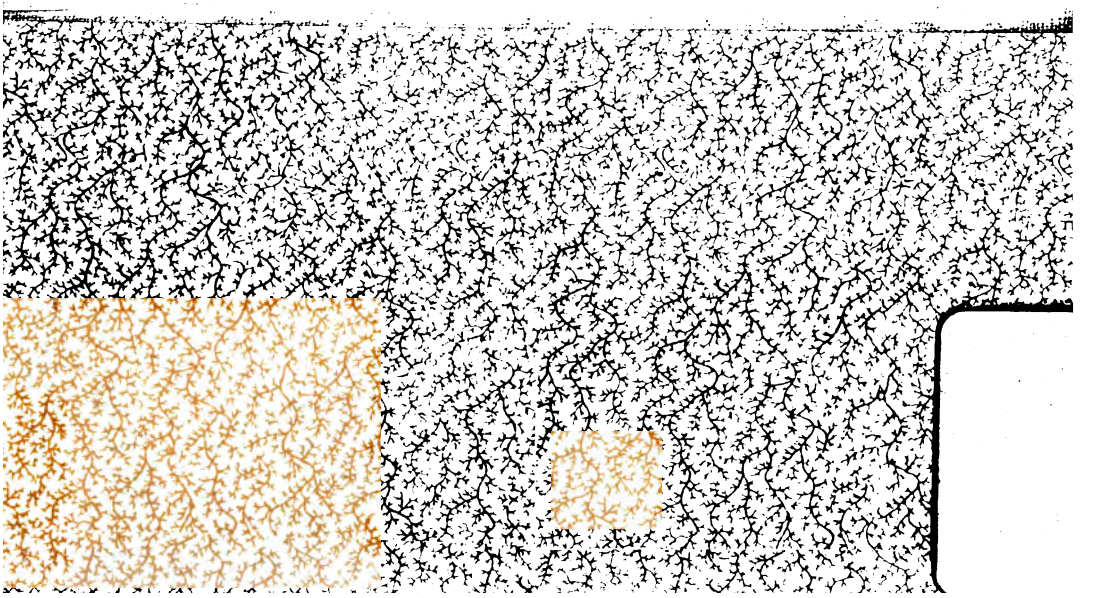

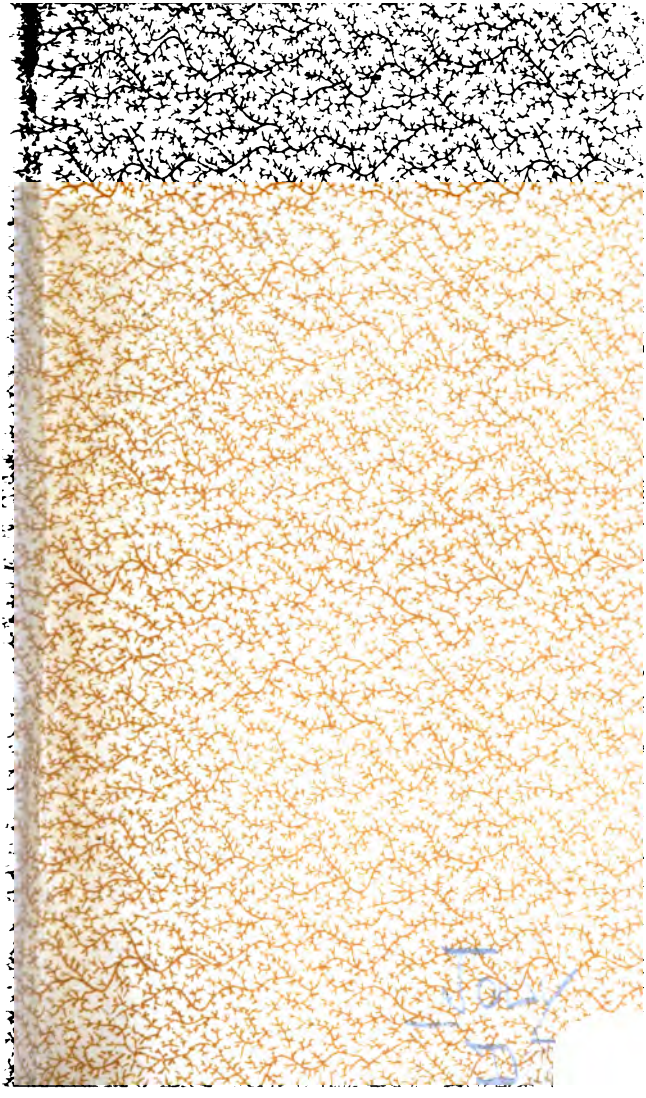

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THE

PARIS SPECTATOR:

OR,

L'HERMITE DE LA CHAUSSÉE-D'ANTIN.

CONTAINING

OBSERVATIONS

UPON

PARISIAN MANNERS & CUSTOMS,

AT THE

Commencement of the Nineteenth Century.

Etienne de Jouy (Victor Jos.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY W. JERDAN.

[William]

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED BY M. CAREY,
AND WELLS & LILLY, BOSTON.
1816.

1816

TO

FRANCIS FREELING, Esq.

&c. &c. &c.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE HERMIT of the Chaussée-d'Antin having, since the commencement of my Translation, published another Volume of his Essays, and thus enabled me to add the following Sheets to my original design, I consider myself entitled to seize the opportunity for a second Dedication. I rather fear that this will be a trespass on you than on my Readers, and my only apology shall be brevity, and the irresistible impulse which I feel to avail myself of, perhaps, the only chance I may ever enjoy, of so widely declaring how sincerely I participate in the general sentiment which your public and private worth inspires. But it is not because your public Life has procured you

"Golden opinions from all sorts of men:"

the regard and esteem of the highest ranks in this country, and the love and gratitude

of your inferiors—it is because in the social circle, as in the discharge of your official Duties, your entire existence is filled with acts of kindness and beneficence; it is because you are so exemplary in the exercise of all the human affections which dignify man, that I am proud even were it to make an occasion on which I can join my voice to the testimony of all who have the pleasure of knowing you, and stating how grateful your friendship is to one, who is,

Dear Sir,

With the warmest feelings of esteem,

Your's most truly,

WM. JERDAN.

Little Chelsea, August, 1815.

NOTICE

FOR THE THIRD VOLUME.

THE HERMIT of the Chaussée-d'Antin was, in the first instance, advertised to consist of two Volumes, but the original Author, having in the interim concluded his labours under this signature, and added another Volume to his preceding Publications, it became necessary to suspend the Translation for a short period, and then to depart so much from the first design, as to bring the Work in a complete form before the British Public. These circumstances will account for the delay which has taken place in producing this publication, and it is hoped that the Third Volume, thus obtained, will be found to possess merit enough to plead its own cause.

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THE

PARIS SPECTATOR;

OR,

L'HERMITE DE LA CHAUSSÉE-D'ANTIN.

No. I.—21*st August*, 1813.

MACEDOINE.

. . . . . Liberius si
Dixero quid, si forte jocosius, hoc mihi juris
Cum venia dabis.

Hor. Sat. 4. lib. 1.

It is not possible to walk abroad in Paris without observing certain personages whom we have noticed from time immemorial, and who appear to transmit themselves from generation to generation. This observation, with which I am struck every day, makes me regret that the work under the piquant title of "Remarkable Personages of the Streets of Paris," had not been confided to abler hands. What a crowd of details, anecdotes, portraits, might be introduced to make it delightful? A manual of this kind might be an incomparable appendix to the "Parisian Cicerone;" for it must be as

curious to know the originals of this capital as its monuments. Paris has lately suffered two irreparable losses of this order; the first, the celebrated Chevalier de Jean, so renowned for his courage and his creditors, his whims and his debts. True to the beau of the last century, you might find him every day at the Palais-Royal, in tight speckled pantaloons, a horse-shoe wig, and ready to give you the history of the pretty Dutch Jewess that he once set about converting. The other character, carried off still more lately from the curiosity of the amateurs, was the most renowned master of all our masters in feats of arms, old father Donnadieu.

For twenty-five years he took every day of his life, between two and three in the afternoon, four turns on the Boulevart de la Madeleine. He was distinguishable by the oscillations of his head, the immensity of his riding-coat, the enormousness of his cane, and the antiquity of his wig, that had fewer hairs than even his own skull. Fifty years ago this man used to turn the heads of the handsomest actresses of the Comedie Italienne.

To harangue upon the arts, without knowing a syllable of the subject, is one of our fashionable absurdities. Derval and Senneville are first rate professors in this.

They have composed for themselves and their disciples a vocabulary of about a hundred words, by the help of which those "Irrefragable Doctors," decide without appeal. "Style without colour, composition without harmony,

incorrect drawing, want of light and shade;" this goes equally to criticism on a poem, a picture, or a piece of music. All that ever comes in the shape of panegyric, no matter what may be the chef-d'œuvre, is equally comprised in the words, "*elegance, vigour, grandeur.*" No doubt these gentlemen have taken the trouble of getting by heart the names of the great masters whom they cite in season, and sometimes not a little out of it: however I have some lingering scepticism about their infallibility, and am not much surprised that a Delille, a Gérard, or a Cherubini, should now and then decline their jurisdiction.

It is a great interval from "l'antre de Procope" such as I remember it in 1754, to the magnificent rooms on the first floor of the Palais Royal, where the Café de Chartes occupies the floor below:

"Ce ne sont que festons, ce ne sont qu'astragales."

"'Tis all festoon and ornament superb."

Gold, ebony, bronze, all are combined with exquisite taste. The bar, all mirrors, is perfect enchantment. The coffee, the dinner services, silver gilt, the cook an adept in "gastrology;" with all this one might be assured that this new establishment would turn out a fortune. But in Paris, utility, luxury, convenience, even pleasure, are not always sure pledges of getting into vogue. Like fashion, that depends on a caprice often beyond all calculation.

The elegant public, for whose fickleness one thinks himself prepared, is often as much led by habit as the mob. It is often nothing but patience and repeated temptation that can break through the force of custom. They are pleased enough with the café on the ground floor, probably they cannot be prevailed on to be pleased on the first floor, probably they will never go up to try, in spite of the whole magic of promise and invitation. The cafés are in Paris no longer what they were; the frequenters are almost made up of regular idlers and Provincials, and except one or two of those houses, where good company still go by a kind of good luck, the others are not attended by fashionable people. In the days of Louis XIV. those places were unknown; the rendezvous for even the first classes was the tavern. The young lords of the court, &c. then particularly distinguished the "Cormier" and the "Pomme de Pin."—They often slept in those places, and it was even the height of high life, which however men of common sense have in all ages despised, to present themselves at Versailles, with the nose begrimed with snuff, and the drapery in a disorder which shewed where they had been. Our fine women of the present day would probably not have much to dread from this kind of seduction. It is a long time since tavern-hunting has been given over by them to justice, and probably many years will not pass before the public opinion, under their direction, will pass the same sentence on the café.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

M. Azais is right. Every thing has its balance; goods and evils. If I had the misfortune to buy, or the folly to read, an enormous volume, entitled * * * * *, in which the author wastes 300 pages in 8vo. in comments on the Fables of a good man, and in proving that there are (which I doubted before,) charming things in this work. If my passion for new books made me fall six months into a heap of typographic follies so overwhelming, I have to thank that passion for putting it in my power to appreciate, among the first, that History of the Crusades with which M. Michaud has just enriched our literature. No work for a long period has come forth with such advantage.

The extreme interest of a subject, of which antiquity offers no model; the thoughts which it excites, the great names which it consecrates, and of which the majority belong to our own annals; the well-conceived plan, not led away by the spirit of system, not fettered by the spirit of party; the style solid, elegant, accurate; those are the qualities which strike me as eminently distinguishing a work whose composition must give M. Michaud a leading rank among French historians.

Baursalt has written a "Petite Comedie," merry enough, called "Words in Fashion."—Of these words, the greater part have disappeared from the Dictionary, others by habit have been promoted to a right to figure there. We have gone through a Neologic irruption, that had "left not a wreck behind." To the

mania of new words has succeeded in certain books, in certain theatres, in certain coteries, the abuse of two or three words, perfectly respectable in themselves, but become perfectly absurd by their employment.

It is almost two or three years since the fashionable word was "Nature." An amateur of the Vaudeville made a collection of 226 couplets from pieces of that theatre, in which "Nature," was the *point*. The word, however, lost its rank from the time that a ballad-maker of the Rocher de Cancale parodied the Mania in a song, of which, I can only remember the last Stanza:

In all the scribble
That authors dribble,
In all that quacks
Stretch on their backs;
In all that women
In tricks or trimming;
Above, below,
Display to beau;
Who's the great teacher?
Nature! Nature!
'Tis rather strange, they can't engage
Her, now and then upon the stage!*

---

* Dans tours leurs ecrits, nos auteurs
Tout l'éloge de "la *Nature!*"
Dans leurs visites, nos Docteurs
Font le procès a "la Nature!"
Nos femmes pour l'habit les mœurs
Le rapprochent de "la Nature!"
Mais en revanche nos acteurs
S'eloignent bien de "la Nature!"

For the present day, "Life" is the word of favouritism: it is almost impossible to conceive its service to our melancholy ladies, and what a multitude of fine things they can manage by the help of this fragment of sentimentality.—"We go up,—we go down the stream of "Life."—"Life" sits lightly on us.—We reject "Life."—The dream of "Life;" the lingering on the borders of "Life;" the waste of "Life;" the despair of "Life:"—and all this, after having in general taken their full share of "Life," in the gayest sense of the word.

"Ah! how are you, my dear friend; what do you think of doing this evening?" "How can you ask: I am going to the Odeon, of course."—And so am I."—"There is a new piece for to night, charmingly got up, as I am told."—"You do not mean to go there yet—It is only four o'clock—Come take a turn in the Tuileries." "I have not a moment—I dine in the Rue de Condé, with a friend of mine, who has just lost his wife—The house is quite a solitude since she is gone."—"And do you dine there?"—"Oh yes, it will be pleasant to weep for a moment with him; besides I will be there quite wound up for the new piece." "I shall go to the Orchestra, try to keep a place for you, and we shall have our laugh together."

I have not altered a syllable in this little dialogue, I call the parties themselves to witness the fact.

Last Sunday, it rained a good deal. At five the croud were clustering about the theatre des Varietes, while the unlucky calaches of the Faubourg St. Denis were returning empty, after standing all day on the place Louis XV. to take the curious to St. Cloud. The drivers looked sad at the crowd; at which the managers of the theatre looked gay; at the same instant, a puppet show-man was dividing the public curiosity with a mourning coach, which carried a poor bibliopolist who had died next door to the theatre. A wedding party were defiling in a train of carriages down the middle of the Boulevart, and in one of the side alleys a sick wretch, was carrying in a litter to the hotel Dieu! All those contrasts were gathered into the space of a few fathoms, and perhaps I was the only one who perceived that they had any thing of contrast in them.

"I know so well the value of a character," (said E——————, some time before his death, to a woman of wit) "that to buy a good one, I would, with all my heart, give all that I am worth in the world." "You would never have made a worse bargain in your life," was the remark.—"How?"—"Because if you had to day, the best reputation on earth, it would be gone in a fortnight."

"Cut and dry characters, things that nobody spares; Come, how nobody knows, and gone, how nobody cares."

"Des réputations, on ne sait pas pourquoi," as Gresset says.

The world never saw before such a heap of those reputations. An exquisite review might be made out of those borrowed celebrities, the majority of which, have not so much as an excuse. Caritides wrote a huge volume of commentary on the twenty-fourth Ode of Anacreon, which had after all but four verses, and this to prove to people who know nothing about Greek, that he knew it marvellously. True, if this commentary is a chef d'œuvre, it is at least not that of an Incog. For every body knows Caritides. He is a member of twenty-two learned societies, he has titles, places, in short, he wants nothing, but,—merit! I have always in my mind the reputation which St. Aulaire made out in a single stanza. And if the world will still hold him up in the niche where Voltaire fixed him, I must resign in spite of Boileau, the same favour for Cotin; for after all, the Abbé's stanza is fairly worth that of the Marquis. Yet without talking of reputations literary, political, scientific, &c. of which we can at least suspect the *Why*, I must, however, without going beyond the spot, clear up the matter to myself. *Why* Mercour has got the name of a wit, and has lived for the last ten years on a single bon mot, of which it is not even now quite established that he is the father. *Why* there is a general agreement to attribute the taciturnity of Morneuil to his depth, when the innocent cause is simple poverty of ideas. The fact is, that society must have him a *thinker*. Nature has made him only a dreamer—awake.

I am more staggered with the propensity to undervalue the good where it is, than to conceive it where it is not. Females are as much exposed to this as men. One passes for a woman of gallantry, of whom we should be hard put to it, to find a single adventure. Another, with twenty lovers, manages to pass off as a prude. I cannot find out the way of explaining errors of this number, received in society as in controvertible truths, but by saying, that they are talked of for the first time before people who have no interest in giving them a negative; that they are often repeated by others who are concerned in giving them circulation, and in one word, that in Paris there are "*agencies for characters*, just as there are *agencies for marriages.*"

No. II.—28*th August*, 1813.

SOMNAMBULISM, AND THE ABBE FARIA.

..... Per amicitiam, divosque rogatus,
Ducere me auditum, perges quocumque, memento,
Nam, quamvis referas memori mihi pectore cuncta,
Non tamen interpres tantumdem juveris: adde
Vultum habitumque hominis.

Hor. Sat. I. lib. 2.

I HAVE often inquired, but never obtained a satisfactory answer to the question, "Why have that class of men whom the Greeks denominated *Agyrtæ*, the Romans, *Circumforanei*, and we, in rather a vague way, *Charlatans*, always chosen France for the principal theatre of their quackery?" These persons do not think Frenchmen greater fools than other people: should they be imagined less addicted to antiquated rules, more free from the prejudices of custom? They will answer themselves that they are always the last, if not to acknowledge, at least to adopt useful inventions. They will confess that Christopher Columbus in vain begged that he might be allowed the favour of discovering a new world for their advantage; that the vortices of Descartes were maintained for half a century among them against the system of Newton; that innoculation had during thirty years saved hundreds of thousands of

European lives long before it was with difficulty introduced into France; that even at this moment, a large proportion of the inhabitants of Paris obstinately persist in drinking the impure water of the Seine, in preference to the clear filtered beverage which they can procure at the same price; and, in short, that all innovation, bearing a highly-marked character for grandeur and public utility, has ever been in this country the object of the most inveterate and absurd opposition. It is however true that, in revenge, all futile follies, all extravagant theories, all ridiculous schemes, (provided they originate with foreigners) are sure to meet among us with favour, protection, and enthusiastic encouragement. From *Luc Gauric* to the *Abbé Faria* inclusively, I do not know a single foreign *Doctor*, whether he has pricked for his dupes on our quays or in our saloons, whether he has had his companions in the shops or in the palaces, who has not found means to realise a sort of fortune in France. Behold upon the *Place du Louvre* this famous *Doctor Napolitano*, rolling about in his open cabriolet, with his huge perriwig whitened with powder, his full scarlet coat trimmed with gold lace, his embroidered vest, rings upon every finger, and his ample ruffles of Flanders lace; in what does he differ from this most illustrious *Cagliostro* whom we have seen, at the close of the eighteenth century, boast, even in the *Oeil de Bœuf**,

* The anti-chamber of the grand apartment at Versailles, so called from the form of its windows. *Tr.*

at Versailles, of being able to make the dead speak, and enrich himself by means of a Phantasmagoria, which when some years after carried to perfection by Robertson the physician, proved the ruin of that individual.

The first and the boldest of the Charlatans who have appeared in France is indisputably,

> ..... Cet Ecossais celebre,
> Ce Calculateur sans egal,
> Qui, par les regles de l'algebre,
> Menait la France à l'Hopital.*

This prototype of all Charlatans born or yet to be born, escaped from England, where he was condemned to be hanged, in a very few years changed his country, his religion, his condition, and his fortune. After having in vain endeavoured to introduce his *System* into every state in Europe, he at last came to establish it in France:—the result is generally known!

Succeeding the adventurer *Law*, sprung up another adventurer of the name of *Willars*, who made a rapid fortune of many millions (of francs) by bottling the waters of the Seine, and selling them as an universal panacea, which would lengthen human life to the extent of at least a hundred and fifty years. The Parisian wine-merchants are the inheritors of his secret, which they vend however under another name!

* This celebrated Scotsman; this unequalled Calculator, who, by the rules of Algebra, led France to the Hospital.

Bletton, acquainted with the miracle wrought by the water of the river, thought he might be as successful in drawing the element from its source. He announced the possession of a physical faculty peculiar to himself, by which he could discover, or rather perceive the existence of subterraneous springs, at whatever depth they might be situated, by means of a hazel switch and an able colleague. He succeeded in reviving for a considerable period this pretended science of *Rabdomancy*, which an Ultramontane quack had imposed upon the credulous in a preceding age.

Mesmer burst forth with greater eclat, and with more powerful means than his predecessors; and his triumph was less ephemeral. He had, if you would believe him, discovered a new agent in nature, which he called *Animal Magnetism*. The properties of this agent, by creating new affinities and new relations between men and things, produced miraculous effects. As magnetism operated chiefly upon the nerves and the imagination, our ladies were its earliest converts. The *Tub* of *Mesmer* became the rendezvous of beauties of the court and city: *Magnetism* hatched *Vapours*, *Spasms*, *Nervous Affections*, of a thousand kinds; and these diseases of the imagination, which seized the physicians themselves, procured proselytes for the German Doctor in the very bosom of the Faculty. Those who most obstinately denied the efficacy of magnetism, perceived however that it was not without its influence on our man-

ners; that it brought into contact many persons who would never otherwise have been seen together; and that the virtue of the *Tub* produced a wonderful effect upon the virtue of women. When the government thought it time to put an end to this comedy, they procured it to be represented on the stage, and the *Modern Doctors* threw into utter discredit the doctors of the day.

This quackery of *Mesmerism*, of which I recollect that Doppat, the pupil of Deslon who had himself been the disciple of Mesmer, ingenuously said, "*Those who are acquainted with our secret, doubt it more than those who are ignorant of it*," has given birth to Somnambulism, for which, at this moment, the Abbé Faria keeps a school, to the great scandal of good sense, and of the philosophy which he professes. I was present at the sitting, that is to say, at the public mystification, which took place on Wednesday last, in a house in the *Rue de Clichy*. I shall relate what I saw; it is impossible to represent the matter in a more ridiculous light.

The apostle of *Somnambulism* had chosen the school room of a house of education, as the theatre for the exhibition of his juggling tricks, in the execution of which, he is, as will be seen, far inferior to Olivier.

Before the professor appeared, I examined the assembly; it was brilliant, numerous, and two thirds of it composed of women in the flower of their age. It was easy to see that the

greater proportion of them came to the place with very favourable prepossessions towards the new doctrine. I was placed near Madame Maur, and I could discover in that amiable person, the different characteristics which credulity, confidence, and persuasion, impart to the physiognomy.

The Abbé, accompanied by five or six young girls, appeared in the space reserved for him at one end of the apartment:—his complexion *browned by the fires of the Goa Sun*, did not detract from the regularity of his features; and I thought I could perceive that the most beautiful half of his auditory, seemed in this respect, to have no stronger prejudices than the tender *Desdemona*.

The Orator commenced by a discourse in so grotesque a style, that it was necessary to be a Frenchman, and to recollect that he who spoke was a foreigner, not to interrupt him at the end of every sentence, with bursts of laughter. The course of his ideas, unfortunately was no less ludicrous than the language in which they were expressed: it is almost doubtful, whether human extravagance could go so far. After an eulogium, emphatic to absurdity, on magnetism and its general properties, the professor laid it down as a principle that this mysterious agent was the basis of all instruction, the foundation of all sciences, the key to all human knowledge. Before hearing this philosopher from the coast of Malabar, who could have imagined that to magnetism appertains, *not only the power of re-*

vealing to us the secrets of medicine; and the cause, the seat, and the cure of all diseases; but also that of enabling us to ascertain the configuration, the matter, the motion of the stars and the nature of their inhabitants? We may therefore make ourselves very easy on the subject of the future progress of medicine and astronomy; even *morals* need no longer trouble us, for magnetism will be found an ample substitute: "*all the virtues are thence derived as well as all true knowledge, and political science, is itself subject to the action of this extraordinary principle.*" After this luminous definition of magnetism, M. Faria addressed us on the subject of *Somnambulism*, which is its immediate result. As far as I was enabled to ascertain from his unintelligible jargon, the state of Somnambulism is for man, and especially for woman, the most consummately blissful;—persons in the condition of Somnambulism develope faculties and information, of the possession of which, they are utterly unconscious when awake, such as the gift of tongues, and the second sight; and what is still more wonderful, in particular cases, it even produces new organs. Thus, one of his pupils had attained the peculiar endowment of reading in her sleep, by that part of the human body which the first created man and woman alone did not bring into the world. Unfortunately the proof of this miracle was of a nature not fit for public exhibition!

Other experiments were presented. The four young girls were placed in a row, and the

preliminary discourse of the master, had so excellently pre-disposed them to slumber, that the very moment the magnetic rod touched them, they were plunged into the most profound sleep. One of them in her nap, said she was thirsty: "what will you have to drink?" demanded the cajoler.—"Sugared Water." Immediately he presented her with a great glass of clear water which he contented himself with magnetising, instead of sugaring. The little girl took the glass of water, drank it, and complained that it was too sweet.

The Abbé might have insisted a little upon the benefits which might be derived from magnetism at a period when sugar is so dear; but without noticing the objection made to him, he passed on to a second experiment. "This young person," said he, pointing to one of the sleepers, "does not, as you may readily believe, understand one word of Latin. Well! in the state of Somnambulism, in which she at present is, you shall see that she can comprehend what is spoken in that language. To prove it:—*Ars longa, vita brevis.* Answer Miss, what is the meaning of these words?" "*Life is long and short!!*" Loud bursts of laughter broke out on all sides, and the sitting would hardly have been suffered to proceed, had not the motions and the cries of a third Somnambulist fixed anew the attention of the assembly. "*Stop thief! Murder! Stop thief!*" she exclaimed. The magnetiser questioned her.—"What is the matter?"—"A murder in the Rue de Cli-

chy!" "Who are the perpetrators?" "Two men whom I can hardly distinguish!" "Are they arrested?" "Only one of them!" This trick would have excited a considerable sensation, had not many of the company been aware of an event which had taken place three hours before, of which the Somnambulist and the Professor, like other people, had learned the circumstances.

The experiments of members paralysed and *deparalysed* at the word of command given by the magnetiser, finished by exhausting the patience, and disgusting the honest feelings of the spectators. At first, murmurs were heard; these were succeeded by hooting; next, they hissed the Indian Professor, who very dexterously accounted for the want of success which attended his efforts, by declaring, that the presence of a single sceptic, was sufficient to neutralise the magnetic virtue, and confound the talent of the magnetiser.

I have been desirous in this essay, to answer the reproach which has been applied to me, for not having heretofore, in a work dedicated to the delineation of living manners, devoted a page to the exposure of a doctrine so perfectly absurd and ridiculous. But there can be no danger of its coming into fashion, and we have no cause to apprehend that the steps of Abbé Faria will be followed by any other Professors.

No. III.—11*th Sept.* 1813.

A HUNTING PARTY.

——————Tu cede potentis amici
Lenibus imperiis : quotièsque educet in agros
Ætolis onerata plagis jumenta, canesque,
Surge, et inhumanæ senium depone Camœnæ
Cœnes ut pariter pulmenta laboribus emta.
HOR. Ep. 18, lib. 1.

Yield to the solicitations of your friend, and when he takes out his dogs, his horses, his whippers-in, quit your serious studies to follow him; and allow yourself, like others, the pleasure of supping on your game.

Hunting, it seems, was his delight,
His joy by day, his dream by night.
SOMERVILLE.

AFTER love, the chase is perhaps of all the pleasures of this lower world, that which has been most censured and most praised. Plato calls it a divine exercise; Saint Augustin, a ferocious amusement; Lycurgus recommended it to the Greeks; Moses forbade it to the Jews; Pliny assures us that it gave birth to monarchy; Sallust wishes it to be abandoned to slaves; Buffon would have it reserved for heroes.

These contradictory opinions would not have been expressed, but that under the same name, each speaks of a different thing; and this being the case, may they not all be equally entitled to credit.

" It is necessary to preserve the flocks from the jaws of the wolf; to prevent animals from destroying the harvest; it is natural to nourish ourselves with the flesh of some, to clothe ourselves in the skins of others. In these instances then the chase is an useful occupation.

" Among noxious animals there are some to whom nature has imparted the highest degree of strength, cunning, and courage. To destroy these, it is necessary to combat them; and to master them, the hunter must often risk his life. The chase then becomes a noble amusement, and may in some respects be considered as a school for the military virtues.

" But hunting now-a-days has scarcely any object but to torment in a thousand ways innocent animals, which are carefully multiplied merely for the pleasure of destroying them. This exercise, which has always been the inheritance of certain privileged men, has become the source of much injustice and vexation. A love of the chase degenerates almost always into a passion; it becomes too often the sole occupation of him who gives himself up to it. It is said to improve the health, but it should be added, that it almost always leaves the mind uncultivated. The chase, viewed in this light, is an injurious and culpable amusement."

Thus it is, an action indifferent in itself, considered separately in its principle, in its practice, or in its abuse, may become an eternal subject of satire or of eulogy.—Locke is right: —to avoid disputes on things, it will almost always be sufficient that we understand each other on words.

Whatever may be the antiquity, the nobleness, and the inconveniences of the pleasures of the chase, it is one of those which I have always found it most difficult to explain, even when I have given myself up to it with most ardour, by false shame, by calculation, or by suitableness. That which was at first but a simple repugnance, has resolved itself into a fixed aversion, from the date of my acquaintance with the Baron de Roncerolles. We met for our common misfortune, about thirty years ago, at the house of one of his relations, in the environs of Dreux.

The Gothic chateau of M. de Cériane, situated in the midst of one of the most beautiful *capitaineries* of the kingdom, was in autumn the rendezvous of all the hunters for thirty leagues round. On entering it, they made a vow to think of nothing but the chase: and even in the presence of ladies, their conversation was limited to that subject. The old Commander, uncle to Madame de Cériane, whose age and infirmities confined him all day to a large high-backed chair in the drawing-room, knew no pleasure but that of maintaining the superior merit of *falconry*, (which he had the

honour of being the last to renounce in France) against Roncerolles, who defended hunting with dogs, with all the force of his habits, and of his lungs. His erudition on this subject surpassed that of all the *Dorantes* and of all the *Clainvilles** in the world. So long as he spoke, (and he desisted from speaking as little as possible) there was nothing to be heard but about the *sole-fileine*, the *pince rondes*, the *biche brehaine*, the *dix-cors jeunement*, the *pied*, and the *contre-pied*†, and all the other barbarous terms, which swell the nomenclature of modern hunting. If he happened to be interrupted for a moment, the old Commander resumed the history and the eulogy of falconry; never failing to assert, in conclusion, that the decline of French gallantry ought to be dated from the invention of small shot. I one day could not help laughing at his peroration somewhat louder than usual. To expiate this offence, he made me endure a description of the finest *bird hunts*, from the reign of Francis I. to the minority of Louis XV. He maintained with the best grace in the world, that the education of the bird of prey, and war, were the only occupations worthy of a gentleman. He could not speak, without sighing, of those happy times, when to charm all the beauties of the court, it

* Characters in the *Fâcheux* and the *Gageure*, two French Dramas.

† These phrases, applied to hinds, barren or with young, to stags, &c.—are not translatable.

was sufficient to know how to fly a falcon; to follow him with all speed; to make him return to the lure, and dexterously to place him on a lady's wrist.—After Francis I., whom he called the *Father of Hunters*, the monarch whom the Commander honoured with the next place in his esteem, was the good King John, who was so passionately fond of the chase, that he knew no better way of amusing himself during his captivity at *Helfort*, than to compose with Gacé de la Bigue, his chaplain, a poem on the art of the chase*, *ad usum Delphini*. The Commander had taken the trouble to charge his memory with fragments of it, which it afforded him no small pleasure to recite. This old man, whose head was well furnished with anecdotes and recollections, was listened to with some interest, while recounting his stories till the third or fourth time: but as to the eternal Baron, (whom they had surnamed the *Syndic of Insupportables*) and who never spoke to you but of the different species of dogs—*clairauds*, *mirauds*, *briffauds*; of the manners of the kennel, and of the education of huntsmen; one could not escape ennui in his society, or the persecution of his discourse, without quarrelling with him—(a precaution which I never failed to take, from the morning after my arrival at Cériane, which however did not prevent our again meet-

* "Le Roman des Oiseaux," which the king wrote for the instruction of his son, Philip, Duke of Burgundy.

ing with reciprocal good will). From his exclusive passion for the chase, the Baron derived this advantage, that he had less cause than others to mourn our domestic troubles. In the revolution he only saw an order to go and hunt somewhere else; and he found nothing to complain of on his return to France but the abolition of the ancient ordonnances, with respect to the waters and forests.

After having lost sight of him for so long a period, I was less surprised than I might have been, to meet him lately while on a little journey to Sologne. My old friend, Madame de L* * * * is proprietor of a magnificent estate in that country, a few leagues from Chambord, where, every year, at the commencement of the sporting season, her son assembles a numerous and brilliant company of amateurs of both sexes. I arrived there in the night of the 4th of September, and I left it eight and forty hours afterwards, satisfied with the scene of which in that time I had been a witness, and which I shall now endeavour to describe in a way as laconic as possible.

The first person whom I encountered in the morning, on leaving my chamber, was the Baron de Roncerolles. He had been apprised of my arrival, and waited for me in the passage. We met like old acquaintances. He found out that I did not seem a year older than I was when he saw me last; I assured him that he looked fifteen years younger—and why not? Time loses nothing by such assertions, and

they always give pleasure. The Baron was in costume; an embroidered waistcoat, with stag's head buttons; a grey hunting cap; a little sporting knife;—in short, nothing was wanting to make his equipment complete. He had taken upon himself to make all the preparations for the next day's sport, and had just been determining on the rendezvous, and the halting-places. He attached, he said, the more importance to the success of that day's chase, as he had provided the equipage of young de L*****, and as General de G**** (the greatest sportsman in France) was to be of the party.

The poor Baron had to endure a sharp scolding at breakfast, for having taken it into his head to have a rehearsal of the horns on the terrace of the castle before noon, regardless of the ladies, who were still asleep after having played at cards till two in the morning. The remainder of the day he was perpetually in motion. He went from the kennels to the stables; he entered the names of the sportsmen; gave his orders to the huntsmen and whippers-in; and returned to the saloon to consult the barometer.

The time for setting out was fixed for seven o'clock on the following morning. At five the Baron was up, and had awaked every body in the chateau. After having been himself to couple the dogs, to separate the relays, and to place the old pack, at the entrance of the forest; he returned to the stables to saddle the horses and to harness the calashes, and have them brought

to the steps of the terrace. He at length returned to the castle, to commence the round of the corridors. Nothing could be more amusing than to see him running from door to door; calling each lady by her name, telling *each* in particular, that the party only waited for *her*; and not giving himself a moment's repose, till all were assembled in the vestibule. He then mounted his horse, and made his troop defile before him. I accompanied them to the forest, saw them enter the wood to the sound of the horn and the yelping of the dogs, and then retraced my steps, peaceably to await their arrival at the chateau.

Towards three o'clock a great noise of horses and of carriages, announced the return from the chase, and I hastened to quit the library, to see the hunters take off their boots. I could not yet discover the Baron, but I heard him hollowing and raving like one possessed of a devil, in the midst of the valets and huntsmen, while the ladies descending from the calashes, repeated with bursts of immoderate laughter—"*At fault** *! At fault !*" At these words, with which they saluted the Baron on his entrance; he flew into the most ludicrous passion imaginable. "*At fault !*" repeated he, (gnashing his teeth, and wiping his forehead, without perceiving that he had taken off his wig with his cap,) "Have I come to this place to hear those words!——Laugh as much as you please; the

* *Buisson Creux !*

affront is not to you ladies, but to me, who have been forty years a sportsman, and have a character to preserve. I would rather have received twenty stripes from a horsewhip across my back, than have experienced such humiliation. As for the rest;" (added he, walking off,) "if these gentlemen understood nothing of the chase, it is not at all astonishing—*Where the devil should they have learned any thing about it?*" Each retired to his apartment to rest himself and to dress.

The dinner bell rang, and we all met at table; and some of the ladies, more fond of mischief than the rest, revived the conversation on the "*At fault*" of the morning, by maintaining that the mistake that had been made, was the error of the Baron. "My error," exclaimed he, rising, "I will be judged by the general.—I had fixed on my stag the evening before. It was a six antlered one. I drew the hounds on to the scent. The game starts. M. Saint Alphonso who is present, and had brought his pack with him, maintained from a view of his slough, that it was a full aged stag. I saw from that moment, that I had to do with a man who was a stranger to the first principles of the art. This is not surprising, *where should he have learnt it?*" (The company laughed.) "The pack of the Chateau caught the scent—it is composed of forty dogs with fine noses, *well matched* and hunting in full cry; I was quite sure of it. The stag beat a long time about the wood. We traced him through his wind-

ings; at length we turned him out. We were then at fault. The pack of M. Saint Alphonso had got on a wrong scent. I wished to break the dogs off from it, and force them away—impossible! these babblers knew nothing of hunting." "*Where should they have learnt it?*" asked the mistress of the house, and this was the signal for a general laugh. The Baron nevertheless went on: "I wished to call them off; he maintained that we should follow them, and that his pack was in the right. The dogs parted, I backed the *good* and cried *hourvari* on the others. Two rascals of huntsmen as knowing as their master, took upon themselves to sound their horns. The whole pack went wrong, the scent was altogether lost—the hunt was sent to the devil. Now I would ask, who was in fault?"

After this fine discourse, of which the ladies could understand nothing, the Baron quite out of breath, resumed his seat. Saint Alphonso, who wished to defend his huntsmen and his dogs, displayed in turn his sporting erudition. The quarrel became very animated, the ladies who were amused by it, did all in their power to heighten it, and the General who had been made the umpire, disposed of the question, by proposing two new hunting parties, over one of which, each of the adversaries should preside. I took my departure without waiting to know who proved victor in the end.

I shall now return to my subject, by transcribing one of the letters, which I received after

writing my first essay on the chase. The only change I shall make in it, will be to omit some of the too flattering compliments which my correspondent has addressed to me.

" *Paris*, 18*th September*.

" *M. Hermit*,

" Your observations on manners, breathe fine morality, have an agreeable gaiety, and are written in an easy natural style. I delight much in reading them, and am sorry we have so long to wait for them. I could wish that after the example of your predecessor, Addison, you would give us a paper every day, in which we could comment upon, and discuss your propositions, for one pointed essay, invites an answer, as a witty conversation invites us to take a part in it. I, for example, have many things to say to you on the subject of your little philippic against the chase. Without saying so much about it, I am little less passionately devoted to it, than your Baron de Roncerolles. This taste is confirmed in me by gratitude, as you shall judge from my history.

" Educated in the country under the eyes of my father and mother, by a preceptor of merit, whose care was rewarded by the rapid progress of his pupil. On approaching my sixteenth year, my health became much impaired; I had palpitations of the heart, and my nights were sleepless. My mother, alarmed, consulted her physician on my case. He was a sensible man, and after a few questions, he called for a pen

and ink to write his prescription, which was as follows:

"'R. *A double barrelled gun, a powder horn, a game bag, and a pointer, the whole to be taken every morning for four or five hours.*' Ye children of the cities, whom less innocent amusements occupy from the cradle, can form no idea of the first perfectly pure pleasure, tasted at an age when enjoyments of a different character are open to us. My delight in the chase partook of madness. Each step of my dog, made my heart beat with violence, and I think, (God and the fair sex forgive me!) I have never felt, on arriving at the place of rendezvous with the woman I most loved, so much anxiety and rapture, as I have experienced when on seeing the hare or the fox quit the covert, to pass to the spot where I was squatting on the watch for him. I again tasted refreshing sleep: my health and gaiety returned, I finished my studies, and set off for my regiment.

"We were then at war. I made three campaigns, and passed two winters in a good garrison; after which, thanks to the fatigues of the one, and the pleasures of the other, I returned to my paternal home, so reduced and so changed, that my parents hardly knew me. The doctor was called in again, and gave me the same prescription as before, 'your health is but slightly affected,' said he to me, 'it will be restored by moderate exercise, which is equally good to supply strength, and to consume excess

of it.' I followed his counsel, and regained my youth.

"I found myself so well, that I soon became passionately enamoured of a young lady in the neighbourhood, and it was not long before I discovered that I had a rival. My folly was such, that I gave myself up to despair. I became melancholy, hardly spoke, and could not eat. I passed the day in writing letters, which were not received, and the night, in wildly pacing my chamber, meditating scenes of romance, and projects of vengeance. As mad as *Orlando*, I was lost in my passion as for an *Angelica* and *Medora*, if the dear doctor had not come once more to my assistance; '*love* and *jealousy*!' said he, 'I know of but one remedy for these fatal maladies.'—'Death!'—'The chase, zounds the chase.'—'But I shall find no pleasure in it now.'—'It is not pleasure you want, but it is fatigue. Do you not see that the repose of your body nourishes the inquietude of your soul; the only cause of your present indisposition? Exercise your limbs, that is the way to set your mind at rest, to restore your appetite, and to extinguish your passions.' I resumed my gun; I again declared war against the rabbits, and before the close of the autumn, I was so well cured of my love for my fair neighbour, that I went to law against her for the right to a warren.

"Some time after this, my father succeeded in marrying me to a rich and noble heiress.

My wife had great virtues and talents, but as a set off against these, her face was singularly plain, and her temper was excessively tiresome. I soon conceived an aversion for her, and unfortunately she felt for me a sentiment exactly the reverse. We understood each other on no one point, yet she undertook to coincide with me in every thing. If I took up a book, she read. If I approached the piano, she begged of me to accompany her; and as she had a habit of not singing correctly, though she was a great musician, she made my passion for music, a real punishment. I thought to escape by riding out on horseback, but she took no respite, and never quitted the riding school, till she had qualified herself to follow me. I hardly knew what saint to invoke, to help me out of this conjugal hell, when I happened to recollect the doctor and his panacea. From that time, I gave myself up without reserve to the only exercise my wife could not share with me. She wished to accompany me, but I led her '*so far—so far*,' (as the Fairy Tales say) that she was obliged to decline such excursions, and thus the chase saved me once more. When I had thus exercised myself all day, I had a good excuse for silence and sleepiness at night. Obliged to separate from me, she has created new occupations for herself, her tenderness has become more calm, and we have finished by living together in a very tolerable manner.

"You will agree M. Hermit, that with such reasons for loving the chase, I may be excused

for taking upon myself its defence, and for endeavouring to remove from you those prepossessions, which you appear to entertain against this exercise.

I have the honour to be, &c.

THE BARON DE LA GIBECIERE."

I have established a little tribunal, in which I have no functions to perform other than those of a mere recorder; I interrogate the parties, I publish the facts, draw my conclusions, and leave the decision to the public. My correspondent pleads in favour of the chase. He has ably set forth its advantages; I proceed to exhibit its inconveniences and folly.

Some of my readers may perhaps still remember the Abbé Vincent, with whom a taste for the chase had become a real madness. After having for a long period sought the means of associating the *decorum* of his profession, with his ruling passion; he at length discovered them with the assistance of a skilful gunsmith in the *Rue de la Harpe*. This person invented expressly for the Abbé, a gun, of which the breech took off, and could be put in the pocket. By means of an ivory knob, made to fit one end of the barrel, and a brass ferrule which went on the other end of it, the gun covered with a fine japan varnish, was presently transformed into a cane. The Abbé with his cane in his hand, and a prayer book under his arm, a bob wig, and a violet coloured coat, used to leave Paris every morning in the sporting

season, satisfied that in this costume he could only be supposed to be a curate of some neighbouring parish, returning on foot to his parsonage. No sooner did he approach a heath, a wood, or any other place stocked with game, than he put his gun in order; and drew from his pocket a small spaniel of an excellent breed, which instantly went in quest of prey. Ponto, with his nose to the ground, and wagging his tail, gave notice to his master that the game was at hand. The bird rose, a shot from the fowling piece brought it to the ground. The dog who carried it to the sportsman, was immediately put with the prize in his pocket, and the game-keepers who on hearing the report of the gun, were attracted to the spot, found only the Abbé walking with a cane in his hand, and reading his prayer book. The ecclesiastical poacher passed on to another estate, where he amused himself in the same way, and this he continued till he had filled his enormous pouch, which served him for a game bag.

The rigour of the ancient ordonnances, restricted the rights of enjoying the sports of the chase, to the class of nobles and to the great land owners. These laws the peasant and the citizen could not but at much risk and peril venture to infringe. More conformable to the general, as well as to individual interest, the existing code allows every one after the harvest, to make war on the game on his own lands. From the beginning of the month of September the castles and country houses are

filled with sportsmen. They awake before day-break;—the guns, the game bags, the ammunition boxes are arranged at the door. They go from the village—their dogs open and disperse about the country, each seeking by sun-rise to discover the seats of the hares by the little vapour which rises from the place where they have passed the night. The alarm is given to the inhabitants of the woods—the dogs are in pursuit of them—the sound of fire arms succeeds, and the game bags are filled The rendezvous has been agreed upon—the breakfast hour arrives; all haste to share the bread, the dried tongue, and the veal pasty which the servants have been busied in providing. Each gives and receives his share of eulogium and criticism. "Such a prize has been missed by the fault of one person; one would give his best shot for that of his neighbour, whom he has seen bring down two partridges by a back-handed fire.—Another has made nothing but blunders; he is in ill-luck," (for sportsmen like gamblers, have their prejudices and their superstitions). Breakfast being finished—the ozier bottle which contains a little rum, passes from hand to hand, and is the signal for departure. They return to the field—the sun shines with all its force—the heat is insupportable, it is a punishment to course the plain.—No matter, they have agreed to *amuse* themselves till four o'clock. It is yet but noon. The game seeks cover in the thickest bushes. The sportsman exhausted with fatigue, can find no more; and

looks in his turn for a commodious sheltering place. His gun placed against a tree, on which he hangs his game bag, his dog at his feet, he lays himself down for a nap, and sleeps; but the perpendicular rays of the sun, darting full on his nose, and the swarm of flies which walk over his face, soon awake him, and with eyes half open, he returns to the chase, and the carnage recommences among the rabbits and partridges. At length the village clock announces the hour of four, and the sportsmen assemble to make a triumphal entry on their return. The ladies seated round a large table in the dining room, receive the hunters, who proudly display the trophies of the day—quails, partridges, rabbits, and hares, which they present to them. It is there that the game is shared, and made into different parcels by the huntsmen—the presents are forwarded to their destination, and the cook of the house takes possession of the choice pieces set apart for the next day's dinner.

Buffon has declared himself the apologist of the chase. If we may believe him, "*it is the only amusement which makes a diversion from business, the only relaxation without effeminacy, and the only one which affords lively pleasure without languor, without alloy, and without satiety.*" Ladies have in France a decided aversion for this species of amusement, which appears to them destructive of all society, of all conversation, and of all sentiment, and which accustoms men to seek, removed from them, pleasures in which they cannot participate.

There is at least as much exaggeration in their complaints against the chase, as in the praises bestowed upon it by the philosopher of Montbard. I should however have less difficulty in pointing out a motive for the one, than in offering a justification for the other.

There is no defect, no excellence, no custom in France which is not parodied. The passion for the chase is travestied at Paris in the most ridiculous manner, by some little shop-keepers. Can there be any thing more grotesque than that honest grocer in the *Rue de la Verrerie*, whose shop is watched by a hunting dog, and who rising above the vulgar taste of his family, waits till Sunday to course the fields, and takes the chance of killing a lark or a water-wagtail. How proudly does he walk through Paris, his gun under his arm, his hunting cap on his head, his buff gaiters, and his sporting jacket, made at the expense of an old coat, the skirts of which have been cut off. How graciously does he smile on his neighbours! How loudly does he call after *Diana* or *Castor*, though the animal has not been a yard from his heels! At last, he has reached the plain of St. Denis, pursuing from bush to bush, the woodpecker, the linnet, and even the tender nightingale, which he sometimes kills by chance with a random shot. But more frequently the whole morning passes away without his having to reproach himself with the death of the smallest bird. Meanwhile the dinner hour approaches, and he knows that they expect the produce of his chase

at home, to make some addition to their humble *bouilli*. In this dilemma, the unfortunate sportsman resolves to repair to the Palais-Royal, and to hunt there, purse in hand, in the shop of a poulterer, from whom he purchases two partridges, which he puts into his game bag, taking good care to pull the feet through the meshes of the netting. The grocer then goes home, and with an air of triumph, presents to his wife, the partridges which he has shot. Unluckily, however, a lusty country cousin, who comes every Sunday to keep his wife company, causes her to remark that one of the birds has been caught in a net, and that the other exhales a high scent, which betrays the remote era of its death.

No. IV.—23*d Oct.* 1813.

REVOLUTIONS OF FASHION.

Toute change—la raison change ausi de méthode,
Ecrits, habillemens systèmes, tout est mode.
RACINE Fils—Epit. à Rousseau.

Forms fluctuate still—resistless fashion's sway,
Arts, habits, wit, and wisdom's self, obey.

Je loue l'industrie d'un peuple qui cherche a faire payer aux autres ses propres mœurs et ses ajustemens; mais je le plains de se laisser lui-même si fort piper et aveugler à l'autorité de l'usage present; qu'il soit capable de changer d'opinions et d'avis, tous les mois, s'il plait à la coutume—on dirait que c'est quelqu'espèce de manie qui lui tourneboule l'entendement.
MONTAIGNE.

I applaud the industry of a people that tries to make its own habits and manners pass current with the world; but I find fault with their suffering themselves to be entangled and blinded by the authority of the reigning custom. Those who are capable of changing their whole system of opinions every month, as the fashion may be, are only to be spoken of, as labouring under a disease which perverts the brain.

IT is rather with a feeling of pleasure, than of vanity, that I find an enterprise prosper in my hands, in which so many men of merit have

successively failed, during the last age: the small share of success obtained in their time by the *Spectateurs*, *Observateurs*, and *Epilogueurs* of France, led many to imagine that our national vanity, revolted from this species of magic lanthern, by which a skilful moralist, more or less severe, might produce every week, a faithful picture of some of our vices, our occupations, and our follies. I imagine, on the contrary, that it is to a want of fidelity in these portraits, that we must ascribe the cold reception which they have hitherto experienced. L'Abbé Prévost, Marivaux, and their imitators, have considered, if I may so express myself, mind and morals in an equal degree with manners, but they have not particularised the habits of their contemporaries; there is nothing determined, nothing of locality in their delineations: their site is every country; their personages are of every age—I confine myself to a less extensive circle; and in compensation for all the advantages which these writers possess over me, I shall excel *them* in that of fidelity, or at least in appositeness.—I design what I see; I trace characters which I have under my eye; and to be more certain of the resemblance, I cast my figures from living nature.

My task, I confess, becomes every day more easy; and it frequently happens, that my correspondence supplies me with the germ, the matter, and sometimes even, as in the following letter, with the substance of my discourse.

" *My dear Hermit,*

" I live secluded, unknown: I love to reflect, to observe; and as often as remarks occur to me, I amuse myself with noting them down; but as Marmontel remarks, ' It is melancholy to contemplate a fine prospect, without being able to say to some one, What a fine prospect!' It gives me pleasure on this principle, to communicate my ideas to you, and I set about it with less scruple, as, in consequence of your being totally unknown, you are not obliged to treat me with the slightest ceremony, but you may at once do justice on my letter, for any little fatigue it may occasion you, by throwing it into the fire.—This premised, M. Hermit, let us have some chat together.

" Tell me, if you know why my dear compatriots, whom Voltaire in his moments of humour, called *Welches*, but who are not the less celebrated for the excellence of their taste and the richness of their imaginations—why, I ask, are the French of all people, most apt to delight themselves with certain retrospects, with a set of reiterated ideas, so as to make the most ridiculous application of them to present customs and manners? Are we children, who cannot admire any object, without wishing to lay hold of it? Reason informs us that every people, every age, and every country, has its peculiar characters; that whatever we borrow from either, must be delicately modified, in order to avoid the fabrication of disgusting absurdities; and that servile imitation is the uner-

ring sign of mediocrity. In proportion to the justice of this reflection we are astonished at the vicious extravagancies of fashion in France, during some years past.—After having been muffled up successively in Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Asiatic rags, she now presents herself speckled with all the colours of chivalry. A little while since, we were enamoured of the Antique, at present, nothing is endured but the Gothic. I shall not examine whether, in character, we are now more essentially, *Knight's-errant*, than we were formerly *Romans*; I regard only the ridiculous side of our metamorphosis. I wish only to take off the habit, and it is not my fault, if, like the robe of the Centaur Nessus, it should stick to the skin.

"I am intimate with a solicitor, who, in arranging the business of others, has done his own so effectually, as to have realised a considerable fortune, which he enjoys with his children and his wife. I know of no fault in the lady, except that of being the slave of fashion, nor can I accuse my friend of any weakness, except that of being, in this respect, the slave of his wife. Nature has given him a thick, short person, and chubby cheeks; he wears spectacles, and false hair, flying on each side of his head like pigeon's wings. I leave you to imagine the figure he must have made, during some years in a bed-chamber, furnished entirely à la grecque, and ornamented on each side with basso relievos, representing the adventures of the gallant Alcibiades. It is still more

ludicrous when one calls to mind the canopied bed, shadowed by a cloud of muslin, and sustained by swans and cupids, where I have been accustomed to see him every morning, in a wove cotton night-cap, and an Indian dressing gown.

"I visited him on my return from a very long voyage. In six years, twenty ages had passed over his house. I found him in a library, the windows of which, in arabesque, admitted but a doubtful and fatiguing light through their vitriolated colours.

His books (all on legal subjects) were ranged on lacquered shelves, surmounted by escutcheons, on which one was surprised to meet with such devices as the following:

La science est folle parole;
Ne suivons que d'amour l'ecole!

Leave science to the pedant fool;
Be joy your study; love, your school.

Or:—

Amour abat orgueil des braves!

Valour itself submits to love.

Or:—

Tout pour les dames!

All for the ladies;

and other conceits of a similar kind. I fixed a day to dine with him, *en famille*, and the family was assembled on my arrival, in the saloon, and

formed one of the most grotesque groups I ever beheld. My friend's father, in a flowered drugget, and a large curled wig, was seated in a kind of curule chair; the master of the house, who had an engagement with his wife, to a nobleman's route in the evening; was dressed altogether in the French style; he was seated, or rather squatted on a very low Ottoman, which extended all round the saloon.—The lady, in a Medician robe, had an Indian shawl wrapt round her arm; her daughter was habited in the Greek, her son in the English costume, and the younger children in that of the Mamelukes.

"I had hoped to console myself for the capricious fluctuations of fashion, in contemplating the immutable beauties of art. I had left our school of painting at its most flourishing epoch, when David, Gerard, and Girodet had revived these fine forms, and that grand style of antiquity, of which, I am an idolater. I entered *a saloon;* I saw nothing but Gothic monuments, obscure arches, women buried in velvet, and men imprisoned in steel. I stopped with the multitude, before a picture, in which every face, masked in a visor, left me nothing to recognise for a human countenance, except the squinting eyes and flat nose of our gallant Duguesclin; a personage whose virtues were better adapted for historic illustration, than his features for pictorical effect. I had once repeated, with a lively author, whom idleness, unluckily, had led to the Muses: 'Who will

deliver me from the Greeks and the Romans!' I now exclaimed, on recollecting myself: 'who will deliver me from the French knights-errant!'

"I had not indeed, found shelter from their attacks, when I set out on a country excursion, proposing to visit a friend who possessed a small estate at some leagues distant from Paris. I learned that he had sold this agreeable property, in order to purchase an old castle, the cradle of an illustrious family to which he had taken it into his head that he was related. Thither he had repaired to celebrate the majority of his eldest son. I proceeded, not in the highest spirits, for this noble mansion, situated at the extremity of lower Britanny. I arrived, after having been overturned three times in the neighbourhood of Quimperlé. It took me a quarter of an hour to wind round a pinnacled wall, flanked with towers and turrets: I at last found the draw-bridge, which I passed without opposition, though somewhat disconcerted at not having an esquire to sound a horn. I announced myself to the governor's only servant, who was dusting his master's coat in the *armoury*. After a long circuit through the obscure corridors of this vast edifice, I found M. N * * * in an apartment, of which most of the rafters were naked; it was ornamented, however, with family portraits, and some black leather chairs, on which it was necessary to mount in order to look out of window. Our conversation during two days, turned on the nobility

and traditions of the place. He gave me an airing in a calash, drawn by the horses of the farm, on a plain where jousts and tournaments were formerly held. In a superb chapel, half of which had recently tumbled down, I heard mass from a priest, whose *chasuble* was made out of an old piece of Utrecht velvet. We dined tolerably well with the mayor, a justice of the peace, and a tax-gatherer, in what was formerly called the servant's hall; I slept, as well as may be imagined, to the music of owls and rats, in an old bed, with flowered hangings, in which, it seems, the Constable de Clisson formerly reposed; and I resumed with infinite satisfaction, my route to Paris, cursing the coldness of my imagination, which rendered me more sensible of the absurdity resulting from an incongruous association of things, than of any interest attached to the times, the persons, and the recollections which they recal.

A. P."

This letter, the malice and the gaiety of which I leave my readers to appreciate, will serve as a preface to a very short dissertation on Fashions, in which I propose to pass in rapid review, the principal revolutions which they have undergone in France, and the absurdities which they have successively introduced in their train.

Among other contrasts which compose the French character, the most striking and inexplicable, is that taste for variety, and that pas-

sion for routine, which our nation only has found the secret of uniting. It is from this compound principle that we change the form of our habits and our furniture, two or three times in an age; and that half Paris still prefers to drink at the same price, the brackish water of the Seine, to water which has been crystallised. We are discussing, however, the question of fashion, not of routine, and we will not wander from the subject. If we wish to form an idea of the different revolutions of our costume since the origin of the monarchy, it is in the museum of the *Petits-Augustins*, that we ought to commence our study. We there perceive that the Roman *Chlamyde*, the coat of the Sicambres, and the amice or hood, formed during two or three ages, the vestments and the head-dress of the early French. In these distant times, the different classes of society were distinguished by the amplitude, the quality, and the trimmings of the chlamyde, the form of which, towards the end of the seventeenth century, began to exhibit a visible alteration. Silk was exclusively reserved for princes and persons of the highest distinction: the inferior orders were restricted to the use of camlet and woollen. As far as we are enabled to judge from some shapeless monuments of art, (replunged at this period into barbarism) which furnish us with the only authorities we can collect respecting these remote ages, our ancestors manifested the same inconsistency of

taste, with which their descendants have since been so loudly reproached.

That protection demanded by industry, and the just bounds within which luxury ought to be restrained in a poor state, had fixed the attention of the sage Louis IX. "*It is proper,*" said that prince in his instructions to his son, "*that every one should dress according to his condition. A man whose only object is to please his mistress ought to be handsomely attired; and his general appearance should be such that old people shall not reproach him with ostentation, nor young ones with meanness.*"

Philip *le Bel*, in the following age, revived in full vigour the ancient sumptuary laws, in order to repress the luxury of the *bourgeoise*, who affected at this time an equality with the court: chariots were interdicted to the bourgeoise women, and they were forbidden, under the penalty of fines, to be attended with wax torches when abroad at night: furs of certain qualities and jewels were reserved for the nobility: gilt girdles became the exclusive appendage of courtezans, and honest women consoled themselves by repeating the proverb,

"Bonne renommée vaut mieux que ceiture dorée."

"A good name is better than a gilt girdle."

This sumptuary law has been exploded, and we have retained the proverb, but without making any deductions from it. A man of letters and of wit (this expression involves no

pleonasm) started, some years since, the ingenious idea of composing a history of France in ballads, not according to the project of certain hungry poetasters who propose to reduce into doggerel rhyme and set to the airs of the Pont-neuf, the elements of grammer, of physic, and even the articles of the civil code; but in combining by an historical commentary the various songs, carrols, and satirical couplets, which have appeared at different periods of our history, and which are connected with its principal events. The *Satire Ménippée* contains a great number of satirical couplets, to which we are indebted for a multitude of anecdotes respecting the *League*, which we should in vain search for any where else. The *Mazarinades* are the true memoirs of *La Fronde*, and have this advantage over all others, that they render us, as it were, contemporary with that epoch of intrigues, by trasporting us into the midst of those personages who acted the principal parts in it.

An universal history of fashions, executed on the same plan, would undoubtedly be one of the most interesting and original works which has yet been published. Nor can the slightest imputation of frivolity be attached to such a subject, considered in its necessary relationship to manners, to laws, and the general spirit of ages and nations.

In contemplating the Orientals, under a burning sky, covered with pelisses, shawls, and stuffs of all kinds; in observing their feet,

which play in their ample slippers, may we not pronounce, without farther investigation, that these are a lazy and indolent people? Who cannot perceive in the Dutchman, in his blue compact habit, in his round unpowdered wig, the man of economy, laborious, and destitute of imagination? In the Hungarian, beneath his rich and martial costume, a character fierce and independent? Is not the ancient Greek dressed, or rather ornamented, in habiliments most favourable to beauty, the proper representative of a people who held the sceptre of arts? If the character of nations discovers itself in their fashions, we may likewise recognise in them the grand epochs of their history. Among ourselves, for instance, does not every revolution in manners reflect itself in our habits?—During the first ages, Charlemagne, who appears with his hair cropt square across his neck, with a woollen tunic embroidered with silk, a sheep-skin mantle clasped after the manner of the Roman emperors, and with sandal shoes; does not this combination suggest to us the idea of barbarism, mingled with an impression of high cultivation? Are we not taught to recognise in him the conqueror who assumed the title of Augustus, and who appropriated for sale the eggs of his poultry-yard, and his garden-vegetables? In the days of Feudalism, when war was the only science, and when there was no rank below nobility, men were clad in iron, and women in their husband's coats of arms. One side of a petticoat, of a lady of the

house of Dreux, was occupied by a *martlet*, and the other by a *crescent gules checked with ermine*. Women, if we may so express it, lived under the buckler which defended them. During the succeeding ages, the progress of arts and intelligence exhibited itself in the reigning modes, which were characterised by an elegant capriciousness, a species of pomp, the offspring of chivalrous imagination, and of Spanish genius modified by French taste: and this composed, at the time of Francis I., the most picturesque costume which this nation has ever adopted. Louis XIV., whose personal character had so much influence on that of his age, accomplished at the expense of taste, but to the great advantage of the nobility and of gravity, a complete revolution in the fashions of his time, wherein majesty did not always display itself divested of charlatanery.—After him, both manners and habits lost their nobility, and retrograded from simplicity: the spirit of society made great progress, urbanity began to generalise, but public manners grew corrupt, and those licensed freedoms which good taste condemns became established. The French costume, short and scanty, preserved nevertheless something of elegance. In proportion as the different classes confounded themselves with each other, good sense, good taste, and the distinction of manners disappeared from society, and an eccentricity in fashion preceded by some years that more serious extravagance, which the nation was preparing it-

self to exhibit. While the men, less culpable in the interim, equalised themselves by the frock, the women emulated each other in self-disfigurement, by the immeasurable height of their head-dresses. The revolution arrived: superfluous ornament was then so retrenched that the body was left almost naked; in the same degree that the moral licentiousnes of the times discovered the vices of the soul.

In the immense picture of great events, produced by little causes, fashion necessarily occupies a considerable place. One of the greatest misfortunes which France has had to lament, the divorce of Louis *le jeune*, from Elinor of Guyenne, resulted from the fashion, which this prince wished to introduce, of shaving his chin and cropping his head. The queen, his wife, who appears to have possessed, with a masculine beauty, considerable acuteness of intellect, observed with some humour, *that she imagined herself to have espoused a monarch, not a monk.* The obstinacy of Lewis in shaving himself, and the horror conceived by Elinor at the sight of a beardless chin, occasioned France the loss of those fine provinces which constituted the dowry of this princess; and which devolving to England by a second marriage, became the source of wars which desolated France during 400 years. Among many other subjects of hatred which the French nation bore to Charles the Bald may be counted the singularity which he affected in his dress. His Greek habits completed his alienation from the hearts of

his subjects; and were in part the cause that no one exerted himself to punish the crime of the jew Sedecstus, who poisoned him.

It is principally on the hair of the beard that the caprices of fashion, among us, are exercised. Short and long locks, the beard thick or shaven, *la royale* or *le barbichon*, mustachios turning up or down, all these modes, which have varied the French physiognomy into a hundred different appearances, are of illustrious origin; the close-crops of the reign of Francis I. were occasioned by a wound which this prince received in the head, and which obliged him to have his hair cut off. The beautiful hair of Louis XIV., when a child, introduced the use of peruques with long floating curls. The enormous wigs which succeeded to these, which were adopted by all Europe, but which have now become a mere appendage of the magistracy, were invented towards the end of the seventeenth century, by a celebrated wig-maker, named Duviller, in order to conceal a slight inequality in the shoulders of the Dauphin.

Mustachios were elevated into a great importance, in the sixteenth century. The Spaniard borrowed on the credit of his mustachios, and the Frenchman swore by them. "*I have great esteem*," (says an author of this period) "*for a young man, who is anxious to equip himself with a handsome pair of mustachios, and who considers that time well employed, which he devotes to their cultivation; in proportion as he*

attends to them, his soul will be capable of great and heroic actions."

Mustachios, on the contrary, seem to have been considered by the historian, Grainger, as a sign of declination. "*The beard,*" says he, "*degenerated into mustachios under the reign of the two Charles's of England, and disappeared entirely with James II., as if its destruction had been allied to that of the house of Stuart.*" The strength of the Stuarts, might perhaps have lain in their beards, as that of Samson did in his locks; nevertheless, we may be permitted to believe that the talents and valour of the Prince of Orange, and the extreme weakness of his father-in-law, contributed to the ruin of this family, at least in an equal degree with the discredit which its chief had attached to mustachios.

A multitude of volumes have been written on head-dresses and beards; and this part of our fashions has been followed in all its variations; these researches, which have been of considerable utility to artists, have not supplied any assistance to the historian. The best thing which was ever said on the subject of beards, is that of Henry IV. "the wind of adversity has blown on my beard."

Fashion is the empire of women—it owns no law but their caprice; but the extravagance of its fluctuations has not always been reconcileable to the strictest idea of delicacy. I shall cite, among many examples of the fantastic taste, that event which brought into vogue, under

another name, the colour called the *yellow-leaf*, which, until then, had been held in excessive contempt. The Archduke Albert besieged Ostend in 1601; the Infanta Isabella, his wife, daughter of Philip II. made a vow, which would not, probably, have come into the head of a Frenchwoman; it was, that she would not change *any* of the vestments which she then wore, until the place was taken, the siege lasted three years and seventy-eight days. Such a lapse of time must have occasioned a singular alteration in the whiteness of the linen worn immediately next the skin; and the archduchess never quitted it, conformably to her vow, until the day that she entered the city. Her courtiers equally officious, and equally ingenious, perhaps, with those of the grand Lama, adopted and brought into vogue, under the name of Isabella, a colour which recalled, as often as it met their eye, a most agreeable image.

The use of bracelets, of necklaces, and of ear-rings (the only ornament common to all females of every age and of every nation) was universally adopted during the reign of Charles VII. Agnes Sorel was the first in France, who employed diamonds for this purpose.

Isabeau of Bavaria, who had extremely handsome shoulders, had at the same time, too much volatility to conform herself to the *guimpe*, or nun's handkerchief, which was worn in the French court, at the time she arrived there. It is to this beautiful and vicious queen, that we might ascribe the honor of those robes,

open on the back, which the present age has improved to such an extent, as to justify Isabeau from that reproach of indecency which her contemporaries lavished upon her.

Henry II., from a contrary motive, in order to conceal a scar which he had received on his neck, the origin of which, he apprehended, might expose him to contempt, or rather, in order to escape contempt altogether, invented the ruff; and the women, always in extremes, adopted, but with excessive exaggeration, the mode which the prince had introduced. Catherine de Medicis made it her principal ornament, and some years after, a queen of the same house, Mary de Medicis, without diminishing the amplitude of the ruff, gave it a direction more favourable to a display of the neck; she bequeathed her name to this article of dress, which was revived with extraordinary eclat, by the French ladies at the commencement of the nineteenth century. This ornament, common to both sexes at the time of the Medicis, was adopted by all Europe. John Stowe, an English author and tailor, has left some invaluable memorials respecting the fashions of his country, he says, "*At this epoch, the reputation of a young cavalier consisted in the size of his ruff, and the length of his rapier.*"

The reign of Henry III. was that of perfumers; this effeminate prince who passed every day, four hours at his toilette, and who slept in prepared gloves, in order to give delicacy to

his hands, found it easy to disseminate his own taste for cosmeticks among the women, and that multitude of *young voluptuaries who reigned in his name.* The Italian perfumers were at that time the most celebrated; numbers came to settle at Paris; and this art, so highly esteemed and contributing so much to the enjoyments of the orientalists, was there carried to a perfection, which, notwithstanding all their efforts, the *Teissiers*, the *Fargeons*, and the *Ribans*, have not been able to attain.

One of the most ridiculous adjuncts of the female toilette in former times, the *vertugadin*, originated during the sixteenth century: it was ridiculously imagined to give elegance to the shape by rounding the hips, and the women, in compliment to their modesty, called it *virtue garden*, corrupted into *vertugadin*. This embellishment, abandoned for more than an age, reappeared in full splendour, under the name of the *Panier*; this was the name of a solicitor who died at that epoch, and some *élégantes* took this method of immortalising his name by an absurdity. This panier enveloped all the women in Europe. Addison dilates on the subject with no less wit than severity: he compares the monstrous superfluity, *to those sacred enclosures of the African nations, in the centre of which, we discover, enclosed by seven or eight circumvallations, the god, who, after all, is nothing but a diminutive ape.*

This pleasantry has so much spirit in the original text that I will transcribe it.

"*When I survey this new-fashioned rotunda,* (the paniers in question) *I cannot but think of the old philosopher, who, after having entered into an Egyptian temple, and looked about for the idol of the place, at length discovered a little black monkey, inshrined in the midst of it, upon which he could not forbear crying out: what a magnificent palace is here for such a ridiculous inhabitant.*"

I shall now speak of recent and existing fashions, with some details, in their relationship to taste, manners, and local affinities.

After having thrown a rapid coup-d'œil over the principal revolutions of France, since the foundation of the monarchy to the present times, I arrest my course for a moment at the eighteenth century; of which I have seen the larger half, and to the follies of which, I recollect with some compunction, I did all in my power to contribute.

During the latter years of Louis XIVth., the court subjected to the immutable ordinations of etiquette, conformed itself to the manners of the prince, and the gaiety of fashion, was supplanted by a disgusting formality. The old noblemen felt no inclination to revive a costume *contemporary with* their youth and their glory; *the young ones* were fearful of hazarding the slightest change, under the eyes of a suspicious monarch, who considered every species of innovation as an insult to his authority, or at least, as an indirect satire on those customs which he himself had originally established. Thus, on

one side, the fear inspired by the king; on the other, the excessive prudery affected by Madame Maintenon, subjected for some time, both the court and the city to a sullen uniformity, the most intolerable yoke which could possibly have been imposed on the French nation. On the death of Lewis XIV. the proteus of fashion burst his fetters, and established himself at the court of the regent. The Duke of Orleans retained in his mature age, the propensities of his youth, and himself gave the signal of that sudden revolution, which was immediately effected in costume and in manners. The young gentry immediately exchanged their large doublets, and long skirts, for the Polish cloak and the Turkish vest; they passed from the church to the tavern, from the sermons to the operas, and honoured themselves with the appellation of *roues*, to which we can ascribe no other meaning than that of the punishment which their debaucheries frequently merited.* The *bon ton*, at that time, was to pass the day in a tavern, and to present themselves at the "Œil-de-Bœuf," flushed with wine, and their noses covered with snuff. The toilette grew almost obsolete amidst this systematic derangement; stockings drawn on athwart the leg, ruffled lace, and a disordered head-dress, formed for a red-heeled *petit-maitre*, the last degree of elegance and polished manners.

*The punishment of the *Wheel*; but *Roue*, in the Dictionary of the Academy is explained to be the familiar appellation for a person devoid of principle.

This revolution in *system*, contributed more than any thing else to that inundation of false taste, which overwhelmed both fashion and the arts during the reign of Louis XV. The scandalous fortunes amassed by financiers, gave birth to the most enormous absurdities: these upstart gentry, having risen for the most part, from the dregs of society, imagined themselves imitating the manners of the court, while they adopted its vices, and exaggerated its luxuries. Under a habit, bedizened with gold lace and embroidery, heaped on, without taste, and without selection, the farmer-general felt himself an important personage, but he was still only a *Turcaret*. In order to conceal, as much as possible, those traits, of which nobility was not the distinctive character, they invented the perruque, *à la financière*; by which the head was, in some degree enveloped in a triple row of buckles, knots, and curls.

That practice, the most absurd and unaccountable of which we have any record, the practice of wearing powder began at this epoch. The young Duke of Fronsac, (afterwards Marshal Richelieu) was the first who adopted it. Dress, at the same time, began to lose something of its amplitude, cuffs gave way to laced ruffles, the frill was substituted for the band, and stockings rolled over the knee, remained in the world, as on the stage, the exclusive appurtenance of extreme old age.

Suppers formed, at that time, the fashionable repast; those of the Regent, at the Palais-

Royal, were distinguished for spirit and gaiety, yet were regulated by a species of etiquette, which excluded that liberty, or in other words, license, which this prince, sufficiently amiable in other respects, associated with his pleasures. In order to disengage himself from the vestige of restraint, he substituted for the grand suppers of the Palais-Royal, the little suppers of the Luxembourg, where his daughter, the Duchess of Berry did the honours a little too gaily. This retreat at the Luxembourg, of which we will not stop to consider all the conveniencies, gave, I believe, the first idea of *Petites Maisons*, of those pretended and mysterious asylums, where pleasure, it was imagined, had been secured by the expulsion of ceremony; where domestics had been excluded in prudential precaution; and in fine, where the fugitive sought concealment, like the Galatea of Virgil, in order to be seen more effectually. Whatever was the origin and purpose of these Petites Maisons, they gave birth to an evening *demi-negligé*, of which the male head-dress, was analagously, a hat *à la Jaquet*, and that of the women, (in derision, no doubt) the cap of *Minerva*.

The painter, Boucher, had too much influence on the fashions of his day, to allow us to forget him in a history of their revolutions. His pictures, the extraordinary popularity of which, may give some idea of the state of degradation into which the arts had fallen in France, were, during more than fifteen years

(from 1724 to 1740) the sole authorities of fashion. This affected painter, who was most ridiculously called the painter of *the Graces*, became the oracle of all the pretty women of this epoch, each of whom endeavoured to model her appearance by some figure in his pictures. They imitated the capricious draperies, of purple, pink, and grey stuffs, in which Boucher dressed up those puppets, which he denominated shepherdesses. This was the time for pompoons, furbelows and for trinkets of all kinds, with which female costume is incumbered.

In order to form a just idea of the bad taste of those times, it is only necessary to give a glance at the *general collection of head-dresses, and the assemblage of French fashions*, formerly at Desnos'; and even now consulted with avidity by the curious.

The rage for knick-knacks extended itself through all the empire of luxury: the women were all enraptured with Chinese monsters, japan vases, lackered toilets, tapestries in camaieu, cut parterres, and lap-dogs. Boucher, whom the king had nominated his first painter, by way of recompensing him, no doubt, for having painted his portrait as Hercules, with an eagle on his head, might boast of having given the tone to his age, and to have corrupted the arts in all their departments. His style, unfortunately is not the only memorial which he has left of his influence.

The use of powder introduced innumerable alterations in the head-dresses, both of men and women. Towards the end of the reign of Louis XV., the men, familiar at court, wore their hair buckled and tied behind with a simple ribband, which allowed it to float over their shoulders. Some elegantès accustomed themselves to tie it up during the morning, in a purse of black taffeta, to which they gave the name of the *bag*, and this, at last, formed part of a full-dress. The bag varied its form and colour; sometimes it exhibited itself at the Tuileries, in a sky-blue or rose colour: the bourgeois restricted themselves to the *crapeau*, a little round purse, which confined the hair close to the head. While the men displayed in their head-dresses, the various inventions of the *horse-shoe*, *(coiffures en fer à cheval) the pigeon's wings*, *the hundred curls*, *and the cavalier's wig;* the women exceeded them in an absurdity, the privilege of which they preserved to themselves. The famous Leònard has immortalised it—

En portant jusque'au ciel l'audace des coiffures.
Raised the audacious head-dress to the sky.

At this time, (in 1775) women were obliged to remove the cushions from the seats of carriages, in order to find room; and they took especial care to enter head-foremost, lest any accident should happen to the *coiffure;* several pleasant caricatures appeared on the subject, in one of which, we see a gallant, who knocks out

the top of a coach gateway, for the purpose of introducing into his hotel, a lady whom he had under his arm.

In another, a set of fire-men are playing their engines in order to extinguish a conflagration, which has burst out in one of those gigantic head-dresses.

Here the *coiffure* mounted on a double ladder, had the appearance of a hedge-row of elm trees.

There, that of a young sportsman, exploring the summit of the head-dress, in search of the birds inhabiting it, as in a lofty forest.

Leonard held the title of hair-dresser to the court: it was established that no lady should be *presented* unless *he* had dressed her hair, and had received from her a douceour of ten guineas, mysteriously presented: this was the price which he expected for the *stroke of his comb*.

A geometrician calculated, that a lady's face occupied exactly the centre point, betwixt her feet, and the summit of that edifice of hair, which surmounted her head. This curious scaffolding gave way all at once, and little bonnets, whose nomenclature alone would fill a volume, succeeded with the rapidity of that caprice which gave them birth; and which determined their duration. Every new event exploded the preceding fashion. The romance of Paul and Virginia, brought into vogue the Creole head-dress, and the success of *la Folle par Amour*, gave birth to the hat, *a la Nina*.

The revolution commenced, and fashion enjoyed a kind of *Saturnalia:* we met in the same saloon, the *bourgeois* in an embroidered habit, the marquis in a frock, the petit-maitre, *en chenille* (caterpillar), the Anglican in boots; women *en levite*, *en pierrot*, *en caraco*, and in long-tailed robes. Terror, in a red bonnet, soon simplified the costume; and the *carmagnole* was admitted as a habit of luxury, among a nation of *sans culottes.*

The first moments of tranquillity, re-illumined the torch of pleasure, and gaiety was the only impulse. The balls of the hotel *de Richelieu*, the concerts of *Feydeau*, the fêtes of Garchi, and of the pavillion d'Hanovre, witnessed the resuscitation of our élégantes in the Greek costume, and the young men assumed the head-dress of the Roman emperors. At length, after the costumes of all nations, ancient and modern, had passed before us, during the space of a few years, our women appear to have selected whatever is most agreeable from each, for the formation of their own. I except, however, the Chinese head-dress, the immeasurable height of which, deprives the head of all proportion and grace; and imposes a penance on every man who has the misfortune to be placed at a spectacle, behind one of those *demi-elegantes*, who have lately adopted this miserable caricature.

The reigning fashions, although partially imitated, as I have said, from originals too remote, leave us little to wish, since they have

been adopted with reference to our habitual feelings, our manners, and our climate. Perhaps one would wish a little more of the ideal. A refined morality is estimated, in our modern imaginations, before every thing, and we exact, from whatever lays claim to the homage of our admiration, the charm of delicacy and mystery. When a female betrays, in every step she takes in the street, the beauties of her person, does she not, in part, divest herself of her influence? A long civilisation renders us difficult to please: every charm which a woman reveals, every veil she discards, may be considered as an attraction sacrificed. I speak here in the interest of love, which can never be separated from that of modesty.

The greatest inconvenience in the reigning fashions, is the expense they occasion. Luxury, though perhaps essential to the state, ought not be considered an obligation of custom. It is injudicious to make the Cachemire shawl an indispensable appendage for every woman, or the lace veil for all young wives: I do not like to see at a spectacle, the wife of a merchant, glittering in as superb a set of diamonds as the marchioness in the adjacent box, to whom, she probably sold a dress during the morning.

Women, it cannot be denied, pay more attention to their intellect, at present, than formerly: how is it then that their expenses are increased in so alarming a proportion? Here, a woman who, herself, nurses all her children, ruins them by her luxury: and the bills of *Le*

Roi produce, at least as much trouble in affairs of house-keeping, as love-letters could do. If women only adorned themselves, as heretofore, for the purpose of pleasing the men, I would take on myself to convince them, I, who am in the secret of these things, that so much expense is useless; that men take no account but of such ornaments as are becoming, that they understand what pleases, and not what it is necessary to admire; that a little grace, wit, and amiability, which cost nothing, charm them infinitely beyond jewels and embroidery, which occasion ruin. But what purpose does all my discourse answer? Women, at present, dress for—women; the toilette is nothing more than the instrument of a cold ambition which they exercise on each other, and as these ladies are, in general, sufficiently difficult to convince on the subject of their respective attractions, they have resorted to an infallible criterion for establishing their superiority—the price of a shawl or a diamond.

The male habit in France, is, what it has constantly been since the reign of Henry III. inclusively, (whatever change it may have undergone) scanty, incommodious, and ungraceful: it has besides, in my eyes, the inconvenience of confounding all ranks and all professions; this perhaps may be a prejudice peculiar to my age, but I cannot see what utility can result from the pretensions of persons to a distinction to which they have no right; it appears to me, too, that an equality of costume

tends to create an ambition in many to rise above their condition, since a similarity of habit contributes to preserve that *esprit de corps*, so necessary in all professions. The magistrate, in long locks had more gravity; the physician, in a black robe, and a large wig, would not have dared to jest at the pillow of a dying man; the sword worn by the courtier, enforced on him a law of politeness; and the venerable habit peculiar to the ecclesiastic exacted from him the greatest circumspection in his conduct and conversation. If an epoch be objected to me, in which it was different, it was at a time when society was tending towards its destruction, and I find in it the proof, not the refutation of an opinion, which I maintain after Duclos and St. Fois.

It would be worthy of the age in which we live, to create a national costume, which should re-establish those gradations, and which, more favourable to the exterior of men, should associate for women, the forms most favorable to beauty, such as would impress respect, and preserve to them the prepossessions of imagination.

No. V.—*10th Nov.* 1813.

AN EXECUTION AT THE PLACE DE GREVE.

D'un spectacle crüel indignement avide,
Turbulent, curieux avec compassion,
Tout un peuple s'agite autour de la prison :
Etrange empressement de voir des misérables !
On hâte, en gemissant, ces momens formidables.
VOLT. TANCREDE, Act. 3. Sec. 3.

With barbarous haste, with tumult fierce and loud,
Round the dire scaffold throng the curious crowd ;
They pant for blood, and urge with furious breath
The destin'd hour to feast their eyes with death.

I HAD occasion to remark, in my last essay, that particular contrast in the French character, constituted by a love of novelty, and an attachment to custom. This strange contradiction, though equally strong, is perhaps less offensive, at the first glance, than that of excessive politeness, and of ferocious curiosity, for which the people, and principally those of this capital, have at all times been distinguished. In fact, what different ideas must suggest themselves to two strangers, one of whom had only seen the Parisians at the opera; the other, only in traversing the city along the quays, on the

day of an execution at the *Place de Grève?* What must the last imagine, on finding his carriage arrested, at every instant, in the midst of an immense crowd pressing round the *Hotel de Ville* and the *Palais de Justice;* in hearing the confused and tumultuous shouts of the populace, which are raised pretty nearly in the same degree, whatever be the circumstance which occasions them?

This stranger, who sees on the road the artisan quit his shop; the *bourgeois* forget his dinner-hour; women stationed at the windows; others mingled in the crowd, with which the quays and the bridges are covered; the taverns and public houses filled with guests; must not this stranger, I say, imagine himself arrived at Paris on the day of a grand solemnity? Suppose also, that he questions his postillion, and is informed that this concourse of people, that all this eagerness is for the purpose of enjoying the last agonies of an unhappy wretch, condemned to execution; would not the traveller, in order to reconcile the traces of civilisation he had observed, with such barbarous habits—would he not be justified in believing himself in the midst of a horde of savages, recently established in the capital of a civilised nation? Curious to observe a little nearer this multitude of the borders of the Seine, he descends, mingles among the crowd, and addressing himself to one of the inhabitants of *la Grève*, he inquires what was the use of those piles of wood-work which are now being pulled down,

and which appear to have belonged to some grand construction; the person replies, that these vestiges formed part of a vast wooden edifice, which had been erected a fortnight since, for the purpose of public rejoicing.—And this other building of smaller extent, which they prepare on the same spot? That is a scaffold, where we shall see, precisely at four o'clock, a well-known individual, who has been tried and convicted of assassination. I imagine that at this response, the stranger must say to himself, "What! the inhabitants of this good city erect then, in the same place, ball-rooms and scaffolds! they mingle, in idea at least, the sounds of a violin and the cries of a malefactor! they appoint, at the same time, and in the same place, fêtes and executions! I have deceived myself, these persons are not savages; they are fools." I have often made this reflection, which I here ascribe to my traveller; and I never pass the place *de Grève*, without trembling at this terrifying contrast, the image of which is always before my eyes.

This place, the name of which revives the most odious recollections, was, at the commencement of the 14th age, appropriated to the execution of criminals. It is painful to learn that innocent blood was the first which flowed here. An unhappy female heretic, named Margaret Porette, scarcely thirty years old, was burnt here in 1310, for having written, *that the soul, absorbed in God, is at the height of every virtue, and has nothing more to do: and that when a cer-*

tain degree of virtue is attained, one cannot go beyond it. Four hundred years afterwards, another female was allowed to utter, with impunity, nearly the same absurdities Four ages hence, and perhaps we shall run the risk of being burnt, for denying the evidence of the same propositions; so unerring is human reason! so infallible is human justice!—Previously to this execution, criminals were put to death in the market-places, which still participated, during more than an age, with *la Grève*, the miserable prerogative of scaffolds. In this last place, were decapitated, in 1398, the two Augustin monks, who had engaged, for a large remuneration, and on the penalty of their lives, to cure Charles VI. of an incurable malady, with which he was struck. The two friars lost their heads, and the king did not recover his own. The last execution, which took place in a market-place, in 1477, was that of the unhappy Duke of Nemours, whose children, placed on the scaffold, by order of the cruel Louis XI., were covered with the blood of their father. This unfortunate man was conducted from the Bastile to the place of his execution, on a horse, caparisoned with black. Since that epoch, every sentence of death, passed at Paris, has been executed at the Place de Grève.

In coming, some days since, out of the Hotel de Ville, I stopt for some moments on the steps; when I found myself assailed, all at once, by a multitude of ideas and of painful recollections. I imagined that I had under my

eyes, the scaffold where a brave general perished so miserably, surrounded by the *beau-monde*, who came *to have the pleasure of seeing his head fall;* that enormous gibbet where the unfortunate *Favras* was one of the first to pay his life for his unalterable fidelity. I contemplated, with shuddering, this Hotel de Ville, the witness of so many crimes and so many executions. I ran over, in idea, the sanguinary records of *la Grève*, where I read with horror the names of Ravailhac, of Brinvilliers, of Damien, of Cartouche, and all the frightful succession of human atrocities. Every kind of crime—robbery, assassination, poisoning, parricide, sacrilege, finds there its ignominious illustration; and according to the remark of the judicious author of "Essays on Paris," all the monsters who have figured at this place, would form an assemblage more numerous than any one of those which have been collected at their execution.

These melancholy ideas, on which my mind engaged itself involuntarily during the rest of the day, continued to occupy me in the evening, when I met Dr. M., one of those men, who, as Sterne says, "seek the north-east passage of the intellectual world, to expedite their arrival at the land of science." This learned physician, the great enemy of systems, and of speculative theories, has occupied himself, during six years, on a work "on the Affinities of Physiology and Morals," in the execution of which, he spends great part of his time in pri-

sons, in order to collect his facts, to multiply his authorities, and to extend his experience. The interest of the science, and the constant preoccupation of a single idea, protects him from any painful feeling, and even from the ridicule sometimes excited by the diligence he uses to be present at the apprehension of great criminals, to follow them before the tribunals, into the prisons, and even to the foot of the scaffold, at the risk of being confounded with those unfeeling idlers, who seek, indifferently, a spectacle at la Grève or at Tivoli. Persons who are accustomed to confound the words and ideas of sensation and of sentiment, who take no account of the strength of will and the force of habit, would find it difficult to believe the sensibility of a man, who makes it his task to watch, in the heart of a condemned criminal, the last sighs of hope, and to observe human nature at war with the idea of destruction. The Doctor explains extremely well, and proves still better by his practice, that the operations of the mind and the movements of the soul are not on the same principle, and ought not to be judged of by the same results. Mr. M. concluded, while yet arguing, by making me promise to attend him the next day to the Conciergerie, to see the assassin Laumond, previous to the hour of his being brought forth for his execution.

The Doctor was exact; but at the moment of setting out, I felt a compunction at heart, which would have made me renounce my pro-

ject, if I had not been ashamed of exposing all my weakness to a man who would not have done honour to my sensibility. We departed. On the road, he recounted to me the frightful details of the murder committed on the fruiterer of Verneuil Street. "The unhappy being whom we are going to see," said he, in finishing his narration, "is a new proof, in support of a truth which I shall exemplify by his whole career: it is, that the door of a gaming-house is one of the gates to the gibbet. During fifteen years that I have studied, that I have been making observations on great criminals, I have scarcely seen any who have not been seized, either with the dice or the cards in their hands." Without giving me time to object to what I might consider exaggerated in this assertion, he applied the principle to the whole life of this Laumond, whom he described, even in his childhood, abandoned to that love of gaming which he retained during his whole career, in public places among children of his own age, who played the prelude to the same vices, in yielding to the same inclinations.—"In turn, a bad son, a bad husband, a bad father, I should have concluded," continued the Doctor, "from the details only of his private life, that the head of such a man must be consigned to the executioner before the age of thirty. One thing only surprises me," added he, "it is, that a wretch whose crime evinced so much weakness, should have had the courage to dispense with the privilege of pleading *not guilty*, to

dispute with justice those hours of agony, and which the law grants the criminal; we scarcely meet with one victim in a thousand who has the resolution to refuse this cruel benefit."

We arrived at the prison, and we had great difficulty in traversing the court, where twenty thousand persons waited, with impatience, the moment of execution. The entrance of the Conciergerie has nothing repulsive except in the idea attached to it. After having passed under the fatal archway, guarded by a piquet of soldiers, appointed as an escort to the criminal, we presented ourselves at the wicket, which opened at the voice of the Doctor. The silence of death reigned, already, within those vaults, elevated on the site of the ancient palace of our kings: the frightful dungeons, by which we were surrounded, formed, heretofore, part of the apartments which Saint Louis inhabited. This court, which the criminal paces, revolving his past crimes, or where, perhaps, some innocent sheds his tears in secret, is the same inclosure where King Charles V. assembled his council; where the princes of the blood, and the nobility of the kingdom, met to discuss the interests of the people, and the necessities of the state. We were between the two wickets, in the parlour of the Wardour's Office, whither the criminal was about to be brought. Exactly at half-past three, when the Serjeant of the Imperial Court arrived, in order to conduct him to the place of execution, the door of a long obscure corridor opened with

a great noise, and the assassin, Laumond, appeared between the executioners; not having on the earth, from which he was about to disappear, any other creature who interested himself in his fate, except the virtuous ecclesiastic, whose holy office is to administer consolation to despair, and present hope to repentance. There are emotions, of which, we cannot give an idea, even after having felt them: such are those produced by the sight of a being who breathes, who thinks, who moves, who is in full possession of his faculties, physical and moral; and who in a few minutes will present only the image of death,—will be nothing more than a corpse. I wish in vain, for the power of expressing that which passed within me at the sight of this unfortunate, whose hair fell beneath the fatal scissars, and whom the executioners stripped, after having tied his hands. In contemplating him, standing on a stool, his eyes haggard, his head reclined on his breast, every muscle of his body in convulsive agitation, the assassin disappeared; I no longer saw any thing but a man, and sentiments of horror gave way to those of pity. The bell tolled four.—At this signal of death, the gratings flew open: he again saw the sky; he found himself, once more, in the midst of men, from the number of whom he was already proscribed. He mounted into the car of infamy, amidst the noise of imprecations, with which his appearance inspired the multitude, and which accompanied him even to the scaffold, erected in

the Place *de Grève*, which he had more than once traversed, in meditating, perhaps, the crime for which he was about to receive punishment.

After the criminal's departure, the Doctor conducted me to the keeper's apartments, where we found, in a saloon agreeably decorated, a young person who was taking a lesson in music, and who sung in a sweet voice, accompanying it with the piano, the ballad of "*The beautiful Country of Spain.*" This near approach of objects so contrasted, of a vile assassin and a young girl, full of grace and innocence; of a gloomy dungeon, and a musical saloon; of the noise of chains, and a song of love; furnished me with a source of reflections which I need only hint, to suggest a similar train to the imaginations of my readers.

No. VI.—*25th Sept.* 1813.

THE RACES OF THE CHAMP DE MARS.

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.

VIRGIL.

De leurs pas bruyans battant les champs poudreux,
D'un tourbillon de sable obscurcissent les cieux.
DELILLE, Eneide 8.

Beating the ground, their burning feet gives rise
To clouds of dust which darken all the skies.

Fas est ab hoste doceri.

HORACE.

It is sometimes useful to receive lessons from an enemy.

ONE of the most remarkable chapters of the immortal work of M. de Buffon, is that on the *horse*. This the eloquent writer describes as *the most brilliant conquest which man has made over nature;* and nobody, after reading his admirable description of the manners of that noble creature, can be astonished at the rank assigned to him by his historian. "In all ages

and in every nation of the world," says an English author*, "horses have enjoyed a very high consideration. Every body knows that Darius was indebted for the throne of Persia to the neighing of his horse, which by-the-bye, has made some of those who rail at the facts and exploits of antiquity say, that it might have been as well to suffer the false Smerdis to reign, as to supersede him in this manner. Bucephalus shared with Alexander the glory of his conquests. It is a well established fact, that a Roman Emperor wished his horse to be named Consul; and it has been generally admitted, that that dignity would have become the animal quite as well as the diadem did his master."—But without going back so far, and seeking so high for the titles of this beautiful quadruped, let us examine him in that exercise in which he displays to the greatest advantage the valuable qualities of which he is possessed.

* Adam Fitz-Adam, author of a periodical work called "The World." *Author.*—Mr. Jouy seems not to be aware that Adam-Fitz-Adam was the assumed name of Mr. Moore, the editor of this periodical publication, the contributors to which were very numerous; comprehending, in addition to Mr. Moore, H. Walpole, Mr. W. Whitehead, Mr. Coventrye, Mr. J. Wharton, Mr. J. Tilson, Mr. Dodsley, Mr. Duncombe, Sir C. H. Williams, Mr. Parratt, Mr. Roberts, the Earl of Corke, Mr. Cambridge, the Hon. Mr. Boyle, Mr. Cole, Mr. R. Berenger, Mr. Loveybond, Mr. Garrick, Mr. J. G. Cooper, jun. Mr. Marriott, Mr. Herring, Mr. Soame Jenyns, Mr. Mulso, Sir. D. Dalrymple, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Moyle, Mr. Gataker, Mr. Burgess, and several anonymous correspondents.—*Translator.*

The English are unquestionably, of all modern people, those who have given their attention to the care of horses with most success. If it is doubtful whether they have yet brought this race of animals to perfection, it is certain that they have singularly improved that breed, which they designate (principally on account of its swiftness) the *race horse*. Two great means have conducted them to this result; the scrupulous attention with which they apply themselves to establish in the most authentic manner the origin of the race horse; and the institution of the annual meetings at Newmarket, &c. The English have borrowed from the Arabs the use of genealogies of horses; to establish which, they require evidence better supported, and proofs more numerous than they formerly demanded at the installation of a canon of Lyons, or a knight of Malta.

The taste or rather the passion for horses, which was extinguished in France with the use of tournaments, revived towards the middle of the last century, and it is from that epoch that they date the first experiment of races, in imitation of those adopted in England. This attempt was made in consequence of a wager laid at Fontainbleau (during a journey of the Court) by an English gentleman whose name I cannot at this moment recollect. He had betted a thousand louis, that in two hours he would perform the journey from Fontainbleau to the *barrière des Gobelins*, and he won by some minutes. In the year following, a great French

lord, on his return from England, (where Louis XV. represented him to have been to learn to take care of horses) succeeded in procuring an exhibition of races in the plain des Sablons.—He endeavoured to provide for their periodical return, but this project was not carried into effect till many years afterwards, when the races of the wood of Vincennes were established, which had no object of public utility or national glory in view, since all the horses which ran were brought from England.

In instituting annual races, where none are admitted but native horses, and where a prize is given to the winners to indemnify them for their trouble and expenses, the government hoped to excite a spirit of emulation in the proprietors, to bring to perfection the excellent species of French horses. The progress made in a short time renders it impossible to doubt, that the end proposed will be soon attained, and that we shall equal, if not surpass, our neighbours.

Every civilised nation has a degree of superiority over others, which in some respect distinguishes it; and among many advantages of which the English gratuitously boast, they may establish a just title to one, in the excellence of their stud. This concession I lately made to M. de Mairieux, an old *Anglomaniac* of my acquaintance, who is never weary of speaking of the excellence of their grooms, of the cleanliness, convenience, and even the elegance of their stables, and especially of all the minute

to the eye so imposing a spectacle. Forced to admire the general aspect of the scene, he indemnified himself by censuring the details of it, and he spared at most not more than five or six of the horsemen among those who travelled over the circle; and who successively became the objects of his criticism. "One was mounted on a short-tailed horse, caparisoned like that of an hussar; another trotted in the English way on a flat saddle, with a fly driver, a velvet chabraque of a crimson colour, and a bow upon his horse's tail. This one curvetted on an English saddle, with ornaments on the bridle, the crupper, and the martingale; that galloped a *contre pied* with impenetrable assurance." All these perversions of costume amused my companion much, who ridiculed equally the riders and their horses. "These were not well formed; those had a bad gait; the others were of no breed. It was easy to perceive from the trot of some, that the modest animals had just quitted the pole of a hackney coach or the shaft of a *demi-fortune* (a one-horse carriage), to figure on the course as riding-horses, and it could be seen that others, in attempting to gallop, vainly endeavoured to bring back the recollection of their youth."

It was four o'clock—the moment at which the race was to commence approached; the horses had been examined by the inspectors, and admitted to be French. The jockies, with their saddles under their arms, dressed in their caps and satin jackets, after having been weigh-

ed according to custom, finished saddling their horses, and inspected every part of the harness. At length the signal for starting was given, and we hastened to take our stand on a hill, about a hundred toises from the winning-post, in the midst of a worthy family which had been assembled there ever since the morning. The chief member of the house lost no time in letting me know that he had been for the last thirty years a seller of lemonade on the Boulevart Beaumarchais. The hobby of this good man, who had probably in the course of his life, seen few horses but those of the brewer, who brought him once a week his cask of beer; his hobby I say, was to speak of racing against time in technical language, of which he knew not the meaning, with an assurance extremely ludicrous, to every one but Mairieux, who was only occupied in furnishing him with the proper words. It is probable that the lemonade merchant would have finished like *Larissole* by sending his instructor packing, but happily a general cry announced the commencement of the race.

Two beautiful horses mounted by jockies, who were dressed the one in blue, the other in yellow, ran the first heat with a rapidity at which my companion himself was surprised. The second was not so soon performed, which caused him to pronounce that our jockies did not know their trade, and that those of England were very careful to husband the strength of their horses for the last moment, when they approached the goal. However this may be, the

yellow jockey finished his career in four minutes and forty-eight seconds; got in twelves seconds before his rival, and was proclaimed the winner of the first race.

In the next contest between two mares, the blue jockey had the good fortune to get in twelve seconds before the other.

The third race, in which many horses were to run, particularly attracted my attention. I surveyed with extreme pleasure some of the most beautiful animals of the creation, displaying all the suppleness of their muscles, and all the vigour of their nerves, to establish their superiority, of which they seemed to appreciate the advantage. I observed the address and the skill of those who mounted them, and who so largely participated in their success; but whatever attention I gave to the spectacle before my eyes, I was very far from taking as *much* interest in it as the daughter of the lemonade seller, near whom I found myself, and whose anxiety and pretty face, had before attracted my notice. This young woman, her eyes fixed on the arena, could not help exclaiming in a tremulous voice,—"there he is, father—there he is—" as she saw a young man in an orange-coloured jacket, mounted on a mare whose ardour promised well, pass by like lightning.—"Ah! yes it is Francis," said the father, *with* an air of indifference; "it is friend Francis," repeated the mother in a lower tone, taking the hand of her daughter; and thel ittle shawl over the bosom of Mademoiselle Louisa was I

perceived much agitated; a blush covered her cheeks, and her eyes were suffused with tears. At the end of the first heat, Francis was left several toises behind by one of his rivals. My pretty neighbour respired with difficulty: her father declared, with a loud laugh, which he meant to be satirical, that "Francis would not win the race." Madame Herbert, his wife, said that "they should see," and my friend with a loud voice offered "to bet two to one on the jockey in the orange jacket." This speech was requited with a look of which Francis might have been jealous. Mairieux was right; in the middle of the second heat, the young man had recovered his lost ground, and collecting for a last effort all the strength of his mare, which he had skilfully managed, he darted, if I may be allowed the word, to the goal, which he reached three seconds before the rival by whom he was most closely pressed. I leave the reader to judge with what pleasure Mademoiselle Louisa heard the name of the victor proclaimed.

I did not quit the Herbert family till I had learnt the nature of the interest which they took in the success of Francis, nor without complimenting his daughter on a triumph, of which they confessed she was to be the prize.

On leaving these good folks, we dined at the house of a Restarateur of Gros Caillou, where I made some notes, and collected some observations which may find a place in a future paper.

No. VII.—*3d Oct.* 1813.

A DINNER OF ARTISTS.

Qu'il est grand, qu'il est doux de se dire à soi-même :
Je n'ai point d'ennemis, j'ai des rivaux que j'aime ;
Je prends part à leur gloire, a leurs maux, a leurs biens :
Les arts nous ont unis, leur beaux jours sont les miens.
C'est ainsi que la terre avec plaisir rassemble,
Ces chênes, ces sapins, qui s'élèvent ensemble ;
Un suc, toujours égal, est préparé pour eux :
Leur pied touche aux enfers, leur cime est dans les cieux ;
Leur tronc inébranlable et leur pompeuse tête
Résiste, en se touchant, aux coups de la tempête:
Ils vivent l'un par l'autre, ils triomphent du tems,
Tandis que, sous leur ombre, on voit de vils serpens
Se livrer, en sifflant, des guerres intestines
Et de leur sang impur arrosser leurs racines.

VOLT. Disc. en vers.

JEALOUSY in the arts, is the vice of mediocrity. This has been said, I believe, and experience proves it to be true, with some few exceptions, which rather confirm, than militate against the general rule. The four greatest poets in the age of Louis XIV., Moliere, Boileau, Racine and La Fontaine, lived long toge-

ther in the strictest intimacy, and always met once a week with Lully, Mignard, and Dufresnoy. Chapelle, one of the Corypheuses of the modern sect of Epicureans, the brothers Brossins, so well known for their devotion to good-living, Counsellor Brilhac and many other distinguished persons, at the same epoch established a weekly dinner party at the *Pomme-de-Pin* (Pine Apple) of which we may form some idea, by reflecting that "*les Plaideurs*" and "*le Chapelain decoiffée*,"* were chiefly composed at these jovial entertainments.

From this period we may date the Clubs of Artists and Amateurs, which were so common during the last age, and which have been continued under different names, even to our times. The first of these which enjoyed a great reputation, is the famous *Society of the Temple, (Societé du Temple)* where the Grand Prior congregated on stated days, all that Paris then boasted in literature and the arts. Some years afterwards, was formed, under a regimen equally gay, but far less luxurious, the *Society of the Cellar, (Societé du Caveau)* among the founders of which, were Piron, Duclos, Fuselier, the younger Crébillon, Boucher, Rameau, Bernard, and Collé. Never did humour, spirit, and taste, erect a more singular tribunal of criticism. Its decisions were pronounced in songs, and often too, upon the productions of its own members. The triumph of the ridicu-

* Two well known works.

lous, the absence of all pretensions, the difficult union of bitter malice with an unalterable security of intercourse, very speedily advanced the *Caveau* to high celebrity. Persons of the first distinction, even the Count de Maurepas himself, at that period, prime minister, solicited the favour of being admitted.

After the dispersion of the associates of the *Caveau*, M. Pelletier, the farmer-general, established a dinner at his own house, many of the old visitors of which, still survive, and can remember having seen STERNE and GARRICK during their abode in Paris. At a later period, the *Societies of the Vaudeville, and of the modern Caveau*, by attaching too much importance to the dishes at their table, and giving too much publicity to the manifestation of their pleasures, seem to have had less regard for their enjoyments than for the fame of their cook, and the notoriety of some of their members. The disagreeable rule which imposes on every member the task of writing a poetical tribute, the rivalry, and its immediate consequence the jealousy, which rarely fails to spring up between men who cultivate the same branch of literature, and wrestle always on the same ground, too often put self-love to the rack, and excite bickerings destructive of harmony, gaiety, and social happiness. Perhaps it is essentially necessary to a society of this sort, desirous of preserving all these advantages, that it should be composed of men, whose talents, wit, and situations in life are of various kinds, so that supe-

riority in different lines may not become the object of direct comparison, nor the pretext for undue usurpation.

There exists in Paris the model of an union of this description. The estimable body of artists who have founded it, meet every fortnight to an unceremonious dinner, in a retired place, just calculated for a company of twenty-five persons, among whom are poets, musicians, painters, performers, sculptors, and even a physician, who is not sorry to find occasional opportunities to join such agreeable society. Far from inviting the attention of the public, which might be a feather in their cap, but never is an addition to pleasure, these amiable companions have the more wit in consequence of their making the less parade of it, and the greater enjoyment of their natural gaiety, from having no one challenged by their ostentation to keep a register of their follies. Poetical impromptus are instantly set to music by the composer, executed by the singer, and sometimes suggest to the painter the idea of a caricature. But these productions, the offspring of jocund hilarity, vanish with it, and have no object beyond that of agreeably filling up the hour which gives them birth.

I met a Neapolitan gentleman, some time ago in the country, with whom I had formerly became acquainted at the house of his father, the Marquis of Caraccioli. He had conceived a very high opinion of the French artists of that period, and with many demonstrations of plea-

sure, recalled to my recollection, the delightful spring of 1765, which we had spent with Madame de Lyonne at Epinay, where Vernet, Lagrenée, Coustou, Souflot, Lekain, Caillau, Sedaine, and Grétry passed several weeks together. "I have travelled through every country in Europe," added he, "and have seen nothing for spirit and amiable qualities united with talent, which could be compared to that assemsemblage of celebrated artists. The model is lost even in France, and it is very doubtful if it will ever be found again." As a complete answer to this declaration, I invited my Neapolitan friend to dine one day at la G * * * when a meeting was certain. I conducted him to a Traiteur's of unostentatious appearance, but to whom his guests remained constant as a recompense for services which he had rendered them in less happy times. The eating-room was decorated with simplicity, but with taste; the table served without extravagance, but with abundance. During the early part of the repast, we were occupied with news relating to the republic of arts:—The sale of a picture, a new piece, the annunciation of a concert, the death of a distinguished artist, became in turn, the subject of a conversation, upon which the stranger, beside whom I was seated, had oftener than once occasion to remark with what grace, ease, and learning devoid of pedantry, many of the company expressed their sentiments. The conversation insensibly ceased to be general, and I had an opportunity of answer-

ing the questions which he asked, respecting the different persons in whose society he was placed without knowing them but by reputation. "What," said he, "is that great young man who speaks little, but whose remarks are extremely pertinent, to all the points which are discussed? He hardly appears to be above thirty-five years of age, notwithstanding this enormous club depending from his powdered *grecque* of very ancient date!"—"That is one of our most esteemed painters. Though still young, he already enjoys a brilliant and merited celebrity. Finer in colour than in design, he follows the example of Rubens, whom he appears to have taken for his model. He has, as you remarked at the late exhibition, something of the exuberance of fancy, and of the firmness of pencilling, which distinguish the chief of the Flemish school, into some of whose blemishes he also falls. He is a man of retired habits, laborious and unassuming, and without further experience of the world than may be gathered from the windows of his painting room.

"On the right of this painter, you doubtless recognise the greatest of our tragedians. Hearken to his reasoning on the subjects of his profession, and you will not be surprised at the superiority he has attained. The study of a new part absorbs him for three whole months; for he is not content with simply becoming master of the poet's verse,—he must be able to identify himself with the character; and the astonishing illusion which he has produced in

many of his representations, is no less to be attributed to the severity of manners and costume which he has introduced upon the stage, than to his genius and the vast resources of his incomparable talents.—Removed from the cares, the toils, and the thoughts of the theatre, he presents himself to you in no other light than as an amiable man, and sometimes even as a great child, whom the slightest matter distracts or disquiets."—

"Tell me quickly, I beseech you, whether or no I am deceived in the opinion I have formed of that man in the chesnut coloured coat, who does the honours of one end of the table with so awkward an air?"—"You are speaking of the most able man in France; and you will acknowledge the truth, when apprised that this stranger, (whom Prussia gave us) has for twenty-five or thirty years been enthroned on his own proper authority, in full controul over the fine arts, which he never cultivated, of which he understands nothing, and which he has nevertheless succeeded in rendering tributary to his sovereign will. You find him here, because he is to be met every where, where there is a good dinner, a good bargain, or a good dupe to make."

"Opposite *Manlius* is one of our modern Orpheuses. This excellent composer has in in some of his works combined the beauties of Gluck and Piccinni by adopting a system in which their separate styles are reconciled and blended in a natural manner. He is among the

small number of those who so agreeably suit the words of the writer to the notes of the gammut, and who are listened to with equal pleasure in a church and in an orchestra. His character is worthy of his genius and talent * * * I am interrupted to allow you to hear an anecdote told with much wit and originality, by one of our painters, whose production you admired above all the other pictures."—"How! is that the French *Vandyke*, to whom I know nothing comparable in the present day, nor superior in antiquity, for truth, elegance, variety of form, beauty of flesh, grace of composition, and grand taste in his accessary parts?"—"It is the same, and I perceive that I have nothing to teach you on the subject of his works; I may add however, that they have bestowed upon him a fortune, of which he makes the most noble use: his house is the rendezvous of talents of every kind, and he there sets the example of that honourable brotherhood which it is less rare to see subsisting among artists, than among men of letters."

"The person whose sallies and *Calembourgs** provoke such continued bursts of laughter on the other side of the room, bears a name famous in painting. His father, whom you formerly knew, and from whom he has not at all degenerated, participated with M. de Bievre the sceptre of *Calembourg*, a matter which did

* Equivoques founded generally on the ambiguous meaning of the words played upon.

not prevent him from producing some master-pieces. His son has turned to advantage his passion for horses, which he paints to a degree of perfection unattained by any of his predecessors in the art. The picture of a battle which he has finished, assures him a distinguished rank among the best painters of this class. This artist has discovered the secret of supporting a celebrated name, and of transmitting it to his son, who promises to pursue a brilliant career on the course where his father and grandfather are so illustrious."

"Tell me if this fat fellow in a green coat, who is always laughing, and laughing by himself, be very merry? Is his physiognomy, so round and open, very indicative of frankness?"

—"You have guessed rightly: this man, in spite of his natural mask, is sour, envious, and deceitful. He is a master-mason who gives himself out for an architect, and who has been taken for such at a time when he thought himself happy in being permitted to sleep in the street. He has built some houses for fruiterers in the faubourgs, patched up some barracks in *la cité*, and has fully convinced himself that he is a *Mansard*. What more would he gain were he really so? He has realised a fortune, and would in his retreat enjoy repose, comfort, health, all the good things of life which so rarely fall to the lot of true merit, if the low jealousy with which he is tormented, did not doom him to eternal suffering on account of the success and happiness of others."

"Would you like to contemplate a frank and easy gaiety, superior endowments in a benevolent nature, a soul elevated without pride, and ability without presumption? Look at the little man on my right hand who sets about telling you a story *of no more consequence than nothing*, in which every word is a pleasant trait, every gesture a piece of humour. He has been long united in friendship with the great painter whom you have surnamed the French Vandyke, and this connexion, to which the love of the arts seems to impart a new charm, is the source of numerous actions performed under circumstances equally honourable to the one and to the other."

"It is long since I partook of so agreeable an entertainment," (said my Neapolitan, laughing heartily at the story of a Gascon emigrant, which one of the party was telling in a most witty and original manner;) "and that which strikes me as very honourably distinguishing this association of men of talents, is a reciprocal good-will which appears to exclude every feeling of self-love."—"Don't trust to that," answered I; "in point of fact, with regard to self-love, we possess that here as well as what may be better. Take a good look at this great boy who is balancing himself upon his chair, with an air of so much no-meaning. He has found out the way, (and that was not very easy,) to have more vanity than merit. His politeness is of a kind which warns you to be off your guard against him; his self-complacency and

his notions of his own perfections are so immovably fixed, that he is more surprised than angry that any other person should become the object of eulogy in his presence;—he has, it is said, critics in his pay, whose pens he directs, and with the assistance of whom, he deals blows upon his rivals, the more dangerous from his knowing better than any one else, the side on which they are vulnerable;—but it would not be difficult to persuade me that self-love and the love of the arts were so identified in him, that he only deemed it the discharge of a duty to both, to say all the good possible of himself and all the evil possible of others. He is a man to drive the most experienced flatterers into despair; because, let them praise him as highly as their powers extend, they never can go beyond the excellent opinion he entertains of himself.

"As if it were in contrast to a character so peculiar, we might fancy that chance alone had not placed near him, that young man so modest in demeanour, and so distinguished for ability. His début has been marked by a triumph, the more flattering since his own competitors have proclaimed it.—I recal to memory this circumstance alike honourable to the young artist and to his rivals; but with so potent a stimulus to emulation, is he not subject to a heavy accusation for the afflicting indifference, to which he has abandoned himself, and which robs France of the *chefs d'œuvre* which so brilliant an essay entitled her to expect? Perhaps

he thinks he has done enough for his fame; perhaps (for even modesty has her self-love) he fears that new efforts might not carry him beyond his first attempt; perhaps in fine, (and this supposition is the most probable, for sensibility the source of great talents, is also the source of mortification,) perhaps some secret sorrow destroys all the energy of his soul? There are moments when the utmost that it is in our power to do, is to live."—"I observe a little lower down, a man who seems to me to acquit himself very gaily of that obligation. What a full-blown face! What an air of health, of happiness?"—"That is a fellow of spirit, who, in a blessed hour, proposed to himself this problem, which he has so ably resolved—*to reconcile the taste for literature with the pursuit of wealth.* He cultivates a branch of commerce, the products of which are indebted to the arts for increased value and perfection, and he renders the luxury of Europe tributary to French taste and industry.

"His neighbour, by an effort more generous, has in many cases, sacrificed his interest to his fame. Worthy competitor of Etienne and of Plantin, he does honour to a name already famous in the typographic art, which he has carried to perfection by the most useful and ingenious inventions. The monuments which he has reared to the Latin and French classics, confer on him as a printer, a reputation, to which as a learned man and an author, he had before a good right to aspire;—a reputation

that exalts still higher the renown for probity by which he would be distinguished, even at the era when that virtue might happily be more common than it is in our time."

"What is he almost opposite to you, whose physiognomy possesses, I can't tell what of the Sardonic, which imparts an expression quite peculiar to features in other respects altogether insignificant?"—"That is a man of literature, well informed, very malignant, and very amiable; qualities which seem incompatible; and the combination of which is one of the mysteries of his character. Endowed with an original turn of mind, he possesses the avidity without the relish for celebrity; he renounces the tranquillity which he loves, and disdains the glory which he pursues. Without making himself master of any thing, he aspires to the possession of every thing, in order to have the privilege of appreciating the merit and the exertions of those whom success renders proud. The interval which separates ignorance from knowledge, (the folly of fine wit,) does not, if we may believe him, appear long, but to the eyes of the vanity which measures it; and the reputation of a rich man excepted, all the others, according to him, might purchase themselves a name, and are almost always paid more than they are worth." "This personage is one of that class which we, like the English, call *characters*; intercourse with such a man could not fail of being amusing; and when one is not

his dupe, I imagine one must be charmed to be his accomplice."

"Observe, I beg of you, that other original of another kind, who harangues for a quarter of an hour in a nasal and sententious tone."—"Who? That thin man, who is every minute adjusting a very youthful perriwig, upon a pretty old head?"—"The same; he is a lachrymose composer whose name is of equal value to a drama. All his divisions breathe sentiment and truth, and though his contemporaries deny that he is acquainted with the first rules of his art, he has found means to be extravagantly successful. Never will he lend himself to any subject which is not most strictly moral, and he very recently refused to set an opera to music, the heroine of which, presumed to marry without the consent of her parents.

"He has composed a collection of psalms for the use of schools, among which is a duet between *Vice and Virtue*, which he proposes should be sung every year at the renewal of the classes, instead of *Veni Creator*. As there are people who permit themselves to laugh at this moralist in *counter-point*, it may be proper to inform them that his works have gained him more than the chefs-d'œuvre of Gluck and of Sacchini ever acquired for their immortal authors."

Our conversation was at this moment interrupted by the youngest of the company, who rose, and said in a loud voice, displaying at the

some time a sheet of paper, which I had seen passing during an hour, through many hands at the further end of the chamber, "Gentlemen, I offer you this for a voluntary subscription; the produce is destined for the widow of an estimable artist, whom you all knew, and who has left no inheritance to his children, but the remembrance of his talents and his virtues." "Adopted," was the cry from every quarter. "I will take charge of the engraving," said, as he emptied his glass, a fat man whom I knew by his Alsacian accent. "At six francs each impression," "and I subscribe for four," added the neighbour of the engraver as he signed the paper, which was in a moment covered with twenty-five or thirty signatures. The sketch was passed round with the list: nothing could be more ingenious than this humorous composition, in which some originals, ridiculously notorious, are represented with the heads of animals, which, without borrowing any thing of the resemblance of portraits, wittily lead to a knowledge of the characters. My companion, who greatly admired this clever design, liberally subscribed for twenty copies. "I ought to inform the gentlemen who subscribe," added a little man, (as round as a ball, wiping his mouth,) "that they will receive *gratis* with the engraving, an explanation in a ballad which I shall have the honour to sing to them at the dessert, if God grants me life till then;—for it has been foretold me that I shall die before the end of a dinner."

The promise of the little man was received with acclamations of pleasure: "There," said my companion, "is a figure which ought to be painted in every eating-room, to create an appetite."—"You will add, when you have heard him, and to inspire joy.—This is from his superiority *our* singer. He sings from instinct, and bears about songs, as the *good man* bears about fables. With a great deal of wit, a perfect natural organ, and an everlasting fund of good humour, he might already perhaps have reaped the harvest of his talents, if less intimate with low life, he had more rarely borrowed its disgusting jargon."

"I am not the only Italian here, if I may judge by a particular accent which strikes my ear, and reminds me of my *Cara Patria*." "The person you point out to me, holds the foremost rank in his profession. A worthy rival of Servandoni, in that department of painting which is connected with the stage, he has often carried the magic of decorations to that pitch at which illusion appeared to be confounded with reality. Born with genius, with that vivacity and richness of imagination which at once embraces all that can be done for a subject, it is probable that he would enlarge the limits of an art, the rules of which retard its progress, if circumstances put it in his power at the same time to execute his vast conceptions, and to develope all the resources of his rare talent."

"I notice near my countryman, a little old man, whose few grey hairs hardly cover the nape, but whose eyes still sparkle with intelligence: if this be not a statuary, I am but an indifferent observer of mankind." "He is indeed one of the modern Phidias, to whom our school boasts the justest title. To his noble chisel was reserved the glory of modelling the features of the patriarch of Ferney, of whom he never speaks but with that sympathetic veneration, and that enthusiasm which a sculptor like him ought to feel for such a model.

"Without quitting this corner of the table, give a glance at that big man with white hair, whose facial angle forms an acute angle of about sixty degrees, and whose flat nose extends itself upon his upper lip."—"So far as I can judge of this little face, buried between two enormous shoulders, there is something exotic in the features of which it is composed."—"He is a native of the shores of the Baltic and a passionate admirer of the works of art which the last age produced, and which I greatly fear will not be bequeathed to posterity. His first visits to Paris, whither he was led by his master passion, were directed to our chief painters, whose port-folios he ransacked, and purchased at high prices all that they contained, which seemed worthy of a place in his collection. A taste of this prominent nature which does not correct itself within a certain period, generally becomes a mania. That of our amateur reached such a pitch as to destroy his for-

tune, which passed entirely from his strong-box to his port-folio, in the shape of fifty enormous cartoons, in which all his wealth is comprehended. Even now, he encroaches on his pleasures, and even on his necessaries, in order to increase this immense collection. Wherever you meet him, you are certain of finding him with a drawing under his arm, going to, or returning from the purchase of some *Crocade* of Carracchi or Paul Veronese, without dreaming that he is applying to this acquisition, the money which was destined to pay his rent, or his taylor's bill."

The dessert and the Champaigne were served;—the servants retired; our Momus chaunted his song, to which the immoderate laughter of all the company served as chorus. It was nine o'clock when we rose from table, delighted with the guests, and more convinced than ever, that the persons who are best acquainted with the enjoyments of life, are those, who at the same time cultivate the arts and friendship.

No. VIII.—*23d Nov.* 1813.

AN EVENING OF THE GREAT WORLD.

Combien d'oiseaux de différent plumage,
Divers de goût, d'instinct et de ramage,
En santillant, font entendre, a-la-fois,
Le gazoullis de leurs confuses voix.
VOLT. EPIT. en vers.

La Ville est partagée en diverses Sociétés, qui sont comme autant de petites républiques, qui ont leurs lois, leurs mœurs, leurs usages, et leur jargon.
LA BRUYERE, Caract.

THAT which was true in the days of La Bruyere is still true in our time, though with a few modifications. At the period when this immortal writer published his *Caracteres*, every one of the little republics of which he speaks, had its own distinct territory, separated from others by unchangeable boundaries; and so great was the difficulty of communication between them, that they scarcely knew each other but by hearsay. Towards the close of the last century, political convulsions overthrew all these barriers, and the new order of things which replaced them, has left on the interval of separation, a gentle declivity, by means of which

an easy intercourse is established. In my youth, rich women sometimes mounted step by step, to the highest rank; but then it was upon a bridge of gold. Under the sanction of the name they had purchased, they appeared at court; next day they were to be found in the midst of their families surrounded by vulgar domestics; they had been out of their proper sphere the day before, and fancied themselves out of their proper sphere the day they were in it.

Vanity, which plays so distinguished a part in society and in societies, is very obvious even in the titles it assumes. In every city, a certain number of a privileged class of men and women who associate together, call themselves *the World.* In Paris *the World* is divided between the *fashionable World* and the *great World**. *Bon ton* is the arbitress of the one; *etiquette* is the queen of the other: with some slight shades of difference, their usages are the same.

Company and the *spectacles* occupy there, the great part of the life of a man of the world: the first of these recreations constitute for him *days of guests, and days of custom* (*de jours priés et de jours d'habitude.*) In both, freedom and confidence generally give zest to repasts at which old friends meet together at the same table. These dinners possess nothing in common with formal parties, where the master of

* Le beau monde, et le grande monde.

a house, of which one does not often know who is the mistress, receives, as at an ordinary, a crowd of people, who being at a loss how to pass the evening, begin it with him at the dinner hour.

Set dinner, and evening parties, are now, as I have at all times seen them, a sort of lottery, in which lucky chances are not the most commonly met with; of which those most frequently complain, who put nothing in, and those who have already made a fortune by them. Even I, I have witnessed and I lament those *charming suppers* of other times, rendered, I am ready to acknowledge, more delicious from my then enjoying a young spirit, a vivid imagination, and an excellent appetite. "O! such society as that of Madame d'Epinai," (said honest Merville to me!) "Never shall we look upon its like again!' Don't you remember in particular, one *fête* which she gave us in '57?"—"I remember that you were at that period about twenty-five or twenty-six years of age, and that your connexion with the beautiful Emily de R * * * began that day."—"Eh! my God," continued the old President d'Abancourt, "you recal to my memory those ravishing evenings of Madame de Forcalquier, where Carmontelle composed his first proverbs."—"Gentlemen," interrupted a third, "speak of the suppers of Madame de la Popelinière; where could you meet, I do not say at this era, but within the period of your remembrance, such an assemblage of men of high station, of men of litera-

ry attainments, and of eminent artists?—And those of Pelletier whom you have not remembered at all!—And those of Madame de la Reynière where I saw *Touzet* for the first time!—*Touzet*, that prince of *Mystificators*, whose talent was displayed in a vein of pleasantry of that kind, the loss of which we ought not perhaps to regret."

This little colloquy took place last Saturday, at the Countess Eliza de Fontbonne's in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where a party of acquaintances, about my age, had got together a full hour before dinner was announced. The Countess was still at her *toilette*, and the Count had not returned from St. Cloud. We chatted as we stood round the fire place, and I had taken up the defence of modern times which the President d'Abancourt was lashing without mercy, when the mistress of the house, in all the pomp of dress and beauty, appeared to plead its cause. Madame de Fontbonne took her station at the chimney corner in a *fateuil* reserved for herself alone. I may remark, by the bye, that this custom of keeping a particular place and seat for the mistress of the house, is now very old; the *bon ton*,—even politeness makes it a law not to offer it to any other female, whatever may be her rank and quality; a very advanced age and the title of *Maréchale* alone, formerly authorised an exception to this general rule.

By degrees the young people and the ladies arrived; those being early or late in proportion

to the importance which they wished to attach to themselves, or the effect they desired to produce. The first occupation or the latter, (after embracing or saluting the Countess according to the degree or nature of their intimacy with her) appeared to me to be, as in times past, the examination and criticism, each with her neighbour, of the dress of all the others. I had already noticed a lusty Baroness de Sarnet, whose deep coloured robe, and Chinese head-dress, contrasted most shockingly with her years, her figure, and the marked expression of her countenance; the pretty Madame de L*** of whom I have often spoken in these pages, was two seats apart from the lusty Baroness, to whose chair she advanced, and complimented her in the most obliging tone, upon the elegance and good taste displayed in her dress. I passed behind the *fateuil* of Madame de L***, and whispered in her ear with unaffected passion,

"Quoi! vous avez le front de trouver cela beau."

"What! have you the impudence to think that becoming."

"My good man," answered she laughing, "go back to your cell; read your Bruyere over again, and you will learn the occasion on which a woman may praise the *toilette* of her rival." This word rival demanded an explanation, for which I will take another opportunity.

The conversation which precedes a grand entertainment is usually confined to the common places of politeness, to observations upon the weather not remarkable for depth of research, and to remarks upon new plays and spectacles. About seven o'clock the Count returned from St. Cloud, and with much grace apologised to the ladies for his detention. A quarter of an hour after, it was announced that *Madame, the Countess was served.* Every body rose; the President, who is always the last to renounce old customs, offered his hand to his cousin Madame de L * * *, to lead her to the dining-room. "Willingly," (said she to him in a low voice, as she accepted his hand), "but I give you fair notice, my dear friend, without establishing it as a precedent; for these gallantries are not the fashion any where but at the *Place-Royale.*" "So much the worse for the Faubourg Saint-Germain," replied the President.

The mistress of the mansion having regulated the seats of honour, next herself and her husband, by designating by name the persons who were to fill them, the rest of the company placed themselves as conveniency directed. The President sat down by me. I had detected the glances of a timid and discreet intelligence between a certain Auditor and a very handsome little prude, whose motions I was watching for my own private guidance. At the crisis of sitting down to table, she raised her large blue eyes towards the young gentleman, who pru-

dently kept himself disengaged, and then bent them sweetly upon the empty chair at her side, and that which being also next to mine, the President unluckily took possession of. The Auditor understood every thing to a miracle, and hurried to seize a place which, doubtless, no man could occupy without tasting equal pleasure and advantage. "If you are, by chance, still one of this world forty years hence," said I to the President, "consult this little lady who will then probably be a devotee, and this Auditor who will then perhaps be a magistrate; you will see if they do not talk of the dinners of Madame de Fontbonne, as you were not long since talking to me about the suppers of Madame Forcalquièr."

It would be absurd to expect any general conversation at a ceremonious dinner; which it is almost as ridiculous to give, as to raise your voice at, and endeavour to fix the attention of forty persons, the majority of whom you hardly know: it is therefore a matter of necessity that you enter into chat with those, near whom chance has placed you. After having listened, during the two first courses, to the grumbler d'Abancourt on my right, who was even unwilling to acknowledge our progress in the ingenious arts, as demonstrated by an examination of the exquisite fashion of the plate, the beauty of the candelabras, the elegance of the centre ornament, the brilliancy of the glass, and in a word, the rich variety of so many objects in which the luxury of the banquet was compris-

ed, I addressed myself to my neighbour on my left, and it was not long before I discovered how much reason I had to lament that I had so long delayed availing myself of so pleasant an entertainment. Never was the boldness of folly displayed to my eyes under a shape more comic, under features more congenial with the *gross* soul of which it bore the impressions. The *Sénéchal* of the comedy of *Originaux*, is but a faint copy of this burlesque personage. One trait of his conversation will suffice for a specimen. He was telling me of the mortification which the marriage of one of his nephews had occasioned him. "Do you know," added he, "that the girl whom this ass has been persuaded to marry, has nothing, that which is called nothing, neither physical nor moral. As for the physical, she is ugly; and as for the moral, she is not worth a farthing."

Coffee was taken at table. On entering the drawing rooms where the lighted incense pots exhaled all the perfumes of the east, we met a number of persons who had assembled in consequence of invitations to spend the evening. The crowd soon became so dense, that it was indispensably necessary to break the circle of women, by distributing them round the tables where different games were played. When the parties were arranged, the Countess passed on to the gallery where M. de Fontbonne was walking and discussing matters with some great personages. She whispered something to him, and went out accompanied by two or three la-

dies, without any body, except myself perhaps, noticing her absence. She returned in about an hour. "How has Grassini sung," said I to her, in a way not to be heard by any one but herself. "Who told you that I had come from the Bouffons, wicked Argus?"—"The fashion, Madame, which would not have failed to exclaim loudly against you, had you not shewn yourself to-night in your box."—"Well! you have guessed rightly. I have been hearing two scenes of *Horaces*; the music is *charming*; this is my critical opinion: Grassini is admirable; she is the only Italian singer (at least of all that I have heard,) who possesses any thing beyond a throat. I came away after the fine air, *Prenar vorrei le lacrime*, which she sung in a style perfectly ravishing."

At the end of the games, which finished before eleven o'clock, M. Carbonelle sat down at the piano. The music was fine, and at times it might have been confessed that parts of *Didon*, *Armide*, and the *Danaides* could support a comparison with *Pirrothe* the *Destruzione di Gerusalemme*, with other masterpieces of the same kind and country.

About midnight they would play at *Proverbes*; in an instant a little theatre was constructed at one end of the gallery. They began with the *Enragé*, an old *Proverbe* of Carmontelle's, and concluded with the *Songe d'un Honnête Homme**. This little piece which

* This species of amusement consists in getting up a sort of play *improvisatore*, which is founded upon a

formed part of a collection published last year by Madame Victorine M * * *, under the title of *Soirées de Société*, possesses all the merit which can belong to a production of the kind,—truth, nature, and grace.

Supper followed this entertainment. Very few of the company sat down to table; others were served with ices and punch; and about two o'clock when I left the rooms, (as much gratified as a man of my time of life could be, with an evening so noisy,) there still remained some gamesters, female as well as male, who beheld with pain, the approaching decision of their last rubber of whist, an enjoyment in which the whole business, pleasure, and hope of their lives is involved.

proverb given as the subject for developement. When ably sustained it produces more amusement than may at first be anticipated.—Tr.

No. IX.—6*th Jan.* 1814.

MY PROJECTS FOR THE YEAR 1814.

The Hermit and his Physician.

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.
HOR. Ode 4. lib. 1.

La vie est courte, ne portons pas trop loin nos espérances.

Life is short, let us not extend our hopes too far.

THE Hermit, (after a fit of coughing.)—"Without doubt, my dear Doctor, old age is a very fine thing, but you must own it has many inconveniencies."

The Doctor.—"Cicero, as you must remember, could find but four trifling ones. *First.* It prevents us from acting. *Secondly.* It brings infirmities in its train. *Thirdly.* It estranges us from nearly all the pleasures of life. *Fourthly.* It brings us nearer to death."

The Hermit.—"As we range under one or other of these classes nearly all the troubles of life, you must allow these small inconveniencies are equivalent to a great number of others.

Nevertheless, Cicero might have added by way of supplement—The temper which age gives us, the gaiety which it takes from us, and the continual restlessness in which it holds us."

The Doctor.—"This querulous reflection which your illness, and not your age suggests to you, loses all its authority in the mouth of a man, whose example is a decisive refutation of his opinion. I have been acquainted with you these twenty years, and (setting aside a fit of the gout or rheumatism,) I never saw you of a more even temper, and possessed of greater ease and gaiety, or of a more philosophical tranquillity of mind."

The Hermit.—"An exception does not destroy a rule, even where it is as complete, as you seem to believe; but the fact is, that if I wished to convince myself of the weakness of my moral and physical faculties, I should discover proof of it in a new frame of mind, against which I struggle with all the energy of my character; and which manifests itself in a sort of repugnance that from time to time breaks out, even towards the very things which I love, and am accustomed to. These books which surround me, to which I owe, not the most striking, but the sweetest pleasures of my life—I look at them, at times, with the eye of the senator, Pococurante.* I say to myself, as I glance over this pile of paper, (the contents of some of which are not worth the cost of binding,)

* A person in the Romance of Candide.

that these four or five thousand volumes, would, according to the calculation of the learned Bishop of Avranches, be reduced to a small duodecimo. if they contained only things true or useful, or such as had never been written before."

The Doctor.—"That's your disease."

The Hermit.—"My business with those whom I love most, is often a trouble to me. The slowness, and dotage of my old servant, become insupportable to me."

The Doctor.—"That's your disease."

The Hermit.—"I am as much astonished as if I had just made the discovery, that there are so many fools, blockheads, and knaves in the world."

The Doctor.—"That's your disease."

The Hermit.—"My disease! My disease! You treat me like the *Géronte* of *Légataire*—my disease! 'Tis the register of my baptism."

The Doctor.—"Not at all; old age is a relative term. One man of seventy-four years of age is younger than another at fifty. You are not yet old; you are ill; your nerves are bad."

The Hermit.—"How I should laugh were it not for the fear of my cough! To ascribe to me the disorder of a languid girl! You would be somewhat embarrassed if I were to ask you to explain this nervous disorder."

The Doctor.—"I should explain it to you as the physician in *Molière* explains the virtue of opium, and my definition must not be laughed

at, for as Doctor Pangloss assures us, there is no effect without a cause. It is not given to physicians or even to philosophers to know all things."

The Hermit.—"If you are not acquainted with the cause of the evil, how can you cure it?"

The Doctor.—"As I grow wheat without knowing how it springs up; as I prescribe a medicine without knowing how it operates."

The Hermit.—"I am then nervous: well be it so. What is to be done in this case?"

The Doctor.—"Resume during the winter an exercise which you have omitted for some months, and as soon as the first birds announce the approach of Spring, leave Paris and take a little tour."

The Hermit.—"Do you know, my dear doctor, that among other complaints which I have against Hippocrates and his clan, (complaints which I will one day explain to you with frankness,) one of the greatest, is the custom of paying no attention to the state and situation of the sick man, in prescribing the remedy. Nothing, in my opinion, is more absurd than these general directions in medicine. I shall never be reconciled to your profession till I see it practised with reference to individuals, and not to the species. To order a poor devil of a tinsmith of the Rue des Prouvaires, who gains a crown per day by his work, to apply himself to a regimen of Quinquina wine to cure himself of a fever;—is it not to bid him make his will?

To prescribe to the wife of a churchwarden of the parish of St. Jacques-du-Haut-Pas, the waters at Toplitz, for the purpose of putting her in a situation to become a mother;—is it not to condemn, without mercy her husband to die without heirs? Your directions to me are much of the same kind. I have become a Hermit and you bid me run over the world. Appointed observer of the Parisian manners, can I fulfil my task on the banks of the Loire, on the mountains of Dauphiny, or on the plains of Languedoc?"

The Doctor.—"This is just the point to which I wished to bring you. Why do you think yourself confined in your observations on our manners to the walls of the capital? Are all Frenchmen in Paris? Many of your correspondents have already asked you the same question. Let Paris be the centre of your operations; let all your ties like those of Arachne meet in one point; nothing can be better: but enlarge your web, fasten the threads to our provinces, and (to continue the comparison to the end) at the slightest sensation you feel, come out of your hold and seize your prey, even at the very extremity of your toils."

The Hermit.—"I have thought of this more than once, but our Romance writers, and our dramatic poets have already said so much on the follies of the country * * * *"

The Doctor.—"As of the follies of the *Marais*, by hearsay, and without the smallest regard to the changes which time and circum-

stances have wrought there. Besides, there is a point of view more useful, and more general, in which the country has never been examined, and which you may take up. The shades of colour which distinguish the manners, customs, and habits of different parts of France: these are things which it is important to know and to compare, sometimes for the amusement, and yet oftener for the instruction of the capital."

The Hermit.—"I begin to think, my dear doctor, that your prescription is not impracticable, and I am almost determined to undertake, at the return of the lovely season, some excursions in the different provinces, when I shall take care, as you may very well suppose, to travel incognito. Once agreed on the project, let us talk of the means of executing it. I am not sufficiently active to set out like J. J. Rousseau, with a stick in my hand and carrying my baggage. I am not young enough to ride on horseback, nor rich enough to travel post."

The Doctor.—"There remains still, that which is the best mode for a man who leaves home to see others. The public stage, a diligence, a packet-boat, a coche d'eau, are excellent cabinets of observation; the models thrust themselves as it were under the eyes of the painter, and I need not attempt to inform you what may be drawn from such situations."

The Hermit.—"There is another point settled! Now my dear doctor, where I shall go? This is a day for submission to my physician:

write me down an itinerary in the form of a prescription; this will afford you an opportunity to dilate on climate and temperature; two words which play a great part in the faculty's dictionary, when at a loss what to say.

The Doctor.—"It is fortunate for you I am more your friend than your physician, or else * * * * *."

The Hermit.—"I feel the full force of this *quos ego*. No matter doctor; present the cup, and like Alexander I will drink without hesitation."

The Doctor.—"I return to your imputation, and I ask whether it be possible for a man of sense to push obstinacy so far as to deny the influence of climate."

The Hermit.—"I deny it not doctor, I only doubt it. I know very well that the author of *The Spirit of the Laws*, whose authority is certainly of great weight with me, has said, that climate may be distinguished by degrees of sensibility, as well as by degrees of latitude:—that he believes he can discover in the geographical positions of different countries, the origin of the qualities and defects of their inhabitants: but experience, whose authority is superior even to that of Montesquieu, has demonstrated to me, that the same country in a few ages, has been successively inhabited by a people the most brave, the most enterprising, the most free, and by a people the most cowardly, the most lazy, and the greatest slaves on earth. I have seen, in contradiction to his system, war-

like Caffres under the equator, and timid Laplanders near the pole: in a word, doctor, nothing appears to me less established than this influence of climate about which so much is said."

The Doctor.—"As to morals, say as much as you please, 'tis no affair of mine. I don't disturb myself with seeking whence come the vices of men, I look only to the origin of their diseases; and this same experience, which you are continually invoking, convinces me that the examination of the climate is justly, one of the fundamental laws of Hygeia. This question is, however, idle here. When you walk in your room, it matters not how long or how broad it is, or which side of it is north, east, west, or south; you will travel as you walk, to change air, to take an exercise which is useful to your health; you will never stop more than three or four days in a place, and it is therefore quite indifferent whether you direct your steps one way or another. You may take that road which is most agreeable to you."

The Hermit.—"This is what I call talking like a friend; your brother doctors are not always in the habit of speaking either so clearly or so laconically."

The Doctor.—"There are professions, such as ours and your own, in which one must sometimes speak so as not to be understood. Reduce a lawyer to the simple discussion of a fact. Take from him his citations, his amplifications, his exordiums, his perorations, and

see what would become of the eloquence of the bar. Desire a Journalist to insert nothing of the truth of which he is not convinced, to praise nothing which is not worthy of estimation, to censure nothing which he does not understand; take from him the report of yesterday, the erudition of to-day, and the interest of the morrow, and see what would become of the daily papers, even the *Gazette de Santé*."

The Hermit.—"*Of health?*"

The Doctor.—"Even the Gazette of Health; though there you will find more learning, more truth, and above all, if I dare mention it, more wit than in this or that journal, calling itself literary."

The Hermit.—"Take care, take care doctor; if you throw stones into our garden we will shower a whole quarry into your's."

The Doctor.—"Your stones will kill nobody."

The Hermit.—"I wish I could say as much for * * * * *coughs*."

The Doctor.—"There is a good fit of coughing in expiation of your sarcasms against medicine. Do you remember that Molière is dead?"

The Hermit.—"I will give you this evening a place to see *le Malade Imaginaire*."

The Doctor.—"Adieu, my good Hermit."

The Hermit.—"Adieu, malignant doctor."

The Doctor.—"I recommend you, for your catarrh, my pectoral syrup and the apozem according to my prescription."

The Hermit.—"I will follow it, and am at your mercy. Adieu my friend."

The Doctor, (returning.)—"On consideration, neither syrup nor apozem! keep yourself warm and drink plentifully of barley water."

No. X.—*15th Jan.* 1814.

THE TWELFTH CAKE.

Fabam mimum agunt.

CICERO.

Ils tirent le gateau des rois.

They draw the twelfth-cake.

I HAVE often wished that the prejudices of a people should not be confounded with their customs. The former cannot be avoided with too much perseverance; but it is seldom that any thing is gained by the destruction of the latter. Every prejudice is born of a vice; every national habit takes its rise from a virtue. The demonstration of this truth would make this discourse a chapter of morality, but

Trop de morale entraine trop d'ennui.

Too much morality brings with it too much *ennui*; I leave, therefore, the principle to itself, and pass on to those feasts in the course of the year, which I count among the number of old customs, whose venerable authority I see, with regret, grows weaker every day.

This taste was implanted in me from my earliest youth, by one of my maternal uncles, the prior of Armentières, who spent with my father all the time which he did not pass at his priory, that is to say, about eleven months and a half in each year. He had an apartment on the second floor, of which his library occupied the greater part. On a sort of table, *à la Tronchin*, on which he wrote, I still see, in a little cabinet of ebony, a calendar for his own use, which he made up himself at the beginning of every year, and inscribed according to the order of their dates, with the feasts and birthdays of all his relations, friends, and even acquaintances.

On the arrival of such a day we were sure to receive a bouquet of flowers, for the most part accompanied with a piece of poetry, or a couplet, in the form of a compliment. That which he did for others, he exacted for himself in so absolute a manner, that he disinherited one of his relations for having neglected to write him a letter on the opening of a new year. My uncle, although he exaggerated the importance of these and similar duties, had ideas on this point not far removed from sound morality. I remember in a little comedy, which he composed

on this subject, one of the persons of the drama abused this submission to childish customs.

Tous ces grand mots ne m'en imposent guère;
C'est à l'abus, d'abord, qu'on déclare la guerre;
Mais l'usage y tenait; on le laisse déchoir,
Et l'usage détruit, entraine le devoir;
Voila, Monsieur, comment avec de telles phrases,
De la société l'on sape enfin les bases.

How many examples did he not cite to us of quarrels made up, and lawsuits between relations terminated by these unions of families which custom formerly prescribed, and which now hardly seem to be tolerated.

Twelfth day, Shrove Tuesday, St. Martin's day were all then domestic feasts, at which young people found those pleasures and enjoyments for which they are now obliged to look elsewhere. My uncle, the Prior, was acquainted with all the minute ceremonies of these feasts, and applied his whole attention to their observance. On such days he invested himself with full authority as master of the house; ordered the repasts, took charge of the invitations, appointed the place of every body at table, and observed that every thing was done according to his rules.

Of all our family feasts, that of Twelfth Day was in his eyes the most important, and therefore it was always celebrated with peculiar pomp. The remembrance which I yet retain of it never permits me to read without sentiments of the most lively emotion, the charming descrip-

tion which M. de Chateaubriand has given us of this ancient festival, at which I have so often assisted. The family was numerous, the parlour for the company was large: I alone am left of all those who partook the good cheer!

"Unsophisticated minds," (says the author of the Genius of Christianity) "can never recollect without sympathy those hours of relaxation, when the family assembled round the cake, which suggested to the mind the presents of the Magi. The grandfather, during the rest of the year secluded in the retirement of his apartment, appears on this day like the divinity of the paternal hearth. His grandchildren who have for some time past thought of nothing but this festival, climb his knees, and awaken again in him all the memory of his youth. The countenances of all exhibit gaiety; the hearts of all are light; the room for the entertainment is decorated, and in honour of the day every one appears drest in his newest habiliments. Amidst the jingling of glasses and bursts of joy, the lots of this ephemeral dignity are drawn, and a sceptre is gained which weighs not too heavy for the hands of the monarch.—Sometimes a little trick is practised which, redoubling the mirth of the subjects and exciting the complaints of the young sovereign alone, elevates to the throne the daughter of the host and the son of a neighbour lately arrived from the army. The young pair blush, as if their crown embarrassed them; the mothers laugh, and the grandfather with a full

goblet drinks to the new queen. The curate, who is at the feast, receives for the purpose of distribution, with other assistance, the first part, called the *Poor's Piece*. Old games and a dance, at which some aged domestic supplies the place of musician, prolong their pleasure, and the whole family, nurses, children, tenants, servants, and masters, mix promiscuously in the mazy wanderings of the ball."

I could not deny myself the pleasure of bringing before my readers this lovely picture, full of gracefulness and truth, though at the hazard of a comparison of which I feel all the disadvantage.

I was reading a few days since the passage which I have just cited to a Mr. Fergus, a scholar, more estimable than orthodox, with whom I had formerly studied, and who did not approve of M. de Chateaubriand's having given to Christianity the honour of an institution evidently borrowed from the Greeks and Romans.

"What the devil," said he, knitting his large black eyebrows, "does he talk to us of the Magi and their presents for, when discoursing on a custom whose profane origin is so well known to us? Who is there that is not acquainted with the amusement of the *King of the Bean* derived to us from the Romans, when the children, during the Saturnalia, drew lots for the part of the king of the festival. This custom of the bean, to trace it still higher, goes back to the Greeks, who made use of beans in the election of their magistrates. We have trans-

planted to the beginning of January a fesat which the ancients celebrated towards the end of December, in the winter solstice, and which the Romans, if we may believe Lucian, Strabo, and Vossius, had borrowed from the Persians. The election of this temporary king was made at table, as with us, but after having been treated during the short term of his reign, with all the respect and regard due to his rank, the ephemeral monarch was hanged, to terminate the feast. It is proper, however, to add, that he was chosen from among the class of slaves, and still oftener from among the criminals."

"I know very well," (answered I to my learned friend in *us*,) "that by dint of learning, the charm may be taken from every thing; but I must own that one of the best written discourses on the origin of the King of the Bean would never amuse me half so much as one of those domestic meetings which have latterly become too unfrequent."

"Among the company you keep," interrupted M. Fergus; "for my own part I have only to choose among three parties to which I am invited for this evening, to draw twelfth cake, at one of which I can answer that you will be extremely well received, if you like to accompany me."

He mentioned M. Bruno, another old schoolfellow, with whom I was some time a boarder at M Doppi's, Rue Mazarine. We left the school together, myself to go to College; M. Bruno to follow the profession of his father, a

linen-draper, at the Golden Fleece, in the Rue des Marmouzets. We had not seen each other for more than twenty years, but I had always dealt with him, and I knew he retained some friendship for me. I did not hesitate, therefore, to take Fergus at his word.

It was four o'clock when we arrived at this Dean's of the ancient shrievalty. We found the good old man in a room over the shop, which a fashionable merchant of the Rue Vivienne would be in these times ashamed to call his anti-chamber. He was seated by the fireside in a large arm-chair, of *Utrecht* velvet; a little child on his knees, and two others seated on the ground, who displayed to grand-papa their Punchinellos, their Chinese monkeys, and their leaden soldiers, which they had received as New Year's gifts. A young girl of sixteen or seventeen, assisted an old servant to lay the cloth.—M. Charles Bruno, the younger son, was reading a newspaper, in a loud voice at the window, while an old aunt cut slips of paper of various colours, to put round the bottom of the candles. The Nestor of the city merchants received me with open arms, and presented me in the most friendly manner to his family, by whom I was greeted in the same affectionate style. It may very well be believed that in the conversation which followed in the chimney-corner between the three old schoolfellows, M. Doppi was not forgotten, and that the phrase, *Do you remember?* occurred more than once in our

discourse. The rest of the company came in order; the first was M. Boutard, son-in-law of M. Bruno, and one of the most famous lace-makers in the Rue des Bourdonnais; he brought with him two of his children. M. Boutard is a very proper man, and has no other fault than that of a little too much vanity, on account of the attention he pays to the church of St. Opportune, of which he is the eldest churchwarden. The Abbé Daillot nephew of the patriarch, and vicar of St. Magloire, came next; he was followed by M. Melchior Bruno, Captain of the Veterans of the Barracks Notre Dame des Victoires, who gave his arm to Madame Boutard and her daughter, a little brunette of the most lively figure.

Dinner was served; we waited only for M. Daumont, an old clerk of M. Bruno, and a most intimate friend of the family.—Mademoiselle Françoise Bruno, the aunt, begged her brother to sit down to table, according to the old axiom: *That waiting prevents one from eating, but eating does not prevent one from coming.* Her advice was followed. The grandfather's arm-chair was placed at the head of the table, the back to the fire. Every one stood by his chair, while the father of the family said grace, and seated themselves as soon as he set them the example. A small table for the children, of which aunt Bruno had the direction, had been prepared in one corner of the room.

Daumont came in just as the soup was removed; he announced himself with a loud

laugh, with which I observed he always preceded his jokes, "I see you have waited for me as the Abbé waits for his monks," said he, shaking the hands of the company round, without omitting myself, though I was a stranger to him. The Abbé answered him by a *tarde venientibus ossa*, which produced some mirth.

The tureen being carried away, a twelfth cake was brought before Madame Boutard who did the honours of the table, on which she bestowed her benediction, tracing there the sign of the cross, and then cut it into eighteen parts. The youngest of the company came forward, which gave the vicar an opportunity of putting in a *surgat junior*, of which, he seemed to take himself a good part. The cake was covered with a napkin, and the dish having been turned round two or three times to prevent all idea of fraud or favour, the child distributed the portions. The first drawn was that for the poor; this was immediately given to the vicar, with the alms which every one hastened to subscribe; the grandfather was served second; in respect to my age, and being a stranger, I had the third part, in which was discovered *the bean*. My election to the sovereignty of the feast was announced by a round of applause, to which succeeded reiterated exclamations of *Vive le Roi*. I was respectfully invited by my new subjects to make choice of a companion who should share with me the splendour of my exalted dignity. I cast my eyes on Mademoiselle Rose Boutard, who seemed however to be

less sensible of the honour of enjoying a throne than displeased at quitting her seat by her young cousin Bruno. The dinner was gay, even a little noisy, and the cries of, the queen drinks, the king drinks, resounded through the whole repast. The precaution which the wise Fergus had taken to bring half a dozen of excellent Bourdeaux wine with him (a precaution which nobody valued more highly than the Captain) succeeded in putting friend Daumont in high spirits, and the vicar took care not to lose so fine an opportunity as when he emptied his glass to his uncle's health, to tell us. "*Bonum vinum lætificat cor hominis.*" During the dessert, according to custom, we proceeded to choose the great crown officers, and every body admired my penetration, when I choose M. Boutard my minister of finances; Daumont master of the household; Captain Melchior commander in chief of my armies; Abbé Daillot, my grand almoner, and Madame Bruno maid of honour to the queen. These appointments being complete, the grand almoner, the minister of the finances, and the master of the household, roared out a bacchanalian song, after which the queen and her little cousin sung under my royal nose a duet so tender and passionate, that with a prince less mild than myself the singers would have fared but badly.

Coffee was served in the chimney corner; some neighbours came in to join the family, and I took advantage of the preparation for a *Loto* table, to slip from the company, fully

resolved to return on the following Sunday, to visit my happy subjects, and close my peaceable reign.

No. XI.—*3d February*, 1814.

THE GOSSIPS.

Vivendum recte est cum propter plurima tunc his
Præcipue causis, ut linguas mancipiorum
Contemnas: nam lingua mali perpessima servi.
JUVEN. Sat. 9.

Let us live irreproachably if it be only to despise the prattle of servants, for there is nothing worse than the tongue of these people.

MADAME Choquet, my house-keeper (whom I mentioned in describing my cell) is not yet fifty-four: she wears very well for her age, and with the exception of her sight, which fails her in a slight degree, she enjoys all her moral and physical faculties. That which she esteems as the most important, and makes the greatest use of, is her speech. A happy formation, seconded by long exercise, has enabled her to find out the way to speak a great deal, very fast, and very long, without fatiguing herself, and what is more, without much fatiguing her hearers.

She is the daughter of an old coachman to the Duke de Villeroy, and was born in his hotel in the year 1760. At fifteen she was admitted among the women of the Duchess, who some few years afterwards, married her to M. Choquet, the son of her Swiss, then serving in the regiment of the French guard, in the company of St. Blaucard, and esteemed the handsomest corporal in the company. M. Choquet at the revolution entered into the line with the rank of Sub-Adjutant, and had it not been for a wound, which he received at the battle of Jemappe, and which compelled him to relinquish the service, he would not have been reduced to the necessity of giving lessons in fencing, at fifteen sous per lesson. Madame Choquet has not been more fortunate, and after losing her mistress, not having resolution to derogate from her function, by taking the place of lady's maid, she accepted a situation as portress, which she retained five years: but as ambition in every state increases with age, looking at the produce of her economy, which amounted to not less than 1200 livres, she determined to establish herself as a mantua-maker. Heaven has prospered her endeavours, and Madame Choquet is at this moment mistress and proprietor of one of the smartest work-rooms to be found between the Rue St. Lazarre and La Petite-Pologne.

This is, in a few words, the history of my house-keeper. I must have an exceeding bad memory, if I did not recollect it, after it has

been so often related to me for these ten years past.

This little history is, however, only a necessary introduction to the prattle with which this accomplished model of Parisian gossips entertains me every morning; a small specimen of which I will lay before my readers. They will not find much connexion, nor perhaps much sense, or much indulgence for a neighbour; but the custom of reading our daily papers will doubtless have familiarised them with this fashionable babble.

Madame Choquet comes to me every morning at nine, and begins her business, by preparing my breakfast; during this meal and while my room is put in order, she favours me with these monologues with such a most inconceivable volubility of tongue, as entirely to set all short-hand writers at defiance.

As I listened to her last Monday I took a few notes to assist my memory—Madame Choquet began:

"Perhaps, Sir, you don't find your cream so good as usual; upon my word, 'tis no fault of mine: Clara did not come to day, and for a very good reason, she has just lain-in; poor woman, this is her seventh; 'tis her husband's present every nine months whether he is at home or abroad. But good often comes out of evil. Madame Dumont, the notary's wife, has given her her child to nurse. You'll ask why so rich a woman does not nurse her child at home; this was her intention, but it is not on account of any

suspicions in the head of her husband, because Colonel Dorfeuil, Madame Dumont's cousin, who had his arm broken in Germany last year, has come to reside with them till it is healed; so far is that from being the case, that M. Dumont has caused the child, whom he is not very fond of, to be sent out to nurse. Perhaps he is not wrong, but you'll say the world is so wicked!

"That's what I said the other day to the portress who told me the story—My dear Madame Barbotin," said I, "if you'll attend to me, look after your gate, and never mind what passes among the lodgers; but this good woman can't resist it, she must gossip. Heaven knows there is no want of subjects in the house she lives in; it is so large—fifteen families! 900 francs, at a penny in the pound, without reckoning Christmas-boxes * * * *. There are very few such doors in Paris. Heaven grant Madame Barbotin may profit more by my advice, than Madame Badureau, portress at M. Beaubois!

"That woman was really the Gazette of the parish. Not a single thing was done in the house, with which she did not acquaint her neighbours. But for her, who would ever have known that M. Beaubois owes his place solely to the interest of his wife! She was thought to have come of a good family, and behold ye, I find she was a dancer in Germany, where she had been the ruin of, I don't know how many Barons. She must have ruined a great num-

ber to make a fortune. She has made her's, and M. Beaubois, who was in want of a security to get him the place he solicited, married her without examining any further than her strong box. Fine news! Such a thing was never heard of. The portress learned the history through a brother of the lady's, a fine boy who fell in her path one morning, and who was sent away pretty quickly, as you may very well guess. They procured a custom-house officer's place for him at the other end of the world, and paid all his travelling expenses. Some people say he really was her brother, and some say he was no more her brother than you or I. It is nothing to me, and as the proverb says, 'Every one for themselves, and God for us all.'

"There has been so much talk about this foolish portress, who was turned away for spreading scandalous reports, that she has never been able to get another situation, and is now living upon her daughter Mariette, who is nursery-maid to a Senator. She is a pretty girl, I had her with me two years as an apprentice. She was to have been married last year to a charcoal factor at Port St. Nicolas. An excellent business, where one knows nothing!

The young man made at least a hundred louis a year. The match went off; but whose fault was it? Why her mother's. She permitted her daughter to go one Sunday to la Chaumiere* alone with her intended. A young

* A Tea Garden.

girl of eighteen, without experience! She did not know the difference between the night before marriage, and the day after; not that I mean to say ——Heaven forbid——But certainly in my time girls were married, and before they went to Paphos, to Tivoli, or to Chaumiere. Balls Champêtres have ruined every thing.

"It is very true, city balls are now not much better. Witness twenty pretty Misses that I could mention, who never fail to attend every one, and are not married a bit the more for that: I name nobody, but see what has happened to your neighbour's daughter. She will one day be rich: she is now pretty. For these ten years she has been called the best dancer in Paris; she has danced with all the young men of the capital: how many offers of marriage has she had? Not a single one; and why? Because they avoid girls who dance too well; because it costs more to take a wife five or six times a year to a ball, than to keep two children; because the love of dancing does not agree with the cares of house-keeping, without mentioning many other reasons, which you can very easily divine."

Madame Choquet made a pause here, and as she perceived I was about to take advantage of it by edging in a word, "I beg pardon for interrupting you," continued she, "but I must ask permission to leave you a little earlier today than usual. I have not a moment to lose. I am going to a wedding, if you must know * * *.

Yes, really to a wedding! Did you never observe a young girl who sometimes comes with me, little Henrietta, the daughter of a master butcher a few doors from us. One of the richest in Paris. He might have done as many others do, who have not half his fortune, placed his daughter in a smart boarding school, given her masters, and in a word, have made a fine lady of her; but Courtois had some good sense; he had his daughter taught to read and write, and placed her with me to learn needlework. These two years that she has left me, she has been at the head of her father's house, and keeps his books as well as the best of clerks could do. With her twenty years, her pretty features, and her crowns, Henrietta has not, as you may very well believe, wanted admirers. She has refused, that is to say, her father has refused for her, a notary's clerk, a clerk in the customs, a lamp contractor, and a grocer in La Rue de la Verrerie, who counted on her portion to restore his credit. M. Courtois has cast his eyes on the son of a cattle dealer of Poissy. After the nuptials, the good man will leave his shop to the children, and retire to his farm in the Pays d'Auge, where, by way of doing something, he will occupy himself in fattening oxen.

"To day is the betrothing; I must not fail to be there. I have made the bride's linen: it is worth seeing: all in dozens, and so good, and so fine! The father has spared no expense. The young man is a strapping good looking

lad. He has made two campaigns, but this has not prevented him from providing a substitute, for whom he has paid two thousand crowns.

"I must leave you to go and dress the bride,—I understand such things a little,—I have not been a lady's maid for nothing. There will be some talk about the nuptial feast, I assure you: a hundred covers at the *Feu Eternel* on the Boulevart du Jardin de Plantes. I know many folks in this part of the world who will not be very well pleased at this marriage. It is enough that things are well done to excite the spleen of the envious. Already satirical verses are written upon it. I have some of them in my pocket. One says that good-man Courtois, will hardly know himself in a merry making; that it is a long while since he has treated his customers; and a thousand other such foolish pleasantries, which don't prevent his being a very good fellow, very serviceable, and one whose only fault is that he bestows his kindnesses in the wrong place. I know something of him; he has just raised my rent, and at the same time has forbidden the goods of an old musician to be sold who lives above me in his house, and who owes him five or six quarters. Whence comes such a preference? Because I am worth something, and the other has not a sixpence. But why hasn't he a sixpence? Because, instead of attending to his scholars, since the death of his wife, he passes all his time at coffee-houses playing at dominos. For

it is well said, that a woman is the treasure of a house * * * *."

The tongue of Madame Choquet is like a coach wheel, which inflames and heats by the rapidity of its motion. The more she speaks the more she warms, and the less possible it is to foresee the termination of, or to stop such a torrent of words:—but fortunately for me and for the ceremony which awaited her, my servant came in as usual, and hastily interrupted her in the middle of her harangue: he knows as well as myself the danger to which we are exposed by permitting her to finish it.

Madame Choquet, after addressing me with the customary final question, "*Is there any thing more I can do for you, Sir?*" retired, dropping me a very low curtesy, and leaving me well convinced that if (as some learned man says) a woman's tongue is her sword, she was full as well qualified to give lessons in fencing as her husband.

No. XII.—12*th Feb.* 1814.

THE EGOTISTS.

Moi!
Moi! dis-je, et c'est assez.

CORN. *Médée.*

Myself! Myself! I say, and that's enough.

THERE exist in nature two opposite forces, denominated *centripetal* and *centrifugal*, whose laws, discovered by Huygens, and applied by Newton, govern the physical world. The first of these forces carries forward all bodies in motion, towards one common centre; the second repels them from it: the harmony of the universe results from the happy combination of these two powers. The same theory may be applied to the organisation of the social system. Patriotism and Egotism supply the functions of the central forces: the one seeks to assimilate itself with the public interest, from which the other as constantly endeavours to abstract itself. The happiest society is that wherein the equilibrium betwixt these two impulses, is best established. I advance this proposition without considering the immediate inference which may

be deduced from it, or the manner in which it may be applied to the time and country in which we live.

It is unjust, in my opinion, that Egotists, the breed of whom (not to say the family) increases to such an alarming extent, should affect to consider Montaigne as their patron. The author of the Essays did not hesitate to avow, that he belonged to that sect of amiable idlers who make happiness consist in that repose of body, that tranquillity of soul, which their master, Epicurus, assigns to his indolent deities.—Montaigne himself informs us, *that his proper employment, in this life, was to live in careless relaxation, idly rather than busily;* but how can we accuse him of egotism who, of all writers, has spoken best on friendship, because he described what he felt? Of all the passions, of all the sentiments of which the human heart is susceptible, friendship is perhaps the only one which precludes egotism. To love, is in some degree to change one's existence,—it is to live in another, for another; it was not (adds Montaigne, in speaking of his union with *la Boëtie*,) *any particular impulse which determined me, it was an undescribable quintessence of all, which having possessed itself of my will, led it to incorporate, and to lose itself in her's.*

The reputation of egotism, which has been conferred on this philosopher, has the same foundation as his glory. Those Essays have been condemned, while admired, in which he talks to his readers about his person, his predi-

his diseases, his virtues, and his de-
Montaigne has proposed for his object
study of the human heart, to be more cer-
in his observations, he made them on him-
self; he speaks of his vices and his merits
with the same freedom; he frequently exhibits
himself as a proof, but never as an example.

It has frequently been attempted, but always without success, to introduce the egotist on the stage. Fabre, who has painted him in the most odious colours in his *Philinte* (which is not that of Moliere, whatever may be said), has given this personage but a secondary rank, and only employs him to relieve the beautiful character of *Alceste*. Barthe, though possessing much wit, has produced but a mediocre comedy on the same subject; Cailhava has been equally unsuccessful, and the *Egotist* yet remains to be pourtrayed: it is unfortunate that we should want painters for such a picture, at an epoch so prolific in models.

In reading the works of Port-Royal, we know not which most to admire, the vast acquirements of these pious ecclesiastics, or their affecting modesty. In considering that these immortal productions, emanating from this school of taste and reason, were presented to the public with a respectful deference, it is impossible to refrain from laughter at the doctorial pomposity so often affected by the journalists of the day, without any other title to the confidence of their readers than the impertinent monogram affixed to their articles? Who can help laugh-

ing at their eternal repetitions of, *I know, I suspect, I contend, and I affirm.* Ah! gentlemen, the Pascals, Arnaults, Nicolles, and Lancelots, said modestly: "*We believe, it is our opinion.*" They thought the custom of speaking to the public in the first person, proceeded from that principle of ridiculous vanity, which they had proscribed under the name of *Egotism* (an energetic word with which they enriched our language). Pascal goes yet farther, he pretends "*that a Christian ought to avoid altogether the use of the pronoun I; that the slightest obtrusion of personal importance is alike incompatible with Christian humility and the laws of politeness.*" It must be acknowledged, that in this respect at least, we have never been less religious or less polite than at present.

During a long time, the revolution has been the emissary which we have charged with the full weight of our iniquity: of all the evils for which it has been made responsible, that of having augmented the number of egotists, has been, perhaps, the most fully confirmed. Those who acted in it, as well as those who suffered, seem to have learned, as a general maxim, that the most certain resource is that which is found in one's self; and the devotion best recompensed, that which we cherish towards our own persons. How many, at this time profess aloud that they regulate their conduct on this ungenerous principle, which many indeed, have acted on before, but which at least, they did not so openly avow.

I was once acquainted with a M. d'Argeville, an officer of dragoons, who lived very pleasantly among his comrades, without any other secret, than that of neither conferring or receiving a favour from any person whatever. Nature had not made him an egotist; he had become so, by system, in consequence of two or three unlucky adventures, which appeared to him to have equally originated in the integrity of his heart: he had lost his best friend, by having rendered him an essential service in lending him an essential sum, which he was unable to reclaim but by quarrelling with the borrower. In attempting to arbitrate one affair of honour, he made himself two; from one of his adversaries he received a wound which confined him six months to his bed; he killed the other, and was, in consequence, obliged to quit his country for two years. Some other misfortunes of the same kind had sufficed to extinguish his natural benevolence: in order to destroy these feelings, he had adopted principles to which he so firmly adhered, that he would neither have lent a crown to his brother, nor have uttered a word to save the lives of two of his comrades: he frequently repeated that, "*in this world it was necessary to centre oneself within a circle of not more than two feet diameter.*"

It is painful to reflect that one of our most celebrated wits and distinguished philosophers, —that Fontenelle, whose long life must, of all others, have furnished a train of experience in

the human heart; it is painful, I say, to think that this so celebrated man, was tainted, or rather contaminated with egotism, to such a degree as to have sanctioned, under his name, that anti-social aphorism, *that there is no perfect happiness without a callous heart and a good stomach.* This expression, which might have escaped the ingenuity of an egotist, or even the caprice of a philanthropist, could not have acquired a dangerous authority, except in the mouth of a man whose brilliant and fortunate career supplies in the opinion of many persons but a long commentary on it.

Among the famous egotists of the last age, we cannot forget the Marchioness Deffant, who during the last month of the life of her old friend, the President Henault, passed all her evenings with him.—She made her appearance at Madame de Forcalquier's; every one concluded that the president was better, but on his health being inquired after, "*Alas!*" said she, "*I had the misfortune to lose him this morning, or you would not have seen me here.*"

Every one knows the reply made by Colardeau, when dying, to his friend Barthe, who requested his opinion on his comedy of the Selfish Man, which he came to read at his pillow, "*You may add an excellent trait to the character of your principal personage,*" replied Colardeau, "*say that he obliged an old friend, on the eve of his death, to hear him read a five-act comedy.*"

I should compose a book, instead of a paper, did I attempt to trace, even in outline, the different portraits of egotism, for which society, through all its gradations, supplies me with models. I shall confine myself to one only, which I have accurately observed, and which appears to me to have attained perfection, or rather to have reached the ideal deformity of a defect, to which I know few vices which are not preferable.

Saint-Chaumont has arrived at the age of forty, without having formed an idea, or felt one sentiment estranged from his own person. In order to give full force to that expression,

Que le *Moi* dans sa bouche a plus d'une syllable.

Myself, with him, exceeds a single word.

He always takes care to couple it with *I; I, myself*, begin all his phrases; he knows no evils but those which *he* feels, no gratifications but those which *he* enjoys: if he is abroad, and it rains? the shower, he is convinced, falls only for him; is he on foot in the streets? he cannot conceive why carriages are tolerated; is he in a carriage? he complains of the rigour of the police, which does not allow foot-passengers to be run over with impunity; all his actions, thoughts, and opinions, are so many answers to those questions which he continually addresses to himself: "*What inconvenience will it occa-*

sion me? What advantage shall I derive from it? In what way can it serve me?"

Saint-Chaumont has, in the world, the reputation of an honest man: what then is the value of his word? One of his friends came to advertise him, one evening, that he should have occasion for him at seven the next morning, on an affair in which his entire fortune, his happiness, and that of his family, depended. The appointment is precise, and one half-hour of delay will annihilate all his hopes. Saint-Chaumont promises to be exact; but he never gets up until nine o'clock: he runs a risk of discomposing himself for the whole day, by an infringement of any of his habits. At eight he is still in bed: his friend arrives, presses, conjures him; he rises, but he never goes out fasting; his physician has interdicted him from it, on penalty of a frightful head-ache: he must fortify himself against the cold; puts on wrappers, double waistcoats, and stuffs his ears with cotton; he sets out, gets into a coach, arrives; the affair was terminated two hours ago; the ruin of his friend is completed. "What!" says Saint-Chaumont, "it was really a great pity to make one get up so early!"

Last year we were visiting together in the country; one evening, the son of the master of the house, taking a walk in the park, fell into an empty well, the top of which they had neglected to cover, and dislocated his ancle. The gardener announced the accident; some ran to assist the young man, others prepared a mattress

in the saloon to receive him. On this mattrass Saint-Chaumont sunk down in a swoon; several pressed round him, administered hartshorn, and his spirits began to revive. Some one, who mistook the cause of this fainting-fit, thought to tranquillise him by assuring him that the accident was less serious than had been imagined, that the youth had not broken his leg. "*Very good,*" said he, "*but I am not the less shocked at the danger I have run; I was yesterday evening walking in the same place, and the very same accident might have happened to myself.*"

These two characteristic traits of a perfect egotist, render it unnecessary that I should exhibit him in less important particulars; at table, either at home or abroad, always helping himself to the best dishes; at the play, always occupying the best place in the box, without regard to age, rank, or even sex; in the drawing-room, standing in front of the chimney, monopolising the fire, perfectly regardless of the inconvenience occasioned by its privation to others. At whatever time, in whatever attitude, we observe him, we find him always occupied with himself when awake, and dreaming of himself when asleep.

If my readers desire to see a finished picture of egotism, they will find it in the following fable, by M. Arnault, in which a most ingenious comparison is expressed with great conciseness, energy, and elegance:

LE ÇOLIMACON.

Sans amis, comme sans famille,
Ici-bas vivre en étranger;
Se retirer dans sa coquille
Au signal du moindre danger;
S'aimer d'une amitié sans bornes,
De soi seul emplir sa maison;
En sortir, suivant la saison,
Pour faire à son prochain les cornes;
Signaler ses pas destructeurs
Par les traces les plus impures;
Outrager les plus tendres fleurs
Par ses baisers ou ses morsures;
Enfin chez soi, comme en prison,
Vieillir, de jour en jour plus triste:
C'est histoire de l'Égotiste,
Et celle du Colimaçon.

THE SNAIL.

With friends, with family unblest,
Condemn'd alone to dwell;
If danger's least alarm molest,
He shrinks within his cell.

Sole tenant of his narrow walls;
His self-esteem profound;
He issues when the season calls
To join the insects round.

Impure his track, he winds his way
Among the shrubs and flowers;
The fairest his selected prey,
He taints them or devours.

Grown old, like captive mop'd and wan,
Forlorn at home he lies:
Thus, snail-like, lives the selfish man,
And like a snail he dies.

In this charming fable, every line is a thought; a thing worth remarking at a time when ideas are so unusual and verses so abundant.

No. XII.—*26th Feb.* 1814.

THE PAINTER'S STUDY.

. . . . Nec desilies, imitator in artium.
Hor. Ars. Poet.

Do not pique yourself on too scrupulous an imitation.

The word *Artist* is of modern creation, at least in the sense in which it is employed at present; it is useful and convenient; it applies extremely well, and generally, to all professors of any art whatever; but in these latter times we have strangely perverted it. In the course of a revolution which tended to equalise, or rather to annihilate all distinctions, it has been made a synonyme to the term *artisan:* it now serves, by courtesy, to designate the condition of a multitude of persons, who have not the slightest pretensions to it. M. Gérard is a painter, M. Houdon is a sculptor, M. Méhul is a musician, M. Talma is a tragedian; Messrs. so and so, the decorators of Chinese recesses, the third violin in the orchestra of l'Ambigu, the noble father of the troop of Montargis, are all *artists*. It is useless to dispute merely about words; but when *words* have a dangerous influence on *things*, it becomes necessary to re-

strict their application. The facility with which this title of artist is conceded to all who arrogate it, contributes more than we imagine to augment that crowd of young people of both sexes, who after having vegetated some years in the classes and painting-rooms of the Academy, leave it with a title which they choose rather to retain without profit and without honour, than to descend from by applying themselves to some useful occupation, better suited to their abilities. Thence comes that multitude of daubers, whose framed and glazed specimens diversify the arcades of the Palais-Royal; thence that swarm of unfortunates who are obliged to skulk in the suburbs, who speculate on the sale of a romance or a waltz, and who attend the season for balls, of which they compose the orchestra, as their sole resource to pay their lodgings, and discharge their tailor's bill.

I met the other day, at the sale of M. de L———'s pictures, the young St. Charles, the son of an eminent watchmaker. He recollected and accosted me. In reminding me that I had formerly introduced him to M. Vien, he brought to my recollection that the restorer of the French school had often assured me that this young man could never succeed in painting: and that I had more than once strongly recommended him to betake himself to that employment which had rendered his father respectable. Tormented by his ambition for the vocation of an *artist*, he paid no regard to my advice, and took at his own expense a journey

to Rome: whence he had returned about four years. Judging, probably, that the meanness of his habit could give me no very brilliant idea of his finances, he took great pains to assure me that he was the most fortunate man in the world, and made me promise to come and see him.

I found him in one of the garrets of the Palais-Royal; he presented his wife to me, a young villager, he informed me, from the province *de Caux*. I confess, I could not help forming a different conclusion respecting her origin. Every thing, in this miserable retreat, bore the appearance of disorder and of poverty, which a varnish of luxury rendered still more insupportable. To divert my attention from the noise and sight of a couple of dirty children, who were fighting with a dog in this small chamber, which served at once for a kitchen and a study, the artist requested me to remark the magnificent coup-d'œil which he *should enjoy*, he said, if some good incendiary (by disencumbering him of an opposite house of seven stories high) would remove the only obstacle to the finest prospect imaginable. He at last shewed me his pictures and designs, neither of which contradicted the prediction of M. Vien; all, nevertheless, were chefs-d'œuvre in the eyes of their author, who only waited for a peace with England, to transport this precious collection to London, where he anticipated a certain fortune. "In the mean time," he said, "he lived as an artist, proudly strug-

gling with the inconvieniences which sometimes assailed him, and submitting without shame to the necessity which even obliged him to degrade his noble pencil, by painting the petty figure of a travelling lemonade-merchant, or the plebeian profile of a toyman of the gallery *des Bons Enfans*." It was now too late to attack his resolution. What, therefore, could I do better than commend his philosophy?

On quitting this artist, I went to visit a painter, in order to measure at one coup-d'œil the immense distinction between them. M. N——, after having gained the grand prize, and made the tour of Rome, where the finest models had matured his talents, has returned to his own country, and announced himself by a chef-d'œuvre. This young man is gifted with one of those intellects, glowing with genius and pregnant with imagination, whence issue those poetic creations which take possession of the heart, without even appealing to the ordeal of the judgment. His rivals applauded his success, the government encouraged him by giving him important commissions, and the prettiest women of Paris, to whose preference he is not insensible, contend for the privilege of supplying models for his pencil.

M. N—— resides in the faubourg St. Germain, in a small house, which he has himself decorated with great taste, and of which his painting-room occupies the principal part: it is truly a sanctuary of the arts, where disorder reigns without confusion: canvasses and sketch-

es are disposed on the easels, beautiful casts after the antique, among which we recognise the torso of the Vatican, the heads of the Apollo and of the Antinous, are ranged in gradation; armour, and modern arms, with draperies of different kinds are thrown on a circle of chairs, in the midst of which stand two long figures, one representing a knight of the fourteenth century, armed at all points; the other, an elegant French-woman of the nineteenth, in a costume which combines the grace of the antique with the charm of modern fashion. A small library, supported by Egyptian pedestals, contains two or three hundred select volumes, among which we remark, in the first range, the works of Leonardo da Vinci, of the Abbé Dubos, of Winkelman, of Montfaucon, the ruins of Herculaneum, &c. Delille takes his place in his quality of pictorial poet: and Le Sage, Fielding, Richardson, and La Bruyere, are not forgotten, as the painters of manners.

The historic painters of France have disdained, during a long time, to exercise their talents on *portrait*. M. N. does not consider himself degraded in exercising that branch of the art which enhanced the reputation of Vandyke, of Titian, and even of Raphael himself. His study was filled with portraits, the greater number of which remained for a partial re-touching of the draperies, a part of his employment which he consigns to his pupils.

The first which attracted my attention represented a member of the mayorality, whose fi-

gure was not decidedly ignoble, nor announced a man absolutely imbecile; the original of this portrait had come to town for the purpose of obtaining the post of a Counsellor of the prefecture, and he was anxious to compensate the loss of his silver wand, by the addition of an embroidery of blue silk to his cloak; moreover, as Monsieur the Counsellor was willing to perpetuate to his family the remembrance of his former dignity, he hit on the expedient of having his scarf painted on the back of the elbow chair in which he was sitting.

"This subject," said M. N———, shewing me another portrait, "has occasioned me excessive embarrassment. The original is a foreign petit-maitre, whom two or three simpletons have rendered popular in Paris, during some weeks past. We have had eight grand consultations to discover some method of exhibiting at once the order of St. Wladimir and the Chamberlain's key, with which this hyperborean Lovelace is decorated. The problem, you will allow, must have been sufficiently difficult; since one is worn behind, on the left side—the other in front, on the right: I have decided the difficulty, as you see, by placing before my model, a glass *à la Psyche*, which presents him at the same time in a double aspect."

While we were engaged in this amusing review, the clock struck twelve; the hour at which our Apelles commenced his sittings.

I was about to withdraw: "Wait a moment," said he, "I expect some originals who are worth knowing; you may have the pleasure of seeing and hearing them, by stepping into this cabinet, from which you may retire whenever you please, by the door which leads to the little stair-case. —A carriage stops at the door; those are the models of a family-picture, the head of which is M. le Baron Coquard de la Grivaudière; I shall say nothing to you, either of his rank or his talents: hear, see, and judge for yourself."

From the centre of my observatory, I saw advance, or rather roll into the room, an immense rotundity, surmounted with a human head; this was M. the Baron: the Baroness was one of those personages who would not disparage a company of grenadiers. Her figure was regularly insipid; her arms bony, her feet large, and her bosom flat. Nevertheless, I should not be surprised if she passed in the world for a fine woman. Her two children were of sufficiently amiable appearance, being but slightly equipped with the masculine graces of their mother.

"Here we are," said the Baron Coquard (as he gave his *witchourat* and his lady's tippet to a servant in a bran-new livery) "but be quick Sir; when people pay as I do, they have a right to expect to be served both well and expeditiously."—"Let us set about composing the groupe," replied M. N——"have you any particular ideas on this subject?"—"Ideas! I have a thousand; but I give the preference to the

most simple of them. You shall paint me in my park, fishing with a rod and line in my great basin; and you must take particular care to shew one of the wings of my house. I shall bring you a plan of it; but, above all things, let the water I am fishing in be as clear as crystal; I have a particular reason for it." "And you, Madam—" "I wish to be painted at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, at the moment of an eruption, explaining that inexplicable phenomenon to my children—'tis an historical fact."—"Very well, but how am I to paint in the same picture Madam, the Baroness at the foot of Vesuvius, and Monsieur the Baron on the border of his basin, in his estate at Brie? We have, like the dramatists, our three unities, and that of place is what we are least permitted to violate."—"With good perspective," replied M. Couquard, "you may do any thing. Make what arrangements you please, I shall not give up my mansion."—"And I stick to Vesuvius," said the lady. "I see but one mode of reconciling these things; I will paint Madame in a summer-house (on the brink of the canal in which Monsieur is fishing) and shewing to her children a coloured print of Vesuvius, in which they shall be all three represented conformably to historical fact." "Very good!" cried the Baron, "folks will be puzzled to make out the meaning of it!"

After half an hour's sitting, which enabled the painter to prepare his sketch, the financial baron departed, resigning his place to an au-

thor, who sat for his portrait, in order to have it engraved as a frontispiece to an ancient edition of Plutarch, which he had encumbered with insignificant annotations. This ridiculous pedant, well known for his fatuity and his *outrecuidance*, felt convinced that his image in copper-plate would have a marvellous effect at the head of an assemblage of illustrious men.

A young lady now made her appearance, whom I should have taken for the model of Gérard's Psyche, if the ravishing expression of her large blue eyes had not apprised me that love had already passed through them. I could not cease admiring the delicacy of her figure, the blooming freshness of her complexion, a thousand graces already formed, and others just expanding. The painter surpassed himself; the portrait, now nearly finished, approached the perfection of the original. After this beautiful creature had sate some minutes:—"My husband," said she with a timid and embarrassed air, "intends coming to-morrow to fetch my portrait; I request, Sir, that you will find some pretext to detain it, and make a copy of it, which I design" (her voice became less firm)—"For a friend whom you wish to surprise?" continued the painter rapidly.—"Yes, Sir, one of my earliest friends."—"We are accustomed to these little secrets of friendship; and on your's, you may be perfectly easy."—"I request, Sir," added she, with more confidence, "that the copy be so like the original portrait that it may be mistaken for it."—"It will be

mistaken for it, Madam; I engage it will be mistaken for it." M. N—— uttered these last words with a peculier smile, and a blush in the young lady's cheek, explained to me the malignity of it.

The other personages who succeeded to the sitting-chair, were without physiognomy: I soon left them to contemplate the lay-figures.

No. XIV.—*12th March*, 1814.

THE NEWSMONGERS.

Pereant qui nostra ante nos dixerunt.
PROV. Lat.

Perish those who anticipate us in telling the news.

Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.
PERSIUS, Sat. 1.

It is nothing to know a thing, unless others are sensible that we know it.

ONE of the most general and whimsical propensities of the human mind, is the avidity we have for hearing and disseminating news:

Est natura hominum novitatis avida*.

I recollect to have heard it said by one of the noblest and most enterprising characters of the last age, "I must have adventures, no matter whether bad or good; I can never sleep contentedly unless I am in the Gazette."

* Human nature is eager for novelties.

How many persons, with some sincerity, might make the same avowal! This curiosity, without object, and usually without profit, exalted in some people to almost an habitual mania, constitutes that race of newsmongers, which it is necessary, in order to distinguish accurately, to divide into three classes. The Park Newsmongers, the Tavern Newsmongers, and the Newsmongers of the drawing-room.

Les nouvellistes de jardin, de Café, et de Salon.

The first of which, the celebrated *Metra*, and the Abbé *Trente—Mille-Hommes*, were formerly the prototypes, occupies itself exclusively with politics.

The second embraces politics, and the literature and news of its department. The third forms the most eminent class of newsmongers; its *forte* is every thing, and its jurisdiction without limits.

Among the numerous successors of those two accomplished *Cracovistes*, whom I have just mentioned, one of the most distinguished is the indefatigable Rigolet. He is up before seven in the morning; after having interrogated his milk-woman respecting the force and march of the enemy, he hastens to the Tuileries to inspect the journals: these he reads from one end to the other, very frequently without perceiving that he is but repeating the text of what he read in the Moniteur the preceding evening. The two following hours he passes

at the *Place du Carousel*, waiting the arrival of the Couriers: by the gallop of the horse, by the very attitude of its rider, he has already divined the nature of the despatches, of which he speaks forthwith, with as much assurance as if they had been addressed to himself. His ear catches a distant report; it must be the cannon of the *Invalides!* fortunately the wind blows another way, scarcely permitting him to hear it, he therefore still retains the hope of being able to recount the victory, announced by this signal, as a special piece of intelligence. He now proceeds to the Italian boulevart, to expatiate with two other profound politicians, who rendezvous there every day at the same hour. Here they arrange the principal facts which they are to put in circulation during the day; and in order to avoid the geographical errors, which such gentlemen frequently commit, they are careful to consult one of those maps of the theatre of war, which are sold in the print-shops. The crowd surrounds them, and Rigolet, a toothpick in his hand, and his spectacles on his nose, continues, nevertheless, to point out the points occupied by the armies, and the position which each of them ought to take up, in order to avoid an inevitable defeat. I was a witness some days since, of one of those military dispositions, and could not help hinting to General Rigolet, that he had drawn up his army in order of battle in a river, which he had mistaken for one of our great roads. Their materials collected, and their memory well

charged with the names of towns and villages, of army-corps and generals, whom they defeat and disperse with the greatest facility, our three newsmongers in chief separate and take their stations, one at the Luxembourg, another at the Palais-Royal, and the third at the Tuileries. This last post, the most important of the three, is confided to the redoubtable Rigolet. At about two o'clock, no matter what weather, we are sure of finding him at the *Petite-Provence*, in the midst of a circle of old politicians, uttering his random and ridiculous discourses on the interests of the belligerents, on the cossacks, the allies, and the levy-en-masse, and figuring on the table with his umbrella stick, the dispositions of a battle which must certainly take place in a few days, and of which he is the man to announce beforehand all the particulars, the number of prisoners, of killed, wounded, and missing. Notwithstanding the respect in which his decisions are held, doubts are sometimes suggested as to the authority of his information. On such occasions, nothing can be more ridiculous than the tone of superiority he affects, and the sapient and mysterious air with which he exhibits a letter from his son, an army commissary, "who ought," (adds he, with a smile of disdain and irony) "to know the movements of the army which he provisions." If this irrefragable authority does not immediately silence his opponent, the president Rigolet puts up his spectacles; coldly salutes the company, and marches off, to the great mor-

tification of this auditory of fly-catching politicians, who listen to him with their ears pricked up and their mouths open.

Before he returns home to dinner, he never neglects to call at the Exchange, and in the state of the stocks, whether high or low, he always finds fresh confirmation of his intelligence, and a new argument to support his conjectures.

I stept by accident, the other night, into a coffee-house at the foot of Pont-Neuf, which I had never entered before: (I say it with shame, I, who from taste still more than habit, pretend to know Paris, at least as well as the late Hurtaud, the lexicographer, whose dictionary, whatever Louis XV. might have said of it, *is a very incomplete inventory of this capital.*) The *Café Manoury*, (so it is called) retains something of the Gothic, which could not but have an agreeable effect to a man of my age; here is neither bronze, gilding, nor crystal; instead of granite or mahogany stands, there are large oaken tables, with slabs of red marble, and the good banquets of the Arras tapestries, furnish as heretofore, the interior of the apartment; the bar is occupied by a corpulent man, who by his dexterity in breaking sugar, seems to have passed at least twenty years in that employment. The excellent coffee, served with great attention in cups of old china, which, notwithstanding their thickness, contained a considerable quantity—altogether contributed to transport me back to the days of my youth, and the

people who surrounded me, were calculated to prolong this pleasing illusion.—I thought at one moment that all the old politicians of the arbour of *Cracovie*, of the great alley of the *Palais-Royal*, and the cellars of *Procope*, had risen to rendezvous at the Café *Manoury*, where I recognised to my great surprise, the originals of three little designs which I had bought in the morning of Martinet.

Being tired of listening to disquisitions on the war, I quitted the politician's corner, and approached a table where five persons were listening to a sixth, with an eagerness of curiosity which exhibited itself in their figures, in traits more or less ludicrous. The oratorical newsmonger was a furrier living in the *Rue Bertin-Poirée;* before I had been advertised of it by one of my neighbours, I had divined his profession, which indicated itself in his *witchourat* of cotton velvet, doubled with an old fox-skin fur, and in his little sable muff, which betrayed the marks, of at least, fifteen years service. This parochial newsmonger related without once stopping, (and without any other transition than the words, "*you bring to my recollection*," addressed to persons who had not opened their mouths,) an accident which had happened to one of his lodgers, who had nearly been suffocated by the fumes of charcoal; an adventure which had occurred the same night in a house in the *Rue de la Monnaie*, where the principal lodger returning home to escort a party of ladies to the Café Conti, had mistaken

for a robber, and given in charge to the watch, a young man, a shopkeeper in the neighbourhood, who had come to present a bill to his wife.

Our furrier afterwards entertained the little assembly with the organisation of the national guard, in which he was about to be promoted to the rank of a serjeant; with the arrest of a young person who had furnished an apartment on credit, on the promise of a lieutenancy of dragoons; with the bankruptcy of a dealer in earthenware, in Poulies Street, who had nearly three hundred pounds on his books; with a duel fought with swords by two water-carriers, and finally with an account of a sermon to be preached by a canon of Notre-Dame at St. Germains-l'Auxerrois during the *passion week*.

Let us leave these bourgeois newsmongers, whose insipid absurdities have so long supplied food for our theatres, and celebrate a more important personage of this kind; my readers have already glanced their eyes on Cleon. This perhaps is the most communicative creature in the world: the pleasure of hearing and of telling something new, is in his estimation, the greatest gratification which it is possible for a human being to enjoy: he scribbles forty notes a day, runs from anti-chamber to anti-chamber, from toilette to toilette: he goes from the Tuileries to the Exchange, from the Exchange to the Tortoni Coffee-house, and makes more noise in the evening, in a saloon, with the news he has collected, than the public crier in announcing

two victories. Like a certain quadruped, to whom, in his voice and ears, he likewise bears some resemblance, he finds an aliment in every thing,

Et brouté egalement le chardon et la rose.

Brouzing alike the thistle and the rose.

He knows of no evil but those things with which you are already acquainted, nor of any good but that of which it is in his power to inform you. He acquaints you with the same satisfaction that a province is exposed to famine, or that it is enriched by an extraordinary abundance; that Lima has been swallowed by an earthquake, or that new islands have been discovered in the ocean: he brings you with the same eagerness, the news, that your only daughter is safely brought to bed, or that your son has been wounded in the last battle. He never fails to be at the first representation of a new piece, and hurries out before the conclusion, in order to be the first to announce its success or condemnation. After having exhausted all the topics of public interest, and displayed all his letters respecting them, Cleon commences the chapter of anecdotes: "Madame N—— is going to take the waters, for a complaint on which her physician himself is afraid to pronounce decidedly. A court intrigue, (of which he was undoubtedly the instrument) will shortly involve a charming woman in insur-

mountable ridicule.—A literary man has communicated to him, in confidence, a Satire like one of Juvenal, of which, Cleon furnished him with the principal traits. A celebrated dancer has changed since yesterday, the cypher on her carriage: it is feared that she will finish at last, by exchanging it for a *number*.—A woman has been delivered of a child with four hands, in a house where a famous critic lies on his death-bed, &c. &c."

Next to public events, the kind of intelligence which Cleon most delights to traffic in, is the reputation of women; in three evenings, this drawing-room Cossack will find the means to sacrifice, without mercy, the reputation of thirty mothers of families.

But in a deficiency of other victims, this magnanimous newsmonger does not hesitate to acquaint you with the good turns done him by his own wife; with the reasons which induce him to expedite the marriage of his daughter, and with the indiscretion which has occasioned him the loss of his best friend; in fine, the idea of his own death would not be at all afflicting to him, if he could find some means which would enable him to disseminate the mournful tidings of it himself.

This character of the newsmonger, which has not yet been introduced on our stage, has been sketched in the excellent comedy of the School for Scandal, by Sheridan, the English Orator. In this piece, two newsmongers relate to the friends of an injured husband, that

he, instead of compromising his conjugal dishonour by a legal process, has fought a duel with his wife's gallant: the fact is undoubted; both them attest it; but the one believes that the affair was determined with swords; the other, more positive, insists that it was decided with pistols. He gives by way of proof, the details of the encounter, which took place in an apartment. The husband received his adversary's bullet in the middle of the thorax, while his ball, less dexterously aimed, after missing the lover, struck a little bronze statue of Shakspeare, passed out at the window, and wounded a postman who was coming up to the house with a letter from Northampton. These gentlemen had only made a trifling mistake, no such combat had taken place; they are set right, by the husband, who assures them of it himself, in addressing to the newsmongers of the l'Ecole de Médisance, this line of our *Menteur*—

Les gens que vous tuez se portent assez bien.

The persons you kill are perfectly well.

No. XV.—23*d April*, 1814.

THE DEATH OF THE HERMIT.

Vixi et quem dederat cursum fortuna peregi.

I have lived; I have finished the task which nature assigned me.

The moment is come. I feel that I shall not survive this day, and I avail myself of an effect of my fever, which supplies my blood and spirits with a degree of activity, to trace the last lines which will fall from my trembling hand.

In that hour when we must resign whatever has been bestowed on us, when no source of satisfaction remains to us, but that which results from the good we have done, or which we may yet be capable of doing, I shall let no thought escape which my feelings may have carelessly suggested, and which has not been sanctioned by reflection.

In drawing, about a year since, the painful picture of the departure of *la Chaine*, I spoke of *a young man, of prepossessing appearance, whose eyes were suffused with tears, and whose muscles were in convulsive agitation.* This young man, whom I may now be permitted to

designate more explicitly, was named *Rateau*, and was formerly a subaltern in the Parisian Guard. He was implicated in the conspiracy of *Mallet*, an attempt, the avowed object of which, did not justify its temerity.

Condemned to a worse punishment than death, he was sentenced for life to the infamy of the gallies. Let me be allowed to exert a dying voice in his favour, and to invoke in his behalf the beneficence, the justice of a prince, whose benefits preceded his presence, and whom heaven restored to his country to repair every injury, and to alleviate every misfortune.

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" *Wednesday*, 22*d April*, 1814.

" The Hermit of la Chaussée-d'Antin is no more: at four yesterday evening, he closed his eyes in the sleep of eternity, having attained the age of seventy-three. As the Hermit has become by accident a public character, and as his Essays have had considerable success in the world, I considered it my duty, in quality of kinsman and executor, to give some account to his friends, (among whom he always felt pleased to reckon his readers) of the last moments of a relative, whose memory I have so much reason to cherish and revere. I imagined likewise, that these details, in which his characteristic discernment may be so clearly recognised,

would not be misplaced at the end of his speculations on manners.

"I was less alarmed than I ought to have been at the progress of a malady, of which my uncle himself had informed the public, and the assurances of the physician had contributed, equally with my own observations, to disarm any apprehension as to the results. The Hermit spoke of his approaching dissolution with so much freedom, nay, sometimes with so much gaiety; I remarked so little alteration in his features, so little diminution of his moral or physical faculties, that I persisted in believing that the idea which exclusively occupied him, was nothing more than the text of one of his subsequent Essays.

"It was only on Sunday last, on finding at his bed-side a notary, to whom he was dictating his will, that I found myself assailed with presages, the impression of which, I could not controul my feelings sufficiently to conceal—"My dear Ernest, (said he with a smile full of sweetness) every thing surprises you, because you do not prepare yourself for any thing: call to mind the judgment you once passed on Madame Lineuil,* and do not give way to immoderate grief, because you have flattered yourself with hopes which it was unreasonable to indulge. To die, is one of the clauses in the contract of life, and I have been fortunate that my

* In a preceding number of the Hermit de la Chaussée d'Antin.

hour for its fulfilment has been somewhat procrastinated, since it has enabled me, before I close my eyes for ever, to witness the dawning of a day, which appeared to be finally extinguished, or which, at least, seemed destined never more to rise for me. If nature had left to my own choice the moment for paying this debt, could I have selected a better? I have seen, contrary to all probability, the accomplishment of that grand restoration which is preparing new ages of prosperity for my country; I enjoy in anticipation all the advantages reserved for my successors, with the certainty of not becoming a witness of the last struggles of ambition, folly, and intrigue; struggles which may yet be made to retard the re-establishment of an order of things where probity and merit will constitute the only claims to the estimation of the country and the favour of the prince. I admire as a man, the singular example of magnanimity displayed by an Alexander, who may truly be denominated the great, and it is only as a Frenchman that I have some regrets in contemplating events which militate against the glory of my country, whose immediate consequences, perhaps will not be unmingled with mortification, and whose advantages will not be reaped without more than one sacrifice."

"The physician arrived at the moment when my uncle, animated by what he called his prophetic spirit, began his course of predictions: he imposed silence on the sick man, and obliged him to allow his body some repose, forbid-

ding him to exercise his head. The Hermit entrusted me with some billets to deliver, and requested me to return early the next morning. It was in vain that I insisted on passing the night with him; he would not permit it.

"In the morning, notwithstanding all my diligence, I found myself preceded in my visit by Madame L * * * my uncle's most intimate friend, of whom he has frequently made mention in his Essays: her presence appeared to have reanimated him, and my hopes began to revive.

"The morning was serene: the Hermit received several visits, read the journals, and introduced himself a discussion on public affairs, the consideration of which had exclusively occupied him since the commencement of his illness.

"It will readily be believed," said he, "that my opinions, at this time, are disinterested, and that my wishes are unmingled with ideas of personal advantage. There can be no repose, no possible happiness for France, but in the bosom of that monarchichal constitution which Montesquieu has described with so much eloquence, and whose advantages are practically exemplified in a neighbouring nation." The Chevalier de N—— contended against this proposition, and spoke in favour of a *pure*, that is to say, an absolute monarchy, in the tone of a man who repeats a lesson, half learned, and who imagines himself supporting principles while he is but defending his prejudices. 'Ah! M.

le Chevalier,' replied the Hermit to him, 'for heaven's sake, do not be more *a royalist than the King*, it is he himself who requests it of you —your actions and your exhortations will be vain, the age will take its course, and we have no alternative but to go along with it; you will never again be able to persuade any one, that despotism, even under a good prince, is not the worst of all governments. In proportion as the French cherish the Bourbons, whom the bounty of heaven has restored to them, they will find a security for their throne, even in the very principles which reversed it: this security can only emanate from a state of things which identifies, in some sort, the nation with the government; which confirms the royal authority, and guarantees public liberty; which places the independence of the tribunals above all fear or influence, and which establishes at the same time the responsibility of ministers and the inviolability of the monarch. Maintain, above all the rest,—maintain, with certain legal restrictions, that liberty of the press, the value of which was sufficiently demonstrated by the pains which Buonaparte took to suppress it. From that day when the right of thinking is repressed, when perhaps a book has no chance of appearing without having been degraded or mutilated by the censor, the debasement of the nation is completed, and tyranny no longer knows a limit: thence we may date that deluge of absurdities, of crimes and illusions with which France has been inundated during ten

years, and which resulted not less from the imbecile credulity of the people, than from the unprincipled audacity of the government. We may apply to its chief, that expression of Luis de Haro, the Spanish ambassador at the conferences of the Pyrenees, when his opinion was asked of Cardinal Mazarin: "*he was a great man,*" replied he, "*but he had a great fault, which was, that he was always endeavouring to deceive every body.*"

"I saw that my uncle had greatly fatigued himself with speaking. Madame L——— made me a sign to withdraw two or three Interlocutors who unmercifully persisted in the dispute; I was obliged to call the doctor to my aid. He entered, saluted the company with a true Hippocratical gravity, approached the sick man, felt his pulse, considered a moment, took a pinch of snuff, and then politely adjourned the assembly, with the exception of Madame L———, myself, the Chevalier, and the doctor himself, whom my uncle detained to dinner.

"The doctor expressed concern. 'Let us not act like children,' said my uncle, 'but express ourselves candidly. It is well understood, doctor, that your theories are defective, and that in spite of you or me, death must soon overtake us; let us then endeavour to submit to this necessity as easily as possible:

"Pompa mortis magis terret quam mors ipsa."*

* The pomp of death is more terrible than death itself.

as you well know. I have yet some days before me, I wish to enjoy them entirely; I shall get the start of you: I request therefore, that you three will not distress yourselves; we will once more dine together.'

"Without attending to the remonstrances of the doctor, he gave orders to have the table laid by his bed-side, and during the repast, apparently in better spirits than we had seen him a long time, he talked of nothing but the miraculous event of the restoration. The good Hermit drank a glass of Burgundy to the health of Louis XVIII, and the peace of the world, and requested me to sing, during the dessert, some spirited couplets which had lately been addressed to him by an amiable correspondent of the *Caveau moderne*.

"Towards six o'clock, my uncle experienced a crisis, which made him request to have a few minutes interview with Madame L——, alone. —'Fifty years since,' said he to her with a smile, 'I should not have ventured to demand this favour, and you would have felt some scruple in granting me a tête-à-tête equally innocent: time has singular privileges.'

"I was recalled in about a quarter of an hour. Madame L——— was seated before an open secretary, and held in her hand a little ebony coffer with steel fastenings; with this she withdrew, endeavouring to stifle her sobbings, and requesting me not to quit the patient until her return.

"This lady had scarcely left the room when my uncle felt another convulsion, less violent, indeed, than the former, but which terminated in a long fainting fit. I called the doctor with a cry of terror; he adopted means to reanimate his patient, and assured me, by way of restoring my spirits, that there was not yet any danger.

"'The doctor is right' added the Hermit, who had heard his last words—'there is no danger. That evil cannot be very formidable, which is the last; and to judge by the trial I am about to make, it is very easy to die. The soul of an old man escapes easily; as it was observed by Seneca, it is already on the brink of his lips. I continue to study myself in these last moments, and it is not without satisfaction that I find myself on the point of ceasing to do what I have been engaged in doing so long. Of what should I complain? Is it not as natural to die as to be born? and do not all the paths of glory and of fortune terminate at this point? In calculating the general term of life, I have lived several years at the expense of others, I have no longer any reasonable wish to form, nor any other prayer to address to heaven than my *Nunc Dimittis*.

"'Adieu, my friend,' continued he, in a faultering voice, 'we shall see each other again to-morrow, I hope, and you will know my last intentions.'

"The next day, Tuesday, the Hermit slept, almost without interruption; during the ensuing night he was agitated, but without pain. On Wednesday morning he wrote some lines—those which I have affixed at the top of this article—I had not closed my eyes during three days, and I slept on a sofa in an adjoining chamber; at about a quarter past four in the afternoon I was awaked by Madame L———, who announced to me, her eyes overflowing with tears, that my uncle was breathing his last; he opened his eyes, turned them on Madame L——— and myself with an expression of ineffable tenderness, turned his head on the pillow, and died.

"Ernest de Lalle."

No. XVI.—30*th April*, 1814.

THE HERMIT'S TESTAMENT.

..... Relinquendem est
MART. Ep. 44.

All must be resigned.

THE custom of making wills must be a very ancient one, if we may judge by that of Noah, cited by Eusebius, the principal ordinances of which have been preserved to us in the chronicle of the Monk Cedrenus. I know that several authors have contended against this right, in virtue of which a man disposes of those possessions which can no longer appertain to him when he shall have ceased to exist. I am of another opinion: it appears to me to be a natural and simple provision, that we should bestow on others the goods we possess, on the condition that they shall not take possession of them until we ourselves have resigned them, and I should have no difficulty in proving that custom is, in this respect, perfectly in unison with reason, justice, and morality. In order, as far as possible, to put this last act of my will out of the reach of that chicane which so fre-

quently introduces itself between two interpretations, I have taken the precaution to make what is called an *olographic* testament; and to ordain as the first clause, that whatever done shall raise the slightest difficulty on all, or any part of the said testament, shall forfeit, by that act, all advantage resulting from benefactions made in his favour. Let such a regulation as this be generally adopted; let it be made an indispensable preamble in all acts of this nature, and we should prevent an infinite number of disgraceful lawsuits, by stopping up the source of them. Seeing that I bequeath to my nephew, as the most valuable part of the inheritance I transmit to him, the reputation of an honest man, which I have laboured to sustain during sixty years, I demand from him that he defend it *unguibus et rostro*, against those associations of bravoes, newly re-organised, who attack and maltreat with indiscriminate ferocity both the dead and the living.

I declare that I quit this world in full expectation that I am entering on a better; a thing which must appear excessively probable, even to the most incredulous, at least if he have passed, like me, seventy-five in this.

Nevertheless, as we ought, as far as we can, to die in peace, even with those with whom we have lived at war, I sincerely ask pardon of all the hypocrites I have unmasked, of all the intriguers I have exposed, and of all the fools I have had the misfortune to laugh at; on my own part, I forgive all who have treated me

with envy, hatred, or ingratitude, and all the libellers who tormented my life as much as they were able; I say nothing of some faithless beauties who caused me much uneasiness in my youth; each has, in turn, forgiven the other.

I require that all my papers, without exception, shall be transmitted to my old friend Charles de L———, who, after having extracted from them what he shall judge worthy of the public, or of a friend's port-folio, shall himself commit the remainder to the flames. By this arrangement I obtain the right of previously disavowing all posthumous memoirs, all inedited correspondence, and other publications of the same kind, which the gleaners of literature may think proper to publish under my name. I should do an injustice to my friend in forbidding, by a special interdict, the publication of my private letters. We have too often protested against that violation of the most sacred of sanctuaries; against that indelicacy which makes the public the confidant of our most secret affections, of the unreserved confessions of two souls expatiating in mutual freedom, to have the slightest apprehension of exciting that scandal after my death, which is attached to the letters of Mirabeau, those of Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, and many others.

I do not forbid the compilation of a complete edition of my works, if the risk be warranted by my bookseller and the public; but I insist that my portrait shall not be placed at the head of it; that is a species of vanity of which cer-

tain persons would have cured me, granting I had been originally infected with it. I please myself with the idea of preventing the journalists from diverting themselves with the Socratic turn of my nose, and the Chinese character of my eyes. If, notwithstanding, the bookseller shall insist on the portrait as an indispensable adjunct, I beg that the artist may be requested to furnish a costume more conformable to my character than my profession. I have often laughed at seeing Bertin sighing forth an elegy in a dragoon's uniform; at Gilbert, wielding the lash of satire, in a bag-wig: and at Buffon explaining the mysteries of Nature, in an embroidered coat and laced ruffles.

I expressly forbid my executor to sell my furniture by auction. I could never contemplete without extreme disgust that eager crowd of persons whom a notice affixed to a piece of carpet has drawn into a house of mourning, into the midst of a family in tears, in order to dispute for the spoils of the dead. In consequence, I direct my nephew to divide between my servant Paul and Mrs. Choquet, my housekeeper, such of my old moveables, as he may not reserve for his own use.

I leave to my nephew in succession, as I received it from my uncle, the Prior *d'Arnay-tières*, my large arm-chair, with morocco cushions, which he is not to banish from his dressing-room, on the penalty of insulting the memory of his forefathers, in giving himself the habit of reposing on it an hour or two every

day, he will be continually reminded of some old ideas of probity and morality attached to it, by which, as occasion serves, he may regulate his actions.

I recommend equally to the piety of my legatee, the eighteen family portraits which I bequeath to him. Many of them are from the the hands of great masters; there are two by Mignard, three by Rigaud, one by Raoux, and four by Latour. If my grand nephew should ever be tempted, in an hour of necessity, to put up his ancestors to sale, I recommend him to read over a certain scene in the School for Scandal, which, perhaps, may induce him to alter his resolution.

I give to the wife of my friend Charles de L——, my portrait at length, which she has frequently demanded of me, and which I was determined to refuse while living; for this reason, that it is a striking likeness, and a monstrous caricature. Death will efface the ridicule and enhance the value of the resemblance.

Item. I give to Paul all my wardrobe; the articles it contains are so plain that he may wear them without impropriety, and their style is so antique that they may soon become fashionable.

My books are chiefly surcharged with notes, and are neither sufficiently rare nor curious to tempt the amateurs. If my executor should determine on selling them, he will be obliged to treat with the second-hand booksellers; by which means I shall at least escape that biblio-

graphical celebrity, which consists, in having one's name exposed in a collection of catalogues, by the side of those *Filheuls*, *La Ceus*, *Bellangers*, and other illustrious and unknown worthies, who have no other reputation than that of their libraries.

I give to my housekeeper my kitchen furniture; requesting her in return to forgive me for having spoken a little freely of her in a discourse, intituled, *the gossipings of my housekeeper*, which has not yet been published, but which will appear in the last volume of my collection of observations. I give to the said dame Choquet a portrait of the Virgin after Raphael, which she has long coveted, and which, as she has observed a hundred times, will look extremely well at the foot of her bed, between her crucifix and her holy-water pot.

Item. I give her a year's wages.

I wish that no billets should be sent apprising persons of my death; those who are interested in it, will hear of it soon enough; those who are not, have no occasion to hear it at all.

I desire that the ceremony of my funeral may be conducted with the utmost simplicity; that I may be borne directly from my own house to the church, and from the church to my final abode, without stopping the hearse before the theatre *du Vaudeville*, where I recollect to have had a piece brought out twenty years since; nor even before the office of the Gazette de France, where I once took up my literary residence, lest they should command

some one of the establishment to pronounce my funeral oration.

Seeing the instability of our modern cemeteries, and that another has taken possession of the only place in the burying-ground of Montmartre which I had a wish to occupy, I request Dr. N—— to employ some method, supplied by his art, to reduce my body, as promptly as possible to a skeleton, so that I may be admitted, immediately, and without passing through the gradations of the sepulchre, to the catacombs, where I bespoke a place two years since in a walk I took with Madame de Sezanne.—Once there, I am certain I shall not be again dislodged; I have never been fond of removals.

I desire that Paul may remain in my nephew's service, unless he should choose to retire to my farm in Normandy; in either case, I give and bequeath to him a pension of 300 francs, besides 200 francs for mourning, which he may wear in colours, should he like that better.

Item. I give to this good and faithful domestic the time-piece fixed up in my alcove, which he has kept in order during thirty years.

Item. I give to my excellent friend, Charles de L——, in memory of our long friendship, which commenced in India, an engraved ruby, which was presented to me by Hyder Ally, after the invasion of the Carnatic. I have worn it ever since. This memorial will be found attached to my watch chain.

Item. I give to Madame L—— a little black coffer, with steel fastenings, the key of which

has been a long time lost; and I request that she will not open it until the expiration of one year after my decease.

Item. I give to the poor inhabitants of the little town of N——, where I was born, the sum of 1500 francs, which the curate of the place will take the charge of distributing.

My debts discharged, and the provisions of this testament fulfilled, I leave the rest of my estate, real and personal, to my grand nephew Ernest de Lallé, whom I nominate at the same time my executor.

Written and signed by my own hand; enjoying the full exercise of my intellectual faculties, at Paris, in my hermitage of La Chaussée-d'Antin, this 28th of March, 1814.

E. J.

The Hermit of La Chaussée-d'Antin.

THE END.