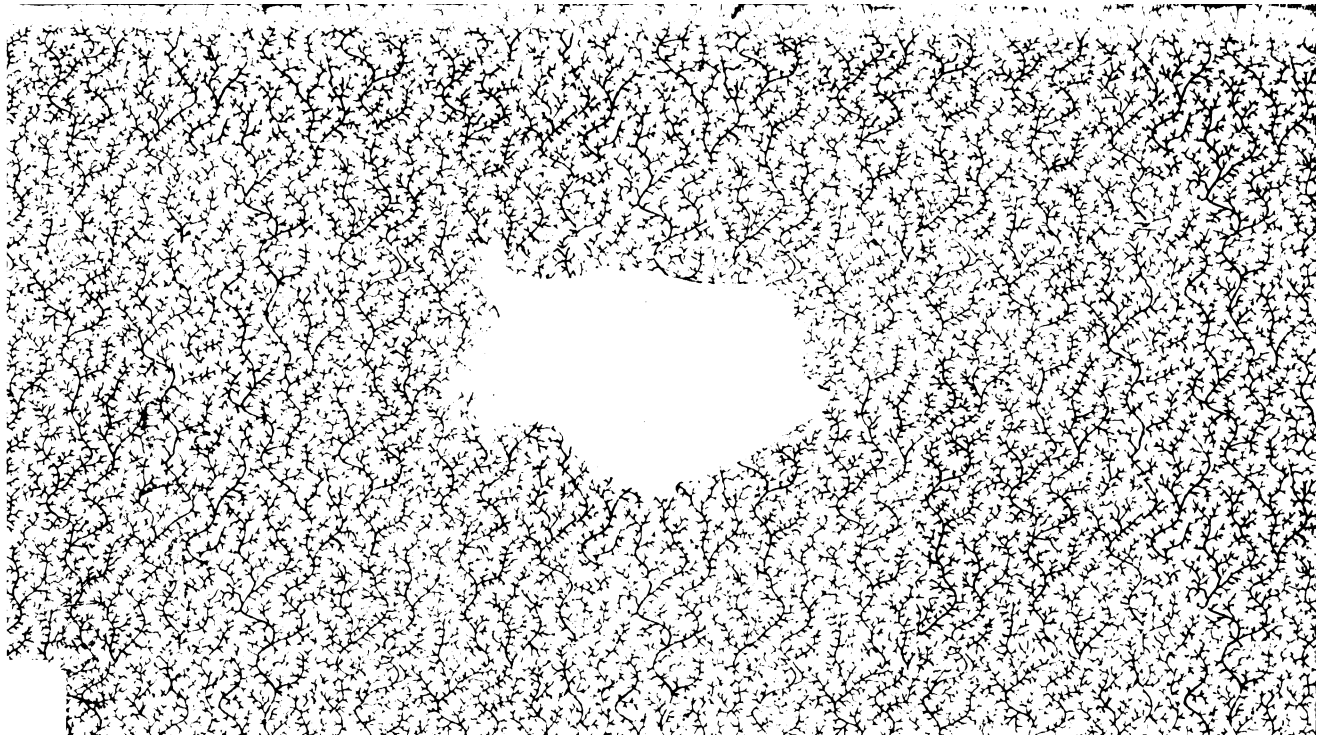

ADVENTURES

OF A

LONDON REVIEWER.

A

SHORT HISTORY

OF THE

ADVENTURES

OF

A LONDON REVIEWER.

By JOHN GORDON
OF SWINEY.

Blot out, correct, insert, refine,
Enlarge, diminish, interline.—SWIFT.

SECOND EDITION.

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DEDICATION.

TO THE LONDON REVIEWERS.

HIGH AND MIGHTY LORDS,

THE Dedicator has been informed, that your High Mightinesses are the States General and Burgomasters of the Republic of Letters; that you succeeded a number of ingenious men, who cleared away, by draining and digging canals, the fog and thick air that covered it, from the third to the sixteenth century, a huge portion of time, and no less than one thousand two hundred years—may God guard us from seeing the like again—that you added to the laudible works of these men, banks and mounds to prevent the ocean of ignorance

from breaking in upon it. It would have added much to the happiness of mankind, High and Mighty Lords, if you had not proceeded farther; but the Dedicator is truly informed, that you have introduced commerce into this republic, and that the merchants of this commerce are, the different booksellers, printers, and compositors, of the cities of London and Westminster. He is also told, from a History of your Republic, elegantly bound in calf, and well lettered in gold, that you have an army to protect this commerce, and that the soldiers of this army are, stationers, paper-makers, book-porters, packthread pedlars, ink-makers, and sheet-sewers; and that the officers of this army are, authors of various descriptions, such as divines, lawyers, physicians, and as many members of both Houses of Parliament as can find time from the occupations of horse-racing, rout-making, drinking claret, and shuffling cards; that the generals of this army are yourselves, High and Mighty Lords, and that the commander in chief is a London Reviewer. It is unquestionably said, that

this army fought a long battle against the plain understandings of the common readers of the English language, and that you conquered, High and Mighty Lords, in so much, that these readers will not buy, or look at, nor read a book, until you have approved of it. The Dedicator, being wrought up to the highest pitch of admiration at the exploits of this army, has added a few supernumeraries to it, viz. Sir Thomas Lycurgus, a patriot; Dr Skylight, an author and critic; Dr Kilglister, a physician, surgeon, and author; and a butcher's son in Cork, who grew up to an extraordinary size by eating a great deal of marrow when a child; this man's uncle, Bibulus Macquickan, a wine-merchant, of the same place; Samuel Fairletter, a bookseller; Charles Bearskin, a bookseller of a different description; Edward Calfleather, a bookseller's clerk and a punster; George Dreadthunder, an electrician; Andrew Buskinfoot, an old player; Alderman Fatchops, a London merchant; the chieftain Mackbustlekilt, a Scotch Highlander; Doctor Saintbruno and Bishop Exo-

dus, moral writers; Mactacitus, Livison, and Laboricranium, historians; Macirritation, John St Spendthrift, and Anglecato, novel-writers; Stultum Genio, a poet; Glisverbo, a divine; and Smitosh, a political writer.

The Dedicator hopes that your High Mightinesses will allow these good people to pass in review before you, and before such persons as may choose to look at them.

PART I.

BIRTH AND EDUCATION.

THE Reviewer was descended from the old Earls of Castle Pillar, a family of long and lineal descent, of great moderation and dignity: the heads of it did not assume any superiority over their inferiors that was not readily granted to them, for none was asked that they were not well entitled to. The son succeeded the father for many generations in a kind of patriarchal simplicity and rustic hospitality, without pride and ostentation, and with no more magnificence than pleased those who partook of their bounty,—a manner of living that must every where have the best effects in conciliating the good opinion of mankind.

Their descendants, the little family of the Critics, were of a very different description. Proud without fortune, and saucy without merit, they were little respected by their neighbours, who considered them in no other light, than as the apes of such worthy progenitors.

He that has nothing to confer is apt to demand what he has no right to, as he that pays worst is universally known to dun most.

The Reviewer was an only son; yet his father could not afford to pay wages to a preceptor for him alone, for his estate was small, and he was obliged to keep up a kind of taudry imitation of the consequence of the Earl of Castle Pillar. He had three daughters, that he educated at no small expense, with a view to marry them to men considerably above his own degree; for vanity often looks up in matters where pride looks down. Owing to this circumstance he was obliged to send young Critic to the house of a neighbouring clergyman, who was obliged to keep a school from the smallness of his stipend, or rather from

the allowance that was given to him from those who received stipends: this was the plain, honest, laborious curate, Meagremeal.

The curate worked hard in a vineyard, the master of which seldom pruned the vines or pressed the grapes, although he drank of the wine they produced, and exacted the rent of the vineyard; the drudgery of keeping it in order, poor Meagremeal performed with a scrupulous and conscientious exactness, and for which he received yearly £11, 7s. 2d.: with this the curate made a shift to live, for he had no children; these little agreeable and solacing comforts to the rich, but to the poor they are like as many withered limbs rendered useless by disease, but which they must maintain, though at the expense of losing their lives.

His wife was an industrious woman, the daughter of a small Scotch farmer; they drank tea once in the week, generally on Sunday morning, before the curate mounted his horse, in order to preach at a considerable distance; they drank it with a small loaf of bread

and a little butter, and used the economical manner of the Dutch at the forming of their republic, as to the sugar required for it, which was ground down into a small powder, and sprinkled lightly upon the bread and butter.

When Meagremeal's wife, on a Monday morning, bought a joint or piece of meat, after having roasted it, she cut two small slices from the thickest part, which, with two potatoes beat up with the gravy, served them for that day. On Tuesday bread and cheese, with two onions, sent them as a present from the sexton. On Wednesday the piece of meat cold, with hot potatoes, three slices and a half. On Thursday, bread and butter and a little tea, the same as on Sunday morning. On Friday, the joint, eat almost bare, with a cabbage. On Saturday it was cut up into small pieces, bones and all, and warmed up with bread. On Sunday Mrs Meagremeal was invited to dine with the grave-digger; the curate dines where he can, and as near the place where he preaches as he can contrive.

* The Archbishop resides in a palace, travels in a coach, has twenty servants, eats of two courses, has a third served up that nobody eats off; it afterwards dines these idle, insolent, pampered, wanton servants.

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* I travelled in France a few years before the late revolution of that country. In Burgundy, not far from Chalon, we came in the evening to an inn; we went into the kitchen to order some supper: in a room near it we observed from seventeen to twenty servants, at supper; we told the innkeeper that we feared he had not sufficient accommodation for us, as his house was so full. He said, there was but one traveller in his house, a Bishop going from Paris to his diocese, and that all these servants we saw not only belonged to him, but that there were others of a higher degree up stairs along with himself. On hearing this we went into the room to take a closer view of this troop of vicious idleness; we were but a short time there, when a well-dressed, middle-aged man, with a golden-headed cane in his hand, came in; he told them to make ready for departure in the morning, that so many were to ride on horseback, so many in a carriage, others to mount behind; and he delivered his orders with as much importance and precision, as if he were Marshal Turenne's Aide-camp giving orders to engage Montieuculo's army.

HE REMOVES FROM CURATE MEAGREMEAL'S TO CAMBRIDGE.

If at the curate's the Reviewer had not the advantage of good living and good company, he had the more estimable one of sober meals, light suppers, and agreeable slumbers; but his father having been told by some officious gossip the story of the joint of meat and the sugar, he rung the bell for his wife, and with an angry countenance, asked her, if a person descended from the ancient family of Castle Pillar should dine and breakfast in such a manner.

His wife replied, that it almost broke her heart to hear of it, but that she had the pleasure to inform him, that her brother, John Longstory, an attorney, in Brief Lane, Westminster, had procured him a pauper's birth in the University of Cambridge.

"What?" said the father, "a pauper's birth! well, if hitherto he has been served for a week with the third part of a leg of mutton, he shall

now for a whole month have the satisfaction to be present at the dissection of a grasshopper."

"My dear," says she, "it shall not be so; he shall dine as well as any lad in Cambridge, and all he pays for it is, to say grace when the rest of the students are to dine, and to read to them some agreeable piece of poetry during the dessert."

"The dessert!" says the husband; he was going to reply with much passion, but on considering the lightness of his purse, and the manner in which he intended to provide for his daughters, he silently walked out of the room, and allowed his wife to manage the business in the best manner she could, in despite of all that he had heard or known of the antiquity and greatness of the Earls of Castle Pillar.

She possessed more prudence and foresight, and had less pride, than her husband. She made it her business to know the customs and habits of the town; and she was informed, that in whatever house a young lad might be boarded and lodged, he ought to provide him-

self with good blankets, to keep him warm from the easterly winds. To guard against them comfortably, she got together three good double blankets, which, with a few necessaries, she put into a large sack, and in the middle of one of the blankets she put a sturdy well-made cheese, as a present to the principal professor. The sack, with its contents, being well corded and secured from the depredations of rats during the night, was hoisted up on the peasant's back, and he carried it, the young Reviewer walking by his side, all the way to Cambridge.

Could man renew this tumultuous scene in a regeneration of life, were he so unwise as to wish for perpetual existence in any period of it, I think he would fix on that which passes between ten and fifteen; the child and the half boy is then left behind, and the youth, with the feverish anticipation of manhood, is not come on; life is a continual source of enjoyment, without disease or pain.

Our young Reviewer found himself in this pleasant spring of nature, as he walked along with his rustic conductor: the novelty of his

situation, the beauty of the country, the freshnsss of the air, and his own still higher and fresher spirits, made him supremely happy.

Ah! how different from thy situation afterwards, when you laboured all day, and after it during the silence of night, in the foul, rotten, and pestilential air of Paternoster-Row, praising and dispraising, commanding and ridiculing, the books that issue from the press in London, like the bees of a hive when a rat or a mouse gets into it!

What he was taught at Cambridge, I hope the good-natured reader (if there is a reader) will excuse me the relation of it; for how can a man describe a country in which he never resided? it would be as difficult for me to do it, as it would be for the Lord Mayor of London to describe Curate Meagremeal's Saturday night's repast.

It is well known that he left Cambridge well stored, or rather well stuffed, with various branches of learning.

His father meant that he should follow one of the learned professions, and, as the Castle

Pillar family had several good livings in their gift, he proposed to him to study divinity. But the young Reviewer could never forget the small morning loaf and the little sugar of his younger days, and his father could not prevail upon him to run the risk of similar treatment; but it was soon agreed between them, that he should study the laws of his country, and that he should take chambers for that purpose. He paid his small debts, packed up his small necessaries, sold his blankets, according to custom, to the person he boarded with, and taking his bundle in one hand and a stick in the other, he set off for London.

PART II.

HE ARRIVES IN LONDON—STUDIES THE LAW—TAKES CHAMBERS—ADVERTISES FOR BUSINESS WITHOUT SUCCESS.

On his arrival in the smoky and crowded capital of the European trade, he delivered a letter of introduction he had from the principal professor at Cambridge, to Samuel Fairletter, a bookseller in Holborn. This man was a happy contrast to many of his brethren in trade, (a few of whom we shall shortly introduced to the acquaintance of the reader;) he sold his books well printed and well bound, and at a price that afforded him a moderate profit; which enabled him to live in a decent and substantial manner, and with that independence which is the last thought at night and the first in the morning of every true British citizen. This he did when a book was his own property. When he sold it for an

author, he was obliged, against his judgment, to submit to all the arts of book-making and book-jobbing, that disgrace so many authors of the present time; he despised the booksellers who assisted them in such undertakings, who were generally men half learned and half witted. He did not like these; pretended to a deep knowledge in books, in order to increase, curtail, or alter the useful and excellent thoughts of eminent men, or make them subservient to the profits of trade, or to the bad but prevailing taste of the times.

He gave a book a fair trial, by advertisement in the public papers; and left it to the judgment of the public to find out whether it was a good or a bad one, and took his chance of it accordingly.

Fairletter got chambers in the Temple for him, and advertised that he intended to commence the laborious and hazardous career of a lawyer; the latter, indeed, he soon found it to be; for it is the nature of that profession, that a few successful men engross all the emoluments and reputation of it, in the same

manner that a few large strong fish, which take their station at the mouth of a bay, eat all the small fish that go in and come out of it, and will not allow any other fish to take one of them.

The other silent, unfortunate units on the posterior benches, must sit quietly, if not contentedly, and hear learned and eloquent harangues, from which they may reap instruction as well as entertainment; but when they return to their chambers, each had the mortification to find that, during his absence, the fire was burning and spending its heat; the rent of the apartments running on, shoes wearing at the soles; the gown apt to be soiled by the dirt that flies about in the air of so great a town as London. This impure effluvia rises from the wheels of waggons, carriages, and carts; from the hoofs of horses, the feet of men, women, and children; cattle, hogs, sheep, oxen, mules, asses, dogs, rats, and cats; steams from 200,000 kitchens at the least, from numbers of breweries, manufactories, furnaces, butcher and fish markets, and stalls;

burial places to a great amount: add to all, about 150,000 privies; these compound quintessences of putrefaction fly about in the air, and subtilely find their way down the throats of the numerous and busy inhabitants: they descend into the stomach of a duchess as readily as into that of a butcher.

A steak or chop, with a half pint of wine and a pint of porter, is required, without any thing to make up for these unavoidable necessities of the day.

This was exactly the young Reviewer's case; and instead of attending in Westminster Hall, as he used to do every day regularly at ten o'clock during term, he walked one morning backwards and forwards in his chamber, with the anguish and consternation that seizes every man who does not know to-day how he is to provide for the demands and cravings that he is sure to-morrow will make upon him. After walking in this manner for a while, he sat down, and, ruminating on his condition, he said, "O! Pride, well might Mr Pope have called you the never-failing vice of fools: he

might have added, that you are but too often the sad and ill-suited companion of the needy. I am here without bread to support me, in this my genteel avocation and scientific calling; I am young and strong and healthy, and yet I disdain to follow a humbler occupation, by which I might have a comfortable and decent livelihood, for fear of tarnishing the lustre of the old family of Castle Pillar, and the education I have received; but since I have got thee, Pride, through the dignified channels of so many generations, it must be so; I will humour thee in thy own way; I will perform no manual labour, I will work merely by the machines of the imagination and the brain:" and in this mood he immediately sat down to write a poem.

While he laboured for that which never comes but of itself, and in its own way, and at its own time, and endeavoured to keep the wheels of his imagination from rusting, by the means of coffee and brandy, he heard a smart knock at his door, and without any other introduction or ceremony there suddenly present-

ed himself a little squat, brisk lad, about five feet high: he told him his name was Edward Calfleather, and that he served as an apprentice Mr Charles Bearskin, a bookseller in the Strand; and, with a pert quick motion, he presented a small bill for paper and some stationary articles that the young Reviewer had taken up at his shop: he would rather have been presented with a bank-note for his poem; but he told Calfleather that it would shortly be paid, and added, that the paper he saw on the table was a poem, from the sale of which he expected a considerable sum; and asked if Mr Bearskin bought such productions. Calfleather replied, that Bearskin did not buy such, but that there was a bookseller in Pall-mall, of the name of Shortmuzzle, who he knew gave good encouragement that way, and immediately left the room. As this prim, spruce, though diminutive person, had some share afterwards in these adventures, we here give some account of him.

He was the son of a waiter at the Cock eating-house, opposite to the north side of the

Royal Exchange, the grate in the kitchen of which, during the great run of the house, about the end of the eighteenth century, was equal in length to the ordinary breadth of a London parlour. This savoury volcano began, about one o'clock, steaking, broiling, frying, roasting, and grillading, which continued till five o'clock, for the gorging of at least one thousand citizens, that during these hours ran out and in, like the Romans of old to the exhibitions of their wild beasts, and gladiators in a circus; close to the strong fume of this disseminator of the gout and scurvy, Calfleather was born. When he left school, his father bound him as an apprentice to a tanner in Crooked-lane; but he soon tired of scraping wet hides and dining on bad tripe, and he resolved to turn his knowledge in tanning to a more clean and agreeable occupation. When his apprenticeship was over, Mr Bearskin took him in as a partner and assistant, so that the drudgery of the shop might be taken off his hands, while he passed his time himself at

clubs and coffeehouses, in the company of players, critics, buffoons, and newsmongers.

The young Reviewer was overjoyed at the idea of selling his poem to advantage. As soon as he had written out a fair copy of it, he hurried away and introduced himself to Shortmuzzle: he found him in a little parlour on the ground floor: after a few words of ceremony, he presented the poem to him; Shortmuzzle read the first line, "Ha!" says he, "it is not rhyme," and quickly after, reading a little farther, he exclaimed, "Po, it is neither rhyme nor reason." These were words that he got from some old book of criticism, for they were known one hundred years at least; he delivered back to him his poem, and though the words he made use of were not many, they fully explained his meaning. I remember no more of this bookseller, than that he was rather of a dark complexion, of the middle stature, and that he had a dry, uncourteous look, and lived in Pall-mall in the year 1784 and 85.

As soon as he had, with sunk looks and heavy steps, reached his apartment, he threw himself upon his bed in a fit of anguish that partook both of stupidity and despair. "Well," says he, "in this manner have vanished all my fond expectations of happiness; laughed at by a bookseller, mocked and jeered by a bookseller's clerk."

He remained in this comfortless situation for a few days; he was reduced to such distress, (distress that ungenerous critics never think of,) that he was obliged to go out one evening with his best waistcoat and the best of his two shirts, made up in two small bundles, in the pockets of his great-coat, with a view to dispose of them at a pawnbroker's shop (a necessary evil in a great town, and the temporary, though distressful friend of the unfortunate and needy). As he passed a coffee-house in the Strand, he saw through a window, that had its curtain not fully drawn over, his relation and Cambridge acquaintance, Dick Bluntworthy. At sight of him his face brightened, like that of an antiquary on his way to

Rome at the sight of the dome of St Peter's church.

He was afraid to go in; he went back to his lodgings, threw off his great-coat, and having dressed himself as well as he could, in a short time he joined his friend Bluntworthy.

He found him over a bottle of port, at least some rough strong red wine mixed with brandy and the spirit of lead. After a few blunt forms of civility, Dick asked him what success he had at Westminster-hall? It is remarked by the curious, that Scotchmen and Frenchmen never give a direct answer to any question that is put to them, owing, no doubt, to the crafty and wary disposition of these people. An Englishman gives a direct answer, from an inherent determined principle, that no man shall take his beef or his argument from him with impunity. The young Reviewer did not refuse a direct answer from any of these motives, but from one as common as either of them, that of not wishing to begin with a recital of his miscarriage. He said that there were some in that dining-room of William

Rufus's, viz. Westminster-hall, who eat well, drank well, and slept profoundly in fine holland and damask, and who sat close up near the head of the table; but as for himself, he should be happy, if he were allowed of a holiday to get a little soup at the bottom of it: even that he could not procure.

"Well," says Bluntworthy, "since that is the case, I hope you have fallen on some business or employment, to compensate you for the loss?"

"Why," says he, "I had not much time to choose one; my necessity made such incessant demands upon me, with the vain idea of being a cadet of the family of Castle Pillar, that I was hurried away from the dictates of prudence, like a wisp of straw in a thunder storm, and I commenced,—what do you think?"

"Why," says the plain Bluntworthy, "perhaps a wine-merchant."

"Ha! would it were," says the other; "no, I became a poet; and what is still worse, I have been ill treated by a bookseller, and I have been the credulous dupe of a bookseller's ap-

prentice, a little punster, of the name of Calf-leather. He then related what had happened to him: a man of the ordinary common kind, who had neither much generosity, nor wanted it altogether, would have laughed at him, for the profession he had pitched upon in order to make up his loss and miscarriage in the science of the law. But honest Dick Bluntworthy shook him by the hand, and told him not to be discouraged by the crosses of the world, to despise the malice of his ill-wishers, and, filling his glass up to the top and another for the young Reviewer, he drank his health, and better speed to his next undertaking. Although the character may be short, I cannot here refrain from the pleasure of making the reader a little better acquainted with this worthy person.

Richard Bluntworthy, Esq. was a native of the west of England: he was descended from a respectable family, that lived contentedly on a good estate, but moderate establishment which made them always masters of the action and inclinations that are the agreeable off-

springs of independence, the greatest blessing in life, and which is often unknown to him that spends more than his yearly income.

He succeeded to this estate at the age of fifty, after having served long in the army; he had the candour and the honourable reserved character of an English gentleman; his generosity arose not from ostentation, but from good sense and the genial warmth of his heart: but he was liable to a failing, that unfortunately arises from a wrong application of this last agreeable and honest virtue. He poured forth libations on the altar of Bacchus; but he never allowed these excesses to get the better of the rules he had laid down for a proper economy of his affairs, which they seldom do in men of strong minds, who cannot bear to have their happiness lost for the acquirement of those things which bring along with them no solid advantage.

While they were drinking their bottle together, he told him how much he required his assistance, in getting him some place under government, so that he might appear with credit in the world. During their conversa-

tion, he never once hinted any pecuniary distress but; uch could not well escape Bluntworthy's sagacity, in the course of a narrative delivered by a lawyer without business, an author without friends, and a poet full of vanity, though not devoid of imagination. The generous Bluntworthy did not wish to wound his feelings by offering him a sum of money. He asked him if he had any books. He said that he had. Bluntworthy then told him that he would buy them in order to make up his library in the country, and that it would be an easy matter for him to get the reading of as many books as he had a mind to in a town like London; in this manner he meant to relieve the wants of his relation: they walked to the Temple to see the books. Bluntworthy was not surprised to find, that they consisted of a few old law books, and the Poems of Tam D'Urfy: he gave him a fifty pound note for them.

When the young Reviewer found himself alone in his apartment, and when he compared the note to what the books had cost him, which

was scarcely as many shillings, on the various stalls and small hawking-shops with which the British metropolis abounds more than any other city in the world, he said to himself, "This is something very agreeable; how comfortably might one live on such profits! Had I wherewith to buy a few books, I think I might join the substantial profits of a tradesman to the desirable occupation of an author, and both to the fond but unsubstantial illusions of a poet." Full of his new employment, and of the wealth and pleasure it promised to afford, he left his lodgings, and went in quest of his excellent friend and benefactor, Mr Blunt-worthy.

His friend was of that benign and good disposition that any thing pleased him, if it only pleased others. He approved of his scheme, said he would do every thing in his power to promote it, and that he would give him the loan of £100 to enable him to put it in execution. Pride, when it arises from an intermixture of self-conceit, superciliousness, and van-

ity, is a vice both odious and troublesome to society; and when it arises from a haughty desire for solitary independence, it can scarcely be called a virtue. This young man, who had not five pounds in the world, before he got the fifty pounds bank-note for his books, hardly thanked his friend for the handsome offer of £100; he coldly said, he hoped the loan would soon be paid him, with the interest, from the profits of his trade as a bookseller. Bluntworthy either did not see, or, from the goodness of his heart, paid little attention to this unthankfulness; and on some further conversation, he told him that he would introduce him to an author of eminence, a member of Parliament, a good speaker, and a man well known at court and in the country.

He that, half starving, faintly received the offer of £100, listened with as much eagerness to this proposition as a young simple girl would to a tale of love told to her by a dancing-master. He rejoiced at the idea of becoming acquainted with a popular rich au-

thor and a member of Parliament, the worthy and respectable Sir Thomas Lycurgus, and the congenial friend of Squire Bluntworthy.

PART III.

HE IS INTRODUCED TO SIR THOMAS LYCURGUS, AND COMMENCES BOOKSELLER.

THE man that I think the greatest of antiquity (with diffidence be it said) has delivered it down as a maxim, that friendship can only be formed between the virtuous; had he lived during a late memorable revolution, he might have had cause in some measure to alter his opinion; and it only confirms the old saying, that there is no general rule without an exception: it was from this sublime, but rare and inconstant attraction of friendship arising from virtue, that an acquaintance suddenly sprung up between these two worthy persons.

Sir Thomas was born in the south of England, where he possessed a great estate; he was genteel in his person, with a mild and ingenuous countenance; he had a stiffness in his manner, which arose from habits of study, and

a constitutional deportment which no man is thoroughly able to shake off. In his youth he was sober, studious, and attentive to every means that could enable him, through life, to make a considerable figure in the world; to these he added the most indefatigable perseverance, the most unwearied industry in promoting the good of his country, by writing on various subjects connected with it, and by establishing institutions, the utility of which will be long remembered; but he allowed himself to be misled by a weakness—it was vanity: he was so completely carried away into the vortex of this futile passion, that he swallowed praise, flattery, and raillery, with little or no discrimination. This led him to undertake more than he was able to accomplish; for the gifts of nature, as well as the acquirements of science, must be greatly weakened by being divided, and he that might appear eminent in one science, or art, appears to disadvantage in a number of them.

But little particles of dust mix with the dew on the most beautiful verdure of the morning;

not greater than these to men of candour did one foible appear in the character of this excellent friend to mankind, the constant patron of ingenious young men; and notwithstanding the ingratitude of some of them, and the neglect of their parents, no new face ever left him with a cloud of disappointment on it, which he was always ready to wipe away, and he provided for more persons of this description than any man of his time. Such was the patron of the young Reviewer in his new career of vending as well as criticising the literary productions of the times.

By the generosity of Bluntworthy, and the patronage of Sir Thomas Lycurgus, he was enabled to set up as a bookseller in the Strand; a house was taken, an apartment fitted up with shelves, desks, and all the apparatus necessary for vending a profusion of ideas. But there were two persons wanted, and without their assistance no bookseller can carry on business; these were, a laborious steady printer, and a sharp long-headed scholar, who should be a good judge of books, and well acquainted with

such as have the best chance to succeed in the world. With this view, he waited on Sir Thomas Lycurgus as the most proper person to recommend him to such necessary persons. He found Sir Thomas writing some letters at ten o'clock, after having breakfasted; an hour when most men of his rank are in bed, and giving their eyes the first rub in the morning; he told him his business, and Sir Thomas gave him a letter to a printer of the name of Macport, and another to Dr Skylight. Macport was the son of a drayman in Thames-street, who meant to have brought him up to his own profession, for which he was well qualified by nature, from the strength of his constitution and the size of his limbs. The calves of his legs were little inferior to those of that huge and gigantic statue that represents the Law at the door of the French pantheon at Paris; his shoulders resembled those of the Farnese Hercules; his lungs breathed freely in a chest not inferior to these principals of the human body. A mind, the inhabitant of such a tabernacle, could not well brook to

be constantly employed in pouring bad small beer from one cask into another; too proud for being a porter, and too stout for the confinement of a shop, and too ambitious not to be in some way useful to mankind. Robert Macport resolved to follow the trade of a printer, a business in which his body and his mind could have full scope for action.

Dr Skylight was the son of an old, crabbed, drunken officer of engineers; his father left him nothing as an inheritance, but a learned education, a sharp piercing eye, an acquiline nose, that he was ready to thrust into every place and company that would admit it, a contentious argumentative spirit, and a great deal of knowledge and ability, both natural and acquired, with a considerable share of the pride that belongs to them. He resembled, not remotely, the famous Earl of Shaftsbury, that lived in the reign of Charles the Second; like him he had from nature an intuitive genius for the law; busy, active, alert, and eloquent, he would have shone in that transcendent but perverted science; but it was Skylight's fate

to follow a profession that did not suit the natural turn of his mind, and not succeeding in it, he wasted his time in fruitless endeavours to instruct and please the public. He starved on the productions of his pen, when he some way attracted the notice of Sir Thomas Lycurgus, who recommended him to the young Reviewer, as a learned, ingenious, but neglected man. He got employment for him; but it was nearly as bad as what felons receive in a mine—the labour was Skylight's, the profit the young Reviewer's.

When he had fully consulted with Skylight and Macport, as to the purchase of the books he required, they made a range through the cities of London and Westminster, and their immense environs (the greatest in the world.) In a short time they fitted up a tolerable bookseller's shop. He then turned to Macport, and told him, that there was still something necessary, if not to his trade, at least to his comfort, and it was the acquaintance of a brother bookseller, with whom, after the fatigues of the day, he could unbend himself and take a pot,

and that he would have no objection if Macport himself would sometimes join them, when his business allowed of it. Macport told him there was a man of this description in the neighbourhood, of the name of Bearskin, that he thought would suit him.

"Bearskin!" says he, abruptly; "so there is, and I think I owe him a small bill; and has he not an assistant and clerk, a squat little rascal of the name of Calfleather?"

"I think so," says Macport.

"Ha!" says he, "I fear the master and the man are like two pieces of the same cloth."

Says Skylight, who was standing by, "Sir, that need not be any bar to your acquaintance with Mr Bearskin, for no man keeps his clerks in better order, nor can any man be of a fitter disposition to do it."

"Well," says he, "let us make him a visit, and, at the same time, pay him his small bill." They departed for this purpose, and when they had entered the shop, they heard a noise in the room behind it, and understood the owner

was there; they found him scolding a poor author that failed in producing, at the stated time, a treatise on electricity, for which he had received a sum of money in advance. This was the ingenious but unfortunate George Dreadthunder. Dr Skylight interceded for him, and when the black ire that boiled in Bearskin's stomach had a little subsided, he introduced the young Reviewer to him as a brother bookseller and neighbour, who had lately set up in the trade, and who would be glad of his acquaintance. They exchanged civilities, and agreed to meet for the enjoyment of each other's conversation at a future period.

George Dreadthunder, that Skylight interceded for, was the son of a bookseller in London; the industry of the father enabled him to give the son a learned education at Oxford, where he applied himself with great care and attention to the study of electricity and metaphysics, to which the turn of his mind led him; and wishing to make himself known, by being singular in his studies and way of thinking, he broached a new doctrine unknown

before to that ancient and great seminary of learning; he endeavoured to account for the subtile refinements of metaphysical researches by the principles and nature of electricity; but the more he looked into this well the less he saw of the bottom; the more he dug the farther he was from it, until it presented to his view a long dark hole full of impenetrable mist; but his mind had not strength enough to perceive that the unalterable decrees of nature prevent the strongest intellect from seeing farther. He then bought a new-invented telescope, and an electrical machine, and he determined to make a fire, and to gaze if he could do no more. The Reviewer now found himself in a situation the most agreeable that he had experienced during his life. He was patronised by Sir Thomas Lycurgus; Dr Skylight assisted him; Robert Macport printed for him. He drank his pot at night with Charles Bearskin, and the worthy Squire Bluntworthy was the bulwark and sheet-anchor of his credit. As the young Reviewer, one night, smoked his pipe over a good fire

and a foaming tankard, along with Charles Bearskin, Ned Calfleather came into the room in company with George Dreadthunder. The Reviewer was in the middle of an humorous story, with a laughing and careless countenance, but at sight of Calfleather it changed all of a sudden, and became as settled and grave as the half-finished bust of Brutus in the gallery at Florence.

Ned Calfleather, however, saluted the company, and said, "This is Mr Critic, the gentleman lately set up as a bookseller in the neighbourhood."

Bearskin answered, "It is."

"Yes," says he, "and he is the gentleman that you directed with a poem to Shortmuzzle, in Pall-mall."

"And if your poem had been a good one," said Calfleather, "you would not have repented of your morning's trip."

On this the young Reviewer seized a poker, and Ned Calfleather a shovel; George Dreadthunder thrust himself under the table, and Bearskin, with all his blustering, was a little

disconcerted. The Reviewer was going to advance, but Calfleather, who had squatted himself, like a vicious cat that had a mind to beat off a bare-skinned, soft-eared, chubby-headed pointer, aimed a blow at him, which was so feebly and unskilfully warded off that the sharp corner of the shovel hit him just above the temple, and he fell motionless with his head towards the grate. The little conqueror threw the shovel into the fire, and made off with himself. Charles Bearskin hurried to the relief of his friend; he lifted him up, and found that his wound was a bad one. George Dreadthunder lifted up his head, and peeped from beneath the table; not seeing the little hero, he remarked it was a pity, for, by the powers of Alchime, he would have thrown him out through the window.

When the Reviewer had come to himself, he asked if there was a surgeon, or any person of medical skill at hand? Charles Bearskin told him there was one in the next street, and that he was likewise a physician, having taken degrees, and acted in both capacities as occa-

sion required. "He is likewise," says he, "an author as well as a critic of no small abilities." At any other time, and in any other circumstance, the latter part of this character would have delighted the Reviewer; but, situated as he then was, he merely desired that he might be sent for: he asked his name, and Bearskin replied, Kilglister, a native of Ireland. When this Herculean production of a moist climate entered the room, and found that a dapper apprentice had made so much havock in so short a time, he seemed to regret that he was not present to put George Dreadthunder's threat in execution: he dressed the Reviewer's wound expertly, and conducted him home, and in a few days he was as well as ever. As this huge person had afterwards a considerable share in these adventures, the following short account of him may be acceptable to the reader:

Heliagabulous Kilglister was a native of Cork, in Ireland, and the son of a butcher in that city. He measured six feet seven inches

in height; was as stout, brawny, and broad in proportion to that height, as the Patagonians are reported to be in proportion to theirs, which far exceeds that of the Europeans, and all the other nations of the world hitherto known.

As the British navy, and our garrisons and plantations, are victualled from Cork, there is an immense slaughter of oxen and other cattle there; and every butcher in the place has at command capacious wooden bowls filled with marrow.

The reader need not be told that Heli Kilglister was well fed in his youth, or that he grew to the size just mentioned. To avoid the contagion of vice in the city of Dublin, and the cumberous burthensome weight of the learning that young men are obliged to submit to in the university there, as soon as he left school, his father sent him to a university in Scotland; there, as it ought to be, his mind was left at freedom to pursue the study of that science or art that nature had most fitted

it for; without obliging him to be a general scholar, in order to be a proficient in any particular branch, he was educated at less expense, and not so much troubled with forms, as he would have been in the Dublin college. Having finished his education at this university, he went to London with a view to practise in one of the large hospitals of that huge city. This situation he got by means of his uncle, a well-known wine-merchant, and a great drinker at Cork, called Bibulus Macquickan; the Lord Lieutenant got drunk with him on a journey through the south of Ireland, and Macquickan procured this favour for his nephew. In this new situation his real character appeared, that hitherto lay concealed under the forms and restraints of scholastic tuition.

His manners were as boisterous as his person was uncouth; he walked rudely with a quick pace, and carried in his hand a stick, in Ireland called a bit; his bushy hair, ill-combed and untied, rolled about his cheeks, which were covered generally with a black-

matted beard,—the ends of his coarse woollen stockings half appeared for want of garters to keep them up. With this ungainly appearance, Kilglister was not deficient in the knowledge of his profession, and many other acquirements of learning; but they were rendered disagreeable and offensive by a contradictive temper and rude behaviour: he had no idea of the proprieties of time and place, so necessary to decorum, and the agreeable communications of the world.

The young Reviewer, in his new employment of a bookseller, had an opportunity of seeing men and things in a different light from that in which he viewed them, when he was a silent and unemployed lawyer and a starving fruitless author. He was patronised by men of eminence and abilities; he was enabled to estimate the common fate of books, what makes them sell, and what leaves them unsold. Dr Skylight informed him (and he could do it from experience), that the fate of a book depended altogether on the genius, turn, and

humour of him that criticised it, since the public never looked at a book until it passed the ordeal of criticism, and the hot ploughshares of the reviewers: that few books were so well written as to force commendation from men whose sole business it is to criticise them; who had round the balls of their eyes a thin deleterious ichor, that often fell upon the print and the leaves of a book, which so blasted and soiled it, that nobody would buy or read it: that the great body of the people, the middle ranks, who read and reflect most, were more apt to blame than to praise; that they did not like to see authors, little and newly known, looking over their shoulders,—men who were yesterday on a level with themselves, to-day strutting and lording it over them, and pointing out the road in which they should walk; teaching them the manner in which they were to act and live in the world: that he might see, from the advancement of learning, and from the increased wealth and leisure of individuals, that every man thought

himself a critic; and consequently, that a general calendar of criticism would be well received by the public. He immediately resigned the management of his shop to Charles Bearskin, and he set up the first review that was known in England and its language.

PART IV.

HE COMMENCES REVIEWER.

In every new undertaking there is a species of enthusiasm that seizes the mind. Hope kindly, though often falsely, spreads a delusion over the understanding that tends to dissolve the unforeseen difficulties that so much abound in the different situations of life.

No man should have been better acquainted with these than the Reviewer, from his former occupations; nor did he altogether overlook them. Before he entered on his new and hazardous career, he consulted his friends, Charles Bearskin and Dr Skylight.

They advised him, as the business was new, to insert in the public papers an advertisement, by which he should inform the world of his intention to review, criticise, and analyze all new publications, of whatever species of

composition they might be. This having been done, they next considered the manner of conducting their new business, and how it could be most expeditiously and beneficially carried on; they agreed that the Reviewer should be the dictator as well as director and chief critic; that Dr Skylight should be his assistant and counsellor; that Bearskin should sell and get off the books; and that Robert Macport should print them. All matters being now adjusted, they took a house in Paternoster-Row; they fitted up the best room in it for a study and composition-room, and they placed a large desk in the middle of it for that purpose. Ned Calfleather was despatched to get such books as best suited the beginning of their critical career. The Reviewer at this time was a person upon the whole of good appearance, but he had an unhappy sourness and habitual superciliousness in his manner, that arose as much from nature as from former disappointments in life. Envy was a prevailing ingredient in his composition; a legacy bequeathed to him through the consequential

absurdities of ten generations; and where could this blear-eyed little vice fix her abode more properly, than in the breast of him who was obliged to dine on an ill-dressed, and, before it came to his chambers, half-cold beef-steak and a pint of porter, and at the same time think himself equal to the son of the Prince of Condé, or the brother of the Duke of Lorraine? These were imperfections not likely to allow a man to succeed in the supple, active, and acute science of the law; he thought himself entitled to a situation in life to which he did not properly belong, and out of which it were better for himself and others if he could be prevailed upon to remove. He constantly grumbled at not receiving the respect that he thought due to him, and was out of humour at the least neglect of it; so that every one was obliged to salute him first, or he would pass by, without notice or salutation, his intimate friends and acquaintance. But in the middle of all this vanity and pride he could descend to little meannesses, which he ac-

quired from the manner in which he was brought up.

They now got every thing ready for their first monthly and critical pamphlet, except materials to work upon; but a reviewer's materials are different from those of other tradesmen; they must have good materials to make good work, but he must be furnished with bad materials, otherwise he would have no work at all. They waited eagerly for the premature production of some vain, inadvertent young man, when Ned Calfleather came into the room, and threw upon the desk a history written by Jonathan Sternbottom, a Scotch parson.

"What! Sternbottom?" says the Reviewer; "he studied with me at Cambridge; he was not a bad scholar, but rather an ingenious kind of young man; but to think of writing a history,—it astonishes me to see young men in this manner go beyond their depth."

Dr Skylight said, "that the book ought to have a fair trial, and that no judgment should be passed upon it without mature deliberation;

and that he ought to banish from his understanding the prejudice that seizes all mankind against those who pretend to be wiser than others, which all authors, small and great, do when they publish their thoughts to the world."

"Po!" says the Reviewer, "it raises my indignation to see men from the ordinary level of mankind presume to buoy themselves up to the importance of men of genius,—a history, and that of an ancient and warlike country, indeed! Had he written the history of a small town, or a siege or the like; but to think of writing the history of an ancient kingdom,—it were more in his line to cant on the mysteries and sympathies of the Gospel."

Next morning as, in a satisfied manner, he read a newspaper after breakfast, reposing himself after the fatigues of a late supper and too much punch, Calfleather came into his apartment with a newly-published book:—"There, Sir," says he, "is the History of the House of Tudor for you."—"What!" says the Reviewer, "nothing less than history:—when

I expected some ease and repose, at least respite from my critical labours, I must now begin to peruse a history.—Only a few reigns," says Ned. "A few devils," says he. "You will soon get over it," says Calfleather. "I am best judge of that," says the Reviewer; "I desire none of your interference." Calfleather saw that it was necessary for him to depart, but he would go in his own way, and said, that instead of a history, it would soon be a story hissed.

When he left the room the Reviewer took up the book; "Let us see what we have got here," says he; "some abuse of Henry VIII. no doubt, some censure on his vigour and cruelty to his wives; aye, meant to be added to the History of the House of Stuart. The author moves back in more senses than one; indeed, written by some hungry Scotchman, who wishes to get some more of our money; a complete epitome, the history of four reigns in two volumes, two reigns to a volume; very mechanically adjusted. But I forgot, there was Edward VI., but his reign was short; let us see." He read a while, and then threw the book down upon

the table. "The very man," "says he, who writ the History of the House of Stuart; still cramming down our throats passive obedience, and non-resistance; he wept for the Earl of Stafford, and he would hang Queen Elizabeth and burn Queen Mary." He glanced through the volumes, marking down the exceptionable passages. After his hypercritical spleen had a little evaporated, "it is very hard" says he, "that these tall meagre Scotchmen will not write the barren annals of their own bare country, they must interfere with our history forsooth." He could not, or he would not, see that happy medium between the conciseness of Sallust, and the diffuseness of Livy; he could see nothing either praiseworthy or excellent, in the simplicity and perspicuity of the History of the House of Tudor, where impartial philosophy gains the candid reader's consent against the prejudices and partialities of the world, as does that unequalled historical composition, the History of the Civil War which so soon ensued against Charles the First. Says Robert Macport, "Can one of you tell me,

what the Romans thought of Livy when he composed the first part of his history?"—"I cannot well say," replied Skylight; "but I read somewhere, that one day as he came out of the bath, and as he rubbed his eyes and cheeks with a towel, he rather made too many wry faces and contortions of countenance, but such as are not uncommon in these cases, though not so well suited to the dignity of an historian."

That while he was in this posture, with one leg carelessly hanging over the other, there came in at the door of the bath a young pert critic; he looked at Livy full in the face; "What!" says he, "is this the man who pretends to inform us of the origin, exploits, and actions of the Roman people?" Livy's modesty, and the awkward situation in which he found himself, disabled him from making any reply; he quietly put on his clothes, and walked out of the bath, without speaking a word, leaving the ill-natured critic more hurt and mortified by his silence than if he had reproached him in the severest manner.

After they had disputed a considerable time upon the merits of the Scotch parson's history, "Come," says the Reviewer, "let us pass sentence; and, Doctor, as you were recommended to me by Sir Thomas Lycurgus, I ask your advice before I pass it."

"I am not fond of giving advice," says Skylight.

"Why?" says the Reviewer.

"Because," says the Doctor, "a wise man does not require it, and a fool is sure never to take it!"

"Po!" says the Reviewer, "I am a species between these two, so that you may freely give it."

"Well," says Skylight, "be sure never to criticise this, or any other new book, until you have ate a good dinner; and after you have picked your teeth, and drank your second glass, and wish to be amused, take up the book; and it is ten to one if you do not find a beauty, that you find ideas capable of being made beautiful as well as useful, by the application and cultivation of the author's mind. But if you take

up a book in the morning, with the fumes of grog and tobacco scattered over your brain, you will most assuredly not see these beauties nor these ideas, or if you happen to light upon them, you will only see them through the medium of spleen, discontent, and ill-humour; and you will as naturally pass over them to the imperfections of the book, as an excise officer would pass the most delicate wine to get at a cask of gin.

"Pray, Sir,' says the Reviewer, "are you come here to assist me, or are you come to dictate to me, or rather to laugh at me?" Sky-light was going to reply, and matters had the appearance of a serious dispute, when a servant came in with a card to him: he opened it and read,—

"My Lady Grintaudry has the infinite honour to present her very and most respectable compliments and respects to the Reviewer, as she purposes and has preconcerted to have a rout at her house this evening, of cards and music, with dancing and walking, and the very

delectable conversation of her neighbours; she begs the favour of his company, and wishes that he may increase and augment, with his critical coadjutors, the felicity of the entertainment.

Maria Louisa Caroline Grintaudry.
Bond Street, 2 o'clock.

"By the generosity of a Reviewer," says he, "this is a most polite lady; this is the first time that we have been asked out since we commenced Reviewers; dress your wigs, and brush your shoes, as well as your clothes, for we shall go directly." Ned Calfleather was sent for a hackney-coach, and as soon as it arrived, they went off to my Lady Grintaudry's house. When they arrived, they were ushered into a large ill-furnished room, full of most extraordinary company; the hostess sat at the head of it, under a kind of mock canopy, that bespoke the poverty as well as vanity of the owner; it was made of a common Holland sheet, with a few half-worn India shawls, fixed over a great arm-chair.

It is necessary for mankind to have always something new, something to vary and change the heavy tediousness and dull uniformity of life. When this meets with feeble intellects and a weak head, it becomes ridiculous, for it branches out into grimace and affectation, into extraordinary dress, and a love of something peculiar and singular in manners and appearance. This last propensity was exactly the case with my Lady Grintaudry and her guests; they were composed of weak and idle men and women, who can find no better employment than to imitate those whom they think their superiors. When the Reviewer and his friends went up to salute the lady, she received them with a kind of half-grin, half-laugh; this was fashionable at the time, though it made the female countenance as hideous as that of the two women that Mr Biron mentions to have seen on the west coast of Patagonia after he had been wrecked near the straits of Magellan. Some of the company had buckles in their shoes three inches broad, and so long that the ends of them came down

on each side of the foot till they struck the ground. There were some young men, not twenty-five years of age, who wore large bushy wigs upon fine thick hair; and they thought it a notable piece of singularity to hide this natural and beautiful covering of the head, the symbol of youth and health, for so false an ornament as the hair of perhaps some unfortunate diseased person who, languishing in a jail, might dispose of it for a little subsistence. Another set of young men wore waistcoats so short that they scarcely covered the pits of the stomachs. This deficiency was amply made up for at the other end; for there they were tucked up by means of collars so as to cover both ears; the upper ends of the breast flaps were so high that they annoyed the wearer all the time of dinner, and dangled about his mouth so as to prevent the getting down his victuals. The neckcloths of these apes of good breeding were tied round their chins; they looked like so many persons escaped from an hospital full of patients ill of the king's evil. But among the company

there was a country squire that broke through all the rules of polite assemblies; for he came there screwed up in buckskin breeches and boots; the former were so tight that his step was not three inches long, and he moved like a cat in pattens, to the great entertainment of the rest of the company, who, according to the usual weakness of human nature, laughed at this absurdity in the squire, though they could see none in themselves. The ladies wore most extraordinary head-dresses, some of them three feet high, ending at the top like a sugar-loaf: the materials of these crests were whalebone and wire, the hair tucked up to them, with the various feminine ornaments of ribbons, flowers, and lace. It would be useless to enumerate many other uncouth dresses among the company, in which human nature appeared little, if not contemptible, and which prevailed in Britain towards the end of the eighteenth century. The numbers were so great that they could scarcely move about, much less walk and converse with plea-

sure; and to a man of sober reflection, the whole had the appearance of persons assembled for the purpose of annoying each other. They had no former acquaintance, but stared and jostled like a crowd at a fair, or a mob at a bull-baiting. When this congregation of folly broke up, there was a general outcry for hats, sticks, umbrellas, great-coats, caps, fans, clogs, cloaks, carriages, servants, and flambeaux, and the noise was such that it disturbed the whole neighbourhood. When the critics were returning home, Robert Macport asked who the lady was that gave such a confused and unmeaning entertainment? Doctor Skylight said he knew something of her, that he believed she was the daughter of a Highland laird, married to an honest Welsh squire of small estate, but long pedigree; that she came up to London every winter for a short time, and exposed herself to the ridicule of people of sense, in giving such routs as they had just witnessed; imitating her superiors, without wealth or taste, and

which obliged the whole family to live in the country, during the rest of the year, in an obscure and comfortless manner, to make up for such futile and transitory extravagance.

PART V.

THE Reviewer and his associates followed their employment with considerable success. They soon saw that critical dissertations and compilations, the picking up trivial faults, watching the little slips and errors of ingenious men, were better received by the public than the noble enterprise of original composition. They formed an idea, not without some foundation, that the public, a very few excepted, were nothing but a great and undiscerning mob, and that they swallowed whatever was offered to them by a Reviewer, with as little discernment as the cod on the Dogger Bank swallow the various baits that fishermen send down to them.

One day, as they were finishing off a review, the Reviewer turned to Dr Skylight, "Sir," says he, "I think we might enlarge this business, and employ more hands in our critical labours. I perceive our Review takes mightily with the town and the country. You are well acquainted with the authors and critics of the age: who among them can you recommend to me?"

"In what branches would you require assistance?" says Skylight.

"Why," says the Reviewer, "if I had some in physic, in metaphysics, and pieces for the stage, I think we might manage the rest ourselves."

"Po!" says Skylight, "we need not go far for some of these; for the two first, have we not our acquaintances, Dr Kilglister and George Dreadthunder?"

"And so we have," says the Reviewer; "I quite forgot them.

"A reviewer's brain is like a sieve, owing to the great quantity of minute stuff that goes through it; it retains at times but very little,

and that little," says Ned Calfleather, "is only the chaff and the dross."

"Sir," says the Reviewer, "I would recommend it to you to be more sparing of your remarks; for at present you are in my employment."

Charles Bearskin pleaded for Calfleather, on condition that he held his tongue.

"But as to plays," says the Reviewer, "who shall we get for them?"

"Why," says Skylight, "there is a man who frequents the Chapter Coffeehouse, who I think will answer your purpose as to these, and his name is Andrew Buskinfoot."

"A good name," says the Reviewer, "and mayhap as good a critic."

It was settled that Skylight should engage these learned people, and, in the mean time, every measure was taken for the more successful enlargement of their Reviews.

It often happens to men of abilities, that they are obliged to be subservient to men of mean talents and inferior acquirements; the

pride that attends genius is hurt, a fretful uneasiness ensues, and exertions are made to get free from such disagreeable circumstances. This was the case with Dr Skylight: he could not bear the Reviewer's arrogance and presumption in making himself sole judge of the taste and judgment of the nation in matters of literature. "What, says he, "is become of the labours of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St Andrews; of all the numerous academies, schools, and seminaries in Great Britain, where men have taught, little inferior to Plato or Aristotle? That no new book must be read until it is first praised by the editor and compiler of a monthly pamphlet, assisted by men who, being incapable themselves of original composition, get their bread by criticising the writings of men of genius." But these independent and generous sentiments were in Dr Skylight damped by poverty; insomuch, that he was obliged to be an humble drudge against the conviction of his

understanding. He silently repined against the unkindness of fortune, and could do no more.

In the morning the critics assembled in their apartment. The Reviewer sat down at the head of the table, and Dr Kilglister at the foot of it; Charles Bearskin and George Dreadthunder at one side of it, and Andrew Buskinfoot at the other; Skylight stood near it. "Pray, Mr Skylight," says the Reviewer, "why don't you take your seat?" He hung down his head, and did not reply.

"I command you to sit down," says the Reviewer.

Skylight was obliged to sit down, and stifle the generous emotions that he felt, how much soever he might be liable to caprice and passion. After they had taken their seats, the Reviewer got up and informed them, that nothing could be done until Calfleather appeared with a new book, and that, in the mean time, he would give them an account of the state of their affairs, which were prosperous beyond his expectations. He said, that no lord,

squire, nor lady of quality, read a new book until they heard, in some of the polite circles, what the Reviewer had said of it; that no alderman, bishop, or navy-contractor, would as much as hear of a new book until they had first read their Review; that no lawyer, pawnbroker, or Scotch parson, could sleep without the Review; that even the beef-eaters of St James's read it; that the king of the Jews put it into his pocket when he went to the synagogue; that a learned Arabian of the sect of Ali had a dispute with another of the sect Omar about the Review; that the doctors of colleges, masters of academies, and heads of corporations, all over the world, praised, magnified, and glorified their Review; that all authors, booksellers, printers, rag-men, and rag-tearers, would be soon tributary to their labours; that they should lay under general contribution all the readers of books in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, male and female, the learned and the unlearned, the wise and the foolish: in short, that they would deliver over to the most severe and ruthless

execution of their pens, every one who dared to oppose or disapprove these their firm and absolute resolutions, and the principles and excellence of their Review.

Fame is the parent of ambition. These critics, who formerly lived and wrote in dirty lanes and little coffee-houses, the air of which last resembled that of glass-houses rather than proper places of respiration, now fancied themselves transported to wide and airy streets, to spacious and elegant lodgings; some of them even began to think of a second course, costly wines, and a library. From these reveries they were awakened by Ned Calfleather's knocking at the door: he was loaded with new books.

"Ha! Ned," says the Reviewer, "if you have been long away, it cannot be said that you have come empty-handed."

"No," says Ned, "if I have not many ideas in my head, I have abundance of them on my back. The head of a minister of state, on the eve of making a peace, could not contain more;" and, with a countenance full of

satisfaction, he threw his wallet quite full upon the table; "there," says he, "critical gentlemen, there is food for your censorious understandings for a full month to come."

The Reviewer opened the wallet, and thrusting his hand into it, the first thing he fetched out was another poem, written by a vain and young author, who had before unsuccessfully written one. "What," says he, "another attempt by the very same person whose former poem we so lately condemned! It is necessary, gentlemen, that we chastise this person with all the rigour of our critical court, with all the vengeance of a *verbo-critico* flagillation, that he shall remember all the days of his life; a castigation with the words that compose our cat-o'-nine-tails of criticism, for his impudence and presumption in having dared to offer any thing to the public, after our sentence of condemnation of his former production."

"Sir," says Dr Skylight, "do you imagine that a young author may not improve by study, and reflection, however he might at first

have been intoxicated by an over-ardent desire of fame, and carried away by it to premature composition as well as publication? Cannot good writing be attained by experience and attention, when nature has been kind to the writer? and should he not have a fair trial, until he is found altogether incapable of either amusing or instructing the world?"

"Sir," says the Reviewer, "you are my assistant, and not my master, in criticism. Gentlemen, let us pass the sentence of our court of inquisitorial severity; write, this poem we condemn to the pastry-cook, to the trunk-maker, to the retailers of small wares, and to smoking cider cellars, for lighting the pipes of the guests; and, indeed, those who could endure to read the first four lines of it, needed not go farther to know of what the rest is composed."

"How," says Dr Skylight, "could a man know by the beginning of a poem, what might be contained in the middle or the end of it?"

"Sir," says the Reviewer, "my criticism is my criticism, and yours is yours." "Well

found out," says Skylight, "I hope it is so." He exulted in the severity of his sentence, and said, "I think we have set this pretender at rest; he shall trouble no longer the public nor us with his writings; let him retire to his garret, and there repine, and reflect on his blasted ambition and sunk reputation; as to his lank belly and meagre looks, let him look to that." Upon this sentence being delivered, Robert Macport's countenance changed, from having a blunt honest smirk upon it, to a species of serious indignation.

"I shall set the types to this poor and ill-used author," says he, "when he requires it, and a fig for your sentence."

The Reviewer could scarcely contain himself: "What," says he, "shall a printer set himself up in defiance to a sentence delivered by me, and approved of by my fellow-critics; a greasy type-setter, and a dabbler in ink, and the rusty points of crooked old nails, to presume to arrogate to himself such sentiments?" Macport quietly heard him out, and said, that he mistook entirely the business and

functions of a printer. The Reviewer was going to reply, in the consequential array of an angry man, when Skylight got up and said, that he hoped the meeting would permit him to deliver a few words on the different functions of a critic and a printer. The meeting gave its consent, and Skylight said, that undoubtedly the printer had a manifest advantage over the critic, for that in a few days he could throw off as many copies of a book as might equal, as to number, the library of the most learned man of antiquity, while the critic could only in so short a time make a few remarks on their works; that the most expert and nimble-fingered clerks of antiquity were no more to Robert Macport and his art, than strength of hands and arms are to pullies, cranes, levers, and the steam-engine.

"Mayhap," says Macport, "I thought we were in the right on it."

"It might naturally happen," says Skylight, "that the poor clerk, fatigued with his labour, would fall asleep, and laying his hand on the paper, he might snore, grunt, and so

soil it and the writing, that it could not be easily read, and from this cause it might be looked upon, by those who had the misfortune to have bad eyes and a slow comprehension, as a bad book."

"But," says Skylight, "these bad books were soon to have an end; it had become so intolerable a labour to copy them, and they were so ill to read, that all men's wits were set on edge to find out a remedy for so great an evil, and to remove such an encumbrance from the fertile genius that appeared every where to have awoke as from a long sleep during a dark and cloudy night; the remedy was soon found out by some Germans, or Dutchmen, (it matters not by whom,) and the art of printing appeared.

"Were I but born then," says Macport;—"the art of printing diffused knowledge through the world by thousands of channels, like the river Nile, that spreads his soft and balsamic waters over the prolific fields of Egypt."

Robert Macport appeared in ecstasy.

"Pray," says Ned Calfleather, "did no crocodiles come along with these waters?"

"Ah!" says Skylight, "there came a number, small and great."

"What were they?" says Macport.—"They were crocodiles in human shape; critics, commentators, curtailers, abridgers, essence-makers, beauty-catchers, interpolaters, book-builders, and undertakers, hawkers, and reviewers. In what manner did they employ themselves?"

"I will tell you that," says Skylight; "they, whose souls could not expand into the universal and sublime variety of epic poetry, who could not melt into the natural and distressing scenes of tragedy, nor hit upon the ridiculous actions of mankind in common life, called comedy, who could not comprehend, and draw into an essence, the various occurrences that have passed in the world under the name of history, that places the actions of men under our eyes as clearly as a man sees a country if he stands on a hill in the middle of it. These very persons disappointed the epic poet, marred the

sale of a tragedy, made a whole audience hiss a comedy; made the costly and laborious volumes of the historian moulder upon the shelves of a bookseller's shop; made the intense lucubrations of the philosopher so neglected, that he was obliged to breakfast on half a penny worth of bread, and a little bad butter, put up in half a sheet of his uncalled-for writings, and which he carried in his pocket to some obscure coffeehouse, where he was sure to meet neither critic nor acquaintance, and where he called for half a pint of porter to wash down the unsavoury and scanty pittance.

"And how could they accomplish all this?" says Macport.

"In the same manner," says Skylight, "that rats injure the farmer: the little pernicious animals cannot carry corn to a storehouse or granary for the good of mankind, but, by cutting a few shreds in the side of a sack, they get into it, eat and pick unseen and undisturbed; they let the grain fall upon the ground to perish among filth and nastiness."

"Gentlemen," says the Reviewer, "what

do you think of the speech and defection of our brother-critic and assistant, Dr Skylight?"

Charles Bearskin disapproved of his conduct, and proposed, that he should be obliged to free from dust the library of a pedant during the space of one month, and not allowed to go into an alehouse all the time.

George Dreadthunder proposed, that he should be obliged to fight a giant; and Ned Calfleather insisted, that he should be obliged to dine on bad tripe.

"Gentlemen," says the Reviewer, "your sentiments have too much the appearance of levity for the business in hand; I will not have the chair I have the honour to fill at this tribunal shook by the learned arrogance of Dr Skylight. We must inflict some severer punishment, and have this culprit tried by something resembling the laws and institutions of our country. Suppose we have him tried by a jury of booksellers and hawkers, and as for judges, we may act their parts ourselves."

"I am afraid," said Ned Calfleather, "that

the judges and the jurymen will be like two pieces of cloth cut from the same web."

"None of your tailor's remarks," says the Reviewer.

Charles Bearskin, by way of correction, threw a half-finished review at his head, and he was obliged to hold his tongue.

The meeting approved of the Reviewer's proposal, and each member got directions as to the part he should act in the new trial, which he informed them would take place in the middle of the Chapter Coffeehouse. It is the custom of that place, that a box may at one time be filled with philosophers, poets, and historians; but, owing to its neighbourhood to Smithfield, it may, in half an hour afterwards, contain pig-merchants, cow-feeders, and butchers. Next day the Reviewer sent writs of appearance to a number of booksellers and hawkers, to attend as jurymen on the trial, which was to take place on Wednesday of the week immediately preceding Christmas. It was settled, that Ned Calfleather and Charles Bearskin were to provide chairs, and the

largest table that they could find in the coffee-house, with proper pens and ink. Dr Kilglister and Robert Macport were to stand sentries, each with a great stick over his shoulder, to prevent any disturbance at the trial; and George Dreadthunder was appointed door-keeper; Andrew Buskinfoot was to snuff the candles, keep the fire up, and run on such messages as might be required; the Reviewer was appointed sole judge.

On the day appointed they all met in the Chapter Coffeehouse at ten o'clock; they found a large table placed in the middle of the room, on which were all the apparatus necessary for the trial. They took their seats in great form, and with grave countenances. The court was constituted, and every thing in the most complete readiness to begin the trial.

After a short pause the Reviewer got up, and silence ensued. "Gentlemen," says he, "I beg leave to inform you, that all aggregate civilised congregations of individuals cannot live agreeably nor wisely without learning; it is to the mind what a joint and good plum-

pudding is to the body: a learned man takes as much pleasure in pronouncing a hard word, as a porter takes in swallowing a bumper of gin on a cold morning. Gentlemen, the orthodox concatenations of the observations of criticism are the pillars and corner-stones of a good book."

Ned Calfleather got up, and said, that perhaps he meant a bad book.

The Reviewer appeared angry at the remark, and desired that he might not be interrupted. "Gentlemen," says he, "a Review may in some measure be compared to the tower of Babel, for it is a multifarious decompounded mixture of all languages and ideas; an hodge-podge and olio, suited to all tastes and inclinations, to all capacities and incapacities; if such, therefore, are the useful accuracies of our Review, what should be the punishment of the deterioration of the same? What should be done to him, who attempts to vilify so useful and laborious a conglomeration of congruous instructions? The culprit before us has compared our lucubrations to

the depredations of rats. I have heard much pother and paraphrase about the ingenuity of good books; but, for my own part, I must confess, that I do not much relish them; for, if there were no books but good ones, our labours and our support would be soon at an end; for good books are to a Reviewer, what honest, good-natured, plain-dealing men are to lawyers; they create a retrograde destitution in the circumstances of their contention. Gentlemen, it is unreasonable to praise works of exalted genius only; for it is a certainty corresponding to the omniscient sublimated nature of truth, that there are one thousand men of ordinary understanding to one man of extraordinary conception; therefore, gentlemen, there ought to be one thousand books of ordinary standard to one book of extraordinary perception. Now, gentlemen," says he, "for these reasons given and dealt out, I recommend to the jury to have Dr Skylight dismissed from his employment of an assistant in writing for our Review."

When the Reviewer sat down, a pig-merchant in one of the boxes told a cow-feeder near him, that he did not understand the meaning of some of the words that he had just heard. The cow-feeder said, that he did not understand them himself, and that he thought the speaker mixed his clover and oil-cake very oddly together.

When Mr Reviewer had done, Kilglister turned about abruptly, and, with a harsh loud voice, said, that he wished to say a few words; but Ned Calfleather remarked, that it was rather new to see a man, who stood sentry for the due order of a court, presume to make a speech in it. But Charles Bearskin told him, that his remark was petulant and troublesome; for that the Doctor and Macport were appointed sentinels merely on account of the strength of their arms and the size of their limbs. Bearskin's opinion was approved of, and Kilglister said, that it was a shame for a critic to abuse the critics of his own employment and his own country; and that he might

as well leave a Munster fair without striking a blow with his bit,* as see such an ugly thing as a scholar's being angry at the head of his college; and he swore by the Giant's Causeway, if Skylight used him in such a manner, and had put such an affront upon him, that he would make his skull as soft as the bag of an ill-fed sheep, and that he would.

When Dr Kilglister had done, George Dreadthunder advanced towards the table: he begged leave to remark, that if they permitted him to make a short speech, he should nevertheless have his eye on the door, so that no improper person came in; no, not the stoutest man on 'Change, nor the boldest man in Smithfield. On these conditions he got leave to speak; and he said, that criticism is the balanced effervescence and quintessence of men's understandings; that the understanding itself arose from the formation of the brain; and that the brain itself was only the

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* A stick or baton, so called in Ireland.

cobweb of the existence of the understanding; that he knew all these things from the principles of electricity, which is the sublime fiery substance that sprang from the first primeval and primordial existence of chaos, which formed the world, that formed critics as well as electricians, and every thing else. "Gentlemen," says he, "existence is only an invisible impression, arising from an incomprehensible thin fluid, arising from the sublimated particles of the blood acting on the imperceptible fine fibres of the nerves of the human body; that he knew this from the metaphysical principles of phlogisticated intuition. Gentlemen," says he, "when a man is electrified, he feels something transpiercing him he knows not how."

He had scarcely uttered these words, when, casting his eyes towards the door, he saw a great black boar, chased by two butchers' dogs, coming down full speed through the lane that leads to Paternoster-Row, opposite the door of the coffeehouse. George Dreadthunder finished his speech, and ran up the

stair that leads from the coffeehouse to the rooms above, and in an instant he was out of sight. The boar made off from Smithfield, and when he was chased down the lane, he did not enter the coffeehouse, although the door was half open, but turned to the right, and went down the row. The flight of Dread-thunder, and the boar-chase that occasioned it, caused all the people in the room to laugh heartily, the judge, jurymen, hawkers, and by-standers. The Reviewer was disconcerted at this ludicrous incident, as well as at the want of firmness in his refined philosophical fellow-labourer; but it was the good fortune of this censor of the capacities and understandings of mankind, that, when he was at any time puzzled in this manner, there came something in the way that relieved him, and in this last dilemma, a servant came in with a letter from Sir Thomas Lycurgus, as follows:—

"Sir,—It was only last night that I heard of the trial that you are engaged in. I am the person who recommended Dr Skylight to you

as an assistant critic. I know him to be an acute, ingenious, but neglected man. How then can I approve of your trying him by a jury composed of book-carriers and hawkers? I think the mark on your temple may point out to you the impropriety of your conduct. True criticism, sir, is attended with more difficulty than you imagine; it arises from the conjunction of a clear head, with a beneficent mind; it improves and forms a national taste in literature, from which ultimately arise civilization and happiness. That man, therefore, must be your friend, who corrects your want of judgment, when you pervert so useful a branch of science; and he must be your enemy, who indulges you in so pernicious a business as the one you are now engaged in.

"I have established in my house a foreign custom, called conversations. I think it preferable to our manner of passing an evening, when we sit over bad and dear wine, by which the mind is enfeebled and heated, the body diseased and bloated. If you and your brother-critics come here this evening, at seven

o'clock, you may partake of them, and I will endeavour to reconcile you and Dr Skylight."

The Reviewer was rejoiced at an opportunity given him in this manner of dissolving his motley Court; for, after the flight of George Dreadthunder, Dr Kilglister and Robert Macport found it impossible to keep order, or even common gravity, in the coffeehouse; the bar-maid and waiters tittered; the cow-feeders and pig-merchants laughed, and remarked, that whatever these critics carried in their heads, they did not want suppleness in their feet; so that he told the Court, that the letter he had just received obliged him to dissolve it.

PART VI.

CONCLAVE OF AUTHORS, CRITICS, AND BOOKSELLERS, AT THE HOUSE OF SIR THOMAS LYCURGUS.

When the Reviewer dismissed the Court, his associates and himself set off for the house of Sir Thomas Lycurgus. When they arrived, they were shown into a large, plain, comfortable room, the furniture of which bespoke the elegant but moderate mind of the owner,—as remote from affectation and singularity as it was from the futile and changing absurdities of fashion. The company walked through the room, conversing on various subjects. On bye-tables were refreshments for such as chose to partake of them; at intervals, musicians came in, who charmed them with the melody of that delightful and innocent art. The company were numerous, and composed of people

of several professions and denominations, with a view to exclude pedantry as much as possible; but they were acquainted, and did not push, jostle, and stare at each other, as if they were at Guildhall during a city of London election.

The Reviewer took Sir Thomas aside, and told him, that books and criticism had so much engrossed his attention, that he shone not in conversation; that an idea had struck him, that he hoped might be acceptable.

Sir Thomas wishing to know it, he said, that as the Roman cardinals held conclaves for the election of popes, who may be called the colossal arch-impostors of the ancient but perverted European religion, he thought that they might form a conclave of authors, critics, booksellers, and printers, for the purpose of choosing a leviathan (if not a pope) of criticism, under the denomination of Reviewer-general of all books in all languages. Sir Thomas smiled at the idea, and said it would not be an easy matter to find such a man. "Po!" said the Reviewer, "I will introduce

you to such a number of wits, critics, and authors, that we may easily choose one altogether fit for such a perilous and even transcendent station." Sir Thomas consented; and the Reviewer engaged to introduce them to him at the next night's conversations. Those of this night were agreeable, lively, and entertaining; without wine, without play, without scandal, without tea; with cool heads in the morning, and no uneasy feelings during night.

Next evening there assembled in the great room of Sir Thomas's house a number of the most celebrated authors and critics of the times. A great table of characteristic English oak was placed in the middle of it; chairs made of the ivy tree graced the sides, with two huge arm-chairs, one at the head, the other at the foot, made from that symbolical tree of genius, the first for the president, Sir Thomas, the other for the Reviewer as vice-president.

Then came into the room the orthodox champion, a man of fine aspect and noble countenance. From a mean degree, his life, by the force of genius, became splendidly use-

ful; by infirmities and disasters, it ended piteously unfortunate; but he showed, that poetry, logic, and metaphysics, can be produced by the same brain, and be the instructive and agreeable composition of one man.

Along with him came his noble assistant, if not his master, the philosopher Acutus. His life was useful and grave, but agreeable, and one that the Almighty transmits to man for his solace, in the so much important knowledge of himself.

Another entered with them as their coadjutor; a man small in stature, but great in genius and mind; obscure in life, but known to posterity; a companion worthy of their exertions, their never-dying exertions in the cause of truth.

They threw over the dark bleakness of the north, rays of resplendent light: their united efforts strangled Atheism, humbled Irreligion, trampled under foot Deism, and sunk their baleful principles and doctrines into the lowest regions of Tartarus, there to weep and bewail for the miseries they brought on the human

race. There next appeared, with a fine aspect, and handsome person, unsmelt of the college, and appertaining to the senate and the world, the unpremeditated orator of human kind; from his full blue eye sprung the vast conceptions of genius, with the luminous energies and force of the understanding.

With these, there unhappily entered the room, in a species of disguise, two men, the reproach of the times, and the bane of virtue and liberality of sentiment.

The first was the apostle of faction, democracy, and turbulence; the obliquity of his vision was, the reflection by which the Devil directed all his thoughts, and by which mankind had a full view of all that worked within him. Rebellion, endangered by profligacy, littleness of mind, squatting down in the dirt along with personality, impiety leading a dance in which obscenity formed the principal figure, and all reproached by intrepidity of mind in the cause of liberty.

The other, St Clericus Seleratus, entered, with his forehead stamped by low and inde-

cent vice; illiberality stained his vulgar countenance; his black coat reproached, and its colour upbraided, his life and his manners; while imagination, in the bitterness of poetical composition, exposed the whole to the just and moral indignation of mankind.

But the assembly was highly gratified with the appearance of a man of an agreeable and unaffected aspect. He shone like a meteor in the boundless expanse of the sky. In his right hand he held modern fame, which he brandished about with incredible agility and the happiest success; but unluckily he got the name of the prolific St Volumnus. His works, though poetical, only filled the hold of a ship in conducting them to the ever-extending and shapeless mart of saleable ideas; whether on a shelf in gilt, or in a trunk in cover,—whether in the hands of a philosopher, or within the fingers of a pastry cook,—whether examined by a critic, or folded up by a seedsman,—whether cursed by a Reviewer, or bought by a tobacconist,—every sheet has its merchant and its price.

This cargo of verse, seized, forestalled, and

grasped the folly and ill taste of the times. Many more entered the room of equal and less merit; we leave them for the never-failing and true judgment, for the impartial examination of posterity. But we must introduce two, if not superior, nothing inferior to the rest.

One of them may be called the Honey-mouthed Poet. He gave a new cast, a new character, to the poetry of his time, by the full and mellifluous numbers of his verse, and, though too numerous, with classical conciseness and taste.

The other, the poet of future hope, a man of rare merit, beyond the comprehension, taste, and conception of his time. His classical imagination ill suited the enactments of commerce, the rude and boisterous attacks of faction, and the sordid nature and habits of self-interest.

We may add a third, the last mentioned, but the first on the list. It is not possible to give to him an appropriate name and character; for he shone and he erred, was present and out of sight, like the changeable wander-

ings of the sky. He appeared in the blaze of youth, the senator of modern poetry, in a rank hitherto unknown for superior genius in that line. The eccentricity of his imagination, and the force of his mind, seemed to arise from strong poetical feeling and a high pitch of enthusiasm; but sometime debased by imitations of even vulgar mediocrity in other kinds of composition.

When all the members had taken their seats, Sir Thomas got up, and said that this was a very extraordinary meeting; that he consented to the formation of it, as the Reviewer assured him that a man might be found capable of fulfilling the arduous and perilous function of Reviewer-general of all books in all languages. But he carefully concealed what he heard from others (God forbid that it were true!) that authors, booksellers, and reviewers, joined together to trade in literature, to make profit by the witless, to amass from the foolish, and lay contribution on want of taste; one writing, another praising or dispraising, and a third vending.

That they shared the profits among them like the owners of a privateer, each receiving in proportion to what he laid out; that they debased learning, discouraged genius, and imposed on the world. He hoped that he had not said too much, and he left the business in hand to their judgment and discretion.

While the assembly were deliberating on the important part they had to act, recovering the literature of their country from the attacks of low interest, acting upon the hidden and ungenerous principles of malice, they were suddenly disconcerted by the appearance of two men, the most extraordinary characters of the time,—they were the Chieftain Macbustle-kilt and Alderman Fatchops; for the Reviewer having left the room, he saw these men, and introduced them to the learned assembly without either leave or ceremony.

Character of Alderman Fatchops, a Merchant of London.

He delighted in the wealth, commerce, and bustle of that huge aggregate of houses without slate, and streets without regularity,—narrow and crooked lanes in continual impediment and interruption,—where foul air is cooped up, coal-smoke, mixed with damp fog, gulped down in the morning instead of wholesome bread and palatable butter,—where the loaf is the compound of yeast, grounded bones, sawdust, and alum, that binds up the bowels like an iron stopper in a bottle of aquafortis,—where fish is prevented from invading the smelling sense by pouring water upon it twenty times a day, and then sold in dear pittance to mock the stomach it cannot satisfy,—where overabounding, unacquainted mortals meet, jostle, and stare at each other, and are as far beyond the true and useful standard of society as the barbarous inhabitants of the woods and wilds fall short of it. The Alderman was insensible

to the intolerable noise of waggons, carts, and carriages.

The pent-up small coffee-room, where thirty persons sit talking politics, and whiffing up tobacco-smoke until the ceiling *totally* disappears, with the putrid effluvia of a small necessary place a few yards off, never discomposed the smelling sense by his nostrils. The pride of an official citizen shone cordially in his face, when he saw at table, on Christmas day, a roast, ten inches on the rib, voiding, as the knife cut it, unctuous fat like whale-blubber juice, gorged down in the sensual excess of gluttony.

At a city-election in Guildhall, he resembled a fighting angry Turkey cock beat by his antagonist, his snout hanging down, flabby, red, and long.

The Alderman's belly in this encounter appeared not prominent, but flatted off like the turtle's, with its strong, savoury, and green fat. On that day, a heavy dulness and unusual sadness invaded his countenance; his gold chain and purple attire availed him not; he retired

from the gross turbulence in vexation and discontent.

But let us speak of the worthy Alderman as he is, and without malice. A staunch supporter of government, he sticks as close to the Cockpit as a whore to the guinea of an impotent lord or tipsy man of fortune. His long white face changes colour and aspect when he sees what he thinks the enemies of our constitution; it then appears as short as that of a terrier hunting a badger.

The Alderman is a man of great political courage. At a meeting of the democratical freeholders of Middlesex at Hackney, he singly held up his hand against their resolutions, although one thousand of them were ready to devour him like so many foxes on the scent of a fat goose. This Alderman is a most eccentric character. From the luxury of city-dinners, spread out with venison, salmon, grouse, turbot, currie, and custard, enjoyed and digested by Burgundy, claret, and champaigne, profoundly sleeping on down in the finest Holland sheets, at once he appears like a Highland

chieftain reposing in armour on a heather-bed, with a greyhound on each side of him; his pillow the fog of the rein-deer, wrapped up in Rob Roy tartan.

When he lately appeared at the Edinburgh Court in the Highland dress, his knees above the hose resembled two immense Bologna sausages. As that stupendous work, the Caledonian Canal (worth a hundred subsidies), is now open, the Alderman, in his yacht, should enter it at Fort William and sail to Inverness, enjoying the grand nautical tour—gliding between mountains touching the skies—rivers rushing down in torrents from them—lakes of immeasurable depth—and huge pending cliffs threatening destruction to all below.

The Conclave was forcibly struck with the original and odd appearance of these men; one completely out of character, and the other considerably beyond it.

There were men in the assembly with nerves unhinged and eyes sunk in their sockets; they stared at the Chieftain with amazement and terror. When they saw the arch of his

brow, that resembled the curve of a Lochaber axe, a few of them looked at him as an emigrant, swab-bellied, broad-faced Manchester shopkeeper would survey an Indian on the western shore of the lake Winipeg, with his tomahawk ready to strip off the skin from his head as fast as a chambermaid would slip the cover from a pillow. The Alderman, on the contrary, excited among them so much merriment, was the cause of so many sallies of wit and humorous remarks, that Sir Thomas found it impossible to preserve the gravity so necessary for such an assembly; and for this reason he dissolved it, after telling Fatchops that he should never again appear in a dress and character so unbefitting the senior gravity of an alderman, the enterprising and shrewd character of a merchant, and the sober gait and plain manner of a citizen.

He admonished the Chieftain for want of courtesy, and for pushing too far a character now lost in the refinements of luxury and the selfish pursuits of interest and gain.

Among the company there was an eccentric

but learned parson: he requested to speak a few words, which, having been granted, he said, that those whose writings deny and derange the consoling hopes of immortality,—archbishops, who give dinners with the six superior wines and a dessert, and a scarified peppered devil to spur on that appetite which has already been crammed and cloyed by excess and superfluity,—the gambler, who coolly, soberly, and designedly, goes to ruin the unwary, ensnare the unsuspecting, entrap the undiscerning, forces them to suicide,—instigates the wrong-brought-up female to commit desolation and infamy in her family,—he said, that these and bribed reviewers go to hell only.

Sir Thomas asked the parson how works of genius had been lost and might perish in time to come? He replied, that the incursions of barbarous nations into learned and civilized countries was the most common cause of their destruction, but that there might be others; that he believed it impossible for the strongest understanding, assisted by the best memory

and the greatest duration that has been known in life, to retain knowledge of all the literary productions that have appeared and may appear through the successive ages of the world; that, although these were only copies of the original ideas which the Almighty has allowed to human nature, yet that they might be so greatly multiplied and diversified, and put into so many new and different lights by books in many languages, and by such an art as printing, wherever refinement and much civilization take place, that it is no wonder if the brain of frail and mortal man could not contain them all, nor any more of them than he is capable of retaining and bringing into use; and for these reasons, he thought that a number of good books had and might perish through the immensity of time. He said, that ill printing would have the same effect that the want of it formerly had; for that, after the lapse of many centuries, books badly printed could not be read, from a deficiency in the materials that composed them; that, unless better printing prevailed, and better paper was made use of, they might

be lost in the same manner as before the art of printing was known, if such bad impressions were not constantly and regularly kept up, which could not be well supposed in the decline of literature and the natural decay of genius; so that nothing more deserved a heavy tax than bad print, since good printing was the noblest and most durable monument hitherto found out for recording the ideas and the actions of men.

PART VII.

THE CRITICS' DIALOGUE—A CONVERSATION BETWEEN DOCTOR UTERECTUS VANDERBLAASBOLG, A LEARNED GERMAN, AND TOM PRINTWIT, COMPOSITOR, AND FRIEND OF THE LONDON REVIEWER.

Printwit's Lodgings.

Enter BLAASBOLG.

Blaasbolg. I presume, sir, that you are Mr Printwit, the London Reviewer's compositor and friend?

Printwit. I am that humble person.

Blaasbolg. Though humble, yet learned and ingenious.

Printwit. Commendations must be accept-

able from a person of your stately, learned-like, and grave deportment.

Blaasbolg. Expressed in a scientific manner, it bespeaks the correctness of the press.

Printwit. I am proudly gratified by your compliment; but favour me with an account of yourself since I have been honoured by a visit from you.

Blaasbolg. Sir, I am Doctor Uterectus Vander Blaasbolg, a German; I came over to England to try my fortune with a new book; and as I find that you are not only the compositor, but the friend of the noted London Reviewer, I am come to solicit your favour with him as to the due analysis and critical examination of my book.

Printwit. May I ask the subject on which it is written.

Blaasbolg. Sir, it is written upon the complicated legislative government and military constitution of the German empire, the balance of its power, and the consequence and rights that belong to each prince and potentate of it, from him who commands 200,000 men

to him who gravely keeps in pay a corporal, three men, two yagers,* and a sentry, and upon the quantity of British money that each of these should receive in proportion to the number of his troops and his influence at the court of St James's.

Printwit. A most learned, wise, and important subject: but as you wish that your book should be examined critically, might you not wish at the same time that a little praise would be bestowed upon it?

Blaasbolg. Aye, indeed, sir, I believe I would, if it were convenient to grant it.

Printwit. Do the words, judged critically, and examined learnedly, mean praise in Germany?

Blaasbolg. They almost do, sir.

Printwit. Then, sir, I must inform you, that England and Germany are very different countries.

Blaasbolg. I am sorry for that, sir; but I am told that there is a most agreeable inter-

* Gamekeepers, or Huntsmen.

course between the reviewers and booksellers of your great town.

Printwit. Whatever is said upon that score must be in close and secret confidence.

Blaasbolg. You may depend on my secrecy and taciturnity: The Emperor could not more depend upon the secretary to the Aulic Council.

Printwit. Our reviewers and booksellers agree as well in these cases as our ministers of state agree when they give a subsidy to a German Prince.

Blaasbolg. I am dissolved in joy, I am ravished to ecstasy: but pray, what are the fruits that arise from such uncommon conjunctions of criticism, venality and wit?

Printwit. Why, sir, our books are magnified and multiplied exceedingly; and lest the reader might forget the meaning of their contents, it is expressed thrice in different parts of the same book. A trade is carried on in diffuse, disjointed, and turgid ideas, in disguised repetitions, in verbose circumlocutions in tautology and antithesis; so that huge bales

of such incongruous and hasty materials are packed up for home-consumption and exportation.

Blaasbolg. I am transported to the regions of literary fable and inconsistency! But, sir, do these reviewers and booksellers diminish books as well as enlarge them?

Printwit. They do, sir; and then the scissors and the clipping knife are applied without mercy, our most intelligent and comprehensive authors are curtailed, mutilated, and condensed, so that nothing remains but obscure hints and conceited ideas.

Blaasbolg. I am confounded, I am agonized between hope and fear!

Printwit. Be not afraid, sir; your book shall have its chance in this trade, like any other, and by ways and means it may have a favourable shove given to it into the world.

Blaasbolg. I thank you, dear Printwit, but I do not correctly understand the import of the words, Ways and Means.

Printwit. Why, sir, they have two meanings; in politics they mean laying on thousands

to pay millions; in literature they mean the arts of putting a Reviewer in good humour, paying close attention to his foibles, and his manner of life.

Blaasbolg. But, Mr Printwit, it is surprising that all this time I never asked you how the Reviewer spent his time in his library.

Printwit. The Reviewer has no library.

Blaasbolg. No library! What would a German critic, or a Doctor of the Jusgentium, say to this?

Printwit. He sold it long ago, after getting every word of it by heart.

Blaasbolg. Mercy on me, what a memory! Are you sure, sir, that you tell the truth?

Printwit. Most certainly.

Blaasbolg. But the library must have been very small, a few volumes only.

Printwit. No, sir, it contained many and many volumes.

Blaasbolg. Heaven preserve me from arguing or disputing against such a man!

Printwit. Yes, sir, it is fortunate for you that you did not; for he would have vexed,

puzzled, contradicted, humbugged, perplexed, browbeat, and bamboozled you.

Blaasbolg. O Germany! I would rather have argued against thy whole diet, Aulic Council, and all the Universities; I would, I would; it is no wonder that a new book should be basted, worried, devoured, nay, and annihilated by such a memory. Ha! were Scaliger alive, I would ask him, how new books could exist among such memories: they cannot, they must not, they should not.

Printwit. But, Mr Vander Blaasbolg, though the Reviewer has so prodigious a memory, I have heard of men who have as much judgment.

Blaasbolg. You rejoice me; perhaps my book may yet have some small chance of existing, some fortunate, though faint escape from being devoured.

Printwit. Perhaps it may, sir, provided you can put it into the Reviewer's hand at a proper time of the day.

Blaasbolg. Ha! you revive me, you raise my spirits like a drinking match at our great,

noisy, protesting, and ill-agreeing diet. At what time should that be?

Printwit. Exactly when he awakes, at eleven, and has had a long, a sound, and loud snoring sleep.

Blaasbolg. Most excellent! but would you advise me at that time to make the Reviewer a little present?

Printwit. O Lord, sir, you little know him when you talk in this manner.

Blaasbolg. Ha! how so? do you not think that a Spanish doubloon piece, or a ten pounds Bank of England note, might be put to advantage into his hands?

Printwit. O, sir, if you but offered such a thing to him he would run away out of the house as if a mad dog had bit and pursued him.

Blaasbolg. Wonderful! a most extraordinary instance of learned virtue, of classical and critical integrity! I had no idea that such incorruptible literary manners could exist in such a bustling, trading, farming, manufacturing, electioneering, and lawyer-jeering country,

where a house is called a castle, a shop a sanctuary; where tea and bits of bread, dried like the chips of a carpenter's shop, are called breakfast; ham, cold beef, and warm poultry, are called a lunch; meat, fish, fowl, and pudding, are scarcely called a dinner; where tea, chocolate, and coffee, (a few hours after,) with bolts of bread and butter, sweet bread and short, buttered buns, and cakes engrossed with raisins and suet, all helped down by marmalade, jelly, and honey, are called drinking tea; and where steaks, chops, and toasted cheese, are called a supper; and going to bed, is as full as a puncheon of rum after the last plug is put into it; and where wealth and interest absorb every thing up, like the proboscis of an elephant in a great bucket of water.

Printwit. I think, Mr Doctor, that is rather saying too much of us.

Blaasbolg. I hope not, sir; I thought it merely too much for me. But though the Reviewer would not take money in this open manner, perhaps he might accept of some place under your government, if I could procure it

for him, by the interest of our ambassador at your court.

Printwit. Doctor, if you only spoke to him of such a thing, he would fall into such convulsions, that his stomach would get up half way towards his throat.

Blaasbolg. Astonishing! what a delicate conscience and refined stomach!

Printwit. Both are so, sir, to the extreme movements of sensibility.

Blaasbolg. Then, sir, I need not offer to him another present that I thought of?

Printwit. What is it, sir?

Blaasbolg. Why, it is a compact, round, juicy buttock of beef.

Printwit. Nay, sir, perhaps that might be acceptable to him; it might settle his stomach, and blunt the squeamishness of his conscience; and I do deliver it as my opinion, that if the Reviewer can bring himself to accept any present, it will be a round, compact, and juicy buttock of beef.

Blaasbolg. Happily and rarely hit upon! But, sir, I think that you mentioned that I

must deliver the book to him, precisely at 11 o'clock forenoon, just as he has awoke from a snoring, soporific and oblivious sleep?

Printwit. Yes, I said so, and still think so.

Blaasbolg. But do you think that the buttock of beef should be delivered to him at the same time?

Printwit. Yes, sir; but you must first make a present to his chambermaid, who will introduce you to the Reviewer; that over, make him a low bow as you enter the room, another in the middle of it, a third within a yard of him; then place the book and the buttock exactly in his lap, and I will forfeit the price of all the books in Paternoster-Row and Lackington's shop if your book is not extolled and praised to the many editions so eagerly desired by all ambitious authors.

Blaasbolg. My lovely, ingenious Mr Printwit, much am I obliged to you; how shall I reward you?

Printwit. By a Dutch cheese and a firkin of red herrings.

Blaasbolg. You shall have them by the very first tract-scoute that arrives from Holland.

PART VIII.

When the Reviewer walked home from the Conclave with some of his friends, they asked him, why he did not join more in the conversations? "Ha!" says he, "the Alderman and the Chieftain disconcerted all my measures: as to the first I might have got the better of him; but the Indian look of the other, and the point of his dagger, that stuck out through the scabbard, had such an effect on me, that I would have given L.100 for a sight of the Lord Mayor, at his court in the Mansion-house; besides the diversified strange cloth, called tartan, affected my eyesight, and made it as yellow as if I had the jaundice." But to divert his mind from such thoughts, he intended to erect a great monument to the honour of literature, of which he had been think-

ing for a long time, and that he would inform them of it to-morrow in the Criticism-chamber.

They met next morning at the usual hour, and the Reviewer addressed them in the following manner:—

"Gentlemen, you have often heard of the fascinating, inspiring, poetical mountain of Parnassus; it has been the constant, regular, and never-failing admiration and exultation of the Grecian and Latin poets, our masters and administrators in the fruitful and teeming region of the imagination, and the airy, flighty, and bamboozling one of the fancy; it is our misfortune and loss to have no such hill in this country. We have the peak of Derby and Snowdown, Ben-Nevis and Wrenning—names not likely to kindle the fire of genius, nor light up the vigour of the imagination. No nightingale was ever heard to exert his throat upon any of them; they remain unsung, unrecorded, unlamented by poet, historian, or critic. But the invention of a critic, when he is in good humour, can make up

wants, supply defects, clothe destitutions, and heal up deteriorations; what nature has denied and not given to our dear country, we can supply by the supererogations of art. Suppose we erect an artificial Mount Parnassus, and make up in this manner for what has been so niggardly, unkindly, unhandsomely, unaremly, and ungainly denied to us."

Dr Skylight said, that the thought was not a bad one; Charles Bearskin said, it was an excellent one; George Dreadthunder, that it was a bold one; and Dr Kilglister said, that it equalled the thoughts of those huge men who laid the foundation of the Giant's Causeway in Ireland. He then asked their advice as to the place in which it should be erected. One mentioned the dry, elevated situation between Highgate and Hampstead; another, Salt-hill; but Andrew Buskinfoot said, that a hill of this kind could not be looked upon as complete, unless it was surrounded by water, at least for the greater part, and on that account he proposed the Isle of Dogs. All the critics agreed with Buskinfoot, and allowed

that he had found out the most proper place; and that the hill should be erected there.

The Reviewer then informed them, that two of their number should be deputed to fix upon a proper site for it; that they should make out an estimate of the expense necessary for such a glorious undertaking; that they should engage workmen, buy horses, oxen, and carts, wheel-barrows, hand-barrows, spades, picks, crow-irons, and every necessary tool and implement, and then report the progress they had made in as short a time as possible.

The critics deputed Dr Kilglister and George Dreadthunder to carry into effect these their resolutions, with an injunction to wait upon Alderman Fatchops, and solicit his interest and assistance with some of the liverymen and common council of the city of London. The deputies departed, and the critics went to the house of Sir Thomas Lycurgus, with an intention to ask his opinion of the literary phenomenon that they were about to establish. Sir Thomas received them politely; and when the Reviewer mentioned his artifi-

cial hill, Sir Thomas smiled, and said, that he would always approve and give countenance to every thing connected with literature; but before he ventured an opinion, he should like to know the purpose for which it was to be erected. He replied, that he meant it as a select place, for the better enjoyment of the exercises of criticism and extraordinary exertions of the understanding, and a repository for books of taste and genius; that the very appearance of such a hill must inspire the learned with ideas that they could not expect to find in the smoke and noise of London; that he intended to build round it a circular shelf from the bottom to the top; that it should ascend gradually like the worm of a corkscrew; that the sides of it should be planted with myrtle and rose-trees, with flowers, and whatever could please and administer to the gratification of the realization of the sensations of genius. Ned Calfleather, who was standing by, asked him, how the books were to be defended from the inclemency of the weather?

The Reviewer indignantly replied, that the books were not to be brought there but in good weather, nor were the critics to stand exposed to bad weather during the critical jubilee. He was then asked, how the books were to be placed on the shelves, and by whom their several places were to be adjudged?

The Reviewer replied shortly, that close to the shelf there would be steps to ascend by, for the purpose of placing the books on them; that he would sit himself on the top of the hill, and act as judge, and would place them according to their merits, on the first, second, middle or lower region of the hill, for into so many regions he intended to divide it; that he first intended to pull them up by a rope, but the steps would answer better. Sir Thomas heard all this with great patience; he told him, that his hill appeared to him rather whimsical; but since he would have it so, that he would propose to him an idea that had struck him regarding it, which was, to weigh the books, one against the other, before he gave them a final sentence of condemnation or ap-

proval; that he should not value a book by its size, or the laborious minuteness of its matter, or the comments that might be made upon it by prejudice or friendship, or the bad judgment of such as might set themselves up for judges of good writing, without any authority but their own.

The only part of this doctrine that the Reviewer relished, was the idea of weighing the books one against the other: he thought that it would afford some new light to his critical association, and Sir Thomas meant it merely as a literary mark to shoot at, on this novel production of his brain that he was to erect in the Isle of Dogs.

Sir Thomas asked Skylight, what he thought of writings without a date annexed to them?

The Doctor replied, that writing without a date is like a clock without a hand; it may be read, but cannot be estimated by proper portions of time, as to which it gives no information; it leaves the reader in a maze, and but little instructed, as the matter and circumstances must be so far barren, and out of the

reader's recollection, so that nothing is so necessary as dates to every species of writing; they elucidate, and make it interesting and instructing.

The Doctor was then asked by some of the company, why so many critics and commentators appear in the decline of literature, and so few in the morning and meridian of it?

He said, that literature, in its decay, is seldom attended by genius; that critics, commentators, and emendators, appear in the absence of genius, in the same manner that snow, rain, and sleet appear in the absence of the sun; that literature in its decline dresses itself out in gaudy exuberance, in what is uncommon and unnatural as well as in what is little and conceited. Critics in these cases attend in great numbers, and act the parts of emendators and retailers of fashion. One would tell the authors of this species of writing,—"Sirs, these coats of yours are too long in the skirts; allow me, with these scissors, to cut off a piece. "Your hair," says another, "is very long before; it shades your forehead; let me comb

it back and lay it over with this piece of pomatum!" Says a third, "Your hat is very small and cocked up; it does not shade your face from heat, nor defend it from rain; you really look like a monkey on a holiday." "But," says Skylight, "it often happened that these lords of fashion were themselves the worst dressed men in the company." He said, that an ill-humoured, though learned man, of a peevish, discontented spirit, if it happens to be his lot to become a critic, is the bane of taste and literature; but that a man of a generous and comprehensive spirit, on the contrary, when he ranges through the various ideas of men on various subjects, culls, like the bee, the various sweets and sensibilities they afford, mildly condemning the dross as unworthy of his serious regard.

Sir Thomas asked Skylight to what he could compare a reviewer?

Says the Doctor, "I think a reviewer may be compared to an angry woman; he is always in a state of irritation, and pours forth upon every occasion a number of words that

are not necessary; but, like a woman, if you sooth him with mild words, or make him a present suitable to his temper, he is in good humour again immediately. But human nature is so various, that a reviewer at other times may be compared to a cat; for you may feed him, and stroke him in your lap as much as you please, but he seldom leaves you without giving you a scratch on the hip for your pains."

He observed, "that when a reviewer reads a new book, he resembles a jockey buying a horse; he contracts his eyes, and screws up his features, so that no fault may escape him; as he reads on, if he sees a number of beauties, he resembles a miser in a goldsmith's shop, he burns with envy and desire, because all these fine things are not his own."

All seemed pleased with the Doctor's comparisons; but Calfheather hinted that he did not think them complete; and Sir Thomas asked his opinion of the matter. He said, that he thought a reviewer not unlike a pawnbroker, since all he disposes of once belonged

or does belong to other people. "But," says Ned, "he is not so generous as the pawnbroker, for he gives nothing for what he receives."

He asked Calfleather what he thought of marriage? Ned replied, that, not being married himself, he could not decide properly on the merits or demerits of it; but that he once heard a Jew say, who had been ruined by one of his wives, that a wise man never marries, that a fool marries once, a great fool twice, and the greatest fool of all three times. Sir Thomas sharply rebuked Calfleather for his misplaced as well as improper wit on such a necessary institution, respected even by Polygamists, and held sacred among all nations in any degree removed from the state of nature, although the wrong, the light, and perverted education of females made it so often unfortunate, added to the riding and carousing education of the males, added to both the failings, the vices, and the follies of each.

"That may be true," said Ned; "but I

have heard it said, that, when Eve pulled the fatal apple of the paradise tree, and when she held up the shining luscious fruit to her husband, the devil, with the shape and in the disguise of a French lawyer, stepped in between them; that the arch-rascal, by a glance of his eye, without uttering a word, persuaded Eve to eat the apple; that in her mouth it became, by the warmth of her constitution, an acrid bitter gall that she squirted into Adam's face. From henceforth and evermore arose dissension between man and wife. The marks of small-heeled shoes on cheeks swelled up with roast-beef and turtle, with ragouts, fricandoes, and grosse soupe, with olios, macaroni, and sour crout. From this portentous era were glanced sour looks of the morning, complaining of night, jealousy without cause, and cause for jealousy, contradiction when weak, and a box on the ear when strong, cold upbraiding silence at one time, and hot rattling talk at another, gallants leaping out from windows, and husbands knocking hard at doors,

peevishness and brawling, passion and indifference, misadvised perverseness, and misapplied indulgence."

Sir Thomas, addressing himself to Calfleather,—

"Pray, sir," says he, "is a reviewer an author or a critic?"

Says Ned, "He is neither the one nor the other, but, I think, he partakes of the qualities of both; he may be called a critic in the same manner that a seal may be called a fish, and he has the same right to be called an author that a fish has to be called a seal." This comparison occasioned a smile, but it did not determine the matter. Several remarks were made upon authors and books. Skylight asked Ned the following question: "If you knew that a reviewer had a mind to condemn a well-written book, what species of direction or receipt would you give to him for the accomplishment of so laudable a purpose?"

Ned replied, that if they gave him half an hour in another room, he would endeavour to write such a receipt as he thought ought to

be given in such a case. His request was granted, and Ned, at the end of the time allotted to him, presented the company with the following receipt for a reviewer when he has a mind to condemn a good book:

"After you get up in the morning take a glass of brandy,—breakfast,—take after it a great cup full of coffee of unusual and extraordinary strength; then go to a stationer's shop, buy the largest swan's quill that you can get there; after this is done, go to a cobbler's stall, get the loan of an awl from him; go to your lodgings and shape the quill like a pistol, bending and moulding the feather-end of it for that purpose; cut off the end of the quill part, clean it out, and scrape with a sharp knife the outside of it, so that it may have the appearance of a small pistol-barrel; take your awl, and bore a small hole for a touch-hole; charge your pistol; put into it for powder three grains of rage, ram them down with an old pencil that might be found among the curiosities Doctor Bently has left behind him; take for a wad any small piece of the writings of

John Dennis, ram it down in the same manner; for shot take two grains of envy, three of malice, and two and a half of detraction; after ramming them well down, take for a second wad, three lines of Wooton's abuse of Sir William Temple; then take the small top that you cut off from the quill-end, shape it as well as possible into the form of a pan for the touch-hole; fill this pan with four grains of the essence of irritability, then roll up your feathered pistol in a sheet of your last review; go to the bookseller's house who sells the book that you look out for; ask as a favour of his wife to give you the use of her petticoat for a short time, and a farthing candle along with it: when you are provided with these, ask as a very particular favour of the bookseller, to give you the use of his shop to yourself alone for a few minutes; after he has turned his clerk and apprentice out of it, and gone out himself, locking all the doors, then go to the inside of the counter; place yourself just opposite to the book you wish to condemn; put the petticoat over your head, so as to hide all but the eye

by which you mean to take aim, in case any one might look in through a small hole or chink; after taking a steady aim, apply the farthing candle to the touch-hole, and fire your pistol off at the book; then say, in as loud a voice as possible, May the Lord have us in his holy keeping!"

PART IX

In walking home, he was full of the agreeable idea of weighing the brains of men of genius in a pair of scales. He told Calfleather to come to him early in the morning, so that they might get every thing ready for the erection of the hill. When he went to bed, he began to muse on the conversation he had with Sir Thomas Lycurgus; his mind was expanded with joy at the thoughts of sitting in judgment on all the books, ancient and modern; on all the remains of the ingenuity and wit of man, the compressed memorial of the multitudes that have appeared in the world since the creation. In the extravagancy of his fancy, he figured to himself a hill little inferior to the beautiful original in Greece, though the mark of a spade had not as yet shewn the spot on which it was to stand. He dozed on in this

manner until Ned Calfleather came to his door at the dawn of day. "Ned," says he, "I have been all night thinking on my artificial and critical mountain of Parnassus, on the top of which I intend to sit in judgment on *all* the books that have hitherto appeared in the world."

"Sir," said Calfleather, "if you sit on your buttocks on the hill, like a shepherd looking at a flock of sheep, those below will be apt to treat you with ridicule; numbers of people will come to the hill from curiosity, and whoever is curious is apt to ridicule what does not suit the standard of his taste and judgment. Sir, you should get made for yourself a magnificent chair for so glorious a business; nay, one made of ivory, and mounted with gold; and if you choose, I will instantly go to the Alderman, so that he may order one to be made for you by the first chair-maker in the city." At the end of this conversation, the Doctor, Kilglister, and George Dreadthunder entered the room, in order to give in a report of their proceedings. They joined in the con-

versation as to the chair; one of them said, that it would be too expensive; and the other, that it would be too gaudy. They proposed a chair made of cedar or lignum vitæ. The Reviewer told them, that he would have no chair at all, but that he would get for himself a seat more conformable to his function than one made of either wood or ivory; that he would sit in judgment on large, elegant folio editions of the works of Scaliger, Tycho Braché, and Hugo Grotius. The company approved of his choice. He then called for the report of Messrs Kilglister and Dreadthunder, who gave it in as follows:—They had hired 600 workmen, 80 horses, 74 oxen, 67 carts, 200 wheel-barrows, 100 hand-barrows, and as many spades, picks, shovels, and mattocks, as would fill the largest parlour in the London Tavern: that they waited on Fatchops, who received them with the blunt frankness of an English merchant. He gave them assurance of his assistance to the monument they were about to erect for the honour and advancement of literature; for that next to the safe ar-

rival in port of a British ship, books and every thing belonging to them were the matters that he most delighted in. He told them, that he would attend and assist them with two aldermen, fifty common council men, twenty clerks, and thirty stock-brokers; that he would march these hundred men, preceded by six hogsheads of good porter, on a wain drawn by a mule of extraordinary size and strength; for the weather might be warm, and such beverage necessary; that he would place one alderman at the head of these men, the other in the rear, and that he would place himself in the centre. All present commended the zeal of the Alderman, and admired his wealth and power in the city, when he could command so many men with a brace of aldermen.

The Reviewer then told all the gentlemen present, that they were to meet at five o'clock next morning in St Paul's Church-yard, with the labourers, horses, oxen, implements, &c. He appointed George Dreadthunder to lead the van; Dr Kilglister to push up the centre, and Robert Macport to spur up the rear;

Charles Bearskin, quarter-master; Ned Calf-leather, adjutant; and himself general of the expedition. Andrew Buskinfoot was sent on his embassy to the city, and each received a copy of these orders and appointments.

At five o'clock next morning they assembled in St Paul's Church-yard. The Reviewer appeared mounted upon a great dray-horse, Dr Kilglister on a small red Welsh pony, and George Dreadthunder rode an ass. Robert Macport appeared on foot;—all those who passed by admired the breadth of his shoulders, that threw the reflection of strength on the muscular rotundity of the calves of his legs. Ned Calfleather dressed the men three deep, with the horses, oxen, and carts, (filled with the implements,) behind them, and at seven o'clock the march began. The signal was given by George Dreadthunder; he drew a little rusty hanger that hung by his side, and brandished it thrice. Kilglister fired a pistol in the centre, and Robert Macport struck one of the horses on the buttock with a great oak stick. At these formidable signals

of departure, if not of war, the procession moved slowly on down through Eastcheap, and the streets that lead to Tower-hill, to the amusement of an immense number of silent but amazed spectators.

Charles Bearskin, the quarter-master, had orders to go on to Tower-hill, to provide breakfast for the men, and some oats and hay for the horses and oxen when they arrived there. Ned Calfleather, being as yet young in his function of adjutant, and not thinking attendance on a march a very particular part of it, went along with him. As they passed through Gracechurch-street, Bearskin proposed that they should go to an inn, and take what might warm the morning air on their stomachs; Calfleather consented, and they entered one of these great wide inns, where are galleries on the first and second floors, and from which a number of ill-furnished bed-chambers lead off for the accommodation of the passengers of various stage-coaches that come in of a morning to such inns, with a number of travellers, who jolt on all night, and who appear

half asleep, besoiled with hay and straw; some with night-caps on, others with hairy caps, and some with their stockings drawn over their knees, besotted and bedizened, by often unnecessary fatigue and the want of natural and necessary rest.

The quarter-master and adjutant went into a small parlour, and having paid for their morning stomach-bracer, they took their departure, and were met at the door of the inn by the waiter, chambermaid, boot-cleaner, hostler, porter, chaise-driver, stable-boy, and cook, each of them demanding some gratuity. Charles Bearskin began to murmur at their demands.

"Have patience," said Calfleather, "and be thankful that the master and mistress have not made their appearance likewise." Ned, in a facetious manner, told them, that they had not slept in the house; that they had neither chaise nor horse; and that they had nothing along with them but wit,—a commodity the least fit in the world to put any thing into one's

pocket. These tavern-beggars muttered a few words of disapprobation and went away.

"It is a strange matter," says a foreigner, who stood by, "that a people so proud, so rich and great, and so fond of their liberties as the English, will allow themselves to be teased and imposed upon by such people."

Andrew Buskinfoot performed the embassy to the Alderman with alertness, and much about the time that the Reviewer marched from St. Paul's Church-yard, the Alderman marched with his troops from the front of Guildhall, preceded by the great mule and the six huge-heads of porter. He marched down Cheapside, passed the Exchange, went down the Minories, and when the Reviewer appeared at one end of Tower-hill, he appeared at the other; each of them halted on a sudden, and gave a shout, like two straggling parties of an army, that had accidentally met after having been separated in a battle by the superior force of an enemy. When they met on the hill they shook hands, and congratulated each

other on having so far advanced to the completion of their purpose. Charles Bearskin provided breakfast for the men, and hay and oats for the horses and cattle; but a quarrel had nearly happened here of a serious nature. The Reviewer's labourers were all uncouth men, collected together from various parts of the country, few of them having seen a town of any size before; they were ill dressed, and answered the description of Mr Dryden's clown, who stood with stupid eyes and gaping mouth that testified surprise. When they saw the stock-brokers and jobbers they stared at them with haggard looks, having never seen so many fine clothes and cunning faces before. The stock-brokers, on the other hand, stared not a little at them, and scoffed and sneered at their rustic and odd manners. Curiosity and contempt are ingredients not likely to agree long together; the labourers advanced so far as to square elbows with the brokers, when the critics and Fatchops led them both off to breakfast. Breakfast finished, they all met to form the march to the Isle of Dogs. The

Reviewer wished to shew the Alderman all the respect and attention in his power, in return for the ready and cheerful assistance that he gave to his expedition. He told him to take the post of honour, and his men were posted there accordingly. The Reviewer posted his men, horses, oxen, and implements near him. As there was no artillery, the six hogsheads of porter and the great mule were placed on the right. The signal for marching was given by the mule-driver cracking his whip three times; all then marched off down through Wapping, and about two o'clock they arrived at the middle of the Isle of Dogs, the site of the artificial and much-longed-for Mount Parnassus.

PART X.

When they arrived at the hill, orders were given for quarters to the men, for stables to the horses and oxen;—a storehouse was rented, the implements of labour and the porter were safely deposited in it. Several small matters of that nature having been settled, what next took up their attention was the size and figure of the hill, and the model from which it was to be made. After much debate, it was agreed that it should nearly resemble one of the pyramids of Egypt; that it should have a quarter of an acre of land for its basis, and the top of it should be of no more extent than what might be sufficient for a critic's seat, made of ponderous and prolix volumes of modern learning.

These matters having been settled, the Re-

viewer ordered them all to meet at five o'clock next morning.

They all met at the hour appointed, and the first hand was put to a work that had solely employed the Reviewer's thoughts for many nights; and that so completely, that he did not sleep above four hours in any one of them, and in some none at all.

So many were employed in cutting turf and sods; some in filling carts; others in shovelling sand and earth into heaps for the greater expedition; many were sent to the different nurseries in the neighbourhood for sprigs of myrtle, for young ivy, with various evergreens, that were to be set in the sides of the hill, as it mounted up to completion. The work began in the most strenuous manner:—a number of spectators were present from various parts of the country, and a multitude from the town;—many of these made it a point to assist the work; in the Isle of Dogs appeared the greatest bustle and energy; half an hour was only allowed for breakfast; the commanders and men partook of it on the ground; no shade was al-

lowed from heat; no shelter from rain; no defence from wind. The ardour of the Greeks, and the fierce perseverance of the Romans, were seen in every action; nothing was heard of but virtue, learning, enterprise, stock-jobbing, and criticism.

Breakfast over, the work began with redoubled activity; the heat of the day was great, and more than one eye was turned to a hogshead of the porter that was taken out of the storehouse by express order. Alderman Fatchops ordered it to be broached immediately, but by some accident the cask had no cock-hole, and no borer had been brought from town to broach it; the men were clamorous for drink to refresh them, and no borer could be found, the neighbourhood was all sought over, and no borer could be got. In this state of impatience and difficulty there appeared, in front of the porter cask, a person of very singular appearance, rubbing his face with a handkerchief; he was Bibulus Macquickan, the Irish wine-merchant, and great drinker, and uncle to Dr Kilglister, as

has been already mentioned. He came lately from Ireland, and was on his way to Germany, to see the huge tun of wine at Heidleberg, and the German diet at Frankfort or Ratisbon, where he understood it was the custom to have drinking-matches among the German barons. He glowed with impatience to see one of these, and to try his strength. As to his person and looks, his cheeks were so red and swollen, that they resembled two large red skins full of wine, that a mountaineer brings into a Spanish town on a festival morning on the back of an ass. His eyes appeared with a fierce sadness, the effect of excessive drinking; from Archangel in Russia to Bern in Switzerland; from Lerwick in Shetland to Penzance in Cornwall; from the Giant's Causeway to Cape Clear in Ireland, there was scarcely a great drinker or honest fellow that had not heard of him, nor among them all a man that he would be afraid to meet in the fields of Bacchus.

When no borer could be got, Bibulus Macquickan addressed the company, and asked

leave to broach the cask after the manner of his country. Seeing no borer in his hand, the crowd were impatient to see the Irish manner of broaching a cask. "Step aside a little, gentlemen," said Macquickan quietly, and with a grave face, he pulled a great horse-pistol out of his pocket, loaded with a bullet; he took his stand about three yards from the end of the cask, and taking aim, he directly hit it one inch above the lower stave; the ball pierced through; a copious flood sprung out; 100 tankards immediately surrounded the welcome stream. Praise of the Irish method of boring a cask resounded through the astonished and pleased multitude. The Reviewer advanced and shook Macquickan by the hand; the Alderman bustled through the crowd to thank him, and told him that he should have the freedom of the city conferred upon him for his ingenuity. A captain of a ship of war who stood by, gave him a smack on the shoulder: "By Gad, my hearty," says he, "I will immediately apply to the first Lord of the

Admiralty, and have you appointed rum-taster and grog-mixer to the navy."

Macquickan thanked them; he looked a little at the foundation of the mount, and said it was the most dry, unmeaning thing he ever saw. He rubbed his face a second time, and coolly walked away on his journey to Heidleberg and the great tun; for he would rather see a real German drinking-match than get the best place under government.

The porter was copiously dealt out to the thirsty workmen, who recommenced their labour with new vigour and assiduity; the myrtles, ivies, evergreens, rose-trees, and flowers, of various hues and descriptions, arrived at the hill, and were planted in the sides of it, as it ascended up to perfection; the circular shelf, and the steps close to it, were carefully carried up, and done in the neatest manner, as far as it was possible, to make them suit the form of a pyramid. An useless building, but the best hitherto contrived for duration, and which might be perpetual, if the Almighty

had not formed in the bowels of the earth what is sufficient to level it with the ground in a moment.

The hill was built up in a rapid manner; it would be tedious to mention the repetition of such labour; it is sufficient to say, that in twenty-five days it was finished. The evergreens began to grow; the shelf, and the different regions of it, with the steps to them, were done neatly and with taste; a space of six square feet was left at the top for the Reviewer to be seated upon, and the whole completed to his entire satisfaction.

But who can equal the works of nature? Notwithstanding all the trouble, pains, and expense bestowed on this hill, it had an unnatural look; it seemed to allure by a species of false and unbecoming lustre, like a demirep dressed out at a Sunday's concert, not like a young and blooming virgin, with no headdress but her own abundant hair, dressed in white, the simple emblem of her chaste and beautiful countenance.

The Reviewer, however, was overjoyed at

seeing his favourite object brought to such a happy conclusion. He got together the critics, common council-men, clerks, stock-jobbers, and labourers, as well as several others who assisted at the work; he formed them in a circle at the foot of the hill; he went to the top of it himself, and said,—

"Gentlemen, and worthy persons who have erected in the Isle of Dogs a monument to literature, receive my thanks, and be assured that posterity will inscribe your names in the Temple of Fame on tablets of brass, with pens made of adamant; receive my thanks, and be assured that nothing shall obliterate from my memory the exploit that you have performed. You will all be welcome to such exercises of criticism as may in future be performed at this hill, and in the mean time you may retire to your several homes and habitations."

He then marched back his men, horses, oxen, and implements, to St Paul's Church-yard, where he dismissed the men, and went with the horses and oxen to Smithfield, where he sold them as well as the implements. He

and his brother critics then retired each to his abode, much satisfied with the result of their labour. But before they departed, he informed them of another great procession that he intended to his new hill, and of an advertisement to that effect, and that they should meet him in the morning to hear it read.

PART XI.

NEXT day he inserted the following advertisement in all the newspapers :—

" A London Reviewer, greeting,—

" To all philosophers, poets, and historians; to all grammarians, logicians, mathematicians, and rhetoricians; to all reviewers, commentators, compilers, abridgers, and compressors; those who advertise the beauties of such an author; those who curtail the best authors and enlarge the worst; those who publish the essence of the best authors: in short, to all authors whomsoever, did their writings contain no more than a tragic comedy, when those who ought to weep laugh, and those who ought to laugh weep.

" Whereas the arts and sciences in Great Britain are neglected by ministers of state, owing to the nature and constitution of the

government of this country, that obliges them to employ all their time and abilities in keeping themselves in place, and in providing for the various persons and parties that usher them into power, and keep them in it, as long as they are subservient to their views; and as we have been sorely grieved, to see the sciences, arts, learning, and learned men treated in this manner, we have erected at a great expense, and with much trouble, and with the assistance of Alderman Fatchops, of the critics Kilglister and Dreadthunder, and several other assiduous and excellent critics, we have erected and consolidated an artificial Mount Parnassus for the encouragement of learning and genius; the said hill is situated in the middle of the Isle of Dogs, and we invite the above-mentioned learned persons to an exercise of criticism at the same, on Monday next, the 21st of May; and as we intend that a grand procession of all the authors, in and about London, should take place on that day to the said mount, we solicit their appearance at the Chapter Coffee-house, at ten o'clock at the farthest, so that all

proper measures may be taken for making the proposed procession, the most complete thing of the kind that has appeared in the world since the procession of the clergy, at the council of Trent; and may the spirit of Aristotle enter into all your conceptions."

At ten o'clock on the day appointed, a number of learned men, and men of genius, appeared at the Chapter Coffeehouse; among the most remarkable, were Bishop Exodus, and the Doctor St Bruno, the Scottish historians M'Tacitus and Livison, and with them came the great political writer, Smitosh, their particular friend, and a man in every respect worthy of them; there were the Scottish novelist, the proud but honest M'Irritation, and the Scottish divine, Glisverbo; there was the English historian, Laboricranium; there were the poets of England and Ireland, Stultumgenio, Antinatura, and the vegetable poet, the English novel-writers, Anglicato and St Spendthrift; there was the eccentric and ingenious English divine, Flavious; but the heat of the room was so great, that it overcame the delicate settin-

bility of his frame, and he was obliged to retire.

The Reviewer addressed these worthy persons; he explained fully the reasons that induced him to call them together, and he begged their advice as to the manner in which they were to march in procession to the hill, and the festival of criticism that he had advertised. The learned assembly was at first stunned a little with the novelty and even oddness of the business before them; the members of it looked at each other and said nothing; but curiosity has much power over great minds when the object of it is even small.

St Bruno said, that having passed his life among books and papers, he had no objection to take a walk the length of the Isle of Dogs.

This man was among the learned what a ram is among a flock of sheep,—whatever way he went the crowd followed him.

Bishop Exodus said, that he would not only walk to the Isle of Dogs, but that he would walk there in procession.

The poet, Stultumgenio, got up and said,

that they should all walk to the hill in procession, and that before they left the room. All present laughed heartily at this proposition, and it put the meeting in good humour, which has the effect to put reason sometimes a little off her guard; for no small portion of enthusiasm broke out for the procession; like the fire and warmth of youth after it has got free from any unjust and unnatural restraint; but enthusiasm is not a very orderly passion, and but little order was seen in the learned assembly; some were for one kind of procession and some for another; one was for marching by such a street, and another by a different street; at length the historian, M'Tacitus, got up and said, that since the Reviewer had been at so much pains and expense in erecting his artificial Parnassian hill, they should leave the management of the procession to him, and to one or two of their own number; he proposed that these two should be, the poet, Stultumgenio, and the novelist, Anglicato. The meeting consented, and the deputed members retired with the critic, so that they might have

every thing in readiness to march by one o'clock, while the rest of the company retired to breakfast.

At twelve o'clock the Reviewer and his two coadjutors appeared with the improved scheme of the procession; they proposed that the whole should march two deep, that Dr St Bruno and Bishop Exodus should lead the van; that wreaths of myrtle should adorn the Bishop's brows; that he should carry the history of the Jews under his right arm, and carry a white rod in his left hand;—that Doctor St Bruno should carry a crown of ivy on his head, with a great oak stick in his right hand, of true English growth; that the poet, Stultumgenio, and the novel-writer, Anglicato, should march up with the rear, and that the centre should be attended by the divine, Glisverbo, and John St Spendthrift, and that the rest might walk in procession, or assist as they thought proper; that the procession should be preceded by a great chest, in a cart, drawn by a Flanders mare of great size and strength, and filled with the books necessary. As soon as this plan

was read, the meeting approved of it; but St Bruno desired to be heard for a short time against the head-dress that was intended for him. He said, that such would ill become a man, who, for thirty years and upwards, had laboured in the mine of learning, oppressed by poverty and almost overcome by sickness and depression. That during all that time tea and books had been the great solacers of his life; that out of gratitude to them, he would carry a pound of tea in one pocket and a quarto volume in the other, and would not be crowned in the manner they proposed. The members of the meeting laughed heartily at the oddness of his choice, but agreed to it, and they all formed themselves in the middle of Paternoster-Row. Bishop Exodus put himself at their head, accompanied by pride, ability, ardour, arrogance, and disdain. Bruno placed himself by his side, with his pockets filled in his own way. Before these two worthies of literature were placed in a cart, the great chest already mentioned, filled with classical books, and weights to weigh them with. The huge

animal that was to draw the cart was put into the traces; her mane was dressed out in ringlets, and twisted with paper taken from the works of St Thomas Aquinas.

Those who brought up the rear had their hair bound with white fillets; those who attended the centre carried white wands in their hands; all these officers of literature were dressed in black gowns and wore broad round hats. The Reviewer at first intended to ride on horseback at the head of the procession, but he was so elated, and his spirits were so high with the success of his advertisement, in bringing so many learned men together, that nothing would satisfy him but to ride the great Flanders mare yoked to the cart.

Dr Kilglister and others represented to him that the shafts of the cart might hurt his legs, and that the stock-jobbers and brokers might jeer and ridicule him as he passed 'Change; but Dr Skylight replied, that ridicule could not hurt learning, since it is the institution of the gods; that by them it had been conveyed to the earth in order to enlighten man,—a

being in other respects of an earthly nature; that it is the only emblem of divinity belonging to him, and the sign and symbol of that future inheritance that he is to enjoy.

The Reviewer was so fully of this opinion, that he said, to do it honour, he would not only ride a mare pulling a cart, but a boar or an ass, if they carried the treasure for which he built his hill with so much labour and trouble, and from which he expected, in a short time, even that very day, a pleasure bordering on ecstasy. All matters being ready, he mounted the mare, and every one took the post allotted to him. The procession moved off slowly, at one o'clock, down through Cheapside; all the shopkeepers and apprentices of that rich and crowded street came to the doors of their shops to view it; their wives and daughters looked out at the windows; the coachmen stared, and the passengers on the pavement stopped.

When it came opposite to the 'Change, the Reviewer was aware of the stock-brokers; he put on a serious and stern countenance, not to be affected by jibes and jokes.

The jobbers and brokers stood at the south door of this mart of extreme wealth and fictitious necessity. One of them remarked, that the chest was large enough to contain all the notes in the Bank of England; another said that he would not give one per cent. omnium for all it contained; a third desired him to take care of his legs.

The Reviewer disregarded these remarks: he cracked his whip, and rode steadily on; his knees fixed to the sides of the saddle; his back quite straight; his head not moving in the least; and his looks regarding only the point immediately before him. The procession passed through Whitechapel, went by Poplar, and at three o'clock it arrived at the hill. The chest was taken off the cart with much ceremony; the great mare was sent to a neighbouring stable; numbers came to see her, and she was gazed at as if she were Bucephalus, the horse of Alexander the Great.

PART XII.

The Reviewer proposed that the chest should be opened and the criticisms begin; but St Bruno remarked, that they had a long walk, and that it was past three o'clock. This man, though he possessed a strong mind and an exalted genius, though he amused and instructed the world, and discountenanced vice, while he protected and ennobled virtue, yet he often felt the pangs of hunger in the country of Europe that possesses the greatest wealth, and that boasted the most of relieving and rewarding such men; boasted of it in the newspapers, and performed it there only. The other members of the procession took the hint given to them by the Doctor, and signified that a bit of dinner before they began might

be acceptable. The Reviewer proposed that they should go to a neighbouring inn to dine; but Ned Calfleather who came up to the chest in his busy manner, told them, that if the chest were opened, perhaps something for dinner might be found in it. The most enthusiastic of the company thought that he meant some excellent book, that might serve them for a feast of the mind if not of the body; but Ned did not relish such ideal feasts. The truth of the matter was, that in putting the books into the chest, he contrived, by some means or another, to thrust in among them a large surloin of cold roast-beef, solely with a view to pass off some pun or jest in consequence of it. St Bruno insisted on opening the chest, and in poking his long and brawny arm down through the books, he found the beef, which he took out, to the no small entertainment as well as delight of the company.

Bread and liquor were immediately ordered from an inn close by; the lid of the chest served for a table, and a most copious meal was made in a very short time; for it has

been remarked, that, whatever may be the extent of the brains of authors, their stomachs are always found to be larger and more capacious than those of other men; those of bad critics in particular, who swallow more than they can digest.

When dinner was over, the chest was opened a second time, and the Reviewer took out of it the works of Puffendor, Tycho Brahé, and Hugo Grotius, printed in huge folio editions. He tied them together with a rope, and placed them on Robert Macport's back, and told him to carry them up to the top of the hill. Macport seemed delighted with an honourable an office; he smiled and grinned all the way up; the Reviewer followed him, and placed the books on the top of the hill in such a manner as to make a very commodious seat. After sitting on them a short time, he got up and addressed himself to the multitude below; for by this time a great crowd had assembled from all parts of the city and the neighbourhood.

The Reviewer was by nature of a supercili-

ous character, and of a sour and peevish temper, yet he had keenness bordering upon ardour in his constitution, and, having a passion for learning, and becoming a critic and an author, in the course of time he became an enthusiast in his profession. The success he had in building his artificial Parnassus, and in getting so many learned men, and even men of genius together, to celebrate his criticisms at it, had nearly turned his brain; and the speech he made from the top of the hill was extravagant in the extreme, and savoured much of a dangerous state of mind. He imitated the manners of the old Presbyterians and Puritans who appeared in many parts of Europe after the Reformation. He turned up and half shut his eyes; he spoke through his nose with a canting tone, a species of eloquence that is sure to affect and please the vulgar; but it only served to disgust many of the learned men below. He got up and spoke as follows:—

"The Lord of Hosts has so far protected and brought to perfection this undertaking.

I am arrived upon the verge of the most complete learned happiness; I may shortly vie with the men on whose immortal works I have been sitting—works of huge and Herculean labour; I am as minute and prolix as Puffendorff, and as sententious as Sallust. O! were I as sublime as Homer, as eloquent as Virgil, as great as Milton, as natural as Shakspeare, and even as unnatural as Spencer! My whole life, with fervent zeal, has been passed in the cause of literature, and my soul is every day shut up within the leaves of a book. May the light of heaven shine upon these criticisms that we are about to celebrate! May these prolusions be equal to the Olympic games! and may the soul of Thucidides enter into one of the men of genius now present that he may transmit them to posterity! May the spirit of learning and the essence of criticism diffuse themselves over the minds of the multitude that surrounds this hill,—a multitude that pours joy on my heart and that clothes my loins with fat! If there are among them any enemies to literature, to criticism, to making,

publishing, vending, hawking, printing, exporting, increasing, and disposing books, may they be reclaimed, may they be retrieved."

When he had finished this short oration, he ordered the weights to be taken out of the chest; they were then properly suspended by the means of poles and other apparatus. He appointed the Doctors, St Bruno and Skylight, to weigh the books for the first day, and they were denominated the authors for the day, as were all those who filled the same important daily office afterwards. The co-operating critics had different parts allotted to them during the time that the criticisms were to last. Charles Bearskin was to take the books out of the chest, Doctor Kilglister was to manage the weights, Ned Calfleather was to take the small books up to the different regions of the hill, and Robert Macport the large ones; George Dreadthunder was to keep off the crowd, and Andrew Buskinfoot to run as messenger.

When a man offers a literary production to the world, the world is apt to ask, "Who is

he that pretends to soar over our heads in this manner, and who says to us, I am superior to you in understanding; the organs of my intellect are finer and more acute than yours; I can instruct as well as amuse you?"

Now I am inclined to think that the world is too often disposed to be unreasonable in this respect, for unless a man has within himself a strong persuasion, and even presumption, that he can instruct as well as amuse mankind, he has but an ill chance of succeeding in either; and unless somebody write for such a purpose, this astonishing aggregate of animals and fishes, of land and water, of earth, stones, vegetables, and minerals, would remain in barbarism, ignorance, and cruelty; so that the Reviewer was in the right, when, from his folio seat, with a loud voice, he ordered the criticisms to begin, and the two authors for the day to call for the books that they had a mind to weigh one against the other. Doctor Skylight called for the poems of Swift; he struck out of them a few puerile conceits and inferior poems, with all the dirty ideas, in fine language that so

much degrade him. "Take out Hudibras," says St Bruno.

Says Skylight, "Hudibras may have more wit, and it is a very singular and original production; but the verse of it is often without harmony, and too uniform for so long a work; for the best poetry tires without variety in the symphony and cadence of its measure. Swift's verse is rather too uniform, but as his poems in general are short and on various subjects, this slight defect in them appears but faintly. His humour and his wit are still more original, and the most original in the English language, or perhaps in any other; for if any composition singularly and individually belongs to one man these poems so belong to Swift."

"And it may be truly said, that no poems were ever written so fit to relieve and delight the mind under any pressure arising from misfortune," says Bruno. "We must make allowance for the different times in which both these books were written," says Skylight; "when that is made, all that you gain is, that

the one period of time is preferable to the other, which may be the reason that the last writer is preferable to the first, and he had the advantage of the other in living at his ease among the great as well as the small."

When they were weighed, Swift gradually lifted up his witty antagonist, and they were both adjudged to be placed in the middle of the second region of the hill.

Doctor St Bruno then told Charles Bearskin to take out the poetical works of Cowley. When they appeared, he asked Skylight what book he intended to weigh against them?

"Let me see your book," says Skylight. He opened the small folio edition of 1668, that Bearskin had taken out. He took a pair of scissors out of his pocket, and he cut out of it the first two lines of the second stanza of the Hymn to Light:

> "Thou tide of glory that no rest doth know,
> But ever ebb and ever flow."

"Now," says he, "I will weigh these two lines against the rest of the volume."

"Here is a new battery turned against us," says St Bruno; "I have been an author and a critic for thirty years, and I have seen nothing like this."

"I am ill used," says the Reviewer.

"I shall shortly require to be exorcised," says Bishop Exodus. The authors and critics in general seemed to be somewhat offended at the oddness of Skylight's proposition; but the candid and clear-sighted historian, M'Tacitus, told them to suspend their judgments until they heard what Skylight had to say for himself.

Says the son of the drunken engineer, "I value an author according to the number of great or beautiful or new ideas that may be in his works. I do not value a repetition of his own ideas, nor the disguise that he may give to the ideas of others, that they may pass for his own. I have often read Cowley's works, and I have found nothing in them resembling this sublime and simple description of light; an element so necessary to give animation and life to the works of the creation, that without

it we should be little better than the moles that dig in the earth. It seems," says he, "to be the coadjutor of time, and, next to heat, the greatest engine of the Almighty in the formation of the world; and I beg, gentlemen, to inform you, once for all, that, in such cases, it is not the small bit of paper and the little ink upon it that I weigh, but the conceptions of the author."

"A few lines like these," says Skylight, "charm and delight the mind; but when I see a great book, without such, how well soever adorned with paper, print, and binding, it puts me in mind of the outside of a great and fine house, but when you go in, you see nothing but little ill-lighted rooms, low passages, and narrow corners. But let me weigh my two lines," says Skylight, "and here they are against the rest of the volume." They were put into the scales, and kept a steady balance against the whole of the volume without them, so that one could not preponderate against the other; they continued in the scales a considerable time, and several remarks were made too tedious to

be mentioned here; and in the end they were both adjudged to be placed near the bottom of the second region of the hill.

"Take out," says Brutio, "the poetical works of Addison." Charles Bearskin took them out the tragedy of Cato and all; "what lines have you to propose against them?" says he to Skylight.

"Bring me out the works of Pope," says Skylight. He took his scissors, and cut out of them the Elegy on the Death of an unfortunate Lady, and desired that it might be weighed against the poems of Addison.

"What!" says St Brumo, "an apology for suicide against the virtuous performances of Addison and his patriotic Cato!"

"It is not an apology for suicide," says Skylight, "it is the plaintive feeling of a delicate and sensible heart, lamenting the misfortunes of human nature; while it shews a just indignation at the barbarous cruelty of parents and relations, in the disposal of their children contrary to their inclinations and happiness. And pray, Mr Brumuns, had not

Miss Scudamore as good a right to kill herself as Cato?" The Doctor could not deny but she had. The two performances were put into the scales, when Addison's fine volume flew up to the top of the beam, but Pope's beautiful elegy went to the bottom, like a stone fallen from the top of a chimney.

The authors for the day asked where these poetical performances should be placed on the hill? The Reviewer insisted that they should be placed at the bottom of the middle region, without any discrimination as to their merits. Bishop Exodus was much offended at this opinion, as it undervalued one of his friend's most exquisite poems, which he wished to be placed in the first region; but after a sharp and long dispute, during which the Bishop was three times in a passion, the majority of the authors and critics, with the assistance of the judicious divine Glisverbo, ordered the elegy to be placed at the top of the second region, and the poetical works of Addison to be placed at the top of the middle region.

The authors of the day were upon the point

of calling out for more books to be weighed, when Ned Calfleather came up to them, and asked, as a particular favour, to be allowed to weigh the poems of two authors, for whom he knew that the Reviewer had a great regard; and these were, the Gondebert of Sir William Davenant, and the Prince Arthur of Sir Richard Blackmore. His request was granted, and they were put into the scales; but, contrary to what had hitherto happened, both ends of the weighing-beam stood still, as if they had been seized by the dead spirit of inaction; a few good lines in Prince Arthur endeavoured to get down, but they were so much opposed by innumerable pages of absurdity, by such a crowd of indigested ideas, without choice or selection, that the remainder was nothing but a huge farrago of dulness, fitter to make men laugh than to inspire them with sentiments of heroic virtue.

The Reviewer was much displeased at seeing two of his favourite authors made a subject for laughter, by all the authors and critics, who adjudged these mock-heroic productions

to be placed in the middle of the lowest region of the hill.

When the fit of merriment was over, (and it took some time to subside,) Dr Skylight called for the political works of Addison and Steel; when they appeared, he asked Dr St Bruno whose political works he had a mind to oppose to them? "Take out," says the latter, "the political works of Lord Bolingbroke and Dr Swift."

"Ha!" says Skylight, "these men favoured France against the real interest of their country."

"It may be so," says Brounum, "but I do not believe it; and as for the first of them, I have always considered his writings on the British constitution of government, on the parties, factions, defects, and virtues that belong to it, as the standard and true criterion of the English language; for to the strength of the latter, to his clear and sententious energy, and his real English idiom, he added the beauty and sweetness so peculiar to the style of Addison."

"I suppose you will next praise his philosophy?" says Skylight.

"Sir," says Bruno, "we should not disparage what is good in the writings of any man, because he may have written what is bad: I now speak of Lord Bolingbroke's style only."

"Let us put your argument to the test," says Skylight; "weigh these books, Kilglister." The Hibernian put them into the scales; in vain did the witty Steel and the virtuous Addison endeavour to preponderate; their dissertations flew up to the end of the beam. Dr Skylight looked up, and asked the Reviewer in what region of the hill these books should be placed?

"Send them to Pluto's pastry-cook," says the Reviewer, "for I have lived to see all my critical hypothesis of no avail." Some of the members joined him in opinion, and a dispute arose as to the part of the hill in which the books should be placed. It took up much time; at last it was agreed, that the Dissertation on Parties, the Letters on Patriotism, and

a Patriot King, with the Examiner, (and some others of Swift's works, after all the factious parts had been cut out of them,) should be placed in the middle of the second region, while the political works of Addison and Steel should be placed in the centre of the middle region.

But evening now began to shew her dusky garb, like the last and departing days of man; the authors and critics agreed to adjourn for the night; the Reviewer descended from the altitude of his critical abode; sentinels were placed round the hill for the security of the books, and so ended the first day of the critical amusements.

PART XIII.

NEXT day they met at twelve o'clock. The Scotch historian, M'Tacitus, and the Scotch divine, Glisverbo, were elected authors for the day. The country of these ingenious men had of late produced the greatest historian, the greatest political writer, and the greatest traveller of modern times; and if Glisverbo was not the greatest, he was the most amiable divine of this period, and an excellent critic of the most nice discernment.*

* Glisverbo sent the first manuscript of his sermons that he intended to publish to a London bookseller for sale; the mere sheet and calf-skin vender being no scholar, could not conceive that an obscure Scots parson could compose any thing fit for the London market. Before he returned it, St Bruno, then the universal, uncontradicted arch-critic of the time, came into the shop; he saw it on the counter, read so much of it, then sat down on a huge bale of unsold

The Reviewer mounted the hill with a stiff air; he was supported on one side by Ned Calfleather, and on the other by Andrew Buskinfoot. He took his seat, and ordered the criticisms to begin.

"Take out," says M'Tacitus, "the Epigoniad of Wilkie, and the Leonidas of Glover."

When they were taken out,—"Produce your books, Glisverbo," says he. The Scotch divine ordered out the poems of Dryden. He took a pair of scissors, and in the manner of Skylight, he cut from them Alexander's Feast and Absalom and Achitophel.

"Now," says he, "I will oppose two small productions to your bulky epic poems."

Says M'Tacitus, "I never could see much merit in the poems of Dryden."

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ideas, and read on. The bookseller, surprised at so much attention, asked him, if the sermons were good? "Good!" says the leviathan of literature, "they are more than good;" and from that hour immortality was stamped on the sermons of Glisverbo, which might, but for this happy incident, have mouldered away in his bureau.

"Well, sir," says Glisverbo, "let us put them to the test."

They were put into the scales; the small poems of Dryden forced their way to the bottom in an instant, while the swelling periods of Wilkie and Glover, their many and bulky pages, buoyed up and floated like the blubber of a whale on a strong and deep sea. Glisverbo was a man of the most refined taste in the beauties and delicacies of poetical composition; and superior in this respect (but in this respect alone) to M'Tacitus, the man of his time, that possessed the most agreeable diction, with the most acute and masculine understanding in history and political writing, nor do scarcely the writings of any age exceed them. M'Tacitus was a man of exquisite humour; he laughed at the miscarriage of his opinion.

Says St Bruno, "Mr Reviewer, where shall we place these books?"

He made no answer.

"In your breeches pockets," says Exodus.

But the meeting ordered the poems of Dry-

den to be put at the top of the second region, and the Epigoniad and Leonidas to be put at the bottom of the middle region.

"Mr Bearskin," says Glisverbo, "take out the William and Margaret of Mallet; I think it the most beautiful and pathetic of all the little poems in the English language. The simplicity of it is so consonant to the character and situation of the injured person whose shade complains in it, that this circumstance alone is sufficient to render it immortal."

Says M'Tacitus, "I will oppose to it something in the poems of Waller."

Says Glisverbo, "I think if you except the lines on Cromwell's death, it will outweigh all his poems; and even these lines want the harmony and symphony of good poetry."

"Ha!" says the Reviewer, "and we are to have some of Dr Skylight's refined whims again?"

Says M'Tacitus, "I have never been addicted to passion, but I cannot well refrain from it, when I see the father of smooth English verse treated in this manner."

Now commenced a long dispute among the authors and critics on the merit of Waller's poems. Some maintained that they were excellent, while others contended, that however polished they might be, as to words and the construction of the rhyme, there were very few, if any, great and poetical ideas in them. At last they were ordered to be weighed, but not till it was agreed that the lines on Cromwell's death should be cut out of them with Skylight's pair of scissors.

They were then put into the scales, when, to the surprise of M'Tacitus, and the Reviewer's disappointment, William and Margaret pushed up Waller to the top of the beam.

Dr Kilglister then said, that since he had so much trouble in weighing books for others, he hoped that they would permit him to weigh a book for himself. The authors and critics having given their consent,—"Take out, Bearskin," says he, "Young's Night Thoughts; and, Mr Glisverbo, call out some grave book that is worthy to be opposed to them."

Says Glisverbo, "One grave book is enough at a time; I have often heard of the Night Thoughts, and often endeavoured to read them; but I never could get beyond the first night, so heavy is the diction, so remote the thoughts, and so gloomy the whole composition. At the end of the first book, I threw the volume down, tired, if not disgusted, at a turgid and metaphysical sublimity that took up so much of my time to understand; and, indeed, I doubt that these thoughts possess this last-mentioned great quality of the mind, since it is always attended by simplicity; for when Homer describes the Almighty toning the ocean out of its channel by a single movement of his hand, nothing can be more simple and easily understood, and yet I consider it as the most sublime conception that was ever produced by the imagination of man."

It is easy to conceive that a long dispute arose on these sentiments of Glisverbo. Homer was criticised from head to foot, and every one thought that the Scotch divine would have produced some book of Homer to be weighed

against the Night Thoughts; but instead of this, he ordered out Pope's Rape of the Lock; he struck out of it a few improper ideas.—"Now," says he, "I will weigh this small poem, with its gay humour, invention, and perspicuity, against all the fire and smoke of the Night Thoughts; and, perhaps, in no poem of the English or any other language, is there more of both."—Kilglister began to defend his book; but the company, finding by their appetites that the hour of dinner should not be far off, ordered the books to be weighed, when the little, pathetic, and clear-headed Mr Pope hoisted up the pompous parson in less than a minute,—so necessary are clear ideas and unclouded sentiments to every literary production.

Evening now began to cover the world with her veil, to be succeeded by night,—that kind, though often ill-received and misapplied repository for the ills of the day.

The authors and critics, in the warmth of their zeal for literature, had forgot to dine, and all agreed that supper might be a neces-

sary refreshment. But before they departed, they agreed not to meet next day till twelve o'clock, having been much fatigued with the jarring arguments that were used in the course of the debates.

The resolution of not meeting till twelve o'clock gave the Reviewer an opportunity of paying a visit to his friend, Sir Thomas Lycurgus, as shall be mentioned immediately. Guards were placed over the hill and the books, and so ended the second day of the weighings and criticisms.

PART XIV.

THE authors and critics met this day a good deal later than the hour appointed, so that the Reviewer had time to visit Sir Thomas Lycurgus, who wished to know the success of the literary adventures at the hill; he likewise expected to have had his mind soothed by the amenity of that excellent man from the disappointments he had lately met with at the critical exercises, where his opinion was over-ruled by the learned men who had assembled there to assist him. When Sir Thomas wished him joy of his hill, and the assistance which he had so indefatigably received regarding it, "Ah, sir," says he, "there is indeed a resemblance of the beautiful Grecian original; there are men and books; odd men and men at odds; we have had a grand procession or two; and the London Reviewer is placed in mock ma-

jesty on the top of the hill; but what signifies all this when his opinion is never taken in placing the books on it; if asked, it is never followed. I have abundance of futile compliments paid to me, but no respect. I resemble the cuckold husband in La Fontaine, when he is asked to the table of his wife's gallant; he is placed at the head of it; served with warm tid bits and delicate morsels, with a great deal of flattering ceremony; but what is this? nothing more than a gilded cloak to hide his disgrace and dishonour."

"Let us have patience," says Sir Thomas, "when we have no better remedy at hand."

Dr Skylight proposed to weigh the authors of most wit in the English language one against the other. At these words Calfleather's face became two inches shorter; and when Skylight called out for the works of Swift, Addison, Pope, Prior, Congreve, Vanburgh, and Wicherly, Calfleather hastened to the chest in order to fetch them from it, with the air of a young French officer making up to a woman of fashion, painted in the same style of

that country; his back and his knees became as straight as those of a dancing-master; he turned out his toes, and his whole frame moved by a species of extraordinary ragout elasticity.

When Bearskin took out the books to the scales,—"Now, gentlemen," says Skylight, "I will take out of these books what I conceive to be the witty parts of them, and I will weigh two of them against the other five." He then put the best parts of Swift and Addison into one scale, and those of Pope, Prior, Vanburgh, Congreve, and Wicherly in the other. The scale in which Swift and Addison were put hoisted up the other in as short a time as a bawd would pass the arch that leads to King's-place, having by the arm a flower of innocence, as quickly to be nipt of its fragrance as a glutton would swallow an ortolan.

The surprise excited by this weighing was hushed by St. Bruno, who said, that wit displeases and disgusts all men of worth, taste, and sentiment, when it is mixed with and partakes of obscenity, or any species of immora-

lity, as it then degenerates from its true and genuine nature, and becomes the excrescence, the diseased and polluted offspring of wealth, luxury, and profligacy.

"What then is it?" says the Reviewer.

Says St Bruno, "I never possessed it; but I think it the simple and happy essence of a great and lively understanding. Swift is the only writer in our language, or perhaps in any other, who has united to wit, humour, irony, and ridicule; and Voltaire alone excels him in ridicule, and a most simple, original, and cutting species of wit."

When the different members of the learned assembly walked away together from the hill, the Reviewer called the brethren of his labours together, and invited them to take a pot with him, as he had something of consequence to communicate to them. Kilglister, Dreadthunder, and a few more, went along with him to his lodgings. After the second pot had gone round, he got up,—"Gentlemen," says he, "there is a weight of grief upon my mind equal to twenty folios; my spirits resemble

those of a German polemic after having spun out an idea like the thread of a Flanders piece of lace; I am like an author after the condemnation of a play, or a poet borrowing the rent of a garret, or a woman of quality at five in the morning, after having lost her money, her sleep, her temper, and her reputation. I am as fretful as a child in the smallpox, or as a bawd in the presence of a magistrate; and as mortified as a member of Parliament who had been coughed down in the middle of a speech."

"And, sir," says Ned Calfleather, "what comfort would you have us administer to you?"

"Ha, Ned," says he, "I never received much comfort from you; and now you have not even a pun itself to move a little the features of the face. Your store is exhausted, and an attempt at a pun without success is the next thing to those faint imitations of reason that sometimes cross the brains of a fool."

"Sir," says Dr Kilglister, "assert your dignity, and do not repine in this manner."

Says Andrew Buskinfoot, "Sir, you have

nothing to do but to imagine yourself a hero on the stage of criticism,—go to the top of the hill, put a crown on your head, and take a sceptre in your hand, and let these fellows below know that you are the principal reviewer in London, and that you are more wise, more learned, and a better critic, than any of them. Do all this, and I will stand behind your back and be your prompter."

"By St Thomas," says the Reviewer, "I believe, Andrew, that you are in the right of it; and notwithstanding the deep draughts that you have taken of our tankard, I have a mind to take your advice."

"Sir," says George Dreadthunder, "a king or an hero should never appear without a sword by his side, and I hope you will accept of mine."

Says Charles Bearskin, "It would be more in your line to offer him some piece belonging to an electrical machine, and perhaps he stands more in need of it. I never hear you talk of swords but when there is no occasion for using them."

It was agreed that the Reviewer should take the advice of Andrew Buskinfoot; that he should assert his critical importance, and shew the authors that he was master of the hill as well as the weighings and criticisms; but Dr Skylight, who was silent during the conversation, prevailed with him to alter the crown for a mitre, and, instead of a sceptre in his right hand, to have in it the works of Aristotle, neatly bound in quarto.

About 12 o'clock the learned assembly met as usual. Smitosh and St Spendthrift advanced to the weighing scales; Kilglister stood by, ready to begin his function; and Charles Bearskin had the key in his hand with a view to open the chest, when the Reviewer rose from his seat, and having attracted the notice of the meeting, by ordering silence to be observed, he spoke as follows:—

"Gentlemen, authors, learned men, and critics, it is not necessary, and of course unnecessary, and there is no occasion to inform you who I am; but as dress, habiliments, and what in general that regulator of the day,

custom, calls raiment, makes a notorious and distinguished difference in the appearance and outward aspect and deportment of men, I think fit to inform you, and let you know, that I have this mitre on my head, this heap of ancient subtle interrogations, syllogisms, and physical interrogatories in my hand, and this electrical pipe, slung over my shoulders, solely and purely, and merely to command respect. But I have something more to tell you than all this. I swear, by the quintessence of criticism, that I will assert my dignity as a critic, grammarian, philologer, and reviewer, and that maugre and in opposition and contradiction to all that would oppose me. Do you know, gentlemen, that I am he who built this hill, and that my brain was heating for a fortnight before I could form the idea of building it; and, on that account, I hope, gentlemen, that you will allow me to manage it, and every thing about it, in my own way, or, by St Timothy, I will let you know who and what I am; and so, Mr Doctor Kilglister, begin your function."

The literary gentlemen for the day now began the combat.

"Mr Bearskin," says Smitosh, "take out the essays of my Lord Chancellor Bacon. I have always considered them as the most cool and profound maxims of wisdom that have hitherto appeared in the world; and, sir, I desire that you order out a book worthy to be put in competition with them, otherwise I will not allow it to be put into the scale."

"Sir," says the Reviewer, "you have come here to weigh books, and not to dictate as to such as may be thought worthy to be weighed."

Says St Spendthrift, "Do not be angry, Mr Critic, I will order out a book in every respect a match for his book; so take out of your chest-library the Spectator."

Says Smitosh, "The authors of the Spectator were many in number; they had nothing to do but to round their periods, and to refine their sentences; but the author of the essays was at the head of the most difficult and labo-

rious department of the law; he was likewise the first of the moderns who opened to the world the road to science and philosophy, that had for a thousand years been shut up in ignorance and barbarism; and these essays seem to have been no more than an amusement and relief to him from misfortune and old age." *

"Shew me," says M'Tacitus, "an instance in history of great ability and virtue without failings as well as faults attending them; and they appear, as to them, like small coppice-wood in a grove of stately trees; its slow growth and deformity make a contrast to the advantage of the towering pines and oaks of the forest."

"Gentlemen," says the Reviewer, "have done talking about that cold icy dame—Virtue; we hear a great deal about her, but seldom see

* It has been said that he lived solitary and alone in Gray's Inn, and so poor, or negligent, or helpless, that he was not able to indulge himself with a bottle of good ale after dinner.

her. We must lose no time, so, Kilglister, weigh these books."

"Sir," says the authors, "we must descant a little on the beauties of the book we have pitched upon,—beauties that are forgot and not read in our age. We have books of morality in abundance; but the moral is stiff and the virtue ungain, with studied sentences and obsolete words; and over all is sometimes thrown the semblance of Melancholy, with her brown veil and dusky habit; so that the young mind turns away from them with disgust."

Bruno put down his head, and Exodus smiled at his doing so.

"But in the Spectator you see Morality and Virtue like two beautiful, modest, and chaste maidens, who draw towards them the hearts of all beholders with sentiments of love rather than desire."

"Sir," says the Reviewer, "there is not a man in England that has a right to talk of maidens but Anglicato; and as he is not pre-

sent, I will not allow you to usurp his province."

They were a little offended at this; for they thought that they could lead a young girl as virtuous a dance as Anglicato, with all his furs and fences below.

"Pray, Mr Critic, hear us out with patience."

"No," says the Reviewer, "patience is the virtue of men of insipid minds and cold constitutions; the little I had of it I lost in reading bad books, that showered in upon me like hail of a January morning; so weigh these books directly, or, by St Januarius, I will take hold of them and throw them into the Thames!"

The learned meeting stared at this violence.

"Sir!" says St Bruno.

"Not a word, Mr Bruno," says the Reviewer.

All the authors were struck at such behaviour from a man who carried himself so differently on the former days of these amusements.

When the books were upon the point of being put into the scales, says Bruno, "I will lay a pound of tea against any thing of equal value, that the Spectator will outweigh the Essays."

The historian, M'Tacitus, laid a copy of Hobbes's Leviathan that it would not. And here a new scene appeared at the critical weighings; for the whole learned assembly began to bet one against the other upon the merits of these two excellent performances. The Reviewer told them, that, as betting was of English growth, he would not oppose it. Some of the members delivered it as their opinion, that it was the best mode of deciding an argument among a blunt people of few words; that it was this circumstance that made it so truly English, that it might be said to have originated among that people. Even the grave historian, Livison, was so far smitten with the infection of this fungous, arising from taciturnity and dry humour,—this enemy to polite conversation and a free intercourse of

sentiment, that he laid a pound of snuff that the Spectator would prevail. A number of other bets were laid; and among them, Bishop Exodus laid the rent of a parsonage-house on the Essays against Dr Skylight, who, in return, had nothing to bet on the Spectator but an old copy of Homer's Iliad; but the Bishop accepted the challenge, on account of the veneration in which he held the genius of the ancients as well as their literature; and it is allowed, that, after Dr Bently, no Englishman understood them better. The spirit of gaming began to spread her baleful influence over the assembly, like Satan, when he hovers over London of an evening, and with a malignant eye looks out for the places where he thinks he will be most welcome, till at last he alights between King's-place and St James's Street.

Dr Skylight saw this propensity; "Gentlemen," says he, "as a proof that I do not approve of gaming, I have only betted an old book; I have always considered it as the oldest

child of avarice and fraud, and the very near relation of debauchery. How can that man call himself honest, who endeavours to deprive another of his estate and happiness, in as short a time as a small piece of bone takes a turn or two upon a table? Excess in wine and women are cured by the disgust they occasion; but gaming is like a cancer, the more it eats into the body, the more it desires to consume. Look," says he, "at a gaming table, see one blaspheming and cursing the ruin with which he is overwhelmed. See another, trembling at the loss he may sustain; immoderate and tumultuous joy are seen in the faces of some, and despair and distraction in the countenances of others. In one place at the table all is eagerness and attention, deep thought and anxiety; in another, folly and drunkenness, and perhaps chastity, falling victims to circumvention and design; while the gloom and silence of night make these boisterous passions more horrid than they naturally are. Then," says he, "examine the face of an old gambler,

you shall see it as inanimate and unmoved as a barber's block, from the constant habit of disguising his sentiments at play; you will perceive spread over it cold apathy and a distaste of life, the effects of ill-spent time and an evil conscience, the lot of all who follow this odious and ruinous vice."

They were put into the scales; and here was seen a most noble struggle between strength of mind and beauty of sentiment, between the exertions of a man of great genius, and the labours of a few men of the most elegant endowments and refined understandings; between the finest language, and excellent rules for the government of life, and the most close and nervous description of every thing regarding it. But as language and its representative, writing, are the noblest gifts of human nature, and as the merit of bringing them to the utmost perfection is almost the greatest that man can arrive at, the Spectator gradually gained the bottom of the scale, but not without the greatest opposition that had

as yet been seen at the weighing of the books.

But this weighing, and the bets upon it, took up much time, and Kilglister said, that he felt his navel verging towards the lower part of his belly; upon which the Reviewer told Calfleather to place the books in the middle region.

Says Smitosh, "I think you might have put them in the second."

"Sir," says Bruno, "consider the usefulness of these incomparable papers and essays for the proper regulation of human life; their inestimable advantage for reclaiming the vices and disorders of enlarged society; their tendency to make mankind happy and wise. I think, sir, on account of these excellent qualities, you should place them on the top of the second region, along with the works of the eminent men already placed there."

"Doctor," says the Reviewer, "I suppose you expect that your own essays and papers should not be placed far below these good

books. Aye, Doctor, you would have me place Sir Roger de Coverly and William Wimble alongside Dryden and Pope."

Smitosh took up Bacon's Essays in his right hand; he held them up towards him; "Sir," says he, "did you never read the deep and uncommon remarks made in this book, not drawn from other books, or other men, but from the author's own strong, enlightened, and original mind?"

"Gentlemen," says the Reviewer, "it is late, and I am hungry, and by the beauty of the Isle of Dogs, if these books are not placed where I desire, I will order them to be ript up for lighting Charles Bearskin's tobacco-pipe."

"Mercy on us!" says Smitosh, "are we come to this? I think I had better go home to meditate on the restless manners and greed of the European nations."

"It is as well," says Skylight, "and I wish you could find me out what the people on 'Change would do at four o'clock, if the

Bank of England was demolished by an earthquake."

The authors for the day walked off in this manner, and Ned Calfleather placed the books in the middle region. The assembly was dissolved, after they had appointed Bishop Exodus and the historian, Livison, as the authors for the next day.

PART XV.

These amusements began to lose, in the course of a few days, the fresh lustre that novelty presents to the mind; but when the Reviewer dictated magisterially to the learned assembly, and when he insisted that the books should be placed as his ill taste or bad judgment directed, the members began to drop off, like those of a great assembly near the Thames, a little before seven o'clock, the dinner hour of these grave legislators; or like the members of a club, when a man above the ordinary level comes among them, who gives a joke with much good humour, but receives one with a stern countenance; then the liquor is bad, the waiter inattentive, and the fire almost out; one slips away after another, for a great man,

in a club of ordinary persons, is out of his place, and they are not in theirs.

At mid-day, the authors and critics, the bishop and the historian, met at the scales. Doctor St Bruno observed, that the meeting was thinner than usual; "Gentlemen," says he, "I fear that we begin to tire of these amusements,—men do not like to act under control and restraint.

"He that is born a slave, and never knew the sweets of liberty, has no objection at times to lose sight of the most indulgent master."

The Doctor's rough frame was beginning to soften by such sympathies, when the Reviewer cried out, rather in a surly manner, that if he went on at that rate, there could be no weighings that day, for that it would be all spent in making such remarks. The Doctor made no answer.

"Mr Bearskin," says Exodus, "fetch me out the sermons of St Thomas a Becket; and, Mr Livison, I will be glad to see that you call out a book worthy to be weighed against the most zealous apostle of the Christian church."

" Take out," says Livison, " the sermons of John Knox, the Scotch reformer, and the second or third champion of the Reformation." All the people present were now in high expectation of hearing many ingenious arguments on the merits of high and low church; but when Livison began to reply to some remarks made by Exodus, on the factious nature of Presbyterian government, and the too great equality of its members, the Reviewer told him, that he would allow no discussion on the matter; Livison took a pinch of snuff and said nothing. But Bishop Exodus thought that his mitre and cassock might plead in his favour for permission to put in a word or two. " Mr Critic," says he.

" Not a word, Mr Bishop," says the Reviewer; " weigh these books immediately, Dr Kilglister, or by the irregular imagination of Pindar, I will throw this ponderous folio of Hugo Grotius at your head, and for all your marrow, I suspect you shall feel it."

In the mean time the Bishop's countenance began to change colour; his eyes to contract,

and he fixed them upon the poles that supported the scales; his mouth shut of itself by an impulse of anger, his breast began to heave, and his limbs shook at the instigation of wrath. He suddenly turned about, and putting his right hand to the poles, he overturned them, weights and all, to the ground. He then took two of the remaining authors by the arm; "Come away with me, gentlemen," says he; "that presumptuous fellow, whom I once remember to have seen with all his wardrobe in a bundle, carried in his left hand, and not larger than the swaddling clothes of a beggar's child; I will for ever lament, that my love of learning could induce me to attend his mock criticisms and mud hill; the fellow had not the civility to mention as much as the title-page of any of my works. But, gentlemen, I am wrong; the neglect of so insignificant a person I should look upon as a compliment,—I should reckon such neglect of my abilities as the best test of their value. Come along, gentlemen, you shall have a Bishop's fare; as much meat, wine, and ale, as would serve fifty small lairds

during the Scotch Solemn League and Covenant."

When the Bishop and the two authors had retired, leaving the poles, weights, and scales prostrate on the ground, the Reviewer rose from his seat with a stunned countenance; he could not utter a word; but St Bruno laughed so heartily, that the scurf, with which his face was much disfigured, broke off; his large mouth opened wider than usual; "Ha, ha," says he, "I think, Mr Critic, that one of the generals of the van of your army has made a very odd retreat: I have all my life hated the Whigs, but when the Tories imitate their violence, I think them the worse persons of the two; ha, ha, and this is the gentle person who saved Moses from being carried away by the stream of a river."

Ned Calfleather and Andrew Buskinfoot joined in the conversation, which was upon the point of becoming futile and trifling at the Doctor's expense, (for wise men ought to be upon their guard in company with the vulgar.) When the Reviewer, having recovered from

the consternation that seized him, on seeing his poles and scales treated with such indignity, told St Bruno to take the poles up, and to place them and the scales in their former position; and by so doing, to make amends for the pride and passion of his Tory friend and brother author.

"Sir," says St Bruno, "I confess that in my youth, and in almost all the stages of my life, I have been in situations sufficiently low; but, sir, although I say it myself, my heart and my mind are too great to deny that these matters were so; and I am too proud to claim merit from the friendship or acquaintance of the great. Make Ned Calfleather, George Dreadthunder, and Andrew Buskinfoot take up your poles,—there is a stick for each of them, sir; and you may make Charles Bearskin take up the scales and weigh in them, if he pleases, the merits of a couple of tragic comedies, or comic tragedies, or any other extravagant or absurd production that the vitiated taste of the public may choose to countenance." He quitted the meeting, and

left the Reviewer without a single author or learned person, except such as belonged to his own fraternity.

When St Bruno went off in this manner, the critic and his pristine coadjutors looked at each other, like men that had been surprised by some unexpected event; for they thought, that as long as a man of his reputation in the republic of letters remained, they had a rallying point, to which those who went off before might return; but when they saw this dogmatical arch ram of literature follow the example of the rest, despondency seized them all, and each was silent for a considerable time.

At last the Reviewer got up, and spoke to the following effect:—

"Gentlemen critics, and, I hope, as yet, unbroken and unsubdued legislators of wit, Dr St Bruno's conduct is very extraordinary indeed; but that is no reason why ours should not be extraordinary as well as his; you may be surprised that I have not begun, by giving vent to my indignation against Bishop Exodus; but, gentlemen, this surprise will cease when

I inform you, that the Bishop is,—what could you suppose, gentlemen?—why, that he is my rival, and that I am his rival; and in what, do you suppose, gentlemen? Why, gentlemen, in that most important question in ancient history, whether Moses was born on Wednesday or Thursday? This point we have both endeavoured to deliver down to future ages in the most clear and convincing manner; and the Bishop is afraid that I have given a better account of it than he has done; and this is the source, root, and origin of his passion, when he threw down the poles: but, gentlemen, although he threw them down, I do think and believe, that all of us here, (even if Robert Macport were absent,) are able to take the poles up again. As for the behaviour of the other learned men, it is so obvious, that I should be ashamed to mention it; for you all know, that it was occasioned by a jealousy of my superior talents as a critic and a man of taste. Now, gentlemen, let us erect our weighing-machine again; let us take the books out of the chest, and let us weigh them

and put them upon our hill, in the same manner as heretofore; for what signifies to us the presence of these learned fellows, when we are in ourselves the very essences of learning, criticism, syllogism, text and syntax."

Says Andrew Buskinfoot, "But pray, sir, why have you left out knowledge and wit?"

"Hold your tongue, you strutting blockhead," says the Reviewer; "he that has those must be possessed of these."

Says Ned Calfleather, "What shall we do, sir, for authors of the day?"

"Silence," says the Reviewer, "thou offspring of the lowest species of wit, and the steam of a kitchen-grate; no man will ever propose you for one."

Robert Macport got up, and putting one of his great feet upon the first step of the circular stair of earth, "Sir," says he, "mayhap I might be chosen one of the authors for the day."

"Robert," says Dr Skylight, "you are in the wrong; you are a much greater man than any author; he only thinks and writes, but

by your means alone, his thoughts are made known to all the world."

Dr Kilglister got up and observed, that from the age of seven to fourteen, his daily allowance of marrow was not less than a pound; that evening began to show herself, and that night would soon follow and cover the world with her cold and uncomfortable robe; that nature surely intended some other occupations for them than debating about books and criticism; he therefore proposed an adjournment, and that, during the night, Ned Calfleather and Andrew Buskinfoot should guard the hill and the books, and whatever belonged to them. His proposal was agreed to, and so ended the last day of the critical weighings.

The Seventh and Last Day of the Critical Amusements.

NEXT day the Reviewer and his fellow-labourers arrived at the hill rather late. When they departed the night before, they were much vexed, and a good deal dispirited, at the abrupt leave taken of them by St Bruno and the rest of the authors. They were of opinion that the best remedy for such evils would be a sound and long sleep if it could be had; and it may admit of some doubt if all the arts and sciences, and the philosophy that belongs to them, have found out a better. They all appeared much dejected, and each resembled an avaricious man that had just heard a will read, where not so much as his name was mentioned, but from which he expected to be the sole heir of the testator. In this disagreeable state of affairs, Alderman Fatchops arrived at the hill to the great joy of

all present; one shook him by the hand, another tapped him on the cheek. When these ceremonies were over, the Reviewer congratulated the meeting on the acquisition of so worthy a person. Several remarks were made. George Dreadthunder said, that they had now the city on their side, and that St Bruno and the authors might go where they thought fit; that he would be glad to see who would now attack or disparage them.

Andrew Buskinfoot said, that commerce and ships in a free country agreed as well together as a lemon and a piece of sugar in a pint of rum.

Ned Calfleather remarked, that a merchant by the side of a captain of a man-of-war resembled a rich and delicate widow under the protection of a strong young man.

The Alderman did not like the comparison; he frowned upon Ned and his wit, and asked the company if he resembled a delicate widow. Doctor Skylight told him not to mind the levity of some of the foragers and sutlers of their camp.

It was then proposed that the Alderman and Macport should be elected authors for the day, in the room of those who would have been appointed had they not deserted so respectable a station.

The Alderman declined the appointment. He said that he honoured literature, as he knew that it gave bread to the printer, the paper-maker, the hawker, and the ragman; but that the great ledger at Lloyd's was the only book that he was thoroughly acquainted with; that it was the common-place book of all his reading and learning, and that the index to all his knowledge were contracts, insurance, brokerage, commission, all the per cents., with that luminary of city speculation, omnium.

Macport excused himself likewise, and said that he would take Dr Skylight's advice, and be content with his function, since he made it greater than that of an author.

The Reviewer soon supplied the place of these men, by ordering the Doctors, Skylight and Kilglister, to begin the weighings and cri-

tions as before. They took their stations, and Skylight immediately told Charles Bearskin to take out Lord Anson's Voyage round the World. Charles opened the chest, and cried, "It is out."

"Out!" says the Reviewer; "what is out with you?"

"The books," says Bearskin.

"The books out?" says the Reviewer.

"Yes, sir," says Bearskin, "the books are all at an end, and our career along with them; and I am very glad of it. I have led a tiresome troublesome life of it here, alongside this huge machine, hearing nothing but criticism, contention, and disputation; and I have not seen a drop of your liquor as yet."

Says Skylight, "Our employments in the regions of the gods begin to smell of Paternoster-Row, and we shall shortly be obliged to march back to it in a different manner from that in which we left it; but in every species of warfare it is better to make a wise retreat than a foolish engagement."

Says Dr Kilglister, "I wish to take the

opinion of the meeting upon this question, Whether we are to remain here disputing, and out of humour with ourselves, and a function that has disappointed us, or whether we shall return to our old abode in Paternoster-Row by noon of to-morrow?"

Upon this there followed a long debate among the critics; the Reviewer argued strongly for remaining; but his coadjutors, seeing matters grow dull, and all the authors and numerous spectators gone, thought that to stay longer could answer no purpose of vanity, profit, or ambition; and they persuaded the Reviewer to march back to the house of Sir Thomas Lycurgus by one o'clock of the next day.

The usual guards were posted, and the necessary ceremonies having been gone through, so ended the last day of the critical amusements.

PART XVI.

NEXT morning the critics met at an early hour, so that they might have sufficient time to arrange all matters necessary for their retreat into town.

About eleven o'clock they appeared at the hill with countenances overcast; and it was observed, that Robert Macport's face was more shaded than that of any other person. One of the critics having asked the cause of it, Robert said, he thought it hard that, having heard so much about genius and taste since these criticisms commenced, he should now go home to his printing-press, and not be more fully informed as to the difference between them; for that the former debates rather puzzled than instructed him upon the matter. He turned to Skylight, and asked him in what they differed?

"Robert," says he, "men of more refined frames than yours are at a loss to solve the question you have put; some suppose genius superior to taste, and others think taste superior to genius; for my own part I rather think with the former. A man may acquire taste by much reading, much reflection, and great industry, and by conversing with the world, and those who read and reflect most in it; but genius is conferred alone by the vigour and strength of nature; and when she bestows them on man she seldom denies him taste, but confers it upon him as an agreeable companion to direct their operations. And, indeed, it may be said, that it arises from the comprehension and light that always attend genius; but we may have ten men of great taste and refinement in the different branches of literature, for which nature has most adapted their understandings, for one great philosopher, poet, or historian."

Says the Reviewer, "I thought they had been more nearly allied; but however well you may describe the difference between them,

we have as yet seen no performance of yours in either."

Says Macport to Skylight, "Would you now tell me the difference between taste and judgment, for I have often heard them mentioned together?"

"Why, really," says the Doctor, "you will lay me a-ground by your questions. I think taste and judgment may be compared to man and wife; they should be very closely united, and never separated. The last being more solid, grave, and sententious, the first more airy, light, and agreeable, it ought to be as true to the other as a woman of honour is to her husband. In short, Robert, genius, judgment, and taste, may be compared to good sense legibly printed on fine paper."

"Ha!" says Robert, "now I understand you; you have by these words given me a better idea of them than I had by all the discourses of the authors and critics. I shall now go home contented, and print to advantage."

Robert Macport having been satisfied in

this manner, the critics prepared to take their final leave of the hill and the Isle of Dogs. The Reviewer did not go up to the top of it, as on the former days, attended by his aid-de-camps, George Dreadthunder and Andrew Buskinfoot; he walked about the chest and the scales with an air of seeming indifference, but which, at bottom, was full of melancholy and discontent. Of the numerous spectators who were in the habit of attending these entertainments, none attended on this day of forlorn and last farewell. A retreat was determined on; but the question was, who should beat the drum for it?—It was a disagreeable office, and all seemed averse from it. They walked about the foot of the hill and the ground near it, like itinerant merchants in a fair, unwilling to pack up, in case something good might cast up, and yet selling nothing.

In this mood of apathy, Charles Bearskin observed, that when a man is to be hanged, the sooner the rope is tied about his neck the better, as delay in so trying a situation becomes but moments of death to him.

Dr Skylight agreed as to the truth of this remark, but he thought it coarse and indelicate.

Robert Macport said, that when any thing like truth appeared, there should be no demur.

The Reviewer told them, that he contrived and commanded the expedition to the hill as well as the erecting and adorning of it, but that he could take no delight in a retreat from it, and that he would leave it entirely to be managed by them.

Dr Skylight, as next in command, ordered the critics to attend him; he told them, that matters were now come to that point, when the most must be made of them; that all the books should be put into the chest immediately; that George Dreadthunder should go for the great mule; that the hill should be sold for ballast to the captains of East Indiamen at Blackwall; and that they should march back to the house of Sir Thomas Lycurgus, and condole with him on the failure of their

adventure.—This was unanimously agreed to. Ned Calfleather and Andrew Buskinfoot threw down the books from the different places on the hill, and Robert Macport took them up in huge armfulls, and threw them into the chest, notwithstanding a few rough oaths from Charles Bearskin, who had the trouble to arrange them there.

The great mule arrived; she was put into the traces of the cart. The chest, as soon as it was filled, and properly locked and corded, was hoisted up upon it. Dr Kilglister and Robert Macport lifted up one end of it without any assistance; all the rest of the critics were scarcely able to lift the other. The poles, scales, and weights, were fixed upon the chest. Dr Kilglister mounted the mule and rode off with the learned cart-load, while Robert Macport poked her behind with the pole of a Thames wherryman. The other critics, with the Reviewer at their head, followed, like a privateer's crew taken prisoners, and marching through a town in an enemy's country.

In this manner they went through the different streets and lanes of London; the people staring at the size of the mule, the height and Herculean make of him that rode her, and the immense limbs of him that poked her behind. The general remark was, that the master of the uncommon big fellow who rode the mule must be a fool to have the animal so burdened, notwithstanding her strength.

When they arrived at the house of Sir Thomas Lycurgus, Kilglister dismounted, and all were anxious to see their mentor. The Reviewer knocked at the door; admittance was immediately given. They found Sir Thomas in the drawing-room, in the middle of a number of projectors; for it was this worthy man's failing to have his pockets often emptied by these kind of people.—"Mr Critic," says he, "I think I may read in your face the miscarriage of your adventure; but I will be glad to have an account of it from yourself. I take no pleasure in the disappointments of other people, but as I see that the chest and the

mule, and the critics, and yourself are safely arrived, I hope nothing of a very bad nature has happened.

"Nothing, sir," says the Reviewer, "only that we have returned without glory."

He then recounted all that passed at the hill. During the recital of it, some of the projectors thrust their fingers into their mouths; some coughed; nor was it possible for Sir Thomas to make these fellows behave with due decorum. When he had done, Sir Thomas said, "Well, Mr Reviewer, all I have now to do is to give my opinion of your adventure. When you mentioned to me that you intended to make an artificial Mount Parnassus, I considered that intention as the production of enthusiasm in the cause of literature. I revere whatever belongs to learning and genius so much (as I then told you), that I did not like, by any kind of disapprobation, to lessen your zeal. But, Reviewer, I must now tell you, that your zeal was the much-beloved child of a weak understanding. How

could you believe that mankind in this country could mistake the Isle of Dogs for the shaded valleys and green bowers of Greece? or that a hillock made of mud and sand should resemble Mount Parnassus? The authors and the persons of genius who attended you to this hill, were possessed of zeal as well as you, but they had what you want,—genius, ardour, and strength of mind, which made zeal to them a secondary object only, to spur them on, to compose what informed and delighted the world. Why, then, did you reject their advices, contradict their opinions, and not follow their decisions? Look at the result, sir; they all left you, and the good opinion of the world along with them. By this you have been reduced to denude your hill of its ornaments,—to replace the books into your chest,—and to sell your ideal Parnassus for ship-ballast. But let not these lessons of adversity be thrown away upon you: return to your old apartment in Paternoster-Row. Cultivate candour as well as letters. Do not imagine that the strength

of your brain or the soundness of your judgment are better than those of numbers who read and enjoy reading as well as you. Restrain your spleen and ill-humour, lest they blast the hopes of many aspiring young writers, whose bread as well as happiness depend on their reputations as authors. Pause, and think how you would like to be treated by them in the manner you treat them yourself,—with critical superciliousness, indifference, or contempt. Yet on the success of such writers may depend the bread of an only child, a helpless, aged parent, or a virtuous wife. For one bad and presumptuous author that you may be able to amend by such means, you may destroy the hopes and happiness of fifty such as these. Because necessity or chance might have made you a reviewer, are you on that account superior in intellectual capacity to all the readers in Great Britain who are not reviewers? And yet, by this pretended critical superiority, you would make people believe that no book is worthy the approbation of the

public unless it is commended and approved of by you. A good review, sir, written with judgment, with good sense and good manners, and with the great attention, industry, and learned enterprise that such a work requires, may be of invaluable advantage in such a country as ours, where so many think as well as write, and where the nature of the constitution and government requires that men should think and write justly, with moderation as well as acuteness, and the most unshaken resolution. The reviewer who would accustom them to think and write in this manner, might be the means of prolonging our hitherto unrivalled and unequalled system of legislative government; for whenever the luxury of refinement in writing appears; when over-nice, and curious, and effeminate distinctions and rules are looked upon as the sole criterions of good writing, I consider them as symbols of decay in our constitution of government and laws, and as so many steps down the stair that leads to arbitrary power, which a number of circum-

stances hidden and open tend to bring about. Give up dealing in the profits of booksellers; it is an infamous prostitution of genius."

At this reproach the Reviewer got up. "I declare," says he, "upon my honour, that I never received any of the profits of booksellers in my life."

"I believe it," says Sir Thomas; "I only meant to put you on your guard against what the demons of want, or misfortune, or greed, might lead you to. Unsuccessful authors and the malicious world talk of these matters; it is not impossible but they may happen, and if they do, nothing can throw a fouler stain on the literature of Great Britain. Return to thy critical apartment, and may you, from the consequence of your late failure, be a reviewer without envy, a compiler without conceit, and a man without malice."

I shall conclude with an asseveration, that I have not, in the foregoing pages, aimed at any particular person. I am so little acquainted

with reviewers and critics, that I do not know the name of any reviewer in London; and if I have drawn a resemblance without knowing it, I declare that nothing was farther from my thoughts than to wound the feelings of any individual whatever.

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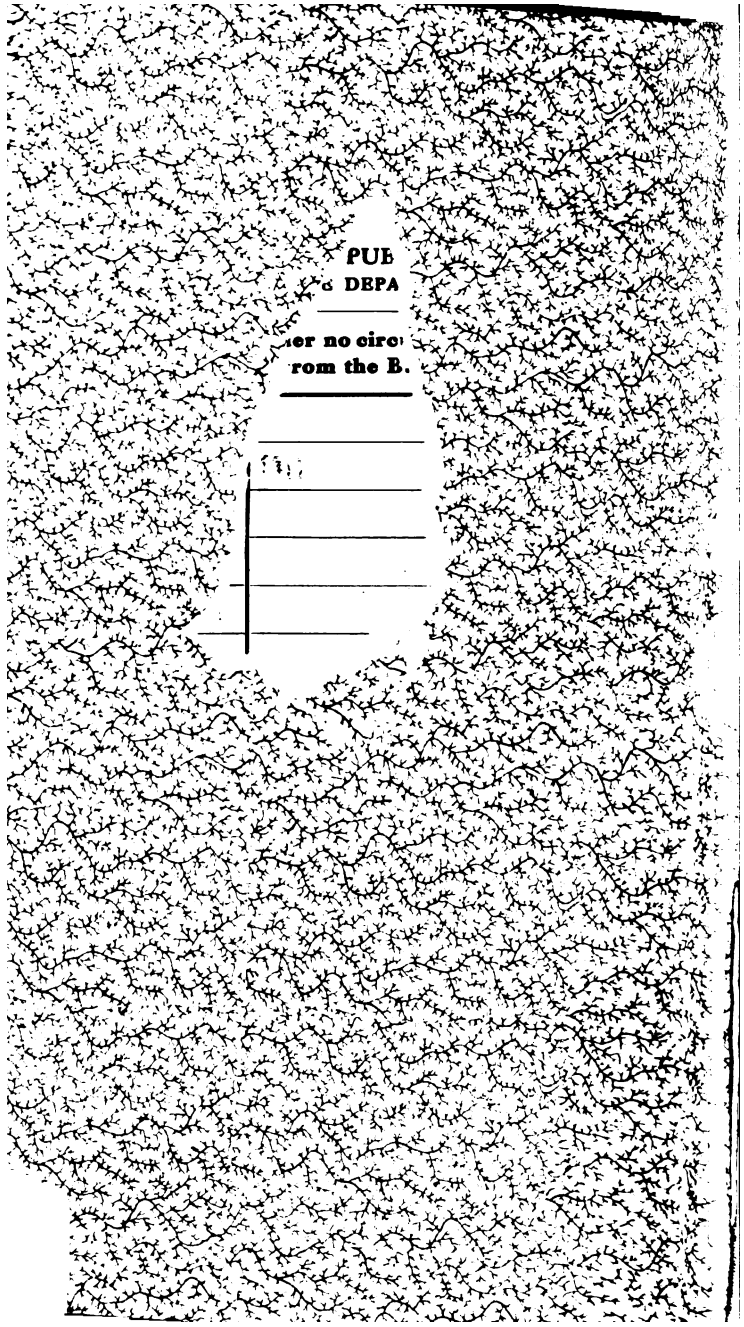
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