mass of rock, with a side opening leading

into a portion of the cave already traversed, moved round a corner to the right, and then came a very comfortable part of the cavern. The road was good, the general passage was broad, and the roof was eight or nine feet high—perhaps more in some parts—and though formed of solid rock it was for a considerable distance nearly as flat and even as the ceiling of a house. The general covering of the cave at this spot is thicker, in other words, higher, than in any other portion: we are now nearly 180 feet from the surface of the hill—in the heart of a mountain—with millions of tons of rock and earth above us. Stalagmites of many shapes line the passage we are going through, and the peculiarities met with—the many-formed oddities observed—remind one more of the aesthetic eccentricities of a pantomimic transformation than of the cold, darkly-formed deposits of a cave. How strange, how fantastic, how much out of the ordinary run of things they are; and yet each form here noticed is not a mere accidental affair; every little curious spire and strange column, every great block and ponderous heap has been fashioned in accordance with laws consummate in accuracy, and governed by One who makes nothing in vain, and who can even weave into shape and elaborate with beauty the deeply-hidden, darkly-mysterious passages of a mountain cave! There was yet another “peal of bells”—if we may be permitted to use such a phrase—in the part now reached, and when touched by the guide they sounded more sweetly, were richer in cadence and more regular in tone, than those previously listened to. A double passage was the next curiosity. The road on which we were travelling split itself into two parallel passages; we kept to the one on the right; and found that, in a few yards, it was joined by the other again, leaving, as before, a single path for us, pretty broad and high, but neither as even nor as lofty as that we left before the “split” appeared. Our journey now soon came to an end. The guide mounted a block of rock in one corner—a dark, low-roofed corner to the right—and told us to stand still and put our candle on the ground, a little rearwards. And we did so. At the side, about three feet high, and running onwards to the block which the guide had ascended, there was a long rock, hollow in the middle, and containing

clear water. In the dark low place where the guide was crouched there was a fine cluster of stalactites, and he held his candles behind them. The result was a most beautiful reflection in the basin of water named. The hanging stalactites appeared in the water like a rich and magnificent chandelier of opal or alabaster—a cluster of crystal pinnacles beautiful in design and imposing in effect. This was as far as we could get. The cave did not terminate here; formerly it could be traversed perhaps 200 yards further; but there was a fall or a shifting of rock in the cave, a few years ago, through a flood, which blocked up the passage, and the obstacle has not been removed. If we could have reached the far end, we should perhaps not have been much edified. All the chief sights of the cave were, the guide told us, in the parts we had traversed. The remaining passage is narrow and low; but at the end of it there is a place called the Giant's Hall, which is lofty in one part, and then juts up narrowly for 60 or 70 feet. There are two small holes on one side of the floor of this hall, and on one occasion Mr. James Farrer and his gardener, suspecting that there was a lower cave still, for they could hear the sound of water, made a descent. "They let themselves down to a level where they were stopped by a deep pool—the receiver of the fall. Fixing a candle to his cap, and with a rope round his body, Mr. James Farrer swam across the murky lake, but found it closed in by what appeared to be an impassable wall of limestone—the heart of Ingleborough." Our return journey was quick and comparatively easy, for by this time we had got accustomed to the cave, and proceeded along its dim winding path with a certain air of composure and familiarity. "It would be awkward if our lights went out," said we to the guide; but whilst intimating that this might be so in the case of strangers, it would not, he remarked, trouble him very seriously, for he knew every foot of the place, and said he could find his way here in the dark. In answer to another question the guide told us there were no fish in the waters of this cave—that, in fact, he had never met with anything alive in it except rats. "And how do they live?" inquired we. The quantity and quality of their food somewhat puzzled us; but the guide solved the question easily; tallow—burned-down bits of candles, thrown away in the cave, by parties going through it—

formed the pabulum of the rats, were their main source of attraction, and the guide viewed their expeditions here very coolly and philosophically. "They are like everything else"—said he—"after a living." The cave is 2,106 feet long from its mouth to the Giant's Hall. It bends to the right all along, and its general passage describes what may be termed an irregular semi-circle. On reaching the entrance the open air was genial, and the sunlight as it bathed the opposite hill was beautiful to the sight. With the guide we marched back to Clapham, well pleased with his company and with all the curiosities he had shown us; we remained with him in the village for half an hour, induced him to have some refreshments with us at a fine-looking inn, talked about all kinds of things with him—the subjects ranging from geology to prairie hens—and then we hurried homeward.



AMONGST A THOUSAND MAD PEOPLE.

—o— CHAPTER I.

Rather a large number of crazy folk—a thousand—to be amongst; and yet we have felt more uncomfortable at times in the presence of just one wild mortal than we recently did amid ten hundred positively certified lunatics. The one was, perhaps, a blatant, fiery fellow, encountered in some room, or street, or at some street corner, or shop door, who, whilst the passion was upon him, was wilder than a March hare, and as incapable of reasoning as a bull surrounded by red rags; the thousand we met with were under careful and systematic restraint—protected, guarded, and, in the bulk of instances, just about as safe as children, and as affable as foot-men. May be, they would have been something very different if they had not been under the restraint hinted at; no doubt they would have been awfully tumultuous and chaotic if left to themselves; but we refer to them as we found them, and as good order was the rule amongst the multitude encountered, we must emphasise that fact and not something which might have been prevalent, or predominant, if the conditions had been different. Well, then, and where did we meet with this singular, this mentally-benighted and curiously caged-up thousand? A visit to Lancaster Asylum brought us in contact with them. Some time before, we had seen a portion of that place—just seen into a sort of wing connected with it, at night-time; a desire to describe the place induced us to visit it during day-light; and, having done so, we will, like that particular gentleman alluded to by Bret Harte, “rise to explain.” Lancaster Asylum is the first place of its kind constructed in Lancashire. Originally the County authorities thought of having an asylum at Bootle, near Liverpool, and ground was there purchased for such a building; afterwards it was thought that if a place of this description were erected at Cadley,

or on Fulwood Moor, near Preston, it would, for county purposes, be more central and convenient; but—cheapness is always a potent bait—the corporation of Lancaster ultimately stepped in, offered to *give* a site on Lancaster Moor, and, it being stated that “facilities would be given for the inspection of the asylum at the half yearly visits of the magistrates during the spring and autumn assizes,” that offer was accepted. At the commencement of operations it was intended that the asylum should afford accommodation for only 40 patients; indeed it was originally, built for that number. The work of construction was begun in 1811; the place was opened on the 28th of July, 1816; it has since undergone much alteration and development; instead of meeting the requirements of 40, it now provides for the wants of 1,000 patients; and altogether it is a very large and imposing place. Lancaster Asylum occupies a hollow in a hill east of the old county town; and it is within half an hour’s moderately brisk walk of the railway station. The greater portion of the road we patronised—a road branching at right angles from Back-lane—is almost as straight as an arrow. It leads you past that quaint, moth-eaten quadrangle called the “Old Maids’ Hospital,” past rather a dim, elongated market; past a silent, quietly-genteel, semi-aristocratic place called Dalton’s-square; past a Catholic church with a beautiful spire; and then on and up, past the Grammar School, the Workhouse, and sundry dwellings built as if for the purpose of showing how well houses can stand at an angle of 45, without tumbling over, if properly engineered. The probabilities are that somebody will, by and by, be constructing a house hereabouts altogether on its side, or wrong way up, just for the sake of enjoying the novelty of such an eccentric situation. As we ascend the scenery becomes fine—finer and more commanding at each step; and on reaching the summit of the Moor, behind which stands the Asylum, the view is quite panoramic and charming—wide-spread, varied, beautiful. Very few scenes are equal to this: mountain and valley, rugged hill and broad plateau, the sweeping sea and the fertile plain, the winding river and the rocky prominence, the bleak fell and the fertile homestead, are all brought into instantaneous view. An entire book descriptive of the excellence of this sight—of the rare beauty, the delightful variety of the scenery here presented, with all its remote and immediate associations—

might be written. The road, when the summit has been reached, wheels round to the right. There is the Cemetery, with its undulating ground and its white headstones and column-like monuments, on the other side; and in front there is a bleak brown piece of ground reminding us of old times—of the days when there were races at Lancaster, and when once a year, all along this road, there were tract distributors, three card men, and multifarious hucksters, each anxious to do a trade amongst the multitude streaming up to the "course." Not a vestige of the race ground can now, so far as we could observe, be seen. The old grand stand has disappeared; the rising curve of the old "course" has given way to well-defined fields; and a serious and pastoral spirit seems to have completely enwrapt the situation. Having walked along the road winding round to the right for a short distance, we encounter a broadly-sweeping gateway. This is the entrance to the asylum grounds. We pass through the gateway, ring at a lodge-like building, on the left, and on receiving a statement from a smiling female servant therewith connected, that we must proceed to the front of the buildings ahead, we move on. The neatness of the road, the varied and beautiful character of the adjoining grounds—studded with shrubs and trees—immediately attract our attention; a church on an eminence hard by next claims our notice; and then as we proceed and descend, for the road dips down quietly to the main buildings, we are struck with the extent of the "establishment," and with the stillness which prevails. After leaving the lodge-like building, and until we had twice rung at the bell of the principal entrance, we observed nothing indicative of any life or action beyond the opaque smoke of a large chimney in the rear of the asylum. That rose and stirred; everything else was still. Not a soul did we meet; not a bush nor a tree moved; not a bird sang; not a voice spoke; and so far as we could notice, if the thousand patients, with their doctors, attendants, cooks, &c., had been mesmerised by some enchanter into a sudden sleep, or turned by some embalmer into absolute mummies, we could not have experienced a more palpable or singular stillness. But there is never an effect without a cause. The balm of Gilead for everything, from a queen amid gold to an alligator amid sand, is—something to eat; that

is the great consoler and quietener; and it was this said "something to eat" which created the stillness we observed. If there had been a thousand tigers here, or a thousand lions, or a hundred thousand leopards instead of ten hundred mad people, they would all have been equally quiet if the time had been one set apart for eating. The fact is, it was dinner time when we got to the asylum, and that accounted for the pacific and silent character of the outside. We passed, as before-mentioned, through a portion of the Asylum grounds—fifty acres in extent altogether—in our approach to the "front," which the servant at the lodge-like building directed us to, and on reaching the general building we were struck with its proportions and its substantial appearance. The front, like the other portions, is of stone; the chief entrance, in the centre, is ornamented with Doric columns; and there are sweeping wings which give additional importance and effectiveness to the general facade. In the rear and on each side of the part we are now at there are other buildings—some joining up, others detached; and altogether there seems to be as much masonry in this hollow which the Asylum occupies as would make a moderately-sized village. Indeed, there are more people here—patients, officials, keepers, &c.—than can be found in many a village. We have given the number of patients at a thousand, and that is as near the mark as possible. The sexes are represented in about equal proportions—half male and half female; all of them are of the poor or pauper order; and their ages are about as varied as their features, which make up as motley and complicated a piece of mosaic work as could well be conceived. All sorts of causes have contributed to bring these unfortunate people here—love has had its share in sending some here, drink has, religion in mistaken forms has, poverty, disease, and all sorts of curious evils have. It has been estimated, but we do not know how far this calculation applies to those in Lancaster Asylum, that in 1,000 male patients insanity can be traced to the following causes:—Drunkenness, 110; consequences of disease, 100; epilepsy, 78; ambition, 73; excessive labour, 73; born insane, 71; misfortunes, 69; old age, 69; chagrin, 54; love, 47; accidents, 39; religious enthusiasm, 29; unnatural practices, 27; political events, 26; poisonous

effluvia, 17; ill-usage, 12; crimes, remorse, and despair, 9; malformation of the skull, 4; other and unknown causes, 88; pretended insanity, 5. We should, however, fancy that the great majority of those in Lancaster Asylum have landed there through a less diversified number of causes: drink, poverty, and disease, with a smattering of love and a little of religion—the love and religion being of the stupid or phrenzied type—have, we should say, been the leading operative causes. On entering the building, which seemed remarkably airy and clean, we were shown into a side room, apparently used by one or more of the medical staff, for it contained a library principally devoted to medical literature. In a few minutes a sharp, polite, slender young gentleman—one of the doctors—made his appearance, and under his guidance we proceeded to inspect the Asylum. We went into and peeped into an immense number of rooms—rooms on this side and on that, rooms above and below, indeed, there seemed to be rooms everywhere, and patients, and keepers, and servants everywhere. The inside of a gigantic beehive could not have been busier or more complicated, or more singular—to a stranger; and yet, amid all the mystification, and flitting about, and crowding in particular rooms, and clang of voices, and clatter of plates, and knives, and forks, going on, there was evidently the spirit of good order present. Everything was being worked in accordance with a sound, practical system, and though the machine, if one may so term it, was to us bewildering, its operations were steady and correct. We landed at the place a few minutes after 12 o'clock; and the patients, when we entered the rooms, were busy eating—eating meat, boiled or roasted, along with potatoes “done in the jackets”—and the bulk were evidently enjoying themselves. What a difference between the old system of treating the insane and that now adopted. The greatest care as to the well-being, the food, personal cleanliness, and general comfort—physical, mental, and moral—is now taken of this unfortunate class of persons. In old times they used to be treated more like wild animals than human beings—were thrashed, caged up, ducked in water, and subjected to very harsh and merciless measures; and in some parts of the country—certainly at “Bedlam,” if nowhere else—they used to be put

on exhibition "as a show," the price to see them being 1d. or 2d. All that kind of paganism has now been changed; and everything that science, humanity, and enlightened sense can take advantage of is brought into use for their service. An account of the rooms we inspected, the men and women we met with, and the sights we saw, in the Asylum at Lancaster, follows.



CHAPTER II.

We now commence an inspection of the various rooms constituting the interior of Lancaster Asylum. Eating is going on in every apartment, and that is a sign not of madness but of genuine and practical wisdom. The eating rooms we entered—perhaps half a score altogether—somewhat surprised us. The idea we had was, that we should find the inmates—considering this was the dinner hour—in some great and capacious dining-room; but this was a mistake: groups of 15 or 20 were drafted off into separate apartments, and this we were told was the best way of preserving order and securing comfort. As we entered or peeped into each room, the patients looked up, eyed us very inquisitively, and in the bulk of instances were not only very quiet, but exceedingly civil. Some of them would nod, others would smile, one or two would say “Good day,” an odd one would exclaim “How are you, sir?” The majority could attend to the feeding part of the business very well; but there were odd ones who seemed as if they were eating like strange machines out of order—they were sloppy and slovenly; and others had to be reminded of their duty and assisted in the work. The great bulk of those we first met with were of the epileptic order—men liable to sudden fits and falling. Some of them had scars upon their faces, probably occasioned by unforeseen tumbling; others had more definite marks—perhaps caused by quarrelling, for they have, if the keepers are not sufficiently near, occasional “bouts” of fighting, and like men in the outer world, when a bellicose feeling overcomes them, they try to hit as hard as they can, and to leave a notification thereof in the shape of a marked nose or a sombre eye. Whilst proceeding along one corridor, we noticed an uncouth and dismal fellow eating alone in a little room, and when we asked for an explanation of his isolation we were informed that he was addicted to stealing—was too fond of getting hold of other people’s meat when he

had the chance; so by way of reducing his aggrandising opportunities and bringing him to a sense of propriety, he was put by himself, unable to get at anybody's meat except his own—a right plan for making him mind his own business. There were young, and middle-aged, and old men amongst the number we met with; the bulk seemed to be between 30 and 50; and the majority were dark complexioned. There were red-headed, and sandy-featured, and grey-haired fellows in the rank and file; but the dark predominated, and reminded us of the fact that whilst the greatest energy—physical and mental—exists amongst that class there is the greatest liability to wreckage in it: that if strong common sense, or deeply acquired wisdom, or sound judgment, or a great disposition to obedience be not allied with it, failures and mishaps in the ratio of its quality are likely to occur. We believe that if a correct chart could be made it would be found that the greatest and silliest of mortals have been dark complexioned. But we have neither the time nor the inclination to indulge in psychological, anthropological, or theoretical questions, so we return to the business of description. After leaving some of the dining rooms we entered a species of sitting room, walked to one end of it, and there saw a quiet, pleasantly-disposed fellow fastening up a torn concert programme. We suspected that it referred to something which was going to take place—that the man was anxious to fix up some interesting notice; but imagine our surprise when the doctor intimated to the poor fellow that he was engaged on a wild goose job, the programme being two years old! This room, like all the others set apart for similar purposes, had a fire-place at one end, railed over with iron bars to prevent the patients from interfering with or falling into the fire. On entering one of the rooms of this class, but not quite so closely fastened up in the fire department, the doctor observed a man sitting on a high fender, and apprehensive that he might fall over, asked him to move off. He did so, and then began to indulge in rhyme—talked about the fender, and said “render, tender, and surrender.” On entering one room a young fellow, who had cleaned up his dinner plate pretty well, asked the doctor accompanying us if he would

like a little to eat. The reply he got was that there was "not much left." Then an elderly man, whose eyes flashed somewhat, looked right at us and said,—“What business have you here?” We smiled; but this did not satisfy him, and he continued,—“Can’t you speak?—are you a foreigner?” We walked out and left him to solve the problem of our nationality. In an adjoining room there was a fat, little fellow, who badly wanted his clothes that he might go to Lytham. In another apartment an aged man directed the attention of the doctor to some beef on his plate, said it was hard, that he had no teeth, and that younger men in the place were getting tenderer meat. The doctor examined the piece of meat, and told him there was some decent picking on it; but the old fellow did not very clearly see this, and ejaculated,—“If I was at Chorley I could have a leg of mutton.” Then we proceeded into another corridor, and met a number of patients who had partaken of dinner, and were proceeding into a large room at one end, where they met, and sat, and talked for a time before being drafted off to work; for it must be understood that many of them do work—some out of doors, in the land, whilst others are engaged in tailoring, shoemaking, and various trades for the benefit of the asylum. As we entered the large room many of the men smiled—a few of them politely lifted their hands and nodded, or said, “Nice day, sir;” but there was one amongst the lot—a powerful-looking, weather-beaten, muscular fellow, strong enough in appearance to almost break down the walls, who came tearing along, blustering and swearing at something, and shouting loud enough to lift the roof. He had got an imaginary grievance on his mind, and that was the way in which he was ventilating it. In a few moments we got into another corridor, passed a sad, pulpy-faced man, who was standing at the entrance of a small room, clasping his hands and moaning, and then proceeded into a large, airy room, which, if the company had been a sane instead of a mad one, would have looked the very emblem of peace and comfort. There were pictures upon the walls, flowers in the windows, and it did seem strange that human brains should be so twisted and dislocated as not to appreciate them. But no doubt they had their influence, as must all the aesthetic arrangements we met with during our tour

of inspection. For we must not forget to state that whilst the bodies of the poor creatures in this great establishment are looked after, many things calculated to attract and influence their minds are brought into play. The walls of all the corridors are profusely hung with engravings and coloured pictures; the windows are studded with flowers or artistic designs; whilst cleanliness is almost carried to a point of scrupulosity. The large room we entered contained about 50 patients, who were "blowing" after dinner. Immediately after we entered it, a dark, bony-faced, rough young man came up to us, and said, in a somewhat confidential tone, that he had lost the world—that it had fallen out of his hands. The Doctor—trying to stir up his bump of common sense—replied, "Well, then, pick it up again." The young man smiled sardonically, and then leaning over to us intimated that he had let the world slip out of his fingers—that it had fallen from his grasp: we told him to get hold of it and lift it up—a sort of second appeal to his common sense; but he replied, in a half-pious, half-confiding way, that as he was not as powerful as God Almighty he could not manage the world in the same way, and then, in almost the very next breath—in the insane as in the sane world the ridiculous kicks the heels of the sublime—he whispered, "Give me a halfpenny—can you give me some bacco? We told him we would send him some, then moved back into the corridor, and whilst talking with another man this poor soul who had let the world slip out of his fingers bored us again for tobacco. Our passage down this corridor was a queer one. When we had got a few yards along it, a lively, smart little man, with a quick eye in his head, deliberately spoke out to us and said, "Do you get your living by secret plunder?" We pretended not to notice his question and smiled; but he fell foul upon us like a Tartar, grew indignant, said we were treating him and his question with levity; and when, by way of throwing oil on the troubled waters, we said that we did not exactly hear his interrogation, but would give him a plain reply to a plain question, he partially repeated his statement; and then he began to denounce both us and the doctor as robbers, plunderers, and murderers. And he shouted out—impeaching our characters ferociously—until the whole cor-

ridor rang. It was quite refreshing for two moderately virtuous, fairly moral men to hear this definition of their character. As we moved out of the corridor we met the pulpy-faced, sad man who was squeezing and half-ringing his hands at the door of a little apartment, and the doctor asked him how he was. The reply received was, "Oh, doctor, I'm miserable," and then the poor fellow began to tell us how he felt that he was "lost" on account of his sin. We told him that he was mistaken, that he would be all right, and then went on until we reached, after descending sundry steps and traversing an enclosed yard, a detached building termed the hospital. In this place there were about 60 patients. The first room we entered contained a number of beds, in which were several poor, quietly-demented men, unable through sores or organic defects to stir. Some of these men were quietly lying in their beds, turning their eyes as we passed them; others were raised a little; but all were still and submissive. Contiguous to these were about 50 men seated in chairs in a large room—several looking blanched and moped, a few appearing placid and stupid, and a smaller number, located near the fireplaces, seeming neither in a living nor a dead state. This was an unpleasant spot, and we were not long in it. The next place we entered was the recreation hall—a spacious, oblong, airy building, not so far from the Infirmary, and set apart for entertainments on behalf of the occupants of the Asylum. Here at intervals there are dancing parties, concerts, theatrical entertainments, &c.—a species of "medicine" calculated to admirably benefit the inmates, and a proof, if one were wanting, of the interest taken in the welfare of the unfortunates occupying the Asylum. A little to the south-west of this recreation hall, and detached from the other parts of the establishment, there is a large stone building which contains a number of lunatics, whilst on the opposite side, standing by itself upon an eminence, there is a spacious, good-looking edifice, which contained, when we inspected it, about 140 men of the harmless and imbecile order. On entering this building we found nearly the whole of the inmates in one large airy room—some sitting in a quiet dazed way, others standing in small groups, a few walking about, and several engaged in conversation. Good order prevailed amongst them, and here, as in the other rooms,

there were newspapers and periodicals for the amusement or enlightenment of the patients. This reminds us that, whilst pointing to some newspapers lying upon a table, in one of the rooms previously visited, we were told that the inmates liked reading them better than anything else. We saw a young man in the large imbecile room whom we had known years ago in the outer world : he was a writer then for the press, was one of the sharpest, merriest fellows you could imagine ; and it is possible that he may yet get out again, for though he has been in the Asylum ten years, we were told that a change for the better had manifested itself in his case, that he was now disposed to be less stupid or indifferent, more useful than formerly—a sign to that extent of improvement. Seven years after he had been in the Asylum, he recognised us during a visit we paid to this room ; and on the present occasion he did so, and told the keeper, who questioned him, our name. We sat down beside him for a few moments and chatted about old times ; but he did not seem to be very communicative, and only spoke when we prompted him by a question or a statement. At one end of this large room there is a spacious, clean, well-ventilated dormitory ; over the same room there is another large and excellent sleeping place ; whilst at one side, on the ground floor, there are baths, &c., for the benefit and convenience of the inmates. After leaving this building we proceeded to one corner of the general block, inspected the washing, laundry, and cooking departments—big, lofty places ; and then moved into a corridor leading to a large room set apart for the female patients. Along this corridor there was pacing backwards and forwards a thin, long-featured, elderly woman, who muttered, and talked, and indulged in very strong denunciation, intensified occasionally by curses. On entering the general room, where the women usually assemble for a short time after their meals, we found it nearly running over with females. They were squatting about in every direction, and the gossiping, and gabbling, and noise they created with their talk fairly drowned and bewildered the place. We never heard so much miscellaneous, lively chit-chat, babblement, and confused confabulation in our life. Very soon after we had got into the room a ruddy-face young woman, more like a demented country milk-maid than anything else, came

up to the doctor, and with a broad grin on her face said—"I can't stop talking." There were, we thought, more females than this in the world—not in a mad-house—with a "strong weakness" in that direction, and this young woman may take it for granted that in the matter of inability to give over talking she is not, by a long way, alone in the business. Almost as quick as lightning, after making this admission about her tongue, she turned to the rear of the doctor, put her hand to the back of his head, and asked him if he had any holes there. He gave her a little advice, and then we left the room, meeting in the corridor a young woman who wanted to go out, and receiving an intimation from another quarter that one of the females had behaved ungallantly in not celebrating his 25th birthday, which, she said, occurred the day before! In walking through one of the back kitchens we encountered a woman who asked for snuff—at asylums the males beg tobacco, and the females snuff. Then we proceeded through a long passage admirably "decorated" with hams and flitches of bacon, which swung down from its ceiling in groups. If any of those old East Lancashire hard-heads, whose chief toast was "more pigs and fewer parsons," had seen this passage they would have died with joy; for it seemed to be the very walhalla of practical baconian philosophy. In a minute after we had got through this passage, we were in the entrance room, where we signed our name in the visitors' book and withdrew, surprised alike at the greatness and excellence of the establishment—at the humanity prompting the construction of such a place, and at the good sense displayed in its maintenance and management.



TRAVELLING.—A CONTRAST.



The English are understood to be a very safe, but exceedingly slow, orthodox people; as compared with Yankees they are mere tortoises by the side of racehorses; but in the matter of interchanging ideas and moving their own individual corporations about, they have been the greatest and most wonderful revolutionists in the world—more go-ahead than any other class of beings on the globe. They first started the telegraph, and they first inaugurated the railway system; and whilst by the former they can scatter their words to the ends of the earth at the rate of about 20,000 miles an hour, by the latter they can move themselves, including their traditional hat boxes and umbrellas, at a speed equal to a mile a minute! That is not bad work for a heavy, sheet-iron lot of people, whose forefathers used to paint themselves blue, whose ancient loving mothers used to nurse in mud wig-wams without any glass in the windows, and whose first relatives never stirred half a mile from home except when they prowled off for something to eat, or marched out to fight somebody. Between that day and this, however, a long time has elapsed—a period sufficient to bring up any race with energy in it to a pretty brisk, sharp point; but whilst long intervals of time show up our progressive qualities well, short ones tell rather against us—at any rate, against those immediately our seniors, and that is a thing to be glad of, for it gets *us* very neatly and compactly out of the mess and lets *them* into it. As an illustration of this let us take the question of travelling into consideration, and let us bring the job very near home—say between Preston and Kendal—in order that we may all the more fully realise it. Now-a-days, if the journey were not slightly fractured by a junction, a person could travel from Preston to Kendal in an hour; but at the beginning of

this century, if a person wished to do the same thing in the most popular way—sail on the canal—fifteen hours would have been consumed in the journey! Our object in this article is to depict what was at one time looked upon as a great institution—canal travelling. In these days the bare sight of a canal brings up notions of slowness, dullness, and ineffable sleepiness. If people were seen in these times travelling on a canal for the sake of expediting their journeys they would be looked upon as mad and beyond the reach of physic; a canal boat is now eyed as the synonym of stagnation—as something which can never be beaten in the region of standing still, with the exception of a pond or an old-fashioned thorn hedge; but that was not always so. There was nothing more popular at the beginning of this century with everybody between Preston and Kendal than the canal; coaches ran then, but they were dear and inconvenient; and the canal was the grand favourite and facilitator of both passengers and goods. Not so very many people—only middle-aged and elderly folk—know much, if anything, about canal life; as time goes on less will be known of it; so that by way of rescuing from oblivion a system once popular, and of affording some instruction or amusement for our readers, we will briefly describe the “doings” on the chief canal in this part, when travelling thereon was the fashion, and when the great bulk of people thought they were doing a mighty fine thing in sailing from here to Lancaster and Kendal, or from there to here, in “packets.” If anything important were going to take place in Preston now, people living north would be told, by either handbills or advertisements, something about “special trains,” “low fares,” and other advantages associated with the railway system; but in 1802, when Preston Guild was at hand, the people then living in the region named, were informed by the Lancaster Canal Company that “for safety, economy, and comfort, no other mode of conveyance could be so eligible as the Packet Boats; for there,” we are told, and this is fine, “the timid might be at ease, and the most delicate mind without fear.” An Act of Parliament for making a canal between Preston and the north was obtained in 1792; in 1798 the Canal was opened between Preston and Tewit Field, near Burton in Westmorland; and some years afterwards it was ex-

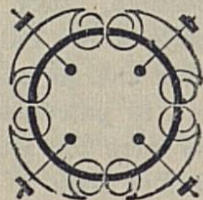
tended to Kendal. An old historian says that this Act was obtained "principally through the endeavours of the inhabitants of Lancaster and its neighbourhood," and that its object was to secure a connection between Kendal and London—to make "a navigable canal from Kendal, by way of Lancaster, Garstang, Preston, Chorley, Blackrod, and Haigh to West Houghton, with a view to unite with the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, which is intended to cross the country from east to west; whilst the Lancaster Canal goes in a direction nearly from north to south; and with the further view of continuing the Lancaster Canal, at some future period, to communicate with the late Duke of Bridgewater's Canal, and thereby procure a line of inland navigation from London to Kendal." In the construction of this Canal between Preston and Tewit Field, the greatest work was the aqueduct above Lancaster—a splendid bridge, crossing the Lune, which bears on one side this inscription, "To Public Prosperity," and on the other a number of lines in Latin, which, liberally translated, mean this—"Things that were wanting are brought together; things remote are connected; rivers themselves meet by the assistance of art to afford new objects of commerce." After this, the date of the erection of the bridge, 1797, the name of the engineer, I. Rennie, &c., are given. Between Preston and Tewit Field there are, on the line of the canal, 114 road and occupation bridges, and two road aqueducts. Six times the canal crosses the highway; in three spots the canal is crossed by the north railway, which for nearly half the distance keeps to the right of the water, and for the remainder to the left. For a considerable time the terminus of the canal, at Preston, was opposite Mr. Clayton's, Soho Foundry; subsequently an extension was made into the town, to the bottom of Wharf-street, and beyond that spot—now an antiquated, dingy, desolate hole, with a few old warehouses sleeping by the side of slimy, stagnant canal basins—it never got. But though the water stopped here, there was a certain mode of communication onwards; a small rambling tramway went from the Wharf-street terminus of the canal at Preston, to "the Summit," near Bamber Bridge, and by this means a connection was obtained with the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. For several years the northern terminus of the canal was, as intimated, at Tewit Field, where there used

to be a great business done in coke or cinder making. Thirty or forty cinder ovens were planted there; coal was carried thither in boats; cinders were then made, and, there being plenty of limestone in the district, the cinders were used for the purpose of making lime which was taken as "till" by the surrounding farmers. For about 20 years the canal went no further than Tewit-field; then it was extended to Kendal, and the work of construction was by no means of an easy character. Eight locks had to be made beyond Tewit-field, for the purpose of raising the canal to a higher level, and at Lancaster a tunnel, perhaps 200 yards long, had to be formed. And the way in which boats went through that tunnel was a trifle curious. They were not dragged through by the horses; indeed the horses were unyoked at the entrance and driven over the top! How, then, it may be asked, were the boats got through the tunnel? In this way—there were ropes fixed at intervals in the tunnel, and the "sailors" belonging to the boats used to seize hold of them, and in that way draw the boats through, when the horses were re-yoked and on they went again. The canal route from Preston to Lancaster is 30 miles; from Lancaster to Kendal 27; and if crookedness had been the only virtue worth looking after in the world, the constructors of this canal could not have loved zig-zaggery more than they seem to have done in some parts. The most round-about irregular part of the route is near Preston. A journey from Preston, say to Broughton, by canal, must have been a very joyous and refreshing thing; for parties indulging in such a trip as that would have to go past Lea and Salwick, then wind on towards Wharles, then turn in and pass through Woodplumpton, and finally—after traversing about ten or a dozen miles, be able to reach Broughton, which by the road is only four from Preston! The object in making this detour in the track of the canal was to catch or take in Kirkham; but then, at the nearest point of the circumbendibus, the canal was three miles from that town—very convenient, certainly, for the people! and a nice way of getting to Lancaster and more northern places! The argument which induced the projectors of this precious canal to go down towards Kirkham for the sake of picking up goods and passengers there, would, if it had been pushed to its logical conclusion, have caused

them to ramble all round the Fylde—all round everywhere, in fact—before getting to Lancaster, or even Garstang. Whilst going to Broughton by canal was a curious affair, travelling north of Garstang—say to Lancaster—involved, occasionally, considerable comicality. A friend of ours having read the preceding account of canal packet times, says:—"You describe with great minuteness the detour the canal makes round by way of Kirkham to reach Lancaster, and then returning to the original course, going on pretty straight to the Lancaster station. The return point is at or near Roe Buck, about seven miles from Preston. In former times all the Preston lawyers' offices used to migrate twice a year to Lancaster, when, for near a month, all the law business of the county was transacted during the assizes which were held at Lancaster for the whole of the county, there being no assizes at that time at Liverpool or Manchester. Well, the lawyers went to Lancaster, some one way, some another, but mostly they patronised the packet, in which they could walk about, or lie down, or sit, or play cards, or have a catch and glee concert, or play the fiddle, or at chess, or backgammon (they played many varieties of the latter game), or smoke, or read, or write, or eat, or drink, or do, in fact, just as they liked. Well, but it was rather a long sail, after all—was absent nine hours on board the packet—even with all the above solaces, so the lawyers had a plan of 'cutting it short' after their own way. The plan was this, unless an eminent official connected with the Corporation be wrong: They used to give the packet an hour's start from Preston; then set off to walk to the Roe Buck, a distance of seven miles; then sat down to dine (dinner previously ordered), and by the time they had finished dinner and drank the usual loyal toasts the packet, which had started from Preston an hour before them, came in sight, bearing up westward from towards Kirkham; the packet horn blew its musical warning, the legal brigade jumped on board, and off they went to Lancaster, at a pace rather slower than if wheeled there in a modern perambulator by a flock of nurse girls. Very likely they might have liked the latter mode of locomotion pretty well if it had been invented at that period." The idea of "direct routes" was not then so definite and vital as it has since become, and this accounts for such a

round-about ramble as that mentioned. Originally, a person travelling from Preston to Kendal started by packet at six o'clock in the morning, and got to the far end at nine o'clock at night; and when even the quickest boats were put on, the journey consumed about eight hours! The "stations" between Preston and Kendal were Salwick (for Kirkham), Roebuck, Garstang, Potter Brook, Galgate, Lancaster, Hest Bank, Bolton-le-Sands, Carnforth, Borwick, Tewit-field, Burton, Holme, Farleton, Crooklands, Incaster, and Sedgwick. The water for the canal, when its terminus was at Tewit-field, was gathered from the Keer, near Borwick; and when extended to Kendal, it was obtained from a large reservoir on the hills between Burton and Kendal. About the year 1830 that reservoir burst, sweeping everything before it, and releasing thousands of fish from its depths. When passengers or goods going farther north than Kendal, reached that town, they were conveyed onward by coaches or waggons; whilst at Preston, after the North Union Railway got opened, there was a contest for passengers. The coaches, which up to this time had been in full swing, from Preston southwards, now began to feel the shoe pinch, and by way of catching as many persons as possible, they were driven down to the terminus, opposite where Paley's mill stood, and there displayed whatever charms they possessed by way of tempting passengers to patronise them; but steam engines and iron rails were too much for coaches and horses, and the latter had soon to give way and cease running. The first packets which plied on the canal only travelled at the rate of about four miles an hour, and even with a speed so slow as that they were well patronised. It was more comfortable riding in them than in the coaches—there was less of crush, and, during inclement weather, more warmth and comfort in them; for all the passengers could, if they liked, be under cover, and they could procure all kinds of refreshments. When the old slow boats were in vogue—the original packets—the drivers of the horses used to run by their side: they had stages of four miles; and when the drivers had gone one of these lengths, another set took their places, and so on to the end of the journey. After a stage had been completed the drivers left behind remained till another boat, on

the return journey, came up, and away they went with the horses until they had retraced their steps to the place from which they originally started. About the year 1833 new packets—the materials for which came from Scotland, and were fitted up at Lancaster or Preston—were introduced. These packets were considered swift ones—"tip-toppers" for speed; and yet they were slow affairs; the speed they travelled at being only about eight miles an hour. Still that was a great "pull" over the four mile *regimé*, and it was considered fine.



CHAPTER II.

Sailing on the canal we have been describing—the canal between Preston and the North—was, no doubt, a very attenuated affair, and at times mightily monotonous; but it was not so dreary, nor so dismal as many may fancy. People fly now, are, so to speak, pitchforked and thrown from place to place; but in old times they *travelled*—saw the country they were passing through, knew where they were, and never underwent any risk of being instantly crushed into a confused mass, or cut up into odds and ends fit only for some dire and diabolic kaleidoscope. *That* luxury has been reserved for modern times. The whirling, and whisking about, and high pressure system of flying here, and there, and everywhere now so fashionable has, of course, its advantages; but its disadvantages are heavy. You may by that system leave home in a morning, merry as the lark and bright as the sunshine, and at night be brought home a mere tattered, smashed mass of something incapable of identification; but on that sinuous, roundabout, ancient route—that old-fashioned piece of “inked sweetness long drawn out”—the canal, with its packets and its horses—you invariably got to the journey's end safe, and if ever you did encounter a mishap, why it never assumed anything more serious than the loss of a hat, or a comical tumble overboard and a quick picking up again, with lots of refreshments at hand to bring you round to healthy vitality. It was almost worth while tumbling out of a canal boat on purpose, in old times, just on account of the attention which was paid to you, and the revivifying liquids afterwards placed at your service. Slow as canal travelling used to be, in comparison with the electric rapidity now in vogue, it had its pleasures. It was marvellously easy—no swinging, and jolting, and rattling over “sleepers,” no jerking, and oscillating, and shaking on iron rails, but a placid, steady, move onwards, “sleek as a whistle,” and as calm as moonlight. But if you wanted fun you could have it; there was generally a fiddler in some part of the boat, or a card-

ing party, or a smoking company, or a romancing, larking, tale-telling *coterie*, and if you liked none of these, why, you could go aloft, get on deck, and either have your hat blown away or, if that did not enliven you, and special exhilaration were needed, have your head well grazed against the next bridge on the route. The original packet boats were about as long as the ordinary canal craft now in use, but narrower; in the centre there was a compartment for the captain, for cooking purposes, and for the sale of refreshments; and not far off there was a stove for hand and foot warming. The "classes" consisted only of two—the two which modern railway reform seems to be necessitating—"first" and "third." There were no second class folk on the canal packets. The refined or first class passengers had a compartment in the fore part of the boat; the third occupied the rear; but both had the privilege, though on separate platforms, of going aloft, "on deck," and in summer time, when trees were full of foliage, and fields were teeming with crops, and birds were singing, it was pleasant sitting there—pleasant having a game at whist up there, or listening to tales, or quietly smoking the calumet of peace; and especially funny and lively, too, if a hat happened to blow off—an incident which did not cause the boat to be stopped—or if a pack of cards were sent up fluttering in the wind, and then down into the water, or if somebody, neglecting the signal, permitted his cranium to impinge too closely upon the arch of a bridge. There was no ticket giving, nor ticket collecting, on board these old packets, and people got on and off anywhere. We have always looked upon the Garstang and Knot End Railway as a curiosity in this respect. On that line, when under the original *regimé*, you certainly could get a ticket; but it was given out of a corner in one of the carriages; whilst as to getting on and off, if report be not mendacious, that could be indulged in almost anywhere. The old canal system, however, was even more curious than this wonderful line of railway. The captains took up and put down passengers anywhere. All those who started from the terminus—whether Preston, or Tewit Field, or Kendal, handed in their fares at once; but when the packets had started, the captains on taking up passengers just put down, on a slate,

their commencing point and destination, and then took their money. There was no check upon the captains, and it is said that the bulk of them got moderately independent during their servitude. Of course, the absence of a check and the securing of an independence were only a coincidence. It just happened so; there was no special cause or effect in the case; and we only mention the thing as one of the many curiosities in the realm of coincidence. It was a laughable thing to see the way in which, after the boats had started, people got on and off them. Sometimes a hat would be seen waving in a field; that meant somebody coming, and the boat would stop till a sweltering, puffing farmer got on board; in another place an umbrella would be seen pointed up in the distance, and that perhaps indicated the existence of some elderly matron pushing ahead, anxious to travel by the canal to see somebody, and so the boat was stopped for her; then, as the packet moved on, a shout would be heard, or a handkerchief would be seen fluttering in the wind from somebody sweating and hurrying down a rural lane, and for that special party the packet would either stop or slacken its speed. And so this dilly-dallying little game went on for miles and miles; and it went on in the same style for those who had to get off the packets. Every now and then not only would somebody want to get on, but somebody would desire to leave, the boats. If only one or two had such a desire—wanted to get off—the pace would be slackened, and the passengers would be “swung off;” if a larger number wished to leave, the process would, of course, be more cumbrous, and the boat would have to stop. When only one or two had to leave, and when the packets simply slackened and did not halt, it was not an infrequent event to see a splash in the water: the innocent coons had stepped off the wrong way, same as inexperienced persons get off modern omnibuses sometimes, and the result was a tumbling about and occasionally a dash into the canal; but nothing serious ever occurred on account of this sort of bungling; the unlucky ones were quickly picked up; and all that the accident caused was a smart souzing on the one hand, and a heap of laughter on the other. The way in which the packets used to accommodate people, reminds us of an incident more than

once observed even at a terminus ; for the packets were even obliging at such a place, as well as at intermediate points of the route. There was an old man called Joshua Bibby, who used to live near Tewit Field. He was a homely, honest soul, and on Sundays officiated as a Nonconformist minister. Nobody, that we know of, has rescued Joshua from the quiet oblivion he has sunk into ; so we will do that kindly act for him. Joshua was a sincere, conscientious, old man ; but he was not, though a Dissenter, of the punctillious and carping sort. Sometimes Joshua came to Preston, and in the warmth of his zeal or in the enthusiasm of his convivial moments, he forgot the packet which had to take him home ; but the packet did not forget him. More than once Joshua was seen hurrying down Lune-street or Wharf-street, with a long churchwarden pipe in his mouth, and just at the last minute, when the packet for the north was about starting, there would be a cry raised by somebody, "Old Joshua's coming;" and so the boat would wait until the venerable old man, quite out of breath and no longer able to smoke his long pipe, stepped on board ; then a voice would be raised that the craft was right, and away it would go. When the new packets began their career, no difference was made in the mode of taking up and putting down passengers ; but an end was put by them to the old plan of lounging on deck. The original packets had their cabins covered with wood, on which passengers could congregate for fun or fresh air ; but the new boats had canvas tops—a change which prevented this, and made travelling in them, in rough weather, a colder job than previously. It must have been especially comfortable and convenient for some people—persons living in the neighbourhood of the canal—this old style of travelling, on account of the plan of taking up and setting down passengers. Some had only just to go to the end of the house in which they lived, or to the bottom of the garden, hail the boat, and jump on ; others could almost step out of the boat into their houses. There were no cheap trips, as modernly understood, in those days. The fares were never altered ; perhaps an extra boat would occasionally be put on, when there was some stir in a particular district ; but that was all ; the fares remained unchanged. Although the coaches ran pretty close to the route of the canal, there was nothing

in the shape of competition between them and the boats. The former took up people anxious for quick despatch; the latter absorbed "the million"—the ordinary mass of travellers, who had more convenience and more of their own way here than the vehicular system could afford. There used to be not only many a comfortable party on board the boats, chatting, smoking, and imbibing the refreshments provided, but many a breezy spree, relieved occasionally with a fight. Two men were once quarrelling in a boat between Preston and Lancaster; it was summer time, and the cabin windows were down; and they got so blithesome and energetic in their hitting, that during a struggle which ensued, both fell through one of the windows right into the canal. Periodically, there would be a scuffle "aloft," and when very keen, odd ones would be seen tumbling head over heels into the water; but whenever duckings of this sort ensued, the boats were slackened in speed, and the unfortunates hauled in—compelled to remain in their wet clothes until their destination had been reached, and forming a pretty laughing stock for the remainder of the passengers. In travelling along, the boat horses had to accommodate themselves to a certain swell movement. But this the old boats, &c., were not subjected to; it was only in the case of the fast ones that the peculiarity was encountered. Directly after the quickest craft had started, the water became considerably cut up and ruffled; then a wave-like swell appeared; and it was the duty of the drivers to get this swell about mid-way under the boat, and then preserve that relative position. If the swell got too much to the front it was like the bulk of human "swells,"—became offensive and inconvenient; indeed, a position too advanced in this direction made the work of pulling the boats so hard and difficult that the speed of the horses had to be slackened, when the wave receded, and on reaching about the centre of the boat all was right, and away the packet went again. In passing under the bridges where the water is narrow, great care had to be taken in steering, for if the packet suddenly dragged against the side, the check was so severe that occasionally it would throw the horses with their riders into the water. In wintery weather, when ice covered the canal, the journeys of the packets were completely stopped; sometimes never a packet ran for five

or six weeks through this cause. An effort might now and then be made to break up the ice with sharp iron-fronted boats ; but the floating ice which remained in their track was an obstacle to the packets, and there was nothing for it but to remain till a natural thaw had done the work properly. As with the old coaches, so with the old canal packets, their approach at a "station" was made known by the blowing of a horn ; and sometimes when a packet and a coach got to a certain station simultaneously, and when the different horns, with different tones, were blown at the same time, there was a species of excitement got up, and a degree of rivalry assumed ; but it was not real opposition, for, as before stated, there was no competition of any consequence between the road and the canal. In 1840, when the Preston and Lancaster Railway was opened, a damper was put upon the packet traffic of the canal. In 1842 the canal was leased to the shareholders of that railway ; and in 1846, when the line was continued and opened to Kendal, an absolute quietus was put upon the carriage of passengers on the canal. Since then the canal has been a very slow, deadly-lively affair : there is no running of spirited horses now along its banks ; no blowing of horns announcing arrivals at stations ; "fast packets," with their blithesome companies, no longer skim its waters ; it has become the very emblem of dullness, devoted only to lumbering old boats carrying coal, stone, &c., and never bearing upon its opaque surface anything sailing at a more brilliant speed than about two miles an hour !



TO THE DERBY.

There are many "big things" in the world ; but "going to the Derby" is about the biggest. We have seen curiosities and wonders ranging from, say the tunnels of a coal pit to the spots on the sun ; but a ride to Epsom Downs, by road, on the Derby day, beats all. The light of every oddity, of every singularity pales and becomes ineffectual before this. Every man, it is said, should go to the Derby once, and, we would add, only once ; for if he never indulges in the journey he will miss a sight hammering perfectly flat and transparent the seven orthodox wonders of the world ; and if he participates in it more than once the sensation will lose its strength, and the original surprise its piquancy and singularity. We have been to the Derby just once—on the 26th of May, 1875 ; and we shall never forget the sights we witnessed and the phenomena encountered. Talk about a multitude, about an unending throng of people, about a maze and a mass and a long drawn-out congregation of human beings of every size, age, and character,—here you have the whole thing complete on the road to Epsom. Imagine all the people of a great town on the move, along one particular road ; fancy the pilgrims to Paray le Monial, and those who annually patronise Mecca, rolled into one heap, then multiplied into a countless throng, and then crushed up and squeezed out for miles and miles ; conjure up the Children of Israel all riding in conveyances instead of walking in that long silent processional line which pictures have made us familiar with, and then you will have some idea as to the number of those who journey by road to the Derby, but none as to the strange, comical, ever-varying sights, the fun and rollicking, the larking, joking, laughing, and chaffing experienced during the journey. No amount of imagining or dreaming can make up the picture which this

tremendous, strangely-elongated multitude of mortals presents. "It must," as the showman says, with his wonders, including Pig Toby of learned memory, "be seen to be believed." Whilst, as we have observed, it beats all the old-fashioned wonders of the world, this going to the Derby reminds us of one of them: the thoroughfare traversed by its thousands and tens of thousands of men, and women, and conveyances, may fairly be termed the throngest, the chief, the "*Colossus of Roads*." Many persons went to the Derby, on the day we proceeded to it, by railway; but that way of travelling to Epsom strikes all the fun and every one of the sights out of the journey. "Be sure to go by the road," was an injunction drilled well into us many days before the event came off, by an old hand who had "done the Derby," and we obeyed the command most absolutely. Shortly before ten o'clock on the morning of the Derby day we left an olden hostelrie in that narrow, quaint, little place in London called Leather-lane. Our "vehicular arrangement" was an open conveyance calculated to carry about a dozen persons, and it was filled to the full extent of its capacity; indeed, at first the carriage was uncomfortably crammed, and it was not until a Birmingham fellow, seated in front, began protesting and swearing, that the cargo was lightened and sitting was made agreeable. The sky was clear, the weather beautiful, and our route of egress from the great city was charming: we rounded into Farringdon-street, then wheeled to the right upon the Thames Embankment; and as we dashed along that brave roadway and then over Westminster Bridge, with the sun shining upon the river, lighting up the palaces adjoining, and bringing into stately relief the towers and pinnacles beyond, we felt that, whatever the Derby might be like, this instalment of the journey alone was a treat, enough to make one feel specially pleasant for a week and proud for a month or two afterwards. Westminster Bridge having been crossed, we turn sharply to the right, pass St. Thomas's Hospital, with its massive detached blocks, then Lambeth Palace, with its dark castellated masonry, and then onward through Vauxhall, where carriages, evidently Epsom-bent, become more tangible and spectators more numerous. By and by a large open carriage, containing swellish people, drawn by four

horses, driven by postillions, whisked gallantly past. At the Clapham-road junction there was a great concourse of spectators, and for some distance afterwards each side of the thoroughfare was crowded with people who had come out of their houses to witness the sights. The carriages on their way to the Derby now became more numerous, the travellers by them more miscellaneous, and the scenes more lively. When Clapham Common had been got over, the road thickened up marvellously with carriages; progress at anything like a quick pace was now out of the question; the horses were slackened down to a walk; and then, owing to the immense crush of conveyances ahead, we experienced our first block—could not proceed—had, like the bulk about us, to stop. In a minute or two we are again on the move; but only at a walking rate, and when we do afterwards get into a trot, it is very irregular and short lived, and not unfrequently melts down into a mere creep, to be succeeded by a dead stand. But if the business of travelling be slow, it is lively; and when it even comes to a positive halt, how the scene bubbles up and boils over with life and hilarity! The spirit of good eating and drinking is soon upon the multitude. Only a few miles on the journey, and yet there are people uncorking beer bottles and making fierce attacks upon sandwiches; others follow suit; then everybody proceeds to the business of masticating and supping, and they will “carry on” more or less in this way till night. The conveyances are by this time three deep, packed close to each other, stretching ahead, in one deep, thick, seething mass as far as you can see, filling-up the rear in exactly the same dense, closely wedged-in way—a winding, pushing, scrambling, crushing line of men, women, horses, and conveyances, perfectly amazing in number and bewildering in motion. At a place called Wandsworth-lane, opposite a public-house going by the old-fashioned name of the Wheat Sheaf, there was another block—a sort of general stoppage, partly because the horses could not get on—they were now four abreast—and partly because everybody wanted to eat or drink. Nearly every party in every carriage had a hamper, either swinging to the axle-tree, or perched upon the box near the driver, or in the body of the vehicle, and when the halt was made, opposite the public-house named, there was a great unearth-

ing of eating and drinking stuff. In the line of eating there seemed to be everything substantial, from home-made sandwiches to entire hams, with a multitude of odds and ends totally defying enumeration; in the arena of drinking the bottles ranged in their contents from coldly-blue looking lemonade to rum and champagne. This portion of the sight was in itself something immense; the road was crowded, covered; horses and conveyances were all crammed and rammed up until it was impossible for one to stir without all of them moving. But this was only a morsel, a small section of the scene—just a sample of what was going on between Lambeth and Epsom. The crowding and crushing were like this for all that distance. In the north of England, during festivals, we have great street gatherings; in Preston, on a Whit-Monday, we have immense and imposing processions; but in this Derby day business the procession was about *eighteen miles long!* A few straggling folk, like travelling tinkers, or navvies, or broken-haired gipsies were on foot, creeping along at the sides of the road; but the great mass—the *grand omnium gatherum*—did the business in conveyances; and if creation had been ransacked the scene could not have been more varied and mosaic as to horses and conveyances. There were high stepping animals in pairs and in double pairs—four in hand lots; there were fat and lean, rough-haired and glossy-skinned, strong-spirited and broken-winded animals; there were horses which would have had no objection to leaping a hedge or bolting away over everything, and broken-kneed, used-up animals, which would have laid down or gone to sleep if half a word of encouragement in that direction had been given; every class was represented. And as to the carriages, they were equally varied and curious—cabs, pleasure vans, brakes, gigs, shandrays, drags, broughams, landaus, waggonettes, coaches—all were there, down to small, dingy dog-carts which darted in and out, and sidled in this direction and that, getting along where ordinary conveyances would have been instantly blocked, and threading their way for miles most surprisingly. Some of the carriages contained parties wonderfully equipped for the occasion. One of the conveyances immediately adjoining ours, at the halting-place spoken of, held about a dozen superlatively fine folk; they had brought

their own waiter, a youth in light blue, with closely buttoned jacket, and he handed chicken and champagne to the swells surrounding him in superb and imposing style. The people forming this gigantic procession were just about as varied as the horses and the conveyances drawing them: big and little, slim and adipose, city clerks, shop men, business people, working folk, young fellows with their sweethearts, elderly men with their wives, sons and daughters with fathers and mothers, exquisitely dressed parties, shabby-genteel individuals, office men, costermongers, females of the milliner and dressmaker stamp, females of the domestic servant type, and other females, fixed up in muslins and silks, looking gushingly smart and handsome, but periodically betrayed by their words and actions, until it became quite unnecessary to guess what business in life theirs was. When the eating and the drinking at the Wheat Sheaf had subsided, a move was made, and just as the horses started there was a general ring of laughter at the antics of a female, dressed in white, who stood up in a carriage, brandished a gigantic piece of rhubarb, and inquired for sugar to sweeten it. At Tooting the dust of the road began to rise, but many had made ample provision for it: women pulled their veils down; men sporting blue and green veils, hitherto twisted round their hats, did the same; and those who desired such eye and face protectors could easily be accommodated, for at intervals there were persons planted by the road side with veils to sell. If possible, the throng on the road became now even greater than before—the highway seemed one compact moving mass of horses, conveyances, and people; but nothing went wrong; everything was in the best order; never a wheel came off, nor a shaft broke, nor an axle gave way amongst all those thousands of carriages; whilst amongst the people the utmost harmony prevailed: laughing, singing, supping, and eating constituted the programme; and then there was chaffing, as you came up to, or passed, or were overtaken by, parties; but it was comparatively tame, the steam had not got properly up, and the fun in this direction was mainly reserved for the return journey, when it frequently, as we shall afterwards relate, became “fast and furious.” When Tooting Corner had been reached, the great stream of pleasure seekers was divided; some branching off by

the Sutton-road to Epsom, and others following the ordinary way to that place. We took the latter road, and for a while it was pleasant; but eventually it got terribly dusty, and the crowd, which underwent a striking division at Tooting, appeared to be now as great as ever. Shortly after Morden had been reached, we encountered, but did not stop at, another public-house, in front of which was a young woman dressed in white, merrily waltzing to the strains of a passing trumpeter, and holding in her right hand a quart pot containing beer! In front of every public-house we came to, and there are many on this Epsom road, there was a crowd eating, and drinking, and laughing; and occasionally we espied on the road side or caught a glimpse of, up lanes, parties who had drawn up their horses, got out of their carriages, and planted themselves upon the grass, in the pic-nicing fashion, with a ham or a heap of roast beef in the centre of them, and glasses or bottles all round. Then we went by a sort of school, the pupils of which (young girls) had been brought out, and were seated on a form by the road side, to see the sights. Carts of the common costermonger kind, containing big empty tubs, were now and then met with, and, puzzled to know what could be wanted at the Derby with these things, we spoke to the driver, who informed us that they were for storing water on the Downs, and that it would be sold at 4d. or 6d. a pail, for the use of the carriage horses standing there during the races. The rattle of conveyances, the crackling of whips, the jingling of harness, the hum of voices, and the flying of dust, which rose like a cloud and drifted away into the adjoining fields, kept matters lively for some miles, until at length we reached the region of sulphate of magnesia (commonly called salts) and horse racing. We landed at Epsom, a clean, quaintly-picturesque village shortly before one o'clock: here there was another halt and an immensity of sandwich devouring and porter drinking was done by the crowd; and then the journey was resumed to the Downs—to the race course—which was reached in about half an hour. The road to the course, when the village of Epsom has been cleared, rises all the way, and finally runs to the top of a brown, moor-like eminence, just behind which is the race course. There were thousands streaming up the brow of

this hill—carriage loads of people gliding up it by a road on the extreme right; some driving near the centre; many going up the left side; and crowds of pedestrians, from the railway station below, all making for the race course. What we saw at the Derby is given in the following chapter.



AT THE DERBY.

CHAPTER II.

It was a fine, a strangely-exciting and grandly-bewildering sight that which presented itself when we reached the crown of the moor-like hill which so many seemed to be climbing. Carriages, horses, people—what a complicated, gigantic multitude! If some great battle had been pending there could not have been a vaster concourse; if some enormous pic-nic business, with representatives from every place under the sun, had been going on, there could not have been more content, conviviality, or good humour manifested. There was a long, wandering semi-circle of people immediately in front; then came a hollow, beyond which was a mighty bank of people; whilst away to the right there was the grand stand—a huge, plain, lofty structure, crowded with people, and surmounted with the Royal Standard. The environing scenery was beautiful: gently-rising hills, finely-sweeping vales, well-cultivated fields, and shady woodland patches formed the outside panorama; but this was not what the multitude cared about or had come for. What could be, what was, the object of the thousands, the scores of thousands, assembled on this distant, out-of-the-way moor? Sporting—gambling—a vicious love of horse-racing—what? Not so much of this, not any of it, in the bulk of cases. Many there were, no doubt, in this seething densely-peopled quarter whose prime object was questionable—bad. In this vast olla podrida of mortals there were genteel speculators, bejeweled gamblers, dexterous swindlers—men given up altogether to betting, to craft, and cunning of every kind; but the great mass, nineteen-twentieths of those who had driven from London or ridden by rail from London to these famous Downs of Epsom, had come out just for a day's enjoyment. To them this Derby Day business meant not speculative horse-racing nor venal gambling, but an out, a holiday, a pleasure trip, a merry excursion, a blithesome, genial spree. They go to the Derby just "for the fun of the thing;" and this is what they always do. Every locality has its particular season of mirth; for instance, Lancashire has its Whitsuntide;

and London, which is equal to half a dozen moderate counties, goes in with a lot of enthusiasm for its Derby Day; and whilst there are characters and scenes in connection with every festival, every holiday, antagonistic to reason and sense, there are, of course, exhibitions of excess and folly associated with the annual racing day on Epsom Downs. Everything has its antithesis, and the more marked the contrast the nearer its realisation: the ridiculous always clings to the skirts of the sublime; a lie is always lurking near the truth; pain ever sits in the lap of pleasure; and Nonsense in some shape or other perennially elbows up to the grave and commanding figure of Wisdom. The moment we overcame the moor-like summit referred to we were launched instantly into a new world—a world full of everything odd, exciting, and mysterious. Yes, mysterious without a doubt, for amid all these thousands of people, these crowds to the right and left, rearwards, frontwards, everywhere, we could not, at the outset, see a single soul that we knew—not one being amongst all this Babylonish multitude whom we could go directly up to, or shake hands with, on the score of acquaintance, or even recognise as somebody we had ever seen before! And the gathering was so vast in its proportions, so varied in its elements, that this was a general feeling. Our driver, reflecting the experience of half of the folk visiting the Derby, tells us, at once, that he has attended the place ten years in succession, and has never once fairly seen the Derby race! Somehow, when you get to this particular quarter the crowd is so immense, the horses, the conveyances, the extraneous sights so odd and multifarious, and the difficulties of the general situation so compact and complete, that the probabilities are you will see ten times more of what you never expected nor even dreamed of in your wildest moments than of what you are really in search of. There were conveyances in rows, unyoked horses in rows, for ever of everything in rows—people eating, and drinking, and laughing, and looking through opera glasses, and swearing, and chaffing, and courting, and eating pickles, and drawing corks out of bottles, and denouncing corks because they would not come out of bottles, and talking rubbish to each other, and kissing one another, and inquiring when the next race would come off, and caring never a pin whether it

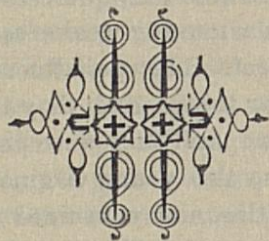
would ever or never come off, all in rows, and heaps, and grand mystifying admixtures, which neither gods, nor men, nor solicitors from Philadelphia could solve. In accordance with the advice of our driver, who was a shrewd, queer fellow, with a deadly horror of everything in the shape of cold water (except when intended for his horses), we halted directly after getting over the hill. The course was close to us; but there were many huge, heavy, thronged carriages in front, and as we were given to understand that £2 would have to be paid ere we could occupy similar quarters, we decided to wait until the next race was over, then cross the course, and secure a place on the opposite side, giving us as good a vantage ground as could at that hour of the day—half-past two in the afternoon—be expected; and so we waited, perhaps ten minutes; then there rose a cry “They’re off!” then three or four horses could be seen galloping round the corner of an eminence to the left, and in a few moments afterwards they rushed past, on to the winning post, and all was over. The course was then crossed by our conveyance and the carriages of many other parties, and we took up a position on the opposite side of, and not very far from, the grand stand. Just in front of the stand named there was an enclosure—“the ring”—thronged with betting men of every class; on one side there were two or three other stands—one being set apart for, and containing several members of, the Royal Family; on the other there were sundry large refreshment booths; whilst right along, close to the ropes of the course, and extending for a quarter of a mile to the left and half a mile to the right there was a dense line of people, numbering altogether perhaps 50,000. On the opposite side—our side—there was a great line of spectators, many being perched on conveyances, and some on shaky-looking stands or forms, the price of admission to which was being constantly shouted out by dingy, enterprising spirits very anxious to accommodate the public and pocket their coin. We had hardly time to look round before the great race—the Derby—was run. It was a source of much excitement, of immense interest; only, like the Irishman’s whisky, it was “done too soon,”—it was over in “no time”—seemed to have come to a termination before it had fairly commenced. The great bulk of people

could only see a portion of the race; they could catch a sight of the horses shortly after they had started, and when they had emerged from behind a ridge in that quarter; they could now and then get a glimpse of them as they sailed along—through a winding channel, whose banks were formed of a world of people; and as they passed with a grandly-violent rush those particular spots where positions had been taken up a momentary view could be obtained of them; and by a giraffe-like extension of the neck a glimpse might be caught of the animals as they landed at the winning post. As the horses—there would be nearly a score of them—dashed along with their many-coloured drivers, the excitement gradually intensified, until, at length, when they were nearing the end of the race, it got to a white heat pitch: there was an immense turning of faces from every quarter, a hum and a roar of voices, a wild effervescence of feeling, and then, after a quick round of cheers, all was over. Then the book-makers and the betters compared notes and exchanged money whilst amateur speculators and friendly “sweep” parties looked dumbfounded or exultant just in the order of their losses or triumphs. During the race there once or twice got upon the course the traditional dog—running vigorously along, unable to get away, followed by policemen, shouted at by outsiders, and altogether cutting about the wildest and most Ishmaelitish figure you or anybody else could possibly imagine. Between each race there was a great crush and scramble of people upon the course—some anxious to read the figures put up at the winning post, others to quiz the occupants of the Royal stand, and many to witness the usual sights incidental to such a great, changing, mercurialised crowd. The most active thing in connection with the races was not the winner of the Derby, but a bell somewhere near the grand stand, which did a vast amount of quick, noisy, unmusical ringing. When a race was over and another being prepared for, off went this piece of uneasy metal with the serious vehemence of a fire bell; it “carried on” tremendously until the race was run; and when another was projected, it did the very same thing with, if possible, greater and completer noisiness. The sights upon the Downs—near the course, and on the ground embraced within its elongated semicircle—were most varied and extraordinary, most

amusing and singular. "Three sticks a penny" men, with long patches of canvass, were planted here and there; dark-eyed gipsies were hanging about vehicles in begging postures, or dodging away quietly with young females anxious to have their "fortunes" told; organ and monkey men, looking grim and uncivilised, were fishing about for coppers; there were strangely improvised photographic studios; noisy shooting galleries; wandering nigger minstrels, with faces naturally opaque and faces made gloomy with burnt cork; awfully blithesome bagpipers, with one or more chiels near them doing the Highland fling; girls dancing on stilts, and men floundering about, as if racing, on horses; stereoscopic exhibitors and sellers of smutty transparent cards; indeed, a complete maze and mass of all sorts of curious, comical, cunning, sensational folk. We left our conveyance two or three times and wandered off amongst the multitude. In one part a couple of young pickpockets were being hurried away by a policeman; in another a policeman seized a youth for some kind of trickery—stealing, we believe—but was promptly done out of his case and turned into a peculiar object of laughter. The officer had hold of the youth by the jacket collar, and was marching him along in a somewhat commanding and authoritative style, when all at once the youth "peeled" himself—slipped out of his jacket, darted off, and was soon lost amongst the crowd. The policeman looked a daft and most mystic creature—the picture of stupidity and patience, whilst he was nursing the jacket of the fugitive, and reflecting upon the slipperiness of the age. In another quarter the chief sensation consisted of a sallow-coloured, Moorish-looking man, breaking big flint stones with his fist. He put the stones upon a small stand, then raising his right hand, which was covered with a white handkerchief, brought it down with the force of a sledge hammer. Every time he struck a stone he broke it—smashed it to pieces, making the bits fly off in every direction. There was a good deal of music on the ground, and some of it was quite of a peculiar kind. Whilst rambling amongst a mass of carriages we came to a smart open one, close to which was a well dressed female. There were three young gentlemen and one elderly party in the carriage, and they were listening with much gusto to the

female who was playing an accordion and tickling their tympanums with as elaborate and singular a piece of shady nonsense as could well be strung into verse and set to music. At the finish she appealed to her patrons for assistance: the young fellows gave her a few coins; but the elderly party who had quietly enjoyed the affair up to this point, and would have said never a word had the woman kept on singing till now, if she had only kept off his pockets, stood up, looked awfully virtuous, and shook his head very indignantly. She afterwards went away to similar swells, young and old, seated in carriages, as did others of the same ilk, and regaled them with fascinating rubbish. During the afternoon there was a fine stir and revel amid solids and liquids—more than was observed on the road to the Derby. There were people drinking out of everything from rough quart measures to embossed silver tankards, and eating everything from chicken and boiled tongue to cold potatoes and Rabelaisian loblolly. Two young females, whose headquarters were in a carriage close to ours, had an astounding weakness for sliced cucumber and underdone beef. They paid the most minute attention to these peculiar things, and they tarried long at the game of consumption. And they were perfectly welcome to the lot. When these two young virgins had emptied two large cucumber bottles, and consumed much half-roasted beef, they actually began drinking brandy! The crying out respecting all manner of things was great; cards for the races, stands, "commodation," dust veils, and sun hats, formed a general subject for shouting; then there was the broad everlasting din made by all the "three sticks a penny" men, the players, fiddlers, dancers, singers, conjurors, gingerbread hawkers, niggers, thimble-riggers, likeness takers, and vendors of every conceivable eatable and drinkable associated with fairs, and festivals, and holiday gatherings. The races were not half so enduring in their attractions as the many-sided, many-hued singularities which crowded the general ground. They constituted as wonderful a kaleidoscope as could be found between here and the Pole which the Arctic expeditionists have gone in search of, and beautiful weather transformed the whole picture into something more akin to romance than reality. We remained some time after the last race

had been run; and when six o'clock had struck preparations for the return journey were made; and what it was like must form the subject of our next chapter.



FROM THE DERBY.

CHAPTER III.

"From the Derby." Yes; and such a "from" as neither you, nor your respected father, nor gentle mother, nor mystical godmother, nor any other vascular or religious relation could possibly gather, extract, manufacture, or squeeze into shape out of the boundless materials of Imagination. When we went to the Derby, we thought there was nothing like it, nothing equal in wonder to the journey thither; but this return business was much more singular and varied—was wilder, blither, merrier—was odder, noisier, dustier—was, if possible, thronger, more miscellaneous, more confounding, more excitable. Whilst waiting on the course to return—waiting for our driver, who would persist in keeping our party halting in the carriage while he looked after some relative travelling in another conveyance—up there came, on the outer side of us, a coach heavily freighted with passengers, and as it had to stop for a few moments, owing to the crush ahead, a scene ensued between its driver and a bronzed, gipsy-looking trio—evidently husband, wife, and daughter—in charge of a three-sticks-a-penny concern. The coach stood right at the top and in front of their range; this interfered with their business; they shouted, then swore at, then threatened, the driver, who feigned indifference; but at last the gipsy-looking wife, exasperated until her dark eyes flashed fire, began throwing the heavy, bludgeon-like sticks of the "establishment" at the horses; this stirred up matters somewhat, made the woman's husband and daughter, under the apprehension that they were going to get into trouble, counsel quietude, caused the driver and some of his passengers to frown tremendously; but the stick-flinging seemed to force on a move, for directly afterwards the coach went ahead; and in a minute or two we were on its track—along the lower side of the course, past the grand stand, on, and up, and round to the right, and then we gradually drifted into and got mixed up with a bewilder-

ing, crowded complication of vehicles and clouds of dust which moved onward and rolled upward for nearly 20 miles. At Epsom, a tiny serene village, turned into a vehicular Bedlam and chaos of visitors on this particular day, there was an eccentric turn round a post or a stone, in the centre of the place. Up to this village the journey was pretty easy and regular; but afterwards—oh! what crowding, and crushing, and moving in and out, and on this side and on that, and driving slow, and halting, and drinking, and eating, and joking! There was no getting on and keeping to it at anything like a brisk speed. The crowd ahead was so great that slowness, relieved by stoppages, counter-relieved by short bursts ahead, eventuating in the stand-still posture, was the inevitable rule of the road. Easier would it be for a camel, or a lion, or a tiger, or say the Royal Zoological Gardens to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a horse and conveyance to travel along the road from Epsom to London, on the day of the Derby race, without being interrupted. Jollity constantly breaking out into hilarity; mirth regularly culminating in shouts of laughter; interrogations winding up with banter and rollicking chaff; compliment-passing succeeded by larking—these were the ingredients which made up the homeward programme; and, however tired or cynical you might be, the best plan by far was to fall in with the proceedings—to swim with the tide—as complacently as possible. It was the advice of one of the old fathers that, when in Rome, you should chime in with the ways of Rome; and that same principle holds good on this precious Derby road—either keep away, or laugh and be merry like the rest of people: that is the advice we give, and if any one tries to ignore it, he will have an uneven and sorry time of it. Like a kaleidoscope, at every fresh turn there was a fresh sight. The road appeared to be more densely packed than ever when we got a few miles beyond Epsom, and the scenes were infinitely more curious and laughable. There were young women nursing dolls and shaking them at you in order to evoke a laugh; there were blithesome, careless wags on carriage tops asking you when you last saw your mother, and whether it was safe for you to be alone; there were veiled-up swells, and fellows in long white smocks like night gowns, and middle aged men

"fou and unco' happy;" there were roystering noisy boys, some wearing masks, and all full of mischief; and cozy, snoozling couples in closed carriages tired of the sights of the day and endeavouring to sleep out the remainder of the journey—a job they would not accomplish unless they had got special soporifics with them. The sources of "amusement" on the road consisted not only of chaffing and singing, eating and drinking, mask-wearing and doll-nursing; it ran in many directions; and often found vent in shooting peas through tin tubes at people passing; in squirting water out of small leaden flasks like scent holders; in throwing rice at bystanders; in making loud noises with cheap trumpets. The ground in front of every public-house along the road was as throng, as crowded, and as noisy as if a fair of some kind were being held there. Thirsty souls would insist upon "pulling up" at these places, and if there had been as many more—two dozen instead of one—they would have been thirsty at each of them. It is wonderful how dry people become when they see a place wherein are barrels, and kegs, and glasses. The drivers and those near them made it out that the horses were dry and needed water; and now and then, perhaps, they were in that needy condition, for they had heavy loads to draw, and the weather was warm and the road unpleasant; but that was no reason why the people they were pulling along should be thirsty too; and yet they were. The horses are dry, therefore the passengers are, was the logic of the road; and, when the horses are not dry the passengers have a right to be, cropped up like a supplementary conclusion universally believed in. Only twice during the whole length did we see anything in the shape of quarrelling, and both instances of this were manifested in the same neighbourhood and within a few yards of each other. In one case a young man, hanging to the back of a carriage, was fighting another young man within the vehicle; in the other, a stiff-set little fellow was hitting his wife because she found fault with his sister! With these exceptions, we saw nothing during the whole march of this gigantic multitude indicative of quarrelling, or, in fact, of anything at variance with the spirit of mirthfulness, and good fellowship, and genuine sociality. It was a great crowd, a mighty procession, a colossal throng to be so imbued with

cheerfulness, and good temper; and yet harmony and geniality of disposition were indispensable: there would have been no getting along at all, the procession was so dense and vast, if jangling, and jannering, and quarrelling, had prevailed: you were compelled to be orderly, everybody was, in order that each might get ahead at even a moderately slow pace. If anybody had become angry through being chaffed, it would have been the climax of folly to blow and bluster about it, for the frolicsome bantering men and women coming along in the everlasting stream would have just laughed and humbugged him to death; and if anybody had been disposed to engage in an open quarrel, through having his corns too tightly stepped on, he would have had to turn up his sleeves to the whole lot, and the futility of that small game would have been quickly demonstrated. So that, as before stated, the best plan, was to laugh with the crowd, joke with the multitude, and swim on with the tide. Once or twice smart young fellows (planted on carriages), with a singular faculty for astonishing or amusing people with their pea-shooting or water-squirting, were out-matched by spectators at the sides of the road, who, anticipating nonsense, had wrapped up dust in small paper parcels, which they threw up with much effect, amid roars of laughter. Here and there roguish youths perched on walls amid overhanging trees, or planted behind hedges, made attacks in the larking line upon the occupants of carriages; but the latter, being numerically stronger, had invariably the upper hand of the spectators; and they did not care whom they "dropped on;" sometimes they would hit, with a pea, the nose of some venerable old gentleman looking over a garden gate; at other times they would touch up an otiose swell lounging on a rustic chair; and occasionally they would land a certain quantity of water, by the squirting process, in the ear of some corrugated old maiden sitting in front of an open window, making her jump and turn round as if galvanised. As the "procession" neared London, say within half-a-dozen miles of the great city, the fun and freedom of the multitude became more lively. There was no end of mirth, and harmless folly, and "rigging," and ludicrous adventure. Nor was there any end to the incessant rolling onward of dust clouds, and carriages containing strange

faces. In one part a smart open carriage, with a footman lounging in front, and freighted with fair females, dashed up; they were handsomely dressed, they looked precise and genteel, as if they belonged to some better class family; but "murder will out"; somebody of a larking, or mischievous, or suspicious turn of mind, began plaguing them, passing remarks, &c., when lo! if one of these lady-looking, elegantly-dressed creatures did not actually put her thumb to her nose, and swear! That little digital display and damnatory ebullition of backyard eloquence settled the business properly as to her mission and occupation. Farther on, where many people were halting, either because they or their horses were thirsty, there was a large, smart, open carriage. In that particular carriage we beheld a gentleman throng with a champagne bottle, and when he had satisfied himself with its contents, he handed a sparkling glass to a lady-like female on his right; she drank it; and then with the greatest nonchalance imaginable, if he did not actually put his arms around her neck and give her numerous kisses in the running fire style! That was a sensation for the crowd; cries of "Oh" were raised, and then everybody burst into laughter. The nearer we got to London and the more crowded the road sides became; from Clapham Common right up Kennington-road, past the Surrey Gardens, to the Elephant and Castle, the parapets were thronged with people who had come out to witness "the return from the Derby." And it was a sight worth seeing—such an array of carriages, such a miscellaneous company occupying them, such a dust-covered multitude as could only be brought into "processional order" on a Derby day. The way in which everybody was dusted-up was something extraordinary. If they had been rolling about in the road somewhere or shaking all the meal and flour bags under the sun at each other they could hardly have been whiter or dustier. The great dense line of carriages ran into the metropolis at a brisk speed; but its proportions, overpowering as they all along had been, were now speedily diminished; after entering Kennington-road they began to get less, and the process of reduction continued until the Elephant and Castle had been passed, when all seemed to rapidly melt away—to be quickly absorbed in the life of the great city, creating no ruffle on its surface, nor in the least disturbing its mighty equilibrium.

A DAY WITH OTTER HUNTERS.

"For a hunting we will go, boys."

Old Song.

Wandering along river sides, jumping ditches, scrambling over hedges and walls, rambling in and out of fields, wading and splashing up to the knees—sometimes up to the breast—in water, running, shouting, tumbling about, laughing, screaming, brandishing big sticks, closing up in a circle (amid hounds worrying something like a dim-looking wild cat), and then feeling wonderfully wet and amazingly hungry: that is the sum and substance of an otter hunt. But, perhaps, you would like to have a few details; we wanted them one day, got them, and with your permission we will unfold the whole story thereof, not in the peculiar lingo of otter hunters, but in plain words capable of comprehension. One Monday morning during the summer 1875, the West Cumberland pack of otter hounds, in charge of a trio of redoubtable hunters, had to start for all the sport they could get from the Sherburne Arms, Hurst Green, not far from Stonyhurst College, and a little to the north of the Ribble. With sundry "jolly dogs" we moved off, by train, the night before, to Whalley, intending early next morning to run up in a conveyance to Hurst Green, so as to have a fair start with the hounds. Whalley, with its long viaduct and olden abbey ruins, was reached about half-past eight, and nearly an hour was consumed in finding quarters for the night in that tiny, antiquated place. "Full," said the landlord at the first place called at; "No room," was the reply of Boniface, when the second was entered; at the third, mine host being of the "blessed" kind with his quiver full of children, could only guarantee half the accommodation needed, and was unable to furnish a supper; ultimately, after a keen, half-begging and praying hunt for pabulum and beds, the problem was satisfactorily solved; and at 10 45 our party, split up in two sections, retired to rest for the night. What with excitement, strange quarters, and the fact that we had to be down for

breakfast next morning at a quarter-past five, not over-much sleep was procured. But we got more of that fine anodyne than some of the flock. Opening his eyes pretty early, one of the party, finding that his companion, of an unconsciously aggrandising turn, was pushing him off, quietly got up and, taking all the clothes and wrapping himself up in them, walked to another part of the room and laid down in them, his nocturnal *confrere* being all the while so sound asleep that he knew nothing whatever of the transformation. Some folks quarrel as to which side of the bed they ought to be on; but this couple settled their difficulty quietly—one took all the bed and the other all the clothes! At half-past six, we arrived at Hurst Green. The morning was a beautiful one, and the drive was delightful. Soon after 7 o'clock the hunting party started on their mission of sport; and they were joined by many gentlemen fond of sport. Several young ladies, with a streak of "game" in them, also put in an appearance, at different parts along the route. On leaving Hurst Green the party dashed down the fields, through a wood, and were quickly on the banks of the Ribble. They moved upwards, the bend opposite Dinckley Hall being selected as the place for "the meet." About half a dozen of the hounds dashed down, singly, to the edge of the water—they were put in to find the "drag" or scent; the others were kept up in couples ready to be unleashed if an otter were met with. Directly after the hounds started, three or four of them, running in and out amid big stones and brushwood, at the water edge, began baying and yelping, and as one of them called "Wellington," a sure-nosed, experienced old animal, joined in the noise, it was a clear proof that there had been an otter here. Frequently, as the hounds ran up the side of the river, they gave mouth in this way; but as it is a point in hunting etiquette to only start operations at the spot chosen for "the meet," they were not permitted to pursue the scent—they were hurried on. Eventually the meeting place was reached; and then the hounds began their work; but for a long time it did not amount to much. They passed the murky mouth of the Calder; then they wheeled up to the left, into the Hodder; but there appeared to be no sport in this

direction, so there was a general turn round, the pioneer hounds being shouted and whistled back; and it was decided to cross the Hodder and get to the Ribble again. This was to some of the party an unexpected and unpleasant piece of teetotalism. Several were correctly fixed up for the business—they wore knickerbockers and strong boots; others were in ordinary civilian suits, and it was this lot which the river-crossing troubled. The regular hunters and the knickerbocker and strong-boot wearers dashed through quickly: the other class eyed each other curiously, turned their trousers up, and then followed. One young gentleman opposed to moisture of this sort got upon the back of a gamekeeper, who plunged on pretty fairly until within about three yards off the side, when—how cruel!—he slipped, fell on one side, and down he and his freight went into the water, thereby completely administering the wetting which it was their desire to avoid. When the Hodder had been forded, the party made up to Mitton Bridge, passing the old hall on the right, and subsequently the rare old church on the left. The hounds “gave mouth” periodically—kept meeting with a “drag,” but nothing very definite was hereabouts encountered. The walk up the valley was very pleasant, and it being understood that there was “something” above—three or four otters being talked about—the spirits of the party were well sustained. By many a winding pathway, over many a hedge—through patches of brushwood, across ditches, past brook mouths, &c., the hunting party went. And having once been fairly wet with the water, it was surprising how gallantly the whole lot took to it again, and crossed it where necessary; indeed, this sort of work seemed to be relished, for as the forenoon got very warm, and the feet somewhat tired with rough, irregular walking, a periodical wade up to the knees, across the stream, refreshed rather than harassed the party. In a beautiful vale, opposite Edisford Hall, the hounds, which for some distance had been quiet, became pretty lively; the “pioneers” got down amongst some tree roots close to the river, and there was the usual yelping-out, showing that an otter had been there; but the anxiously-looked-for animal could not be met with; so the hunters hurried along the banks towards Low Moor, and on reaching this place the hounds ranged about the banks pretty

actively—moving round and amongst stones and tree roots, snuffing quickly about, and making noises now and then indicative of an otter, which had either gone up or down the river. The appearance of the hunting party in this quarter created quite a sensation: they were now close to Low Moor Mill, and out of nearly every window of that establishment facing the river there were operatives peering or leaning. But no otter could be met with here, and the hunters resumed their upward course. In a field above the mill named, and between its “cut” and the Ribble, the hounds, meeting with another scent, set off in full cry, and after such a long and patient ramble, their din amounted to a species of music at once refreshing and encouraging. Up the field they bounded, with their tails raised, and roaring out finely; and there was now considerable excitement; but it was short-lived; in less than half a minute a quietus was put upon it, for as soon as the hounds reached the “cut” the scent was lost, and they could not recover it on either side. A man in the crowd, from Low Moor, said he had seen an otter here, and this revived the hope which had so quickly been crushed; but when questioned he said it was a fortnight before, and that put a quietus upon the business; only laughter was created by it; and the ejaculation—“Oh, its had time to get to London by this time,” followed. The Ribble, at the weir, was then crossed. When Brungerley Bridge had been passed the proceedings became very tame; the dogs, as an Irishman would say, uttered never a word, and though it was stated by apparently experienced people that there *should* be otters hereabouts, none were met with. If, however, the hunting was slow, the scenery was charming, and that constituted—even all along the route—a considerable pleasure. When the party had got to the bend in the river a little below Grindleton, a halt was made; the opinion that it was of no use going any further was notified; so the hunters turned back. When they had got about half a mile down on their return journey a small drain which had attracted some notice from the hounds was explored. A gentleman from Norfolk, who turned up somewhere, and joined the party, had two pretty little fox terriers with him, and he put one of them into the drain; but it did not unearth anything. The downward move was then re-

sumed, the hunters now paying more attention to the eastern than the western side of the river. At a curve in the stream, below Horrocksford, a drain, running back some distance into the meadows there, empties itself, and there being an idea that an otter might be up it—one or more having at time and time been seen at the entrance—measures were taken for exploring the place. About two hundred yards from the mouth of the drain a hole was cut into it; then another was cut farther back; and whilst this was going on several persons, drawn together by the hunting party, crossed the water to see what was going on. In about half an hour, the hounds were taken to the head of the drain in another field, and almost half a mile from the mouth of it. Here the sport, for the first time, began in earnest. The hounds, on reaching the drain head, gave mouth decisively, and it was settled that there was an otter somewhere about. In the meantime the drain cutters—three men connected with Horrocksford farm—cut two more holes in the second field, and at the mouth of one of them an otter was espied; but anxious to keep itself all right as long as possible, it quickly drew back again. The excitement now became strong, and there being a crowd of people about they were urged to keep well back so that the otter, when it did come out, might have an opportunity of running through the fields and into the river. If it had been killed on land the job would have been over directly, and would only have been like a rat hunt; therefore, by way of giving the otter a fair chance, and of having some sport, it was decided to let it run down to the water. One of the fox terriers mentioned was put into the drain; but the otter kept moving. At one time it was thought that the animal had gone up a drain branching out of the main one, and a hole was dug into the top of the passage; but the animal was not there. Shortly after this one of the hounds—a notable dog called “Ranger”—was put into a hole made in the main drain and near the top of it; then the people, forming the crowd of on-lookers, were asked to come to the drain and dance, or jump on the top of it, so as to frighten the otter out at one of the holes—the hole next to that into which “Ranger” had been put. About 50 young men, old men, and lads, got upon the drain and jumped up, all in a line,

cutting a most peculiar and laughable figure. Ultimately a sign was given that the otter was coming out; the crowd stood back; the hounds were held in the rear; the shouting, and talking, and laughing previously indulged in were all hushed down; there was silence; heads leaned forward; then a cry of "Now! it's there!" was raised; and so it was; for out of the hole in the drain there bolted a fine otter, and away it went in a sort of slow galloping style—hardly as fast as a man could run. After it ran the crowd—helter-skelter, shouting loudly at the terriers and dogs, which had somehow got loose, to keep back; hitting them with sticks; bawling and screaming and laughing and floundering about in the most exciting and chaotic style. The otter kept close to a hedge dividing two fields and running towards the river. It was feared that the animal would be killed on land; but after a keen struggle it got to the water, bolted in, followed very closely by the hounds, and it immediately disappeared. But though an otter can remain under water a considerable time it must come up to breath; and so this joker which had gone out of sight turned up its nose a little out of the water, in perhaps a quarter of a minute. "There!—its there!" was the cry when it rose; then the hounds made towards it; but the otter was down again in a moment, and whilst they were staring about and swimming in this direction and that it re-appeared, perhaps 20 yards away. This it did three or four times, until it got into a broad, placid pool a little down the river. The crowd of people on the banks—a crowd considerably made up of folk from Clitheroe and round about—rushed forward along the banks very impetuously, and there was much excitement; but after a good deal of shouting on the part of one or two local gentlemen, anxious to give the otter breathing time, in order that there might be more sport, the crowd held back and calmed down a little. The water being clear and the sun shining fully upon it, many of the movements of the otter could be well observed. Whilst in the pool, it periodically came up, breathed, moved its head about a little as if surveying the situation, and then, turning a sort of summersault—like seals often do—went out of sight. It afterwards went up the pool a little; then it swam down it and onward, perhaps 50 yards, eluding the hounds wonderfully. Like the rest of its tribe, this otter

was a beautiful swimmer. It moved along—apparently near the bottom of the water—deftly, smoothly, and more like a fish than anything else. Often, when under water, there would be a cry raised, “Where is it?” “Yonder,” somebody would shout; and once when this was uttered we heard a fellow, who was looking right at it, say, “Nay—that’s a salmon.” Its movements were so quick and fish-like that this was not an unnatural surmise. Sometimes it would swim under or very near the hounds, and as they had to keep their heads above water they could not see it; now and then its head would pop up, perhaps a foot from a hound; the hound would then make a grab at it; but the otter, alive to danger, was down in a second, and when it re-appeared it would be several yards away from them. Once, whilst “breathing time” was being given to the otter, it swam down a shallow place, and the hounds lost it. They were then sent up the stream a short distance, and whilst paddling about some old roots at the side, they “gave mouth”—a proof that their prey was not far off. In half a minute afterwards the otter was seen down the stream; then, keeping under water, it crossed the river, and re-appeared in a pool. This was a critical point; for if not caught quickly, the otter might get into a broader and deeper part of the river below, and then the hounds, already well tired, might be quite unable to get it. There was much knocking about at this time—hurrying along the banks, rushing into the water, &c., and when the fun was at its height one Herculean sportsman comically relieved matters for a moment by slipping over a stone and tumbling on his side in the water. At length the principal hunters made a cordon across a shallow place in the river, a little above Brungerley Bridge, so as to stop the otter from going farther down. Whilst doing this, the otter came swimming along under the water, and when it had got to the shallow part a young fellow seized it by the tail, and lifted it right out of the water. The otter turned its head, and showed its teeth terribly, but it could not bite him. The hounds closed in upon it, and began snatching at it and biting it fiercely; but the young fellow could not retain his hold whilst the hounds were tugging at it in this way, so he had to let it drop. The otter then swam about for a few seconds, when one of the regular hunters, seizing it by the tail and drawing it

quickly out of the water, held it until they had "polished it off." This final worrying was the most unpleasant part of the business. The previous proceedings constituted rare and exciting sport; but it was painful to see the otter held up by the tail whilst ten or a dozen hounds gnawed it to death. They had to bite, and tear, and pull at it for five minutes or more before life was extinct. Worrying otters in this way, or spearing them, is, it is said, the only plan of killing them. If spearing involves a quicker mode of despatch, it is preferable; but we should think that, after a good run of sport, and when the dogs have got fairly tired, it would be still better, when an otter is pulled up by the tail, to just send a pistol ball into its head, which is very hard, but scarcely hard enough, we fancy, to resist closely applied gunpowder and lead. The otter in question when killed was carried to the bank of the river and inspected by several persons. It measured from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail 42 inches, and weighed about 18 lbs. After the hunt we crossed the river, with our party, at Brungerley Bridge, stormed an old-fashioned hostelry in Clitheroe, for refreshments, and early in the evening re-appeared in Preston.



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ERRATA.						
Page	2	Line	28	read	Cadogan	for Cardogan.
	9	"	13	"	Addison	" Watts.
	14	"	28	"	70	" 60.
	31	"	8	"	Eastward	" Westward.
	57	"	22	"	Human	" Humane.
	113	"	1	"	There	" Their.
	164	"	12	"	Ingleborough	" Ingleboroagh.
	168	"	40	"	Hear	" Here.
	197	"	20	"	Linked, &c.	" Inked, &c.
	227	"	20	"	Breathe	" Breath.

Page 63, read weirdly; 69, serenely; 83, chatted; 85, disheartening; 205, postillions; 93, mattress; 96, stile; 98, ecstasy; 74 and 130, equilibrium; 113, exhilarating; 143, weind; 200, punctilious; 214, slipperiness.

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