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'THE FOURTH ESTATE.'

IN the seventeenth century, it was the pulpit which greatly moved the masses of men; now it is the press. For weal or for wo there cannot be a doubt that the journals of this country exercise a vast amount of influence over society; in France, their power is even more strikingly manifested, and so it always must be, we apprehend, the more the people are cast loose from their usual anchorages, and sent upon the finding out of new ways. Even the degree of influence which the journals possess in England becomes a serious question, when we reflect that it is a power acting under none of the usual checks or responsibilities. A clergyman is answerable to his bishop or his synod; a member of parliament to his constituency. Teachers of almost all kinds and grades are subjected to some sort of test. The newspaper alone is free. This is an immense point in its favour, whether for good or evil to the community. It is an entire novelty too in social machinery.

The difference between the bond and the free systems of teaching is, we think, very easily detected. In the bond system, all violent aberration and mischief is repressed, but the penalty of this is mediocrity of effect. Under the free system, we have fearful fountains of corruption opened, but we have at the same time brilliantly-energetic action, and, on the whole, grand results. Now, if teaching through churches and academies, and by other regulated methods, be strictly co-ordinate with teaching through unlicensed journals, a problem must be in time wrought out by their contrasted action. It will either be discovered that the writer should be responsible to some central authority, connected or unconnected with the state, as all other teachers are, or that these other teachers, if they are to maintain themselves in equal efficacy with the unlicensed writer, must be equally free. Even now the question may be put, Why should any person be able to address hundreds of thousands of his fellow-citizens over the whole country every week, or every day if he pleases, without any restraint whatever, when it is impossible to teach twenty boys in a university, or undertake the cure of three hundred souls, without a paralysing amount of responsibility? The two systems cannot always co-exist. The one must in time overflow and absorb the other.

The press, after all, has its restrictions, but of a kind which does not in the least interfere with the above remarks. A journal is under the check of public opinion. The public writer has to assume a virtue if he hath it not, because his readers would otherwise desert him. His faith may be greatly different from that of the multitude, but he is compelled to keep it in the recesses of his own bosom, if he would avoid giving his readers offence. He is thus forced to adhere to certain

standards of feeling and opinion, without having ever been asked to sign a test or take an oath. If it be found that public opinion can produce such results in the literary teacher, it will in time be asked if it may not be sufficient in that of all other instructors. It is here assumed that the one system does not in the least tend more to induce an identity between the real and the professed opinion than the other.

The press being so important a power—being, in fact, rather than by mere jocular sobriquet, a fourth estate—it is of consequence that it should be morally raised as high as possible. Its moral status cannot be said to be low in this country. It has one great and shining virtue in a superiority to personalities. With comparatively few exceptions, and those only of particular classes, there is a spirit of fairness and veracity in the press. We have often had occasion to observe with pleasure, when individuals had made themselves conspicuous by some gross offence, with what good feeling towards relatives the newspapers conducted themselves. These are amiable and respectable features. That party views are in general advocated with temper, and that none but those which are really defensible, and therefore legitimate, are advocated, must also be allowed to the credit of the English press. It must nevertheless be admitted that the *personnel* of the press is far from being in a satisfactory condition.

The fact is, that the journals themselves have alone a recognised personality in England. We ask what is the opinion of the 'Times' on the subject? how the 'Chronicle' has written? and whether the 'Examiner' and 'Spectator' may be expected to take up the question strongly? The human beings whose hands hold the pen in certain dingy back-rooms of the offices of those papers are not thought of at all. The writers of articles for a paper are not always known even to each other. Were we to hear their names mentioned, we should be as much in the dark as before, for the men have, in general, no social status of any distinction. It is therefore the paper, not the writer, which is amenable to the check of public opinion. All this is primarily a matter of consideration for the board of proprietors, whose pockets are liable to be affected by it. Now here, we think, lies the dark and painful feature of the English press. The fundamental maxim of all ethics—the responsibility of the individual—is wanting. He is merely a mouthpiece. He is only a representation of a human judgment and a human heart. He may write one way for one paper, and another way for another, without anybody knowing of it. The temptation to do so must often arise, and must often be yielded to; at least, in the obscurity which invests him, we have no security that he will resist it. It will not do to say that, provided he adheres to the standards of feeling and opinion which are sanctioned by the

public, or by some respectable portion of it, there is no occasion for complaint. The diversity that exists between the inward mind of the writer and the demonstrations he makes, is an evil in itself which we must put up with only in as far as it cannot be helped. The less of it the better; and what we believe is, that it is increased immensely by this system of sinking the personality of the writer in that of the journal.

The journalists themselves feel that their position is a false one, and one of the outcries of the day is for a right acknowledged place in the state to those men whose intellects exercise so great an influence in its affairs. It cannot be surprising that this clamour should be heard, for only consider how it must affect a man's mind to hear society ringing with some powerful article which he has written, and yet to know that he is only one of the multitude of Smiths or Wilsons living in certain rows of houses, of democratic uniformity, in Camberwell or Camden-Town, and that, while the daily labour no more than suffices for the daily wants, his life must continue to be one of obscure toil. The English journalist looks across the Channel, and sees his brother in Paris a distinguished political figure, whose standing for a place in the national legislature is beheld as a fitting part of the system of things, and who may even aspire to be a minister of state. Suppose Smith or Wilson of the 'Daily News' or 'Morning Herald' were to stand for the Tower Hamlets, what a shout of universal ridicule would salute his placards! Why does it look so natural in Paris and so foolish in London? It is because the French journalist asserts his own personality, while the English sinks his in that of his journal. A newspaper proprietor may stand for a seat in parliament, if his wealth and character place him amongst the class who ordinarily take that position; but the author of the thunder which daily issues through that gentleman's paper—he is only an obscure hireling—for him to pretend to any such position would only be to expose himself to a derision which would never afterwards perhaps cease to attach to his name.

It seems to us that what is required to give the public writer in England the true position which he is now groping for, is identical with what is necessary to perfect the condition of the English press. We must see and hear MEN preaching to us, not papers. Let the journalist issue his daily or weekly discourses with his name, and he must soon obtain a personal distinction and a place in society appropriate to his deserts. If his becomes a great Voice for counsel and instruction, he must rise in the social scale. His name will be courted for lists of directors and patrons. If it become convenient for him to ask the suffrages of a parliamentary constituency, his doing so will appear as quite in the right course of things. And this must be precisely because, in the avowal of his personality, he gives a guarantee to society for his conduct. We think all this so clear, that we wonder at its not having been seen long ago.

Our argument may be met perhaps with the assertion that the English press is as moral as it can possibly be. On that we join issue. While, as before, fully admitting its many merits, we see several points of sordidness and unconscientiousness, such as could not exist in any profession where individuals were socially recognisable. We pass over many matters connected with advertisements, though these may be said to form the grand snare for the honesty as well as dignity of the press, and pitch upon one part of London newspaper practice less remarkable perhaps, but sufficiently reprehensible.

All the London journals profess to criticise theatricals. They must professedly do so, in order to make the public aware of what is doing in the theatrical world. They must professedly mean to do it, not in a spirit of favour to the theatrical managers, but in a spirit of truth, as for the benefit of their readers. It may be at once admitted that the theatres are fairly liable to this criticism; but assuredly they are not to be expected to pay anything in order to facilitate the newspapers in performing a part of their ordinary duty. Nevertheless, the newspapers demand from the managers free admission for their critic—a demand with which the latter are obliged to comply, in order to avoid giving the newspapers offence. This we think an unjust tax, if ever there was one. Granting that there might be shown some ground of claim for the admission of one person, it surely never could be thought necessary for the business of the newspaper that it should have free admission for more? Yet how stands the fact? Each London newspaper claims admission for two persons at all times. They also expect to be now and then favoured with an entire box, on which occasions the editor or publisher, or some persons connected with the office, will attend with their whole families. There is even one paper of unusual power which claims from each theatre the privilege of writing out an unlimited number of orders of admission for any night's performance! If it be considered that there are upwards of fifty journals in London, the amount of this tax will be seen to be not small. If it be further considered that the theatrical profession is pre-eminently a struggling one, an estimate of the humanity attending the imposition may be formed. The poor manager is forced to submit, because he cannot afford to incur the hostility of the press. On his best nights he must quietly see a large part of his house filled with emissaries of the press, to the exclusion of those who would pay, and not unfrequently to the annoyance of his proper customers; for it is a peculiarity of the system that it throws into the boxes persons whose proper position is the gallery. Now this is surely a grossly-unconscientious use of power. While such an abuse exists, and while newspaper conductors remain, to all appearance, unperceptive of its real character, we must continue to regard journalism in England as something less pure than it ought to be, and not entitled to any more honour than it at present receives.

To talk of newspaper writers coming forth with a recognisable personality may appear visionary. Our business, however, is to point out where we think the evil lies, and where the remedy might be found. If the necessary change cannot be made, we can only be sorry for the fact. But is such a change altogether hopeless? Against it there are two obstacles. One is custom. It has become a sort of rule to conduct newspapers anonymously. But in a country where Cobbett wrote for many years with his name frankly displayed on his paper, it cannot be said that we are without a precedent for the contrary. The second and greater obstacle is in the difficulty of setting up a paper. Even this would be greatly done away with if newspapers were free from duty. There would then be as little to hinder a man of talent from entering upon the career of a teacher by writing, as from adventuring upon any other profession by which he hoped to make his bread. The men of the press have been so long accustomed to the salaried condition in which they live, as to have lost nearly all sense of the value of an independent position. Slavery has, as usual, worked its worst effect in

reconciling its victims to bear with it. Were they to strain, even in the present circumstances, for the true command of the organs through which they condescend to blow, they would probably be more successful than they at present dream of, and the first taste of the edifying effect of their independence would make them wonder that they had so long submitted to their present degradation.

FANCHON.

'MICHEL,' said old Blaise Pastoror one day to his son, 'I wish I could see you lifting up your head a little, and thinking of taking another wife.' Michel, instead of lifting up his head, only shook it very sadly. 'I know well what a loss you experienced in Marguerite,' continued the father, 'and I understand your feelings. But it is now two years since she died, and it is time you began to rouse yourself from this unavailing grief. Your children are of an age to need a mother's care; my wife is growing old, like myself, and she is not equal to the fatigue of looking after the young ones; and when they choose to run away from her to the edge of the pond, or under the horse's feet, she can't overtake them.'

'What you say is true enough, father,' answered Michel; 'but where shall I get a wife like Marguerite?' 'There is no telling till you try,' answered Blaise. 'Marguerite was a good wife, a good mother, and an excellent woman in every respect; but it would be hard to think there are no more such left in the world! And I am certain if she could speak to you from heaven, where she no doubt is, that she would give you the advice I am giving you. Suppose your mother were to die, who is to take care of your children when you are out all day about the farm?'

'Well, father, I'll think of it,' said Michel. 'But I know no women. Where am I to look for a wife? If you wish me to take one, choose for me yourself.'

'Why,' said Blaise, 'there are several things to be considered. First, you must not marry a very young woman; she will be thoughtless, and neglect your children perhaps.'

'And if she's older, she may ill-treat them,' said Michel. 'For what I see, they are as likely to suffer by my giving them a mother as by wanting one.'

'We must be cautious in our choice,' answered Blaise. 'But God be thanked good women are more plenty than bad ones everywhere!'

'That's true,' answered Michel. 'I daresay Pauline or Louise Médoc, or little Catherine Sylvestre, would either of them do well enough.'

'Too young,' said the old man, shaking his head; 'too young, and too poor.'

'Young they are certainly, and poor too,' said Michel; 'but I shouldn't like to marry an old woman, and where I'm to find a rich one that will have me I don't know.'

'I wouldn't recommend an old woman either,' said Blaise; 'but one about your own age—eight or nine-and-twenty say; and as for money, if there's none in this parish, there may be in the next. What would you say to old Gerard's daughter Isabel?'

'I never saw her,' answered Michel.

'It's a good while since I saw her either,' said Blaise; 'but she was a fine-looking girl then; and being an only daughter, she will have everything her father leaves. That will be no trifle; and as he wishes to see her married—for she's nearly as old as you are—there will be no objection on his part at all events.'

'What!' said Michel; 'have you spoken to him on the subject?'

'Well, to say the truth I have,' answered Blaise. 'When you saw me talking to him at the fair last week, he was remarking that it was time you shook off your grief for poor Marguerite, more especially as you had been such a good husband, and had nothing to reproach yourself with.'

'Thank God for that!' said Michel.

'And when I said I wished I could see you married again, he gave me a hint that he shouldn't be sorry if you were to take a fancy to his girl.'

'Well, father,' said Michel, 'she is the same to me as another, for I can never love any woman again as I loved my Marguerite; so, since you wish it, I'll think about this marriage with Isabel Gerard.'

'Thinking about it wont do: you must make her think about it too,' said Blaise, 'or somebody may step in before you. You must go over to Grandpré and see her.'

'That will be a day to go, and a day to come back, and a day there,' said Michel; 'and how can I be spared just now in harvest-time?'

'We mustn't mind a day or two when there's a good wife to be got,' answered Blaise. 'Besides, to-morrow's Saturday. If you take the brown mare, and start to-morrow afternoon, you'll be at Grandpré before night; and as there's a moon, it wont signify even if you are a little late.'

So it was settled that Michel should go on the following day to Grandpré, to try if he could love Isabel Gerard; but it was with a heavy heart he made his preparations, for love so formally invited is apt to be shy: Cupid likes to pay his visits when he's least expected.

On the same evening that this conversation took place, when the children were in bed, and the rest of the family were sitting round the hearth, there came in an old woman called Barbette, who lived in a poor hut on the borders of Blaise Pastoror's farm. Twice a week they gave her broth, and she was now come for her allowance.

'Sit down and rest yourself, Barbette,' said Margot, the farmer's wife, 'and let us hear how the world goes with you.'

'Not worse than with other people I believe,' answered Barbette; 'but I'm going to lose my daughter, little Fanchon.'

'Lose her! How? Is she going to be married?'

asked Margot. 'Married! Poor child, who would marry her?' said Barbette. 'No, no; but she's going to Grandpré. I've got a situation for her there at Farmer Gerard's. It's a hard thing to part with her; but she must go to service some time; and the winter will be here soon, and if she can earn a little money, she will be able to help me through it.'

'She's such a little creature, that we forget her age,' said Margot; 'but the truth is, it is time she went to service. If she stays at home she may get habits of idleness.'

'No fear of that,' answered Barbette. 'I believe Fanchon would rather go down on her knees and scrub the stones in the high road than be doing nothing. She'll be a treasure to anybody that gets her I can tell you; and I only wish you could have taken her into your service.'

'Perhaps we may another year,' said Margot; 'but, in the meantime, it will be a good thing for her to go to Grandpré. Gerard keeps a good house, and she'll improve herself there. When does she leave you?'

'She's to be there to-morrow,' answered Barbette; 'but it's a long way for such a young creature to go alone.'

'She needn't go alone,' said Blaise. 'Michel is going to-morrow to Grandpré, and he shall take charge of her; and, by the by,' added he, 'as Fanchon is going to live with friend Gerard, she may do us a good turn; and thereupon he communicated to Barbette his hopes of bringing about a marriage betwixt Michel and Isabel, begging that, as Fanchon was well acquainted with them all, she would say a good word for the family in general, and for his son in particular.'

'She may do that with a clear conscience,' said Barbette; 'for happy'll be the wife that calls Michel Pastoror husband. I'll speak to her about it, and,

depend on it, he won't miss his mark if they'll take Fanchon's bail for him.'

Michel, who had been pacing up and down the orchard, thinking seriously of what was before him, now came in, and having learned the destination of Fanchon, he consented willingly to escort her. Accordingly, on the ensuing afternoon the little damsel presented herself at the stable-door with a small bundle in her hand, ready for the road, and having mounted behind the young farmer, they started on their journey with the good wishes of the assembled family. It was the first time she had left her poor home, and her old mother, and the young girls of her own age that she had grown up with; and whilst Michel jogged along, his mind absorbed in his own troubles, the tears were streaming down her face as she thought of those she was leaving, and the strangers she was going among. All at once Michel became aware that she was weeping. 'What's the matter, little Fanchon?' said he.

'I'm thinking of home and my poor mother,' said she, endeavouring to restrain the flowing tears.

'Ah,' said Michel, 'it makes one's heart sad to leave those we love if it's only for a short time, for one never feels sure of seeing them again. Who could have thought, when I left my poor Marguerite to go to Rouen for two days, that she would be dead before my return! And that puts me in mind that I didn't see my little Lep when I came away: where could he be, I wonder?'

'I saw him in the morning running along the high road,' said Fanchon: 'I thought you had sent him a message perhaps.'

'Not I,' answered Michel; 'but my mother may, to keep him out of the way, for he wanted sadly to come with me to Grandpré.'

'And why not have brought him?' said Fanchon. 'He's no weight, and the mare could have carried us all three; besides, I could walk a good part of the way. I love little Lep, and I should have liked to have him here with us.'

'Why, I wished to bring him, but my father said it wouldn't do to go courting with a child at my back. But I'm talking of what you know nothing about.'

'I beg your pardon,' said Fanchon; 'I do know all about it. I know you are going to marry the rich farmer's daughter that's to be my mistress.'

'Then you know more than I do,' said Michel. 'She may not choose to have me.'

'Why shouldn't she have you?' said Fanchon. 'Didn't you make a good husband to Marguerite? You're well off too, and as young as she is, for what I hear.'

'But I have three children,' said Michel.

'So much the better; it will make the merrier home. Besides, an't they the prettiest children in the whole parish, and the best brought up? For my part I think the very sight of little Lep would have won her heart at once.'

'Ay, if she likes children; but suppose she does not?'

'Pooh! if she doesn't like children, she won't like to marry you; so there'll be an end of it. But they say she's rich and handsome, and I never heard an ill word spoken of her; so you're wrong to take up notions before you've reason.'

'I'll tell you what, Fanchon,' said Michel, 'you are sharp and quick, and you are going to live in her father's house. After you have been there a week or two, you must tell me what you think of her.'

'No,' answered Fanchon; 'I won't promise that. I might make a mistake, and so do mischief.' Just as she said this the mare shied. 'What's that?' she asked.

'It's some animal in that bush,' answered Michel: 'a strayed lamb perhaps.'

'It's a child!' said Fanchon. 'Why, it's your little Lep I declare, and asleep!'

'So it is,' said Michel, alighting from the mare. 'To think of the child being here alone, and so far from home!' When the boy opened his large eyes, he was

amazed; for his father having refused to take him to Grandpré, he had set off some hours before, with the intention of watching on the road till Michel passed, and thus gaining his object; but weary with walking, he sat down and fell asleep, and now being suddenly awakened, he could not remember how he got there. Michel was angry, for he neither liked to leave the boy there nor to take him to Grandpré, and while he scolded, Lep cried. However, Fanchon, siding with Lep, the youngster carried the day, and Michel placing him on the saddle before him, on they went. The child was so delighted at first, that he forgot he had had no dinner; but they had not gone far before the jogging of the horse reminded him of his hunger.

'Didn't I tell you so?' said Michel impatiently. 'What's to be done now? I don't see a house where one could get a mouthful of bread for miles round!'

'Don't fret,' said Fanchon, quietly opening her bundle; 'I've got a bit of bread and cheese here. Take it, Lep, and eat away.'

Lep did not require to be twice invited; but Michel said, 'What will you do yourself, Fanchon, without anything till we get to Grandpré? We've a long way to go yet.'

'Oh,' said Fanchon, 'young stomachs can't wait, and mine can; besides, grief at leaving my poor mother has spoiled my appetite, and I don't want anything.'

The next thing that happened was, that as soon as Lep's stomach was full, he became so sleepy, that he was like to fall off the mare, and Michel could not guide her, and at the same time hold the child and a bag of game, which his father had given him as a present to his intended; but Fanchon said, 'Give me the game-bag, and I'll tie it to my bundle, and then you can sling them before you, while I carry the boy in my arms.'

So on they jogged in this way some miles farther, till they reached a wood which they had to pass through; but by this time it was getting late, and though the moon was rising, there arose also such a thick mist, that they could not find their way, while the horse frequently stumbled over the broken branches and the stumps of trees. After trying first one path and then another, and always finding they were wrong, Fanchon proposed that they should alight and walk, 'being nearer the ground, we may perhaps make out where we are; and while you lead the mare, I'll take care of the child,' said she. As the wood was intersected here and there by ditches and ponds, they were in less danger on their feet than on horseback, and they got on for some distance without accident; but on reaching at length a spot where the thicket terminated, they found themselves on the edge of a large marsh, which Michel knew to be in an opposite direction to the road they should have gone. So they turned back again, and made another attempt, but with no better success; and to add to their misfortunes, whilst Michel was seeking for his hat, which the branch of a tree knocked off his head, the mare slipped the bridle from his hand, and trotted off.

'What's to be done now?' cried he. 'The child can walk no further, and I'm afraid to leave you here while I go after the mare, lest I should not be able to find you again; and if we stay here all night, the child will get his death, and you too, with the cold. Besides, I'm by no means sure there may not be a wolf or two hereabouts!'

'We must light a fire,' said Fanchon. 'Here's a large oak which will keep off the rain, and I feel plenty of dry sticks crackling under my feet; and then we must make a bed for the boy, and let him sleep till the mist clears off.'

'That's easily said,' answered Michel; 'but where are we to get fire? And the mare has run off with my saddle-bags and everything we had to make a bed with!'

'I've my tinder-box in my pocket,' said Fanchon, as she set briskly to work to gather sticks; 'and we must clear a dry spot and wrap him up in my cloak.'

'And what's to become of you without it?' cried Michel.

'The fire will warm me, and I can keep myself awake,' she answered; 'but the child can't, and he'll get his death if we don't take care of him while he sleeps.'

It is astonishing what resources there are in a well-disposed, active, good-tempered woman, and how helpless, in certain emergencies, a man is beside her! Fanchon had a good blazing fire and a bed of dry leaves under the oak ready for Lep in no time; then she wrapped him in her cloak, and covered him with the game-bag, which, together with her own bundle, had slipped off the mare as she kicked up her heels and ran off.

'You must keep up the fire,' said she, 'while I watch the child, lest the sparks should reach him.'

'Upon my word you're a capital little lass!' said Michel. 'You know how to take care of a child, and to make a fire in the wood, and do everything that's useful. I was beginning to feel cross, I can tell you, at the thoughts of passing the night here in the cold.'

'And when one loses one's temper, one generally loses one's presence of mind too,' said Fanchon. 'For my part I have often been obliged to keep the sheep on the hills in cold weather, and I should have been badly off if I hadn't known how to make a fire!'

'What you say about losing one's temper is true enough,' answered Michel; 'but how to help it when things go so perversely?'

'Just remember that losing your temper will only make them worse,' said Fanchon. 'My mother and I have had many a hard struggle, but we never lost heart till it came to the parting-to-day; but your mother says she'll perhaps hire me next year if I learn to be a good servant at Grandpré; so I shall keep up my courage, and live in hopes of seeing dear home again.'

'I wish she had hired you at once,' said Michel, 'instead of sending me this wildgoose chase after a wife. You could have taken care of my children as well as any wife.' But as Michel sat with his knees towards the fire opposite Fanchon, he now, for the first time in his life, as the light shone on her face, made the discovery that she was a very pretty girl. 'How old are you, Fanchon?' said he.

'Eighteen,' said she; 'but I'm so little, that nobody takes me to be so old.'

'Why, you're old enough to be married!' said Michel.

'Ha, ha!' laughed Fanchon, 'who'd marry me I wonder?'

'That remains to be seen,' said he. 'Have you never thought of a husband yet?'

'Never!' answered she. 'I'll never marry till I have a hundred crowns to begin housekeeping with.'

'But it will take you many years to save that while you've your mother to help out of your wages,' said Michel.

'But I can wait,' answered Fanchon. 'Folk that live single may die as happy and go to Heaven as fast as the married ones.'

'That's true,' said Michel thoughtfully; 'but it's better to marry.' And here he fell into a reverie, out of which he by and by awoke, declaring that he was dying with hunger, and had nothing to eat.

'Not so bad as that neither,' said Fanchon. 'As we came through the wood I plucked the chestnuts that were bobbing in my face, and when I lighted the fire, I set them on the ashes. They must be about done by this time I think; and if they're not enough for you, you can take one of the birds you brought for your intended, and I'll roast it for you betwixt a couple of stones, as we used to do the larks we caught on the hill when I kept the sheep.'

'What a brute I am, never to remember that you gave your bread and cheese to Lep! Why, you must be starving, Fanchon! I had a good dinner before I started, and yet I'm as hungry as a wolf!'

'It's all habit,' said Fanchon: 'you are accustomed

to your three or four meals a day at the farm, but I am used to fasting, and I don't miss a meal now and then.'

'That's another excellent quality in a wife,' said Michel laughing.

'But I'm not a wife, nor like to be,' said Fanchon.

Here Michel fell into another reverie. 'He'll be no fool that chooses you,' said he.

'I hope not, for I shouldn't like to marry a fool,' said she.

'I daresay you think me a stupid fellow,' said he, after a pause; 'for I can do nothing, and you can do everything. But you see, Fanchon, I was set to the plough, and to guide the oxen through the furrows, when I was but a little lad; and as I only worked on my father's farm, I always found my meals ready when I wanted them; and then I married young, and my poor Marguerite took care of me; but I've nobody to mind me now.'

'Couldn't Fanchon take care of you, papa?' asked little Lep, who had been awakened by the smell of the cookery, and was now sitting up and waiting for his share.

'To be sure I can,' said Fanchon, who was so far from thinking of Michel as a husband for herself, that she was not in the least embarrassed by the child's question; for Blaise Pastorer was esteemed a rich farmer in that part of the country, and Fanchon's mother was in a great degree dependent on the charity of the family.

'Come,' said she to Michel when he had finished his supper, 'I see you can't keep your head up to talk, so you had better lie down by the child, and go to sleep at once, and I'll watch the fire.'

'No, it is you that must lie down, Fanchon,' said Michel, 'and I'll watch you both; for I have fifty things stirring in my head, and though I were to try never so, I could not sleep a wink.'

'Fifty things! That's too many for one head,' said Fanchon merrily.

'Well, if I haven't fifty, I've one that I haven't been able to get out of it for the last two hours, and I should like to tell you what it is.'

'I think I could tell you,' said Fanchon: 'you wish you were at home, and in bed, instead of running the country after a wife.'

'A woman I never saw!' said Michel. 'I've nine minds to go back again, Fanchon. What do you say? Will you go with me?'

'I go with you!—no,' said she. 'What would my poor mother do next winter if I lose the situation she has got for me with so much trouble? And as for you, I say you'd be very wrong. Why should you take such a prejudice against a girl you have never seen? Think of your good parents too, that wish you to marry. What's your objection?'

'None, if I may choose for myself,' answered Michel.

'Wait till you see her,' said she.

In spite of her brave little heart and good spirits, fatigue began to tell against Fanchon at last, and the next time Michel spoke to her she was nodding. 'Come, my girl,' said he, 'lie down beside the boy, and rest till the morning dawns, and then I'll wake you both.' So Fanchon stretched herself on the bed of leaves, and taking the child in her arms, was soon fast asleep. Then Michel spread the cloak over her; and as he looked at her sweet innocent young face, with little Lep lying on her bosom, he said, 'Where have my eyes been all this while, that I have had this treasure under them, and never found it out? I thought she was a child; but though she's as fair and delicate as a white doe to look at, she's as hardy as a young heifer, and as tender and brave as a good woman; and that's what she is, in good faith, and a fit wife for any man. But what's this to me?' he exclaimed, turning away. 'My father and mother would never hear of my marrying her, even if she would have me.' Still, reason with himself as he would, he could not get out of his head that Fanchon was the wife to make him happy, and that he

never should be able to fancy any other. However, the rain having ceased, and the moon shining out more clearly, he by and by thought it advisable to arouse the sleepers, and endeavour to recover their lost path. Fanchon was very drowsy, and as for Lep, there was no waking him at all; but Michel took him in his arms, and they trudged away for some time in hopes of finding their way out of the wood. And accordingly, after walking for upwards of an hour, Michel exclaimed joyously that they were approaching a house, for that he saw a light shining through the trees; so they took heart, and hastened forwards; but instead of a house, they found the light proceeded from their own fire, which the breeze had blown into a flame; whereupon Michel lost all patience, exclaiming they must be bewitched; but Fanchon said, 'Come, let us make the best of it. One night in the wood wont kill us; but we must make a bed for the child again, and cover him up warm, for I begin to feel the cold air of the morning.' But though Fanchon's patience was not exhausted, her limbs were; and turning as white as the handkerchief that covered her neck, she was seized with a shivering, her teeth began to chatter, and she sunk to the ground almost insensible.

'Oh, Fanchon, my girl!' cried Michel, lifting her in his arms to the bed she had made for the boy, 'it is my fault that you are exposed to all this trouble and fatigue. I undertook to protect you to Grandpré, and I have done you nothing but mischief. But forgive me, Fanchon, and I'll make you amends for it all if you'll take me for your husband!'

'I!' cried Fanchon, somewhat recalled to herself by amazement. 'You're raving, Michel: you don't know what you're talking about.'

'I know very well what I'm talking about,' answered he; 'and I know that you're the only woman to make me happy; and that you'll be a kind mother to my children, and a good daughter to my old father and mother; so only say that you'll marry me, and as soon as it's light enough to see our way, instead of going on to Grandpré, we'll turn our faces the other way, and go back to the farm.'

'It's impossible,' said Fanchon, shaking her head. 'It can't be; so think of it no more, Michel, but go forward and see Isabel Gerard, as you promised your parents when you left them.'

'It's of no use,' said Michel; 'it would only be an affront to go and see a girl I'm determined not to marry. But why wont you have me, Fanchon? Wasn't I a good husband to my poor Marguerite? Didn't she, on her deathbed, bid me take another wife? And didn't she bid me tell her that I had never given my first one a moment's cause to regret that she had taken me for her husband?'

'I know that's true,' answered Fanchon with the tears in her eyes. 'My mother, who was helping to nurse her in her last illness, heard her say so.'

'And didn't you hear what Lep said to-night? It was the voice of my Marguerite speaking through her child!'

Fanchon, however, was not to be persuaded; and although she gave no reason, she so steadily refused him, that, quite discouraged, Michel at length ceased to speak; and while she lay down again beside the boy, he sat with his head resting despondingly on his hands till the morning broke. Then he turned to rouse her, but he saw she was awake, and that she had not slept any more than himself. Having inquired their way from an early woodcutter, they once more started for Grandpré; and as soon as they reached the entrance of the village, Fanchon stopped, and holding out her hand, bade him good-by; 'for,' said she, 'I can't go to my new mistress till I have washed my face and hands, and made myself tidy. I shall come there by and by; and in the meantime, Michel, I shall forget all you have said to me, and I hope you will marry Isabel Gerard, and that she may make you a good wife, and your children a good mother!'

'I wont have any mother but Fanchon,' said Lep.

'You sha'n't have any other,' said Michel; 'and as she wont be your mother, you shall have none.' Whereupon, bidding Fanchon farewell, he returned home with the child, while she proceeded on her way.

In certain parts of France, where it is customary for all the married, as well as the single, children and grandchildren to reside together under the same roof as long as it is possible for them to do so, there is a remarkable degree of deference observed towards the elders of the family; and thus Michel, though nearly thirty years of age, felt some misgiving at the thoughts of presenting himself at the farm without having fulfilled the object of his journey, and without being able to explain to the satisfaction of his parents the reason of his return; for to say that he had fallen in love with Barbette's little daughter, and that she had refused him into the bargain, he knew would appear to them rather a subject for amazement and laughter than commiseration. However, he was so good a son, and so worthy a man, that although disappointed, the old people did not think proper to press the matter further when he declared his determination not to marry Isabel Gerard; and they contented themselves with looking about in other directions, and recommending to his notice first one and then another fair damsel of the surrounding districts. But it was all in vain; Michel would have nothing to say to any of them; and although he went about his work as diligently as ever, everybody saw he was an altered man. Of Fanchon he heard nothing; but as there followed a very hard winter, Barbette would have suffered exceedingly, had it not somehow miraculously happened that her stock of potatoes, and flour, and firewood never diminished! It did not signify how freely she used them, she had always plenty; and although at first, fearing the devil might have a hand in the business, she had some thoughts of confessing to the priest, she comforted herself with the idea that as she had not entered into any compact with the Evil One, he had no right to expect any condescension on her part in return for his benefits. When the year was expired, Fanchon came home again; but much to the annoyance of her mother, and the surprise of Blaise Pastor and his wife, she declined to enter into their service. Michel guessed her reason, and it stung him to the quick to see how resolutely she avoided him; but it happened that while she was making inquiries for another situation, the scarlet fever broke out in the neighbourhood, and there was scarcely a house that had not one or more children in bed with it. Among the rest Michel's three children were all attacked at one time; and in such an emergency as this Fanchon did not wait to be asked—she offered her assistance at once. In spite, however, of all the care and attention that were lavished on them, the two youngest died, to the inexpressible grief of their father, who doted on them for their own sakes, and as relics of his beloved Marguerite; but Lep recovered; and it was whilst he was lying in bed convalescent that he said to Fanchon, to whom he had become passionately attached, 'Fanchon, I want you to promise me something. Will you?'

'Yes, dear, I will if I can.'

'Oh yes, you can very well if you like.'

'Well, what is it, dear?' asked Fanchon.

'Promise that you'll be my mamma!' said Lep.

'Oh, that's nonsense!' said Fanchon, rising suddenly, for Margot was in the room. 'Lie down, and let me cover you up while I fetch your broth.'

'No I wont,' said Lep; 'I'll not lie down till you promise to be my mamma,' and he seized hold of her apron, and held her fast.

'Fie, Lep!' said Fanchon. 'Let me go!'

'You thought I was asleep that night in the wood when papa asked you to be my mamma,' said Lep; 'but I wasn't; and when we were coming home, he promised me that he would never give me any mamma but you. Oh, Fanchon, do!' he said, throwing himself into her arms; 'for now that God has taken away my brother

and sister, what shall I do without a mamma?' And yet weak and excitable from his illness, the boy burst into an uncontrollable passion of tears and sobs.

'Oh, Lep! Lep! what can I do to comfort you, darling?' said Fanchon, almost crying herself at the boy's distress and her own confusion.

'Do what he asks, my child!' said the old woman, coming to the bedside. 'I understand now the cause of poor Michel's despondency, and why you wouldn't come to live with us, Fanchon. But perhaps you don't like my son? Perhaps you couldn't be happy with him? Is that the reason you refused him?'

'No, ma'am,' said Fanchon, hiding her face amongst Lep's curly locks.

'Perhaps it was because you thought we should not like you for a daughter?' Fanchon did not answer. 'Well, Fanchon, perhaps you were right; and did you tell my son your motive for refusing him?'

'Never,' answered Fanchon.

'You're a brave, good girl,' said the mother as she left the room.

'Wont you be my mamma now, Fanchon?' said Lep, throwing his arms round her neck. 'Granny wishes it, and I wish it, and papa wishes it.'

'I don't know that,' said Fanchon.

'But I do,' said Lep; 'for when he asked me this morning if there was anything I wished for that he could give me, I asked him to give me Fanchon for my mamma; and he said he should be very glad indeed, but that Fanchon wouldn't. But you will now, wont you?'

'Perhaps!' whispered Fanchon.

'She says *perhaps*, papa: make her say *yes*!' cried Lep to Michel, who now entered the room with his father and mother.

Michel did make her say *yes*; and ere many days were passed, Fanchon became Lep's mamma, to the joy and astonishment of old Barbette, and the infinite satisfaction of all parties concerned.

THE PROCESSION-CATERPILLAR.

SOME interesting communications have recently appeared in the Belgian and German journals concerning the procession-caterpillar (*Bombyx processiona*, Linn.), an account of which may prove acceptable to our readers. Before proceeding to these, however, we may refer to what is said about this curious animal in Reaumur's valuable *Memoirs on the Natural History of Insects*. The *Bombyx processiona* is a caterpillar of medium size that infests the oak. The hairs are as long as the insect itself, and after rising perpendicularly upwards, become curved downwards. White at first, both they and the skin become reddened with age. Each family of these caterpillars forms a republic of from 600 to 800 individuals, which never quit each other, eating together, and crawling together, and remaining in close contact during their condition of chrysalides. The butterflies, however, which result from these disperse in every direction.

The caterpillars encamp on the oak, where they weave webs for their domiciles; but after changing their skins, they abandon these, and form new ones from time to time until they acquire two-thirds of their complete size, when they settle themselves in a fixed abode. The nest containing so many is necessarily large, and is found at various heights on the trunk of the oak (*Quercus robur*); but in spite of its large size, so much does it resemble the tuberosities or knots commonly seen on the tree, that unless when purposely sought for, it is very apt to be overlooked. It varies in shape, being sometimes as much as from 18 to 20 inches long by 5 or 6 broad, and rising from 2 to 4 above the level of the tree.

During their movements, the caterpillars follow a leader as implicitly as if they had chosen him to direct their march. They all move, stop, and recommence their progress exactly as he does; and from their disposition to follow his motions in regular array, Reaumur called them *processionary* or *evolutionary caterpillars*. He took

a branch of oak containing a nest home with him, and observed their movements for several days with the greatest care and interest. First a single caterpillar crawled out, others immediately following him in single file to the length of about two feet, each individual having his head close against the tail of the one preceding him. The file now became twofold; by and by these insect soldiers came three abreast; and after a while four, and then five, six, seven, and eight abreast, with the utmost regularity; the caterpillars always close to the tails of those preceding them, each rank of the line dressed as if by a drill sergeant, and all following implicitly the movements, however tortuous, of their leader. On some occasions Reaumur contrived that this leader should pass over a space apparently too small to deploy all his followers; but he nevertheless accomplished the feat by pursuing numerous tortuous lines, which soon became studded with caterpillars marking their sinuous course. Sometimes, when in search of a new portion of the oak to devour, numerous evolutions and complicated figures are formed; the head of the moving body being always angular, and the width of the rest of the line increasing with it, sometimes formed of fifteen or twenty abreast. These movements in search of food take place in the evening, and if the caterpillars are observed beyond the limits of the nest during the day-time, they are seen to be gathered together in contorted and motionless masses. When in their nests, too, they lie thus interlaced, and the chrysalides are stowed so closely, that they seem to form a cake of varying dimensions. After lying so for about a month, the butterflies all escape in the same twenty-four hours, some time in the middle of August, and rapidly disperse; the evacuated cocoons then having a strong resemblance to a wasp's nest.

Too much care cannot be taken in handling these caterpillars, as also the chrysalides and the cocoons, after the butterflies have escaped. Reaumur, acting at first incautiously in this respect, suffered some inflammation in the hands, face, and eyes in consequence; and some ladies who were observing the curious movements of the animals, without handling them at all, found their skins irritated, though in a less degree. When in his walks Reaumur merely disturbed their nests with his stick, he found some degree of the same irritation ensue; and freely covering the hands with oil was found to afford no protection to those handling the chrysalides or their husks. He attributed these irritating effects to some of the small hairs which abound on the surface of the animal. The long hairs he considered nearly innocuous; but if he removed these from the cast-off skin of the caterpillar, and then rubbed his hand with it, he experienced an irritation equal to that caused by the strongest nettles.

Professor Morren has recently read a paper on this insect at the Belgian Academy. He says that an animal so utterly destructive to so valuable a tree as the oak is fortunately rare in Belgium; but that in 1847 and 1848 great numbers were seen in certain places, furnishing opportunities of observing the frightful damages the animal is capable of causing, as well as the singular habits described by Reaumur. In 1847 it invaded a portion of the forest of Hertogenwald, situated on the confines of Prussia, and did great mischief to the oaks there, attacking especially the leaves of the larger trees. Its appearance in this forest, and the direction its ravages took, led to the belief of its being a true emigration in the direction of east to west from Germany to Belgium. In 1848 it was hoped the pest had not reappeared; but although in May its existence could be nowhere discovered, yet during a botanical excursion in the vicinity of Maestricht in July, the author and his pupils had full opportunity of observing this caterpillar migrating from tree to tree as it successively destroyed the leaves of each. He describes as frightful the spectacle of whole masses as large as a man's head, of these voracious animals, or processions of them marching on their destructive mission in troops of fifteen or twenty feet long. He was astonished at the apathy of the inhabitants, who took not the slightest step to avert the mischief, although the creatures were rapidly destroying the white oaks growing in

contact with the heated metal, two huge tubes of which proceed from the stove; and on reaching the main-deck, are divided on each side into two smaller branches, which run round the officers' cabins, and towards the fore-castle, thus completely warming the habitable deck. Outside the cabins is an apparatus for washing and cooking, all in one. It resembles in shape an old-fashioned plate-warmer, being, however, very much higher. There is a huge grate underneath: the upper part has ranges of shelves for baking; it slips off, and the top of the oven reversed fixes into its place, and becomes a copper for washing or boiling. Close to it is a Downton's pump for pumping the ship, and near the fore-castle another for pumping up either fresh or salt water. These pumps are on the hydraulic principle. They look like huge copper or brass vases; and the tubes or funnels running up from them on deck, in order to prevent the water within from freezing, are covered closely and carefully with the coarse sort of flannel of which our snow-boots are made. Two stand together, divided by a brass plate of a circular form, with large, round, flat pieces surrounding it. There is a movable centre-piece of the same metal, which, fixed on one or other of the rounds, sends up either fresh or salt water, as you choose, by its pressure; or—as in the case of the pump further aft—pumps out the ship; thus saving the sailors the terrible and depressing labour they used to have when such exertion became necessary in days of yore.

Near the fore-castle is a machine for dissolving ice or snow for use. A sort of iron shoot receives the snow on deck, when shovelled in by the men, and it descends through this passage into a huge iron reservoir, beneath which is a furnace. Here it is melted, and runs through a pipe into the tubs or buckets placed to receive it. Mr Brown told us that ice would be first melted in it, as it would be some time ere they saw snow. We were then shown the ice-saws, by means of which a passage of miles has been cut through the ice. They are of huge dimensions, with tremendous teeth. The method of using them is by fixing a triangle, to the apex of which a block is hung; a strong rope runs through it, to one end of which the handle of the saw is attached; the other end has a number of smaller ropes proceeding from it, by means of which the sailors work the saw through the solid ice, and are thus enabled to open (as we have said) a passage of some length. Such are some of the mechanical facilities that science has afforded for encountering the terrible north. Indeed we came to the conclusion that a residence on board, in cabins kept up to such a temperature, could not be very uncomfortable; but we were reminded of the necessity of going on deck, and into the air, and this of course led to an explanation of the means used to prevent the effects to be apprehended from such a sudden change of atmosphere. Her Majesty provides the members of the expedition with boots which reach higher than the knee, of the very thickest flannel, with soles of cork two inches thick; the inner dress is of flannel, next to that chamois leather, which, preventing evaporation, retains the heat; then, if they choose, another garment lined with fur, or a greatcoat lined with sables, one of which we saw: a sort of helmet is to be worn on the head, to which is attached a mask of knitted wool, wadded and lined with silk, and doubly thick over the nose, leaving only an aperture for the eyes. These masks are of different colours; and the whole attire, especially when the hands disappear in the huge fur gauntlets which complete it, is almost ludicrous.

The stores laid in are necessarily abundant; a transport follows with them, to be transferred to the vessels when they reach a certain latitude. The officers' private stores are, however, on board the separate ships to which they belong. Amongst them were some very large tin cases of preserved potatoes, looking like a quantity of rough coarse powder or meal, but which, when mixed with boiling water, make in a few minutes an excellent

dish of mashed potatoes. In answer to our inquiries as to whether there was any difficulty in getting the ships manned, we learned that the sailors were very anxious to enter, and that three or four times the number of the crew might have been obtained, but that great care was necessary in the selection of the men with regard to health and strength, an *old scar* even rendering them unfit for the climate they were to endure. The officers appeared in great spirits, and declared that if their lost comrades are still living, it is impossible to miss finding them, the search is so well planned. Heaven grant it! and that their own voyage may be achieved in safety. They have a brave and experienced commander, a most humane and courteous gentleman, who will doubtless render their life on ship-board as pleasant as one of great fatigue and privation can be, for they have to anticipate a winter of solemn gloom, and many an unforeseen peril, ere they look upon merry England again. They bear with them the best wishes of the public, and as it is not a mere mania for (practically) useless discovery which sends them forth, we do not deem it quite as much a matter of regret as usual that England should peril so many of her best and bravest on the enterprise.

We left the Arctic ships highly gratified by our visit, everything but the balloons being then on board. Government has done much to alleviate their discomforts and dangers; but we trust that *one* source of comfort has not been overlooked—that is, a good supply of entertaining and instructive books for all. Not a common ship's library, but one meet to beguile the tedium of a Polar winter, and render it a period of mental improvement to many. There are now numerous publications admirably suited for such a purpose, and the generosity of the public could not be better exercised than in bestowing them on these or other vessels destined for the Arctic seas.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

PIANOFORTES FOR THE MILLION.

A REGRET was some time ago expressed in the *Journal*,* that since the pianoforte is now the reigning instrument of the civilised world, it should, from its expensiveness, be confined to the comparatively affluent classes. It was suggested that, as much of the costliness of the instrument was caused by fineness of materials not essential to the musical result, it might be possible, by using plainer materials of that kind, to make a considerable reduction of price without any inferiority in essentials. On this hint the respectable firm of Collard and Collard of London have acted, and we have now, by their favour, seen an example of certainly a much more popular class of instruments than what has previously existed. The piano submitted to us is of the cottage size and form: its key-board presents six and a-half octaves. The strings are arranged on a frame strengthened by metal. It is such an instrument as, when of finer external materials, is usually offered by the maker at L.56. The price of this is L.30, being a reduction of nearly one half. The only apparent difference of the instrument from others is in the paleness of the wood forming the case, this being of the common pine instead of mahogany. Yet, far from being in the least inelegant, it has rather a pretty effect, the exterior being highly polished, and having much the appearance of satin wood. As to essentials, the instrument is excellent; its tone is clear, metallic, and rich, and this from end to end of the key-board, while two pedals serve to give the usual modifications to the effect.

While expressing to Messrs Collard and Collard our gratification in finding them so far successful in cheapening the pianoforte, we must take leave to urge further efforts in the same direction, for L.30 is still a price

* No. 306, published on the 10th of November 1843.

which places the instrument beyond the reach of many persons of taste in the middle ranks of life. Let this powerful firm bethink itself of further reductions, even though these should extend to the matters of compass and pedals, so as to offer serviceable pianofortes at, say L.20. This would be a triumph indeed, and we shall hope to see it accomplished.

THE CENTRAL LAKE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

This sheet of water, the discovery of which, in 1849, by three British travellers has already been made familiar to the public, is supposed to lie about latitude 20° 19' south, and longitude 24° east. A writer in the 'Graham's Town Journal' of February 9, 1850, expresses his firm belief that the discharge of its waters is by the well-known river Zambezi, which falls into the Mozambique Channel. He also points out that there is a continual chain of mountains or table-land from this point far to the north, and he recommends that we should now endeavour to push commerce into Africa by that overland course, instead of spending efforts vainly on the coast, where unhealthy atmosphere, the slave trade, and the semi-Portuguese and Arabic character of the inhabitants, compose a formidable opposition. 'In this inland route,' he says, 'there are no fevers to contend with, and the fears and prejudices of the natives, by kindness, gentleness, and gifts, will soon be overcome. With such a road open, what should hinder commerce and civilisation advancing with rapid strides? The natives, instead of being obliged to take their produce and collections from the interior to the sea, at the risk of being plundered and kidnapped for slaves, would find, without any fear at all, a far better market in the interior itself.' The writer concludes by recommending the formation of a Pioneering Society, and pointing out three sundry routes to the lake.

It strikes us that this is a rational plan of procedure for Europeans seeking access to Africa. It is in the high inland grounds that a climate will be found which a European constitution can bear. Push forward lines of civilisation into the centre, and the depraved communities on the coast must languish like limbs which have been cut off by ligatures from communicating with the centre of organisation.

NOVELTY IN NEEDLEWORK.

We have seen some specimens of what appears to us to be a new application of the art of pictorial embroidery, and of a kind which gives more artistical scope than the usual laborious essays of the needle. The specimens are chiefly landscape; and unless the spectator stands very close to the picture, or the light shines strongly upon it, he can have no suspicion that it is anything else than an oil-painting. The effect is not produced by what would be called *stippling* in painting, but by bold splashes, so to speak, of the coloured wool, thrown down horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, according to the rules of drawing. The views are obviously taken from nature; and one now before us of Fast Castle, with the cliffs half buried in gloom, and the agitated waters, touched here and there by the red sunset, exhibits a feeling of art not very common even among the wielders of the pencil.

These productions, though worthy of attention from their intrinsic merit, have likewise an interest attached to them from the circumstances under which they are brought before the public. The artist, Mrs Maclauchlan, a young married lady, is the daughter of M'Kenzie of Gruinord, the last male representative of the earls of Seaforth and barons of Fortrose. She has now been thrown, by unmerited misfortunes, upon her own resources, and cultivates, as a means of support for herself and her mother, the elegant accomplishments she studied under very different prospects. Her works have been purchased by various members of the nobility, and there is one of them, we believe, in the possession of her Majesty; but as, owing to the material used, they are not admissible into the pictorial exhibitions, it is requi-

site that other steps should be taken to draw towards them the attention of the public. We shall be much gratified if this brief notice should assist in any degree in obtaining for them the desired publicity.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF CAIRO.

Of the outside of Egypt little or nothing remains undescribed by the tourist; and if it be not an exhausted country, it is only because the variety of moulds into which the Almighty has cast the minds of writers is inexhaustible, and not because there are temples unmeasured and unlimned, or natural phenomena unobserved or unaccounted for. But the interior life of Egypt is still a wide and interesting field for research, which has been only glanced at by the thousand-and-one fashionable tourists who have published on that country, the unique works of the Lane family being the exceptions that prove the rule.

The obstacles to these studies are the great difficulties of the Arabic language, and still more the fanaticism of the people on religious subjects. In China, where political motives restrict the locomotion of the traveller, the pure morality of a Confucius, and the shining humility of a Mencius, have produced a considerable tolerance—a tolerance which would have been extended to Christianity if Jesuitism had not made it a political engine, and compelled the government to deal alike with matters of fact and matters of faith. No idea of desecration interferes with the free entrance of a European into their temples, or with the perusal of their sacred books, or free inquiry into their doctrines. But in the Ottoman empire, the European is in other matters not only obstructed, but forwarded and assisted. Acts of arrogance and even outrage on his part often pass with impunity; but the people abhor the sight of a Frank costume in their mosques; and in the *azhar*, as the university of Cairo is called, it is absolutely prohibited, except in the rare and extraordinary case of the visit of a member of a house reigning in Europe. The Chinese hates the foreigner for his barbarous nation, and not for his difference of faith; while the Egyptian detests the difference of faith rather than the difference of nation, and would make the Koran a sealed book to unbelievers.

To make a semblance of joining in the divine service of Moslems for literary purposes is what no right-thinking man would descend to now-a-days, however it may have been considered in the time of Burkhardt. On the other hand, to pay a literary and historical visit to Cairo, and leave out the university of the *azhar*, would be to enact the tragedy of 'Hamlet' with the part of the prince omitted. I therefore adopted a middle course, such as that recommended by Sir Gardner Wilkinson in his 'Guide to Modern Egypt,' which was, to wear the costume for a period; so that although I was known as an Englishman, I entered all the mosques with perfect freedom during the intervals between divine service, and visited the *azhar* repeatedly, there being nothing in my appearance to attract especial observation or to shock Moslem prejudices. In visiting the pasha, I appeared in no other costume than that of plain John Bull.

It was on one of the clear beautiful days of November in Cairo, when the heat of summer had passed, when the inundation had begun to decline, and the delicious season of the winter had just commenced, that I accompanied my cicerone to the *azhar*, which is situated in the upper part of Cairo—that is to say, that part of the city which is most remote from the Nile, and close under the mountain-chain running parallel with the river. Instead of being situated, as most universities are in Europe, in some open square, you never see it until you find yourself at the so-called Barbers' Gate; an entrance elaborately sculptured in the Saracenic manner, but more remarkable for its excess of ornament than for grandeur and simplicity of design, deriving its name from the circumstance of several of this craft being generally seated there on mats in the open air with the implements of their trade ready for a customer. The streets in the vicinity of

* Mrs Maclauchlan resides at 4 Horatio Place, Gourcock.

the azhar have nothing to make them remarked from other parts of Cairo, being narrow, dark, and unpaved—an inconvenience not felt in a country where there is from three to five days' rain in the year; while from the want of noise of wheels or stones, and the shops being all opened to the street, without a wall on this side, and every few paces being covered over from house-top to house-top to exclude the sun, one has a feeling of walking rather in the labyrinthine passages of an enormous house than in the streets of a capital.

Within the university we find the mosque proper; a wide and extensive hall, with the roof supported by a great many columns, evidently originally from Greco-Roman edifices, or Christian basilica, before the Moslem conquest in the seventh century. The destruction of a Christian church never stood in the way of the architects of the earlier mosques of Cairo; and the invention of the pointed arch in the ninth century, long before it was ever seen or heard of in Europe, arose from the ingenuity of a Christian architect, who, to save his church from being despoiled of its columns to build the mosque of Touloun, promised to construct an arcade without the necessity of cylindrical columns. The discussion on the origin of the pointed arch has been for a century past a hot one among archaeologists, but need never have been so if Macrizi had been accessible in a translation to Egyptian travellers.

There was rather a deficiency of light in this mosque compared with the others that are open courts; but there was still enough to read and write by; and the floor was completely covered with clean new mats. It was not the hour of prayer, and the place appeared to be a sort of general lounge, where were seen the Ulema, with their high white turbans of a peculiar fold; the *Megawereen*, or students and fellows, of various dresses and complexions, from the different parts of the Moslem world; and blind men, groping from pillar to pillar with the ease of familiar spirits. Mr Lane has given several anecdotes of the pride, insolence, and fanaticism of these poor blind men; but one I received from my informant was quite the other way. Once a blind man entered the azhar, wearing a blue Christian turban. He was consequently beaten, and told to go out, on which he cried out—'I am Sheik Mohammed; why do you beat a Moslem in the temple of God?' 'It is not true,' said they; 'else why do you wear the dress of a Christian?' And on explanation, it was found out that a hoax had been played upon him by a man who had offered and pretended to sell him the green turban of a Shereef, giving him, instead, the dark-blue one of a Christian.

We now passed through a door into the court with the other porticos or cloisters called *Riwack* (plural *Rewaweck*), and in these saw the nations, not intermingled, but each in its separate compartment, seated on the ground cross-legged, receiving instruction in the beautiful but time-killing mental gymnastics of Arabic grammar and prosody, logic and rhetoric, law and dogmatic theology, and in the smattering of pre-Copernican astronomy and mathematical science that is requisite for an almanac-maker or time-keeper of a mosque, with a view to precision in the hours appointed for prayer. The *Riwack* Es-Sham, or Cloister of Syria, had in 1845-46 altogether nearly three hundred pupils; but those I saw could not be a quarter of that number, and were easily distinguished, having fair complexions, clean turbans, and being altogether the best dressed and most respectable group in the university. A complete contrast to them are the *Mogrebains*, who drove me to think of politics rather than of literature. Many of them from Morocco were dressed in *haiks*, or garments of a drab colour of the coarsest texture, and were of a much darker colour than Syrians, with coarser skins, being altogether a savage, unpolished-looking race; although many of them, particularly the Tunisians, dress like Arab townsmen, in a costume resembling that of Egypt. Looking at the two races, one sees at once that the prolonged resistance which the Algerines have offered to the French is that of a race far more savage and warlike, far more energetic and fanatical, and, let us add, far less corrupted, than the Moslems of Egypt

and Syria. One of the cloisters contains several fellow-subjects or protégés of our most gracious Majesty the Queen, who are Moslems from Western India, frequenting a *Riwack* called *Goawey*, from Goa; but as I have always found Indian Moslems very shy in the Ottoman empire, I did not claim any political relation with them.

While foreign Moslem countries have for the most part only a single *Riwack*, each division of Egypt has its own, several of which have still some income allowed in the shape of daily bread; for instance, that of the *Sharkawy*, or country to the east of the eastern mouth of the Nile, which has two hundred loaves of bread a day. The cloisters of the other districts of Egypt have peculiar names unknown to maps. That of the country around Alexandria is called *Liptigaweeey*, and that of the Delta, *Tabarseey*. The cloister of the people of Saïd, with its fountain reading-room, is distinguished by the dark complexion of its inmates; but darkest of all is the cloister of the *Dac-roory*, who are perfectly black; a cloister that was instituted by *Kaid Bey*, a sultan who lived towards the close of the fifteenth century, and which turns out ebony *Ulema*, *cadis*, and *muftis* for the countries beyond the Cataracts. Moslems from Persia and Central Asia are common; but if we cast our eyes to the Celestial Empire, where there are nearly twenty thousand mosques, a solitary *Alim* from that vast and distant region was the only one who attended the azhar in the winter of 1845-46.

As to the general doctrines and discipline of Islamism as taught in the azhar, I refer the reader to the well-known works of *Reiland* and *Sale*; and as regards custom and law, he will find the expositions of the four great Moslem doctors, *Hanife*, *Shafei*, *Malek*, and *Hambale*, geographically mapped in Mr Lane's 'Modern Egyptians.' All Turkey Proper follows the first; most of Egypt and Syria the second; Morocco and Western Africa the third; and Mr Lane assigns to the fourth the *Wahabees* of Arabia, to whom I would suggest, as an addition, the inhabitants of the important city of Bagdad and Nablouse in Syria, the latter the Samaritan *Sichem* of Scripture. A detailed history of the fortunes and misfortunes of the azhar—of the rise, decline, and fall of learning in Egypt, from the foundation of the university in the tenth century to the present period—if written with the erudition of a *Hammer Purgstall*, a *Lane*, or a *Quatremare*, would be one of the most interesting works conceivable; but in a sketch of this sort, a brief and rapid glance is all that can be given.

The azhar is the oldest ecclesiastical edifice of Cairo Proper—that is to say, of the Cairo built and named by *Moezz*, the first of the *Fatimite* caliphs; for when Egypt was conquered by *Amru*, in the time of the Caliph *Omar*, the city was not in existence. Cairo was built by *Moezz* with strong walls, and the streets called after his mercenaries, among whom were Greeks and Sicilian Saracens. The mosque was finished in two years, and was, according to the inscription on the right of the sanctuary, 'built by the command of Abdallah, vicegerent of God, *Abou Temin Ma'ad el Imam el Moezz Ledinallah*, the prince of the faithful, on whom and on whose fathers and legitimate children be the blessing of God, and by the hands of his servant *Gohar*, the secretary, the Sicilian, in the year 369.' There is a talisman to prevent the sparrows and turtle-doves from building their nests there—the talisman being the figures of birds carved in stone. Ten years after its foundation, the mosque was endowed as a seminary, the *fakihs*, or tutors and lecturers, being thirty-five in number, and besides a small salary, each being allowed a new dress and a mule at the festival of *Bairam*; and thus was the azhar the principal mosque and seminary in the first years of the *Fatimite* dynasty.

The two principal figures in this dynasty were men as opposite to each other as it was possible to conceive, but both professing to protect learning. The former, *Hakem*, is to this day, according to the *Druse* religion, the incarnation of the Deity; for, not content with being acknowledged caliph in Egypt, Syria, and the Barbary states, he wished himself to be considered a god. Instead of being an orthodox Moslem, he had a great deal of communication with the emissaries of the *Ismaelis* and *Assas-*

sins, the people of the Old Man of the Mountain; and at last, owing to his cruelties and eccentricities, was murdered at the instigation of his own sister. He was thus morally at war with the doctors of divinity in the azhar, although he repaired and further endowed it, as appears by the deed of settlement given by Macrizi; a curious specimen of Cairo conveyancing in the tenth century after Christ.

Hakem set up an institution of his own, called the Dar el Hekimet, or College of Science, with a copious library, and pen, ink, and paper for those who wished to consult it; his object being to introduce the philosophy of the Carmates, who allegorised the precepts of Islamism, and by their secret societies wished to establish a universal dominion in the East on the ruins of the Caliphate of Bagdad. Consequently Hakem is regarded to this day by every true Moslem as having been an impious impostor.

A very different person was one of his successors, Mostanser, who may be regarded as the Mamoun, or Harouner-Reshid, of the Fatimite dynasty. He was a mild and pious prince, who reigned in the eleventh century. His private library contained 120,000 volumes; and although he completed the mosque of Hakem with great magnificence, he did all in his power to encourage learning and learned men, and the azhar was well frequented. But the dynasty was brought to a close in the year 567 of the Flight, or 1171 of Christ, by the splendid military talents of Saladin; and henceforth the litany which used to be read for the Fatimites was restored to the caliphs of Bagdad. But Saladin settled that it should be read in the mosque of Hakem, on account of the size of the building; and for a hundred years no *khotbet*, or litany, was recited in the azhar, until it was restored by Sultan Bibars. But in the great earthquake of 702 of the Flight, which ruined so many mosques, the original azhar of Moezz was thrown down; and the great emirs who spent their lives in combating the Crusaders arranged to rebuild a mosque each, when the Emir Silar rebuilt the azhar. No Tasso has sung the valour and generosity of the heroes of Islamism; but whoever reads the contemporary accounts of both sides of the question debated in these days, must come to the conclusion, that in piety, in valour, and in generosity, a Saladin, a Bibars, and a Bayseri, were in no way inferior to a Louis or a Godfrey of Boulogne.

All the dynasties of caliphs were Arabic; but that singular series of temporal dynasties which, on the fall of the Fatimites, began with Saladin, and ended with the Ottoman conquest in 1517, was at first Kurdish, then Turkish, and last of all Circassian. But Arabic being the language of Islamism, remained also that of science, and even of the most considerable departments of government; and Saladin, Bibars, Sultan Hassan, and Kauso el Ghory, the last and most learned of the Mameluke sultans, all cultivated Arabic literature.

The funds for the azhar were ample, for we find that in the year 818 of the Flight, upwards of 750 Ulema pupils and fellows were maintained out of the income of the college. The Megawereen, or fellows, lived in a sort of monastic state, Sultan Barkouk having ordained the law, that what they possessed should be in common; hence a state of idleness and disorder inseparable from Communism. A species of Moslem John Knox arose in the midst of this monkish system, in the person of the Emir Sodula, who turned them out by violence with their boxes and trunks, throwing them on the world in the most miserable condition. Some went back, and even blows were resorted to to drive them out; but this emir's conduct appeared to be that of a destroyer of learning rather than a reformer of learned men, and he was consequently seized by the sultan, and confined until he died.

During the three centuries of the Ottoman possession of Egypt, the number of pupils of the azhar may not have fallen off, but the literary spirit of Cairo has much declined from what it was when it gave birth to such vast historic labours as those of a Macrizi in the fifteenth century of Christ; and the reforms of Mohammed Ali have altogether altered the position in which the Ulema and pupils of the azhar formerly stood. It has ceased to

be an asylum for murderers, which it previously was. Another peculiarity was, that that formidable personage, the inspector of weights and measures, had no government over the quarter of the azhar, as they had a separate inspector of their own, whom they called by the curious name of Gyndy el Mudback, or Trooper of the Kitchen: one being in the house of the sheikh of the azhar, the other in the house of the sheikh of the rite of Malek. The government of the Shereefs and Ulema by separate magistrates is also abolished; and if these rob or steal, they are under the control of the ordinary police; although in minor assaults and batteries, which are very frequent among those persons, they are handed over to the sheikh of the azhar, who adjudges and punishes them through the trooper of the kitchen.

The seizure of the mosque lands by the Egyptian government, the establishment of medical and polytechnic schools, and last of all, the institution of a species of gymnasium at Paris, where 150 young Egyptians receive Frank education, have, so to speak, completely altered the polarity of education in Egypt. Polytechnic schools have risen on the decline of the Moslem Sorbonne. The principle of the old education is religious even to fanaticism; that of the new latitudinarian, and entirely subservient to military purposes; consequently medicine and mathematics, drawing and European languages, take the precedence of other branches of instruction. I have seen the Ulema at an opera of Donizetti in the castle of Cairo, and have heard the mufti of Cairo in the house of the Sheik el Bekri, on the evening of the Festival of the Prophet, promise to affix his approbation to the novelty of a printed edition of the Koran: but these are the exceptions, and the Ulema of the azhar rather shut their eyes on such innovations than accept them cordially; and I regard a reaction towards the old system to be, however undesirable, yet highly probable.

LAST DAYS OF COPERNICUS.

It was a still, clear night in the month of May 1543: the stars shone brightly in the heavens, and all the world slept in the little town of Wernica, a canonry of Prussian Poland—all save one man, who watched alone in a solitary chamber, at the summit of a lofty tower. The only furniture of this apartment consisted of a table, a few books, and an iron lamp. Its occupant was an old man of about seventy, bowed down by years and toil, and his brow furrowed by anxious thought; but in his eye kindled the fire of genius, and his noble countenance was expressive of gentle kindness, and of a calm, contemplative disposition. His white hair, parted on his forehead, fell in waving locks upon his shoulders. He wore the ecclesiastical costume of the age and country in which he lived: the long straight robe, with a fur collar and double sleeves, which were also lined with fur as far as the elbow.

This old man was the great astronomer Nicholas Copernicus, doctor of philosophy, divinity, and medicine; titular canon of Wernica; and honorary professor of Bologna, Rome, &c. Copernicus had just completed his great work 'On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Bodies.' In the midst of poverty, ridicule, and persecution, without any other support than that of his own modest genius, or any instrument save a triangle of wood, he had unveiled heaven to earth, and was now approaching the term of his career just as he had established on a firm basis those discoveries which were destined to change the whole face of astronomical science. On that very day the canon of Wernica had received the last proof-sheets of his book, which his disciple Rheticus was getting printed at Nuremberg; and, before sending back these final proofs, he wished to verify for the last time the results of his discoveries. Heaven seemed to have sent him a night expressly fitted for his purpose, and he passed the whole of it in his observatory. When the astronomer saw the stars beginning to pale in the eastern sky, he took the triangular instrument which he had constructed with his own hands out of three

pieces* of wood, and directed it successively towards the four cardinal points of the horizon. No shadow of a doubt remained, and, overpowered by the conviction that he had *indeed* destroyed an error of five thousand years' duration, and was about to reveal to the world an imperishable truth, Copernicus knelt in the presence of that glorious volume whose starry characters he had first learned to decipher, and folding his attenuated hands across his bosom, thanked his Creator for having opened his eyes to understand and read aright these His glorious works. He then returned to the table, and seizing a pen, he wrote on the title-page of his book—'Behold the work of the greatest and the most perfect Artisan: the work of God himself.' And now, the first excitement having passed away, he proceeded, with a collected mind, to write the dedication of his book.

'To the Most Holy Father, Pope Paul III.: I dedicate my work to your holiness, in order that all the world, whether learned or ignorant, may see that I do not seek to shun examination and the judgment of my superiors. Your authority, and your love for science in general, and for mathematics in particular, will serve to shield me against wicked and malicious slanderers, notwithstanding the proverb which says that there is no remedy against the wounds inflicted by the tongue of calumny, &c.

NICHOLAS COPERNICUS—*Of Thorn.*'

Soon the first dawn of day caused the lamp of the astronomer to burn more dimly; he leant his forehead upon the table, and, overcome with fatigue, sank into a peaceful slumber. After sixty years of labour, he in truth needed repose. But his present repose, at all events, was not destined to be of long duration: it was abridged by the entrance of an aged servant, who, with slow and heavy step, ascended the tower stairs.

'Master,' said he to the canon as he gently touched him upon the shoulder, 'the messenger who arrived yesterday from Rheticus is ready to set out on his return, and is only waiting for your proof-sheets and letters.'

The astronomer rose, made up the packet, which he duly sealed, and then sank back upon his chair, as if wearied by the effort.

'But that is not all,' continued the servant; 'there are ten poor sick people in the house waiting for you; and besides, you are wanted at Frauenberg, to look after the water-machine, which has stopped working; and also to see the three workmen who have broken their legs in trying to set it going again.'

'Poor creatures!' exclaimed Copernicus. 'Let my horse be saddled directly.' And with a resolute effort shaking off the sleep which weighed down his eyelids, the good man hastily descended the stairs of the tower.

The house of Copernicus was, in outward appearance, one of the most unpretending in Wernica: it was composed of a laboratory, in which he prepared medicine for the poor; a little studio, in which this man of genius, skilled in art as well as in science, painted his own likeness or those of his friends, or traced his recollections of Rome and of Bologna; and lastly, of a small parlour on the ground-floor, which was ever open to all who came to him for remedies, for money, or for food. Over the door an oval aperture had been cut, through which a ray of the mid-day sun daily penetrated, and resting upon a certain point in the adjoining room, marked the hour of noon. This was the astronomical gnomon of Copernicus; and the only ornament the room contained were some verses written by his own hand, and pasted up over the chimney-piece.

It was in this parlour that the good canon found the ten invalids who had come to claim his assistance; he dressed the wounds of some, administered remedies to

others, and on all he bestowed alms and words of kindness and consolation. Having completed his labours, he hastily swallowed a draught of milk, and was about to set out for Frauenberg, when a horseman, galloping up to the door, handed him a letter. He trembled as he recognised the handwriting of his friend Gysius, bishop of Culm. 'May God have pity on us,' wrote this latter, 'and avert the blow which now threatens thee! Thy enemies and thy rivals combined—those who accuse thee of folly, and those who treat thee as a heretic—have been so successful in exciting against thee the minds of the people of Nuremberg, that men curse thy name in the streets; the priests excommunicate thee from their pulpits; and the university, hearing that thy book was about to appear, has declared its intention to break the printing presses of the publisher, and to destroy the work to which thy life has been devoted. Come and lay the storm; but come quickly, or thou wilt be too late.'

Before Copernicus had finished the perusal of this letter, he fell back voiceless and powerless into the arms of his faithful servant, and it was some moments before he rallied. When he again looked up, the horseman, who had been charged to escort him back, asked him how soon he would wish to set out.

'I must set out directly,' replied the old man in a resigned tone; 'but not for Nuremberg or for Culm; the suffering workmen at Frauenberg are expecting me; they may perhaps die if I do not go to their assistance. My enemies may perhaps destroy my work—they cannot stop the stars in their courses!'

An hour later, Copernicus was at Frauenberg. The machine which he had bestowed upon this town, which was built on the summit of a hill, conveyed thither the waters of the river Bouda, situated at the distance of half a league in the valley below. The inhabitants, instead of suffering, like their fathers, from continued drought, had now only to turn a valve, and the plenteous stream flowed into their houses in rich abundance.

This machine had got out of order the preceding day, and the accident had happened very inopportunistly, because this was the festival of the patron saint of Frauenberg. But at the first glance the canon saw where the evil lay, and in a few hours the water again flowed freely into the town. His first cares, we need not say, had been directed to the unhappy men who had received injuries whilst working in the sluices: he set their fractured limbs, and bound them up with his own hands; then commending them to the care of an attendant, he promised to return and visit them on the morrow. But a blow was about to descend upon himself which was destined to crush him to the dust.

As he crossed the square, whilst passing through the town on his return home, he perceived amidst the crowd a company of strolling players acting upon a temporary stage. The theatre represented an astronomical observatory, filled with all sorts of ridiculous instruments—in the midst stood an old man, whose dress and bearing were in exact imitation of those of Copernicus. The resemblance was so striking, that he directly recognised himself, and paused, stupified with astonishment. Behind the merry-Andrew, whose business it was thus to hold up the great man to public derision there stood a personage whose horns and cloven foot designated him as a representation of Satan, and who caused the pseudo Copernicus to act and speak, as though he had been an automaton, by means of two strings fastened to his ears—which were no other than asses' ears, of considerable dimensions. The parody was composed of several scenes. In the first, the astronomer gave himself to Satan, burnt a copy of the Bible, and trampled a crucifix under foot: in the second, he explained his system, by juggling with apples in guise of planets, whilst his head was transformed into a likeness of the sun by means of torches of resin: in the third, he became a charlatan, a vender of pomatum and quack medicines—he spoke dog-Latin to the passers-by; sold them water, which he had drawn from his own well, at an exorbitant price; and became intoxicated himself with excellent wine, in such copious draughts of which did he indulge, that he finally disappeared under

* Tycho Brahe has preserved to us a drawing of this instrument, which was the means of accomplishing such wonderful discoveries, and which was sent to him after the death of Copernicus by John Hanovrius, bishop of Wernica. It is difficult for us to conceive how a triangle so rude in its formation, and so irregular in its movements, can have supplied, in the hands of this great man, the place of those infallible telescopes which have since served to confirm his discoveries.

the table; in the fourth and closing act he was again dragged forth to view as one accursed of God and man; and the devil, dragging him down to the infernal regions amidst a cloud of sulphurous smoke, declared his intention of punishing him for having caused the earth to turn on its axis, by condemning him to remain with his head downwards throughout eternity.

When Copernicus thus beheld the treasured discoveries of his whole life held up to the derision of an ignorant multitude, his enlightened faith branded as impiety, and his self-denying benevolence ridiculed as the quackery of a charlatan, his noble spirit was at first utterly overwhelmed, and the most fearful doubts of himself, of mankind, and even of Providence itself, rushed upon his mind. At first he hoped that the Frauenbergians, the children of his adoption, to whose comfort and happiness he had devoted himself for fifty years, would cut short the disgraceful scene. But alas! he saw his defamers welcomed with applause by those on whom he had conferred so many benefits. The trial was too much for his failing strength; and worn out by the emotion and fatigue of the preceding night, and by the labours of the morning, he sunk exhausted to the ground. Then, for the first time, did the ungrateful multitude recognise their benefactor: the name of Copernicus flew from lip to lip—they heard that he had come that very morning to the town in order to relieve their distress—in a moment the current of popular feeling was turned, their ingratitude was quickly changed to remorse—the crowd dispersed the actors, and crowded anxiously round the astronomer. He had only strength left to call for a litter, and was conveyed back to Wernica in a dying state. He lingered, however, still for five days—days of trial and anxiety—during which the lamp of genius and of faith still shed its halo around the dying man. On the day succeeding his visit to Frauenberg, a letter from Rhéticus confirmed the sinister predictions of the bishop of Culm: thrice had the students of the university made an attempt to invade the printing-office whence the truth was about to issue forth. 'Even this very morning,' wrote his friend, 'a set of madmen tried to set fire to it. I have assembled all our friends within the building, and we never quit our posts either day or night, guarding the entrance, and keeping watch over the workmen—the printers perform their work with one hand, whilst they hold a pistol in the other. If we can stand our ground for two days, thy book is saved; for let only ten copies be struck off, and nothing will any longer be able to destroy it. . . . But if either to-day or to-morrow our enemies should succeed in gaining the upper hand'. . . . Rhéticus left the sentence unfinished, but Copernicus supplied the want—he knew how much depended upon this moment. On the third day another messenger made his appearance, and he, too, was the bearer of evil tidings: 'A compositor, gained over by our enemies, has delivered into their hands the manuscript of the book, and it has been burned in the public square. Happily the impression was complete, and we are now putting it into press. . . . But a popular tumult might yet ruin all!'

Such was the state of suspense in which the great Copernicus passed the closing days of his existence! Life was ebbing fast, and the torpor of death had already begun to steal over his faculties, when a horseman galloped up to the door in breathless haste, and springing from his horse, hastened into the house of the dying astronomer. A volume, whose leaves were still damp, was treasured in his bosom: it was the *chef-d'œuvre* of Copernicus: this messenger was the bode of victory.

The spark of life, so nearly extinguished, seemed to be rekindled for a moment in the breast of the dying man: he raised himself in his bed, grasped the book with his feeble hand, and glanced at its contents with his dim, expiring eye. A smile lighted up his features; the book fell from his grasp; and clasping his hands together, he exclaimed, 'Lord, let thy servant now depart in peace!' Hardly had he uttered these words, before his spirit fled from earth to return to the God who gave it. It was the morning of the 23d May—day had not yet dawned—heaven was still lighted up with stars—the

earth was fragrant with flowers—all nature seemed to sympathise with the great revealer of her laws—and soon the sun, rising above the horizon, shed his earliest and purest ray upon the still, cold brow of the departed, and seemed in his turn to say, 'The king of creation gives thee the kiss of peace, for thou hast been the first to replace him on his throne.'

Persecution followed Copernicus even in the grave. The court of Rome replied to his dedication by condemning his book; but the book was the instrument of its own revenge by enlightening the court of Rome herself, which at last recognised, although too late, the faith and the genius of the astronomer of Wernica. Prussia, with the ingratitude of a conqueror, has converted the observatory of Copernicus into a prison, and is now allowing his dwelling-house to crumble into ruins. But Poland, his native land, has collected some of her last *oboles*, to raise a monument to his memory at Cracow, and to erect a statue of him in Warsaw. This statue is from the hand of the great sculptor Thorvaldsen.

BANNOCKBURN.

O for a gush of Castaly
To undulate my song,
Ye goddess-muses, unto whom
The springs of verse belong!
No matter—there are streams enow
Between the hill and sea,
And every Scots foot on their banks,
Thanks to King Bruce, is free!

I.

The English king hath sworn an oath,
That ere the Baptist's day,
Near Stirling's towers shall England's best
And Scotland's meet in fray;
Such fray as, if it lifts us not
Above all foes and praise,
Shall be the last and bloodiest
Of Scotland's fighting days.

II.

From cot, from castle spread the news
O'er hill, dale, everywhere:
It found God-speed in Liddesdale,
It found God-speed in Ayr;
Among the mosses of Dumfries
The Maxwells caught the omen;
Buchanans told it to Colquhouns,
In the shadow of Ben Lomond;
Makraken gave it to Milroy
On the coast of Galloway,
Where the relics of St Ninian sleep,
And the monks of Balliol pray:
'Twas heard at Ebba's Kirk, and heard
By them that hear the din
Of Corryvrekan, and Cape Wrath,
And Foyers, and Corra Linn;
It spread—it sprang from isle to isle,
From Harris to Tiree:
It roused the red-legged clans of Ross
And the Dane-mixed men of Dee;
It woke the country of Saint Clair,
And the country of Mackay;
It pierced unto the springs of Clyde,
And the virgin rill of Spey:
It made proud mothers cease to sing,
And maidens to be coy,
But the warrior heard, and ground his teeth,
And cut the air for joy.

III.

That day which makes each week arise,
With the blue eye of Heaven,
It found us on the battle-field,
But not to arms was given;
Yet not to rest, or thought of rest,
With a broad sun blazing o'er us,
And a hundred thousand English swords
Grim gathering before us.
That day the sun went down like blood,
And even when rose the moon,
All the night-air palpitated,
With the fiery heart of June.

IV.

Sir Mowbray stood in chafing mood
On Stirling's old gray wall,
For nought on earth had he to do,
But watch our movements all.
And well he noted every sign:

'The time,' quoth he, 'is brief,
When yonder nodding flags, my boys,
Will bring us all relief.
Another day, one bloody fray,
Quoth he, 'and I am free;
The mouse may cheep in Stirling keep,
But not, please God, for me.'

V.

Sir Mowbray, as a gallant knight,
Was raised to high command
By the great soul that left its clay
At Borough-on-the-Sand;
And give the old knight his wonted place
Among the Southrons hot,
And let him tread the springy sward,
In teeth of the proud Scot;
That arm of his hath pith enough
To show you lion's play,
When the fire flies from flashing eyes,
The blue eyes and the gray.

VI.

Next morn arose as peaceful
As if war had never been,
Though nations twain in battle gear
Were standing in its sheen,
With gilded flags, like Beltane fires,
All gleaming in the sun,
And men on both sides muttering, 'Thus
Shall battle-fields be won!'

VII.

Like waters fed by many streams,
The northern ranks are thronged
With vassal leal and bold outlaw,
The wronger and the wronged;
Grim graybeards that have swung their swords
Around the Wallace wight,
Brave striplings that have fled from home,
But will not flee from fight,
And some who have aforetime fought
Against the leal and true,
Will this day stand in Scotland's van,
And soldier penance do.
Yea, even the knave whose cattif life
Has hardly one proud day,
Who comes to plunder, he for once
Is come in time to slay.

VIII.

King Bruce surveyed his mingled host
With no unhopeful eye—
'Let every soldier make his bed,
As he would wish to lie!
I give old Scotland's flag in charge
Of this gray rock,' said he,
'A standard-bearer that shall fly,
Good friends, as soon as we.'

IX.

Our gracious king: right well we knew
How he had played the man,
How he had led an outlaw's life,
And borne the church's ban,
How he had kept his fame so well,
In flight, when doomed to flee,
And how he nursed a heart of ruth
In hottest victory!
Ho! for the men that loved their king,
When loyal men were few!
Ho! for the king that knew his men,
And trusted whom he knew!

X.

Old Maurice of Inchaffray
(Save his gray head from harm!),
To fix our confidence, displayed
Saint Fillan's relic-arm:
But how our hearts beat in us
When we heard the good priest say
That living arms, and layman nerves,
Were all required to-day!
And when he raised the cross, and bade
Us cry unto the Lord,
And seek the grace of every saint
That ever drew a sword,
And pardoned fight, and pardoned fall,
Scarce was the counsel given,
When, hand to heart, and knee to earth,
And every eye on Heaven,
Ye might have heard the abbot's tread,
Unsanctified though he trod,
So breathlessly the Scottish host
Were speaking to their God.

XI.

Now came proud England's battle-burst:
O ladies, 'twere a sight
On which the fairest lady eye
With joyance would alight,

To see such gallant gentlemen
At tourney, dance, or play!
But this was not a time of mirth,
Or joust or holiday.

XII.

Then Scotland bared her good broad sword,
And baptised it in blood,
And Bannockburn was swollen and red,
But not with rain or mud;
For each man fought as boors might work
In harvest-time or Spring
('Twas the spring-time of Liberty,
And Hate's in-gathering),
Till, on the uneven and pitted ground,
With caltrops thickly sown,
A crop of staggering cavaliers
And plunging steeds was mown;
Till Hereford was prisoner,
Till Gloster's heart was cold
(Brave Gloster's deathbed shall be called
For aye the Bloody Fold);
Till knightly D'Argentine had urged
The southern king away—
Brave D'Argentine, whose one good sword
Almost renewed the fray—
Till home-fast boys and screaming girls
Beheld at Ingram's Crook
Balls of red foam and trunkless heads
Slow sailing down the brook.
The very winds were vocal,
And the dumb hills seemed to cry,
'Your bairns are sleeping at our feet,
Ho! save your homes, or die.'
And saved they were, and safe they are,
And shall be safe and free,
For right was might at Bannockburn,
The great God honoured be!

XIII.

That night by Ninian's sleepless monks
Full many a prayer was said;
That night the trophied tidings brought
Sweet dreams to wife and maid;
That night we bound the wounded up,
To-morrow hid the slain;
One short hour reckoned up our loss—
All time shall count the gain:
For 'tis a story to be held
In memory for aye
How lord and vassal knelt and prayed,
Though not as beadsmen pray;
How lord and vassal rose and fought,
As none had fought before;
And how the burn was oked with knights,
And the marsh half-filled with gore;
And how the northern sun arose,
As sank the southern star;
And how the braggart Southron king
Did ride to reach Dunbar.

XIV.

O luckless, luckless king, that broke
The barb of Edward's name!
O starless breast, that came so far,
And found so little fame!
O well for thee hadst thou been left
With Gloster on the plain!
Thou goest to gall a noble steed,
A steed thou canst not rein.
Thou goest—O luckless, luckless king!—
To Favouritism's foul breath,
To trust a courtier's puny arm,
To Berkeley's horrid death;
And England's wide and motley realm
Holds not so poor a thing,
As thine anointed, witless head,
O luckless, luckless king!

Bannockburn.

J. B. M.

CLIMATE OF AUSTRALIA.

In a country of such vast extent as Australia, spreading over so many degrees of latitude, we might naturally expect to find much diversity in the climate; and such is really the case. Van Diemen's Land, from its isolated and more southern position, is cooler, and characterised by greater humidity than Australia; its vegetation is therefore abundant, and its forests dense and difficult of access. The climate of the continent, on the other hand, between the 25th and 35th degrees of latitude, is much drier, and has a temperature which is probably higher than that of any other part of the world, the thermometer frequently rising to 110 degrees, 120 degrees, and even 130 degrees in the shade, and this high temperature is not unfrequently increased by the hot winds which sweep over the country.

from the northward, and which indicate most strongly the parched and sterile nature of the interior. Unlike other hot countries, this great heat and dryness is unaccompanied by night-dews, and the falls of rain being uncertain and irregular, droughts of many months' duration sometimes occur, during which the rivers and lagoons are dried up, the land becomes a parched waste, vegetation is burnt up, and famine spreads destruction on every side. It is easier for the imagination to conceive, than the pen to depict, the horrors of so dreadful a visitation. The indigenous animals and birds retire to the mountains, or to more distant regions exempt from its influence. Thousands of sheep and oxen perish, bullocks are seen dead by the roadside, or in the dried-up water holes, to which, in the hope of relief, they had dragged themselves, there to fall and die; trees are cut down for the sake of the twigs as fodder; the flocks are driven to the mountains, in the hope that water may there be found, and every effort is made to avert the impending ruin; but in spite of all that can be done, the loss is extreme. At length a change takes place; rain falls abundantly; and the plains, on which but lately not a blade of herbage was to be seen, and over which the stillness of desolation reigned, become free with luxuriant vegetation. *Orchideae*, and thousands of flowers of the loveliest hues, are profusely spread around, as if nature rejoiced in her renovation; and the grain springing up vigorously, gives promise of an abundant harvest. This change from sterility to abundance in the vegetable world is accompanied by a correspondent increase of animal life; the waters become stocked with fish, the marshy districts with frogs and other reptiles; hosts of caterpillars and other insects make their appearance, and spreading over the surface of the country, commence the work of devastation, which, however, is speedily checked by the birds of various kinds that follow in their train. Attracted by the abundance of food, hawks, of three or four species, in flocks of hundreds, depart from their usual solitary habits, become gregarious and busy at the feast, and thousands of straw-necked ibises (*Ibis spinirostris*) and other species of the feathered race revel in the profusion of a welcome banquet. It must not, however, be imagined that this change is effected without its attendant horrors: the heavy rains often filling the river beds so suddenly that the onward-pouring flood carries with it everything that may impede its course; and wo to the unhappy settler whose house or grounds may lie within the influence of the overwhelming floods! So little has as yet been ascertained respecting the climatology of Western, North-Western, and Northern Australia, that it is not known whether they also are subject to these tremendous visitations; but as we have reason to believe that the intertropical parts of the country are favoured with a more constant supply of rain, as well as a lower degree of temperature, it is probable that they do not there occur.—*Gould's Birds of Australia*.

AFFECTING INCIDENT.

Yesterday morning we witnessed a scene that we little believed could be enacted within the borders of Kentucky. The steamer G. W. Kendall was lying at the wharf at the foot of Wall Street preparing to start to New Orleans. On the fore-castle deck stood a group consisting of a master and five or six slaves, including a woman with a child at the breast, who were apparently going to the south. Just as the last bell of the steamer rang out its peal for departure, and the lines were about to be cast loose, the mother was bidden to give up her infant, and was told that she must go without it. At this intimation the poor creature became frantic with grief. She caressed the child a moment, then flew to her trunk in which she had packed various little articles of clothing she had made up for it to wear. These she first pressed fervently to her lips, and then bestowed them upon the child. Her owner then ordered her to follow him, and she mechanically started to obey; but the promptings of nature were too strong within her swelling breast to be resisted, and with loud sobs of grief she turned, embraced her child, and clung to it with the tenacity of despair. The heartrending grief of the woman, and her frantic gestures, attracted the attention of persons passing along the levee, and strongly excited the sympathies of many. The owner was asked by a gentleman if he would sell the woman and child. To this he assented, and demanded 650 dollars for them. Upon inquiry, however, it was ascertained that the woman was to be sold down the river, and that the child would be disposed of here. The bystanders volunteered to raise subscriptions to buy the child and send it with its mother, and several of them proffered ten dollars

a piece. At this juncture Captain Norton, the captain of the boat, came forward and told the owner of the slaves that he would not take him on his boat, and sent the whole party ashore, and in a few minutes the steamer was seen dashing over the falls without them.—*Louisville Courier*.

HOW ILLNESS IS TO BE BORNE.

If the spirit can so far prevail as to remove the sickness wholly from itself, and banish it into the body only, an immense step is gained; and we may then bear bodily ailments not only with apparent, but with real firmness and tranquillity, and not only bear but draw from them much that softens and purifies the soul. I myself, indeed, though I have been often ill, and occasionally dangerously so, have never had to endure lasting sickness, or even what may be deemed a weak constitution. But I have intimately known many, both men and women, with whom this was the ordinary state, and had no hope of escaping from it but by death. To this class belonged Schiller especially. He suffered much—he suffered continually—and knew, as indeed happened afterwards, that this continual suffering would lead him step by step to the grave. Yet one might truly say of him that he held his illness confined to the body; for at whatever time you visited him, or under whatever circumstances you might meet him, his mind was always calm and cheerful—ready to adapt itself to friendly intercourse, or to interesting and even philosophic conversation. He was, indeed, wont to say that a man worked better under the influence of illness, if it were not too severe; and I have seen him under circumstances which certainly afforded nothing cheering, compose both poems and prose pieces which betrayed no traces in their composition of the illness of the writer.—*Humboldt's Letters*.

INTELLECTUAL LABOUR.

A popular lecturer (Mr Turner) is reported, somewhat confusedly, to have lately spoken as follows:—'He had often heard it said of a man, "Oh! intellectual pursuits are killing him;" but there never was a man yet who died from intellectual labours, if he paid attention to the other circumstances that ought to be connected with intellectual pursuits. If a man engrossed in study neglects his food, his exercise, and other physical causes so essential to the maintenance of health, is not health likely, to a certain extent, to fall a sacrifice? But intellectual pursuits, corresponding with the taste of the individual, having a tendency to enlarge the mind, so far from being detrimental to health, are highly conducive to it.' Experience enables us to add a decisive testimony to the same effect. It is only when intellectual labours are pursued in harassing circumstances, or in excess, or with a disregard of the common requisites of health, that they prove hurtful.

'MRS CHISHOLM.'

It was omitted to be mentioned by the contributor of the account of Mrs Chisholm, given in No. 326, that the materials were gathered chiefly from Sidney's 'Emigrants' Journal.' This valuable journal, we are sorry to say, has been discontinued, which is probably the reason why our correspondent did not think it necessary to quote its authority.

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