

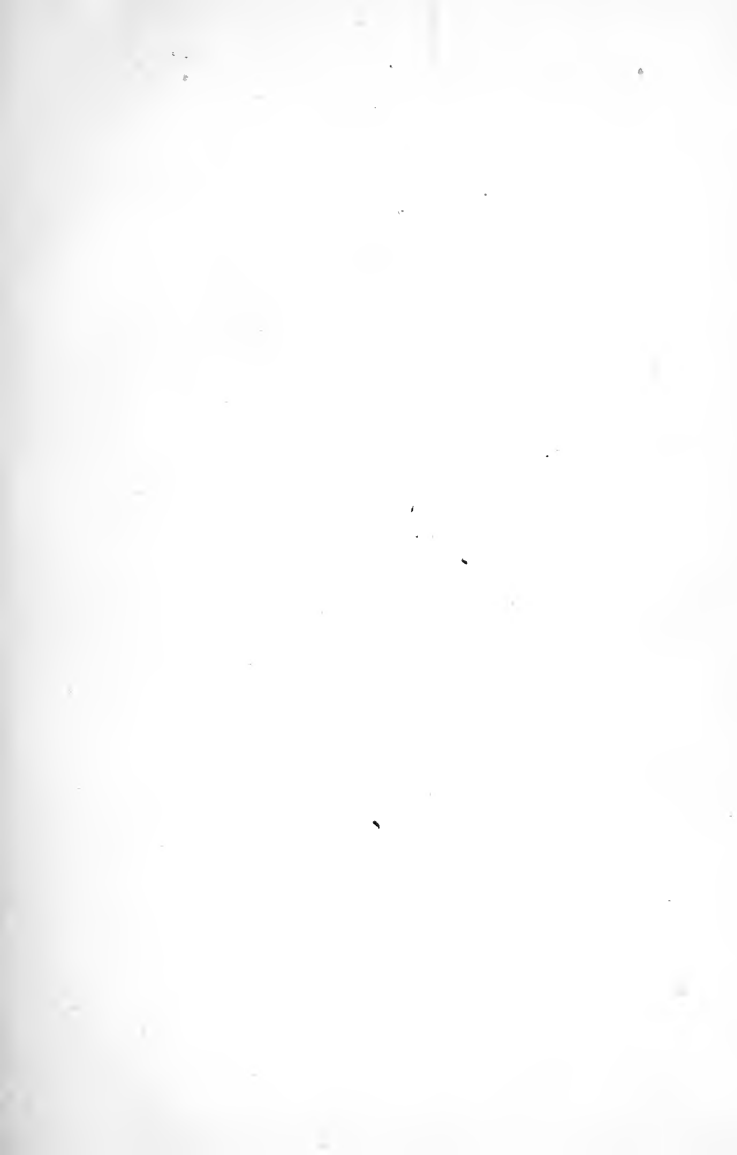


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CHARLES LAMB

After a drawing by Robert Hancock in the National Portrait Gallery

ESSAYS OF ELIA

FIRST SERIES

BY

CHARLES LAMB

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

GEORGE ARMSTRONG WAUCHOPE, M.A., PH.D.
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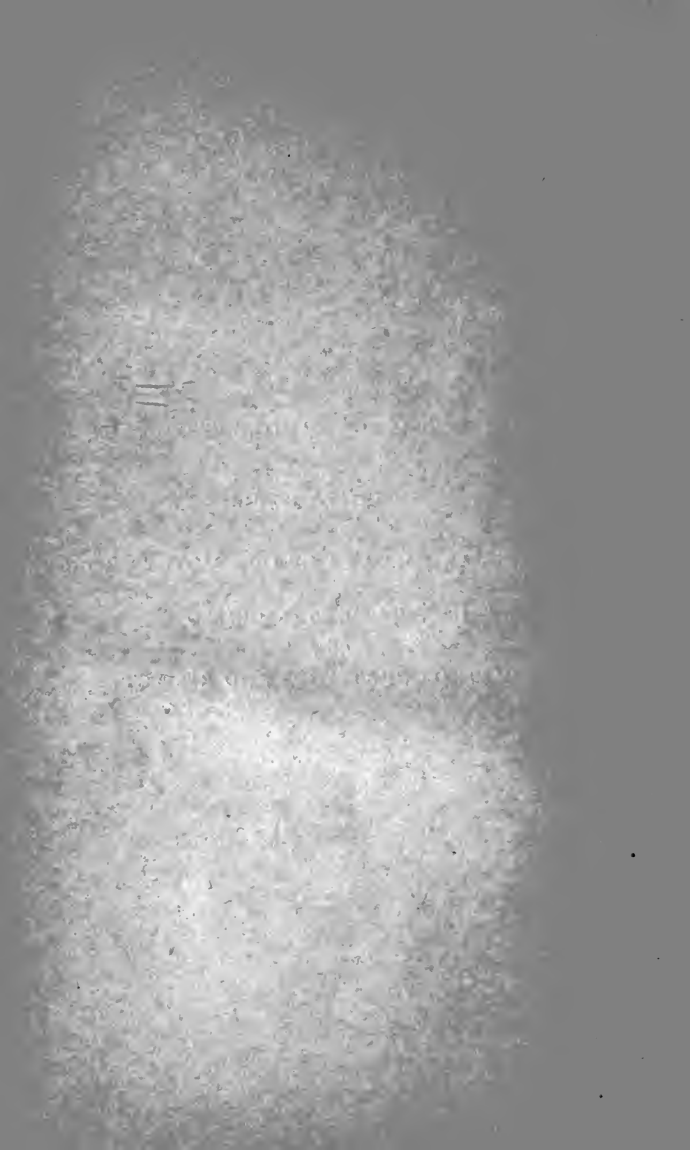
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TO
MY BELOVED COLLEAGUE AND REVERED FRIEND

Edward S. Joyner

CRITIC, LOVER, AND MASTER OF OUR MOTHER TONGUE

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED
AS
A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE AND RESPECT



PREFACE

A LARGER volume of the Essays of Charles Lamb was issued from the Athenæum Press by the present editor in February, 1904. Since then, the *Essays of Elia* (First Series) having been included in the College Entrance Requirements, this edition has been prepared with special reference to the needs of our secondary schools. Although much of the matter of the earlier and fuller work has been used, this book is in many respects a new one. Not to infringe upon the rights of the teacher, the beautiful and pathetic story of Lamb's life has been left untold, and only a few suggestions as to methods of study have been made. To avoid similar sins against the pupil, the plan of not giving information that is easily accessible has been adhered to. The right of personal research — a wholesome stimulus to interest — is respected in this edition, but help is offered where help is needed. In criticism, analyses of style and structure, and in notes on recondite allusions, the book will, I believe, be found reasonably full.

After carefully collating four standard English editions of the *Essays of Elia*, the editor has followed closely the excellent text of Mr. Richard Herne Shepherd (London: Chatto & Windus, 1898), which has the advantage of being based directly on the text of the two volumes of 1823 and 1833, issued under Lamb's own eye. The spelling and the use of points and capitals is, therefore, substantially that approved by the author. Several passages which Lamb suppressed have been restored from the magazines in which the essays originally appeared, as the personal reasons that caused their omission

now no longer exist. It has seemed best to retain Lamb's own notes on the text as footnotes.

The section on works of reference, and specific acknowledgments in the Introduction and Notes, will sufficiently indicate the indebtedness of the editor, which is too multifarious to be here set down. A number of Lamb's allusions and quotations have defied all attempts of the editor to trace them, and any information throwing light on such passages will be gratefully appreciated.

G. A. W.

COLUMBIA, S.C.

August, 1905

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

	PAGE
I. CHIEF EVENTS OF LAMB'S LIFE	ix
II. LAMB'S PERSONALITY AND INFLUENCE	xi
III. STYLE AND MATTER OF THE ESSAYS	xxiv
IV. LIBRARY REFERENCES	xxxiv

ESSAYS OF ELIA

✓ I. A CHARACTER OF THE LATE ELIA	I
II. THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE	6
III. OXFORD IN THE VACATION	15
IV. CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE-AND-THIRTY YEARS AGO	23
✓ V. THE TWO RACES OF MEN	38
✓ VI. NEW YEAR'S EVE	44
✓ VII. MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST	52
VIII. VALENTINE'S DAY	60
✓ IX. A QUAKERS' MEETING	63
✓ X. MY RELATIONS	69
✓ XI. MACKERY END, IN HERTFORDSHIRE	76
XII. IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES	82
XIII. THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE	91
✓ XIV. WITCHES AND OTHER NIGHT-FEARS	104
XV. GRACE BEFORE MEAT	111
XVI. DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERIE	119
XVII. ON SOME OF THE OLD ACTORS	123
XVIII. THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS	137
✓ XIX. A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG	145
XX. ON THE ACTING OF MUNDEN	153
XXI. MUNDEN'S FAREWELL	156

	PAGE
✓ XXII. A CHAPTER ON EARS	159
✓ XXIII. ALL FOOLS' DAY	166
XXIV. THE OLD AND THE NEW SCHOOLMASTER	170
XXV. MY FIRST PLAY	180
✓ XXVI. MODERN GALLANTRY	185
XXVII. DISTANT CORRESPONDENTS	189
XXVIII. A COMPLAINT OF THE DECAY OF BEGGARS IN THE METROPOLIS	196
✓ XXIX. A BACHELOR'S COMPLAINT OF THE BEHAVIOUR OF MARRIED PEOPLE	205
XXX. ON THE ARTIFICIAL COMEDY OF THE LAST CEN- TURY	213
NOTES	227
FOREIGN TERMS AND QUOTATIONS	293
INDEX	295

INTRODUCTION

I. CHIEF EVENTS OF LAMB'S LIFE

(Arranged chronologically)

- 1775 February 10, born in Crown-office Row, Temple, London.
- 1781 Pupil in William Bird's school in Fetter Lane.
- 1782-1789 October, enters Christ's Hospital; schoolmates are Leigh Hunt and Coleridge; becomes Deputy Grecian under Rev. James Boyer; vacations spent at Blakesware in Hertfordshire.
- 1789? Receives clerkship in the South-Sea House; love affair with Ann Simmons (1789-1795).
- 1792 April 5, appointed clerk in the East India House; meetings with Coleridge at the "Salutation and Cat" Tavern; sees Mrs. Siddons.
- 1795-1796 Takes lodgings in Little Queen Street, Holborn; meets Robert Southey; spends six weeks in madhouse at Hoxton.
- 1796 Lamb's sonnets published with Coleridge's poems; September, Mary Lamb kills her mother and is confined in madhouse.
- 1797 Charles and Mary begin their "life of dual loneliness"; visits to Southey in Hampshire and to Coleridge at Nether Stowey.
- 1798 Publication of *A Tale of Rosamund Gray* and *The Old Familiar Faces*.
- 1799 Meets Godwin and Manning; revisits Hertfordshire.
- 1800 Removes with Mary to Chapel Street, Pentonville, where they are "shunned and marked"; affair with Hester Savary; removes to No. 16 Mitre Court Buildings in the Temple; visits from and to Coleridge; meets the Wordsworths.

- 1800-1803 Contributor to the *Morning Post*, *Albion*, and *Morning Chronicle*.
- 1802 Publication of *John Woodvil*, *Fragments of Burton*, and *Ballads*.
- 1805 Mary in asylum a month; Lamb writes *Farewell to Tobacco*.
- 1806 Lamb's farce, *Mr. H.*, fails at Drury Lane Theater; begins to give Wednesday-night parties.
- 1807 *Tales from Shakespeare* published jointly by Charles and Mary.
- 1808 *Adventures of Ulysses* and *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* published.
- 1809 Takes lodgings at 34 Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, thence to chambers No. 4, Inner Temple Lane; Wednesday-night parties flourish; joint publication of *Mrs. Leicester's School* and *Poetry for Children*.
- 1810 Visit to Hazlitt at Winterslow; visit to Oxford; Mary in asylum.
- 1811 Publication of essays on *The Genius and Character of Hogarth* and *The Tragedies of Shakespeare* in the *Reflector*; Gifford attacks Lamb in the *Quarterly Review*.
- 1815 Meets Talfourd; visit from Wordsworth; Mary in asylum ten weeks.
- 1817 Takes lodgings in Great Russell Street, Covent Garden; meets the actors Munden, Elliston, and Miss Kelly.
- 1818 Publication of Lamb's *Complete Works* in two volumes (Chas. Ollier).
- 1822 Death of John Lamb; trip to Paris; writes *Confessions of a Drunkard*.
- 1823 *The Essays of Elia*, published by Taylor and Hessey; controversy with Southey; removes to a cottage in Colebrook Row, Islington; writes *A Character of the Late Elia. By a Friend*, and seven essays for the *London*.
- 1825 March, Lamb retired on pension of £450 a year by the directors of the India House; writes four essays for the *London*, a hoax *Memoir of Liston, Horns*, and *Letter to an Old Gentleman*.

- 1826 Writes for the *New Monthly Magazine*; writes *The Confidant*, a farce.
- 1827 Mary ill in asylum; removes to Chaseside, Enfield.
- 1828 Contributes *Popular Fallacies* to the *New Monthly*.
- 1829 Lodges at the Westwoods'; the stagecoach incident; Mary ill.
- 1830 Moxon publishes Lamb's *Album Verses*; Lamb removes for a short while to London, then returns to Enfield; Mary's illness increases.
- 1831 Contributes *Peter's Net* to the *Englishman's Magazine*.
- 1833 Lodges with Walden at Bay Cottage, Edmonton; Mary very ill and Charles' health poor; Moxon publishes the *Last Essays of Elia*.
- 1834 Death of Coleridge; death of Lamb, December 27, and burial at Edmonton.
- 1847 May 20, Mary dies in private asylum.

II. LAMB'S PERSONALITY AND INFLUENCE

De Quincey has remarked that in order to appreciate Lamb it is necessary to understand his character and temperament.¹ A knowledge of the man, his likes and dislikes, his whims, caprices, and fancies, is in fact the master key which alone will unlock the treasures of his writings. Charles Lamb was a most paradoxical character, and his personality is projected to a remarkable extent into all his literary work. The correct interpretation, therefore, of any particular passage may depend upon our insight into the peculiar bias of the writer's mind. The coy and wayward Elia should, of all essayists, be approached in a friendly and unprejudiced spirit. Recognizing this important personal equation, therefore, the student of Lamb should not lose sight of the unconscious reaction of his character and life on his work, and should set himself the pleasant task of

¹ De Quincey's *Works*, Vol. III, p. 53, Masson ed.

discovering and tracing out some of these hidden undercurrents of influence.

Lamb's most obvious trait was his artistic temperament, and a recognition of this fact by the student at the outset is fundamental. There was a touch of the bohemian in him which revealed itself in his tastes and habits. He showed a good-humored contempt for modern affectations and conventionalities, and cultivated the old-fashioned in speech and bearing. He was a lover of streets and shops, of libraries and theaters, of rare prints and first editions, of the cheerful glass and a rubber at whist. A scorner of the commonplace, he was an uncompromising enemy of Philistinism with its cant, self-satisfaction, and materialism. It is not strange that a man thus constituted should have created a style unique in literature, and made it an instrument adequate to the expression of his quaint and nimble mind.

As a balance to the artist in Lamb was a fine judicial poise of intellect. This wholesome quality saved him from the excesses of youthful enthusiasm. Like his friend Hazlitt, he was ever a seeker of essential truth. With the courage and confidence of a true philosopher, he retried all questions at the bar of his own reason, and rendered fresh verdicts based on justice, conservatism, and sympathy with the best in human nature.

Another quality inherent in Lamb was his magnanimity, along with its counterpart, modesty. He is egotistical, but with the gentle self-assertion which is fully justified by the worth and interest of his ideas. He never, however, takes himself or his views too seriously, and his very egotism is, like Falstaff's lying, felt to be merely a genial affectation of manner assumed for the double purpose of amusing himself and the reader.

Lamb was not lacking, as some have supposed, in the stuff of true manly courage. Many have been misled by the tender epithets of "frolic" and "gentle-hearted," given him by his friends, or by his own playful self-confessions, and have

ill-advisedly judged him weak, frivolous, and timid. He was, on the contrary, strong to suffer and endure. One need take only a cursory survey of his career to find such evidences of his fortitude in the face of petty annoyances and appalling misfortunes as should place him on the roll of the heroes of humble life. His exasperating impediment of speech, his bitter disappointment at being debarred from any congenial profession, the dreadful taint of insanity in his blood, his sister's madness with its tragic sequel and his voluntary self-sacrifice as her guardian, the constant vexations of business life, and the never-ending pinch of poverty and ill health, — all this was enough to excuse Lamb had he been the most morbid and fretful of men. On the contrary, his troubles served but to mellow a rarely sweet and happy disposition and rendered him more unselfish and benevolent. Since death removed the sacred veil of domestic sorrow, the world has known what caused the pathetic sadness in those eyes which were wont to twinkle with the most tricky merriment.

It is equally true that Lamb possessed many so-called feminine traits. This bisexual nature, as Furnivall calls it in Shakespeare, is one of the most attractive characteristics of his imaginative mind. The bravest souls are the most tender. Mary Lamb was noted for her directness and common sense. In her brother, however, there was the suggestion of posing, an incorrigible fondness for make-believe, a mischievous playing with life which was delightful when one realized his reverence for its serious aspects. His favorite attitude to the reader is that of one chatting familiarly with a companion. Not even in his open letter to Southey in the famous controversy did he assume the air of the slashing critics of the day, and abuse or browbeat his opponent. His essays, though more polished than his letters, move in a plane scarcely more elevated than the epistolary. "They are all carefully elaborated," says Talfourd, "yet never were works written in a higher defiance to the

conventional pomp of style." Even when Lamb is argumentative he is never dogmatic. His purpose is not to demolish the position of an imaginary antagonist, but to win a friend's approving nod or foil the smile of incredulity. He rarely makes a categorical assertion of some matter of opinion except it be half in jest, and his whole bearing is persuasive and winning. He aims to entertain, not to arouse debate.

The Essays of Elia, being candidly personal in atmosphere and structure, contain a vast deal of autobiographical material. "In his various essays," says Nicoll, "he has left a faithful and true portrait of himself, with all of his out-of-the-way humour and opinions; and irresistibly attractive the portrait is."¹ What Lamb says of himself, however, should be accepted guardedly. He had, in Ainger's happy phrase, "a turn for the opposite." One cannot read too warily, for example, the sketch of his own character in his inimitable *A Character of the Late Elia. By a Friend*. There a charming and pardonable egotism is masked under a veil of self-depreciation. One must be circumspect indeed not to be entrapped by a man who can thus gravely preach his own funeral discourse.

Lamb was incorrigibly fond of hoaxing, mystification, and practical joking. He valued himself, in fact, on being "a matter-of-lie-man," believing truth to be too precious to be wasted upon everybody. His lying *Memoir of Liston* is a clever mock biography, which the public, misled by its jumble of fact and fiction, took seriously—to the immense amusement of the author. Nothing of the sort had been so successful since the appearance of *Gulliver's Travels*.² When the authorship of the *Waverley Novels* was a general subject of conjecture, Lamb told George Dyer in strictest confidence that they were the work of Lord Castlereagh, whereupon his innocent schoolmate hurried away to whisper it in the ear of Leigh Hunt, "who as

¹ Nicoll's *Landmarks of English Literature*. p. 368.

² See *Letter to Miss Hutchinson*, January 20, 1825.

a public writer ought to hear the latest news." ¹ When Manning was about to return home from China after several years' absence, Lamb wrote a letter in which he tells him "not to expect to see the same England again which you left; few of your old friends will remember you;" ² then mentioning the deaths of Mary, Coleridge, and Wordsworth, he adds that he himself is now in an asylum. The next day he wrote another letter correcting these dismal statements and mailed it to St. Helena to meet his friend on the way home. The spirit which prompted such pleasantries with intimate friends comes out in the essays in curious perversions of fact which serve the author's purpose of puzzling or shocking his readers.

Lamb showed his contemporaries how to combine business with culture. His example of industry, prudence, and independence was a wholesome one in an age when men of letters were notoriously visionary and unpractical. As a clerk he paid the most careful attention to business. So far as is known, no complaint was ever made of his being negligent in the performance of his duties, and his employers showed their appreciation of his services by granting him many leaves of absence, and finally retiring him on a handsome pension. He was at his desk in the India House punctually at ten and remained till four o'clock daily. He then returned to his rooms and dined with his sister at half-past four, after which he was in the habit of taking a long walk for exercise.

Lamb was essentially a town man, and was never quite at home off the streets of London. His essays picture the delights of city life much as Wordsworth's poems reveal the charms of country life. He confessed that he was "not romance-bit about nature," but felt "as airy up four pair of stairs as in the country." He was one "that loved to be at home in crowds."

¹ *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*, Chap. IX, p. 359.

² See "Letter to Richard Manning," December 25, 1815, Talfourd ed., p. 268.

“Separate from the pleasure of your company,” he wrote to Wordsworth, “I don’t much care if I never see a mountain in my life. I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and intense local attachments, as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead nature. . . . The wonder of these sights impels me into night walks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fullness of joy at so much life. All these emotions must be strange to you ; so are your rural emotions to me.”¹

With his high-strung nature, Lamb had his periods of depression as well as elation. His health was not uniformly good ; he was a great sufferer from nervousness and headaches, which were aggravated by office confinement, late hours, and imprudent diet. His low spirits show themselves less in the essays than in his letters, in writing which he solaced many dreary hours in the intervals of business. At times he felt himself hopelessly condemned to “the drudgery of the desk’s dead wood,” while opportunity for the employment of his literary tastes and talents continually receded. The burden of some of his letters is that he sadly lacked leisure, he was bothered by visitors whom he called “friendly harpies,” he was so “smoky with last night’s ten pipes” that he must leave off writing, and he was extra-worked auditing warehousekeepers’ accounts in his “candlelight fog-den at Leadenhall.” “My theory,” said he to Wordsworth gloomily, “is to enjoy life but my practice is against it.”

In arriving at a fair estimate of Lamb, we must take also into account the fact that he was disappointed in his early literary ambitions. He grew restless in the monotonous treadmill of daily toil ; yet this very drudgery saved him from a garret in Grub Street or the humiliating necessity of seeking a patron. Intellectual defeat was yet harder to bear. How bitter must have been his sense of failure as he successively

¹“Letter to Wordsworth,” January 30, 1801.

abandoned hope of winning renown in the alluring fields of poetry, fiction, the drama, and journalism. His mother's murder shattered his poetic aspirations; his adherence to an unhealthy and decadent school of romance proved disastrous to *Rosamund Gray*; the flimsy plots of *John Woodvil* and *Mr. H*— caused the first to fail of acceptance and the latter to be hissed from the stage; and on account of his ignorance of politics combined with the impossible demands of the daily humorous paragraph, three party journals dispensed with his services.

His correspondence was the single field of literary activity which he found well suited to his peculiar bent. The composition of his letters, many of which were future essays in the rough, was good preparation for the more pretentious work of *Elia* in the *London*. All this early groping after a career in letters, however, unsatisfactory though it was, did serve as an indispensable training in style. Each effort contributed something to the formation of the wonderful whole: the verses refined his sense of rhythm and diction; the journalism expanded his power of humorous observation; the dramas sharpened his turn for dialogue and witty expression; the stories developed his skill in narration and analysis of character; and the letters furnished that friendly attitude to the reader which every one finds so attractive, and suggested an interesting class of subjects.

The influence of Lamb upon the literary life of his own time should not be overlooked. His Wednesday-evening parties are famous to this day. Next to the gatherings at the Holland House, those at Lamb's were the most interesting in London. The assemblages of distinguished men in the luxurious parlors of the noble lord were more brilliant and imposing; but the men who met in the humble but hospitable chambers of Charles and Mary Lamb, and partook of their simple teas, contributed more to the intellectual life of the metropolis

and preserved the traditions of good comradeship associated with Raleigh's Club at the Mermaid and Dr. Johnson's at the Turk's Head. If there was more of politics at the earl's, there was more of literature at the clerk's. The company that met at Lamb's was not only homogeneous in spirit but was fairly representative of London life. Among the regular guests were Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, Lloyd, Godwin, "Barry Cornwall," Robinson, Field, Dyer, Barnes, the editor of the *Times*, Admiral Burney, and the actors Liston and Charles Kemble. Occasionally Wordsworth, De Quincey, and Coleridge were present when they happened to be in town. Lamb's house was indeed a fountain head from which flowed a stream of criticism of art, literature, philosophy, religion, politics, and the stage, that fertilized the mind of young England to an extent of which the agents themselves were only half conscious.

In all that assemblage of gifted men it is no derogation to the visitors to say that their host was the most remarkable. Hood, Crossley, Procter, Patmore, and all who knew him, agree substantially as to his appearance. Talfourd has left us perhaps the best pen sketch of Lamb. "Methinks I see him before me now," he writes, "as he appeared then. . . . A light frame, so fragile that it seemed as if a breath would overthrow it, clad in clerk-like black, was surmounted by a head of form and expression the most noble and sweet. His black hair curled crisply about an expanded forehead; his eyes, softly brown, twinkled with varying expression, though the prevalent feeling was sad. . . . Who shall describe his countenance, catch its quivering sweetness, and fix it forever in words? Deep thought, striving with humour; the lines of suffering wreathed in cordial mirth; and his smile of painful sweetness, present an image to the mind it can as little describe as lose. His personal appearance and manner are not unfitly characterized by what he himself says in one of his letters to

Manning, of Braham, 'a compound of the Jew, the gentleman, and the angel.'"¹

In the home where Mary Lamb presided there was plain living and high thinking. The flow of soul, however, was not absent from this feast of reason. We turn again to Talfourd's delightful pen for this picture of one of the suppers. "Meanwhile Becky lays the cloth on the side-table, under the direction of the most quiet, sensible and kind of women, who soon compels the younger and more hungry of the guests to partake largely of the cold roast lamb or boiled beef, the heaps of smoking roasted potatoes, and the vast jug of porter. Perfect freedom prevails. . . . As the hot water and its accompaniments appear, and the severities of whist relax, the light of conversation thickens. Lamb stammers out puns suggestive of wisdom for happy Barron Field to admire and echo; the various dribbles of talk combine into a stream, while Miss Lamb moves gently about to see that each modest stranger is duly served."²

Lamb was a man of strong appetite, over which he sometimes failed to exercise due restraint. His sister often wrote of his being "smoky and drinky." He was, like Chaucer's franklin, Epicurus' true son. His taste for pastries, roast pig, partridge, hare, and shoulder of mutton is evident from numerous allusions in his letters and essays. Taste is the sense least often appealed to by writers, but Lamb has succeeded in making some excellent literature out of the pleasures of the palate. Perhaps he thought it equally clever and far kinder to make the mouths of his readers water than their eyes. Whatever may have been his artistic or ethical motive, Elia's *Roast Pig*, *Chimney-Sweepers*, *Christ's Hospital*, *Grace before Meat*, and other savory papers, form a body of succulent literature which is little short of an apotheosis of the appetite.

¹ Talfourd's *Letters of Charles Lamb*, Chap. X, p. 257.

² *Final Memorials*, pp. 348, 349.

Elia was also addicted to the pipe and preferred the strongest varieties of "the great plant." He began the use of tobacco as a substitute for strong drinks, but the counter-attraction soon became a new form of slavery. In one of his moods of reformation he abjured the fragrant weed and wrote his lyric *Farewell to Tobacco*. Unhappily this proved but the first of a series of adieux to his "friendly traitress." On one occasion Doctor Parr, who smoked the mildest tobacco in a pipe half filled with salt, saw Lamb puffing furiously at a pipe crammed with the strongest mixture, and asked him how he had acquired the power of smoking at such a rate. Lamb replied, "I toiled after it, sir, as some men toil after virtue."

It cannot be denied that Lamb's most serious frailty was his habit of partaking too freely of alcoholic stimulants. He inherited a constitution which craved intoxicants, and this strengthened the temptation. In ales, wines, gin-and-water, he found temporary relief from bashfulness, low spirits, and the cares and sorrows of existence. A further effect was that they enabled him partly to overcome his stammering and to throw off the consciousness of other personal oddities. His system was so sensitive to their effects that a single glass sufficed to start the marvelous flow of wit and fancy. "It created nothing," says Patmore, "but it was the talisman that not only unlocked the poor casket in which the rich thoughts of Charles Lamb were shut up, but set in motion their machinery in the absence of which they would have lain like gems in the mountain or gold in the mine."¹

The same agent must be held responsible for the reckless buffoonery with which he sometimes entertained his company, and also the moods of perversity during which he made life a burden for the uncongenial. At such times he took delight in shocking strangers and confirming any unfavorable impression

¹ Barry Cornwall's *Charles Lamb: A Memoir*, p. 57.

by assuming an attitude of mockery or frivolity.¹ This explains the impression left on Macready and Carlyle. The great actor records with disgust "one odd saying of Lamb's that the last breath he drew in he wished might be through a pipe and exhaled in a pun." One can also readily see why Elia appeared to the stern Scotch seer "a sorry phenomenon," and his talk "contemptibly small and a ghastly make-believe of wit."² Lamb, however, lavished such a wealth of affection and pathetic tenderness on his sister and such a store of generosity and good comradeship on his friends, and kept his writings so free from all unpleasing notes, that his readers are only too willing to condone his shortcomings.

Of all Lamb's friendships that with Coleridge was the strongest and mutually the most helpful. Beginning at the Blue Coat School, it ripened as the years passed, and ended only with the death of the poet. It is one of the most beautiful in literary history. Coleridge encouraged Lamb to follow literature as an avocation, and published the first work of his friend with his own. Lamb amply returned the favor by giving Coleridge the benefit of his fine powers of criticism. The appreciation of the latter is evident in a letter written to Cottle in 1797, in which he says, "I much wish to send my 'Visions of the Maid of Arc' and my corrections to Wordsworth, who lives not above twenty miles from me, and to Lamb, whose taste and judgment I see reason to think more correct and philosophical than my own, which yet I place pretty high."³

After the fatal tragedy in 1796, Coleridge was the one friend to whom Lamb poured out all the anguish of his heart. "White, or some of my friends," he wrote, "or the public papers by this time may have informed you of the terrible

¹ See Hayden's *Autobiography and Journals*, p. 216.

² Carlyle's *Reminiscences*, p. 310.

³ Campbell's *Life of Coleridge*, p. xxxii. See also pp. 538 *seq.*

calamities that have fallen on our family. I will only give you the outlines: My poor, dear, dearest sister, in a fit of insanity, has been the death of her own mother. I was at hand only time enough to snatch the knife out of her grasp. She is at present in a madhouse, from which I fear she must be moved to an hospital. . . . My poor father was slightly wounded, and I am left to take care of him and my aunt. Mr. Norris, of the Blue Coat School, has been very kind to us, and we have no other friend; but, thank God, I am very calm and composed, and able to do the best that remains to do. . . . God Almighty have us well in his keeping!" In a later letter he tells of Mary's recovery and of her most affectionate and tender concern for what had happened.

The story of the "life of dual loneliness" and mutual devotion which the brother and sister led from this time until the death of Charles has hardly its parallel in fact or fiction. The guardianship of Mary was at once cheerfully assumed by Charles, who cared for the unfortunate woman henceforth with the most unselfish affection. Wherever they went they soon became "marked people," and were subjected to such petty annoyances and persecutions that they were obliged repeatedly to change their lodgings. At irregular intervals Mary suffered recurrences of her malady, which ever hung over them with its fearful shadow. Even when they ventured to indulge in a short excursion during Lamb's vacation, Mary took the precaution to have a strait-waistcoat carefully packed in their luggage. At last these seizures became so frequent and uncertain that they gave up their holiday trips. "Miss Lamb experienced," says Talfourd, "and full well understood, premonitory symptoms of the attack, in restlessness, low fever, and the inability to sleep; and, as gently as possible, prepared her brother for the duty he must soon perform; and thus, unless he could stave off the terrible separation till Sunday, obliged him to ask leave of absence from the office as if for

a day's pleasure — a bitter mockery! On one occasion Mr. Charles Lloyd met them slowly pacing together a little footpath in Hoxton fields, both weeping bitterly, and found, on joining them, that they were taking their solemn way to the accustomed asylum."¹

Mary, who was ten years older than Charles, became on her part the benefactress and guardian angel of his humble home, and looked after his comfort with tender solicitude. All who knew her admired her taste, tact, and good sense; and, being herself gifted with no ordinary literary talents, she was able not only to preside as a gracious hostess at the Wednesday parties, but also to be her brother's helpful companion and inspiring collaborator. Something of the love and reverence which Charles Lamb felt for this noble woman may be read between the lines of a letter written to Dorothy Wordsworth in 1805. "I have every reason to suppose," he wrote, "that this illness, like all Mary's former ones, will be but temporary. But I cannot always feel so. Meantime she is dead to me, and I miss a prop. All my strength is gone, and I am like a fool, bereft of her coöperation. I dare not think, lest I should think wrong; so used am I to look up to her in the least and the biggest perplexity. To say all that I know of her would be more than I think anybody could believe or even understand; . . . She is older and wiser, and better than me, and all my wretched imperfections I cover to myself by resolutely thinking on her goodness. She would share life and death, heaven and hell with me. She lives but for me."²

"Rich indeed in moral instruction," says De Quincey, "was the life of Charles Lamb: and perhaps in one chief result it offers to the thoughtful observer a lesson of consolation that is awful, and of hope that ought to be immortal, viz., in the

¹ *Final Memorials*, pp. 131-132 (October 3, 1796).

² *Works of Charles Lamb*, Vol. I, pp. 201-202, Talfourd ed.

record which it furnishes that by meekness of submission, and by earnest conflict with evil in the spirit of cheerfulness, it is possible ultimately to disarm or to blunt the very heaviest of curses — even the curse of lunacy.”¹

III. STYLE AND MATTER OF THE ESSAYS

Lamb's style is as unique and paradoxical as his personality. It possesses the amiable humor, the well-bred tone, the tender pathos, and the airy fancy which made the man so attractive. All that was weak, perverse, boisterous, or discourteous has evaporated in the processes of composition; while his genial egotism, perfect humanity, piquant philosophy, the essential sweetness and light of his nature, remain crystallized. Ernest Rhys mentions admiringly “the many fine and rare graces to be found in *Elia*: the art, the fantasy, the charm of style, the exquisite sense of words, the temperamental faculty for literature at its highest and choicest attainment.”² Saintsbury pronounces him “the most exquisite and singular, though the least prolific, of the literary geniuses”³ whom the *London* boasted during its brief but brilliant career. To say the least, Lamb has by general consent made an exceedingly interesting and original contribution to English prose. His style is eclectic in spirit and composite in form. This is the secret of its structure, which though extremely illusive is susceptible of analysis.

Until his forty-fifth year Lamb was engaged in tentative and 'prentice work, none of which would have given him a high permanent reputation. It was only with the establishment of the *London* in 1820 that he found the proper vehicle for his

¹ De Quincey's *Works*, Vol. V, p. 220, Masson ed.

² *Essays of Elia*, Introduction, p. xiv (Camelot Series).

³ Saintsbury's *History of Nineteenth-Century Literature*, p. 181.

genius. The fortunate opening was industriously taken advantage of, and during the next thirteen years there appeared in the *London* and other periodicals that series of *Essays of Elia* upon which his title to an immortality of fame now securely rests. It is not strange that so gifted a person should have invented for his use a special instrument which was perfectly adequate to the expression of his inimitable mind.

One of the earliest impressions made on the student of these essays is the author's apparently haphazard and incongruous choice of themes. Closer investigation, however, will disclose the fact that all the subjects group themselves under three or four general heads. One class is *antiquarian*, and includes such papers as *The South-Sea House*, *Christ's Hospital*, and *The Old Benchers*; another is *social*, examples being *Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist*, *Imperfect Sympathies*, *Grace before Meat*, and *Old China*; a third is *critical*, and discusses topics of general or philosophic interest, such as *Sanity of True Genius* and *Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading*. Under this classification are found personal reminiscences, character sketches, bits of folklore, poetical rhapsodies, and criticism. Lamb followed the custom of the *Spectator* in choosing subjects of interest to the unprofessional reader, such as holidays, witches, religion, plays, relatives, cooking, newspapers, china, famous places and people. Self-confidence was shown in the selection of these familiar and often commonplace topics, for any failure here in freshness of style or originality of thought would have been conspicuous, perhaps fatal. Elia hands down to the nineteenth century the best traditions of the popular eighteenth-century periodical essay. "He showed," says Saintsbury, "how the occasional in literature might be made classical." He is "an epitome of the lighter side of *belles lettres*," and often something more, for in addition to entertaining us he teaches us to observe, to analyze, to philosophize.

It is important to take into account the external influences, as well as the more hidden springs of thought and feeling, which helped to mold his style. As to conventional form, as well as in choice of subject, he followed the type of the personal essay found in the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*. Steele and Addison were pioneers in making good literature of the chit-chat of the tea table and the weightier talk of the coffee-house, and thus beguiled the illiterate fops and fine ladies into a love of reading. Lamb and the other Cockney essayists were the heirs of all this literary experience, but they made important additions to their heritage. To the wit, correctness, philosophy, and common sense of the eighteenth century they added the warmth, geniality, freedom, and individuality of the nineteenth.

For Lamb's masters in style and his intellectual affinities we must go back to an earlier period. "What appears to the hasty reader artificial in Lamb's style," says Ainger, "was natural to him. For in this matter of style he was the product of his reading, and from a child his reading had lain in the dramatists and generally in the great imaginative writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Shakespeare and Milton he knew almost by heart; Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Ford, and Webster were hardly less familiar to him; and next to these, the writers of the so-called metaphysical school, the later developments of the Euphuistic fashion had the strongest fascination for him. When the fantastic vein took the pedantic-humorous shape, as in Burton; or the metaphysical-humorous, as in Sir Thomas Browne; or where it was combined with true poetic sensibility, as in Wither and Marvell,—of these springs Lamb had drunk so deeply that his mind was saturated with them. His own nature became 'subdued to what it worked in.' For him to bear, not only on his style but on the cast of his mind and fancy, the mark of these writers, and many more in whom genius and eccentricity went together, was no

matter of choice. It was this that constituted the 'self-pleasing quaintness' of his literary manner."¹

The surprising range and variety of Lamb's subjects are an index of his mental activity and breadth of sympathy; but the complex and heterogeneous elements that enter into his style reveal his sensitiveness to language and his capacity for absorbing without loss of originality the best that had preceded him. His mind may be thought of as a magic alembic which had the virtue of distilling a variety of strange simples into a new quintessence beautiful and aromatic. Henry Nelson Coleridge in the *Etonian* asserts that "Charles Lamb writes the best, purest, and most genuine English of any man living. For genuine Anglicism, which amongst all other essentials of excellence in our native literature is now recovering itself from the leaden mace of the *Rambler*, he is quite a study; his prose is absolutely perfect, it conveys thought without smothering it in blankets."² His style kept pace in flexibility with the versatility of its author, and readily adapted itself to the matter in hand. Thus each theme with its respective mood finds a natural and effective garb, yet the peculiar, unmistakable touch of Lamb is never absent. It is not exaggeration to say that in him English prose style reached its climax, and this view is now generally accepted.

Lamb is one of our most bookish writers. His essays have something suggestive of the musty odor of old folios, always the atmosphere of the study. X He felt the lack of the highest university training, and laid no claim to profound scholarship. Few of his essays, however, fail to show industrious browsing in that rich pasturage of Samuel Salt's library. The works of the poets, rhetoricians, and playwrights of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were his "midnight darlings." It was in their fields that he loved to glean. His habit of keeping

¹ *The Essays of Elia*, p. vii, Ainger ed.

² *Ibid.*, p. iv.

scrapbooks, in which he copied selections from his favorite authors, enabled him to make a ready use of the best of what he had read. Lamb is an inveterate but happy quoter, and many of his quotations are difficult to trace. Some are taken from obscure nooks and crannies of literature but little explored by even the bookworms of our day. An examination of his method of weaving in choice pieces from other authors will disclose some interesting facts. Sometimes he quotes inaccurately or paraphrases as if from memory; again he deliberately changes the language to suit his context; often he merely suggests some familiar passage by a delicately allusive phrasing. His style holds in solution a sufficient amount of recondite allusion and scholarly reference to please the most learned, and at the same time it delights the general reader with its racy, idiomatic English and its many echoes of the language of the Bible. Thus there are in Lamb's style, aside from its substance, many elements that make for permanency.

Lamb's usual manner is the conversational. The long literary correspondence which he conducted with Coleridge, Wordsworth, Manning, and others was his best training school. We have seen how many of his letters are little essays in the germ. The essays were composed slowly and with the utmost pains. They were not hastily and carelessly dashed off. Their author was a master of the art that conceals art, and though the whole result may be easy and familiar, each sentence and paragraph has received the skillful manipulation of the trained stylist. The discursive structure of the essays, the frequent digressions, the parentheses, and the abrupt transitions are but devices to give them an easy, unconventional tone. The normal plane in writing gives opportunity for that rise and fall in feeling which afford relief from monotony, like the use of light and shade in art. The reader imagines himself listening quietly to the fascinating talk of a beloved companion who for the most part chats delightfully in a witty or sentimental mood, with

many half-whispered asides, but who now and then warms with his theme and rises eloquently into heights of rhapsody or apostrophe.

The quality that has given Lamb his distinctive place in the development of English prose is his *humor*. He was a humorist in the old historic sense, his humor being the outgrowth of his character, and also a talent which he strove to improve by cultivation. There was besides a vast deal of wisdom in his wit. As other men have labored to become profound or eloquent, so Lamb studied to be humorous. He devoted himself painstakingly to placing this gift upon a refined and intellectual plane. His habit of making quips on serious matters led the critical to charge him with masquerading as a man who took himself as a joke, but his friends knew that he "wore a martyr's heart beneath his suit of motley and jested that he might not weep." Besides, in following his natural bent, he was true to his best instincts. Of all the English humorists he most resembles Sir Thomas Browne and Thomas Fuller, two of his favorite authors. His bizarre vocabulary, coinages from the Latin, and his turn for the quaint and unexpected are characteristics which he has in common with the author of *Religio Medici*; his fondness for verbal quips, figures, and extravagant conceits reminds us of *The Worthies of England*. Coleridge's remark on Fuller that "his wit was the stuff and substance of his style" applies equally well to Lamb. When we compare the letters with the essays we see a tendency and a growth, for Elia is the outcome of the habit of seeing and presenting things humorously.

Lamb's humorous effects are produced in such a variety of ways that one must read a good deal of him to appreciate his versatility. We can indicate here only a few of his many devices for getting fun out of a subject. His title of the "Last of the Elizabethans" is nowhere better justified than in his fondness for verbal humor. He delights in words, and

revives the literary standing of the long-neglected pun and the conceits so much in vogue in the days of Lyly and Sidney. He thus reveals many latent resources of our vocabulary and lends fresh interest to the dictionary. We suddenly come across such strange words as hobby-dehoys, manducation, periegesis, orgasm, traydrille, obolary, and deodands, and discover that he is using learned or unusual terms to dignify the commonplace. Less original but very happy is his use of the simile, where he expresses his aversion to dying, "I am not content to pass away like a weaver's shuttle." Again, what an indescribable flavor is imparted to his paper on *Poor Relations* by dropping into the archaic style, "He casually looketh in about dinner-time," etc.

Lamb revels in exaggeration, hyperbole, and the mock heroic, and he frequently indulges in burlesque, anticlimax, and caricature. One leading form of his humor depends upon some oddity or incongruity of character. How delightful is the sophistry in the thesis that "the title to property in a book is in exact ratio to the claimant's powers of understanding and appreciating the same." How gravely he asserts that "a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple-dumplings," and how equally cheerfully he announces that a certain undertaker "lets lodgings for single gentlemen." "Amanda, have you a *midriff* to bestow?" illustrates his use of burlesque; the burning of the cottages for the purpose of roasting pigs, the mock heroic; and his reference to Locke in the same connection, the ironical. A specimen of tender and unexpected humor is the remark about himself and his sister that "we are generally in harmony, with occasional bickerings—as it should be among near relations." Ainger aptly calls this "the antithesis of irony,—the hiding of a sweet after-taste in a bitter word."

"No one describes," says Hazlitt, "the manners of the last generation so well as Mr. Lamb; with so fine, and yet so formal an air; with such vivid obscurity; with such arch

piquancy, such picturesque quaintness, such smiling pathos.”¹ Lamb has left, at least in his essays, no full-length portraiture of character. This is not to be expected. In lieu of this he has drawn a whole gallery of pastels or pen-and-ink sketches, —delightful Jonsonese studies of every man in his humor. In his characterization Lamb is neither a satirist nor a caricaturist; there is nothing purposely distorted or exaggerated about his figures. He does not conceal any oddity of dress or manner, he does not hesitate to call attention to any idiosyncrasy whether ludicrous or admirable; but he goes further, and with keen insight and a sweet and gentle sympathy he makes us feel the essential humanity of the person described.

He has a faculty nothing short of genius of suggesting character by a few rapid touches. How quickly we become acquainted with the formal John Tipp, swearing at his little orphans, whose rights he is guarding with absolute fidelity; or the noble and sensible Bridget Elia, whose presence of mind, though equal to the most pressing trials of life, sometimes deserts her upon trifling occasions. There, too, is the mendacious voyager, himself fictitious, who perfectly remembers seeing a phoenix in his travels in upper Egypt. And, best of all, we repeat the opinions of that rigorous, strenuous old dame, Mrs. Battle, who next to her devotions loved a good game of whist. Like Dickens, Lamb dissected the humors of his characters with a loving hand; there was no malice in his smile and his sarcasm was only arch pleasantry. “Seeking his materials,” says Talfourd, “for the most part in the common paths of life, often in the humblest, he gives an importance to everything, and sheds a grace over all.” In the unpretentious department of miniature painting Lamb is an artist of the first rank.

The scope of this introduction does not admit of an extended discussion of all Lamb’s literary output. His letters, poems,

¹ Hazlitt’s *Spirit of the Age*, p. 114.

plays, translations, and short stories must remain uncriticized. Space remains for only a few remarks on his work as a critic. Although widely read and endowed with rare insight and a sensitive taste, his limitations as a critic were serious and fundamental. His opinions of men, books, paintings, plays, and the conduct of life are based rather on sentiment and prejudice than on reason and technical considerations. His judgments, therefore, are often unreliable and open to objection, and so are mainly interesting because of their striking originality and finished style. Lamb's method is impressionistic; he has almost nothing in common with the more recent school of scientific criticism represented by Matthew Arnold. Leaving out the biting satire and cruel personalities of Jeffreys, Gifford, and Wilson, Lamb is much like his contemporary reviewers. Some of the whimsical and paradoxical elements of the Elia essays are found also in the critical papers.

Lamb's merits as well as his limitations as a critic of art are seen in his essay *On the Genius and Character of Hogarth*. This is a case of special pleading, and was written to vindicate the noble qualities of the painter's work. The classical school of artists had attacked Hogarth on the charge that he was a mere caricaturist, a defective draughtsman, and that he showed slight knowledge of the human figure. In defense of his favorite, Lamb takes the high ground that Hogarth was a great satirist and moralist, and that he aimed to make a series of realistic and dramatic drawings which should depict life in all its vigor and variety. What attracted Lamb was the story in the pictures overflowing with the humor and pathos of humanity. Therefore what seemed to others grotesque and horrible was to him amusing or sublime. He ran the risk of damaging his cause by overstatement, as with the print of *Gin Lane*, where he missed the real meaning of the picture. He judged as a novelist, not as a painter, and found in the drawings only what he wished to find there. As a critic of

art he is unconvincing because of his ignorance of technical matters, but his interpretation of the moral power of any particular work is stimulating and therefore valuable.

In the realm of literature Lamb's critical faculty was delicate and penetrative. Here again the personal equation appears, for the value of his remarks depends largely upon his like or dislike of the author under consideration. For this reason his judgments of his contemporaries are unreliable except in the case of friends. "Where his heart was," says Ainger, "there his judgment was sound. Where he actively disliked, or was passively indifferent, his critical powers remained dormant." It is to be expected that he would be unappreciative of most of the writers of his own day. He admired Coleridge more than Wordsworth, and cared nothing for Scott, Shelley, or Byron, whom he did not know personally.

Lamb's position as a critic now rests on his choice bits of criticism of the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly the dramatists contemporary with Shakespeare. In his brief comments on the characters in the principal plays of this period is revealed a mind remarkable for its poetic sensitiveness and interpretative imagination. In his longer critical papers he prefers to take a narrow field and an unusual point of view. It is therefore important for the reader to get at the precise question which Lamb proposes to argue in each case, otherwise his position will seem absurd. Thus in his *Shakespeare's Tragedies* he discusses certain limitations of the stage, and makes an admirable argument on the proposition that there are intellectual qualities in dramatic poetry which cannot be interpreted by the actor's art.

The time has come when, by eliminating all that does not make for permanence, we can fairly estimate Lamb's contribution to English prose; and we may confidently assert that his niche in the pantheon of famous authors is definite and secure. The happy originality of his genius renders him

singularly free from unfavorable comparison with previous writers, from contemporary rivalry, and from the fluctuations of critical judgments in the future. All now unite in awarding him high praise for the leading part which he bore in the rediscovery of the rich treasures of the Elizabethan drama, and in the recrudescence of the quaint style of the humorists and philosophers of the seventeenth century. Furthermore, his inspiring example of combining business and culture in the face of appalling difficulties has made him personally the best beloved man in our literary history. The *Elia* papers justly take an honored place in the long succession of periodical essays that adorn the language. As an expression of their author's genial, elastic, and reflective mind they are marvelously perfect, and alone would entitle Charles Lamb to a secure place among the immortals.

IV. LIBRARY REFERENCES

I. *Editions.* There are several complete editions of Lamb's writings, the fullest and most satisfactory being Fitzgerald, *Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb* (1876) in 6 vols.; Ainger, *Works of Charles Lamb* (1883-1888) in 6 vols.; and Crowell, *Works of Charles Lamb* (1882) in 5 vols., now out of print. Included in the last-named edition are "The Letters of Charles Lamb with a Sketch of His Life" (1837) and "The Final Memorials of Charles Lamb" (1848), both by Talfourd, and both authoritative works having the interest and value of autobiography.

Ainger, *Letters of Charles Lamb* in 2 vols., is the best collection of his correspondence. The cheapest one-volume edition complete is Shepherd's, published by Chatto and Windus. A centenary edition of his complete works was published by Routledge. Moxon's edition was one of the earliest, but does not include the letters. Among the best editions of the *Essays of Elia* are Ainger's (containing many interesting notes for the general reader); Walter Scott's, with a brief introduction by Ernest Rhys (no notes); Chatto

and Windus'; Kent's (notes few and inaccurate); and Bliss Perry's "Selections from Lamb" in his *Little Masterpieces*. None of the foregoing editions are intended for students. W. Carew Hazlitt compiled a useful volume entitled *Charles and Mary Lamb: Poems, Letters, and Remains* (1874).

II. *Biography and Criticism*. Ainger's *Charles Lamb* (1882) in the "English Men of Letters" series is the most important life of Lamb, and contains a full analysis and criticism of his works. The introduction to the same author's edition of the *Essays of Elia* is an admirable critique. A good short life of Lamb, combined with criticism, by the same writer, is found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. XXX, pp. 423-429. De Quincey's biographical sketch in his complete works, Vol. V, pp. 215-258 (Masson ed.), is the most eloquent and philosophical monograph on Lamb. *Charles Lamb: A Memoir* (1866) by Procter (Barry Cornwall) has much original material. Cradock's *Charles Lamb*, Peabody's *Charles Lamb at his Desk* (1872), and Marten's *In the Footprints of Charles Lamb*, are all full of personal interest and background.

Saintsbury's estimate of Lamb in his *History of Nineteenth-Century Literature* (1896) is just and penetrative. Swinburne's "Charles Lamb and George Wither" in his *Miscellanies* (1895) is a brilliant and enthusiastic study of Lamb as a critic. Mrs. Oliphant's discussion of Lamb in her *Literary History of England* (1894), Vol. II, pp. 1-18, is merely a repetition of Talfourd's impressions. Bliss Perry's little essay in his "Selections" is fresh and suggestive. The last chapter of Hazlitt's *Spirit of the Age* (1825) is a glowing appreciation. The same writer's beautiful essay *On Persons One Would Wish to Have Seen* narrates the conversation at one of Lamb's parties.

Much interesting anecdote and critical comment will be found scattered through the following books: Gilchrist's *Life of Mary Lamb*; Sandford's *Thomas Poole and his Friends* and *Elia and Geoffrey Crayon*; Haydon's *Autobiography and Journals* (1853); H. C. Robinson's *Diary*; Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography* (1850); Thomas Hood's *Literary Reminiscences* (1839); P. G. Patmore's *My Friends and Acquaintances* (1854); W. C. Hazlitt's

Memoirs of William Hazlitt (1867); Mrs. Matthews' *Memoir of Charles Matthews* (1838); Cottle's *Early Recollections of Coleridge* (1837); Gillman's, Campbell's, and Alsop's biographies of Coleridge; Southey's *Life and Correspondence*; Barton's *Poems, Life, and Letters* (1849); and Augustine Birrell's *Obiter Dicta* (1887).

The following magazine articles show considerable research: "The Sad Side of the Humorist's Life" in *Littell*, January, 1832; Mary Cowden Clarke's "Recollections of Mary Lamb" in the same magazine for April, 1858; "Charles Lamb and Sydney Smith," a strong piece of comparative criticism, in the *Atlantic*, March, 1859; "Concerning Charles Lamb" in *Scribner's*, March, 1876; and "Gleanings after his Biographers" in *Macmillan's*, April, 1867.

The most complete bibliography of Lamb is that by E. D. North, appended to Marten's *In the Footprints of Charles Lamb* (1890).

Since the earlier volume went to press, Mr. William Macdonald's edition of Lamb's works, in twelve volumes beautifully illustrated by Mr. C. E. Brock, has appeared. This edition must take precedence over all others, not only on account of its reasonable and congruous arrangement and the sanity and excellence of its editorial equipment, but because it contains a considerable amount of new and important matter.

Mr. E. V. Lucas has also recently edited a collection of Lamb's correspondence, which includes a large number of letters not hitherto published.

ESSAYS OF ELIA

I. A CHARACTER OF THE LATE ELIA

BY A FRIEND

THIS gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature. He just lived long enough (it was what he wished) to see his papers collected into a volume. The pages of the London Magazine will henceforth know him no more.

Exactly at twelve last night, his queer spirit departed; and the bells of Saint Bride's rang him out with the old year. The mournful vibrations were caught in the dining-room of his friends T. and H., and the company, assembled there to welcome in another First of January, checked their carous-
als in mid-mirth, and were silent. Janus wept. The gentle P——r, in a whisper, signified his intention of devoting an elegy; and Allan C., nobly forgetful of his countrymen's wrongs, vowed a memoir to his *manes* full and friendly as a
"Tale of Lyddalcross."

To say truth, it is time he were gone. The humour of the thing, if there was ever much in it, was pretty well exhausted; and a two years' and a half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom.

I am now at liberty to confess, that much* which I have
heard objected to my late friend's writings was well-founded. Crude they are, I grant you — a sort of unlicked, incondite things — villanously pranked in an affected array of antique modes and phrases. They had not been *his*, if they had been

other than such ; and better it is, that a writer should be natural in a self-pleasing quaintness, than to affect a naturalness (so called) that should be strange to him. Egotistical they have been pronounced by some who did not know, that
5 what he tells us, as of himself, was often true only (historically) of another ; as in a former Essay (to save many instances) — where under the *first person* (his favourite figure) he shadows forth the forlorn estate of a country-boy placed at a London school, far from his friends and connexions — in direct oppo-
10 sition to his own early history. If it be egotism to imply and twine with his own identity the griefs and affections of another — making himself many, or reducing many unto himself — then is the skilful novelist, who all along brings in his hero, or heroine, speaking of themselves, the greatest egotist
15 of all ; who yet has never, therefore, been accused of that narrowness. And how shall the intenser dramatist escape being faulty, who doubtless, under cover of passion uttered by another, oftentimes gives blameless vent to his most inward feelings, and expresses his own story modestly ?

20 My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him ; and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is, he gave himself too little concern what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and
25 would e'en out with what came uppermost. With the severe religionist he would pass for a free-thinker ; while the other faction set him down for a bigot, or persuaded themselves that he belied his sentiments. Few understood him ; and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself. He
30 too much affected that dangerous figure — irony. He sowed doubtful speeches, and reaped plain, unequivocal hatred. — He would interrupt the gravest discussion with some light jest ; and yet, perhaps, not quite irrelevant in ears that could understand it. Your long and much talkers hated him. The

informal habit of his mind, joined to an inveterate impediment of speech, forbade him to be an orator ; and he seemed determined that no one else should play that part when he was present. He was *petit* and ordinary in his person and appearance. I have seen him sometimes in what is called 5 good company, but where he has been a stranger, sit silent, and be suspected for an odd fellow ; till some unlucky occasion provoking it, he would stutter out some senseless pun (not altogether senseless perhaps, if rightly taken), which has stamped his character for the evening. It was hit or miss 10 with him ; but nine times out of ten, he contrived by this device to send away a whole company his enemies. His conceptions rose kindlier than his utterance, and his happiest *impromptus* had the appearance of effort. He has been accused of trying to be witty, when in truth he was but strug- 15 gling to give his poor thoughts articulation. He chose his companions for some individuality of character which they manifested. — Hence, not many persons of science, and few professed *literati*, were of his councils. They were, for the most part, persons of an uncertain fortune ; and, as to such 20 people commonly nothing is more obnoxious than a gentleman of settled (though moderate) income, he passed with most of them for a great miser. To my knowledge this was a mistake. His *intimados*, to confess a truth, were in the world's eye a ragged regiment. He found them floating on the sur- 25 face of society ; and the colour, or something else, in the weed pleased him. The burrs stuck to him — but they were good and loving burrs for all that. He never greatly cared for the society of what are called good people. If any of these were scandalized (and offences were sure to arise), he could not 30 help it. When he has been remonstrated with for not making more concessions to the feelings of good people, he would retort by asking, what one point did these good people ever concede to him? He was temperate in his meals and

diversions, but always kept a little on this side of abstemiousness. Only in the use of the Indian weed he might be thought a little excessive. He took it, he would say, as a solvent of speech. Marry — as the friendly vapour ascended, how his
5 prattle would curl up sometimes with it! the ligaments, which tongue-tied him, were loosened, and the stammerer proceeded a statist!

I do not know whether I ought to bemoan or rejoice that my old friend is departed. His jests were beginning to
10 grow obsolete, and his stories to be found out. He felt the approaches of age; and while he pretended to cling to life, you saw how slender were the ties left to bind him. Discouraging with him latterly on this subject, he expressed himself with a pettishness, which I thought unworthy of him.
15 In our walks about his suburban retreat (as he called it) at Shacklewell, some children belonging to a school of industry had met us, and bowed and curtsyed, as he thought, in an especial manner to *him*. “They take me for a visiting governor,” he muttered earnestly. He had a horror, which he
20 carried to a foible, of looking like anything important and parochial. He thought that he approached nearer to that stamp daily. He had a general aversion from being treated like a grave or respectable character, and kept a wary eye upon the advances of age that should so entitle him. He
25 herded always, while it was possible, with people younger than himself. He did not conform to the march of time, but was dragged along in the procession. His manners lagged behind his years. He was too much of the boy-man. The *toga virilis* never sate gracefully on his shoulders. The impressions of
30 infancy had burnt into him, and he resented the impertinence of manhood. These were weaknesses; but such as they were, they are a key to explicate some of his writings.

[He left little property behind him. Of course, the little that is left (chiefly in India bonds) devolves upon his cousin

Bridget. A few critical dissertations were found in his *escritoire*, which have been handed over to the editor of this magazine, in which it is to be hoped they will shortly appear, retaining his accustomed signature.

He has himself not obscurely hinted that his employment 5
lay in a public office. The gentlemen in the export department of the East India House will forgive me if I acknowledge the readiness with which they assisted me in the retrieval of his few manuscripts. They pointed out in a most obliging manner the desk at which he had been planted for forty years ; 10
showed me ponderous tomes of figures, in his own remarkably neat hand, which, more properly than his few printed tracts, might be called his "Works." They seemed affectionate to his memory, and universally commended his expertness in book-keeping. It seems he was the inventor of some ledger 15
which should combine the precision and certainty of the Italian double entry (I think they called it) with the brevity and facility of some newer German system ; but I am not able to appreciate the worth of the discovery. I have often heard him express a warm regard for his associates in office, and 20
how fortunate he considered himself in having his lot thrown in amongst them. "There is more sense, more discourse, more shrewdness, and even talent, among these clerks," he would say, "than in twice the number of authors by profession that I have conversed with." He would brighten up 25
sometimes upon the "old days of the India House," when he consorted with Woodroffe and Wissett, and Peter Corbet (a descendant and worthy representative, bating the point of sanctity, of old facetious Bishop Corbet) ; and Hoole, who translated Tasso ; and Bartlemy Brown, whose father (God 30
assoil him therefor !) modernized Walton ; and sly, warm-hearted old Jack Cole (King Cole they called him in those days) and Campe and Fombelle, and a world of choice spirits, more than I can remember to name, who associated in those

days with Jack Burrell (the *bon-vivant* of the South-Sea House); and little Eyton (said to be a fac-simile of Pope, — he was a miniature of a gentleman), that was cashier under him; and Dan Voight of the Custom-house, that left
5 the famous library.

Well, Elia is gone, — for aught I know, to be re-united with them, — and these poor traces of his pen are all we have to show for it. How little survives of the wordiest authors! Of all they said or did in their lifetime, a few glittering words
10 only! His Essays found some favourers, as they appeared separately; they shuffled their way in the crowd well enough singly; how they will *read*, now they are brought together, is a question for the publishers, who have thus ventured to draw out into one piece his “weaved-up follies.”]

PHIL-ELIA.

II. THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE

15 READER, in thy passage from the Bank — where thou hast been receiving thy half-yearly dividends (supposing thou art a lean annuitant like myself) — to the Flower Pot, to secure a place for Dalston, or Shacklewell, or some other thy suburban retreat northerly, — didst thou never observe a melan-
20 choly-looking, handsome, brick and stone edifice, to the left — where Threadneedle Street abuts upon Bishopsgate? I dare say thou hast often admired its magnificent portals ever gaping wide, and disclosing to view a grave court, with cloisters, and pillars, with few or no traces of goers-in or comers-out — a
25 desolation something like Balclutha’s.¹

This was once a house of trade, — a centre of busy interests. The throng of merchants was here — the quick pulse of gain

¹ I passed by the walls of Balclutha, and they were desolate. —
OSSIAN.

—and here some forms of business are still kept up, though the soul be long since fled. Here are still to be seen stately porticoes; imposing staircases; offices roomy as the state apartments in palaces—deserted, or thinly peopled with a few straggling clerks; the still more sacred interiors of court and committee-rooms, with venerable faces of beadles, door-keepers—directors seated in form on solemn days (to proclaim a dead dividend), at long worm-eaten tables, that have been mahogany, with tarnished gilt-leather coverings, supporting massy silver inkstands long since dry;—the oaken wainscots hung with pictures of deceased governors and sub-governors, of Queen Anne, and the two first monarchs of the Brunswick dynasty;—huge charts, which subsequent discoveries have antiquated;—dusty maps of Mexico, dim as dreams,—and soundings of the Bay of Panama!—The long passages hung with buckets, appended, in idle row, to walls, whose substance might defy any, short of the last conflagration:—with vast ranges of cellarage under all, where dollars and pieces of eight once lay, an “unsunned heap,” for Mammon to have solaced his solitary heart withal,—long since dissipated, or scattered into air at the blast of the breaking of that famous BUBBLE.—

Such is the SOUTH-SEA HOUSE. At least, such it was forty years ago, when I knew it,—a magnificent relic! What alterations may have been made in it since, I have had no opportunities of verifying. Time, I take for granted, has not freshened it. No wind has resuscitated the face of the sleeping waters. A thicker crust by this time stagnates upon it. The moths, that were then battening upon its obsolete ledgers and day-books, have rested from their depredations, but other light generations have succeeded, making fine fretwork among their single and double entries. Layers of dust have accumulated (a superfoetation of dirt!) upon the old layers, that seldom used to be disturbed, save by some curious finger, now and then, inquisitive to explore the mode of book-keeping in

Queen Anne's reign; or, with less hallowed curiosity, seeking to unveil some of the mysteries of that tremendous HOAX, whose extent the petty speculators of our day look back upon with the same expression of incredulous admiration, and hopeless ambition of rivalry, as would become the puny face of modern conspiracy contemplating the Titan size of Vaux's superhuman plot.

Peace to the manes of the BUBBLE! Silence and destitution are upon thy walls, proud house, for a memorial!

10 Situated as thou art, in the very heart of stirring and living commerce, — amid the fret and fever of speculation — with the Bank, and the 'Change, and the India House about thee, in the hey-day of present prosperity, with their important faces, as it were, insulting thee, their *poor neighbour out of business*
15 — to the idle and merely contemplative, — to such as me, old house! there is a charm in thy quiet: — a cessation — a coolness from business — an indolence almost cloistral — which is delightful! With what reverence have I paced thy great bare rooms and courts at eventide! They spoke of the past: —
20 the shade of some dead accountant, with visionary pen in ear, would flit by me, stiff as in life. Living accounts and accountants puzzle me. I have no skill in figuring. But thy great dead tomes, which scarce three degenerate clerks of the present day could lift from their enshrining shelves — with their old
25 fantastic flourishes, and decorative rubric interlacings — their sums in triple columniations, set down with formal superfluity of cyphers — with pious sentences at the beginning, without which our religious ancestors never ventured to open a book of business, or bill of lading — the costly vellum covers of
30 some of them almost persuading us that we are got into some *better library*, — are very agreeable and edifying spectacles. I can look upon these defunct dragons with complacency. Thy heavy odd-shaped ivory-handled penknives (our ancestors had everything on a larger scale than we have hearts for) are

as good as anything from Herculaneum. The pounce-boxes of our days have gone retrograde.

The very clerks which I remember in the South-Sea House—I speak of forty years back—had an air very different from those in the public offices that I have had to do with since. 5 They partook of the genius of the place!

They were mostly (for the establishment did not admit of superfluous salaries) bachelors. Generally (for they had not much to do) persons of a curious and speculative turn of mind. Old-fashioned, for a reason mentioned before. 10 Humourists, for they were of all descriptions; and, not having been brought together in early life (which has a tendency to assimilate the members of corporate bodies to each other), but, for the most part, placed in this house in ripe or middle age, they necessarily carried into it their separate habits and 15 oddities, unqualified, if I may so speak, as into a common stock. Hence they formed a sort of Noah's ark. Odd fishes. A lay-monastery. Domestic retainers in a great house, kept more for show than use. Yet pleasant fellows, full of chat — and not a few among them had arrived at considerable 20 proficiency on the German flute.

The cashier at that time was one Evans, a Cambro-Briton. He had something of the choleric complexion of his countrymen stamped on his visage, but was a worthy sensible man at bottom. He wore his hair, to the last, powdered and frizzed 25 out, in the fashion which I remember to have seen in caricatures of what were termed, in my young days, *Maccaronies*. He was the last of that race of beaux. Melancholy as a gibe-cat over his counter all the forenoon, I think I see him making up his cash (as they call it) with tremulous fingers, as if he 30 feared every one about him was a defaulter; in his hypochondry ready to imagine himself one; haunted, at least, with the idea of the possibility of his becoming one: his tristful visage clearing up a little over his roast neck of veal at

Anderton's at two (where his picture still hangs, taken a little before his death by desire of the master of the coffee-house, which he had frequented for the last five-and-twenty years), but not attaining the meridian of its animation till evening
5 brought on the hour of tea and visiting. The simultaneous sound of his well-known rap at the door with the stroke of the clock announcing six, was a topic of never-failing mirth in the families which this dear old bachelor gladdened with his presence. Then was his *forte*, his glorified hour! How would
10 he chirp, and expand over a muffin! How would he dilate into secret history! His countryman Pennant himself, in particular, could not be more eloquent than he in relation to old and new London—the site of old theatres, churches, streets gone to decay—where Rosamond's Pond stood—the Mul-
15 berry Gardens—and the Conduit in Cheap—with many a pleasant anecdote, derived from paternal tradition, of those grotesque figures which Hogarth has immortalized in his picture of *Noon*,—the worthy descendants of those heroic confessors, who, flying to this country, from the wrath of Louis
20 the Fourteenth and his dragoons, kept alive the flame of pure religion in the sheltering obscurities of Hog Lane, and the vicinity of the Seven Dials!

Deputy, under Evans, was Thomas Tame. He had the air and stoop of a nobleman. You would have taken him for one,
25 had you met him in one of the passages leading to Westminster Hall. By stoop I mean that gentle bending of the body forwards, which, in great men, must be supposed to be the effect of an habitual condescending attention to the applications of their inferiors. While he held you in converse, you
30 felt strained to the height in the colloquy. The conference over, you were at leisure to smile at the comparative insignificance of the pretensions which had just awed you. His intellect was of the shallowest order. It did not reach to a saw or a proverb. His mind was in its original state of white paper.

A sucking babe might have posed him. What was it then? Was he rich? Alas, no! Thomas Tame was very poor. Both he and his wife looked outwardly gentlefolks, when I fear all was not well at all times within. She had a neat meagre person, which it was evident she had not sinned in over-pampering; but in its veins was noble blood. She traced her descent, by some labyrinth of relationship, which I never thoroughly understood, — much less can explain with any heraldic certainty at this time of day, — to the illustrious, but unfortunate house of Derwentwater. This was the secret of Thomas's stoop. This was the thought — the sentiment — the bright solitary star of your lives, — ye mild and happy pair, — which cheered you in the night of intellect, and in the obscurity of your station! This was to you instead of riches, instead of rank, instead of glittering attainments: and it was worth them all together. You insulted none with it; but, while you wore it as a piece of defensive armour only, no insult likewise could reach you through it. *Decus et solamen.*

Of quite another stamp was the then accountant, John Tipp. He neither pretended to high blood, nor in good truth cared one fig about the matter. He “thought an accountant the greatest character in the world, and himself the greatest accountant in it.” Yet John was not without his hobby. The fiddle relieved his vacant hours. He sang, certainly, with other notes than to the Orphean lyre. He did, indeed, scream and scrape most abominably. His fine suite of official rooms in Threadneedle Street, which, without anything very substantial appended to them, were enough to enlarge a man's notions of himself that lived in them — (I know not who is the occupier of them now¹) — resounded fortnightly to the

¹ [I have since been informed, that the present tenant of them is a Mr. Lamb, a gentleman who is happy in the possession of some choice pictures, and among them a rare portrait of Milton, which I mean to do myself the pleasure of going to see, and at the same time to refresh

notes of a concert of "sweet breasts," as our ancestors would have called them, culled from club-rooms and orchestras—chorus singers—first and second violoncellos—double basses— and clarionets—who ate his cold mutton, and drank his punch, and praised his ear. He sate like Lord Midas among them. But at the desk Tipp was quite another sort of creature. Thence all ideas, that were purely ornamental, were banished. You could not speak of anything romantic without rebuke. Politics were excluded. A newspaper was thought too refined and abstracted. The whole duty of man consisted in writing off dividend warrants. The striking of the annual balance in the company's books (which, perhaps, differed from the balance of last year in the sum of £25, 1s. 6d.) occupied his days and nights for a month previous. Not that Tipp was blind to the deadness of *things* (as they call them in the city) in his beloved house, or did not sigh for a return of the old stirring days when South-Sea hopes were young—(he was indeed equal to the wielding of any the most intricate accounts of the most flourishing company in these or those days):—but to a genuine accountant the difference of proceeds is as nothing. The fractional farthing is as dear to his heart as the thousands which stand before it. He is the true actor, who, whether his part be a prince or a peasant, must act it with like intensity. With Tipp form was everything. His life was formal. His actions seemed ruled with a ruler. His pen was not less erring than his heart. He made the best executor in the world: he was plagued with incessant executorships accordingly, which excited his spleen and soothed his vanity in equal ratios. He would swear (for Tipp swore) at the little orphans, whose rights he would guard with a tenacity

my memory with the sight of old scenes. Mr. Lamb has the character of a right courteous and communicative collector.] This note was omitted in the collected *Essays of Elia* (1823). The Mr. Lamb here mentioned was the author's brother John. — ED.

like the grasp of the dying hand that commended their interests to his protection. With all this there was about him a sort of timidity — (his few enemies used to give it a worse name) — a something which, in reverence to the dead, we will place, if you please, a little on this side of the heroic. 5 Nature certainly had been pleased to endow John Tipp with a sufficient measure of the principle of self-preservation. There is a cowardice which we do not despise, because it has nothing base or treacherous in its elements; it betrays itself, not you: it is mere temperament; the absence of the 10 romantic and the enterprising; it sees a lion in the way, and will not, with Fortinbras, “greatly find quarrel in a straw,” when some supposed honour is at stake. Tipp never mounted the box of a stage-coach in his life; or leaned against the rails of a balcony; or walked upon the ridge of a parapet; 15 or looked down a precipice; or let off a gun; or went upon a water-party; or would willingly let you go if he could have helped it: neither was it recorded of him, that for lucre, or for intimidation, he ever forsook friend or principle.

Whom next shall we summon from the dusty dead, in 20 whom common qualities become uncommon? Can I forget thee, Henry Man, the wit, the polished man of letters, the *author*, of the South-Sea House? who never enteredst thy office in a morning, or quittedst it in mid-day — (what didst 5 *thou* in an office?) — without some quirk that left a sting! 25 Thy gibes and thy jokes are now extinct, or survive but in two forgotten volumes, which I had the good fortune to rescue from a stall in Barbican, not three days ago, and found thee terse, fresh, epigrammatic, as alive. Thy wit is a little gone by in these fastidious days — thy topics are staled by the 30 “new-born gauds” of the time: — but great thou used to be in Public Ledgers, and in Chronicles, upon Chatham and Shelburne, and Rockingham, and Howe, and Burgoyne, and Clinton, and the war which ended in the tearing from Great

Britain her rebellious colonies — and Keppel, and Wilkes, and Sawbridge, and Bull, and Dunning, and Pratt, and Richmond, — and such small politics. —

A little less facetious, and a great deal more obstreperous, 5 was fine rattling, rattleheaded Plumer. He was descended — not in a right line, reader (for his lineal pretensions, like his personal, favoured a little of the sinister bend) — from the Plumers of Hertfordshire. So tradition gave him out; and certain family features not a little sanctioned the opinion. 10 Certainly old Walter Plumer (his reputed author) had been a rake in his days, and visited much in Italy, and had seen the world. He was uncle, bachelor-uncle, to the fine old Whig still living, who has represented the county in so many successive parliaments, and has a fine old mansion near Ware. Walter 15 flourished in George the Second's days, and was the same who was summoned before the House of Commons about a business of franks, with the old Duchess of Marlborough. You may read of it in Johnson's Life of Cave. Cave came off cleverly in that business. It is certain our Plumer did nothing to discounte- 20 nance the rumour. He rather seemed pleased whenever it was, with all gentleness, insinuated. But, besides his family pretensions, Plumer was an engaging fellow, and sang gloriously. —

Not so sweetly sang Plumer as thou sangest, mild, child-like, pastoral M——; a flute's breathing less divinely whispering 25 than thy Arcadian melodies, when in tones worthy of Arden, thou didst chant that song sung by Amiens to the banished Duke, which proclaims the winter wind more lenient than for a man to be ungrateful. Thy sire was old surly M——, the unapproachable churchwarden of Bishopsgate. He knew not 30 what he did, when he begat thee, like spring, gentle offspring of blustering winter: — only unfortunate in thy ending, which should have been mild, conciliatory, swan-like. —

Much remains to sing. Many fantastic shapes rise up, but they must be mine in private: — already I have fooled the

reader to the top of his bent ; — else could I omit that strange creature Woollett, who existed in trying the question, and *bought litigations* ? — and still stranger, inimitable solemn Hepworth, from whose gravity Newton might have deduced the law of gravitation. How profoundly would he nib a pen — 5 with what deliberation would he wet a wafer ! —

But it is time to close — night's wheels are rattling fast over me — it is proper to have done with this solemn mockery.

Reader, what if I have been playing with thee all this while — peradventure the very *names*, which I have summoned up 10 before thee, are fantastic, insubstantial — like Henry Pimpernel, and old John Naps of Greece : —

Be satisfied that something answering to them has had a being. Their importance is from the past.

III. OXFORD IN THE VACATION

CASTING a preparatory glance at the bottom of this article, as 15 the wary connoisseur in prints, with cursory eye (which, while it reads, seems as though it read not), never fails to consult the *quis sculpsit* in the corner, before he pronounces some rare piece to be a Vivares, or a Woollett — methinks I hear you exclaim, reader, *Who is Elia* ? 20

Because in my last I tried to divert thee with some half-forgotten humours of some old clerks defunct, in an old house of business, long since gone to decay, doubtless you have already set me down in your mind as one of the self-same 25 college — a votary of the desk — a notched and cropt scrivener — one that sucks his sustenance, as certain sick people are said to do, through a quill.

Well, I do agnize something of the sort. I confess that it is my humour, my fancy — in the forepart of the day, when the mind of your man of letters requires some relaxation — (and 30

none better than such as at first sight seems most abhorrent from his beloved studies) — to while away some good hours of my time in the contemplation of indigos, cottons, raw silks, piece-goods, flowered or otherwise. In the first place . . . and
 5 then it sends you home with such increased appetite to your books . . . not to say, that your outside sheets, and waste wrappers of foolscap, do receive into them, most kindly and naturally, the impression of sonnets, epigrams, *essays* — so that the very parings of a counting-house are, in some sort, the
 10 settings up of an author. The enfranchised quill, that has plodded all the morning among the cart-rucks of figures and cyphers, frisks and curvets so at its ease over the flowery carpet-ground of a midnight dissertation. It feels its promotion. . . . So that you see, upon the whole, the literary dignity of
 15 *Elia* is very little, if at all, compromised in the condescension.

Not that, in my anxious detail of the many commodities incidental to the life of a public office, I would be thought blind to certain flaws, which a cunning carper might be able to pick in this Joseph's vest. And here I must have leave, in the
 20 fulness of my soul, to regret the abolition, and doing-away with altogether, of those consolatory interstices, and sprinklings of freedom, through the four seasons, — the *red-letter days*, now become, to all intents and purposes, *dead-letter days*. There was Paul, and Stephen, and Barnabas —

25 Andrew and John, men famous in old times ;

— we were used to keep all their days holy, as long back as I was at school at Christ's. I remember their effigies, by the same token, in the old *Basket* Prayer-book. There hung Peter in his uneasy posture — holy Bartlemy in the troublesome act
 30 of flaying, after the famous Marsyas by Spagnoletti. — I honoured them all, and could almost have wept the defalcation of Iscariot — so much did we love to keep holy memories sacred : — only methought I a little grudged at the coalition of the

better Jude with Simon — clubbing (as it were) their sanctities together, to make up one poor gaudy-day between them — as an economy unworthy of the dispensation.

These were bright visitations in a scholar's and a clerk's life — “far off their coming shone.” — I was as good as an almanac in those days. I could have told you such a saint's-day falls out next week, or the week after. Peradventure the Epiphany, by some periodical infelicity, would, once in six years, merge in a Sabbath. Now am I little better than one of the profane. Let me not be thought to arraign the wisdom of my civil superiors, who have judged the further observation of these holy tides to be papistical, superstitious. Only in a custom of such long standing, methinks, if their Holinesses the Bishops had, in decency, been first sounded — but I am wading out of my depths. I am not the man to decide the limits of civil and ecclesiastical authority — I am plain Elia — no Selden, nor Archbishop Usher — though at present in the thick of their books, here in the heart of learning, under the shadow of the mighty Bodley.

I can here play the gentleman, enact the student. To such a one as myself, who has been defrauded in his young years of the sweet food of academic institution, nowhere is so pleasant, to while away a few idle weeks at, as one or other of the Universities. Their vacation, too, at this time of the year, falls in so pat with *ours*. Here I can take my walks unmo- lested, and fancy myself of what degree or standing I please. I seem admitted *ad eundem*. I fetch up past opportunities. I can rise at the chapel-bell, and dream that it rings for *me*. In moods of humility I can be a Sizar, or a Servitor. When the peacock vein rises, I strut a Gentleman Commoner. In graver moments, I proceed Master of Arts. Indeed I do not think I am much unlike that respectable character. I have seen your dim-eyed vergers, and bed-makers in spectacles, drop a bow or curtsy, as I pass, wisely mistaking me for

something of the sort. I go about in black, which favours the notion. Only in Christ Church reverend quadrangle, I can be content to pass for nothing short of a Seraphic Doctor.

The walks at these times are so much one's own, — the tall
5 trees of Christ's, the groves of Magdalen ! The halls deserted,
and with open doors, inviting one to slip in unperceived, and
pay a *devoir* to some Founder, or noble or royal Benefactress
(that should have been ours) whose portrait seems to smile
upon their over-looked beadsman, and to adopt me for their
10 own. Then, to take a peep in by the way at the butteries, and
sculleries, redolent of antique hospitality : the immense caves
of kitchens, kitchen fireplaces, cordial recesses ; ovens whose
first pies were baked four centuries ago ; and spits which have
cooked for Chaucer ! Not the meanest minister among the
15 dishes but is hallowed to me through his imagination, and the
Cook goes forth a Manciple.

Antiquity ! thou wondrous charm, what art thou ? that, being
nothing, art everything ! When thou *wert*, thou wert not anti-
quity — then thou wert nothing, but hadst a remoter *antiquity*,
20 as thou calledst it, to look back to with blind veneration ; thou
thyself being to thyself flat, jejune, *modern* ! What mystery
lurks in this retroversion ? or what half Januses¹ are we, that
cannot look forward with the same idolatry with which we for
ever revert ! The mighty future is as nothing, being every-
25 thing ! the past is everything, being nothing !

What were thy *dark ages* ? Surely the sun rose as brightly then
as now, and man got him to his work in the morning. Why is it
that we can never hear mention of them without an accompany-
ing feeling, as though a palpable obscure had dimmed the face
30 of things, and that our ancestors wandered to and fro groping !

Above all thy rarities, old Oxenford, what do most arride
and solace me, are thy repositories of mouldering learning,
thy shelves —

¹ Januses of one face. — SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

What a place to be in is an old library! It seems as though all the souls of all the writers, that have bequeathed their labours to these Bodleians, were reposing here, as in some dormitory, or middle state. I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves, their winding-sheets. I could as soon 5 dislodge a shade. I seem to inhale learning, walking amid their foliage; and the odour of their old moth-scented coverings is fragrant as the first bloom of those scintial apples which grew amid the happy orchard.

Still less have I curiosity to disturb the elder repose of MSS.¹ 10 Those *variæ lectiones*, so tempting to the more erudite palates, do but disturb and unsettle my faith. I am no Herculean raker. The credit of the three witnesses might have slept unimpeached for me. I leave these curiosities to Porson, and to G. D.—whom, by the way, I found busy as a moth over some 15 rotten archive, rummaged out of some seldom-explored press, in a nook at Oriel. With long poring, he is grown almost into a book. He stood as passive as one by the side of the old shelves. I longed to new-coat him in Russia, and assign him his place. He might have mustered for a tall Scapula. 20

¹ [There is something to me repugnant at any time in written hand. The text never seems determinate. Print settles it. I had thought of the Lycidas as of a full-grown beauty—as springing up with all its parts absolute—till, in an evil hour, I was shown the original copy of it, together with the other minor poems of its author, in the library of Trinity, kept like some treasure, to be proud of. I wish they had thrown them in the Cam, or sent them after the latter cantos of Spenser, into the Irish Channel. How it staggered me to see the fine things in their ore! interlined, corrected! as if their words were mortal, alterable, displaceable at pleasure! as if they might have been otherwise, just as good! as if inspiration were made up of parts, and these fluctuating, successive, indifferent! I will never go into the workshop of any great artist again, nor desire a sight of his picture till it is fairly off the easel; no, not if Raphael were to be alive again, and painting another Galatea.] This note appeared in the *London* but was omitted by Lamb in the edition of 1823.—ED.

D. is assiduous in his visits to these seats of learning. No inconsiderable portion of his moderate fortune, I apprehend, is consumed in journeys between them and Clifford's Inn — where, like a dove on the asp's nest, he has long taken up his
 5 unconscious abode, amid an incongruous assembly of attorneys' clerks, apparitors, promoters, vermin of the law, among whom he sits, "in calm and sinless peace." The fangs of the law pierce him not — the winds of litigation blow over his humble
 10 — legal or illegal discourtesy touches him — none thinks of offering violence or injustice to him¹ — you would as soon "strike an abstract idea."

D. has been engaged, he tells me, through a course of laborious years, in an investigation into all curious matter connected
 15 with the two Universities; and has lately lit upon a MS. collection of charters, relative to C——, by which he hopes to settle some disputed points — particularly that long controversy between them as to priority of foundation. The ardour with which he engages in these liberal pursuits, I am afraid, has
 20 not met with all the encouragement it deserved, either here, or at C——. Your caputs, and heads of Colleges, care less than anybody else about these questions. — Contented to suck the milky fountains of their Alma Maters, without inquiring into the venerable gentlewomen's years, they rather hold such

¹ [Violence or injustice certainly none, Mr. Elia. But you will acknowledge that the charming unsuspectingness of our friend has sometimes laid him open to attacks, which, though savouring (we hope) more of waggery than of malice — such is our unfeigned respect for G. D. — might, we think, much better have been omitted. Such was that silly joke of L——, who, at the time the question of the Scotch novels was first agitated, gravely assured our friend — who as gravely went about repeating it in all companies — that Lord Castle-reagh had acknowledged himself to be the author of Waverley! — Note, not by Elia.] This note, appended to the original essay, was a hoax, L—— being Lamb himself. — ED.

curiosities to be impertinent — unreverend. They have their good glebe lands *in manu*, and care not much to rake into the title-deeds. I gather at least so much from other sources, for D. is not a man to complain.

D. started like an unbroke heifer, when I interrupted him. 5
A priori it was not very probable that we should have met in Oriel. But D. would have done the same, had I accosted him on the sudden in his own walks in Clifford's Inn, or in the Temple. In addition to a provoking shortsightedness (the effect of late studies and watchings at the midnight oil), D. is 10 the most absent of men. He made a call the other morning at our friend *M.'s* in Bedford Square; and finding nobody at home, was ushered into the hall, where asking for pen and ink, with great exactitude of purpose he enters me his name in the book — which ordinarily lies about in such places, to record 15 the failures of the untimely or unfortunate visitor — and takes his leave with many ceremonies, and professions of regret. Some two or three hours after, his walking destinies returned him into the same neighbourhood again, and again the quiet image of the fireside circle at *M.'s* — Mrs. *M.* presiding at 20 it like a Queen Lar, with pretty *A. S.* at her side — striking irresistibly on his fancy, he makes another call (forgetting that they were “certainly not to return from the country before that day week”) and disappointed a second time, inquires for pen and paper as before: again the book is brought, and in 25 the line just above that in which he is about to print his second name (his re-script) — his first name (scarce dry) looks out upon him like another *Sosia*, or as if a man should suddenly encounter his own duplicate! The effect may be conceived. D. made many a good resolution against any such lapses in 30 future. I hope he will not keep them too rigorously.

For with G. D. — to be absent from the body, is sometimes (not to speak it profanely) to be present with the Lord. At the very time when, personally encountering thee, he passes

on with no recognition — or, being stopped, starts like a thing surprised — at that moment, reader, he is on Mount Tabor — or Parnassus — or co-sphered with Plato — or, with Harrington, framing “immortal commonwealths” — devising some plan of
5 amelioration to thy country, or thy species — peradventure meditating some individual kindness or courtesy, to be done to *thee thyself*, the returning consciousness of which made him to start so guiltily at thy obtruded personal presence.

[D. commenced life after a course of hard study in the
10 house of “pure Emanuel,” as usher to a knavish fanatic school-master at —, at a salary of eight pounds per annum, with board and lodging. Of this poor stipend he never received above half in all the laborious years he served this man. He tells a pleasant anecdote, that when poverty, staring out at
15 his ragged knees, has sometimes compelled him, against the modesty of his nature, to hint at arrears, Dr. — would take no immediate notice, but after supper, when the school was called together to even-song, he would never fail to introduce some instructive homily against riches, and the corruption of
20 the heart occasioned through the desire of them — ending with “Lord, keep thy servants, above all things, from the heinous sin of avarice. Having food and raiment, let us therewithal be content. Give me Agur’s wish” — and the like — which, to the little auditory, sounded like a doctrine
25 full of Christian prudence and simplicity, but to poor D. was a receipt in full for that quarter’s demand at least.

And D. has been under-working for himself ever since ; — drudging at low rates for unappreciating booksellers, — wasting his fine erudition in silent corrections of the classics, and in
30 those unostentatious but solid services to learning which commonly fall to the lot of laborious scholars, who have not the heart to sell themselves to the best advantage. He has published poems, which do not sell, because their character is unobtrusive, like his own, and because he has been too much

absorbed in ancient literature to know what the popular mark in poetry is, even if he could have hit it. And, therefore, his verses are properly, what he terms them, *crotchets*; voluntaries; odes to liberty and spring; effusions; little tributes and offerings, left behind him upon tables and window-seats 5 at parting from friends' houses; and from all the inns of hospitality, where he has been courteously (or but tolerably) received in his pilgrimage. If his muse of kindness halt a little behind the strong lines in fashion in this excitement-loving age, his prose is the best of the sort in the world, and 10 exhibits a faithful transcript of his own healthy, natural mind, and cheerful, innocent tone of conversation.]

D. is delightful anywhere; but he is at the best in such places as these. He cares not much for Bath. He is out of his element at Buxton, at Scarborough, or Harrogate. The 15 Cam and the Isis are to him "better than all the waters of Damascus." On the Muses' hill he is happy, and good, as one of the Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains; and when he goes about with you to show you the halls and colleges, you think you have with you the Interpreter of the House 20 Beautiful.

IV. CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE-AND-THIRTY YEARS AGO

IN Mr. Lamb's "Works," published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school,¹ such as it was, or now appears to him to have been between the years 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own standing 25 at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his; and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in

¹ "Recollections of Christ's Hospital."

praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember L. at school; and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his school-
5 fellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand; and he had the privilege of going to see them, almost as often as he wished, through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. The present worthy sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple can explain how that happened. He had his
10 tea and hot rolls in the morning, while we were battenning upon our quarter of a penny loaf—our *crug*—moistened with attenuated small beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porritch, blue and tasteless, and the pease soup of Saturday, coarse and
15 choking, were enriched for him with a slice of "extraordinary bread and butter," from the hot-loaf of the Temple. The Wednesday's mess of millet, somewhat less repugnant—(we had three banyan to four meat days in the week)—was endeared to his palate with a lump of double-refined, and a
20 smack of ginger (to make it go down the more glibly) or the fragrant cinnamon. In lieu of our *half-pickled* Sundays, or *quite fresh* boiled beef on Thursdays (strong as *caro equina*), with detestable marigolds floating in the pail to poison the broth—our scanty mutton crags on Fridays—and rather
25 more savoury, but grudging, portions of the same flesh, rotten-roasted or rare, on the Tuesdays (the only dish which excited our appetites, and disappointed our stomachs, in almost equal proportion)—he had his hot plate of roast veal, or the more tempting griskin (exotics unknown to our palates), cooked in
30 the paternal kitchen (a great thing), and brought him daily by his maid or aunt! I remember the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride) squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the

Tishbite); and the contending passions of L. at the unfolding. There was love for the bringer; shame for the thing brought, and the manner of its bringing; sympathy for those who were too many to share in it; and, at top of all, hunger (eldest, strongest of the passions!) predominant, breaking 5 down the stony fences of shame, and awkwardness, and a troubling over-consciousness.

I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in 10 the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six 15 hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early home-
stead! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years! How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and 20 faces! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire!

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from 25 the haunting memory of those *whole-day-leaves*, when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the livelong day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none. I remember those bathing-excursions to the New-River, which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can — for 30 he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such water-pastimes: — How merrily we would sally forth into the fields; and strip under the first warmth of the sun; and wanton like young dace in the streams; getting us appetites for noon,

which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying — while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings — the
5 very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them ! — How faint and languid, finally, we would return, towards night-fall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired !

10 It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the streets objectless — shivering at cold windows of print-shops, to extract a little amusement ; or haply, as a last resort, in the hope of a little novelty, to pay a fifty-times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to
15 the warden as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower — to whose levée, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

L.'s governor (so we called the patron who presented us to the foundation) lived in a manner under his paternal roof. Any
20 complaint which he had to make was sure of being attended to. This was understood at Christ's, and was an effectual screen to him against the severity of masters, or worse tyranny of the monitors. The oppressions of these young brutes are heart-sickening to call to recollection. I have been called out of
25 my bed, and *waked for the purpose*, in the coldest winter nights — and this not once, but night after night — in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leathern thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my callow overseer, when there has been any talking heard after we were gone to bed,
30 to make the six last beds in the dormitory, where the youngest children of us slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit, nor had the power to hinder. The same execrable tyranny drove the younger part of us from the fires, when our feet were perishing with snow ; and, under the cruellest

penalties, forbade the indulgence of a drink of water, when we lay in sleepless summer nights, fevered with the season, and the day's sports.

There was one H——, who, I learned, in after-days, was seen expiating some maturer offence in the hulks. (Do I 5 flatter myself in fancying that this might be the planter of that name, who suffered — at Nevis, I think, or St. Kits, — some few years since? My friend Tobin was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red-hot 10 iron; and nearly starved forty of us, with exacting contributions, to the one half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse's daughter (a young flame of his) he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the leads of the *ward*, as they 15 called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat — happier than Caligula's minion, could he have kept his own counsel — but, foolisher, alas! than any of his species in the fables — waxing fat, and kicking, in the ful- 20 ness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below; and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram's horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho) set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to 25 Smithfield; but I never understood that the patron underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L.'s admired Perry.

Under the same *facile* administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses used to carry away 30 openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practised in that magnificent apartment, which L. (grown

connoisseur since, we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings "by Verrio, and others," with which it is "hung round and adorned." But the sight of sleek well-fed blue-coat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to 5 him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions carried away before our faces by harpies; and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido)

To feed our mind with idle portraiture.

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to *gags*, or the 10 fat of fresh beef boiled; and sets it down to some superstition. But these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fat-haters), and in strong, coarse, boiled meats, *unsalted*, are detestable. A *gag-eater* in our time was equivalent to a *ghoul*, and held in equal detestation. 15 ——— suffered under the imputation:

————— 'Twas said,
He ate strange flesh.

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remnants left at his table (not many, nor very choice fragments, 20 you may credit me) — and, in an especial manner, these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away, and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bed-side. None saw when he ate them. It was rumoured that he privately devoured them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such 25 midnight practices were discoverable. Some reported, that, on leave-days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to 30 the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spake to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated; put out of the pale of the school.

He was too powerful a boy to be beaten, but he underwent every mode of that negative punishment, which is more grievous than many stripes. Still he persevered. At length he was observed by two of his school-fellows, who were determined to get at the secret, and had traced him one leave-day for that purpose, to enter a large worn-out building, such as there exist specimens of in Chancery Lane, which are let out to various scales of pauperism with open door, and a common staircase. After him they silently slunk in, and followed by stealth up four flights, and saw him tap at a poor wicket, which was opened by an aged woman, meanly clad. Suspicion was now ripened into certainty. The informers had secured their victim. They had him in their toils. Accusation was formally preferred, and retribution most signal was looked for. Mr. Hathaway, the then steward, for this happened a little after my time, with that patient sagacity which tempered all his conduct, determined to investigate the matter, before he proceeded to sentence. The result was, that the supposed mendicants, the receivers or purchasers of the mysterious scraps, turned out to be the parents of ——, an honest couple come to decay, — whom this seasonable supply had, in all probability, saved from mendicancy; and that this young stork, at the expense of his own good name, had all this while been only feeding the old birds! The governors on this occasion, much to their honour, voted a present relief to the family of ——, and presented him with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon RASH JUDGMENT, on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal to ——, I believe, would not be lost upon his auditory. I had left school then, but I well remember ——.

He was a tall, shambling youth, with a cast in his eye, not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself, as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad ; and a sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven ; and had only read 5 of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had *run away*. This was the punishment for the first offence. As a novice I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little, square, Bedlam cells, where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket — a mat-
10 tress, I think, was afterwards substituted — with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison-orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water — who *might not speak to him* ; or of the
15 beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude : — and here he was shut up by himself of *nights*, out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves, and super-
20 stition incident to his time of life, might subject him to.¹ This was the penalty for the second offence. Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree ?

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was at this time deemed irreversible, was
25 brought forth, as at some solemn *auto da fé*, arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire — all trace of his late “ watchet weeds ” carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket, resembling those which London lamplighters formerly delighted in,

¹ One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide, accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture to the spirits was dispensed with. This fancy of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard's brain, for which (saving the reverence due to Holy Paul), methinks, I could willingly spit upon his statue.

with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frightened features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante had seized upon him. In this disguise-
ment he was brought into the hall (*L.'s favourite state- 5*
room) where awaited him the whole number of his school-fellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was thenceforth to share no more; the awful presence of the steward, to be seen for the last time; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion; and of two faces more, of direr import, 10
because never but in these extremities visible. These were governors; two of whom, by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these *Ultima Supplicia*; not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the uttermost stripe. Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, I 15
remember, were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attend- 20
ing to the previous disgusting circumstances to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made over, in his *San Benito*, to his friends, if he had any (but commonly such poor runagates were friend- 25
less), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so often as to spoil the general mirth of the community. We had plenty 30
of exercise and recreation *after* school hours; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier, than *in* them. The Upper and the Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds.

Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer was the Upper Master ; but the Rev. Matthew Field presided over that portion of the apartment of which I had the good fortune
5 to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just what we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried an accidence, or a grammar, for form ; but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we
10 had learned about them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Field never used the rod ; and in truth he wielded the cane with no great good-will — holding it “ like a
15 dancer.” It looked in his hands rather like an emblem, than an instrument of authority ; and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good, easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but
20 often stayed away whole days from us ; and when he came, it made no difference to us — he had his private room to retire to, the short time he stayed, to be out of the sound of our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to “ insolent Greece or haughty Rome,”
25 that passed current among us — Peter Wilkins — the Adventures of the Hon. Capt. Robert Boyle — the Fortunate Blue Coat Boy — and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic or scientific operations ; making little sun-dials of paper ; or weaving those ingenious parentheses, called *cat-cradles* ; or making
30 dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin pipe ; or studying the art military over that laudable game “ French and English,” and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time — mixing the useful with the agreeable — as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Field belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the *gentleman*, the *scholar*, and the *Christian*; but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the composition. He was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly bow at some episcopal *levée*, when he should have been attending upon us. He had for many years the classical charge of a hundred children, during the four or five first years of their education; and his very highest form seldom proceeded further than two or three of the introductory fables of Phædrus. How things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses, always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference, send to borrow a rod of the Under Master, and then, with sardonic grin, observe to one of his upper boys, "how neat and fresh the twigs looked." While his pale students were battering their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoined by the Samite, we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us; his storms came near, but never touched us; contrary to Gideon's miracle, while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry.¹ His boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Field comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a "playing holiday."

¹ Cowley.

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus. B. was a rabid pedant. His English style was cramped to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scannel pipes.¹ He would laugh, ay, and heartily, but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex* — or at the *tristis severitas in vultu*, or *inspicere in patinas*, of Terence — thin jests, which at their first broaching could hardly have had *vis* enough to move a Roman muscle. He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discoloured, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer. J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a "Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?" Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the school-room, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, "Od's my life, sirrah" (his favourite adjuration), "I have a great mind to whip you," — then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair — and after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out

¹ In this and everything B. was the antipodes of his coadjutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F. would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of Vertumnus and Pomona, is not yet forgotten by the chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction. B. used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was *too classical for representation*.

again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell — "*and I WILL, too.*" In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor* was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, 5 at the same time ; a paragraph, and a lash between ; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall 10 ineffectual from his hand — when droll squinting W——, having been caught putting the inside of the master's desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that *he did not know that the thing had been forewarned.* This exquisite 15 irrecognition of any law antecedent to the *oral* or *declaratory*, struck so irresistibly upon the fancy of all who heard it (the pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L. has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. 20 Coleridge, in his Literary Life, has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium on them. The author of the Country Spectator doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better 5 than with the pious ejaculation of C—— when he heard that 25 his old master was on his death-bed — "Poor J. B. — may all his faults be forgiven ; and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities."

Under him were many good and sound scholars bred. First 30 Grecian of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since Co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with Dr. T——e. What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the

antisocialities of their predecessors ! You never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm in arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it convenient to retire, the other was not long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to turn over the *Cicero De Amicitia*, or some tale of Antique Friendship, which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate ! Co-Grecian with S. was Th——, who has since executed with ability various diplomatic functions at the Northern courts. Th—— was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing of speech, with raven locks. Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta), a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He has the reputation of an excellent critic ; and is author (besides the *Country Spectator*) of a Treatise on the Greek Article, against Sharpe. M. is said to bear his mitre high in India, where the *regni novitas* (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility quite as primitive as that of Jewel or Hooker might not be exactly fitted to impress the minds of those Anglo-Asiatic diocesans with a reverence for home institutions, and the church which those fathers watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild and unassuming. Next to M. (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the *Aboriginal Britons*, the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems ; a pale, studious Grecian. Then followed poor S——, ill-fated M—— ! of these the Muse is silent.

30

Finding some of Edward's race
 Unhappy, pass their annals by.

Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee

— the dark pillar not yet turned — Samuel Taylor Coleridge
 — Logician, Metaphysician, Bard! — How have I seen the
 casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with
 admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the
speech and the *garb* of the young *Mirandula*), to hear thee 5
 unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of
 Jamblichus, or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst
 not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in
 his Greek, or Pindar while the walls of the old Grey Friars
 re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy!* — Many 10
 were the “wit-combats” (to dally awhile with the words of old
 Fuller) between him and C. V. Le G——, “which two I
 behold like a Spanish great galleon, and an English man-of-
 war; Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher
 in learning, solid, but slow in his performances. C. V. L., with 15
 the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing,
 could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all
 winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.”

Nor shalt thou, their compeer, be quickly forgotten, Allen,
 with the cordial smile, and still more cordial laugh, with which 20
 thou wert wont to make the old Cloisters shake, in thy cog-
 nition of some poignant jest of theirs; or the anticipation of
 some more material, and, peradventure, practical one, of thine
 own. Extinct are those smiles, with that beautiful counte-
 nance, with which (for thou wert the *Nireus formosus* of the 25
 school), in the days of thy maturer waggery, thou didst disarm
 the wrath of infuriated town-damsel, who, incensed by provok-
 ing pinch, turning tigress-like round, suddenly converted by
 thy angel-look, exchanged the half-formed terrible “bl——,”
 for a gentler greeting — “*bless thy handsome face!*” 30

Next follow two, who ought to be now alive, and the friends
 of Elia — the junior Le G—— and F——; who impelled,
 the former by a roving temper, the latter by too quick a sense
 of neglect — ill capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are

sometimes subject to in our seats of learning — exchanged their Alma Mater for the camp; perishing one by climate, and one on the plains of Salamanca: — Le G——, sanguine, volatile, sweet-natured; F——, dogged, faithful, anticipative of insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old Roman height about him.

Fine, frank-hearted Fr——, the present master of Hertford, with Marmaduke T——, mildest of Missionaries — and both my good friends still — close the catalogue of Grecians in my
10 time.

V. THE TWO RACES OF MEN

THE human species, according to the best theory I can form of it, is composed of two distinct races, *the men who borrow*, and *the men who lend*. To these two original diversities may be reduced all those impertinent classifications of Gothic and
15 Celtic tribes, white men, black men, red men. All the dwellers upon earth, “Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites,” flock hither, and do naturally fall in with one or other of these primary distinctions. The infinite superiority of the former, which I choose to designate as the *great race*, is discernible in
20 their figure, port, and a certain instinctive sovereignty. The latter are born degraded. “He shall serve his brethren.” There is something in the air of one of this cast, lean and suspicious; contrasting with the open, trusting, generous manners of the other.

25 Observe who have been the greatest borrowers of all ages — Alcibiades — Falstaff — Sir Richard Steele — our late incomparable Brinsley — what a family likeness in all four!

What a careless, even deportment hath your borrower! what rosy gills; what a beautiful reliance on Providence doth he
30 manifest, — taking no more thought than lilies! What contempt for money, — accounting it (yours and mine especially)

no better than dross! What a liberal confounding of those pedantic distinctions of *meum* and *tuum*! or rather, what a noble simplification of language (beyond Tooke), resolving these supposed opposites into one clear, intelligible pronoun adjective!—What near approaches doth he make to the primitive *community*, — to the extent of one-half of the principal at least! —

He is the true taxer “who calleth all the world up to be taxed”; and the distance is as vast between him and *one of us*, as subsisted betwixt the Augustan Majesty and the poorest obolarly Jew that paid it tribute-pittance at Jerusalem!—His exactions, too, have such a cheerful, voluntary air! So far removed from your sour parochial or state-gatherers, — those ink-horn varlets, who carry their want of welcome in their faces! He cometh to you with a smile and troubleth you with no receipt; confining himself to no set season. Every day is his Candlemas, or his Feast of Holy Michael. He applieth the *lene tormentum* of a pleasant look to your purse, — which to that gentle warmth expands her silken leaves, as naturally as the cloak of the traveller, for which sun and wind contended! He is the true Propontic which never ebbeth! The sea which taketh handsomely at each man’s hand. In vain the victim, whom he delighteth to honour, struggles with destiny; he is in the net. Lend therefore cheerfully, O man ordained to lend — that thou lose not in the end, with thy worldly penny, the reversion promised. Combine not preposterously in thine own person the penalties of Lazarus and of Dives! — but, when thou seest the proper authority coming, meet it smilingly, as it were half-way. Come, a handsome sacrifice! See how light *he* makes of it! Strain not courtesies with a noble enemy.

Reflections like the foregoing were forced upon my mind by the death of my old friend, Ralph Bigod, Esq., who departed this life on Wednesday evening; dying, as he had lived,

without much trouble. He boasted himself a descendant from mighty ancestors of that name, who heretofore held ducal dignities in this realm. In his actions and sentiments he belied not the stock to which he pretended. Early in life
5 he found himself invested with ample revenues; which with that noble disinterestedness which I have noticed as inherent in men of the *great race*, he took almost immediate measures entirely to dissipate and bring to nothing: for there is something revolting in the idea of a king holding a private purse;
10 and the thoughts of Bigod were all regal. Thus furnished by the very act of disfurnishment; getting rid of the cumbersome luggage of riches, more apt (as one sings)

To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise,

15 he set forth, like some Alexander, upon his great enterprise, "borrowing and to borrow!"

In his periegesis, or triumphant progress throughout this island, it has been calculated that he laid a tithe part of the inhabitants under contribution. I reject this estimate as
20 greatly exaggerated: but having had the honour of accompanying my friend, divers times, in his perambulations about this vast city, I own I was greatly struck at first with the prodigious number of faces we met, who claimed a sort of respectful acquaintance with us. He was one day so obliging as to
25 explain the phenomenon. It seems, these were his tributaries; feeders of his exchequer; gentlemen, his good friends (as he was pleased to express himself), to whom he had occasionally been beholden for a loan. Their multitudes did no way disconcert him. He rather took a pride in numbering them; and, with
30 Comus, seemed pleased to be "stocked with so fair a herd."

With such sources, it was a wonder how he contrived to keep his treasury always empty. He did it by force of an aphorism, which he had often in his mouth, that "money kept

longer than three days stinks." So he made use of it while it was fresh. A good part he drank away (for he was an excellent toss-pot), some he gave away, the rest he threw away, literally tossing and hurling it violently from him — as boys do burrs, or as if it had been infectious, — into ponds, or ditches, or deep holes, — inscrutable cavities of the earth : — or he would bury it (where he would never seek it again) by a river's side under some bank, which (he would facetiously observe) paid no interest — but out away from him it must go peremptorily, as Hagar's offspring into the wilderness, while it was sweet. He never missed it. The streams were perennial which fed his fisc. When new supplies became necessary, the first person that had the felicity to fall in with him, friend or stranger, was sure to contribute to the deficiency. For Bigod had an *undeniable* way with him. He had a cheerful, open exterior, a quick jovial eye, a bald forehead, just touched with grey (*cana fides*). He anticipated no excuse, and found none. And, waiving for a while my theory as to the *great race*, I would put it to the most untheorizing reader, who may at times have disposable coin in his pocket, whether it is not more repugnant to the kindness of his nature to refuse such a one as I am describing, than to say *no* to a poor petitionary rogue (your bastard borrower), who, by his mumping visnomy, tells you, that he expects nothing better ; and therefore, whose preconceived notions and expectations you do in reality so much less shock in the refusal.

When I think of this man ; his fiery glow of heart ; his swell of feeling ; how magnificent, how *ideal* he was ; how great at the midnight hour ; and when I compare with him the companions with whom I have associated since, I grudge the saving of a few idle ducats, and think that I am fallen into the society of *lenders*, and *little men*.

To one like Elia, whose treasures are rather cased in leather covers than closed in iron coffers, there is a class of alienators

more formidable than that which I have touched upon; I mean your *borrowers of books*—those mutilators of collections, spoilers of the symmetry of shelves, and creators of odd volumes. There is Comberbatch, matchless in his
5 depredations!

That foul gap in the bottom shelf facing you, like a great eye-tooth knocked out—(you are now with me in my little back study in Bloomsbury, reader!)—with the huge Switzer-like tomes on each side (like the Guildhall giants, in their
10 reformed posture, guardant of nothing) once held the tallest of my folios, *Opera Bonaventuræ*, choice and massy divinity, to which its two supporters (school divinity also, but of a lesser calibre,—Bellarmine, and Holy Thomas) showed but as dwarfs, itself an Ascapart!—*that* Comberbatch abstracted
15 upon the faith of a theory he holds, which is more easy, I confess, for me to suffer by than to refute, namely, that “the title to property in a book” (my Bonaventure, for instance) “is in exact ratio to the claimant’s powers of understanding and appreciating the same.” Should he go on acting upon
20 this theory, which of our shelves is safe?

The slight vacuum in the left-hand case—two shelves from the ceiling—scarcely distinguishable but by the quick eye of a loser—was whilom the commodious resting-place of Browne on Urn Burial. C. will hardly allege that he knows
25 more about that treatise than I do, who introduced it to him, and was indeed the first (of the moderns) to discover its beauties—but so have I known a foolish lover to praise his mistress in the presence of a rival more qualified to carry her off than himself.—Just below, Dodsley’s dramas want their
30 fourth volume, where Vittoria Corombona is! The remainder nine are as distasteful as Priam’s refuse sons, when the fates *borrowed* Hector. Here stood the Anatomy of Melancholy, in sober state.—There loitered the Complete Angler; quiet as in life, by some stream side.—In yonder nook, John

Buncle, a widower-volume, with "eyes closed," mourns his ravished mate.

One justice I must do my friend, that if he sometimes, like the sea, sweeps away a treasure, at another time, sea-like, he throws up as rich an equivalent to match it. I have a small under-collection of this nature (my friend's gatherings in his various calls), picked up, he has forgotten at what odd places, and deposited with as little memory as mine. I take in these orphans, the twice-deserted. These proselytes of the gate are welcome as the true Hebrews. There they stand in conjunction; natives, and naturalized. The latter seem as little disposed to inquire out their true lineage as I am. — I charge no warehouse-room for these deodands, nor shall ever put myself to the ungentlemanly trouble of advertising a sale of them to pay expenses.

To lose a volume to C. carries some sense and meaning in it. You are sure that he will make one hearty meal on your viands, if he can give no account of the platter after it. But what moved thee, wayward, spiteful K., to be so importunate to carry off with thee, in spite of tears and adjurations to thee to forbear, the Letters of that princely woman, the thrice noble Margaret Newcastle? — knowing at the time, and knowing that I knew also, thou most assuredly wouldst never turn over one leaf of the illustrious folio: — what but the mere spirit of contradiction, and childish love of getting the better of thy friend? — Then, worst cut of all! to transport it with thee to the Gallican land —

Unworthy land to harbour such a sweetness,
A virtue in which all ennobling thoughts dwelt,
Pure thoughts, kind thoughts, high thoughts, her sex's wonder!

— hadst thou not thy play-books, and books of jests and fancies, about thee, to keep thee merry, even as thou keepest all companies with thy quips and mirthful tales? — Child of

the Green-room, it was unkindly done of thee. Thy wife, too, that part-French, better-part-Englishwoman! — that *she* could fix upon no other treatise to bear away, in kindly token of remembering us, than the works of Fulke Greville, Lord
 5 Brook — of which no Frenchman, nor woman of France, Italy, or England, was ever by nature constituted to comprehend a tittle! *Was there not Zimmermann on Solitude?*

Reader, if haply thou art blessed with a moderate collection, be shy of showing it; or if thy heart overfloweth to lend them,
 10 lend thy books; but let it be to such a one as S. T. C. — he will return them (generally anticipating the time appointed) with usury; enriched with annotations, tripling their value. I have had experience. Many are these precious MSS. of his — (in *matter* oftentimes, and almost in *quantity* not unfre-
 15 quently, vying with the originals) — in no very clerkly hand — legible in my Daniel; in old Burton; in Sir Thomas Browne; and those abstruser cogitations of the Greville, now, alas! wandering in Pagan lands. — I counsel thee, shut not thy heart, nor thy library, against S. T. C.

VI. NEW YEAR'S EVE

20 EVERY man hath two birthdays: two days, at least, in every year, which set him upon revolving the lapse of time, as it affects his mortal duration. The one is that which in an especial manner he termeth *his*. In the gradual desuetude of old observances, this custom of solemnizing our proper
 25 birthday hath nearly passed away, or is left to children, who reflect nothing at all about the matter, nor understand anything in it beyond cake and orange. But the birth of a New Year is of an interest too wide to be pretermitted by king or cobbler. No one ever regarded the First of January
 30 with indifference. It is that from which all date their time,

and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam.

Of all sound of all bells — (bells, the music nighest bordering upon heaven) — most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year. I never hear it without a 5 gathering-up of my mind to a concentration of all the images that have been diffused over the past twelvemonth; all I have done or suffered, performed or neglected — in that regretted time. I begin to know its worth, as when a person dies. It takes a personal colour; nor was it a poetical flight in a 10 contemporary, when he exclaimed

I saw the skirts of the departing Year.

It is no more than what in sober sadness every one of us seems to be conscious of, in that awful leave-taking. I am sure I felt it, and all felt it with me, last night; though some 15 of my companions affected rather to manifest an exhilaration at the birth of the coming year, than any very tender regrets for the decease of its predecessor. But I am none of those who

Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

I am naturally, beforehand, shy of novelties; new books, 20 new faces, new years, — from some mental twist which makes it difficult in me to face the prospective. I have almost ceased to hope; and am sanguine only in the prospects of other (former) years. I plunge into foregone visions and conclusions. I encounter pell-mell with past disappointments. I am 25 armour-proof against old discouragements. I forgive, or overcome in fancy, old adversaries. I play over again *for love*, as the gamesters phrase it, games, for which I once paid so dear. I would scarce now have any of those untoward accidents and events of my life reversed. I would no more 30 alter them than the incidents of some well-contrived novel. Methinks, it is better that I should have pined away seven of

my goldenest years, when I was thrall to the fair hair, and fairer eyes, of Alice W——n, than that so passionate a love-adventure should be lost. It was better that our family should have missed that legacy, which old Dorrell cheated us
5 of, than that I should have at this moment two thousand pounds *in banco*, and be without the idea of that specious old rogue.

In a degree beneath manhood, it is my infirmity to look back upon those early days. Do I advance a paradox, when
10 I say that, skipping over the intervention of forty years, a man may have leave to love *himself*, without the imputation of self-love?

If I know aught of myself, no one whose mind is introspective — and mine is painfully so — can have a less respect for
15 his present identity, than I have for the man Elia. I know him to be light, and vain, and humoursome; a notorious . . . ; addicted to . . . ; averse from counsel, neither taking it, nor offering it; — . . . besides; a stammering buffoon; what you will; lay it on, and spare not; I subscribe to it all, and much
20 more, than thou canst be willing to lay at his door — but for the child Elia — that “other me,” there, in the background — I must take leave to cherish the remembrance of that young master — with as little reference, I protest, to this stupid changeling of five-and-forty, as if it had been a child of
25 some other house, and not of my parents. I can cry over its patient small-pox at five, and rougher medicaments. I can lay its poor fevered head upon the sick pillow at Christ’s, and wake with it in surprise at the gentle posture of maternal tenderness hanging over it, that unknown had watched its sleep.
30 I know how it shrank from any the least colour of falsehood. — God help thee, Elia, how art thou changed! Thou art sophisticated. — I know how honest, how courageous (for a weakling) it was — how religious, how imaginative, how hopeful! From what have I not fallen, if the child I remember

was indeed myself,—and not some dissembling guardian, presenting a false identity, to give the rule to my unpractised steps, and regulate the tone of my moral being!

That I am fond of indulging, beyond a hope of sympathy, in such retrospection, may be the symptom of some sickly idiosyncrasy. Or is it owing to another cause; simply, that being without wife or family, I have not learned to project myself enough out of myself; and having no offspring of my own to dally with, I turn back upon memory, and adopt my own early idea, as my heir and favourite? If these speculations seem fantastical to thee, reader — (a busy man, perchance), if I tread out of the way of thy sympathy, and am singularly conceited only, I retire, impenetrable to ridicule, under the phantom cloud of Elia.

The elders, with whom I was brought up, were of a character not likely to let slip the sacred observance of any old institution: and the ringing out of the Old Year was kept by them with circumstances of peculiar ceremony. — In those days the sound of those midnight chimes, though it seemed to raise hilarity in all around me, never failed to bring a train of pensive imagery into my fancy. Yet I then scarce conceived what it meant, or thought of it as a reckoning that concerned me. Not childhood alone, but the young man till thirty, never feels practically that he is mortal. He knows it indeed, and, if need were, he could preach a homily on the fragility of life; but he brings it not home to himself, any more than in a hot June we can appropriate to our imagination the freezing days of December. But now, shall I confess a truth? — I feel these audits but too powerfully. I begin to count the probabilities of my duration, and to grudge at the expenditure of moments and shortest periods, like miser's farthings. In proportion as the years both lessen and shorten, I set more count upon their periods and would fain lay my ineffectual finger upon the spoke of the great wheel. I am not content to pass away “like a

weaver's shuttle." Those metaphors solace me not, nor sweeten the unpalatable draught of mortality. I care not to be carried with the tide, that smoothly bears human life to eternity; and reluctant at the inevitable course of destiny. I am in love with
 5 this green earth; the face of town and country; the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. I would set up my tabernacle here. I am content to stand still at the age to which I am arrived; I, and my friends: to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer. I do not want to be weaned by
 10 age; or drop, like mellow fruit, as they say, into the grave. — Any alteration, on this earth of mine, in diet or in lodging, puzzles and discomposes me. My household gods plant a terrible fixed foot, and are not rooted up without blood. They do not willingly seek Lavinian shores. A new state of being
 15 staggers me.

Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and fireside conversations, and innocent vanities,
 20 and jests, and *irony itself* — do these things go out with life?

Can a ghost laugh, or shake his gaunt sides, when you are pleasant with him?

And you, my midnight darlings, my Folios! must I part with the intense delight of having you (huge armfuls) in my
 25 embraces? Must knowledge come to me, if it come at all, by some awkward experiment of intuition, and no longer by this familiar process of reading?

Shall I enjoy friendships there, wanting the smiling indications which point me to them here, — the recognizable face —
 30 the "sweet assurance of a look" ? —

In winter this intolerable disinclination to dying — to give it its mildest name — does more especially haunt and beset me. In a genial August noon, beneath a sweltering sky, death is almost problematic. At those times do such poor snakes as

myself enjoy an immortality. Then we expand and burgeon. Then are we as strong again, as valiant again, as wise again, and a great deal taller. The blast that nips and shrinks me, puts me in thoughts of death. All things allied to the insubstantial, wait upon that master feeling ; cold, numbness, dreams, 5 perplexity ; moonlight itself, with its shadowy and spectral appearances, — that cold ghost of the sun, or Phœbus's sickly sister, like that innutritious one denounced in the Canticles : — I am none of her minions — I hold with the Persian.

Whatsoever thwarts, or puts me out of my way, brings death 10 into my mind. All partial evils, like humours, run into that capital plague-sore. — I have heard some profess an indifference to life. Such hail the end of their existence as a port of refuge : and speak of the grave as of some soft arms, in which they may slumber as on a pillow. Some have wooed 15 death — but out upon thee, I say, thou foul, ugly phantom ! I detest, abhor, execrate, and (with Friar John) give thee to six-score thousand devils, as in no instance to be excused or tolerated, but shunned as a universal viper ; to be branded, proscribed, and spoken evil of ! In no way can I be brought to 20 digest thee, thou thin, melancholy *Privation*, or more frightful and confounding *Positive* !

Those antidotes, prescribed against the fear of thee, are altogether frigid and insulting, like thyself. For what satisfaction hath a man, that he shall “ lie down with kings and 25 emperors in death,” who in his lifetime never greatly coveted the society of such bedfellows ? — or, forsooth, that “ so shall the fairest face appear ? ” — why, to comfort me, must Alice W——n be a goblin ? More than all, I conceive disgust at those impertinent and misbecoming familiarities, inscribed upon 30 your ordinary tombstones. Every dead man must take upon himself to be lecturing me with his odious truism, that “ such as he now is, I must shortly be.” Not so shortly, friend, perhaps as thou imaginest. In the meantime I am alive. I move

about. I am worth twenty of thee. Know thy betters! Thy New Years' Days are past. I survive, a jolly candidate for 1821. Another cup of wine — and while that turn-coat bell, that just now mournfully chanted the obsequies of 1820 departed, with changed notes lustily rings in a successor, let us attune to its peal the song made on a like occasion, by hearty, cheerful Mr. Cotton.

THE NEW YEAR

Hark! the cock crows, and yon bright star
 Tells us the day himself's not far;
 10 And see where, breaking from the night,
 He gilds the western hills with light.
 With him old Janus doth appear,
 Peeping into the future year,
 With such a look as seems to say,
 15 The prospect is not good that way.
 Thus do we rise ill sights to see,
 And 'gainst ourselves to prophesy;
 When the prophetic fear of things
 A more tormenting mischief brings,
 20 More full of soul-tormenting gall,
 Than direct mischiefs can befall.
 But stay! but stay! methinks my sight,
 Better inform'd by clearer light,
 Discerns sereneness in that brow,
 25 That all contracted seem'd but now.
 His revers'd face may show distaste,
 And frown upon the ills are past;
 But that which this way looks is clear,
 And smiles upon the New-born Year.
 30 He looks too from a place so high,
 The Year lies open to his eye;
 And all the moments open are
 To the exact discoverer.
 Yet more and more he smiles upon

The happy revolution.
 Why should we then suspect or fear
 The influences of a year,
 So smiles upon us the first morn,
 And speaks us good so soon as born? 5
 Plague on't! the last was ill enough,
 This cannot but make better proof;
 Or, at the worst, as we brush'd through
 The last, why so we may this too:
 And then the next in reason should 10
 Be superexcellently good:
 For the worst ills (we daily see)
 Have no more perpetuity,
 Than the best fortunes that do fall;
 Which also bring us wherewithal 15
 Longer their being to support,
 Than those do of the other sort:
 And who has one good year in three,
 And yet repines at destiny,
 Appears ungrateful in the case, 20
 And merits not the good he has.
 Then let us welcome the New Guest
 With lusty brimmers of the best;
 Mirth always should Good Fortune meet,
 And render e'en Disaster sweet: 25
 And though the Princess turn her back,
 Let us but line ourselves with sack,
 We better shall by far hold out,
 Till the next Year she face about.

How say you, reader — do not these verses smack of the 30
 rough magnanimity of the old English vein? Do they not
 fortify like a cordial; enlarging the heart, and productive of
 sweet blood, and generous spirits, in the concoction? Where
 be those puling fears of death, just now expressed or affected?
 — Passed like a cloud — absorbed in the purging sunlight 35
 of clear poetry — clean washed away by a wave of genuine

Helicon, your only Spa for these hypochondries — And now another cup of the generous ! and a merry New Year, and many of them, to you all, my masters !

VII. MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

“A CLEAR fire, a clean hearth,¹ and the rigour of the game.”
 5 This was the celebrated *wish* of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who, next to her devotions, loved a good game at whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half and half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber ; who affirm that they have no pleasure in
 10 winning ; that they like to win one game and lose another ;² that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no ; and will desire an adversary, who has slipped a wrong card, to take it up and play another. These insufferable triflers are the curse
 15 of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said, that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul ; and would not, save upon
 20 a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave no concessions. She hated favours. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a
 25 good fight : cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her

¹ This was before the introduction of rugs, reader. You must remember the intolerable crash of the unswept cinder, betwixt your foot and the marble.

² As if a sportsman should tell you he liked to kill a fox one day, and lose him the next.

cards) "like a dancer." She sat bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side — their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that Hearts was her favourite suit.

I never in my life — and I knew Sarah Battle many of the 5
best years of it — saw her take out her snuff-box when it was
her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game;
or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced,
or connived at, miscellaneous conversation during its
process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards: 10
and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century
countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a
literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take
a hand; and who, in his excess of candour, declared, that
he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now 15
and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind!
She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which
she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was
her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to
do, — and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards — 20
over a book.

Pope was her favourite author; his Rape of the Lock her
favourite work. She once did me the favour to play over with
me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that 25
poem; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in
what points it would be found to differ from, traydrille. Her
illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the
pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles;
but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his
ingenious notes upon that author. 30

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but
whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she
said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons.
The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners — a

thing which the constancy of whist abhors;—the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille—absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter give him no proper power above his brother-
5 nobility of the Aces;—the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone;—above all, the overpowering attractions of a *Sans Prendre Vole*,—to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist;—all these, she would say, make quadrille
10 a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *solider* game: that was her word. It was a long meal; not, like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady
15 enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel; perpetually changing postures and connections;
20 bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow; kissing and scratching in a breath;—but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her
25 favourite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage—nothing superfluous. No *flushes*—that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up:—that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and colour, without reference to the playing
30 of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colours of things.—Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a

uniformity of array to distinguish them : but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit from dressing up his tenantry in red jackets that never were to be marshalled — never to take the field? — she even wished that whist were more simple than it is ; and in my mind, would have stripped it of some appendages, which in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably, allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps? — Why two colours, when the mark of the suits would have sufficiently distinguished them without it? —

“ But the eye, my dear madam, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason — he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your quaker spirit of unsensualizing would have kept out. — You, yourself, have a pretty collection of paintings — but confess to me, whether, walking in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the ante-room, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to *that* you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court cards? — the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession — the gay triumph-assuring scarlets — the contrasting deadly-killing sables — the ‘ hoary majesty of spades ’ — Pam in all his glory ! —

“ All these might be dispensed with ; and, with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, pictureless. But the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling. — Imagine a dull deal-board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature’s), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and turneys in !

— Exchange those delicately-turned ivory markers — (work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol, — or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess) —
5 exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors' money) or chalk and a slate !” —

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic ; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favourite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted
10 for the legacy of a curious cribbage-board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated) brought with him from Florence : — this, and a trifle of five hundred pounds, came to me at her death.

15 The former bequest (which I do not least value) I have kept with religious care ; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say, — disputing with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She could never
20 heartily bring her mouth to pronounce “*go*” — or “*that's a go.*” She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five dollar stake), because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must
25 have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring “*two for his heels.*” There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms — such
30 as pique — repique — the capot — they savoured (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate, or square. She would argue thus : — Cards are warfare : the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war in disguise of a sport : when

single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves, it is too close a fight; with spectators, it is not much bettered. No looker-on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money; he cares not for your luck *sympathetically*, or for your play. — 5
Three are still worse; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance; or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in traydrille. — But in square games (*she meant whist*) 10
all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honour, common to every species — though the *latter* can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in whist 15
are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold—or even an 20
interested — bystander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathizes in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing 25
to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game. — By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favourite pastime. 30

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game, where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue—and here again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion! — chance is nothing, but where something

else depends upon it. It is obvious that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spectators, where no stake was depending?—Make
5 a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number—and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize?—Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was
10 not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one
15 man's wit—his memory, or combination-faculty rather—against another's; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless.—She could not conceive a *game* wanting the sprightly infusion of chance,—the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a
20 room, whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with insufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of Castles and Knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue (and I think in this case justly), were entirely misplaced and senseless. Those hard head-contests can in no
25 instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and colour. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort that man is a gaming animal. He
30 must be always trying to get the better in something or other:—that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards: that cards are a temporary illusion; in truth, a mere drama; for we do but *play* at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during

the illusion, we *are* as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling and little bloodshed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *games* of life, which men play, without esteeming them to be such. — 5

With great deference to the old lady's judgment on these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life, when playing at cards *for nothing* has even been agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes 10 call for the cards, and play a game at piquet *for love* with my cousin Bridget — Bridget Elia.

I grant there is something sneaking in it: but with a toothache, or a sprained ankle, — when you are subdued and humble, — you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of 15 action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick whist*. —

I grant it is not the highest style of man — I deprecate the manès of Sarah Battle — she lives not, alas! to whom I should 20 apologize. —

At such times, those *terms* which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible. — I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me. 25

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted her) — (dare I tell thee, how foolish I am?) — I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we gained nothing, and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly for ever. The pipkin should be ever 30 boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over: and as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

VIII. VALENTINE'S DAY

HAIL to thy returning festival, old Bishop Valentine ! Great is thy name in the rubric, thou venerable Arch-flamen of Hymen ! Immortal Go-between ! who and what manner of person art thou ? Art thou but a *name*, typifying the restless principle which
 5 impels poor humans to seek perfection in union ? or wert thou indeed a mortal prelate, with thy tippet and thy rochet, thy apron on, and decent lawn sleeves ? Mysterious personage ! like unto thee, assuredly, there is no other mitred father in the calendar ; not Jerome, nor Ambrose, nor Cyril ; nor the consigner of
 10 undipped infants to eternal torments, Austin, whom all mothers hate ; nor he who hated all mothers, Origen ; nor Bishop Bull, nor Archbishop Parker, nor Whitgift. Thou comest attended with thousands and ten thousands of little Loves, and the air is

Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings.

15 Singing Cupids are thy choristers and thy precentors ; and instead of the crozier, the mystical arrow is borne before thee.

In other words, this is the day on which those charming little missives, ycleped Valentines, cross and intercross each other at every street and turning. The weary and all forespent two-
 20 penny postman sinks beneath a load of delicate embarrassments, not his own. It is scarcely credible to what an extent this ephemeral courtship is carried on in this loving town, to the great enrichment of porters, and detriment of knockers and bell-wires. In these little visual interpretations, no emblem is so
 25 common as the *heart*, — that little three-cornered exponent of all our hopes and fears, — the bestuck and bleeding heart ; it is twisted and tortured into more allegories and affectations than an opera hat. What authority we have in history or
 30 Cupid in this anatomical seat rather than in any other, is not

very clear ; but we have got it, and it will serve as well as any other. Else we might easily imagine, upon some other system which might have prevailed for anything which our pathology knows to the contrary, a lover, addressing his mistress, in perfect simplicity of feeling, "Madam, my *liver* and fortune 5 are entirely at your disposal ;" or putting a delicate question, "Amanda, have you a *midriff* to bestow?" But custom has settled these things, and awarded the seat of sentiment to the aforesaid triangle, while its less fortunate neighbours wait at animal and anatomical distance. 10

Not many sounds in life, and I include all urban and all rural sounds, exceed in interest a *knock at the door*. It "gives a very echo to the throne where hope is seated." But its issues seldom answer to this oracle within. It is so seldom that just the person we want to see comes. But of all the clamorous 15 visitations the welcomest in expectation is the sound that ushers in, or seems to usher in, a Valentine. As the raven himself was hoarse that announced the fatal entrance of Duncan, so the knock of the postman on this day is light, airy, confident, and befitting one that bringeth good tidings. It is less mechan- 20 ical than on other days ; you will say, "that is not the post, I am sure." Visions of Love, of Cupids, of Hymens ! — delightful eternal commonplaces, which "having been will always be ;" which no school-boy nor school-man can write away ; having your irreversible throne in the fancy and affections — what are 25 your transports, when the happy maiden, opening with careful finger, careful not to break the emblematic seal, bursts upon the sight of some well-designed allegory, some type, some youthful fancy, not without verses —

Lovers all,
A madrigal,

30

or some such device, not over-abundant in sense — young Love disclaims it, — and not quite silly — something between wind

and water, a chorus where the sheep might almost join the shepherd, as they did, or as I apprehend they did, in Arcadia.

All Valentines are not foolish ; and I shall not easily forget thine, my kind friend (if I may have leave to call you so)

5 E. B. — E. B. lived opposite a young maiden, whom he had often seen, unseen, from his parlour window in C——e Street. She was all joyousness and innocence, and just of an age to enjoy receiving a Valentine, and just of a temper to bear the disappointment of missing one with good humour. E. B. is

10 an artist of no common powers ; in the fancy parts of designing, perhaps inferior to none ; his name is known at the bottom of many a well-executed vignette in the way of his profession, but no further ; for E. B. is modest, and the world meets nobody half-way. E. B. meditated how he could repay this

15 young maiden for many a favour which she had done him unknown ; for when a kindly face greets us, though but passing by, and never knows us again, nor we it, we should feel it as an obligation ; and E. B. did. This good artist set himself at work to please the damsel. It was just before Valentine's

20 day three years since. He wrought, unseen, and unsuspected, a wondrous work. We need not say it was on the finest gilt paper, with borders — full, not of common hearts and heartless allegory, but all the prettiest stories of love from Ovid and older poets than Ovid (for E. B. is a scholar). There was

25 Pyramus and Thisbe, and be sure Dido was not forgot, nor Hero and Leander, and swans more than sang in Cayster, with mottoes and fanciful devices, such as beseemed — a work in short of magic. Iris dipt the woof. This on Valentine's

30 eve he commended to the all-swallowing indiscriminate orifice — (O ignoble trust !) — of the common post ; but the humble medium did its duty, and from his watchful stand, the next morning, he saw the cheerful messenger knock, and by-and-by the precious charge delivered. He saw, unseen, the happy girl unfold the Valentine, dance about, clap her hands, as

one after one the pretty emblems unfolded themselves. She danced about, not with light love or foolish expectations, for she had no lover; or, if she had, none she knew that could have created those bright images which delighted her. It was more like some fairy present; a God-send, as our familiarly pious ancestors termed a benefit received, where the benefactor was unknown. It would do her no harm. It would do her good for ever after. It is good to love the unknown. I only give this as a specimen of E. B. and his modest way of doing a concealed kindness. 10

“Good-morrow to my Valentine,” sings poor Ophelia; and no better wish, but with better auspices, we wish to all faithful lovers, who are not too wise to despise old legends, but are content to rank themselves humble diocesans of old Bishop Valentine, and his true church. 15

IX. A QUAKERS' MEETING

Still-born Silence! thou that art
 Flood-gate of the deeper heart!
 Offspring of a heavenly kind!
 Frost o' the mouth, and thaw o' the mind!
 Secrecy's confidant, and he 20
 Who makes religion mystery!
 Admiration's speaking'st tongue!
 Leave, thy desert shades among,
 Reverend hermits' hallow'd cells,
 Where retired devotion dwells! 25
 With thy enthusiasms come,
 Seize our tongues, and strike us dumb!

FLECKNO.¹

READER, wouldst thou know what true peace and quiet mean; wouldst thou find a refuge from the noises and clamours of the multitude; wouldst thou enjoy at once solitude and society; wouldst thou possess the depth of thy own 30

¹ “Love's Dominion,”

spirit in stillness, without being shut out from the consolatory faces of thy species; wouldst thou be alone, and yet accompanied; solitary, yet not desolate; singular, yet not without some to keep thee in countenance; a unit in aggregate; a simple in composite:— come with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

Dost thou love silence as deep as that “before the winds were made?” go not out into the wilderness, descend not into the profundities of the earth; shut not up thy casements; nor pour wax into the little cells of thy ears, with little-faithed self-mistrusting Ulysses.— Retire with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

For a man to refrain even from good words, and to hold his peace, it is commendable; but for a multitude, it is great mastery.

What is the stillness of the desert, compared with this place? what the uncommunicating muteness of fishes?— here the goddess reigns and revels.— “Boreas, and Cesiæ, and Argestes loud,” do not with their inter-confounding uproars more augment the brawl—nor the waves of the blown Baltic with their clubbed sounds—than their opposite (Silence her sacred self) is multiplied and rendered more intense by numbers and by sympathy. She too hath her deeps, that call unto deeps. Negation itself hath a positive more and less; and closed eyes would seem to obscure the great obscurity of midnight.

There are wounds, which an imperfect solitude cannot heal. By imperfect I mean that which a man enjoyeth by himself. The perfect is that which he can sometimes attain in crowds, but nowhere so absolutely as in a Quakers' Meeting.— Those first hermits did certainly understand this principle, when they retired into Egyptian solitudes, not singly, but in shoals, to enjoy one another's want of conversation. The Carthusian is bound to his brethren by this agreeing spirit of

incommunicativeness. In secular occasions, what so pleasant as to be reading a book through a long winter evening, with a friend sitting by — say, a wife — he, or she, too (if that be probable), reading another, without interruption, or oral communication? — can there be no sympathy without the gabble of words? — away with this inhuman, shy, single, shade-and-cavern-haunting solitariness. Give me, Master Zimmermann, a sympathetic solitude. 5

To pace alone in the cloisters, or side aisles of some cathedral, time-stricken ; 10

Or under hanging mountains,
Or by the fall of fountains;

is but a vulgar luxury, compared with that which those enjoy, who come together for the purposes of more complete, abstracted solitude. This is the loneliness “to be felt.” — 15
The Abbey Church of Westminster hath nothing so solemn, so spirit-soothing, as the naked walls and benches of a Quakers' Meeting. Here are no tombs, no inscriptions,

——— sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruin'd sides of kings — 20

but here is something, which throws Antiquity herself into the foreground — SILENCE — eldest of things — language of old Night — primitive Discourser — to which the insolent decays of mouldering grandeur have but arrived by a violent, and, as we may say, unnatural progression. 25

How reverend is the view of these hush'd heads
Looking tranquillity!

Nothing-plotting, nought-caballing, unmischievous synod ! convocation without intrigue ! parliament without debate ! what a lesson dost thou read to council, and to consistory ! — if my 30
pen treat of you lightly — as haply it will wander — yet my

spirit hath gravely felt the wisdom of your custom, when sitting among you in deepest peace, which some out-welling tears would rather confirm than disturb, I have reverted to the times of your beginnings, and the sowings of the seed by Fox and
5 Dewesbury. — I have witnessed that, which brought before my eyes your heroic tranquillity, inflexible to the rude jests and serious violences of the insolent soldiery, republican or royalist, sent to molest you — for ye sate betwixt the fires of two per-
10 secutions, the out-cast and off-scouring of church and presby-
tery, — I have seen the reeling sea-ruffian, who had wandered into your receptacle, with the avowed intention of disturbing your quiet, from the very spirit of the place receive in a moment a new heart, and presently sit among ye as a lamb amidst lambs. And I remembered Penn before his accusers,
15 and Fox in the bail-dock, where he was lifted up in spirit, as he tells us, and “the Judge and the Jury became as dead men under his feet.”

Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recom-
mend to you, above all church-narratives, to read Sewel's
20 History of the Quakers. It is in folio, and is the abstract of the journals of Fox, and the Primitive Friends. It is far more edifying and affecting than anything you will read of Wesley and his colleagues. Here is nothing to stagger you, nothing to
25 make you mistrust, no suspicion of alloy, no drop or dreg of
the worldly or ambitious spirit. You will here read the true story of that much-injured, ridiculed man (who perhaps hath been a by-word in your mouth), — James Naylor: what dread-
ful sufferings, with what patience, he endured, even to the boring through of his tongue with red-hot irons without a mur-
30 mur; and with what strength of mind, when the delusion he had fallen into, which they stigmatized for blasphemy, had given way to clearer thoughts, he could renounce his error, in a strain of the beautifullest humility, yet keep his first grounds, and be a Quaker still! — so different from the practice of your

common converts from enthusiasm, who, when they apostatize, *apostatize all*, and think they can never get far enough from the society of their former errors, even to the renunciation of some saving truths, with which they had been mingled, not implicated.

Get the writings of John Woolman by heart; and love the early Quakers.

How far the followers of these good men in our days have kept to the primitive spirit, or in what proportion they have substituted formality for it, the Judge of Spirits can alone determine. I have seen faces in their assemblies, upon which the dove sate visibly brooding. Others again I have watched, when my thoughts should have been better engaged, in which I could possibly detect nothing but a blank inanity. But quiet was in all, and the disposition to unanimity, and the absence of the fierce controversial workings. — If the spiritual pretensions of the Quakers have abated, at least they make few pretences. Hypocrites they certainly are not, in their preaching. It is seldom indeed that you shall see one get up amongst them to hold forth. Only now and then a trembling female, generally *ancient*, voice is heard — you cannot guess from what part of the meeting it proceeds — with a low, buzzing, musical sound, laying out a few words which “she thought might suit the condition of some present,” with a quaking diffidence which leaves no possibility of supposing that anything of female vanity was mixed up, where the tones were so full of tenderness, and a restraining modesty. — The men, from what I have observed, speak seldomer.

Once only, and it was some years ago, I witnessed a sample of the old Foxian orgasm. It was a man of giant stature, who, as Wordsworth phrases it, might have danced “from head to foot equipt in iron mail.” His frame was of iron too. But *he* was malleable. I saw him shake all over with the spirit — I dare not say, of delusion. The strivings of the outer man were

unutterable — he seemed not to speak, but to be spoken from. I saw the strong man bowed down, and his knees to fail — his joints all seemed loosening — it was a figure to set off against Paul preaching — the words he uttered were few, and sound
5 — he was evidently resisting his will — keeping down his own word-wisdom with more mighty effort, than the world's orators strain for theirs. "He had been a WIT in his youth," he told us, with expressions of a sober remorse. And it was not till long after the impression had begun to wear away, that I was
10 enabled, with something like a smile, to recall the striking incongruity of the confession — understanding the term in its worldly acceptation — with the frame and physiognomy of the person before me. His brow would have scared away the Levites — the Jocos Risus-que — faster than the Loves fled
15 the face of Dis at Enna. — By *wit*, even in his youth, I will be sworn he understood something far within the limits of an allowable liberty.

More frequently the Meeting is broken up without a word having been spoken. But the mind has been fed. You go
20 away with a sermon, not made with hands. You have been in the milder caverns of Trophonius; or as in some den, where that fiercest and savagest of all wild creatures, the TONGUE, that unruly member, has strangely lain tied up and captive. You have bathed with stillness. — O when the spirit is sore
25 fretted, even tired to sickness of the janglings, and nonsense-noises of the world, what a balm and a solace it is, to go and seat yourself, for a quiet half-hour, upon some undisputed corner of a bench, among the gentle Quakers!

Their garb and stillness conjoined, present an uniformity,
30 tranquil and herdlike — as in the pasture — "forty feeding like one." —

The very garments of a Quaker seem incapable of receiving a soil; and cleanliness in them to be something more than the absence of its contrary. Every Quakeress is a lily; and

when they come up in bands to their Whitsun-conferences, whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis, from all parts of the United Kingdom, they show like troops of the Shining Ones.

X. MY RELATIONS

I AM arrived at that point of life, at which a man may 5
account it a blessing, as it is a singularity, if he have either
of his parents surviving. I have not that felicity — and some-
times think feelingly of a passage in “Browne’s Christian
Morals,” where he speaks of a man that hath lived sixty or
seventy years in the world. “In such a compass of time,” he 10
says, “a man may have a close apprehension what it is to be
forgotten, when he hath lived to find none who could remem-
ber his father, or scarcely the friends of his youth, and may sen-
sibly see with what a face in no long time OBLIVION will look
upon himself.” 15

I had an aunt, a dear and good one. She was one whom
single blessedness had soured to the world. She often used
to say, that I was the only thing in it which she loved ; and,
when she thought I was quitting it, she grieved over me with
mother’s tears. A partiality quite so exclusive my reason can- 20
not altogether approve. She was from morning till night por-
ing over good books, and devotional exercises. Her favourite
volumes were Thomas à Kempis, in Stanhope’s Translation ;
and a Roman Catholic Prayer-Book, with the *matins* and *com-
plines* regularly set down,— terms which I was at that time too 25
young to understand. She persisted in reading them, although
admonished daily concerning their Papistical tendency ; and
went to church every Sabbath, as a good Protestant should
do. These were the only books she studied ; though, I think,
at one period of her life, she told me she had read with 30
great satisfaction the “Adventures of an Unfortunate Young

Nobleman." Finding the door of the chapel in Essex Street open one day — it was in the infancy of that heresy — she went in, liked the sermon, and the manner of worship, and frequented it at intervals for some time after. She came not for doctrinal points, and never missed them. With some little asperities in her constitution, which I have above hinted at, she was a steadfast friendly being, and a fine *old Christian*. She was a woman of strong sense, and a shrewd mind — extraordinary at a *repartée*; one of the few occasions of her breaking silence — else she did not much value wit. The only secular employment I remember to have seen her engaged in, was, the splitting of French beans, and dropping them into a China basin of fair water. The odour of those tender vegetables to this day comes back upon my sense, redolent of soothing recollections. Certainly it is the most delicate of culinary operations.

Male aunts, as somebody calls them, I had none — to remember. By the uncle's side I may be said to have been born an orphan. Brother, or sister, I never had any — to know them. A sister, I think, that should have been Elizabeth, died in both our infancies. What a comfort, or what a care, may I not have missed in her! — But I have cousins, sprinkled about in Hertfordshire — besides *two*, with whom I have been all my life in habits of the closest intimacy, and whom I may term cousins *par excellence*. These are James and Bridget Elia. They are older than myself by twelve, and ten, years; and neither of them seems disposed, in matters of advice and guidance, to waive any of the prerogatives which primogeniture confers. May they continue still in the same mind; and when they shall be seventy-five, and seventy-three, years old (I cannot spare them sooner), persist in treating me in my grand climacteric precisely as a stripling, or younger brother!

James is an inexplicable cousin. Nature hath her unities, which not every critic can penetrate; or, if we feel, we cannot explain them. The pen of Yorick, and none since his, could

have drawn J. E. entire — those fine Shandean lights and shades, which make up his story. I must limp after in my poor antithetical manner, as the fates have given me grace and talent. J. E. then — to the eye of a common observer at least — seemeth made up of contradictory principles. — The genuine child of impulse, the frigid philosopher of prudence — the phlegm of my cousin's doctrine is invariably at war with his temperament, which is high sanguine. With always some fire-new project in his brain, J. E. is the systematic opponent of innovation, and crier-down of everything that has not stood the test of age and experiment. With a hundred fine notions chasing one another hourly in his fancy, he is startled at the least approach to the romantic in others ; and, determined by his own sense in everything, commends *you* to the guidance of common-sense on all occasions. — With a touch of the eccentric in all which he does, or says, he is only anxious that *you* should not commit yourself by doing anything absurd or singular. On my once letting slip at table, that I was not fond of a certain popular dish, he begged me at any rate not to *say* so — for the world would think me mad. He disguises a passionate fondness for works of high art (whereof he hath amassed a choice collection), under the pretext of buying only to sell again — that his enthusiasm may give no encouragement to yours. Yet, if it were so, why does that piece of tender pastoral Domenichino hang still by his wall? — is the ball of his sight much more dear to him? — or what picture-dealer can talk like him?

Whereas mankind in general are observed to wrap their speculative conclusions to the bent of their individual humours, *his* theories are sure to be in diametrical opposition to his constitution. He is courageous as Charles of Sweden, upon instinct ; chary of his person, upon principle, as a travelling Quaker. — He has been preaching up to me, all my life, the doctrine of bowing to the great — the necessity

of forms, and manner, to a man's getting on in the world. He himself never aims at either, that I can discover,—and has a spirit, that would stand upright in the presence of the Cham of Tartary. It is pleasant to hear him discourse of
5 patience—extolling it as the truest wisdom—and to see him during the last seven minutes that his dinner is getting ready. Nature never ran up in her haste a more restless piece of workmanship than when she moulded this impetuous
10 cousin—and Art never turned out a more elaborate orator than he can display himself to be, upon his favourite topic of the advantages of quiet, and contentedness in the state, whatever it be, that we are placed in. He is triumphant on this theme, when he has you safe in one of those short stages that ply for the western road, in a very obstructing manner,
15 at the foot of John Murray's street—where you get in when it is empty, and are expected to wait till the vehicle hath completed her just freight—a trying three-quarters of an hour to some people. He wonders at your fidgetiness—
“where could we be better than we are, *thus sitting, thus*
20 *consulting?*” —“prefers, for his part, a state of rest to locomotion,”—with an eye all the while upon the coachman—till at length, waxing out of all patience, at *your want of it*, he breaks out into a pathetic remonstrance at the fellow for detaining us so long over the time which he had professed,
25 and declares peremptorily, that “the gentleman in the coach is determined to get out if he does not drive on that instant.”

Very quick at inventing an argument, or detecting a sophistry, he is incapable of attending *you* in any chain of arguing. Indeed he makes wild work with logic; and seems
30 to jump at most admirable conclusions by some process, not at all akin to it. Consonantly enough to this, he hath been heard to deny, upon certain occasions, that there exists such a faculty at all in man as *reason*; and wondereth how man came first to have a conceit of it—enforcing his negation

with all the might of *reasoning* he is master of. He has some speculative notions against laughter, and will maintain that laughing is not natural to *him*—when peradventure the next moment his lungs shall crow like Chanticleer. He says some of the best things in the world—and declareth that wit is his aversion. It was he who said, upon seeing the Eton boys at play in their grounds—*What a pity to think, that these fine ingenuous lads in a few years will all be changed into frivolous Members of Parliament!*

His youth was fiery, glowing, tempestuous—and in age he discovered no symptom of cooling. This is that which I admire in him. I hate people who meet Time half-way. I am for no compromise with that inevitable spoiler. While he lives, J. E. will take his swing.—It does me good, as I walk towards the street of my daily avocation, on some fine May morning, to meet him marching in a quite opposite direction, with a jolly handsome presence, and shining sanguine face, that indicates some purchase in his eye—a Claude—or a Hobbima—for much of his enviable leisure is consumed at Christie's, and Phillips's—or where not, to pick up pictures and such gauds. On these occasions he mostly stoppeth me, to read a short lecture on the advantage a person like me possesses above himself, in having his time occupied with business which he *must do*—assureth me that he often feels it hang heavy on his hands—wishes he had fewer holidays—and goes off—Westward Ho!—chanting a tune to Pall Mall—perfectly convinced that he has convinced me—while I proceed in my opposite direction tuneless.

It is pleasant again to see this Professor of Indifference doing the honours of his new purchase, when he has fairly housed it. You must view it in every light, till *he* has found the best—placing it at this distance, and at that, but always suiting the focus of your sight to his own. You must spy at it through your fingers, to catch the aërial perspective—

though you assure him that to you the landscape shows much more agreeable without that artifice. Woe be to the luckless wight, who does not only not respond to his rapture, but who should drop an unseasonable intimation of preferring one of
 5 his anterior bargains to the present! — The last is always his best hit — his “Cynthia of the minute.” — Alas! how many a mild Madonna have I known to *come in* — a Raphael! — keep its ascendancy for a few brief moons — then, after certain intermedial degradations, from the front drawing-room to the
 10 back gallery, thence to the dark parlour, — adopted in turn by each of the Carracci, under successive lowering ascriptions of filiation, mildly breaking its fall — consigned to the oblivious lumber-room, *go out* at last a Lucca Giordano, or plain Carlo Maratti! — which things when I beheld — musing upon
 15 the chances and mutabilities of fate below — hath made me to reflect upon the altered condition of great personages, or that woful queen of Richard the Second —

— set forth in pomp,
 She came adornèd hither like sweet May.
 20 Sent back like Hallowmas or shortest day.

With great love for *you*, J. E. hath but a limited sympathy with what you feel or do. He lives in a world of his own, and makes slender guesses at what passes in your mind. He never pierces the marrow of your habits. He will tell an old-
 25 established playgoer, that Mr. Such-a-one, of So-and-so (naming one of the theatres), is a very lively comedian — as a piece of news! He advertised me but the other day of some pleasant green lanes which he had found out for me, *knowing me to be a great walker*, in my own immediate vicinity — who have
 30 haunted the identical spot any time these twenty years! — He has not much respect for that class of feelings which goes by the name of sentimental. He applies the definition of real evil to bodily suffering exclusively — and rejecteth all others

as imaginary. He is affected by the sight or the bare supposition of a creature in pain, to a degree which I have never witnessed out of womankind. A constitutional acuteness to this class of sufferings, may in part account for this. The animal tribe in particular he taketh under his especial protection. A broken-winded or spur-galled horse is sure to find an advocate in him. An over-loaded ass is his client for ever. He is the apostle to the brute kind — the never-failing friend of those who have none to care for them. The contemplation of a lobster boiled, or eels skinned *alive*, will wring him so, that “all for pity he could die.” It will take the savour from his palate, and the rest from his pillow, for days and nights. With the intense feeling of Thomas Clarkson, he wanted only the steadiness of pursuit, and unity of purpose, of that “true yoke-fellow with Time,” to have effected as much for the *Animal*, as *he* hath done for the *Negro Creation*. But my uncontrollable cousin is but imperfectly formed for purposes which demand co-operation. He cannot wait. His amelioration-plans must be ripened in a day. For this reason he has cut but an equivocal figure in benevolent societies, and combinations for the alleviation of human sufferings. His zeal constantly makes him to outrun, and put out, his coadjutors. He thinks of relieving, — while they think of debating. He was black-balled out of a society for the Relief of * * * because the fervour of his humanity toiled beyond the formal apprehension, and creeping processes, of his associates. I shall always consider this distinction as a patent of nobility in the Elia family!

Do I mention these seeming inconsistencies to smile at, or upbraid, my unique cousin? Marry, heaven, and all good manners, and the understanding that should be between kinsfolk, forbid! — With all the strangeness of this *strangest of the Elias* — I would not have him in one jot or tittle other than he is; neither would I barter or exchange my wild kinsman

for the most exact, regular, and every-way consistent kinsman breathing.

In my next, reader, I may perhaps give you some account of my cousin Bridget — if you are not already surfeited with 5 cousins — and take you by the hand, if you are willing to go with us, on an excursion which we made a summer or two since, in search of *more cousins* —

Through the green plains of pleasant Hertfordshire.

XI. MACKERY END, IN HERTFORDSHIRE

BRIDGET ELIA has been my housekeeper for many a long 10 year. I have obligations to Bridget, extending beyond the period of memory. We house together, old bachelor and maid, in a sort of double singleness; with such tolerable comfort, upon the whole, that I, for one, find myself in no sort of disposition to go out upon the mountains, with the 15 rash king's offspring, to bewail my celibacy. We agree pretty well in our tastes and habits — yet so, as “with a difference.” We are generally in harmony, with occasional bickerings — as it should be among near relations. Our sympathies are rather understood, than expressed; and once, upon my dis- 20 sembling a tone in my voice more kind than ordinary, my cousin burst into tears, and complained that I was altered. We are both great readers in different directions. While I am hanging over (for the thousandth time) some passage in old Burton, or one of his strange contemporaries, she is 25 abstracted in some modern tale, or adventure, whereof our common reading-table is daily fed with assiduously fresh supplies. Narrative teases me. I have little concern in the progress of events. She must have a story, — well, ill, or indifferently told — so there be life stirring in it, and plenty 30 of good or evil accidents. The fluctuations of fortune in

fiction — and almost in real life — have ceased to interest, or operate but dully upon me. Out-of-the-way humours and opinions — heads with some diverting twist in them — the oddities of authorship please me most. My cousin has a native disrelish of anything that sounds odd or bizarre. 5 Nothing goes down with her that is quaint, irregular, or out of the road of common sympathy. She “holds Nature more clever.” I can pardon her blindness to the beautiful obliquities of the *Religio Medici*; but she must apologize to me for certain disrespectful insinuations, which she has been pleased 10 to throw out latterly, touching the intellectuals of a dear favourite of mine, of the last century but one — the thrice noble, chaste, and virtuous, — but again somewhat fantastical, and original-brained, generous Margaret Newcastle.

It has been the lot of my cousin, oftener perhaps than I 15 could have wished, to have had for her associates and mine, free-thinkers — leaders, and disciples, of novel philosophies and systems; but she neither wrangles with, nor accepts, their opinions. That which was good and venerable to her, when she was a child, retains its authority over her mind still. 20 She never juggles or plays tricks with her understanding.

We are both of us inclined to be a little too positive; and I have observed the result of our disputes to be almost uniformly this — that in matters of fact, dates, and circumstances, it turns out, that I was in the right, and my cousin in the 25 wrong. But where we have differed upon moral points; upon something proper to be done, or let alone; whatever heat of opposition, or steadiness of conviction, I set out with, I am sure always in the long run, to be brought over to her way of thinking. 30

I must touch upon the foibles of my kinswoman with a gentle hand, for Bridget does not like to be told of her faults. She hath an awkward trick (to say no worse of it) of reading in company: at which times she will answer *yes* or *no* to a

question, without fully understanding its purport — which is provoking, and derogatory in the highest degree to the dignity of the putter of the said question. Her presence of mind is equal to the most pressing trials of life, but will sometimes
5 desert her upon trifling occasions. When the purpose requires it, and is a thing of moment, she can speak to it greatly ; but in matters which are not stuff of the conscience, she hath been known sometimes to let slip a word less seasonably.

Her education in youth was not much attended to ; and
10 she happily missed all that train of female garniture, which passeth by the name of accomplishments. She was tumbled early, by accident or design, into a spacious closet of good old English reading, without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage.
15 Had I twenty girls, they should be brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not whether their chance in wedlock might not be diminished by it ; but I can answer for it, that it makes (if the worst come to the worst) most incomparable old maids.

In a season of distress, she is the truest comforter ; but
20 in the teasing accidents, and minor perplexities, which do not call out the *will* to meet them, she sometimes maketh matters worse by an excess of participation. If she does not always divide your trouble, upon the pleasanter occasions of life she is sure always to treble your satisfaction. She is
25 excellent to be at play with, or upon a visit ; but best, when she goes a journey with you.

We made an excursion together a few summers since, into Hertfordshire, to beat up the quarters of some of our less-known relations in that fine corn country.

30 The oldest thing I remember is Mackery End ; or Mackarel End, as it is spelt, perhaps more properly, in some old maps of Hertfordshire ; a farm-house, — delightfully situated within a gentle walk from Wheathampstead. I can just remember having been there, on a visit to a great-aunt, when I was a

child under the care of Bridget; who, as I have said, is older than myself by some ten years. I wish that I could throw into a heap the remainder of our joint existences, that we might share them in equal division. But that is impossible. The house was at that time in the occupation of a substantial yeoman, who had married my grandmother's sister. His name was Gladman. My grandmother was a Bruton, married to a Field. The Gladmans and the Brutons are still flourishing in that part of the county, but the Fields are almost extinct. More than forty years had elapsed since the visit I speak of; and, for the greater portion of that period, we had lost sight of the other two branches also. Who or what sort of persons inherited Mackery End—kindred or strange folk—we were afraid almost to conjecture, but determined some day to explore.

By somewhat a circuitous route, taking the noble park at Luton in our way from Saint Alban's, we arrived at the spot of our anxious curiosity about noon. The sight of the old farm-house, though every trace of it was effaced from my recollection, affected me with a pleasure which I had not experienced for many a year. For though I had forgotten it, *we* had never forgotten being there together, and we had been talking about Mackery End all our lives, till memory on my part became mocked with a phantom of itself, and I thought I knew the aspect of a place, which, when present, O how unlike it was to *that*, which I had conjured up so many times instead of it!

Still the air breathed balmily about it; the season was in the "heart of June," and I could say with the poet,

But thou, that didst appear so fair
 To fond imagination,
 Dost rival in the light of day
 Her delicate creation!¹

30

¹ Wordsworth.

Bridget's was more a waking bliss than mine, for she easily remembered her old acquaintance again — some altered features, of course, a little grudged at. At first, indeed, she was ready to disbelieve for joy ; but the scene soon reconfirmed
5 itself in her affections — and she traversed every outpost of the old mansion, to the wood-house, the orchard, the place where the pigeon-house had stood (house and birds were alike flown) — with a breathless impatience of recognition, which was more pardonable perhaps than decorous at the age of fifty odd.
10 But Bridget in some things is behind her years.

The only thing left was to get into the house — and that was a difficulty which to me singly would have been insurmountable : for I am terribly shy in making myself known to strangers and out-of-date kinsfolk. Love, stronger than
15 scruple, winged my cousin in without me ; but she soon returned with a creature that might have sat to a sculptor for the image of Welcome. It was the youngest of the Gladmans ; who, by marriage with a Bruton, had become mistress of the old mansion. A comely brood are the Bru-
20 tons. Six of them, females, were noted as the handsomest young women in the county. But this adopted Bruton, in my mind, was better than they all — more comely. She was born too late to have remembered me. She just recollected
25 to her, climbing a stile. But the name of kindred, and of cousinship, was enough. Those slender ties, that prove slight as gossamer in the rending atmosphere of a metropolis, bind faster, as we found it, in hearty, homely, loving Hertfordshire. In five minutes we were as thoroughly acquainted as if we
30 had been born and bred up together ; were familiar, even to the calling each other by our Christian names. So Christians should call one another. To have seen Bridget, and her — it was like the meeting of the two scriptural cousins ! There

was a grace and dignity, an amplitude of form and stature, answering to her mind, in this farmer's wife, which would have shined in a palace — or so we thought it. We were made welcome by husband and wife equally — we, and our friend that was with us. — I had almost forgotten him — but 5
B. F. will not so soon forget that meeting, if peradventure he shall read this on the far-distant shores where the Kangaroo haunts. The fatted calf was made ready, or rather was already so, as if in anticipation of our coming; and, after an appropriate glass of native wine, never let me forget with 10
what honest pride this hospitable cousin made us proceed to Wheathampstead, to introduce us (as some new-found rarity) to her mother and sister Gladmans, who did indeed know something more of us, at a time when she almost knew nothing. — With what corresponding kindness we were received by 15
them also — how Bridget's memory, exalted by the occasion, warmed into a thousand half-obliterated recollections of things and persons, to my utter astonishment, and her own — and to the astoundment of B. F. who sat by, almost the only thing that was not a cousin there, — old effaced images of more 20
than half-forgotten names and circumstances still crowding back upon her, as words written in lemon come out upon exposure to a friendly warmth, — when I forget all this, then may my country cousins forget me; and Bridget no more remember, that in the days of weakling infancy I was 25
her tender charge — as I have been her care in foolish manhood since — in those pretty pastoral walks, long ago, about Mackery End, in Hertfordshire.

XII. IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES

I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in anything. Those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch.— *Religio Medici*.

5 THAT the author of the *Religio Medici*, mounted upon the airy stilts of abstraction, conversant about notional and conjectural essences; in whose categories of Being the possible took the upper hand of the actual; should have overlooked the impertinent individualities of such poor concretions as
10 mankind, is not much to be admired. It is rather to be wondered at, that in the genus of animal he should have condescended to distinguish that species at all. For myself — earth-bound and fettered to the scene of my activities, —

Standing on earth, not rapt above the sky,

15 I confess that I do feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons. Whatever is, is to me a matter of taste or distaste; or when once it becomes indifferent, it begins to be disrelishing. I am, in plainer
20 words, a bundle of prejudices — made up of likings and dislikings — the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies. In a certain sense, I hope it may be said of me that I am a lover of my species. I can feel for all indifferently, but I cannot feel towards all equally. The more purely-English
25 word that expresses sympathy will better explain my meaning. I can be a friend to a worthy man, who upon another account cannot be my mate or *fellow*. I cannot *like* all people alike.¹

¹ I would be understood as confining myself to the subject of *imperfect sympathies*. To nations or classes of men there can be no direct *antipathy*. There may be individuals born and constellated so opposite

I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me — and in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it. There is something more plain and ingenuous in their mode of proceeding. We know one another at first sight. There is an order of imperfect intellects (under which mine must be content to rank) which in its constitution is essentially anti-Caledonian. The owners of the sort of faculties I allude to, have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive. They have no pretences to much clearness or precision in their ideas, or in their manner of expressing them. Their intellectual wardrobe (to confess fairly) has few whole pieces in it. They are content with fragments and scattered pieces of Truth. She presents no full front to them — a feature or side-face at the most. Hints and glimpses, germs and crude essays at a system, is the utmost they pretend to. They beat up a little game peradventure — and leave it to

to another individual nature, that the same sphere cannot hold them. I have met with my moral antipodes, and can believe the story of two persons meeting (who never saw one another before in their lives) and instantly fighting.

—— We by proof find there should be
 'Twixt man and man such an antipathy,
 That though he can show no just reason why
 For any former wrong or injury,
 Can neither find a blemish in his fame,
 Nor aught in face or feature justly blame,
 Can challenge or accuse him of no evil,
 Yet notwithstanding hates him as a devil.

The lines are from old Heywood's "Hierarchie of Angels," and he subjoins a curious story in confirmation, of a Spaniard who attempted to assassinate a King Ferdinand of Spain, and being put to the rack could give no other reason for the deed but an inveterate antipathy which he had taken to the first sight of the King.

—— The cause to which that act compell'd him
 Was, he ne'er loved him since he first beheld him.

knottier heads, more robust constitutions, to run it down. The light that lights them is not steady and polar, but mutable and shifting: waxing, and again waning. Their conversation is accordingly. They will throw out a random
5 word in or out of season, and be content to let it pass for what it is worth. They cannot speak always as if they were upon their oath—but must be understood, speaking or writing, with some abatement. They seldom wait to mature a proposition, but e'en bring it to market in the green ear.
10 They delight to impart their defective discoveries, as they arise, without waiting for their full development. They are no systematizers, and would but err more by attempting it. Their minds, as I said before, are suggestive merely. The brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) is consti-
15 tuted upon quite a different plan. His Minerva is born in panoply. You are never admitted to see his ideas in their growth—if, indeed, they do grow, and are not rather put together upon principles of clock-work. You never catch his mind in an undress. He never hints or suggests any-
20 thing, but unloads his stock of ideas in perfect order and completeness. He brings his total wealth into company, and gravely unpacks it. His riches are always about him. He never stoops to catch a glittering something in your presence, to share it with you, before he quite knows whether it
25 be true touch or not. You cannot cry *halves* to anything that he finds. He does not find, but bring. You never witness his first apprehension of a thing. His understanding is always at its meridian—you never see the first dawn, the early streaks.—He has no falterings of self-suspicion. Surmises, guesses,
30 misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousnesses, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo conceptions, have no place in his brain, or vocabulary. The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him. Is he orthodox—he has no doubts. Is he an infidel—he has none either. Between the affirmative and

the negative there is no border-land with him. You cannot hover with him upon the confines of truth, or wander in the maze of a probable argument. He always keeps the path. You cannot make excursions with him — for he sets you right. His taste never fluctuates. His morality never abates. He cannot compromise, or understand middle actions. There can be but a right and a wrong. His conversation is as a book. His affirmations have the sanctity of an oath. You must speak upon the square with him. He stops a metaphor like a suspected person in an enemy's country. "A healthy book!" — said one of his countrymen to me, who had ventured to give that appellation to John Bunce, — "did I catch rightly what you said? I have heard of a man in health, and of a healthy state of body, but I do not see how that epithet can be properly applied to a book." Above all, you must beware of indirect expressions before a Caledonian. Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blest with a vein of it. Remember you are upon your oath. I have a print of a graceful female after Leonardo da Vinci, which I was showing off to Mr. —. After he had examined it minutely, I ventured to ask him how he liked MY BEAUTY (a foolish name it goes by among my friends) — when he very gravely assured me, that "he had considerable respect for my character and talents" (so he was pleased to say), "but had not given himself much thought about the degree of my personal pretensions." The misconception staggered me, but did not seem much to disconcert him. — Persons of this nation are particularly fond of affirming a truth — which nobody doubts. They do not so properly affirm, as annunciate it. They do indeed appear to have such a love of truth (as if, like virtue, it were valuable for itself) that all truth becomes equally valuable, whether the proposition that contains it be new or old, disputed, or such as is impossible to become a subject of disputation. I was present not long since at a party of North Britons,

where a son of Burns was expected; and happened to drop a silly expression (in my South British way), that I wished it were the father instead of the son — when four of them started up at once to inform me, that “that was impossible, because
5 he was dead.” An impracticable wish, it seems, was more than they could conceive. Swift has hit off this part of their character, namely, their love of truth, in his biting way, but with an illiberality that necessarily confines the passage to the margin.¹ The tediousness of these people is certainly pro-
10 voking. I wonder if they ever tire one another! — In my early life I had a passionate fondness for the poetry of Burns. I have sometimes foolishly hoped to ingratiate myself with his countrymen by expressing it. But I have always found that a true Scot resents your admiration of his compatriot, even more
15 than he would your contempt of him. The latter he imputes to your “imperfect acquaintance with many of the words which he uses;” and the same objection makes it a presumption in you to suppose that you can admire him, — Thomson they seem to have forgotten. Smollett they have neither forgotten
20 nor forgiven for his delineation of Rory and his companion, upon their first introduction to our metropolis. — Speak of Smollett as a great genius, and they will retort upon you Hume’s History compared with *his* Continuation of it. What if the historian had continued Humphrey Clinker?
25 I have, in the abstract, no disrespect for Jews. They are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with which Stonehenge

¹ There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating facts of no consequence, not at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable. — *Hints towards an Essay on Conversation.*

is in its nonage. They date beyond the pyramids. But I should not care to be in habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation. I confess that I have not the nerves to enter their synagogues. Old prejudices cling about me. I cannot shake off the story of Hugh of Lincoln. Centuries 5 of injury, contempt, and hate, on the one side, — of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate, on the other, between our and their fathers, must, and ought, to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run clear and kindly yet; or that a few fine words, such as candour, liberality, the light 10 of a nineteenth century, can close up the breaches of so deadly a disunion. A Hebrew is nowhere congenial to me. He is least distasteful on 'Change — for the mercantile spirit levels all distinctions, as are all beauties in the dark. I boldly confess I do not relish the approximation of Jew and Christian, 15 which has become so fashionable. The reciprocal endearments have, to me, something hypocritical and unnatural in them. I do not like to see the Church and Synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility. If *they* are converted, why do they not come over to us alto- 20 gether? Why keep up a form of separation, when the life of it has fled? If they can sit with us at table, why do they kick at our cookery? I do not understand these half-convertites. Jews christianizing — Christians judaizing — puzzle me. I like fish or flesh. A moderate Jew is a more con- 25 founding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker. The spirit of the synagogue is essentially *separative*. B—— would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face, which nature meant to be of——Christians. The Hebrew spirit is strong 30 in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the Shibboleth. How it breaks out, when he sings, "The Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea!" The auditors, for the moment, are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our

necks in triumph. There is no mistaking him. B—— has a strong expression of sense in his countenance, and it is confirmed by his singing. The foundation of his vocal excellence is sense. He sings with understanding, as Kemble delivered
5 dialogue. He would sing the Commandments, and give an appropriate character to each prohibition. His nation, in general, have not over-sensible countenances. How should they?—but you seldom see a silly expression among them. Gain, and the pursuit of gain, sharpen a man's visage. I
10 never heard of an idiot being born among them.—Some admire the Jewish female-physiognomy. I admire it—but with trembling. Jael had those full dark inscrutable eyes.

In the Negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity. I have felt yearnings of tenderness towards
15 some of these faces—or rather masks—that have looked out kindly upon one in casual encounters in the streets and highways. I love what Fuller beautifully calls—these “images of God cut in ebony.” But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and my good-nights with them
20 —because they are black.

I love Quaker ways, and Quaker worship. I venerate the Quaker principles. It does me good for the rest of the day when I meet any of their people in my path. When I am ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, the sight, or quiet voice of a
25 Quaker, acts upon me as a ventilator, lightening the air, and taking off a load from the bosom. But I cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemona would say) “to live with them.” I am all over sophisticated—with humours, fancies, craving hourly sympathy. I must have books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes,
30 ambiguities, and a thousand whim-whams, which their simpler taste can do without. I should starve at their primitive banquet. My appetities are too high for the salads which (according to Evelyn) Eve dressed for the angel, my gusto too excited

To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

The indirect answers which Quakers are often found to return to a question put to them may be explained, I think, without the vulgar assumption, that they are more given to evasion and equivocating than other people. They naturally look to their words more carefully, and are more cautious of committing themselves. They have a peculiar character to keep up on this head. They stand in a manner upon their veracity. A Quaker is by law exempted from taking an oath. The custom of resorting to an oath in extreme cases, sanctified as it is by all religious antiquity, is apt (it must be confessed) to introduce into the laxer sort of minds the notion of two kinds of truth — the one applicable to the solemn affairs of justice, and the other to the common proceedings of daily intercourse. As truth bound upon the conscience by an oath can be but truth, so in the common affirmations of the shop and the market-place a latitude is expected and conceded upon questions wanting this solemn covenant. Something less than truth satisfies. It is common to hear a person say, "You do not expect me to speak as if I were upon my oath." Hence a great deal of incorrectness and inadvertency, short of falsehood, creeps into ordinary conversation; and a kind of secondary or laic-truth is tolerated, where clergy-truth — oath-truth, by the nature of the circumstances, is not required. A Quaker knows none of this distinction. His simple affirmation being received, upon the most sacred occasions, without any further test, stamps a value upon the words which he is to use upon the most indifferent topics of life. He looks to them, naturally, with more severity. You can have of him no more than his word. He knows, if he is caught tripping in a casual expression, he forfeits, for himself, at least, his claim to the invidious exemption. He knows that his syllables are weighed — and how far a consciousness of this particular watchfulness, exerted against a person, has a tendency to produce indirect answers, and a diverting of the question by

honest means, might be illustrated, and the practice justified, by a more sacred example than is proper to be adduced upon this occasion. The admirable presence of mind, which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies, might be traced
5 to this imposed self-watchfulness — if it did not seem rather an humble and secular scion of that old stock of religious constancy, which never bent or faltered, in the Primitive Friends, or gave way to the winds of persecution, to the violence of judge or accuser, under trials and racking examinations. “You will
10 never be the wiser, if I sit here answering your questions till midnight,” said one of those upright Justicers to Penn, who had been putting law-cases with a puzzling subtlety. “Thereafter as the answers may be,” retorted the Quaker. The astonishing composure of this people is sometimes ludicrously displayed
15 in lighter instances. — I was travelling in a stage-coach with three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straightest non-conformity of their sect. We stopped to bait at Andover, where a meal, partly tea apparatus, partly supper, was set before us. My friends confined themselves to the tea-table. I in my way
20 took supper. When the landlady brought in the bill, the eldest of my companions discovered that she had charged for both meals. This was resisted. Mine hostess was very clamorous and positive. Some mild arguments were used on the part of the Quakers, for which the heated mind of the good lady
25 seemed by no means a fit recipient. The guard came in with his usual peremptory notice. The Quakers pulled out their money, and formally tendered it — so much for tea — I, in humble imitation, tendering mine — for the supper which I
30 all three quietly put up their silver, as did myself, and marched out of the room, the eldest and gravest going first, with myself closing up the rear, who thought I could not do better than follow the example of such grave and warrantable personages. We got in. The steps went up. The coach

drove off. The murmurs of mine hostess, not very indistinctly or ambiguously pronounced, became after a time inaudible—and now my conscience, which the whimsical scene had for a while suspended, beginning to give some twitches, I waited, in the hope that some justification would be offered by these serious people for the seeming injustice of their conduct. To my great surprise, not a syllable was dropped on the subject. They sate as mute as at a meeting. At length the eldest of them broke silence, by inquiring of his next neighbour, “Hast thee heard how indigos go at the India House?” and the question operated as a soporific on my moral feeling as far as Exeter.

XIII. THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE

I WAS born, and passed the first seven years of my life in the Temple. Its church, its halls, its gardens, its fountain, its river, I had almost said—for in those young years, what was this king of rivers to me but a stream that watered our pleasant places? these are of my oldest recollections. I repeat, to this day, no verses to myself more frequently, or with kindlier emotion, than those of Spenser, where he speaks of this spot.

There when they came, whereas those bricky towers,
The which on Themmes brode aged back doth ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whylome wont the Templar knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride.

Indeed, it is the most elegant spot in the metropolis. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time—the passing from the crowded Strand or Fleet Street, by

unexpected avenues, into its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses! What a cheerful, liberal look hath that portion of it, which, from three sides, overlooks the greater garden: that goodly pile

5 Of building strong, albeit of Paper hight,

confronting, with massy contrast, the lighter, older, more fantastically shrouded one, named of Harcourt, with the cheerful Crown-office Row (place of my kindly engendure), right opposite the stately stream, which washes the garden-foot with her
 10 yet scarcely trade-polluted waters, and seems but just weaned from her Twickenham Naiades! a man would give something to have been born in such places. What a collegiate aspect has that fine Elizabethan hall, where the fountain plays, which I have made to rise and fall, how many times! to the astound-
 15 ment of the young urchins, my contemporaries, who, not being able to guess at its recondite machinery, were almost tempted to hail the wondrous work as magic! - What an antique air had the now almost effaced sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that Time which they measured, and to
 20 take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on, watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its movement, never caught, nice as an evanescent cloud, or the first arrests of sleep!

25 Ah! yet doth beauty like a dial-hand
 Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived!

What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowelments of lead and brass, its pert or solemn dulness of communication, compared with the simple altar-like structure, and
 30 silent heart-language of the old dial! It stood as the garden god of Christian gardens. Why is it almost everywhere vanished? If its business-use be superseded by more elaborate

inventions, its moral uses, its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance. It spoke of moderate labours, of pleasures not protracted after sunset, of temperance, and good hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe of the first world. Adam could scarce have missed it in Paradise. It was the 5
measure appropriate for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to apportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherd "carved it out quaintly in the sun;" and, turning philosopher by the very occupation, provided it with mottoes more touching than tomb- 10
stones. It was a pretty device of the gardener, recorded by Marvell, who, in the days of artificial gardening, made a dial out of herbs and flowers. I must quote his verses a little higher up, for they are full, as all his serious poetry was, of a witty delicacy. They will not come in awkwardly, I hope, in a talk of fountains 15
and sun-dials. He is speaking of sweet garden scenes :

What wonderous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head.
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine. 20
The nectarine, and curious peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach.
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass.
Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less 25
Withdraws into its happiness;
The mind, that ocean, where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds and other seas; 30
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.
Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside, 35

My soul into the boughs does glide :
 There like a bird it sits and sings,
 Then whets and claps its silver wings ;
 And, till prepared for longer flight,
 5 Waves in its plumes the various light.
 How well the skilful gardener drew,
 Of flowers and herbs, this dial new !
 Where, from above the milder sun
 Does through a fragrant zodiac run ;
 10 And, as it works, the industrious bee
 Computes its time as well as we.
 How could such sweet and wholesome hours
 Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers?¹

The artificial fountains of the metropolis are, in like manner,
 15 fast vanishing. Most of them are dried up, or bricked over.
 Yet, where one is left, as in that little green nook behind the
 South-Sea House, what a freshness it gives to the dreary pile !
 Four little winged marble boys used to play their virgin fancies,
 spouting out ever fresh streams from their innocent wanton lips,
 20 in the square of Lincoln's Inn, when I was no bigger than they
 were figured. They are gone, and the spring choked up. The
 fashion, they tell me, is gone by, and these things are esteemed
 childish. Why not then gratify children, by letting them stand ?
 Lawyers, I suppose, were children once. They are awakening
 25 images to them at least. Why must everything smack of man,
 and mannish ? Is the world all grown up ? Is childhood dead ?
 Or is there not in the bosoms of the wisest and the best some
 of the child's heart left, to respond to its earliest enchantments ?
 The figures were grotesque. Are the stiff-wigged living figures,
 30 that still flutter and chatter about that area, less Gothic in
 appearance ? or is the splutter of their hot rhetoric one half
 so refreshing and innocent as the little cool playful streams
 those exploded cherubs uttered ?

¹ From a copy of verses entitled *The Garden*.

They have lately gothicized the entrance to the Inner Temple-hall, and the library front, to assimilate them, I suppose, to the body of the hall, which they do not at all resemble. What is become of the winged horse that stood over the former? a stately arms! and who has removed those 5 frescoes of the Virtues, which Italianized the end of the Paper-buildings?—my first hint of allegory! They must account to me for these things, which I miss so greatly.

The terrace is, indeed, left, which we used to call the parade; but the traces are passed away of the footsteps 10 which made its pavement awful! It is become common and profane. The old benchers had it almost sacred to themselves, in the fore part of the day at least. They might not be sided or jostled. Their air and dress asserted the parade. You left wide spaces betwixt you, when you 15 passed them. We walk on even terms with their successors. The roguish eye of J—ll, ever ready to be delivered of a jest, almost invites a stranger to vie a repartee with it. But what insolent familiar durst have mated Thomas Coventry?—whose person was a quadrate, his step massy and elephantine, 20 his face square as the lion's, his gait peremptory and path-keeping, indivertible from his way as a moving column, the scarecrow of his inferiors, the brow-beater of equals and superiors, who made a solitude of children wherever he came, for they fled his insufferable presence, as they would have shunned an 25 Elisha bear. His growl was as thunder in their ears, whether he spake to them in mirth or in rebuke, his invitatory notes being, indeed, of all, the most repulsive and horrid. Clouds of snuff, aggravating the natural terrors of his speech, broke from each majestic nostril, darkening the air. He took it, not by pinches, 30 but a palmful at once, diving for it under the mighty flaps of his old-fashioned waistcoat pocket; his waistcoat red and angry, his coat dark rappee, tintured by dye original, and by adjuncts, with buttons of obsolete gold. And so he paced the terrace.

By his side a milder form was sometimes to be seen ; the pensive gentility of Samuel Salt. They were coevals, and had nothing but that and their benchership in common. In politics Salt was a Whig, and Coventry a staunch Tory. Many a 5 sarcastic growl did the latter cast out — for Coventry had a rough spinous humour — at the political confederates of his associate, which rebounded from the gentle bosom of the latter like cannon-balls from wool. You could not ruffle Samuel Salt.

S. had the reputation of being a very clever man, and of 10 excellent discernment in the chamber practice of the law. I suspect his knowledge did not amount to much. When a case of difficult disposition of money, testamentary or otherwise, came before him, he ordinarily handed it over with a few instructions to his man Lovel, who was a quick little fellow, 15 and would despatch it out of hand by the light of natural understanding, of which he had an uncommon share. It was incredible what repute for talents S. enjoyed by the mere trick of gravity. He was a shy man ; a child might pose him in a minute — indolent and procrastinating to the last degree. Yet 20 men would give him credit for vast application in spite of himself. He was not to be trusted with himself with impunity. He never dressed for a dinner-party but he forgot his sword — they wore swords then — or some other necessary part of his equipage. Lovel had his eye upon him on all these occa- 25 sions, and ordinarily gave him his cue. If there was anything which he could speak unseasonably, he was sure to do it. — He was to dine at a relative's of the unfortunate Miss Blandy on the day of her execution ; and L., who had a wary foresight of his probable hallucinations, before he set out, schooled 30 him with great anxiety not in any possible manner to allude to her story that day. S. promised faithfully to observe the injunction. He had not been seated in the parlour, where the company was expecting the dinner summons, four minutes, when, a pause in the conversation ensuing, he got up,

looked out of window, and pulling down his ruffles — an ordinary motion with him — observed, “it was a gloomy day,” and added, “Miss Blandy must be hanged by this time, I suppose.” Instances of this sort were perpetual. Yet S. was thought by some of the greatest men of his time a fit person 5 to be consulted, not alone in matters pertaining to the law, but in the ordinary niceties and embarrassments of conduct — from force of manner entirely. He never laughed. He had the same good fortune among the female world, — was a known toast with the ladies, and one or two are said to have 10 died for love of him — I suppose, because he never trifled or talked gallantry with them, or paid them, indeed, hardly common attentions. He had a fine face and person, but wanted, methought, the spirit that should have shown them off with advantage to the women. His eye lacked lustre. — Not so, 15 thought Susan P——; who, at the advanced age of sixty, was seen, in the cold evening time, unaccompanied, wetting the pavement of B——d Row with tears that fell in drops which might be heard, because her friend had died that day — he, whom she had pursued with a hopeless passion for the last 20 forty years — a passion which years could not extinguish or abate; nor the long resolved, yet gently enforced, puttings off of unrelenting bachelorhood dissuade from its cherished purpose. Mild Susan P——, thou hast now thy friend in heaven!

25

Thomas Coventry was a cadet of the noble family of that name. He passed his youth in contracted circumstances, which gave him early those parsimonious habits which in after-life never forsook him; so that, with one windfall or another, about the time I knew him he was master of four or five hun- 30 dred thousand pounds; nor did he look, or walk, worth a moidore less. He lived in a gloomy house opposite the pump in Serjeants’ Inn, Fleet Street. J., the counsel, is doing self-imposed penance in it, for what reason I divine not, at this

day. C. had an agreeable seat at North Cray, where he seldom spent above a day or two at a time in the summer ; but preferred, during the hot months, standing at his window in this damp, close, well-like mansion, to watch, as he said, “ the
 5 maids drawing water all day long.” I suspect he had his within-door reasons for the preference. *Hic currus et arma fuère.* He might think his treasures more safe. His house had the aspect of a strong box. C. was a close hunk — a hoarder rather than a miser — or, if a miser, none of the mad
 10 Elwes breed, who have brought discredit upon a character, which cannot exist without certain admirable points of steadiness and unity of purpose. One may hate a true miser, but cannot, I suspect, so easily despise him. By taking care of the pence, he is often enabled to part with the pounds, upon
 15 a scale that leaves us careless generous fellows halting at an immeasurable distance behind. C. gave away thirty thousand pounds at once in his lifetime to a blind charity. His house-keeping was severely looked after, but he kept the table of a gentleman. He would know who came in and who went out
 20 of his house, but his kitchen chimney was never suffered to freeze.

Salt was his opposite in this, as in all — never knew what he was worth in the world ; and having but a competency for his rank, which his indolent habits were little calculated to
 25 improve, might have suffered severely if he had not had honest people about him. Lovel took care of everything. He was at once his clerk, his good servant, his dresser, his friend, his “ flapper,” his guide, stop-watch, auditor, treasurer. He did nothing without consulting Lovel, or failed in anything
 30 without expecting and fearing his admonishing. He put himself almost too much in his hands, had they not been the purest in the world. He resigned his title almost to respect as a master, if L. could ever have forgotten for a moment that he was a servant.

I knew this Lovel. He was a man of an incorrigible and losing honesty. A good fellow withal, and "would strike." In the cause of the oppressed he never considered inequalities, or calculated the number of his opponents. He once wrested a sword out of the hand of a man of quality that had drawn upon him; and pommelled him severely with the hilt of it. The swordsman had offered insult to a female—an occasion upon which no odds against him could have prevented the interference of Lovel. He would stand next day bare-headed to the same person, modestly to excuse his interference—for L. never forgot rank, where something better was not concerned. L. was the liveliest little fellow breathing, had a face as gay as Garrick's, whom he was said greatly to resemble (I have a portrait of him which confirms it), possessed a fine turn for humorous poetry—next to Swift and Prior—moulded heads in clay or plaster of Paris to admiration, by the dint of natural genius merely; turned cribbage-boards, and such small cabinet toys, to perfection; took a hand at quadrille or bowls with equal facility; made punch better than any man of his degree in England; had the merriest quips and conceits, and was altogether as brimful of rogueries and inventions as you could desire. He was a brother of the angle, moreover, and just such a free, hearty, honest companion as Mr. Izaak Walton would have chosen to go a-fishing with. I saw him in his old age and the decay of his faculties, palsy-smitten, in the last sad stage of human weakness—"a remnant most forlorn of what he was,"—yet even then his eye would light up upon the mention of his favourite Garrick. He was greatest, he would say, in Bayes—"was upon the stage nearly throughout the whole performance, and as busy as a bee." At intervals, too, he would speak of his former life, and how he came up a little boy from Lincoln to go to service, and how his mother cried at parting with him, and how he returned, after some few years' absence, in his

smart new livery to see her, and she blessed herself at the change, and could hardly be brought to believe that it was "her own bairn." And then, the excitement subsiding, he would weep, till I have wished that sad second-childhood might have a
 5 mother still to lay its head upon her lap. But the common mother of us all in no long time after received him gently into hers.

With Coventry, and with Salt, in their walks upon the terrace, most commonly Peter Pierson would join, to make up a third.
 10 They did not walk linked arm in arm in those days — "as now our stout triumvirs sweep the streets," — but generally with both hands folded behind them for state, or with one at least behind, the other carrying a cane. P. was a benevolent, but not a prepossessing man. He had that in his face which you
 15 could not term unhappiness; it rather implied an incapacity of being happy. His cheeks were colourless, even to whiteness. His look was uninviting, resembling (but without his sourness) that of our great philanthropist. I know that he *did* good acts, but I could never make out what he *was*. Con-
 20 temporary with these, but subordinate, was Daines Barrington — another oddity — he walked burly and square — in imitation, I think, of Coventry — howbeit he attained not to the dignity of his prototype. Nevertheless, he did pretty well, upon the strength of being a tolerable antiquarian, and hav-
 25 ing a brother a bishop. When the account of his year's treasurership came to be audited, the following singular charge was unanimously disallowed by the bench: "Item, disbursed Mr. Allen, the gardener, twenty shillings, for stuff to poison the sparrows by my orders." Next to him was old Barton — a
 30 jolly negation, who took upon him the ordering of the bills of fare for the parliament chamber, where the benchers dine — answering to the combination rooms at college — much to the easement of his less epicurean brethren. I know nothing more of him. — Then Read, and Twopeny — Read, good-humoured

and personable — Twopeny, good-humoured, but thin, and felicitous in jests upon his own figure. If T. was thin, Wharry was attenuated and fleeting. Many must remember him (for he was rather of later date) and his singular gait, which was performed by three steps and a jump regularly succeeding. 5 The steps were little efforts, like that of a child beginning to walk; the jump comparatively vigorous, as a foot to an inch. Where he learned this figure, or what occasioned it, I could never discover. It was neither graceful in itself, nor seemed to answer the purpose any better than common walking. The 10 extreme tenuity of his frame, I suspect, set him upon it. It was a trial of poising. Twopeny would often rally him upon his leanness, and hail him as Brother Lusty; but W. had no relish of a joke. His features were spiteful. I have heard that he would pinch his cat's ears extremely, when anything 15 had offended him. Jackson — omniscient Jackson he was called — was of this period. He had the reputation of possessing more multifarious knowledge than any man of his time. He was the Friar Bacon of the less literate portion of the Temple. I remember a pleasant passage, of the cook apply- 20 ing to him, with much formality of apology, for instructions how to write down *edge* bone of beef in his bill of commons. He was supposed to know, if any man in the world did. He decided the orthography to be — as I have given it — fortifying his authority with such anatomical reasons as dismissed 25 the manciple (for the time) learned and happy. Some do spell it yet perversely, *aitch* bone, from a fanciful resemblance between its shape, and that of the aspirate so denominated. I had almost forgotten Mingay with the iron hand — but he was somewhat later. He had lost his right hand by some 30 accident, and supplied it with a grappling hook, which he wielded with a tolerable adroitness. I detected the substitute, before I was old enough to reason whether it were artificial or not. I remember the astonishment it raised in me. He

was a blustering, loud-talking person ; and I reconciled the phenomenon to my ideas as an emblem of power — somewhat like the horns in the forehead of Michael Angelo's Moses. Baron Maseres, who walks (or did till very lately) in the costume of the reign of George the Second, closes my imperfect recollections of the old benchers of the Inner Temple.

Fantastic forms, whither are ye fled? Or, if the like of you exist, why exist they no more for me? Ye inexplicable, half-understood appearances, why comes in reason to tear away
 10 the preternatural mist, bright or gloomy, that enshrouded you? Why make ye so sorry a figure in my relation, who made up to me — to my childish eyes — the mythology of the Temple? In those days I saw Gods, as “old men covered with a mantle,” walking upon the earth. Let the dreams of classic idolatry
 15 perish, — extinct be the fairies and fairy trumpery of legendary fabling, — in the heart of childhood, there will, for ever, spring up a well of innocent or wholesome superstition — the seeds of exaggeration will be busy there, and vital — from everyday forms educing the unknown and the uncommon. In that
 20 little Goshen there will be light, when the grown world flounders about in the darkness of sense and materiality. While childhood, and while dreams, reducing childhood, shall be left, imagination shall not have spread her holy wings totally to fly the earth.

25 P.S. — I have done injustice to the soft shade of Samuel Salt. See what it is to trust to imperfect memory, and the erring notices of childhood ! Yet I protest I always thought that he had been a bachelor ! This gentleman, R. N. informs me, married young, and losing his lady in child-bed, within the first
 30 year of their union, fell into a deep melancholy, from the effects of which, probably, he never thoroughly recovered. In what a new light does this place his rejection (O call it by a gentler name !) of mild Susan P——, unravelling into beauty certain

peculiarities of this very shy and retiring character! — Henceforth let no one receive the narratives of Elia for true records! They are, in truth, but shadows of fact — verisimilitudes, not verities — or sitting but upon the remote edges and outskirts of history. He is no such honest chronicler as R. N., and would 5 have done better perhaps to have consulted that gentleman, before he sent these incondite reminiscences to press. But the worthy sub-treasurer — who respects his old and his new masters — would but have been puzzled at the indecorous liberties of Elia. The good man wots not, peradventure, of the 10 licence which *Magazines* have arrived at in this plain-speaking age, or hardly dreams of their existence beyond the *Gentleman's* — his furthest monthly excursions in this nature having been long confined to the holy ground of honest *Urban's* obituary. May it be long before his own name shall help to swell 15 those columns of unenvied flattery! — Meantime, O ye New Benchers of the Inner Temple, cherish him kindly, for he is himself the kindest of human creatures. Should infirmities overtake him — he is yet in green and vigorous senility — make allowances for them, remembering that “ye yourselves 20 are old.” So may the Winged Horse, your ancient badge and cognizance, still flourish! so may future Hookers and Seldens illustrate your church and chambers! so may the sparrows, in default of more melodious quiristers, unpoisoned hop about your walks! so may the fresh-coloured and cleanly nursery- 25 maid, who, by leave, airs her playful charge in your stately gardens, drop her prettiest blushing curtsey as ye pass, reductive of juvenescent emotion! so may the youngers of this generation eye you, pacing your stately terrace, with the same superstitious veneration, with which the child Elia gazed 30 on the Old Worthies that solemnized the parade before ye!

XIV. WITCHES AND OTHER NIGHT-FEARS.

WE are too hasty when we set down our ancestors in the gross for fools, for the monstrous inconsistencies (as they seem to us) involved in their creed of witchcraft. In the relations of this visible world we find them to have been as rational, and shrewd
5 to detect an historic anomaly, as ourselves. But when once the invisible world was supposed to be opened, and the lawless agency of bad spirits assumed, what measures of probability, of decency, of fitness, or proportion — of that which distinguishes the likely from the palpable absurd — could they have to guide
10 them in the rejection or admission of any particular testimony? — That maidens pined away, wasting inwardly as their waxen images consumed before a fire — that corn was lodged, and cattle lamed — that whirlwinds upstole in diabolic revelry the oaks of the forest — or that spits and kettles only danced a
15 fearful-innocent vagary about some rustic's kitchen when no wind was stirring — were all equally probable where no law of agency was understood. That the prince of the powers of darkness, passing by the flower and pomp of the earth, should lay preposterous siege to the weak fantasy of indigent eld — has
20 neither likelihood nor unlikelihood *à priori* to us, who have no measure to guess at his policy, or standard to estimate what rate those anile souls may fetch in the devil's market. Nor, when the wicked are expressly symbolized by a goat, was it to be wondered at so much, that *he* should come
25 sometimes in that body, and assert his metaphor. — That the intercourse was opened at all between both worlds was perhaps the mistake — but that once assumed, I see no reason for disbelieving one attested story of this nature more than another on the score of absurdity. There is no law
30 to judge of the lawless, or canon by which a dream may be criticized.

I have sometimes thought that I could not have existed in the days of received witchcraft; that I could not have slept in a village where one of those reputed hags dwelt. Our ancestors were bolder or more obtuse. Amidst the universal belief that these wretches were in league with the author of all evil, holding hell tributary to their muttering, no simple Justice of the Peace seems to have scrupled issuing, or silly Headborough serving, a warrant upon them — as if they should subpœna Satan! — Prospero in his boat, with his books and wand about him, suffers himself to be conveyed away at the mercy of his enemies to an unknown island. He might have raised a storm or two, we think, on the passage. His acquiescence is an exact analogy to the non-resistance of witches to the constituted powers. — What stops the Fiend in Spenser from tearing Guyon to pieces — or who had made it a condition of his prey, that Guyon must take assay of the glorious bait — we have no guess. We do not know the laws of that country.

From my childhood I was extremely inquisitive about witches and witch-stories. My maid, and more legendary aunt, supplied me with good store. But I shall mention the accident which directed my curiosity originally into this channel. In my father's book-closet, the History of the Bible, by Stackhouse, occupied a distinguished station. The pictures with which it abounds — one of the ark, in particular, and another of Solomon's temple, delineated with all the fidelity of ocular admeasurement, as if the artist had been upon the spot — attracted my childish attention. There was a picture, too, of the Witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that I had never seen. We shall come to that hereafter. Stackhouse is in two huge tomes — and there was a pleasure in removing folios of that magnitude, which, with infinite straining, was as much as I could manage from the situation which they occupied upon an upper shelf. I have not met with the work from that time

to this, but I remember it consisted of Old Testament stories, orderly set down, with the *objection* appended to each story, and the *solution* of the objection regularly tacked to that. The *objection* was a summary of whatever difficulties had been
5 opposed to the credibility of the history, by the shrewdness of ancient or modern infidelity, drawn up with an almost complimentary excess of candour. The *solution* was brief, modest, and satisfactory. The bane and antidote were both before you. To doubts so put, and so quashed, there seemed to be
10 an end for ever. The dragon lay dead, for the foot of the veriest babe to trample on. But — like as was rather feared than realized from that slain monster in Spenser — from the womb of those crushed errors young dragonets would creep, exceeding the prowess of so tender a Saint George as myself
15 to vanquish. The habit of expecting objections to every passage, set me upon starting more objections, for the glory of finding a solution of my own for them. I became staggered and perplexed, a sceptic in long-coats. The pretty Bible stories which I had read, or heard read in church, lost their
20 purity and sincerity of impression, and were turned into so many historic or chronologic theses to be defended against whatever impugners. I was not to disbelieve them, but — the next thing to that — I was to be quite sure that some one or other would or had disbelieved them. Next to mak-
25 ing a child an infidel, is the letting him know that there are infidels at all. Credulity is the man's weakness, but the child's strength. O, how ugly sound scriptural doubts from the mouth of a babe and a suckling! — I should have lost myself in these mazes, and have pined away, I think, with such unfit sustenance
30 as these husks afforded, but for a fortunate piece of ill-fortune, which about this time befell me. Turning over the picture of the ark with too much haste, I unhappily made a breach in its ingenious fabric — driving my inconsiderate fingers right through the two larger quadrupeds — the elephant and the

camel — that stare (as well they might) out of the two last windows next the steerage in that unique piece of naval architecture. Stackhouse was henceforth locked up, and became an interdicted treasure. With the book, the *objections* and *solutions* gradually cleared out of my head, and have seldom 5 returned since in any force to trouble me. — But there was one impression which I had imbibed from Stackhouse, which no lock or bar could shut out, and which was destined to try my childish nerves rather more seriously. — That detestable picture ! 10

I was dreadfully alive to nervous terrors. The night-time solitude, and the dark, were my hell. The sufferings I endured in this nature would justify the expression. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life — so far as memory serves in things so 15 long ago — without an assurance, which realized its own prophecy, of seeing some frightful spectre. Be old Stackhouse then acquitted in part, if I say, that to his picture of the Witch raising up Samuel — (O that old man covered with a mantle !) I owe — not my midnight terrors, the hell of my infancy — but 20 the shape and manner of their visitation. It was he who dressed up for me a hag that nightly sate upon my pillow — a sure bed-fellow, when my aunt or my maid was far from me. All day long, while the book was permitted me, I dreamed waking over his delineation, and at night (if I may use so bold an expres- 25 sion) awoke into sleep, and found the vision true. I durst not, even in the daylight, once enter the chamber where I slept, without my face turned to the window, aversely from the bed where my witch-ridden pillow was. — Parents do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in 30 the dark. The feeling about for a friendly arm — the hoping for a familiar voice — when they wake screaming — and find none to soothe them — what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves ! The keeping them up till midnight, through

candle-light and the unwholesome hours, as they are called, — would, I am satisfied, in a medical point of view, prove the better caution. — That detestable picture, as I have said, gave the fashion to my dreams — if dreams they were — for the scene
 5 of them was invariably the room in which I lay. Had I never met with the picture, the fears would have come self-pictured in some shape or other —

Headless bear, blackman, or ape,

but, as it was, my imaginations took that form. — It is not
 10 book, or picture, or the stories of foolish servants, which create these terrors in children. They can at most but give them a direction. Dear little T. H., who of all children has been brought up with the most scrupulous exclusion of every taint of superstition — who was never allowed to hear of goblin or
 15 apparition, or scarcely to be told of bad men, or to read or hear of any distressing story — finds all this world of fear, from which he has been so rigidly excluded *ab extra*, in his own “thick-coming fancies;” and from his little midnight pillow, this nurse-child of optimism will start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition,
 20 in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-damned murderer are tranquillity.

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire — stories of Celæno and the Harpies — may reproduce themselves in the brain of superstition — but they were there before. They are tran-
 25 scripts, types — the archetypes are in us, and eternal. How else should the recital of that, which we know in a waking sense to be false, come to affect us at all? — or

— Names, whose sense we see not,
 Fray us with things that be not?

30 Is it that we naturally conceive terror from such objects, considered in their capacity of being able to inflict upon us bodily injury? — O, least of all! These terrors are of older

standing. They date beyond body — or, without the body, they would have been the same. All the cruel, tormenting, defined devils in Dante — tearing, mangling, choking, stifling, scorching demons — are they one-half so fearful to the spirit of a man, as the simple idea of a spirit unembodied following him — 5

Like one that on a lonesome road
 Doth walk in fear and dread,
 And having once turn'd round, walks on,
 And turns no more his head ;
 Because he knows a frightful fiend 10
 Doth close behind him tread.¹

That the kind of fear here treated of is purely spiritual — that it is strong in proportion as it is objectless upon earth — that it predominates in the period of sinless infancy — are difficulties, the solution of which might afford some probable 15 insight into our ante-mundane condition, and a peep at least into the shadow-land of pre-existence.

My night fancies have long ceased to be afflictive. I confess an occasional nightmare ; but I do not, as in early youth, keep a stud of them. Fiendish faces, with the extinguished taper, 20 will come and look at me ; but I know them for mockeries, even while I cannot elude their presence, and I fight and grapple with them. For the credit of my imagination, I am almost ashamed to say how tame and prosaic my dreams are grown. They are never romantic, seldom even rural. They are of 25 architecture and of buildings — cities abroad, which I have never seen, and hardly have hope to see. I have traversed, for the seeming length of a natural day, Rome, Amsterdam, Paris, Lisbon — their churches, palaces, squares, market-places, shops, suburbs, ruins, with an inexpressible sense of delight — 30 a map-like distinctness of trace — and a daylight vividness of vision, that was all but being awake. — I have formerly travelled

¹ Mr. Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*.

among the Westmoreland fells — my highest Alps, — but they are objects too mighty for the grasp of my dreaming recognition ; and I have again and again awoke with ineffectual struggles of the inner eye, to make out a shape, in any way whatever, of Helvellyn. Methought I was in that country, but the mountains were gone. The poverty of my dreams mortifies me. There is Coleridge, at his will can conjure up icy domes, and pleasure-houses for Kubla Khan, and Abyssinian maids, and songs of Abara, and caverns,

10 Where Alph, the sacred river, runs,

to solace his night solitudes — when I cannot muster a fiddle. Barry Cornwall has his tritons and his nereids gambolling before him in nocturnal visions, and proclaiming sons born to Neptune — when my stretch of imaginative activity can hardly, in the night season, raise up the ghost of a fish-wife. To set my failures in somewhat a mortifying light — it was after reading the noble Dream of this poet, that my fancy ran strong upon these marine spectra ; and the poor plastic power, such as it is, within me set to work, to humour my folly in a sort of dream that very night. Methought I was upon the ocean billows at some sea nuptials, riding and mounted high, with the customary train sounding their conchs before me (I myself, you may be sure, the *leading god*), and jollily we went careering over the main, till just where Ino Leucothea should have greeted me (I think it was Ino) with a white embrace, the billows gradually subsiding, fell from a sea-roughness to a sea-calm, and thence to a river-motion, and that river (as happens in the familiarization of dreams) was no other than the gentle Thames, which landed me, in the wafture of a placid wave or two, alone, safe and inglorious, somewhere at the foot of Lambeth Palace.

30 The degree of the soul's creativeness in sleep might furnish no whimsical criterion of the quantum of poetical faculty resident in the same soul waking. An old gentleman, a friend of

mine, and a humourist, used to carry this notion so far, that when he saw any stripling of his acquaintance ambitious of becoming a poet, his first question would be, — “Young man, what sort of dreams have you?” I have so much faith in my old friend’s theory, that when I feel that idle vein returning upon me, I presently subside into my proper element of prose, remembering those eluding nereids, and that inauspicious inland landing. 5

XV. GRACE BEFORE MEAT

THE custom of saying grace at meals had, probably, its origin in the early times of the world, and the hunter-state of man, 10 when dinners were precarious things, and a full meal was something more than a common blessing; when a bellyful was a windfall, and looked like a special providence. In the shouts and triumphal songs with which, after a season of sharp abstinence, a lucky booty of deer’s or goat’s flesh would naturally 15 be ushered home, existed, perhaps, the germ of the modern grace. It is not otherwise easy to be understood, why the blessing of food — the act of eating — should have had a particular expression of thanksgiving annexed to it, distinct from that implied and silent gratitude with which we are expected 20 to enter upon the enjoyment of the many other various gifts and good things of existence.

I own that I am disposed to say grace upon twenty other occasions in the course of the day besides my dinner. I want a form for setting out upon a pleasant walk, for a moonlight 25 ramble, for a friendly meeting, or a solved problem. Why have we none for books, those spiritual repasts — a grace before Milton — a grace before Shakespeare — a devotional exercise proper to be said before reading the *Faërie Queene*? — but, the received ritual having prescribed these forms to the solitary 30 ceremony of manducation, I shall confine my observations to

the experience which I have had of the grace, properly so called; commending my new scheme for extension to a niche in the grand philosophical, poetical, and perchance in part heretical, liturgy, now compiling by my friend Homo Humanus, 5 for the use of a certain snug congregation of Utopian Rabelsian Christians, no matter where assembled.

The form then of the benediction before eating has its beauty at a poor man's table, or at the simple and unprovocative repast of children. It is here that the grace becomes 10 exceedingly graceful. The indigent man, who hardly knows whether he shall have a meal the next day or not, sits down to his fare with a present sense of the blessing, which can be but feebly acted by the rich, into whose minds the conception of wanting a dinner could never, but by some extreme theory, 15 have entered. The proper end of food — the animal sustenance — is barely contemplated by them. The poor man's bread is his daily bread, literally his bread for the day. Their courses are perennial.

Again, the plainest diet seems the fittest to be preceded by 20 the grace. That which is least stimulative to appetite, leaves the mind most free for foreign considerations. A man may feel thankful, heartily thankful, over a dish of plain mutton with turnips, and have leisure to reflect upon the ordinance and institution of eating; when he shall confess a perturbation 25 of mind, inconsistent with the purposes of the grace, at the presence of venison or turtle. When I have sate (a *rarus hospes*) at rich men's tables, with the savoury soup and messes steaming up the nostrils, and moistening the lips of the guests with desire and a distracted choice, I have felt the introduc- 30 tion of that ceremony to be unseasonable. With the ravenous orgasm upon you, it seems impertinent to interpose a religious sentiment. It is a confusion of purpose to mutter out praises from a mouth that waters. The heats of epicurism put out the gentle flame of devotion. The incense which rises round

is pagan, and the belly-god intercepts it for his own. The very excess of the provision beyond the needs, takes away all sense of proportion between the end and means. The giver is veiled by his gifts. You are startled at the injustice of returning thanks—for what?—for having too much, while 5 so many starve. It is to praise the Gods amiss.

I have observed this awkwardness felt, scarce consciously perhaps, by the good man who says the grace. I have seen it in clergymen and others—a sort of shame—a sense of the co-presence of circumstances which unhallow the blessing. 10 After a devotional tone put on for a few seconds, how rapidly the speaker will fall into his common voice, helping himself or his neighbour, as if to get rid of some uneasy sensation of hypocrisy. Not that the good man was a hypocrite, or was not most conscientious in the discharge of the duty; but he 15 felt in his inmost mind the incompatibility of the scene and the viands before him with the exercise of a calm and rational gratitude.

I hear somebody exclaim,—Would you have Christians sit down at table, like hogs to their troughs, without remembering 20 the Giver?—no—I would have them sit down as Christians, remembering the Giver, and less like hogs. Or if their appetites must run riot, and they must pamper themselves with delicacies for which east and west are ransacked, I would have them postpone their benediction to a fitter season, when appe- 25 tite is laid; when the still small voice can be heard, and the reason of the grace returns—with temperate diet and restricted dishes. Gluttony and surfeiting are no proper occasions for thanksgiving. When Jeshurun waxed fat, we read that he kicked. Virgil knew the harpy-nature better, when he put 30 into the mouth of Celæno anything but a blessing. We may be gratefully sensible of the deliciousness of some kinds of food beyond others, though that is a meaner and inferior gratitude: but the proper object of the grace is sustenance, not relishes;

daily bread, not delicacies ; the means of life, and not the means of pampering the carcass. With what frame or composure, I wonder, can a city chaplain pronounce his benediction at some great Hall feast, when he knows that his last concluding
 5 pious word — and that in all probability, the sacred name which he preaches — is but the signal for so many impatient harpies to commence their foul orgies, with as little sense of true thankfulness (which is temperance) as those Virgilian fowl ! It is well if the good man himself does not feel his
 10 devotions a little clouded, those foggy sensuous steams mingling with and polluting the pure altar sacrifice.

The severest satire upon full tables and surfeits is the banquet which Satan, in the *Paradise Regained*, provides for a temptation in the wilderness :

15 A table richly spread in regal mode,
 With dishes piled, and meats of noblest sort
 And savour ; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
 In pastry built, or from the spit, or boil'd
 Gris-amber-steam'd ; all fish from sea or shore,
 20 Freshet or purling brook, for which was drain'd
 Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.

The tempter, I warrant you, thought these cates would go down without the recommendatory preface of a benediction. They are like to be short graces where the devil plays the
 25 host. — I am afraid the poet wants his usual decorum in this place. Was he thinking of the old Roman luxury, or of a gaudy day at Cambridge ? This was a temptation fitter for a Heliogabalus. The whole banquet is too civic and culinary, and the accompaniments altogether a profanation of that deep,
 30 abstracted, holy scene. The mighty artillery of sauces, which the cook-fiend conjures up, is out of proportion to the simple wants and plain hunger of the guest. He that disturbed him in his dreams, from his dreams might have been taught better.

To the temperate fantasies of the famished Son of God, what sort of feasts presented themselves? — He dreamed indeed,

————— As appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.

But what meats? 5

Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn;
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought:
He saw the prophet also how he fled 10
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awaked
He found his supper on the coals prepared,
And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
And ate the second time after repose, 15
The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
Sometimes, that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

Nothing in Milton is finelier fancied than these temperate dreams of the divine Hungerer. To which of these two visionary banquets, think you, would the introduction of what is called the grace have been most fitting and pertinent. 20

Theoretically I am no enemy to graces; but practically I own that (before meat especially) they seem to involve something awkward and unseasonable. Our appetites, of one or 25 another kind, are excellent spurs to our reason, which might otherwise but feebly set about the great ends of preserving and continuing the species. They are fit blessings to be contemplated at a distance with a becoming gratitude; but the moment of appetite (the judicious reader will apprehend 30 me) is, perhaps, the least fit season for that exercise. The Quakers who go about their business, of every description, with more calmness than we, have more title to the use of these

benedictory prefaces. I have always admired their silent grace, and the more because I have observed their applications to the meat and drink following to be less passionate and sensual than ours. They are neither gluttons nor wine-bibbers as a
5 people. They eat, as a horse bolts his chopped hay, with indifference, calmness, and cleanly circumstances. They neither grease nor slop themselves. When I see a citizen in his bib and tucker, I cannot imagine it a surplice.

I am no Quaker at my food. I confess I am not indiffer-
10 ent to the kinds of it. Those unctuous morsels of deer's flesh were not made to be received with dispassionate services. I hate a man who swallows it, affecting not to know what he is eating. I suspect his taste in higher matters. I shrink instinctively from one who professes to like minced veal. There is a
15 physiognomical character in the tastes for food. C—— holds that a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple-dump-
lings. I am not certain but he is right. With the decay of my first innocence, I confess a less and less relish daily for those innocuous cates. The whole vegetable tribe have lost
20 their gust with me. Only I stick to asparagus, which still seems to inspire gentle thoughts. I am impatient and querulous under culinary disappointments, as to come home at the dinner-hour, for instance, expecting some savoury mess, and to find one quite tasteless and sapidless. Butter ill melted — that com-
25 monest of kitchen failures — puts me beside my tenour. — The author of the Rambler used to make inarticulate animal noises over a favourite food. Was this the music quite proper to be preceded by the grace? or would the pious man have done better to postpone his devotions to a season when the blessing
30 might be contemplated with less perturbation? I quarrel with no man's tastes, nor would set my thin face against those excellent things, in their way, jollity and feasting. But as these exercises, however laudable, have little in them of grace or gracefulness, a man should be sure, before he ventures so to

grace them, that while he is pretending his devotions other-
where, he is not secretly kissing his hand to some great fish —
his Dagon — with a special consecration of no ark but the fat
tureen before him. Graces are the sweet prelude strains to
the banquets of angels and children ; to the roots and severer
repasts of the Chartreuse ; to the slender, but not slenderly
acknowledged, refecton of the poor and humble man : but at
the heaped-up boards of the pampered and the luxurious they
become of dissonant mood, less timed and tuned to the occa-
sion, methinks, than the noise of those better befitting organs
would be, which children hear tales of at Hog's Norton. We
sit too long at our meals, or are too curious in the study of them,
or too disordered in our application to them, or engross too
great a portion of those good things (which should be com-
mon) to our share, to be able with any grace to say grace.
To be thankful for what we grasp exceeding our proportion is
to add hypocrisy to injustice. A lurking sense of this truth is
what makes the performance of this duty so cold and spiritless
a service at most tables. In houses where the grace is as
indispensable as the napkin, who has not seen that never-settled
question arise, as to *who shall say it* ; while the good man of
the house and the visitor clergyman, or some other guest belike
of next authority from years or gravity, shall be bandying about
the office between them as a matter of compliment, each of
them not unwilling to shift the awkward burthen of an equivocal
duty from his own shoulders?

I once drank tea in company with two Methodist divines
of different persuasions, whom it was my fortune to introduce
to each other for the first time that evening. Before the first
cup was handed round, one of these reverend gentlemen put
it to the other, with all due solemnity, whether he chose to *say*
anything. It seems it is the custom with some sectaries to put
up a short prayer before this meal also. His reverend brother
did not at first quite apprehend him, but upon an explanation,

with little less importance he made answer, that it was not a custom known in his church : in which courteous evasion the other acquiescing for good manners' sake, or in compliance with a weak brother, the supplementary or tea-grace was waived
 5 altogether. With what spirit might not Lucian have painted two priests, of *his* religion, playing into each other's hands the compliment of performing or omitting a sacrifice, — the hungry God meantime, doubtful of his incense, with expectant nostrils hovering over the two flamens, and (as between two stools)
 10 going away in the end without his supper.

A short form upon these occasions is felt to want reverence ; a long one, I am afraid, cannot escape the charge of impertinence. I do not quite approve of the epigrammatic conciseness with which that equivocal wag (but my pleasant
 15 school-fellow) C. V. L., when importuned for a grace, used to inquire, first slyly leering down the table, "Is there no clergyman here?"—significantly adding, "Thank G—." Nor do I think our old form at school quite pertinent, where we were used to preface our bald bread and cheese suppers with a
 20 preamble connecting with that humble blessing a recognition of benefits the most awful and overwhelming to the imagination which religion has to offer. *Non tunc illis erat locus.* I remember we were put to it to reconcile the phrase "good creatures," upon which the blessing rested, with the fare set
 25 before us, wilfully understanding that expression in a low and animal sense, — till some one recalled a legend, which told how in the golden days of Christ's, the young Hospitallers were wont to have smoking joints of roast meat upon their nightly boards, till some pious benefactor, commiserating the
 30 decencies, rather than the palates, of the children, commuted our flesh for garments, and gave us — *horresco referens* — trousers instead of mutton.

XVI. DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERIE

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children: to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle, or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother 5 Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene — so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country — of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the 10 Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no 15 story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the 20 charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept 25 up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen 30 lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt

drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish, indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighbourhood
5 for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psalter by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person
10 their great-grandmother Field once was: and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer — here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted — the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called cancer, came, and bowed her down with
15 pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight
20 gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm;" and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she — and yet I never saw the infants. Here John
25 expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the twelve Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the
30 old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I could never be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out — sometimes in the

spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me — and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then, — and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew-trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for nothing but to look at — or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me — or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth — or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings, — I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us ; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out — and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries — and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their

great-grandmother Field most especially ; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy — for he was a good bit older than me — many a mile when I could not walk for pain ; — and how in after-life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowance enough for him when he was impatient, and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed ; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death ; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me ; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n ; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens — when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was ; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely

impressed upon me the effects of speech: "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages, before we 5 have existence, and a name"—— and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side — but John L. (or James Elia) was gone forever.

XVII. ON SOME OF THE OLD ACTORS

THE casual sight of an old Play Bill, which I picked up the 10 other day — I know not by what chance it was preserved so long — tempts me to call to mind a few of the Players, who make the principal figure in it. It presents the cast of parts in the Twelfth Night at the old Drury Lane Theatre two-and-thirty years ago. There is something very touching in these 15 old remembrances. They make us think how we *once* used to read a Play Bill — not, as now peradventure, singling out a favourite performer, and casting a negligent eye over the rest; but spelling out every name, down to the very mutes and servants of the scene: — when it was a matter of no small 20 moment to us whether Whitfield, or Packer, took the part of Fabian; when Benson and Burton and Phillimore — names of small account — had an importance beyond what we can be content to attribute now to the time's best actors. — "Orsino, by Mr. Barrymore." — What a full Shakspearean sound it car- 25 ries! how fresh to memory arise the image, and the manner, of the gentle actor!

Those who have only seen Mrs. Jordan within the last ten or fifteen years, can have no adequate notion of her performance of such parts as Ophelia; Helena, in All's Well that Ends 30

Well; and Viola in this play. Her voice had latterly acquired a coarseness, which suited well enough with her Nells and Hoydens, but in those days it sank, with her steady melting eye, into the heart. Her joyous parts — in which her memory now
 5 chiefly lives — in her youth were outdone by her plaintive ones. There is no giving an account how she delivered the disguised story of her love for Orsino. It was no set speech, that she had foreseen, so as to weave it into an harmonious period, line necessarily following line, to make up the music — yet I have
 10 heard it so spoken, or rather *read*, not without its grace and beauty — but, when she had declared her sister's history to be a "blank," and that she "never told her love," there was a pause, as if the story had ended — and then the image of the "worm in the bud" came up as a new suggestion — and the
 15 heightened image of "Patience" still followed after that, as by some growing (and not mechanical) process, thought springing up after thought, I would almost say, as they were watered by her tears. So in those fine lines —

Write loyal cantons of contemnèd love —

20 Halloo your name to the reverberate hills —

there was no preparation made in the foregoing image for that which was to follow. She used no rhetoric in her passion; or it was nature's own rhetoric, most legitimate then, when it seemed altogether without rule or law.

25 Mrs. Powel (now Mrs. Renard), then in the pride of her beauty, made an admirable Olivia. She was particularly excellent in her unbending scenes in conversation with the Clown. I have seen some Olivias — and those very sensible actresses too — who in these interlocutions have seemed to set their wits
 30 at the jester, and to vie conceits with him in downright emulation. But she used him for her sport, like what he was, to trifle a leisure sentence or two with, and then to be dismissed, and she to be the Great Lady still. She touched the imperious

fantastic humour of the character with nicety. Her fine spacious person filled the scene.

The part of Malvolio has in my judgment been so often misunderstood, and the *general merits* of the actor, who then played it, so unduly appreciated, that I shall hope for pardon, 5 if I am a little prolix upon these points.

Of all the actors who flourished in my time — a melancholy phrase if taken aright, reader — Bensley had most of the swell of soul, was greatest in the delivery of heroic conceptions, the emotions consequent upon the presentment of a great idea to 10 the fancy. He had the true poetical enthusiasm — the rarest faculty among players. None that I remember possessed even a portion of that fine madness which he threw out in Hotspur's famous rant about glory, or the transports of the Venetian incendiary at the vision of the fired city.¹ His voice had the 15 dissonance, and at times the inspiriting effect of the trumpet. His gait was uncouth and stiff, but no way embarrassed by affectation; and the thorough-bred gentleman was uppermost in every movement. He seized the moment of passion with the greatest truth; like a faithful clock, never striking before 20 the time; never anticipating or leading you to anticipate. He was totally destitute of trick and artifice. He seemed come upon the stage to do the poet's message simply, and he did it with as genuine fidelity as the nuncios in Homer deliver the errands of the gods. He let the passion or the sentiment 25 do its own work without prop or bolstering. He would have scorned to mountebank it; and betrayed none of that *cleverness* which is the bane of serious acting. For that reason, his Iago was the only endurable one which I remember to have seen. No spectator from his action could divine more 30

¹How lovely the Adriatic whore

Dress'd in her flames will shine — devouring flames —

Such as will burn her to her wat'ry bottom,

And hiss in her foundation.

Pierre, in *Venice Preserved*.

of his artifice than Othello was supposed to do. His confessions in soliloquy alone put you in possession of the mystery. There were no by-intimations to make the audience fancy their own discernment so much greater than that of the Moor—
5 who commonly stands like a great helpless mark set up for mine Ancient, and a quantity of barren spectators, to shoot their bolts at. The Iago of Bensley did not go to work so grossly. There was a triumphant tone about the character, natural to a general consciousness of power; but none of that
10 petty vanity which chuckles and cannot contain itself upon any little successful stroke of its knavery—as is common with your small villains, and green probationers in mischief. It did not clap or crow before its time. It was not a man setting his wits at a child, and winking all the while at other children
15 who are mightily pleased at being let into the secret; but a consummate villain entrapping a noble nature into toils, against which no discernment was available, where the manner was as fathomless as the purpose seemed dark, and without motive. The part of Malvolio, in the Twelfth Night, was performed by
20 Bensley, with a richness and a dignity, of which (to judge from some recent castings of that character) the very tradition must be worn out from the stage. No manager in those days would have dreamed of giving it to Mr. Baddeley, or Mr. Parsons: when Bensley was occasionally absent from the theatre, John
25 Kemble thought it no derogation to succeed to the part. Malvolio is not essentially ludicrous. He becomes comic but by accident. He is cold, austere, repelling; but dignified, consistent, and, for what appears, rather of an over-stretched morality. Maria describes him as a sort of Puritan; and he
30 might have worn his gold chain with honour in one of our old roundhead families, in the service of a Lambert, or a Lady Fairfax. But his morality and his manners are misplaced in Illyria. He is opposed to the proper *levities* of the piece, and falls in the unequal contest. Still his pride, or his gravity (call

it which you will), is inherent, and native to the man, not mock or affected, which latter only are fit objects to excite laughter. His quality is at the best unlovely, but neither buffoon nor contemptible. His bearing is lofty, a little above his station, but probably not much above his deserts. We see no reason why he should not have been brave, honourable, accomplished. His careless committal of the ring to the ground (which he was commissioned to restore to Cesario), bespeaks a generosity of birth and feeling.¹ His dialect on all occasions is that of a gentleman and a man of education. We must not confound him with the eternal old, low steward of comedy. He is master of the household to a great Princess; a dignity probably conferred upon him for other respects than age or length of service.² Olivia, at the first indication of his supposed madness, declares that she “would not have him miscarry for half of her dowry.” Does this look as if the character was meant to appear little or insignificant? Once, indeed, she accuses him to his face—of what?—of being “sick of self-love,”—but with a gentleness and considerateness which could not have been, if she had not thought that this particular infirmity shaded some virtues. His rebuke to the knight, and his sottish revellers, is sensible and spirited; and when we take into

¹ *Viola*. She took the ring from me, I'll none of it.

Mal. Come, sir, you peevishly threw it to her; and her will is, it should be so returned. If it be worth stooping for, there it lies in your eye; if not, be it his that finds it.—Original footnote.

² Mrs. Inchbald seems to have fallen into the common mistake of the character in some otherwise sensible observations on this comedy. “It might be asked,” she says, “whether this credulous steward was much deceived in imputing a degraded taste, in the sentiments of love, to his fair lady Olivia, as she actually did fall in love with a domestic, and one who, from his extreme youth, was perhaps a greater reproach to her discretion than had she cast a tender regard upon her old and faithful servant.” But where does she gather the fact of his age? Neither Maria nor Fabian ever cast that reproach upon him.

consideration the unprotected condition of his mistress, and the strict regard with which her state of real or dissembled mourning would draw the eyes of the world upon her house-affairs, Malvolio might feel the honour of the family in some sort in his
 5 keeping ; as it appears not that Olivia had any more brothers, or kinsmen, to look to it — for Sir Toby had dropped all such nice respects at the buttery-hatch. That Malvolio was meant to be represented as possessing estimable qualities, the expression of the Duke in his anxiety to have him reconciled, almost infers :
 10 “Pursue him, and entreat him to a peace.” Even in his abused state of chains and darkness, a sort of greatness seems never to desert him. He argues highly and well with the supposed Sir Topas, and philosophizes gallantly upon his straw.¹ There must have been some shadow of worth about the man ; he must have
 15 been something more than a mere vapour — a thing of straw, or Jack in office — before Fabian and Maria could have ventured sending him upon a courting-errand to Olivia. There was some consonancy (as he would say) in the undertaking, or the jest would have been too bold even for that house of misrule.
 20 There was “example for it,” said Malvolio ; “the lady of the Strachy married the yeoman of the wardrobe.” Possibly, too, he might remember — for it must have happened about his time — an instance of a Duchess of Malfy (a countrywoman of Olivia’s, and her equal at least) descending from her state to
 25 court a steward :

The misery of them that are born great!

They are forced to woo because none dare woo them.

To be sure, the lady was not very tenderly handled for it by her brothers in the sequel, but their vengeance appears to have

¹ *Clown.* What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?

Mal. That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.

Clown. What thinkest thou of his opinion?

Mal. I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve of his opinion.

been whetted rather by her presumption in re-marrying at all (when they had meditated the keeping of her fortune in their family), than by her choice of an inferior, of Antonio's noble merits especially, for her husband ; and, besides, Olivia's brother was just dead. Malvolio was a man of reading, and possibly reflected upon these lines, or something like them, in his own country poetry : —

Ceremony has made many fools.

It is as easy way unto a duchess

As to a hatted dame, if her love answer :

But that by timorous honours, pale respects,

Idle degrees of fear, men make their ways

Hard of themselves.

“’T is but fortune ; all is fortune. Maria once told me she did affect me ; and I have heard herself come thus near, that, should she fancy, it should be one of my complexion.” If here was no encouragement, the devil is in it. I wish we could get at the private history of all this. Between the Countess herself, serious or dissembling — for one hardly knows how to apprehend this fantastical great lady — and the practices of that delicious little piece of mischief, Maria, the man might well be rapt into a fool's paradise.

Bensley, accordingly, threw over the part an air of Spanish loftiness. He looked, spake, and moved like an old Castilian. He was starch, spruce, opinionated ; but his superstructure of pride seemed bottomed upon a sense of worth. There was something in it beyond the coxcomb. It was big and swelling, but you could not be sure that it was hollow. You might wish to see it taken down, but you felt that it was upon an elevation. He was magnificent from the outset ; but when the decent sobrieties of the character began to give way, and the poison of self-love, in his conceit of the Countess's affection, gradually to work, you would have thought that the hero of La Mancha

in person stood before you. How he went smiling to himself ! with what ineffable carelessness would he twirl his gold chain ! what a dream it was ! you were infected with the illusion, and did not wish that it should be removed ! you had no room for
5 laughter ! if an unseasonable reflection of morality obtruded itself, it was a deep sense of the pitiable infirmity of the man's nature, that can lay him open to such frenzies — but in truth you rather admired than pitied the lunacy while it lasted — you felt that an hour of such mistake was worth an age with
10 the eyes open. Who would not wish to live but for a day in the conceit of such a lady's love as Olivia ? Why, the Duke would have given his principality but for a quarter of a minute, sleeping or waking, to have been so deluded. The man seemed to tread upon air, to taste manna, to walk with his head in the
15 clouds, to mate Hyperion. O ! shake not the castles of his pride — endure yet for a season, bright moments of confidence — “ stand still, ye watches of the element,” that Malvolio may be still in fancy fair Olivia's lord — but fate and retribution say no — I hear the mischievous titter of Maria — the witty
20 taunts of Sir Toby — the still more insupportable triumph of the foolish knight — the counterfeit Sir Topas is unmasked — and “ thus the whirligig of time,” as the true clown hath it, “ brings in his revenges.” I confess that I never saw the catastrophe of this character, while Bensley played it, without
25 a kind of tragic interest. There was good foolery too. Few now remember Dodd. What an Aguecheek the stage lost in him ! Lovegrove, who came nearest to the old actors, revived the character some few seasons ago, and made it sufficiently grotesque ; but Dodd was *it*, as it came out of nature's hands.
30 It might be said to remain *in puris naturalibus*. In expressing slowness of apprehension this actor surpassed all others. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little, with a painful process, till it cleared up at last to the fulness of a twilight

conception — its highest meridian. He seemed to keep back his intellect, as some have had the power to retard their pulsation. The balloon takes less time in filling, than it took to cover the expansion of his broad moony face over all its quarters with expression. A glimmer of understanding would appear in a corner of his eye, and for lack of fuel go out again. A part of his forehead would catch a little intelligence, and be a long time in communicating it to the remainder. 5

I am ill at dates, but I think it is now better than five-and-twenty years ago, that walking in the gardens of Gray's Inn 10 — they were then far finer than they are now — the accursed Verulam Buildings had not encroached upon all the east side of them, cutting out delicate green crankles, and shouldering away one of two of the stately alcoves of the terrace — the survivor stands gaping and relationless as if it remembered its 15 brother — they are still the best gardens of any of the Inns of Court, my beloved Temple not forgotten — have the gravest character, their aspect being altogether reverend and law-breathing — Bacon has left the impress of his foot upon their gravel walks — taking my afternoon solace on a summer day 20 upon the aforesaid terrace, a comely sad personage came towards me, whom, from his grave air and deportment, I judged to be one of the old Benchers of the Inn. He had a serious thoughtful forehead, and seemed to be in meditations of mortality. As I have an instinctive awe of old Benchers, I 25 was passing him with that sort of subindicative token of respect which one is apt to demonstrate towards a venerable stranger, and which rather denotes an inclination to greet him, than any positive motion of the body to that effect — a species of humility and will-worship which I observe, nine times out of 30 ten, rather puzzles than pleases the person it is offered to — when the face turning full upon me strangely identified itself with that of Dodd. Upon close inspection I was not mistaken. But could this sad thoughtful countenance be the same vacant

face of folly which I had hailed so often under circumstances of gaiety ; which I had never seen without a smile, or recognized but as the usher of mirth ; that looked out so formally flat in Foppington, so frothily pert in Tattle, so impotently
5 busy in Backbite ; so blankly divested of all meaning, or resolutely expressive of none, in Acres, in Fribble, and a thousand agreeable impertinences? Was this the face — full of thought and carefulness — that had so often divested itself at will of every trace of either to give me diversion, to clear my cloudy
10 face for two or three hours at least of its furrows? Was this the face — manly, sober, intelligent — which I had so often despised, made mocks at, made merry with? The remembrance of the freedoms which I had taken with it came upon me with a reproach of insult. I could have asked it pardon.
15 I thought it looked upon me with a sense of injury. There is something strange as well as sad in seeing actors — your pleasant fellows particularly — subjected to and suffering the common lot — their fortunes, their casualties, their deaths, seem to belong to the scene, their actions to be amenable to poetic
20 justice only. We can hardly connect them with more awful responsibilities. The death of this fine actor took place shortly after this meeting. He had quitted the stage some months ; and as I learned afterwards, had been in the habit of resorting daily to these gardens almost to the day of his decease. In
25 these serious walks probably he was divesting himself of many scènic and some real vanities — weaning himself from the frivolities of the lesser and the greater theatre — doing gentle penance for a life of no very reprehensible fooleries, — taking off by degrees the buffoon mask which he might feel he had
30 worn too long — and rehearsing for a more solemn cast of part. Dying, he “ put on the weeds of Dominic.”¹

¹ Dodd was a man of reading, and left at his death a choice collection of old English literature. I should judge him to have been a man of wit. I know one instance of an impromptu which no length of study

If a few can remember Dodd, many yet living will not easily forget the pleasant creature, who in those days enacted the part of the Clown to Dodd's Sir Andrew. — Richard, or rather Dicky Suett — for so in his lifetime he delighted to be called, and time hath ratified the appellation — lieth buried on the north side of the cemetery of Holy Paul, to whose service his nonage and tender years were dedicated. There are who do yet remember him at that period — his pipe clear and harmonious. He would often speak of his chorister days, when he was “cherub Dicky.”

What clipped his wings, or made it expedient that he should exchange the holy for the profane state; whether he had lost his good voice (his best recommendation to that office), like Sir John, “with hallooing and singing of anthems;” or whether he was adjudged to lack something, even in those early years, of the gravity indispensable to an occupation which professeth to “commerce with the skies” — I could never rightly learn; but we find him, after the probation of a twelvemonth or so, reverting to a secular condition, and become one of us.

I think he was not altogether of that timber out of which cathedral seats and sounding-boards are hewed. But if a glad heart — kind and therefore glad — be any part of sanctity, then might the robe of Motley, with which he invested himself with so much humility after his deprivation, and which he wore so long with so much blameless satisfaction to himself and to the public, be accepted for a surplice — his white stole, and *albe*.

could have bettered. My merry friend, Jem White, had seen him one evening in Aguecheek, and, recognizing Dodd the next day in Fleet Street, was irresistibly impelled to take off his hat and salute him as the identical Knight of the preceding evening with a “Save you, *Sir Andrew*.” Dodd, not at all disconcerted at this unusual address from a stranger, with a courteous half-rebuking wave of the hand, put him off with an “Away, *Fool*!”

The first fruits of his secularization was an engagement upon the boards of Old Drury, at which theatre he commenced, as I have been told, with adopting the manner of Parsons in old men's characters. At the period in which most of us knew
5 him, he was no more an imitator than he was in any true sense himself imitable.

He was the Robin Good-Fellow of the stage. He came in to trouble all things with a welcome perplexity, himself no whit troubled for the matter. He was known, like Puck, by his
10 note — *Ha! Ha! Ha!* — sometimes deepening to *Ho! Ho! Ho!* with an irresistible accession derived perhaps remotely from his ecclesiastical education, foreign to his prototype of, — *O La!* Thousands of hearts yet respond to the chuckling
O La! of Dicky Suett, brought back to their remembrance by
15 the faithful transcript of his friend Mathews's mimicry. The "force of nature could no farther go." He drolled upon the stock of these two syllables richer than the cuckoo.

Care, that troubles all the world, was forgotten in his composition. Had he had but two grains (nay, half a grain) of it,
20 he could never have supported himself upon those two spider's strings, which served him (in the latter part of his unmixed existence) as legs. A doubt or a scruple must have made him totter, a sigh have puffed him down; the weight of a frown had staggered him, a wrinkle made him lose his balance. But
25 on he went, scrambling upon those airy stilts of his, with Robin Good-Fellow, "thorough brake, thorough briar," reckless of a scratched face or a torn doublet.

Shakespeare foresaw him, when he framed his fools and jesters. They have all the true Suett stamp, a loose and sham-
30 bling gait, a slippery tongue, this last the ready midwife to a without-pain-delivered jest; in words, light as air, venting truths deep as the centre; with idlest rhymes tagging conceit when busiest, singing with Lear in the tempest, or Sir Toby at the buttery-hatch.

Jack Bannister and he had the fortune to be more of personal favourites with the town than any actors before or after. The difference, I take it, was this : — Jack was more *beloved* for his sweet, good-natured, moral pretensions. Dicky was more *liked* for his sweet, good-natured, no pretensions at all. 5 Your whole conscience stirred with Bannister's performance of Walter in the Children in the Wood — but Dicky seemed like a thing, as Shakespeare says of Love, too young to know what conscience is. He put us into Vesta's days. Evil fled before him — not as from Jack, as from an antagonist, — but because 10 it could not touch him, any more than a cannon-ball a fly. He was delivered from the burthen of that death ; and when Death came himself, not in metaphor, to fetch Dicky, it is recorded of him by Robert Palmer, who kindly watched his exit, that he received the last stroke, neither varying his 15 accustomed tranquillity, nor tune, with the simple exclamation, worthy to have been recorded in his epitaph — *O La ! O La ! Bobby !*

The elder Palmer (of stage-treading celebrity) commonly played Sir Toby in those days ; but there is a solidity of wit 20 in the jests of that half-Falstaff which he did not quite fill out. He was as much too showy, as Moody (who sometimes took the part) was dry and sottish. In sock or buskin there was an air of swaggering gentility about Jack Palmer. He was a *gentleman* with a slight infusion of *the footman*. His brother 25 Bob (of recenter memory), who was his shadow in everything while he lived, and dwindled into less than a shadow afterwards — was a *gentleman* with a little stronger infusion of the *latter ingredient* ; that was all. It is amazing how a little of the more or less makes a difference in these things. When you 30 saw Bobby in the Duke's Servant,¹ you said, what a pity such a pretty fellow was only a servant. When you saw Jack figuring in Captain Absolute, you thought you could trace his

¹ *High Life Below Stairs.*

promotion to some lady of quality who fancied the handsome fellow in his top-knot, and had bought him a commission. Therefore Jack in Dick Amlet was insuperable.

Jack had two voices, — both plausible, hypocritical, and
 5 insinuating; but his secondary or supplemental voice still more decisively histrionic than his common one. It was reserved for the spectator; and the *dramatis personæ* were supposed to know nothing at all about it. The *lies* of young Wilding, and the *sentiments* in Joseph Surface, were thus
 10 marked out in a sort of italics to the audience. This secret correspondence with the company before the curtain (which is the bane and death of tragedy) has an extremely happy effect in some kinds of comedy, in the more highly artificial comedy of Congreve or of Sheridan especially, where the abso-
 15 lute sense of reality (so indispensable to scenes of interest) is not required, or would rather interfere to diminish your pleasure. The fact is, you do not believe in such characters as Surface — the villain of artificial comedy — even while you read or see them. If you did, they would shock and not divert you. When
 20 Ben, in Love for Love, returns from sea, the following exquisite dialogue occurs at his first meeting with his father —

Sir Sampson. Thou hast been many a weary league, Ben, since I saw thee.

Ben. Ey, ey, been! Been far enough, an that be all. — Well, father,
 25 and how do all at home? how does brother Dick, and brother Val?

Sir Sampson. Dick! body o' me, Dick has been dead these two years. I writ you word when you were at Leghorn.

Ben. Mess, that's true; Marry, I had forgot. Dick's dead, as you say — Well, and how? — I have a many questions to ask you —

30 Here is an instance of insensibility which in real life would be revolting, or rather in real life could not have co-existed with the warm-hearted temperament of the character. But when you read it in the spirit with which such playful selections and specious combinations rather than strict *metaphrases* of

nature should be taken, or when you saw Bannister play it, it neither did, nor does, wound the moral sense at all. For what is Ben — the pleasant sailor which Bannister gives us — but a piece of satire — a creation of Congreve's fancy — a dreamy combination of all the accidents of a sailor's character 5 — his contempt of money — his credulity to women — with that necessary estrangement from home which it is just within the verge of credibility to suppose *might* produce such an hallucination as is here described. We never think the worse of Ben for it, or feel it as a stain upon his character. But 10 when an actor comes, and instead of the delightful phantom — the creature dear to half-belief — which Bannister exhibited — displays before our eyes a downright concretion of a Wapping sailor — a jolly warm-hearted Jack Tar — and nothing else — when instead of investing it with a delicious confused- 15 ness of the head, and a veering undirected goodness of purpose — he gives to it a downright daylight understanding, and a full consciousness of its actions; thrusting forward the sensibilities of the character with a pretence as if it stood upon nothing else, and was to be judged by them alone — we feel 20 the discord of the thing; the scene is disturbed; a real man has got in among the *dramatis personæ*, and puts them out. We want the sailor turned out. We feel that his true place is not behind the curtain but in the first or second gallery.

XVIII. THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS

I LIKE to meet a sweep — understand me — not a grown 25 sweeper — old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive — but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigritude, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek — such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the 30

peep peep of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aërial ascents not seldom anticipating the sun-rise?

I have a kindly yearning towards these dim specks — poor
5 blots — innocent blacknesses —

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth — these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience
10 to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger than one's self enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *fauces Averni* — to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding
15 on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades! — to shudder with the idea that “now, surely, he must be lost for ever!” — to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered daylight — and then (O fulness of delight) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon
20 emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel! I seem to remember having been told, that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle certainly; not much unlike the old
25 stage direction in *Macbeth*, where the “Apparition of child crowned with a tree in his hand rises.”

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny. It is better to give him twopence. If it be starving weather, and to the
30 proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.

There is a composition, the groundwork of which I have understood to be the sweet wood yclept sassafras. This wood

boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this “wholesome and pleasant beverage,” on the south side of Fleet Street, as thou approachest Bridge Street — *the only Salopian house*, — I have never yet adventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients — a cautious premonition to the olfactories constantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegances, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformation of the organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper — whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften the fuliginous concretions, which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive — but so it is, that no possible taste or odour to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam; to gratify one sense, if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals — cats — when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house*; yet be it known to thee, reader — if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou

art happily ignorant of the fact — he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savoury mess to humbler customers, at the dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home
5 from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan leaving his bed to resume the premature labours of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honours of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen-
10 fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odours. The rake who wisheth to dissipate his o'er night vapours in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

15 This is *Saloop* — the precocious herb-woman's darling — the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas — the delight, and, oh I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldest thou haply
20 encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three halfpennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny) so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'ercharged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter
25 volume to the welkin — so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingredienced soups — nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney*, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket!

30 I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts; the jeers and taunts of the populace; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularly of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness. — In the last winter but one,

pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough — yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened — when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot- 10
inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth — but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in the March to Finchley, grinning at the pie-man — there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last for ever — 15
with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth — for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it — that I could have been content, if the honour of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight. 20

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket presumably holding such jewels; but, methinks, they should take leave to “air” them as frugally as possible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me their 25
teeth, show me bones. Yet must I confess, that from the mouth of a true sweep a display (even to ostentation) of those white and shining ossifications, strikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when

A sable cloud
Turns forth her silver lining on the night.

30

It is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct; a badge of better days; a hint of nobility: — and, doubtless, under

the obscuring darkness and double night of their forlorn disguise, oftentimes lurketh good blood, and gentle conditions, derived from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The premature apprenticesments of these tender victims give but
5 too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine, and almost infantile abductions; the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so often discernible in these young grafts (not otherwise to be accounted for) plainly hint at some forced adoptions; many noble Rachels mourning for their children, even in our days,
10 countenance the fact; the tales of fairy-spiriting may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu be but a solitary instance of good fortune, out of many irreparable and hopeless *defiliations*.

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few years since
15 — under a ducal canopy — (that seat of the Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the late Duke was especially a connoisseur) — encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets inwoven —
folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap
20 where Venus lulled Ascanius — was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noonday, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly
chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this
25 magnificent chamber; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which he there saw exhibited; so, creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

30 Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle. — But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I have just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be

visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions — is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to be lapt by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was now but creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*, and resting-place. By no other theory, than by this sentiment of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed, upon any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend JEM WHITE was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew. Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who, relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was provisionally discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quitted out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place

chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity; but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it.

5 The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlours three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savour. JAMES WHITE, as head waiter, had charge
10 of the first table; and myself, with our trusty companion BIGOD, ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clamouring and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table — for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humours of the scene with more spirit than my friend.
15 After some general expression of thanks for the honour the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing “the gentleman,” and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute,
20 whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable youngers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings — how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths,
25 reserving the lengthier links for the seniors — how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it “must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman’s eating” — how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a
30 tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony, — how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good, he should lose their custom; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip

before drinking. Then we had our toasts — “The King,” — the “Cloth,” — which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering; — and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, “May the Brush supersede the Laurel.” All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather 5 felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a “Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so,” which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on 10 these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savouriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

Golden lads and lasses must,

As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

15

JAMES WHITE is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died — of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield 20 departed for ever.

XIX. A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

MANKIND, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this 25 day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius in the second chapter of his Mundane Mutations, where he designates a kind of golden age by the term Chofang, literally the Cook’s holiday. The manuscript goes on to

say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swine-herd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast
5 for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as younkens of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to
10 ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian makeshift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the remotest periods that we read
15 of. Bo-bo was in the utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labour of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his
20 father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odour assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from?—not from the burnt cottage—he had smelt that smell before—indeed this was by no means
25 the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young firebrand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to
30 feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known

it) he tasted — *crackling!* Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and, surrendering himself up 5 to the new-born pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young 10 rogue's shoulders, as thick as hail-stones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those 15 remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

“You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses 20 with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must be eating fire, and I know not what — what have you got there, I say?”

“O father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats.” 25

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bò, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, 30 thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out, “Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste, — O Lord,” — with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same
5 remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavour, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretence, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched
10 all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbours would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Never-
15 theless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a
20 blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assize town. Evi-
25 dence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it, and burning their fingers,
30 as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given, — to the surprise of the whole court, townsfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present — without leaving the box, or

any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision ; and, when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the district. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke, who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind. —

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favour of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*, I will maintain it to be the most delicate — *princeps obsoniorum*.

I speak not of your grown porkers — things between pig and pork — those hobbydehoy — but a young and tender suckling — under a moon old — guiltless as yet of the sty — with no original speck of the *amor immunditiæ*, the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest — his voice as yet not broken,

but something between a childish treble, and a grumble — the mild forerunner, or *prælude*, of a grunt.

He must be roasted. I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled — but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument !

There is no flavour comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling*, as it is well called — the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance — with the adhesive oleaginous — O call it not fat — but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it — the tender blossoming of fat — fat cropped in the bud — taken in the shoot — in the first innocence — the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food — the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna, — or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is “doing” — it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string ! — Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes — radiant jellies — shooting stars —

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth ! — wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swinehood ? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal — wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation — from these sins he is happily snatched away —

Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
Death came with timely care —

his memory is odoriferous — no clown curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon — no coalheaver bolteth him

in reeking sausages — he hath a fair sepulchre in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure — and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of saporers. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent — a delight, if not sinful, yet so like 5 to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause — too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and excoriateth the lips that approach her — like lovers' kisses, she biteth — she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish — but she stoppeth at the palate 10 — she meddleth not with the appetite — and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop.

Pig — let me speak his praise — is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and the 15 weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertwined, and not to be unravelled without hazard, he is — good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little 20 means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbours' fare.

I am one of those, who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great 25 an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "endear Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"), capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I 30 love to taste them, as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything." I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good flavours, to

extradomiciliate, or send out of the house, slightly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate. — It argues an insensibility.

5 I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over
10 London Bridge) a grey-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at this time of day that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, schoolboy-like, I made him a present of—the whole cake! I walked on a
15 little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger, that I had
20 never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I — I myself, and not another — would eat her nice cake — and what should I say to her the next time I saw her — how naughty I was to part with her pretty
25 present — and the odour of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last — and I blamed my impertinent
30 spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all I wished never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old grey impostor.

Our ancestors were nice in their method of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipt to death with something

of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards intenerating and dulcifying a substance, naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like 5 refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto —

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the young students, when I was at St. Omer's, and maintained with 10 much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavour of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (*per flagellationem extremam*) superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in 15 using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedly, a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But, banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the 20 whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots, stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make them stronger than they are — but consider, he is a weakling — a flower. 25

XX. ON THE ACTING OF MUNDEN

NOT many nights ago I had come home from seeing this extraordinary performer in Cockletop; and when I retired to my pillow, his whimsical image still stuck by me, in a manner as to threaten sleep. In vain I tried to divest myself of it, by conjuring up the most opposite associations. I resolved to be 30

serious. I raised up the gravest topics of life ; private misery, public calamity. All would not do.

———— There the antic sate
Mocking our state—

5 his queer visnomy — his bewildering costume — all the strange things which he had raked together — his serpentine rod, swagging about in his pocket — Cleopatra's tear, and the rest of his relics — O'Keefe's wild farce, and *his* wilder commen-
tary — till the passion of laughter, like grief in excess, relieved
10 itself by its own weight, inviting the sleep which in the first instance it had driven away.

But I was not to escape so easily. No sooner did I fall into slumbers, than the same image, only more perplexing, assailed me in the shape of dreams. Not one Munden, but five hun-
15 dred, were dancing before me, like the faces which, whether you will or no, come when you have been taking opium — all the strange combinations, which this strangest of all strange mortals ever shot his proper countenance into, from the day he came commissioned to dry up the tears of the
20 town for the loss of the now almost forgotten Edwin. O for the power of the pencil to have fixed them when I awoke ! A season or two since there was exhibited a Hogarth gallery. I do not see why there should not be a Munden gallery. In richness and variety the latter would not fall far short of
25 the former.

There is one face of Farley, one face of Knight, one (but what a one it is !) of Liston ; but Munden has none that you can properly pin down, and call *his*. When you think he has exhausted his battery of looks, in unaccountable warfare with
30 your gravity, suddenly he sprouts out an entirely new set of features, like Hydra. He is not one, but legion. Not so much a comedian, as a company. If his name could be multiplied like his countenance, it might fill a play-bill. He, and he alone,

literally *makes faces*: applied to any other person, the phrase is a mere figure, denoting certain modifications of the human countenance. Out of some invisible wardrobe he dips for faces, as his friend Suett used for wigs, and fetches them out as easily. I should not be surprised to see him some day put 5 out the head of a river-horse; or come forth a pewit, or lap-wing, some feathered metamorphosis.

I have seen this gifted actor in Sir Christopher Curry — in Old Dornton — diffuse a glow of sentiment which has made the pulse of a crowded theatre beat like that of one man; when 10 he has come in aid of the pulpit, doing good to the moral heart of a people. I have seen some faint approaches to this sort of excellence in other players. But in the grand grotesque of farce, Munden stands out as single and unaccompanied as Hogarth. Hogarth, strange to tell, had no 15 followers. The school of Munden began, and must end with himself.

Can any man *wonder*, like him? can any man *see ghosts*, like him? or *fight with his own shadow* — “*SESSA*” — as he does in that strangely-neglected thing, the Cobbler of Preston 20 — where his alternations from the Cobbler to the Magnifico, and from the Magnifico to the Cobbler, keep the brain of the spectator in as wild a ferment, as if some Arabian Night were being acted before him. Who like him can throw, or ever attempted to throw, a preternatural interest over the common- 25 est daily-life objects? A table, or a joint stool, in his conception, rises into a dignity equivalent to Cassiopeia's chair. It is invested with constellatory importance. You could not speak of it with more deference, if it were mounted into the firmament. A beggar in the hands of Michael Angelo, says Fuseli, 30 rose the Patriarch of Poverty. So the gusto of Munden antiquates and ennobles what it touches. His pots and his ladles are as grand and primal as the seething-pots and hooks seen in old prophetic vision. A tub of butter, contemplated by

him, amounts to a Platonic idea. He understands a leg of mutton in its quiddity. He stands wondering, amid the commonplace materials of life, like primeval man with the sun and stars about him.

XXI. MUNDEN'S FAREWELL

5 THE regular playgoers ought to put on mourning, for the king of broad comedy is dead to the drama! — Alas! — Munden is no more! — give sorrow vent. He may yet walk the town, pace the pavement in a seeming existence — eat, drink, and nod to his friends in all the affectation of life —
 10 but Munden, — *the* Munden! — Munden, who with the bunch of countenances, the bouquet of faces, is gone for ever from the lamps, and, as far as comedy is concerned, is as dead as Garrick! When an actor retires (we will put the *suicide* as mildly as possible) how many worthy persons perish with him!
 15 — With Munden, — Sir Peter Teazle must experience a shock — Sir Robert Bramble gives up the ghost — Crack ceases to breathe. Without Munden what becomes of Dozey? Where shall we seek Jemmy Jumps? Nipperkin and a thousand of such admirable fooleries fall to nothing, and the departure
 20 therefore of such an actor as Munden is a dramatic calamity. On the night that this inestimable humourist took farewell of the public, he also took his benefit: — a benefit in which the public assuredly did not participate. The play was Coleman's *Poor Gentleman*, with Tom Dibdin's farce of *Past Ten o'Clock*.
 25 Reader, we all know Munden in Sir Robert Bramble, and Old Tobacco complexioned Dozey; — we all have seen the old hearty baronet in his light sky-blue coat and genteel cocked hat; and we have all seen the weather-beaten old pensioner, Dear Old Dozey, tacking about the stage in that intense blue
 30 sea livery — drunk as heart could wish, and right valorous in

memory. On this night Munden seemed like the Gladiator "to rally life's whole energies to die," and as we were present at this great display of his powers, and as this will be the last opportunity that will ever be afforded us to speak of this admirable performer, we shall "consecrate," as Old John 5 Buncle says, "a paragraph to him."

The house was full, — *full!* — pshaw! that's an empty word! — The house was stuffed, crammed with people — crammed from the swing door of the pit to the back seat in the banished *one shilling*. A quart of audience may be said 10 (vintner-like, may it be said) to have been squeezed into a pint of theatre. Every hearty play-going Londoner, who remembered Munden years ago, mustered up his courage and his money for this benefit — and middle-aged people were therefore by no means scarce. The comedy chosen for 15 the occasion, is one that travels a long way without a guard; it is not until the third or fourth act, we think, that Sir Robert Bramble appears on the stage. When he entered, his reception was earnest, — noisy, — outrageous, — waving of hats and handkerchiefs, — deafening shouts, — clamorous beating of 20 sticks, — all the various ways in which the heart is accustomed to manifest its joy were had recourse to on this occasion. Mrs. Bamfield worked away with a sixpenny fan till she scudded only under bare poles. Mr. Whittington wore out the ferule of a new nine-and-sixpenny umbrella. 25 Gratitude did great damage on the joyful occasion.

The old performer, the veteran, as he appropriately called himself in the farewell speech, was plainly overcome; he pressed his hands together, he planted one solidly on his breast, he bowed, he sidled, he cried! When the noise 30 subsided (which it invariably does at last) the comedy proceeded, and Munden gave an admirable picture of the rich, eccentric, charitable old bachelor baronet, who goes about with Humphrey Dobbin at his heels, and philanthropy in his

heart. How crustily and yet how kindly he takes Humphrey's contradictions! How readily he puts himself into an attitude for arguing! How tenderly he gives a loose to his heart on the apprehension of Frederick's duel. In truth he played
5 Sir Robert in his very ripest manner, and it was impossible not to feel in the very midst of pleasure regret that Munden should then be before us for the last time.

In the farce he became richer and richer; Old Dozey is a plant from Greenwich. The bronzed face—and neck to
10 match—the long curtain of a coat—the straggling white hair—the propensity, the determined attachment to grog, are all from Greenwich. Munden, as Dozey, seems never to have been out of action, sun, and drink. He looks (alas he *looked*) fireproof. His face and throat were dried like a
15 raisin, and his legs walked under the rum-and-water with all the indecision which that inestimable beverage usually inspires. It is truly tacking, not walking. He *steers* at a table, and the tide of grog now and then bears him off the point. On this night, he seemed to us to be doomed to fall in action, and
20 we therefore looked at him, as some of the *Victory's* crew are said to have gazed upon Nelson, with a consciousness that his ardour and his uniform were worn for the last time. In the scene where Dozey describes a sea fight, the actor never was greater, and he seemed the personification of an old seventy-
25 four! His coat hung like a flag at his poop! His phiz was not a whit less highly coloured than one of those lustrous visages which generally superintend the head of a ship! There was something cumbrous, indecisive, and awful in his veerings! Once afloat, it appeared impossible for him to come to his
30 moorings; once at anchor, it did not seem an easy thing to get him under weigh!

The time, however, came for the fall of the curtain, and for the fall of Munden! The farce of the night was finished. The farce of the long forty years' play was over! He stepped

forward, not as Dozey, but as Munden, and we heard him address us from the stage for the last time. He trusted, unwisely we think, to a written paper. He *read* of “heart-felt recollections,” and “indelible impressions.” He stammered, and he pressed his heart, — and put on his spectacles, — and blundered his written gratitudes, — and wiped his eyes, and bowed — and stood, — and at last staggered away for ever! The plan of his farewell was bad, but the long life of excellence which really made his farewell pathetic, overcame all defects, and the people and Joe Munden parted like levers! Well! Farewell to the Rich Old Heart! May thy retirement be as full of repose, as thy public life was full of excellence! We must all have our farewell benefit in our turn.

XXII. A CHAPTER ON EARS

I HAVE no ear.—

Mistake me not, reader, — nor imagine that I am by nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me. — I am, I think, rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those ingenious labyrinthine inlets — those indispensable side-intelligencers.

Neither have I incurred, or done anything to incur, with Defoe, that hideous disfigurement, which constrained him to draw upon assurance — to feel “quite unabashed,” and at ease upon that article. I was never, I thank my stars, in the pillory; nor, if I read them aright, is it within the compass of my destiny, that I ever should be.

When therefore I say that I have no ear, you will understand me to mean — *for music*. — To say that this heart never

melted at the concourse of sweet sounds, would be a foul self-libel. — “*Water parted from the sea*” never fails to move it strangely. So does “*In infancy.*” But they were used to be sung at her harpsichord (the old-fashioned instrument in vogue 5 in those days) by a gentlewoman — the gentlest, sure, that ever merited the appellation — the sweetest — why should I hesitate to name Mrs. S——, once the blooming Fanny Weatheral of the Temple — who had power to thrill the soul of Elia, small imp as he was, even in his long coats; and to 10 make him glow, tremble; and blush with a passion, that not faintly indicated the day-spring of that absorbing sentiment, which was afterwards destined to overwhelm and subdue his nature quite, for Alice W——n.

I even think that *sentimentally* I am disposed to harmony. 15 But *organically* I am incapable of a tune. I have been practising “*God save the King*” all my life; whistling and humming of it over to myself in solitary corners; and am not yet arrived, they tell me, within many quavers of it. Yet hath the . loyalty of Elia never been impeached.

20 I am not without suspicion that I have an undeveloped faculty of music within me. For, thrumming, in my wild way, on my friend A.’s piano, the other morning, while he was engaged in an adjoining parlour, — on his return he was pleased to say, “*he thought it could not be the maid!*” On 25 his first surprise at hearing the keys touched in somewhat an airy and masterful way, not dreaming of me, his suspicions had lighted on *Jenny*. But a grace snatched from a superior refinement, soon convinced him that some being, — technically perhaps deficient, but higher informed from a principle 30 common to all the fine arts, — had swayed the keys to a mood which *Jenny*, with all her (less-cultivated) enthusiasm, could never have elicited from them. I mention this as a proof of my friend’s penetration, and not with any view of disparaging *Jenny*.

Scientifically I could never be made to understand (yet have I taken some pains) what a note in music is; or how one note should differ from another. Much less in voices can I distinguish a soprano from a tenor. Only sometimes the thorough bass I contrive to guess at, from its being super- 5
eminently harsh and disagreeable. I tremble, however, for my misapplication of the simplest terms of *that* which I disclaim. While I profess my ignorance, I scarce know what to say I am ignorant of. I hate, perhaps, by misnomers. *Sostenuto* and *adagio* stand in the like relation of obscurity to 10
me; and *Sol, Fa, Mi, Re*, is as conjuring as *Baralippton*.

It is hard to stand alone — in an age like this, — (constituted to the quick and critical perception of all harmonious combinations, I verily believe, beyond all preceding ages, since Jubal stumbled upon the gamut) — to remain as it were 15
singly unimpressible to the magic influences of an art which is said to have such an especial stroke at soothing, elevating, and refining the passions. — Yet rather than break the candid current of my confessions, I must avow to you, that I have received a great deal more pain than pleasure from this so 20
cried-up faculty.

I am constitutionally susceptible of noises. A carpenter's hammer, in a warm summer noon, will fret me into more than midsummer madness. But those unconnected, unset sounds are nothing to the measured malice of music. The ear is pas- 25
sive to those single strokes; willingly enduring stripes, while it hath no task to con. To music it cannot be passive. It will strive — mine at least will — 'spite of its inaptitude, to thrid the maze; like an unskilled eye painfully poring upon hieroglyphics. I have sat through an Italian Opera, till, for 30
sheer pain, and inexplicable anguish, I have rushed out into the noisiest places of the crowded streets, to solace myself with sounds, which I was not obliged to follow, and get rid of the distracting torment of endless, fruitless, barren attention!

I take refuge in the unpretending assemblage of honest common-life sounds;—and the purgatory of the Enraged Musician becomes my paradise.

I have sat at an Oratorio (that profanation of the purposes
5 of the cheerful playhouse) watching the faces of the auditory in the pit (what a contrast to Hogarth's Laughing Audience!) immovable, or affecting some faint emotion,—till (as some have said, that our occupations in the next world will be but a shadow of what delighted us in this) I have imagined myself
10 in some cold Theatre in Hades, where some of the *forms* of the earthly one should be kept up, with none of the *enjoyment*; or like that—

———— Party in a parlour,
All silent, and all DAMNED!

15 Above all those insufferable concertos, and pieces of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension.—Words are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a dying, to lie stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up languor by unintermitted
20 effort; to pile honey upon sugar, and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze on empty frames, and be forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book *all stops*, and be obliged to supply the verbal
25 matter; to invent extempore tragedies to answer to the vague gestures of an inexplicable rambling mime—these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this empty *instrumental music*.

I deny not, that in the opening of a concert, I have experi-
30 enced something vastly lulling and agreeable:—afterwards followeth the languor, and the oppression. Like that disappointing book in Patmos; or, like the comings on of melancholy, described by Burton, doth music make her first

insinuating approaches : — “ Most pleasant it is to such as are melancholy given, to walk alone in some solitary grove, betwixt wood and water, by some brook side, and to meditate upon some delightful and pleasant subject, which shall affect him most, *amabilis insania*, and *mentis gratissimus error*. A most incomparable delight to build castles in the air, to go smiling to themselves, acting an infinite variety of parts, which they suppose, and strongly imagine, they act, or that they see done. — So delightful these toys at first, they could spend whole days and nights without sleep, even whole years in such contemplations, and fantastical meditations, which are like so many dreams, and will hardly be drawn from them — winding and unwinding themselves as so many clocks, and still pleasing their humours, until at last the SCENE TURNS UPON A SUDDEN, and they being now habitated to such meditations and solitary places, can endure no company, can think of nothing but harsh and distasteful subjects. Fear, sorrow, suspicion, *subrusticus pudor*, discontent, cares, and weariness of life, surprise them on a sudden, and they can think of nothing else : continually suspecting, no sooner are their eyes open, but this infernal plague of melancholy seizeth on them, and terrifies their souls, representing some dismal object to their minds ; which now, by no means, no labour, no persuasions, they can avoid, they cannot be rid of, they cannot resist.”

Something like this “ SCENE-TURNING ” I have experienced at the evening parties, at the house of my good Catholic friend *Nov*——; who, by the aid of a capital organ, himself the most finished of players, converts his drawing-room into a chapel, his week days into Sundays, and these latter into minor heavens.¹

When my friend commences upon one of those solemn anthems, which peradventure struck upon my heedless ear,

¹ I have been there, and still would go ;

² T is like a little heaven below. — *Dr. Watts*.

rambling in the side aisles of the dim abbey, some five and thirty years since, waking a new sense, and putting a soul of old religion into my young apprehension — (whether it be *that*, in which the psalmist, weary of the persecutions of bad men, wisheth to himself dove's wings — or *that other*, which, with a like measure of sobriety and pathos, inquireth by what means the young man shall best cleanse his mind) — a holy calm pervadeth me. — I am for the time

—— rapt above earth,

And possess joys not promised at my birth.

But when this master of the spell, not content to have laid a soul prostrate, goes on, in his power, to inflict more bliss than lies in her capacity to receive, — impatient to overcome her “earthly” with his “heavenly,” — still pouring in, for 15 protracted hours, fresh waves and fresh from the sea of sound, or from that inexhausted *German* ocean, above which, in triumphant progress, dolphin-seated, ride those Arions *Haydn* and *Mozart*, with their attendant tritons, *Bach*, *Beethoven*, and a countless tribe, whom to attempt to reckon up would 20 but plunge me again in the deeps, — I stagger under the weight of harmony, reeling to and fro at my wit's end; — clouds, as of frankincense, oppress me — priests, altars, censers, dazzle before me — the genius of *his* religion hath me in her toils — a shadowy triple tiara invests the brow of my friend, 25 late so naked, so ingenuous — he is Pope, — and by him sits, like as in the anomaly of dreams, a she-Pope too, — tri-corneted like himself! — I am converted, and yet a Protestant; — at once *malleus hereticorum*, and myself grand heresiarch: or three heresies centre in my person: I am Marcion, Ebion, 30 and Cerinthus — Gog and Magog — what not? — till the coming in of the friendly supper-tray dissipates the figment, and a draught of true Lutheran beer (in which chiefly my friend shows himself no bigot) at once reconciles me to the

rationalities of a purer faith ; and restores to me the genuine unterrifying aspects of my pleasant-countenanced host and hostess.

P.S. — A writer, whose real name it seems is *Boldero*, but who has been entertaining the town for the last twelve months with some very pleasant lucubrations under the assumed signature of *Leigh Hunt*,¹ in his "Indicator" of the 31st January last has thought fit to insinuate that I, *Elia*, do not write the little sketches which bear my signature in this magazine, but that the true author of them is a Mr. L——b. Observe the critical period at which he has chosen to impute the calumny, — on the very eve of the publication of our last number, — affording no scope for explanation for a full month ; during which time I must needs lie writhing and tossing under the cruel imputation of nonentity. Good Heavens ! that a plain man must not be allowed *to be*——

They call this an age of personality ; but surely this spirit of anti-personality (if I may so express it) is something worse.

Take away my moral reputation, — I may live to discredit that calumny ; injure my literary fame, — I may write that up again ; but, when a gentleman is robbed of his identity, where is he ?

Other murderers stab but at our existence, a frail and perishing trifle at the best ; but here is an assassin who aims at our very essence ; who not only forbids us *to be* any longer, but *to have been* at all. Let our ancestors look to it.

Is the parish register nothing ? Is the house in Princes Street, Cavendish Square, where we saw the light six-and-forty years ago, nothing ? Were our progenitors from stately Genoa, where we flourished four centuries back, before the barbarous

¹ Clearly a fictitious appellation ; for, if we admit the latter of these names to be in a manner English, what is *Leigh* ? Christian nomenclature knows no such.

name of Boldero¹ was known to a European mouth, nothing? Was the goodly scion of our name, transplanted into England in the reign of the seventh Henry, nothing? Are the archives of the steelyard, in succeeding reigns (if haply they survive 5 the fury of our envious enemies), showing that we flourished in prime repute, as merchants, down to the period of the Commonwealth, nothing?

Why, then the world, and all that's in 't, is nothing;
The covering sky is nothing; Bohemia nothing.

10 I am ashamed that this trifling writer should have power to move me so.²

XXIII. ALL FOOLS' DAY

THE compliments of the season to my worthy masters, and a merry first of April to us all!

Many happy returns of this day to you — and you — and 15 *you*, sir; — nay, never frown, man, nor put a long face upon the matter. Do not we know one another? what need of ceremony among friends? we have all a touch of *that same* — you understand me — a speck of the motley. Beshrew the man who on such a day as this, the *general festival*, 20 should affect to stand aloof. I am none of those sneakers. I am free of the corporation, and care not who knows it. He that meets me in the forest to-day, shall meet with no wise-acre, I can tell him. *Stultus sum*. Translate me that, and take the meaning of it to yourself for your pains. What, 25 man, we have four quarters of the globe on our side, at the least computation.

¹ It is clearly of transatlantic origin.

² This postscript was added to the original essay in the *London*, but was omitted by the author in the edition of 1823. — ED.

Fill us a cup of that sparkling gooseberry — we will drink no wise, melancholy, politic port on this day — and let us troll the catch of Amiens — *duc ad me — duc ad me* — how goes it?

Here shall he see
Gross fools as he.

5

Now would I give a trifle to know historically and authentically, who was the greatest fool that ever lived. I would certainly give him in a bumper. Marry, of the present breed, I think I could without much difficulty name you the party.

Remove your cap a little further if you please ; it hides my 10
bauble. And now each man bestride his hobby, aud dust away his bells to what tune he pleases. I will give you for my part,

—— the crazy old church clock,
And the bewilder'd chimes.

Good master Empedocles, you are welcome. It is long since 15
you went a salamander-gathering down *Ætna*. Worse than samphire-picking by some odds. 'Tis a mercy your worship did not singe your mustachios.

Ha ! Cleombrotus ! and what salads in faith did you light upon at the bottom of the Mediterranean ? You were founder, 20
I take it, of the disinterested sect of the Calenturists.

Gebir, my old free-mason, and prince of plasterers at Babel, bring in your trowel, most Ancient Grand ! You have claim to a seat here at my right hand, as patron of the stammerers. You left your work, if I remember Herodotus correctly, at 25
eight hundred million toises, or thereabout, above the level of the sea. Bless us, what a long bell you must have pulled, to call your top workmen to their nuncheon on the low grounds of Sennaar. Or did you send up your garlick and onions by a rocket ? I am a rogue if I am not ashamed to show you our 30
Monument on Fish-Street Hill, after your altitudes. Yet we think it somewhat.

What, the magnanimous Alexander in tears? — cry, baby, put its finger in its eye, it shall have another globe, round as an orange, pretty moppet!

Mister Adams——'odso, I honour your coat — pray do us
5 the favour to read to us that sermon, which you lent to Mistress Slipslop — the twenty and second in your portmanteau there — on Female Incontinence — the same — it will come in most irrelevantly and impertinently seasonable to the time of the day.

Good Master Raymund Lully, you look wise. Pray correct
10 that error. ——

Duns, spare your definitions. I must fine you a bumper, or a paradox. We will have nothing said or done syllogistically this day. Remove those logical forms, waiter, that no gentleman break the tender shins of his apprehension stumbling
15 across them.

Master Stephen, you are late. — Ha! Cokes, is it you? — Aguecheek, my dear knight, let me pay my devoir to you. — Master Shallow, your worship's poor servant to command. — Master Silence, I will use few words with you. — Slender, it
20 shall go hard if I edge not you in somewhere. — You six will engross all the poor wit of the company to-day. — I know it, I know it.

Ha! honest R——, my fine old Librarian of Ludgate, time out of mind, art thou here again? Bless thy doublet, it is not
25 over-new, threadbare as thy stories: — what dost thou flitting about the world at this rate? — Thy customers are extinct, defunct, bed-rid, have ceased to read long ago. — Thou goest still among them, seeing if, peradventure, thou canst hawk a volume or two. — Good Granville S——, thy last patron, is flown.

30 King Pandion, he is dead,
All thy friends are lapt in lead. ——

Nevertheless, noble R——, come in, and take your seat here, between Armado and Quisada: for in true courtesy, in gravity,

in fantastic smiling to thyself, in courteous smiling upon others, in the goodly ornature of well-apparelled speech, and the commendation of wise sentences, thou art nothing inferior to those accomplished Dons of Spain. The spirit of chivalry forsake me for ever, when I forget thy singing the song of Macheath, 5 which declares that he might be *happy with either*, situated between these two ancient spinsters — when I forget the inimitable formal love which thou didst make, turning now to the one, and now to the other, with that Malvolian smile — as if Cervantes, not Gay, had written it for his hero; and as if 10 thousands of periods must revolve, before the mirror of courtesy could have given his invidious preference between a pair of so goodly-proprieted and meritorious-equal damsels.

To descend from these altitudes, and not to protract our Fools' Banquet beyond its appropriate day, — for I fear the 15 second of April is not many hours distant — in sober verity I will confess a truth to thee, reader. I love a *Fool* — as naturally, as if I were of kith and kin to him. When a child, with child-like apprehensions, that dived not below the surface of the matter, I read those *Parables* — not guessing at their 20 involved wisdom — I had more yearnings towards that simple architect, that built his house upon the sand, than I entertained for his more cautious neighbour; I grudged at the hard censure pronounced upon the quiet soul that kept his talent; and — prizing their simplicity beyond the more provident, and, to 25 my apprehension, somewhat *unfeminine* wariness, of their competitors — I felt a kindliness, that almost amounted to a *tendre*, for those five thoughtless virgins. — I have never made an acquaintance since, that lasted, or a friendship, that answered, with any that had not some tincture of the absurd in their 30 characters. I venerate an honest obliquity of understanding. The more laughable blunders a man shall commit in your company, the more tests he giveth you, that he will not betray or

overreach you. I love the safety, which a palpable hallucination warrants; the security, which a word out of season ratifies. And take my word for this, reader, and say a fool told it you, if you please, that he who hath not a dram of folly in his mixture, hath pounds of much worse matter in his composition. It is observed, that "the foolisher the fowl or fish, — woodcocks, — dotterels, — cod's-heads, &c., the finer the flesh thereof," and what are commonly the world's received fools, but such whereof the world is not worthy? and what have been some of the kindest patterns of our species, but so many darlings of absurdity, minions of the goddess, and her white boys? — Reader, if you wrest my words beyond their fair construction, it is you, and not I, that are the *April Fool*.

XXIV. THE OLD AND THE NEW SCHOOLMASTER

My reading has been lamentably desultory and immethodical. Odd, out of the way, old English plays and treatises, have supplied me with most of my notions and ways of feeling. In every thing that relates to *science*, I am a whole Encyclopædia behind the rest of the world. I should have scarcely cut a figure among the franklins, or country gentlemen, in King John's days. I know less geography than a schoolboy of six weeks' standing. To me a map of old Ortelius is as authentic as Arrowsmith. I do not know whereabouts Africa merges into Asia; whether Ethiopia lie in one or other of those great divisions; nor can form the remotest conjecture of the position of New South Wales, or Van Diemen's Land. Yet do I hold a correspondence with a very dear friend in the first-named of these two Terræ Incognitæ. I have no astronomy. I do not know where to look for the Bear, or Charles's Wain; the place of any star; or the name of any of them at sight. I guess at Venus only by her brightness — and if the sun on

some portentous morn were to make his first appearance in the West, I verily believe, that, while all the world were gasping in apprehension about me, I alone should stand unterrified, from sheer incuriosity and want of observation. Of history and chronology I possess some vague points, such as one cannot 5 help picking up in the course of miscellaneous study; but I never deliberately sat down to a chronicle, even of my own country. I have most dim apprehensions of the four great monarchies; and sometimes the Assyrian, sometimes the Persian, floats as *first* in my fancy. I make the widest conjec- 10 tures concerning Egypt, and her shepherd kings. My friend *M.*, with great painstaking, got me to think I understood the first proposition in Euclid, but gave me over in despair at the second. I am entirely unacquainted with the modern languages; and, like a better man than myself, have “small Latin 15 and less Greek.” I am a stranger to the shapes and texture of the commonest trees, herbs, flowers — not from the circumstance of my being town-born — for I should have brought the same inobservant spirit into the world with me, had I first seen it “on Devon’s leafy shores,” — and am no less at a loss 20 among purely town-objects, tools, engines, mechanic processes. — Not that I affect ignorance — but my head has not many mansions, nor spacious; and I have been obliged to fill it with such cabinet curiosities as it can hold without aching. I sometimes wonder, how I have passed my probation with so little 25 discredit in the world, as I have done, upon so meagre a stock. But the fact is, a man may do very well with a very little knowledge, and scarce be found out, in mixed company; everybody is so much more ready to produce his own, than to call for a display of your acquisitions. But in a tête-à-tête there is no 30 shuffling. The truth will out. There is nothing which I dread so much, as the being left alone for a quarter of an hour with a sensible, well-informed man, that does not know me. I lately got into a dilemma of this sort. —

In one of my daily jaunts between Bishopsgate and Shackwell, the coach stopped to take up a staid-looking gentleman, about the wrong side of thirty, who was giving his parting directions (while the steps were adjusting), in a tone of mild
5 authority, to a tall youth, who seemed to be neither his clerk, his son, nor his servant, but something partaking of all three. The youth was dismissed, and we drove on. As we were the sole passengers, he naturally enough addressed his conversation to me; and we discussed the merits of the fare, the civi-
10 lity and punctuality of the driver; the circumstance of an opposition coach having been lately set up, with the probabilities of its success — to all which I was enabled to return pretty satisfactory answers, having been drilled into this kind of etiquette by some years' daily practice of riding to and fro
15 in the stage aforesaid — when he suddenly alarmed me by a startling question, whether I had seen the show of prize cattle that morning in Smithfield? Now as I had not seen it, and do not greatly care for such sort of exhibitions, I was obliged to return a cold negative. He seemed a little mortified, as well
20 as astonished, at my declaration, as (it appeared) he was just come fresh from the sight, and doubtless had hoped to compare notes on the subject. However he assured me that I had lost a fine treat, as it far exceeded the show of last year. We were now approaching Norton Folgate, when the sight of some
25 shop-goods *ticketed* freshened him up into a dissertation upon the cheapness of cottons this spring. I was now a little in heart, as the nature of my morning avocations had brought me into some sort of familiarity with the raw material; and I was surprised to find how eloquent I was becoming on the state of
30 the India market — when, presently, he dashed my incipient vanity to the earth at once, by inquiring whether I had ever made any calculation as to the value of the rental of all the retail shops in London. Had he asked of me, what song the Sirens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself

among women, I might, with Sir Thomas Browne, have hazarded a "wide solution."¹ My companion saw my embarrassment, and, the almshouses beyond Shoreditch just coming in view, with great good-nature and dexterity shifted his conversation to the subject of public charities; which led to the comparative merits of provision for the poor in past and present times, with observations on the old monastic institutions, and charitable orders;—but, finding me rather dimly impressed with some glimmering notions from old poetic associations, than strongly fortified with any speculations reducible to calculation on the subject, he gave the matter up; and, the country beginning to open more and more upon us, as we approached the turnpike at Kingsland (the destined termination of his journey), he put a home thrust upon me, in the most unfortunate position he could have chosen, by advancing some queries relative to the North Pole Expedition. While I was muttering out something about the Panorama of those strange regions (which I had actually seen), by way of parrying the question, the coach stopping relieved me from any further apprehensions. My companion getting out, left me in the comfortable possession of my ignorance; and I heard him, as he went off, putting questions to an outside passenger, who had alighted with him, regarding an epidemic disorder that had been rife about Dalston, and which, my friend assured him, had gone through five or six schools in that neighbourhood. The truth now flashed upon me, that my companion was a schoolmaster; and that the youth, whom he had parted from at our first acquaintance, must have been one of the bigger boys, or the usher.—He was evidently a kind-hearted man, who did not seem so much desirous of provoking discussion by the questions which he put, as of obtaining information at any rate. It did not appear that he took any interest, either, in such kind of inquiries, for their own sake; but that he was in some way

¹ *Urn Burial.*

bound to seek for knowledge. A greenish-coloured coat, which he had on, forbade me to surmise that he was a clergyman. The adventure gave birth to some reflections on the difference between persons of his profession in past and present times.

5 Rest to the souls of those fine old Pedagogues; the breed, long since extinct, of the Lilys, and the Linacres: who believing that all learning was contained in the languages which they taught, and despising every other acquirement as superficial and useless, came to their task as to a sport! Passing from
10 infancy to age, they dreamed away all their days as in a grammar-school. Revolving in a perpetual cycle of declensions, conjugations, syntaxes, and prosodies; renewing constantly the occupations which had charmed their studious childhood; rehearsing continually the part of the past; life must have
15 slipped from them at last like one day. They were always in their first garden, reaping harvests of their golden time, among their *Flori* and their *Spici-legia*; in Arcadia still, but kings; the ferule of their sway not much harsher, but of like dignity with that mild sceptre attributed to King Basileus; the Greek
20 and Latin, their stately Pamela and their Philoclea; with the occasional duncery of some untoward Tyro, serving for a refreshing interlude of a Mopsa, or a clown Damætas!

With what a savour doth the Preface to Colet's, or (as it is sometimes called) Paul's Accidence, set forth! "To exhort
25 every man to the learning of grammar, that intendeth to attain the understanding of the tongues, wherein is contained a great treasury of wisdom and knowledge, it would seem but vain and lost labour; for so much as it is known, that nothing can surely be ended, whose beginning is either feeble or faulty;
30 and no building be perfect, whereas the foundation and ground-work is ready to fall, and unable to uphold the burden of the frame." How well doth this stately preamble (comparable to those which Milton commendeth as "having been the usage to prefix to some solemn law, then first promulgated by Solon,

or Lycurgus") correspond with and illustrate that pious zeal for conformity, expressed in a succeeding clause, which would fence about grammar-rules with the severity of faith-articles! — "as for the diversity of grammars, it is well profitably taken away by the king's majesties wisdom, who foreseeing the inconvenience, and favourably providing the remedie, caused one kind of grammar by sundry learned men to be diligently drawn, and so to be set out, only everywhere to be taught for the use of learners, and for the hurt in changing of schoolmaisters." What a *gusto* in that which follows: "wherein it is profitable that he [the pupil] can orderly decline his noun, and his verb." *His* noun!

The fine dream is fading away fast; and the least concern of a teacher in the present day is to inculcate grammar-rules.

The modern schoolmaster is expected to know a little of everything, because his pupil is required not to be entirely ignorant of anything. He must be superficially, if I may so say, omniscient. He is to know something of pneumatics; of chemistry; of whatever is curious, or proper to excite the attention of the youthful mind; an insight into mechanics is desirable, with a touch of statistics; the quality of soils, &c., botany, the constitution of his country, *cum multis aliis*. You may get a notion of some part of his expected duties by consulting the famous Tractate on Education addressed to Mr. Hartlib.

All these things — these, or the desire of them — he is expected to instil, not by set lessons from professors, which he may charge in the bill, but at school-intervals, as he walks the streets, or saunters through green fields (those natural instructors), with his pupils. The least part of what is expected from him, is to be done in school-hours. He must insinuate knowledge at the *mollia tempora fandi*. He must seize every occasion — the season of the year — the time of the day — a passing cloud — a rainbow — a waggon of hay — a regiment of soldiers going by — to inculcate something useful. He can

receive no pleasure from a casual glimpse of nature, but must catch at it as an object of instruction. He must interpret beauty into the picturesque. He cannot relish a beggar-man, or a gipsy, for thinking of the suitable improvement. Nothing
 5 comes to him, not spoiled by the sophisticating medium of moral uses. The Universe — that Great Book, as it has been called — is to him indeed, to all intents and purposes, a book, out of which he is doomed to read tedious homilies to distasteful schoolboys. — Vacations themselves are none to him, he is
 10 only rather worse off than before ; for commonly he has some intrusive upper-boy fastened upon him at such times ; some cadet of a great family ; some neglected lump of nobility, or gentry ; that he must drag after him to the play, to the Panorama, to Mr. Bartley's Orrery, to the Panopticon, or into the
 15 country, to a friend's house, or his favourite watering-place. Wherever he goes, this uneasy shadow attends him. A boy is at his board, and in his path, and in all his movements. He is boy-rid, sick of perpetual boy.

Boys are capital fellows in their own way, among their mates ;
 20 but they are unwholesome companions for grown people. The restraint is felt no less on the one side, than on the other. — Even a child, that “ plaything for an hour,” tires *always*. The noises of children, playing their own fancies — as I now hearken to them by fits, sporting on the green before my window, while
 25 I am engaged in these grave speculations at my neat suburban retreat at Shacklewell — by distance made more sweet — inexpressibly take from the labour of my task. It is like writing to music. They seem to modulate my periods. They ought at least to do so — for in the voice of that tender age there is a
 30 kind of poetry, far unlike the harsh prose-accent of man's conversation. — I should but spoil their sport, and diminish my own sympathy for them, by mingling in their pastime.

I would not be domesticated all my days with a person of very superior capacity to my own — not, if I know myself at

all, from any considerations of jealousy, or self-comparison, for the occasional communion with such minds has constituted the fortune and felicity of my life — but the habit of too constant intercourse with spirits above you, instead of raising you, keeps you down. Too frequent doses of original thinking from others, 5 restrain what lesser portion of that faculty you may possess of your own. You get entangled in another man's mind, even as you lose yourself in another man's grounds. You are walking with a tall varlet, whose strides out-pace yours to lassitude. The constant operation of such potent agency would reduce 10 me, I am convinced, to imbecility. You may derive thoughts from others; your way of thinking, the mould in which your thoughts are cast, must be your own. Intellect may be imparted, but not each man's intellectual frame.

As little as I should wish to be always thus dragged upwards, 15 as little (or rather still less) is it desirable to be stunted downwards by your associates. The trumpet does not more stun you by its loudness, than a whisper teases you by its provoking inaudibility.

Why are we never quite at our ease in the presence of a 20 schoolmaster?— because we are conscious that he is not quite at his ease in ours. He is awkward, and out of place, in the society of his equals. He comes like Gulliver from among his little people, and he cannot fit the stature of his understanding to yours. He cannot meet you on the square. He wants a 25 point given him, like an indifferent whist-player. He is so used to teaching, that he wants to be teaching *you*. One of these professors, upon my complaining that these little sketches of mine were anything but methodical, and that I was unable to make them otherwise, kindly offered to instruct me in the 30 method by which young gentlemen in *his* seminary were taught to compose English themes. — The jests of a schoolmaster are coarse, or thin. They do not *tell* out of school. He is under the restraint of a formal and didactive hypocrisy in company, as

a clergyman is under a moral one. He can no more let his intellect loose in society, than the other can his inclinations. — He is forlorn among his co-evals; his juniors cannot be his friends.

5 “I take blame to myself,” said a sensible man of this profession, writing to a friend respecting a youth who had quitted his school abruptly, “that your nephew was not more attached to me. But persons in my situation are more to be pitied, than can well be imagined. We are surrounded by
 10 young, and, consequently, ardently affectionate hearts, but *we* can never hope to share an atom of their affections. The relation of master and scholar forbids this. *How pleasing this must be to you, how I envy your feelings*, my friends will sometimes say to me, when they see young men, whom I have
 15 educated, return after some years’ absence from school, their eyes shining with pleasure, while they shake hands with their old master, bringing a present of game to me, or a toy to my wife, and thanking me in the warmest terms for my care of their education. A holiday is begged for the boys; the house
 20 is a scene of happiness; I, only, am sad at heart. — This fine-spirited and warm-hearted youth, who fancies he repays his master with gratitude for the care of his boyish years — this young man — in the eight long years I watched over him with a parent’s anxiety, never could repay me with one look of
 25 genuine feeling. He was proud, when I praised; he was submissive, when I reproved him; but he did never *love* me — and what he now mistakes for gratitude and kindness for me, is but the pleasant sensation, which all persons feel at re-visiting the scene of their boyish hopes and fears; and the seeing on equal
 30 terms the man they were accustomed to look up to with reverence. My wife, too,” this interesting correspondent goes on to say, “my once darling Anna, is the wife of a schoolmaster. — When I married her — knowing that the wife of a schoolmaster ought to be a busy notable creature, and fearing that my gentle

Anna would ill supply the loss of my dear bustling mother, just then dead, who never sat still, was in every part of the house in a moment, and whom I was obliged sometimes to threaten to fasten down in a chair, to save her from fatiguing herself to death — I expressed my fears, that I was bringing her into a way of life unsuitable to her ; and she, who loved me tenderly, promised for my sake to exert herself to perform the duties of her new situation. She promised, and she has kept her word. What wonders will not a woman's love perform? — My house is managed with a propriety and decorum, unknown in other schools ; my boys are well fed, look healthy, and have every proper accommodation ; and all this performed with careful economy, that never descends to meanness. But I have lost my gentle, *helpless* Anna ! — When we sit down to enjoy an hour of repose after the fatigue of the day, I am compelled to listen to what have been her useful (and they are really useful) employments through the day, and what she proposes for her to-morrow's task. Her heart and her features are changed by the duties of her situation. To the boys, she never appears other than the *master's wife*, and she looks up to me as the *boys' master* ; to whom all show of love and affection would be highly improper, and unbecoming the dignity of her situation and mine. Yet *this* my gratitude forbids me to hint to her. For my sake she submitted to be this altered creature, and can I reproach her for it? [These kind of complaints are not often drawn from me. I am aware that I am a fortunate, I mean a prosperous man.] — For the communication of this letter, I am indebted to my cousin Bridget.

XXV. MY FIRST PLAY

AT the north end of Cross-court there yet stands a portal, of some architectural pretensions, though reduced to humble use, serving at present for an entrance to a printing-office. This old door-way, if you are young, reader, you may not know was
5 the identical pit entrance to Old Drury — Garrick's Drury — all of it that is left. I never pass it without shaking some forty years from off my shoulders, recurring to the evening when I passed through it to see *my first play*. The afternoon had been wet, and the condition of our going (the elder folks
10 and myself) was, that the rain should cease. With what a beating heart did I watch from the window the puddles, from the stillness of which I was taught to prognosticate the desired cessation! I seem to remember the last spurt, and the glee with which I ran to announce it.

15 We went with orders, which my godfather F. had sent us. He kept the oil shop (now Davies's) at the corner of Featherstone-building, in Holborn. F. was a tall grave person, lofty in speech, and had pretensions above his rank. He associated in those days with John Palmer, the comedian, whose gait and
20 bearing he seemed to copy; if John (which is quite as likely) did not rather borrow somewhat of his manner from my godfather. He was also known to, and visited by, Sheridan. It was to his house in Holborn that young Brinsley brought his first wife on her elopement with him from a boarding-school at Bath
25 — the beautiful Maria Linley. My parents were present (over a quadrille table) when he arrived in the evening with his harmonious charge. — From either of these connexions it may be inferred that my godfather could command an order for the then Drury-lane theatre at pleasure — and, indeed, a pretty
30 liberal issue of those cheap billets, in Brinsley's easy autograph, I have heard him say was the sole remuneration which he had

received for many years' nightly illumination of the orchestra and various avenues of that theatre — and he was content it should be so. The honour of Sheridan's familiarity — or supposed familiarity was — better to my godfather than money.

F. was the most gentlemanly of oilmen ; grandiloquent, yet 5
courteous. His delivery of the commonest matters of fact was Ciceronian. He had two Latin words almost constantly in his mouth (how odd sounds Latin from an oilman's lips !), which my better knowledge since has enabled me to correct. In strict pronunciation they should have been sounded *vice versa* 10
— but in those young years they impressed me with more awe than they would now do, read aright from Seneca or Varro — in his own peculiar pronunciation, monosyllabically elaborated, or Anglicized, into something like *verse verse*. By an imposing manner, and the help of these distorted syllables, he climbed 15
(but that was little) to the highest parochial honours which St. Andrew's has to bestow.

He is dead — and thus much I thought due to his memory, both for my first orders (little wondrous talismans ! — slight keys, and insignificant to outward sight, but opening to me 20
more than Arabian paradises !) and moreover, that by his testamentary beneficence I came into possession of the only landed property which I could ever call my own — situate near the road-way village of pleasant Puckeridge, in Hertfordshire. When I journeyed down to take possession, and planted foot 25
on my own ground, the stately habits of the donor descended upon me, and I strode (shall I confess the vanity ?) with larger paces over my allotment of three-quarters of an acre, with its commodious mansion in the midst, with the feeling of an English freeholder that all betwixt sky and centre was my own. 30
The estate has passed into more prudent hands, and nothing but an agrarian can restore it.

In those days were pit orders. Beshrew the uncomfortable manager who abolished them ! — with one of these we went.

I remember the waiting at the door — not that which is left — but between that and an inner door in shelter — O when shall I be such an expectant again! — with the cry of nonpareils, an indispensable play-house accompaniment in those days. As
5 near as I can recollect, the fashionable pronunciation of the theatrical fruiteresses then was, “Chase some oranges, chase some numparels, chase a bill of the play;” — chase *pro* chuse. But when we got in, and I beheld the green curtain that veiled
10 a heaven to my imagination, which was soon to be disclosed — the breathless anticipations I endured! I had seen something like it in the plate prefixed to Troilus and Cressida, in Rowe’s Shakespeare — the tent scene with Diomede — and a sight of that plate can always bring back in a measure the feeling of that evening. — The boxes at that time, full of well-dressed women
15 of quality, projected over the pit; and the pilasters reaching down were adorned with a glistening substance (I know not what) under glass (as it seemed), resembling — a homely fancy — but I judged it to be sugar-candy — yet, to my raised imagination, divested of its homelier qualities, it appeared a glorified
20 candy! — The orchestra lights at length arose, those “fair Auroras!” Once the bell sounded. It was to ring out yet once again — and, incapable of the anticipation, I reposed my shut eyes in a sort of resignation upon the maternal lap. It rang the second time. The curtain drew up — I was not past
25 six years old — and the play was Artaxerxes!

I had dabbled a little in the Universal History — the ancient part of it — and here was the court of Persia. It was being admitted to a sight of the past. I took no proper interest in the action going on, for I understood not its import — but I heard
30 the word Darius, and I was in the midst of Daniel. All feeling was absorbed in vision. Gorgeous vests, gardens, palaces, princesses, passed before me. I knew not players. I was in Persepolis for the time; and the burning idol of their devotion almost converted me into a worshipper. I was awestruck,

and believed those significations to be something more than elemental fires. It was all enchantment and a dream. No such pleasure has since visited me but in dreams.—Harlequin's Invasion followed; where, I remember, the transformation of the magistrates into reverend beldams seemed to me a piece 5 of grave historic justice, and the tailor carrying his own head to be as sober a verity as the legend of St. Denys.

The next play to which I was taken was the *Lady of the Manor*, of which, with the exception of some scenery, very faint traces are left in my memory. It was followed by a pan- 10 tomime, called *Lun's Ghost*—a satiric touch, I apprehend, upon Rich, not long since dead—but to my apprehension (too sincere for satire), Lun was as remote a piece of antiquity as Lud—the father of a line of Harlequins—transmitting his dagger of lath (the wooden sceptre) through countless 15 ages. I saw the primeval Motley come from his silent tomb in a ghastly vest of white patch-work, like the apparition of a dead rainbow. So Harlequins (thought I) look when they are dead.

My third play followed in quick succession. It was the 20 *Way of the World*. I think I must have sat at it as grave as a judge; for, I remember, the hysteric affectations of good Lady Wishfort affected me like some solemn tragic passion. *Robinson Crusoe* followed; in which *Crusoe*, man Friday, and the parrot, were as good and authentic as in the story.—The 25 clownery and pantaloony of these pantomimes have clean passed out of my head. I believe, I no more laughed at them, than at the same age I should have been disposed to laugh at the grotesque Gothic heads (seeming to me then replete with devout meaning) that gape, and grin, in stone around the 30 inside of the old Round Church (my church) of the Templars.

I saw these plays in the season 1781-2, when I was from six to seven years old. After the intervention of six or seven other years (for at school all play-going was inhibited) I again

entered the doors of a theatre. The old Artaxerxes evening had never done ringing in my fancy. I expected the same feelings to come again with the same occasion. But we differ from ourselves less at sixty and sixteen, than the latter does
5 from six. In that interval what had I not lost! At the first period I knew nothing, understood nothing, discriminated nothing. I felt all, loved all, wondered all —

Was nourished, I could not tell how—

I had left the temple a devotee, and was returned a rationalist.
10 The same things were there materially; but the emblem, the reference, was gone!—The green curtain was no longer a veil, drawn between two worlds, the unfolding of which was to bring back past ages, to present “a royal ghost,”—but a certain quantity of green baize, which was to separate the
15 audience for a given time from certain of their fellow-men who were to come forward and pretend those parts. The lights—the orchestra lights—came up a clumsy machinery. The first ring, and the second ring, was now but a trick of the prompter’s bell—which had been, like the note of the
20 cuckoo, a phantom of a voice, no hand seen or guessed at which ministered to its warning. The actors were men and women painted. I thought the fault was in them; but it was in myself, and the alteration which those many centuries—of six short twelvemonths—had wrought in me.—Perhaps it
25 was fortunate for me that the play of the evening was but an indifferent comedy, as it gave me time to crop some unreasonable expectations, which might have interfered with the genuine emotions with which I was soon after enabled to enter upon the first appearance to me of Mrs. Siddons in *Isabella*.
30 Comparison and retrospection soon yielded to the present attraction of the scene; and the theatre became to me, upon a new stock, the most delightful of recreations.

XXVI. MODERN GALLANTRY

IN comparing modern with ancient manners, we are pleased to compliment ourselves upon the point of gallantry; a certain obsequiousness, or deferential respect, which we are supposed to pay to females, as females.

I shall believe that this principle actuates our conduct, when I can forget, that in the nineteenth century of the era from which we date our civility, we are but just beginning to leave off the very frequent practice of whipping females in public, in common with the coarsest male offenders.

I shall believe it to be influential, when I can shut my eyes to the fact, that in England women are still occasionally — hanged.

I shall believe in it, when actresses are no longer subject to be hissed off a stage by gentlemen.

I shall believe in it, when Dorimant hands a fish-wife across the kennel; or assists the apple-woman to pick up her wandering fruit, which some unlucky dray has just dissipated.

I shall believe in it, when the Dorimants in humbler life, who would be thought in their way notable adepts in this refinement, shall act upon it in places where they are not known, or think themselves not observed — when I shall see the traveller for some rich tradesman part with his admired box-coat, to spread it over the defenceless shoulders of the poor woman, who is passing to her parish on the roof of the same stage-coach with him, drenched in the rain — when I shall no longer see a woman standing up in the pit of a London theatre, till she is sick and faint with the exertion, with men about her, seated at their ease, and jeering at her distress; till one, that seems to have more manners or conscience than the rest, significantly declares “she should be welcome to his seat, if she were a little younger and handsomer.” Place this

dapper warehouseman, or that rider, in a circle of their own female acquaintance, and you shall confess you have not seen a politer-bred man in Lothbury.

Lastly, I shall begin to believe that there is some such
5 principle influencing our conduct, when more than one-half of the drudgery and coarse servitude of the world shall cease to be performed by women.

Until that day comes, I shall never believe this boasted point to be anything more than a conventional fiction; a
10 pageant got up between the sexes, in a certain rank, and at a certain time of life, in which both find their account equally.

I shall be even disposed to rank it among the salutary fictions of life, when in polite circles I shall see the same attentions paid to age as to youth, to homely features as to
15 handsome, to coarse complexions as to clear — to the woman, as she is a woman, not as she is a beauty, a fortune, or a title.

I shall believe it to be something more than a name, when a well-dressed gentleman in a well-dressed company can advert to the topic of *female old age* without exciting, and intending
20 to excite, a sneer: — when the phrases “antiquated virginity,” and such a one has “overstood her market,” pronounced in good company, shall raise immediate offence in man, or woman, that shall hear them spoken.

Joseph Paice, of Bread Street Hill, merchant, and one of
25 the Directors of the South-Sea Company — the same to whom Edwards, the Shakespeare commentator, has addressed a fine sonnet — was the only pattern of consistent gallantry I have met with. He took me under his shelter at an early age, and bestowed some pains upon me. I owe to his precepts and
30 example whatever there is of the man of business (and that is not much) in my composition. It was not his fault that I did not profit more. Though bred a Presbyterian, and brought up a merchant, he was the finest gentleman of his time. He had not *one* system of attention to females in the drawing-room,

and *another* in the shop, or at the stall. I do not mean that he made no distinction. But he never lost sight of sex, or overlooked it in the casualties of a disadvantageous situation. I have seen him stand bare-headed — smile if you please — to a poor servant girl, while she has been inquiring of him the way to some street — in such a posture of unforced civility, as neither to embarrass her in the acceptance, nor himself in the offer, of it. He was no dangler, in the common acceptation of the word, after women : but he revered and upheld, in every form in which it came before him, *womanhood*. I have seen him — nay, smile not — tenderly escorting a market-woman, whom he had encountered in a shower, exalting his umbrella over her poor basket of fruit, that it might receive no damage, with as much carefulness as if she had been a Countess. To the reverend form of Female Eld he would yield the wall (though it were to an ancient beggar-woman) with more ceremony than we can afford to show our grandams. He was the Preux Chevalier of Age ; the Sir Calidore, or Sir Tristan, to those who have no Calidores or Tristans to defend them. The roses, that had long faded thence, still bloomed for him in those withered and yellow cheeks.

He was never married, but in his youth he paid his addresses to the beautiful Susan Winstanley — old Winstanley's daughter of Clapton — who, dying in the early days of their courtship, confirmed in him the resolution of perpetual bachelorship. It was during their short courtship, he told me, that he had been one day treating his mistress with a profusion of civil speeches — the common gallantries — to which kind of thing she had hitherto manifested no repugnance — but in this instance with no effect. He could not obtain from her a decent acknowledgment in return. She rather seemed to resent his compliments. He could not set it down to caprice, for the lady had always shown herself above that littleñess. When he ventured on the following day, finding her a little better humoured, to

expostulate with her on her coldness of yesterday, she confessed, with her usual frankness, that she had no sort of dislike to his attentions ; that she could even endure some high-flown compliments ; that a young woman placed in her situation
5 had a right to expect all sort of civil things said to her ; that she hoped she could digest a dose of adulation, short of insincerity, with as little injury to her humility as most young women: but that—a little before he had commenced his compliments—she had overheard him by accident, in rather
10 rough language, rating a young woman, who had not brought home his cravats quite to the appointed time, and she thought to herself, “As I am Miss Susan Winstanley, and a young lady—a reputed beauty, and known to be a fortune,—I can have my choice of the finest speeches from the mouth of this very
15 fine gentleman who is courting me—but if I had been poor Mary Such-a-one (*naming the milliner*),—and had failed of bringing home the cravats to the appointed hour—though perhaps I had sat up half the night to forward them—what sort of compliments should I have received then?—And my
20 woman’s pride came to my assistance ; and I thought, that if it were only to do *me* honour, a female, like myself, might have received handsomer usage : and I was determined not to accept any fine speeches, to the compromise of that sex, the belonging to which was after all my strongest claim and
25 title to them.”

I think the lady discovered both generosity, and a just way of thinking, in this rebuke which she gave her lover ; and I have sometimes imagined, that the uncommon strain of courtesy, which through life regulated the actions and behaviour of my
30 friend towards all of womankind indiscriminately, owed its happy origin to this seasonable lesson from the lips of his lamented mistress.

I wish the whole female world would entertain the same notion of these things that Miss Winstanley showed. Then

we should see something of the spirit of consistent gallantry ; and no longer witness the anomaly of the same man — a pattern of true politeness to a wife — of cold contempt, or rudeness, to a sister — the idolater of his female mistress — the disparager and despiser of his no less female aunt, or 5
 unfortunate — still female — maiden cousin. Just so much respect as a woman derogates from her own sex, in whatever condition placed — her handmaid, or dependent — she deserves to have diminished from herself on that score ; and probably will feel the diminution, when youth, and beauty, and advan- 10
 tages, not inseparable from sex, shall lose of their attraction. What a woman should demand of a man in courtship, or after it, is first — respect for her as she is a woman ; — and next to that — to be respected by him above all other women. But let her stand upon her female character as upon a foundation ; 15
 and let the attentions, incident to individual preference, be so many pretty additaments and ornaments — as many, and as fanciful, as you please — to that main structure. Let her first lesson be — with sweet Susan Winstanley — to *reverence her sex*.

20

XXVII. DISTANT CORRESPONDENTS

In a Letter to B. F., Esq., at Sydney, New South Wales

My dear F. — When I think how welcome the sight of a letter from the world where you were born must be to you in that strange one to which you have been transplanted, I feel some compunctious visitings at my long silence. But, indeed, it is no easy effort to set about a correspondence at our dis- 25
 tance. The weary world of waters between us oppresses the imagination. It is difficult to conceive how a scrawl of mine should ever stretch across it. It is a sort of presumption to expect that one's thoughts should live so far. It is like writing

for posterity; and reminds me of one of Mrs. Rowe's superscriptions, "Alcander to Strephon, in the Shades." Cowley's Post-Angel is no more than would be expedient in such an intercourse. One drops a packet at Lombard-street, and in
5 twenty-four hours a friend in Cumberland gets it as fresh as if it came in ice. It is only like whispering through a long trumpet. But suppose a tube let down from the moon, with yourself at one end, and *the man* at the other; it would be some balk to the spirit of conversation, if you knew that the dialogue
10 exchanged with that interesting theosophist would take two or three revolutions of a higher luminary in its passage. Yet for aught I know, you may be some parasangs nigher that primitive idea — Plato's man — than we in England here have the honour to reckon ourselves.

15 Epistolary matter usually compriseth three topics; news, sentiment, and puns. In the latter, I include all non-serious subjects; or subjects serious in themselves, but treated after my fashion, non-seriously. — And first, for news. In them the most desirable circumstance, I suppose, is that they shall be
20 true. But what security can I have that what I now send you for truth shall not before you get it unaccountably turn into a lie? For instance, our mutual friend P. is at this present writing — *my Now* — in good health, and enjoys a fair share of worldly reputation. You are glad to hear it. This is natural
25 and friendly. But at this present reading — *your Now* — he may possibly be in the Bench, or going to be hanged, which in reason ought to abate something of your transport (*i.e.*, at hearing he was well, &c.), or at least considerably to modify it. I am going to the play this evening, to have a laugh with
30 Munden. You have no theatre, I think you told me, in your land of d——d realities. You naturally lick your lips, and envy me my felicity. Think but a moment, and you will correct the hateful emotion. Why, it is Sunday morning with you, and
1823. This confusion of tenses, this grand solecism of *two*

presents, is in a degree common to all postage. But if I sent you word to Bath or the Devises, that I was expecting the aforesaid treat this evening, though at the moment you received the intelligence my full feast of fun would be over, yet there would be for a day or two after, as you would well know, a 5
smack, a relish left upon my mental palate, which would give rational encouragement for you to foster a portion at least of the disagreeable passion, which it was in part my intention to produce. But ten months hence your envy or your sympathy would be as useless as a passion spent upon the dead. Not 10
only does truth, in these long intervals, un-essence herself, but (what is harder) one cannot venture a crude fiction for the fear that it may ripen into a truth upon the voyage. What a wild improbable banter I put upon you some three years since — of Will Weatherall having married a servant-maid! I 15
remember gravely consulting you how we were to receive her — for Will's wife was in no case to be rejected; and your no less serious replication in the matter; how tenderly you advised an abstemious introduction of literary topics before the lady, with a caution not to be too forward in bringing on the car- 20
pet matters more within the sphere of her intelligence; your deliberate judgment, or rather wise suspension of sentence, how far jacks, and spits, and mops could with propriety be introduced as subjects; whether the conscious avoiding of all such matters in discourse would not have a worse look than 25
the taking of them casually in our way; in what manner we should carry ourselves to our maid Becky, Mrs. William Weatherall being by; whether we should show more delicacy, and a truer sense of respect for Will's wife, by treating Becky with our customary chiding before her, or by an unusual defer- 30
ential civility paid to Becky as to a person of great worth, but thrown by the caprice of fate into a humble station. There were difficulties, I remember, on both sides, which you did me the favour tostate with the precision of a lawyer, united to the

tenderness of a friend. I laughed in my sleeve at your solemn pleadings, when lo ! while I was valuing myself upon this flam put upon you in New South Wales, the devil in England, jealous possibly of any lie-children not his own, or working after my copy, 5 has actually instigated our friend (not three days since) to the commission of a matrimony, which I had only conjured up for your diversion. William Weatherall has married Mrs. Cotterel's maid. But to take it in its truest sense, you will see, my dear F., that news from me must become history to you ; which I 10 neither profess to write, nor indeed care much for reading. No person, under a diviner, can with any prospect of veracity conduct a correspondence at such an arm's length. Two prophets, indeed, might thus interchange intelligence with effect ; the epoch of the writer (Habakkuk) falling in with the true present 15 time of the receiver (Daniel) ; but then we are no prophets.

Then as to sentiment. It fares little better with that. This kind of dish, above all, requires to be served up hot ; or sent off in water-plates, that your friend may have it almost as warm as yourself. If it have time to cool, it is the most tasteless of 20 all cold meats. I have often smiled at a conceit of the late Lord C. It seems that travelling somewhere about Geneva, he came to some pretty green spot, or nook, where a willow, or something, hung so fantastically and invitingly over a stream — was it? — or a rock? — no matter — but the stillness and 25 the repose, after a weary journey 't is likely, in a languid moment of his lordship's hot restless life, so took his fancy, that he could imagine no place so proper, in the event of his death, to lay his bones in. This was all very natural and excusable as a sentiment, and shows his character in a very 30 pleasing light. But when from a passing sentiment it came to be an act ; and when, by a positive testamentary disposal, his remains were actually carried all that way from England ; who was there, some desperate sentimentalists excepted, that did not ask the question, Why could not his lordship have

found a spot as solitary, a nook as romantic, a tree as green and pendent, with a stream as emblematic to his purpose, in Surrey, in Dorset, or in Devon? Conceive the sentiment boarded up, freighted, entered at the Custom House (startling the tide-waiters with the novelty), hoisted into a ship. Conceive it pawed about and handled between the rude jests of tarpaulin ruffians — a thing of its delicate texture — the salt bilge wetting it till it became as vapid as a damaged lustring. Suppose it in material danger (mariners have some superstition about sentiments) of being tossed over in a fresh gale to some propitiatory shark (spirit of Saint Gothard, save us from a quietus so foreign to the deviser's purpose !) but it has happily evaded a fishy consummation. Trace it then to its lucky landing — at Lyons shall we say? — I have not the map before me — jostled upon four men's shoulders — baiting at this town — stopping to refresh at t' other village — waiting a passport here, a licence there ; the sanction of the magistracy in this district, the concurrence of the ecclesiastics in that canton ; till at length it arrives at its destination, tired out and jaded, from a brisk sentiment, into a feature of silly pride or tawdry senseless affectation. How few sentiments, my dear F., I am afraid we can set down, in the sailor's phrase, as quite sea-worthy.

Lastly, as to the agreeable levities, which, though contemptible in bulk, are the twinkling corpuscula which should irradiate a right friendly epistle — your puns and small jests are, I apprehend, extremely circumscribed in their sphere of action. They are so far from a capacity of being packed up and sent beyond sea, they will scarce endure to be transported by hand from this room to the next. Their vigour is as the instant of their birth. Their nutriment for their brief existence is the intellectual atmosphere of the bystanders : or this last, is the fine slime of Nilus — the *melior lutus*, — whose maternal reciprocity is as necessary as the *sol pater* to their equivocal generation. A pun hath a hearty kind of present ear-kissing smack

with it; you can no more transmit it in its pristine flavour, than you can send a kiss. — Have you not tried in some instances to palm off a yesterday's pun upon a gentleman, and has it answered? Not but it was new to his hearing, but it
 5 did not seem to come new from you. It did not hitch in. It was like picking up at a village ale-house a two days old newspaper. You have not seen it before, but you resent the stale thing as an affront. This sort of merchandise above all requires a quick return. A pun, and its recognitory laugh,
 10 must be co-instantaneous. The one is the brisk lightning, the other the fierce thunder. A moment's interval, and the link is snapped. A pun is reflected from a friend's face as from a mirror. Who would consult his sweet visnomy, if the polished surface were two or three minutes (not to speak of
 15 twelve months, my dear F.) in giving back its copy?

I cannot imagine to myself whereabouts you are. When I try to fix it, Peter Wilkins's island comes across me. Sometimes you seem to be in the *Hades* of *Thieves*. I see Diogenes prying among you with his perpetual fruitless lantern. What
 20 must you be willing by this time to give for the sight of an honest man! You must almost have forgotten how *we* look. And tell me, what your Sydneyites do? are they th**v*ng all day long? Merciful heaven! what property can stand against such a depredation! The kangaroos — your Aborigines — do
 25 they keep their primitive simplicity un-Europe-tainted, with those little short fore-puds, looking like a lesson framed by nature to the pickpocket! Marry, for diving into fobs they are rather lamely provided *à priori*; but if the hue and cry were once up, they would show as fair a pair of hind-shifters
 30 as the expertest loco-motor in the colony. — We hear the most improbable tales at this distance. Pray, is it true that the young Spartans among you are born with six fingers, which spoils their scanning? — It must look very odd; but use reconciles. For their scansion, it is less to be regretted, for if they take it into their heads to be poets, it is odds but they turn

out, the greater part of them, vile plagiarists. — Is there much difference to see to between the son of a th**f, and the grandson? or where does the taint stop? Do you bleach in three or in four generations? — I have many questions to put, but ten Delphic voyages can be made in a shorter time than it 5 will take to satisfy my scruples. — Do you grow your own hemp? — What is your staple trade, exclusive of the national profession, I mean? Your lock-smiths, I take it, are some of your great capitalists.

I am insensibly chattering to you as familiarly as when we 10 used to exchange good-morrows out of our old contiguous windows, in pump-famed Hare-court in the Temple. Why did you ever leave that quiet corner? — Why did I? — with its complement of four poor elms, from whose smoke-dried barks, the theme of jesting ruralists, I picked my first lady-birds! 15 My heart is as dry as that spring sometimes proves in a thirsty August, when I revert to the space that is between us; a length of passage enough to render obsolete the phrases of our English letters before they can reach you. But while I talk, I think you hear me, — thoughts dallying with vain surmise — 20

Ay me! while thee the seas and sounding shores
Hold far away.

Come back, before I am grown into a very old man, so as you shall hardly know me. Come, before Bridget walks on crutches. Girls whom you left children have become sage 25 matrons, while you are tarrying there. The blooming Miss W——r (you remember Sally W——r) called upon us yesterday, an aged crone. Folks, whom you knew, die off every year. Formerly, I thought that death was wearing out, — I stood ramparted about with so many healthy friends. The de- 30 parture of J. W., two springs back, corrected my delusion. Since then the old divorcer has been busy. If you do not make haste to return, there will be little left to greet you, of me, or mine.

XXVIII. A COMPLAINT OF THE DECAY OF BEGGARS
IN THE METROPOLIS

THE all-sweeping besom of societarian reformation — your only modern Alcides' club to rid the time of its abuses — is uplift with many-handed sway to extirpate the last fluttering tatters of the bugbear MENDICITY from the metropolis. Scrips, 5 wallets, bags — staves, dogs, and crutches — the whole mendicant fraternity with all their baggage, are fast posting out of the purlieu of this eleventh persecution. From the crowded crossing, from the corners of streets and turnings of alleys, the parting Genius of Beggary is “with sighing sent.”

10 I do not approve of this wholesale going to work, this impertinent crusade, or *bellum ad exterminationem*, proclaimed against a species. Much good might be sucked from these Beggars.

They were the oldest and the honourablest form of pauperism. 15 Their appeals were to our common nature ; less revolting to an ingenuous mind than to be a suppliant to the particular humours or caprice of any fellow-creature, or set of fellow-creatures, parochial or societarian. Theirs were the only rates uninvincible in the levy, ungrudged in the assessment.

20 There was a dignity springing from the very depth of their desolation ; as to be naked is to be so much nearer to the being a man, than to go in livery.

The greatest spirits have felt this in their reverses ; and when Dionysius from king turned schoolmaster, do we feel anything 25 towards him but contempt? Could Vandyke have made a picture of him, swaying a ferula for a sceptre, which would have affected our minds with the same heroic pity, the same compassionate admiration, with which we regard his Belisarius begging for an *obolus* ? Would the moral have been more 30 graceful, more pathetic?

The Blind Beggar in the legend — the father of pretty Bessy — whose story doggerel rhymes and ale-house signs cannot so degrade or attenuate, but that some sparks of a lustrous spirit will shine through the disguisements — this noble Earl of Cornwall (as indeed he was) and memorable sport of fortune, fleeing from the unjust sentence of his liege lord, stript of all, and seated on the flowering green of Bethnal, with his more fresh and springing daughter by his side, illumining his rags and his beggary — would the child and parent have cut a better figure, doing the honours of a counter, or expiating their fallen condition upon the three-foot eminence of some sempstering shop-board?

In tale or history your Beggar is ever the just antipode to your King. The poets and romancical writers (as dear Margaret Newcastle would call them), when they would most sharply and feelingly paint a reverse of fortune, never stop till they have brought down their hero in good earnest to rags and the wallet. The depth of the descent illustrates the height he falls from. There is no medium which can be presented to the imagination without offence. There is no breaking the fall. Lear, thrown from his palace, must divest him of his garments, till he answer “mere nature;” and Cresseid, fallen from a prince’s love, must extend her pale arms, pale with other whiteness than of beauty, supplicating lazar alms with bell and clap-dish.

The Lucian wits knew this very well; and, with a converse policy, when they would express scorn of greatness without the pity, they show us an Alexander in the shades cobbling shoes, or a Semiramis getting up foul linen.

How would it sound in song, that a great monarch had declined his affections upon the daughter of a baker! yet do we feel the imagination at all violated when we read the “true ballad,” where King Cophetua woos the beggar maid?

Pauperism, pauper, poor man, are expressions of pity, but pity alloyed with contempt. No one properly contemns a

beggar. Poverty is a comparative thing, and each degree of it is mocked by its "neighbour grice." Its poor rents and comings-in are soon summed up and told. Its pretences to property are almost ludicrous. Its pitiful attempts to save
 5 excite a smile. Every scornful companion can weigh his trifle-bigger purse against it. Poor man reproaches poor man in the streets with impolitic mention of his condition, his own being a shade better, while the rich pass by and jeer at both. No rascally comparative insults a Beggar, or thinks of weighing
 10 purses with him. He is not in the scale of comparison. He is not under the measure of property. He confessedly hath none, any more than a dog or a sheep. No one twitteth him with ostentation above his means. No one accuses him of pride, or upbraideth him with mock humility. None jostle with him for
 15 the wall, or pick quarrels for precedency. No wealthy neighbour seeketh to eject him from his tenement. No man sues him. No man goes to law with him. If I were not the independent gentleman that I am, rather than I would be a retainer to the great, a led captain, or a poor relation, I would choose,
 20 out of the delicacy and true greatness of my mind, to be a Beggar.

Rags, which are the reproach of poverty, are the Beggar's robes, and graceful *insignia* of his profession, his tenure, his full dress, the suit in which he is expected to show himself in
 25 public. He is never out of the fashion, or limpeth awkwardly behind it. He is not required to put on court mourning. He weareth all colours, fearing none. His costume hath undergone less change than the Quaker's. He is the only man in the universe who is not obliged to study appearances. The ups
 30 and downs of the world concern him no longer. He alone continueth in one stay. The price of stock or land affecteth him not. The fluctuations of agricultural or commercial prosperity touch him not, or at worst but change his customers. He is not expected to become bail or surety for any one. No

man troubleth him with questioning his religion or politics. He is the only free man in the universe.

The Mendicants of this great city were so many of her sights, her lions. I can no more spare them than I could the Cries of London. No corner of a street is complete without them. 5 They are as indispensable as the Ballad Singer; and in their picturesque attire as ornamental as the Signs of Old London. They were the standing morals, emblems, mementoes, dial-mottoes, the spital sermons, the books for children, the salutary checks and pauses to the high and rushing tide of greasy 10 citizenry —

——— Look

Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there.

Above all, those old blind Tobits that used to line the wall of Lincoln's Inn Garden, before modern fastidiousness had 15 expelled them, casting up their ruined orbs to catch a ray of pity, and (if possible) of light, with their faithful dog guide at their feet, — whither are they fled? or into what corners, blind as themselves, have they been driven, out of the wholesome air and sun-warmth? immured between four walls, in what with- 20 ering poor-house do they endure the penalty of double darkness, where the chink of the dropt half-penny no more consoles their forlorn bereavement, far from the sound of the cheerful and hope-stirring tread of the passenger? Where hang their useless staves? and who will farm their dogs? — Have the over- 25 seers of St. L—— caused them to be shot? or were they tied up in sacks and dropt into the Thames, at the suggestion of B——, the mild rector of ——?

Well fare the soul of unfastidious Vincent Bourne, most classical, and at the same time, most English, of the Latinists! 30 — who has treated of this human and quadrupedal alliance, this dog and man friendship, in the sweetest of his poems, the *Epitaphium in Canem*, or, *Dog's Epitaph*. Reader, peruse

it; and say, if customary sights, which could call up such gentle poetry as this, were of a nature to do more harm or good to the moral sense of the passengers through the daily thoroughfares of a vast and busy metropolis.

- 5 Pauperis hic Iri requiesco Lyciscus, herilis,
 Dum vixi, tutela vigil columenque senectæ,
 Dux cæco fidus : nec, me ducente, solebat,
 Prætense hinc atque hinc baculo, per iniqua locorum
 Incertam explorare viam; sed fila secutus,
 10 Quæ dubios regerent passûs, vestigia tuta
 Fixit inoffenso gressu; gelidumque sedile
 In nudo nactus saxo, quâ prætereuntium
 Unda frequens confluit, ibi miserisque tenebras
 Lamentis, noctemque oculis ploravit obortam.
 15 Ploravit nec frustra; obolum dedit alter et alter,
 Queis corda et mentem indiderat natura benignam.
 Ad latus interea jacui sopitus herile,
 Vel mediis vigil in somnis; ad herilia jussa
 Auresque atque animum arrectus, seu frustula amicè
 20 Porrexit sociasque dapes, seu longa diei
 Tædia perpressus, reditum sub nocte parabat.
 Hi mores, hæc vita fuit, dum fata sinebant,
 Dum neque languebam morbis, nec inerte senectâ;
 Quæ tandem obrepsit, veterique satellite cæcum
 25 Orbavit dominum: prisci sed gratia facti
 Ne tota intereat, longos deleta per annos,
 Exiguum hunc Irus tumulum de cespite fecit,
 Etsi inopis, non ingrata, munuscula dextræ;
 Carmine signavitque brevi, dominumque canemque
 30 Quod memoret, fidumque canem dominumque benignum.

Poor Irus' faithful wolf-dog here I lie,
 That wont to tend my old blind master's steps,
 His guide and guard; nor, while my service lasted,
 Had he occasion for that staff, with which

He now goes picking out his path in fear
 Over the highways and crossings, but would plant
 Safe in the conduct of my friendly string,
 A firm foot forward still, till he had reach'd
 His poor seat on some stone, nigh where the tide 5
 Of passers-by in thickest confluence flow'd :
 To whom with loud and passionate laments
 From morn to eve his dark estate he wail'd.
 Nor wail'd to all in vain : some here and there,
 The well-disposed and good, their pennies gave. 10
 I meantime at his feet obsequious slept ;
 Not all-asleep in sleep, but heart and ear
 Prick'd up at his least motion, to receive
 At his kind hand my customary crumbs,
 And common portion in his feast of scraps ; 15
 Or when night warn'd us homeward, tired and spent
 With our long day, and tedious beggary.

These were my manners, this my way of life,
 Till age and slow disease me overtook,
 And sever'd from my sightless master's side. 20
 But lest the grace of so good deeds should die,
 Through tract of years in mute oblivion lost,
 This slender tomb of turf hath Irus rear'd,
 Cheap monument of no ungrudging hand,
 And with short verse inscribed it, to attest, 25
 In long and lasting union to attest,
 The virtues of the Beggar and his Dog.

These dim eyes have in vain explored for some months
 past a well-known figure, or part of the figure, of a man, who
 used to glide his comely upper half over the pavements of 30
 London, wheeling along with most ingenious celerity upon
 a machine of wood ; a spectacle to natives, to foreigners, and
 to children. He was of a robust make, with a florid sailor-
 like complexion, and his head was bare to the storm and
 sunshine. He was a natural curiosity, a speculation to the 35

scientific, a prodigy to the simple. The infant would stare at the mighty man brought down to his own level. The common cripple would despise his own pusillanimity, viewing the hale stoutness, and hearty heart, of this half-limbed giant. Few
 5 but must have noticed him; for the accident, which brought him low, took place during the riots of 1780, and he has been a groundling so-long. He seemed earth-born, an Antæus, and to suck in fresh vigour from the soil which he neighboured. He was a grand fragment; as good as an Elgin marble. The
 10 nature which should have recruited his reft legs and thighs, was not lost, but only retired into his upper parts, and he was half a Hercules. I heard a tremendous voice thundering and growling, as before an earthquake, and casting down my eyes, it was this mandrake reviling a steed that had started at his
 15 portentous appearance. He seemed to want but his just stature to have rent the offending quadruped in shivers. He was as the man-part of a Centaur, from which the horse-half had been cloven in some dire Lapithan controversy. He moved on as if he could have made shift with yet half of the
 20 body-portion which was left him. The *os sublime* was not wanting; and he threw out yet a jolly countenance upon the heavens. Forty-and-two years had he driven this out-of-door trade, and now that his hair is grizzled in the service, but his good spirits no way impaired, because he is not content to
 25 exchange his free air and exercise for the restraints of a poor-house, he is expiating his contumacy in one of those houses (ironically christened) of Correction.

Was a daily spectacle like this to be deemed a nuisance, which called for legal interference to remove? or not rather a
 30 salutary and a touching object, to the passers-by in a great city? Among her shows, her museums, and supplies for ever-gaping curiosity (and what else but an accumulation of sights — endless sights — *is* a great city; or for what else is it desirable?) was there not room for one *Lusus* (not *Naturæ*, indeed, but)

Accidentium? What if in forty-and-two years' going about, the man had scraped together enough to give a portion to his child (as the rumour ran) of a few hundreds — whom had he injured? — whom had he imposed upon? The contributors had enjoyed their *sight* for their pennies. What if after being 5 exposed all day to the heats, the rains, and the frosts of heaven — shuffling his ungainly trunk along in an elaborate and painful motion — he was enabled to retire at night to enjoy himself at a club of his fellow-cripples over a dish of hot meat and vegetables, as the charge was gravely brought against him by a 10 clergyman deposing before a House of Commons' Committee — was *this*, or was his truly paternal consideration, which (if a fact) deserved a statue rather than a whipping-post, and is inconsistent at least with the exaggeration of nocturnal orgies which he has been slandered with — a reason that he should 15 be deprived of his chosen, harmless, nay edifying, way of life, and be committed in hoary age for a sturdy vagabond? —

There was a Yorick once, whom it would not have shamed to have sate down at the cripples' feast, and to have thrown in his benediction, ay, and his mite too, for a companionable 20 symbol. “Age, thou hast lost thy breed.” —

Half of these stories about the prodigious fortunes made by begging are (I verily believe) misers' calumnies. One was much talked of in the public papers some time since, and the usual charitable inferences deduced. A clerk in the Bank 25 was surprised with the announcement of a five hundred pound legacy left him by a person whose name he was a stranger to. It seems that in his daily morning walks from Peckham (or some village thereabouts) where he lived, to his office, it had been his practice for the last twenty years to drop his half- 30 penny duly into the hat of some blind Bartimeus, that sate begging alms by the way-side in the Borough. The good old beggar recognized his daily benefactor by the voice only; and, when he died, left all the amassings of his alms (that had been

half a century perhaps in the accumulating) to his old Bank friend. Was this a story to purse up people's hearts, and pennies, against giving an alms to the blind?—or not rather a beautiful moral of well-directed charity on the one part, and
 5 noble gratitude upon the other?

I sometimes wish I had been that Bank clerk.

I seem to remember a poor old grateful kind of creature, blinking, and looking up with his no eyes in the sun—

Is it possible I could have steeled my purse against him?

10 Perhaps I had no small change.

Reader, do not be frightened at the hard words, imposition, imposture—*give, and ask no questions*. Cast thy bread upon the waters. Some have unawares (like this Bank clerk) entertained angels.

15 Shut not thy purse-strings always against painted distress. Act a charity sometimes. When a poor creature (outwardly and visibly such) comes before thee, do not stay to inquire whether the “seven small children,” in whose name he implores thy assistance, have a veritable existence. Rake not into
 20 the bowels of unwelcome truth, to save a half-penny. It is good to believe him. If he be not all that he pretendeth, *give*, and under a personate father of a family, think (if thou pleasest) that thou hast relieved an indigent bachelor. When they come with their counterfeit looks, and mumping tones,
 25 think them players. You pay your money to see a comedian feign these things, which, concerning these poor people, thou canst not certainly tell whether they are feigned or not.

[“Pray God, your honour, relieve me,” said a poor beads-
 woman to my friend L—— one day: “I have seen better
 30 days.” “So have I, my good woman,” retorted he, looking up at the welkin, which was just then threatening a storm— and the jest (he will have it) was as good to the beggar as a tester. It was, at all events, kinder than consigning her to the stocks, or the parish beadle.—

But L. has a way of viewing things in rather a paradoxical light on some occasions.

P.S. — My friend Hume (not M.P.) has a curious manuscript in his possession, the original draft of the celebrated “Beggar’s Petition” (who cannot say by heart the “Beggar’s Petition?”), as it was written by some school usher (as I remember), with corrections interlined from the pen of Oliver Goldsmith. As a specimen of the Doctor’s improvement, I recollect one most judicious alteration —

A pamper’d menial drove me from the door. 10

It stood originally —

A livery servant drove me, &c.

Here is an instance of poetical or artificial language properly substituted for the phrase of common conversation; against Wordsworth, I think I must get H. to send it to the “London,” as a corollary to the foregoing.]¹ 15

XXIX. A BACHELOR’S COMPLAINT OF THE BEHAVIOUR OF MARRIED PEOPLE

As a single man, I have spent a good deal of my time in noting down the infirmities of Married People, to console myself for those superior pleasures, which they tell me I have lost by remaining as I am. 20

I cannot say that the quarrels of men and their wives ever made any great impression upon me, or had much tendency to strengthen me in those anti-social resolutions, which I took up long ago upon more substantial considerations. What oftenest offends me at the houses of married persons where I visit, is an error of quite a different description; — it is that they are too loving. 25

¹ Contained in the original paper, but canceled by Lamb in the edition of 1823.

Not too loving neither : that does not explain my meaning. Besides, why should that offend me? The very act of separating themselves from the rest of the world, to have the fuller enjoyment of each other's society, implies that they prefer one
5 another to all the world.

But what I complain of is, that they carry this preference so undisguisedly, they perk it up in the faces of us single people so shamelessly, you cannot be in their company a moment without being made to feel, by some indirect hint or open
10 avowal, that *you* are not the object of this preference. Now there are some things which give no offence, while implied or taken for granted merely ; but expressed, there is much offence in them. If a man were to accost the first homely-featured or plain-dressed young woman of his acquaintance, and tell her
15 bluntly, that she was not handsome or rich enough for him, and he could not marry her, he would deserve to be kicked for his ill manners ; yet no less is implied in the fact, that having access and opportunity of putting the question to her, he has never thought fit to do it. The young woman understands
20 this as clearly as if it were put into words ; but no reasonable young woman would think of making this the ground of a quarrel. Just as little right have a married couple to tell me by speeches, and looks that are scarce less plain than speeches, that I am not the happy man, — the lady's choice. It is enough that I
25 know I am not : I do not want this perpetual reminding.

The display of superior knowledge or riches may be made sufficiently mortifying ; but these admit of a palliative. The knowledge which is brought out to insult me, may accidentally improve me ; and in the rich man's houses and pictures, — his
30 parks and gardens, I have a temporary usufruct at least. But the display of married happiness has none of these palliatives : it is throughout pure, unrecompensed, unqualified insult.

Marriage by its best title is a monopoly, and not of the least invidious sort. It is the cunning of most possessors of any

exclusive privilege to keep their advantage as much out of sight as possible, that their less favoured neighbours, seeing little of the benefit, may the less be disposed to question the right. But these married monopolists thrust the most obnoxious part of their patent into our faces. 5

Nothing is to me more distasteful than that entire complacency and satisfaction which beam in the countenances of a new-married couple, — in that of the lady particularly : it tells you, that her lot is disposed of in this world ; that *you* can have no hopes of her. It is true, I have none ; nor wishes 10 either, perhaps : but this is one of those truths which ought, as I said before, to be taken for granted, not expressed.

The excessive airs which those people give themselves, founded on the ignorance of us unmarried people, would be more offensive if they were less irrational. We will allow them 15 to understand the mysteries belonging to their own craft better than we who have not had the happiness to be made free of the company : but their arrogance is not content within these limits. If a single person presume to offer his opinion in their presence, though upon the most indifferent subject, he is im- 20 mediately silenced as an incompetent person. Nay, a young married lady of my acquaintance, who, the best of the jest was, had not changed her condition above a fortnight before, in a question on which I had the misfortune to differ from her, respecting the properest mode of breeding oysters for the Lon- 25 don market, had the assurance to ask, with a sneer, how such an old Bachelor as I could pretend to know any thing about such matters.

But what I have spoken of hitherto is nothing to the airs which these creatures give themselves when they come, as they 30 generally do, to have children. When I consider how little of a rarity children are, — that every street and blind alley swarms with them, — that the poorest people commonly have them in most abundance, — that there are few marriages that

are not blest with at least one of these bargains, — how often they turn out ill, and defeat the fond hopes of their parents, taking to vicious courses, which end in poverty, disgrace, the gallows, &c. — I cannot for my life tell what cause for pride there can possibly be in having them. If they were young phoenixes, indeed, that were born but one in a year, there might be a pretext. But when they are so common —

I do not advert to the insolent merit which they assume with their husbands on these occasions. Let them look to that.
 10 But why *we*, who are not their natural-born subjects, should be expected to bring our spices, myrrh, and incense, — our tribute and homage of admiration, — I do not see.

“Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, even so are the young children :” so says the excellent office in our Prayer-
 15 book appointed for the churching of women. “Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them :” So say I ; but then don’t let him discharge his quiver upon us that are weaponless ; — let them be arrows, but not to gall and stick us. I have generally observed that these arrows are double-headed : they
 20 have two forks, to be sure to hit with one or the other. As for instance, where you come into a house which is full of children, if you happen to take no notice of them (you are thinking of something else, perhaps, and turn a deaf ear to their innocent caresses), you are set down as untractable, morose, a hater of
 25 children. On the other hand, if you find them more than usually engaging, — if you are taken with their pretty manners, and set about in earnest to romp and play with them, some pretext or other is sure to be found for sending them out of the room : they are too noisy or boisterous, or Mr. — does
 30 not like children. With one or other of these forks the arrow is sure to hit you.

I could forgive their jealousy, and dispense with toying with their brats, if it gives them any pain ; but I think it unreasonable to be called upon to *love* them, where I see no occasion,

— to love a whole family, perhaps, eight, nine, or ten, indiscriminately, — to love all the pretty dears, because children are so engaging.

I know there is a proverb, “Love me, love my dog;” that is not always so very practicable, particularly if the dog be set upon you to tease you or snap at you in sport. But a dog, or a lesser thing, — any inanimate substance, as a keepsake, a watch or a ring, a tree, or the place where we last parted when my friend went away upon a long absence, I can make shift to love, because I love him, and anything that reminds me of him; provided it be in its nature indifferent, and apt to receive whatever hue fancy can give it. But children have a real character and an essential being of themselves: they are amiable or unamiable *per se*; I must love or hate them as I see cause for either in their qualities. A child's nature is too serious a thing to admit of its being regarded as a mere appendage to another being, and to be loved or hated accordingly: they stand with me upon their own stock, as much as men and women do. O! but you will say, sure it is an attractive age, — there is something in the tender years of infancy that of itself charms us. That is the very reason why I am more nice about them. I know that a sweet child is the sweetest thing in nature, not even excepting the delicate creatures which bear them; but the prettier the kind of a thing is, the more desirable it is that it should be pretty of its kind. One daisy differs not much from another in glory; but a violet should look and smell the daintiest. — I was always rather squeamish in my women and children.

But this is not the worst: one must be admitted into their familiarity, at least, before they can complain of inattention. It implies visits, and some kind of intercourse. But if the husband be a man with whom you have lived on a friendly footing before marriage, — if you did not come in on the wife's side, — if you did not sneak into the house in her train, but were

an old friend in fast habits of intimacy before their courtship was so much as thought on, — look about you — your tenure is precarious — before a twelvemonth shall roll over your head, you shall find your old friend gradually grow cool and altered
5 towards you, and at last seek opportunities of breaking with you. I have scarce a married friend of my acquaintance, upon whose firm faith I can rely, whose friendship did not commence *after the period of his marriage*. With some limitations they can endure that : but that the good man should have dared to
10 enter into a solemn league of friendship in which they were not consulted, though it happened before they knew him, — before they that are now man and wife ever met, — this is intolerable to them. Every long friendship, every old authentic intimacy, must be brought into their office to be new stamped
15 with their currency, as a sovereign Prince calls in the good old money that was coined in some reign before he was born or thought of, to be new marked and minted with the stamp of his authority, before he will let it pass current in the world. You may guess what luck generally befalls such a rusty piece
20 of metal as I am in these *new mintings*.

Innumerable are the ways which they take to insult and worm you out of their husband's confidence. Laughing at all you say with a kind of wonder, as if you were a queer kind of fellow that said good things, *but an oddity*, is one of the ways ; —
25 they have a particular kind of stare for the purpose ; — till at last the husband, who used to defer to your judgment, and would pass over some excrescences of understanding and manner for the sake of a general vein of observation (not quite vulgar) which he perceived in you, begins to suspect whether
30 you are not altogether a humourist, — a fellow well enough to have consorted with in his bachelor days, but not quite so proper to be introduced to ladies. This may be called the staring way ; and is that which has oftenest been put in practice against me.

Then there is the exaggerating way, or the way of irony: that is, where they find you an object of especial regard with their husband, who is not so easily to be shaken from the lasting attachment founded on esteem which he has conceived towards you; by never-qualified exaggerations to cry up all that you say or do, till the good man, who understands well enough that it is all done in compliment to him, grows weary of the debt of gratitude which is due to so much candour, and by relaxing a little on his part, and taking down a peg or two in his enthusiasm, sinks at length to that kindly level of moderate esteem, — that “decent affection and complacent kindness” towards you, where she herself can join in sympathy with him without much stretch and violence to her sincerity.

Another way (for the ways they have to accomplish so desirable a purpose are infinite) is, with a kind of innocent simplicity, continually to mistake what it was which first made their husband fond of you. If an esteem for something excellent in your moral character was that which riveted the chain which she is to break, upon any imaginary discovery of a want of poignancy in your conversation, she will cry, “I thought, my dear, you described your friend, Mr. —, as a great wit.” If, on the other hand, it was for some supposed charm in your conversation that he first grew to like you, and was content for this to overlook some trifling irregularities in your moral deportment, upon the first notice of any of these she as readily exclaims, “This, my dear, is your good Mr. —.” One good lady whom I took the liberty of expostulating with for not showing me quite so much respect as I thought due to her husband’s old friend, had the candour to confess to me that she had often heard Mr. — speak of me before marriage, and that she had conceived a great desire to be acquainted with me, but that the sight of me had very much disappointed her expectations; for from her husband’s representations of me, she had formed a notion that she was to see a fine, tall,

officer-like looking man (I use her very words); the very reverse of which proved to be the truth. This was candid; and I had the civility not to ask her in return, how she came to pitch upon a standard of personal accomplishments for her husband's friends which differed so much from his own; for my friend's dimensions as near as possible approximate to mine; he standing five feet five in his shoes, in which I have the advantage of him by about half an inch; and he no more than myself exhibiting any indications of a martial character in his air or countenance.

These are some of the mortifications which I have encountered in the absurd attempt to visit at their houses. To enumerate them all would be a vain endeavour: I shall therefore just glance at the very common impropriety of which married ladies are guilty, — of treating us as if we were their husbands, and *vice versâ*. I mean, when they use us with familiarity, and their husbands with ceremony. *Testacea*, for instance, kept me the other night two or three hours beyond my usual time of supping, while she was fretting because Mr. — did not come home till the oysters were all spoiled, rather than she would be guilty of the impoliteness of touching one in his absence. This was reversing the point of good manners: for ceremony is an invention to take off the uneasy feeling which we derive from knowing ourselves to be less the object of love and esteem with a fellow-creature than some other person is. It endeavours to make up, by superior attentions in little points, for that invidious preference which it is forced to deny in the greater. Had *Testacea* kept the oysters back for me, and withstood her husband's importunities to go to supper, she would have acted according to the strict rules of propriety. I know no ceremony that ladies are bound to observe to their husbands, beyond the point of a modest behaviour and decorum: therefore I must protest against the vicarious gluttony of *Cerasia*, who at her own table sent away a dish of Morellas,

which I was applying to with great good will, to her husband at the other end of the table, and recommended a plate of less extraordinary gooseberries to my unwedded palate in their stead. Neither can I excuse the wanton affront of —.

But I am weary of stringing up all my married acquaintance 5 by Roman denominations. Let them amend and change their manners, or I promise to record the full-length English of their names, to the terror of all such desperate offenders in future.

XXX. ON THE ARTIFICIAL COMEDY OF THE LAST CENTURY

THE artificial Comedy, or Comedy of Manners, is quite extinct on our stage. Congreve and Farquhar show their 10 heads once in seven years only, to be exploded and put down instantly. The times cannot bear them. Is it for a few wild speeches, an occasional licence of dialogue? I think not altogether. The business of their dramatic characters will not stand the moral test. We screw everything up to that. Idle 15 gallantry in a fiction, a dream, the passing pageant of an evening, startles us in the same way as the alarming indications of profligacy in a son or ward in real life should startle a parent or guardian. We have no such middle emotions as dramatic interests left. We see a stage libertine playing his loose 20 pranks of two hours' duration, and of no after-consequence, with the severe eyes which inspect real vices with their bearings upon two worlds. We are spectators to a plot or intrigue (not reducible in life to the point of strict morality) and take it all for truth. We substitute a real for a dramatic person, and 25 judge him accordingly. We try him in our courts, from which there is no appeal to the *dramatis personæ*, his peers. We have been spoiled with — not sentimental comedy — but a tyrant far more pernicious to our pleasures which has succeeded

to it, the exclusive and all-devouring drama of common life ; where the moral point is everything ; where, instead of the fictitious half-believed personages of the stage (the phantoms of old comedy) we recognize ourselves, our brothers, aunts, 5 kinsfolk, allies, patrons, enemies, — the same as in life, — with an interest in what is going on so hearty and substantial, that we cannot afford our moral judgment, in its deepest and most vital results, to compromise or slumber for a moment. What is *there* transacting, by no modification is made to affect us in 10 any other manner than the same events or characters would do in our relationships of life. We carry our fire-side concerns to the theatre with us. We do not go thither, like our ancestors, to escape from the pressure of reality, so much as to confirm our experience of it ; to make assurance double, and 15 take a bond of fate. We must live our toilsome lives twice over, as it was the mournful privilege of Ulysses to descend twice to the shades. All that neutral ground of character, which stood between vice and virtue ; or which in fact was indifferent to neither, where neither properly was called in 20 question ; that happy breathing-place from the burthen of a perpetual moral questioning — the sanctuary and quiet Alsatia of hunted casuistry — is broken up and disfranchised, as injurious to the interests of society. The privileges of the place are taken away by law. We dare not dally with images, or 25 names, of wrong. We bark like foolish dogs at shadows. We dread infection from the scenic representation of disorder ; and fear a painted pustule. In our anxiety that our morality should not take cold, we wrap it up in a great blanket surtout of precaution against the breeze and sunshine.

30 I confess for myself that (with no great delinquencies to answer for) I am glad for a season to take an airing beyond the diocese of the strict conscience, — not to live always in the precincts of the law courts, — but now and then, for a dream-while or so, to imagine a world with no meddling restrictions

— to get into recesses, whither the hunter cannot follow me —

——— Secret shades

Of woody Ida's inmost grove,

While yet there was no fear of Jove —

5

I come back to my cage and my restraint the fresher and more healthy for it. I wear my shackles more contentedly for having respired the breath of an imaginary freedom. I do not know how it is with others, but I feel the better always for the perusal of one of Congreve's — nay, why should I not add 10 even of Wycherley's — comedies. I am the gayer at least for it; and I could never connect those sports of a witty fancy in any shape with any result to be drawn from them to imitation in real life. They are a world of themselves almost as much as fairy-land. Take one of their characters, male or female 15 (with few exceptions they are alike), and place it in a modern play, and my virtuous indignation shall rise against the profligate wretch as warmly as the Catos of the pit could desire; because in a modern play I am to judge of the right and the wrong. The standard of *police* is the measure of *political* 20 *justice*. The atmosphere will blight it, it cannot live here. It has got into a moral world, where it has no business, from which it must needs fall headlong; as dizzy and incapable of making a stand, as a Swedenborgian bad spirit that has wandered unawares into the sphere of one of his Good Men, or 25 Angels. But in its own world do we feel the creature is so very bad? — The Fainalls and the Mirabels, the Dorimants and the Lady Touchwoods, in their own sphere, do not offend my moral sense; in fact they do not appeal to it at all. They seem engaged in their proper element. They break through 30 no laws, or conscientious restraints. They know of none. They have got out of Christendom into the land — what shall I call it? — of cuckoldry — the Utopia of gallantry, where pleasure is duty, and the manners perfect freedom. It is

altogether a speculative scene of things, which has no reference whatever to the world that is. No good person can be justly offended as a spectator, because no good person suffers on the stage. Judged morally, every character in these plays — the few exceptions only are *mistakes* — is alike essentially vain and worthless. The great art of Congreve is especially shown in this, that he has entirely excluded from his scenes, — some little generousities in the part of Angelica perhaps excepted, — not only anything like a faultless character, but any pretensions to goodness or good feelings whatsoever. Whether he did this designedly, or instinctively, the effect is as happy, as the design (if design) was bold. I used to wonder at the strange power which his *Way of the World* in particular possesses of interesting you all along in the pursuits of characters, for whom you absolutely care nothing — for you neither hate nor love his personages — and I think it is owing to this very indifference for any, that you endure the whole. He has spread a privation of moral light, I will call it, rather than by the ugly name of palpable darkness, over his creations; and his shadows flit before you without distinction or preference. Had he introduced a good character, a single gush of moral feeling, a revulsion of the judgment to actual life and actual duties, the impertinent Goshen would have only lighted to the discovery of deformities, which now are none, because we think them none.

Translated into real life, the characters of his, and his friend Wycherley's dramas, are profligates and strumpets, — the business of their brief existence, the undivided pursuit of lawless gallantry. No other spring of action, or possible motive of conduct, is recognized; principles which, universally acted upon, must reduce this frame of things to a chaos. But we do them wrong in so translating them. No such effects are produced in *their* world. When we are among them, we are amongst a chaotic people. We are not to judge them by our

usages. No reverend institutions are insulted by their proceedings, — for they have none among them. No peace of families is violated, — for no family ties exist among them. No purity of the marriage bed is stained, — for none is supposed to have a being. No deep affections are disquieted, — 5 no holy wedlock bands are snapped asunder, — for affection's depth and wedded faith are not of the growth of that soil. There is neither right nor wrong, — gratitude or its opposite, — claim or duty, — paternity or sonship. Of what consequence is it to virtue, or how is she at all concerned about it, 10 whether Sir Simon, or Dapperwit, steal away Miss Martha; or who is the father of Lord Froth's, or Sir Paul Pliant's children?

The whole is a passing pageant, where we should sit as unconcerned at the issues, for life or death, as at a battle of the frogs and mice. But like Don Quixote, we take part 15 against the puppets, and quite as impertinently. We dare not contemplate an Atlantis, a scheme, out of which our coxcombical moral sense is for a little transitory ease excluded. We have not the courage to imagine a state of things for which there is neither reward nor punishment. We cling to 20 the painful necessities of shame and blame. We would indict our very dreams.

Amidst the mortifying circumstances attendant upon growing old, it is something to have seen the School for Scandal in its glory. This comedy grew out of Congreve and Wycherley, 25 but gathered some allays of the sentimental comedy which followed theirs. It is impossible that it should be now *acted*, though it continues, at long intervals, to be announced in the bills. Its hero, when Palmer played it at least, was Joseph Surface. When I remember the gay boldness, the graceful 30 solemn plausibility, the measured step, the insinuating voice — to express it in a word — the downright *acted* villany of the part, so different from the pressure of conscious actual wickedness, — the hypocritical assumption of hypocrisy, — which

made Jack so deservedly a favourite in that character, I must needs conclude the present generation of play-goers more virtuous than myself, or more dense. I freely confess that he divided the palm with me with his better brother; that, in
5 fact, I liked him quite as well. Not but there are passages, — like that, for instance, where Joseph is made to refuse a pittance to a poor relation, — incongruities which Sheridan was forced upon by the attempt to join the artificial with the sentimental comedy, either of which must destroy the other —
10 but over these obstructions Jack's manner floated him so lightly, that a refusal from him no more shocked you, than the easy compliance of Charles gave you in reality any pleasure; you got over the paltry question as quickly as you could, to get back into the regions of pure comedy, where no cold moral reigns. The
15 highly artificial manner of Palmer in this character counteracted every disagreeable impression which you might have received from the contrast, supposing them real, between the two brothers. You did not believe in Joseph with the same faith with which you believed in Charles. The latter was a
20 pleasant reality, the former a no less pleasant poetical foil to it. The comedy, I have said, is incongruous; a mixture of Congreve with sentimental incompatibilities: the gaiety upon the whole is buoyant; but it required the consummate art of Palmer to reconcile the discordant elements.

25 A player with Jack's talents, if we had one now, would not dare to do the part in the same manner. He would instinctively avoid every turn which might tend to unrealize, and so to make the character fascinating. He must take his cue from his spectators, who would expect a bad man and a good
30 man as rigidly opposed to each other as the death-beds of those geniuses are contrasted in the prints, which I am sorry to say have disappeared from the windows of my old friend Carrington Bowles, of St. Paul's Church-yard memory — (an exhibition as venerable as the adjacent cathedral, and almost coeval) of the

bad and good man at the hour of death; where the ghastly apprehensions of the former, — and truly the grim phantom with his reality of a toasting fork is not to be despised, — so finely contrast with the meek complacent kissing of the rod, — taking it in like honey and butter, — with which the latter submits to the scythe of the gentle bleeder, Time, who wields his lancet with the apprehensive finger of a popular young ladies' surgeon. What flesh, like loving grass, would not covet to meet half-way the stroke of such a delicate mower? — John Palmer was twice an actor in this exquisite part. He was playing to you all the while that he was playing upon Sir Peter and his lady. You had the first intimation of a sentiment before it was on his lips. His altered voice was meant to you, and you were to suppose that his fictitious co-flutterers on the stage perceived nothing at all of it. What was it to you if that half-reality, the husband, was over-reached by the puppetry — or the thin thing (Lady Teazle's reputation) was persuaded it was dying of a plethory? The fortunes of Othello and Desdemona were not concerned in it. Poor Jack has passed from the stage in good time, that he did not live to this our age of seriousness. The pleasant old Teazle *King*, too, is gone in good time. His manner would scarce have passed current in our day. We must love or hate — acquit or condemn — censure or pity — exert our detestable coxcombrity of moral judgment upon everything. Joseph Surface, to go down now, must be a downright revolting villain — no compromise — his first appearance must shock and give horror — his specious plausibilities, which the pleasurable faculties of our fathers welcomed with such hearty greetings, knowing that no harm (dramatic harm even) could come, or was meant to come of them, must inspire a cold and killing aversion. Charles (the real canting person of the scene — for the hypocrisy of Joseph has its ulterior legitimate ends, but his brother's professions of a good heart centre in downright self-satisfaction)

must be *loved*, and Joseph *hated*. To balance one disagreeable reality with another, Sir Peter Teazle must be no longer the comic idea of a fretful old bachelor bridegroom, whose teasings (while King acted it) were evidently as much
5 played off at you, as they were meant to concern anybody on the stage, — he must be a real person, capable in law of sustaining an injury — a person towards whom duties are to be acknowledged — the genuine crim-con. antagonist of the villainous seducer Joseph. To realize him more, his sufferings
10 under his unfortunate match must have the downright pungency of life — must (or should) make you not mirthful but uncomfortable, just as the same predicament would move you in a neighbour or old friend. The delicious scenes which give the play its name and zest, must affect you in the same serious
15 manner as if you heard the reputation of a dear female friend attacked in your real presence. Crabtree, and Sir Benjamin — those poor snakes that live but in the sunshine of your mirth — must be ripened by this hot-bed process of realization into asps or amphibænas; and Mrs. Candour — O! frightful!
20 become a hooded serpent. Oh who that remembers Parsons and Dodd — the wasp and butterfly of the School for Scandal — in those two characters; and charming natural Miss Pope, the perfect gentlewoman as distinguished from the fine lady of comedy, in this latter part — would forego the true scenic
25 delight — the escape from life — the oblivion of consequences — the holiday barring out of the pedant Reflection — those Saturnalia of two or three brief hours, well won from the world — to sit instead at one of our modern plays — to have his coward conscience (that forsooth must not be left for a
30 moment) stimulated with perpetual appeals — dulled rather, and blunted, as a faculty without repose must be — and his moral vanity pampered with images of notional justice, notional beneficence, lives saved without the spectators' risk, and fortunes given away that cost the author nothing?

No piece was, perhaps, ever so completely cast in all its parts as this *manager's comedy*. Miss Farren had succeeded to Mrs. Abingdon in *Lady Teazle*; and Smith, the original Charles, had retired, when I first saw it. The rest of the characters, with very slight exceptions, remained. I remember 5 it was then the fashion to cry down John Kemble, who took the part of Charles after Smith; but, I thought, very unjustly. Smith, I fancy, was more airy, and took the eye with a certain gaiety of person. He brought with him no sombre recollections of tragedy. He had not to expiate the fault of having 10 pleased beforehand in lofty declamation. He had no sins of Hamlet or of Richard to atone for. His failure in these parts was a passport to success in one of so opposite a tendency. But, as far as I could judge, the weighty sense of Kemble 15 made up for more personal incapacity than he had to answer for. His harshest tones in this part came steeped and dulcified in good humour. He made his defects a grace. His exact declamatory manner, as he managed it, only served to convey the points of his dialogue with more precision. It seemed to head the shafts to carry them deeper. Not one of 20 his sparkling sentences was lost. I remember minutely how he delivered each in succession, and cannot by any effort imagine how any of them could be altered for the better. No man could deliver brilliant dialogue — the dialogue of Congreve or of Wycherley — because none understood it — half so 25 well as John Kemble. His *Valentine*, in *Love for Love*, was, to my recollection, faultless. He flagged sometimes in the intervals of tragic passion. He would slumber over the level parts of an heroic character. His *Macbeth* has been known to nod. But he always seemed to me to be particularly alive 30 to pointed and witty dialogue. The relaxing levities of tragedy have not been touched by any since him — the playful court-bred spirit in which he condescended to the players in *Hamlet* — the sportive relief which he threw into the darker shades of

Richard — disappeared with him. Tragedy is become a uniform dead weight. They have fastened lead to her buskins. She never pulls them off for the ease of a moment. To invert, a commonplace from Niobe, she never forgets herself to liquefaction. He had his sluggish moods, his torpors — but they were the halting-stones and resting-place of his tragedy — politic savings, and fetches of the breath — husbandry of the lungs, where nature pointed him to be an economist — rather, I think, than errors of the judgment. They were, at worst, less painful than the eternal tormenting unappeasable vigilance, — the “lidless dragon eyes,” of present fashionable tragedy.

The story of his swallowing opium pills to keep him lively on the first night of a certain tragedy, we may presume to be a piece of retaliatory pleasantry on the part of the suffering author; but, indeed, John had the art of diffusing a complacent equable dulness (which you knew not where to quarrel with), over a piece which he did not like, beyond any of his contemporaries. John Kemble had made up his mind early, that all the good tragedies which could be written, had been written; and he resented any new attempt. His shelves were full. The old standards were scope enough for his ambition. He ranged in them absolutely — and fair “in Otway, full in Shakespeare shone.” He succeeded to the old lawful thrones, and did not care to adventure bottomry with a Sir Edward Mortimer or any casual speculator that offered. I remember, too actually for my peace, the deadly extinguisher which he put upon my friend G.’s “Antonio.” G., satiate with visions of political justice (possibly not to be realized in our time), or willing to let the sceptical worldlings see that his anticipations of the future did not preclude a warm sympathy for men as they are and have been — wrote a tragedy. He chose a story, affecting, romantic, Spanish — the plot simple, without being naked — the incidents uncommon, without being overstrained. Antonio, who gives the name to the piece, is a

sensitive young Castilian, who, in a fit of his country honour, immolates his sister —

But I must not anticipate the catastrophe — the play, reader, is extant in choice English — and you will employ a spare half-crown not injudiciously in the quest of it. 5

The conception was bold, and the *dénoûment* — the time and place in which the hero of it existed, considered — not much out of keeping; yet it must be confessed, that it required a delicacy of handling both from the author and the performer, so as not much to shock the prejudices of a modern English 10 audience. G., in my opinion, had done his part.

John, who was in familiar habits with the philosopher, had undertaken to play Antonio. Great expectations were formed. A philosopher's first play was a new era. The night arrived. I was favoured with a seat in an advantageous box, between 15 the author and his friend M——. G. sat cheerful and confident. In his friend M.'s looks, who had perused the manuscript, I read some terror. Antonio, in the person of John Philip Kemble, at length appeared, starched out in a ruff which no one could dispute, and in most irreproachable mus- 20 tachios. John always dressed most provokingly correct on these occasions. The first act swept by, solemn and silent. It went off, as G. assured M., exactly as the opening act of a piece — the protasis — should do. The cue of the spectators was, to be mute. The characters were but in their introduc- 25 tion. The passions and the incidents would be developed hereafter. Applause hitherto would be impertinent. Silent attention was the effect all-desirable. Poor M. acquiesced — but in his honest, friendly face I could discern a working which told how much more acceptable the plaudit of a single hand 30 (however misplaced) would have been than all this reasoning. The second act (as in duty bound) rose a little in interest, but still John kept his forces under — in policy, as G. would have it — and the audience were most complacently attentive. The

protasis, in fact, was scarcely unfolded. The interest would warm in the next act, against which a special incident was provided. M. wiped his cheek, flushed with a friendly perspiration — 'tis M.'s way of showing his zeal — “from every pore
5 of him a perfume falls” — I honour it above Alexander's. He had once or twice during this act joined his palms, in a feeble endeavour to elicit a sound — they emitted a solitary noise, without an echo — there was no deep to answer to his deep. G. repeatedly begged him to be quiet. The third act at length
10 brought him on the scene which was to warm the piece, progressively, to the final flaming forth of the catastrophe. A philosophic calm settled upon the clear brow of G., as it approached. The lips of M. quivered. A challenge was held forth upon the stage, and there was a promise of a fight. The
15 pit roused themselves on this extraordinary occasion, and, as their manner is, seemed disposed to make a ring, — when suddenly, Antonio, who was the challenged, turning the tables upon the hot challenger, Don Gusman (who, by-the-way, should have had his sister) baulks his humour, and the pit's
20 reasonable expectation at the same time, with some speeches out of the “New Philosophy against Duelling.” The audience were here fairly caught — their courage was up, and on the alert — a few blows, *ding-dong*, as R—s, the dramatist, afterwards expressed it to me, might have done the business, when
25 their most exquisite moral sense was suddenly called in to assist in the mortifying negation of their own pleasure. They could not applaud for disappointment; they would not condemn for morality's sake. The interest stood stone still; and John's manner was not calculated to unpetrify it. It was Christmas
30 time, and the atmosphere furnished some pretext for asthmatic affections. One began to cough — his neighbour sympathized with him — till a cough became epidemical. But when, from being half artificial in the pit, the cough got frightfully naturalized among the fictitious persons of the drama, and Antonio

himself (albeit it was not set down in the stage directions) seemed more intent upon relieving his own lungs than the distresses of the author and his friends, — then G. “first knew fear”; and, mildly turning to M., intimated that he had not been aware that Mr. K. laboured under a cold; and that the performance might possibly have been postponed with advantage for some nights farther — still keeping the same serene countenance, while M. sweat like a bull. It would be invidious to pursue the fates of this ill-starred evening. In vain did the plot thicken in the scenes that followed; in vain did the dialogue wax more passionate and stirring, and the progress of the sentiment point more and more clearly to the arduous development which impended. In vain the action was accelerated, while the acting stood still. From the beginning John had taken his stand; had wound himself up to an even tenor of stately declamation, from which no exigence of dialogue or person could make him swerve for an instant. To dream of his rising with the scene (the common trick of tragedians) was preposterous; for, from the onset, he had planted himself, as upon a terrace, on an eminence vastly above the audience, and he kept that sublime level to the end. He looked from his throne of elevated sentiment upon the under-world of spectators with a most sovereign and becoming contempt. There was excellent pathos delivered out to them: an they would receive it, so; an they would not receive it, so; there was no offence against decorum in all this; nothing to condemn, to damn. Not an irreverent symptom of a sound was to be heard. The procession of verbiage stalked on through four and five acts, no one venturing to predict what would come of it, when towards the winding up of the latter, Antonio, with an irrelevancy that seemed to stagger Elvira herself — for she had been coolly arguing the point of honour with him — suddenly whips out a poniard, and stabs his sister to the heart. The effect was as if a murder had been committed in cold blood. The whole

house rose up in clamorous indignation, demanding justice. The feeling rose far above hisses. I believe at that instant, if they could have got him, they would have torn the unfortunate author to pieces. Not that the act itself was so exorbitant, or
5 of a complexion different from what they themselves would have applauded upon another occasion, in a Brutus or an Appius, but for want of attending to Antonio's *words*, which palpably led to the expectation of no less dire an event, instead of being seduced by his *manner*, which seemed to
10 promise a sleep of a less alarming nature than it was his cue to inflict upon Elvira: they found themselves betrayed into an accompliceship of murder, a perfect misprision of parricide, while they dreamed of nothing less. M., I believe, was the only person who suffered acutely from the failure; for G.
15 thenceforward, with a serenity unattainable but by the true philosophy, abandoning a precarious popularity, retired into his fasthold of speculation, — the drama in which the world was to be his tiring-room, and remote posterity his applauding spectators at once and actors.

NOTES

I. A CHARACTER OF THE LATE ELIA

BY A FRIEND

London Magazine, January, 1823

This paper was first published by Lamb in the interval between the two series of *Essays of Elia*. He seems to have intended it partly as a farewell to his readers, and partly as a piece of mystification. With the omission of the latter part, it was reprinted by Moxon in 1833 as an appropriate preface to Lamb's last essays. This apologetic self-revelation and humorous analysis of his own character, half ironical though it be, shows the causes of his unpopularity and is a valuable commentary on his style.

1. the late *Elia*. When Lamb began to write for the *London Magazine* in August, 1820, he assumed the pen name of *Elia* (pronounced by him *Ell-ia*) in memory of an obscure Italian clerk of this name whom he had known at the South-Sea House.

1 3-4. to see his papers collected into a volume. This volume included *Elia's* twenty-eight contributions to the *London Magazine*, August, 1820, to November, 1822, and an essay on *Valentine's Day* from the *Indicator* of February, 1821. It was issued from the press of Taylor and Hessey, London, 1823. "Eleven years after," says Mr. Charles Kent, "before the author's death, it was already out of print, a stray copy only by rare chance being purchasable at a book-stall."

1 4-5. the *London Magazine* appeared in January, 1820, as a monthly under the editorial direction of John Scott. Thirteen months later, when Scott was killed in a duel with Christie of *Blackwood's Magazine*, the *London* passed into the hands of Taylor and Hessey. In the five years of its existence, though not financially successful, it had many famous contributors, among them being Lamb, De Quincey, Hazlitt, Procter, Hood, Cary, Cunningham, Montgomery, Keats, Mitford, Reynolds, and Carlyle.

17. **Saint Bride's**: a church just off Fleet Street, London. It is the burial place of Richardson, and is closely associated with Milton, Lovelace, and Dr. Johnson.

19. his friends T. and H.: Taylor and Hessey, the publishers of the *London*.

111. Janus wept: a play on the name of the Roman god and the pen name of Wainwright, "Janus Weathercock," a contributor to the *London* of "articles of flashy assumption." This clever, heartless, voluptuous coxcomb subsequently committed murder.

111-12. The gentle P—r: Bryan Weller Procter, better known as "Barry Cornwall" (1790-1874), a poet of the Cockney school, who made considerable reputation as a writer of sea songs. He was much liked by Lamb and wrote a memoir of him.

113. Allan C.: Cunningham (1784-1842), a Scotch poet and man of letters, who was at this time (1823) secretary to Chantrey, a London sculptor. He was the author of popular songs, stories, and biographies of eminent British painters, sculptors, and architects.

113. nobly forgetful: a reference to some unappreciative remarks about the Scotch in Lamb's essay on *Imperfect Sympathies*.

114-15. a "Tale of Lyddalcross": one of *Cunningham's Traditional Tales of the Peasantry*.

28. a country-boy: Coleridge. See note to *Christ's Hospital*.

324. intimados: intimate friends.

44. Marry: an old English interjection or expletive, derived from Mary.

46-7. proceeded a statist: i.e. discoursed as eloquently as a statesman.

416. Shacklewell. See note to the *South-Sea House*.

428-29. toga virilis: the garment assumed by a young Roman on reaching manhood.

433. This passage, inclosed in brackets, appeared in the *London*, but was suppressed in the volume of the *Last Essays of Elia* (1833).

434. his cousin Bridget: the author's sister Mary.

57. the East India House. The old house of the East India Company (established in 1600) stood at the corner of Leadenhall and Lime Streets, London.

529. facetious Bishop Corbet: Richard Corbet (1582-1635), bishop of Oxford and Norwich. He was the author of *Farewell to the Fairies*, and other light verse.

529. Hoole, John (1727-1803): an English poet who translated Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, and other Italian poems.

530-31. God assoil him therefor: i.e. May God forgive him for it, \

5 31. **Walton, Izaak** (1593-1683): a noted author who was a shop-keeper in London until the civil war. Lamb wrote of him to Wordsworth as hallowing "any page in which his revered name appears." His most famous book is the *Complete Angler* (1653), which Lamb "always loved as it were a living friend."

6 1. **bon-vivant**: jolly companion.

6 14. "weaved-up follies": a phrase from Shakespeare's *Richard II*, IV, i, 228.

II. THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE

London Magazine, August, 1820

This essay was first printed under the title of *Recollections of the South-Sea House*. Lamb held a subordinate clerkship in this house for an unknown period between 1789 and 1792. It appears from the official records of the company for the latter year that his brother John was then holding the position of deputy accountant.

6 15. **the Bank**: the Bank of England.

6 17. **the Flower Pot**: a London inn from which the coach for the north started.

6 18. **Dalston or Shacklewell**: northern suburbs of London where rents were low, and where consequently many "lean annuitants," persons of small yearly income, resided.

7 12-13. **the two first monarchs of the Brunswick dynasty**: George I (1714-1727) and George II (1727-1760).

7 18. **pieces of eight**: a name given by the buccaneers to the Spanish piaster, which was divided into eight silver reals. It was first coined in 1479, and was about equal in value to our dollar.

7 19. "unsunned heap": a phrase from Milton's *Comus*, l. 398.

7 19. **Mammon**: a Syriac word meaning riches; personified as the god of riches by Spenser, *Faërie Queene*, II, 7, and Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I, 678.

7 21. **that famous Bubble**: the South-Sea Bubble, a colossal financial scheme which originated about 1711 and collapsed in 1720. It was one of the principal events of George I's reign. For a detailed account of the series of ruinous speculations connected with this and other bubble companies, see Montgomery's *English History*, p. 311, or Green's *Short History of the English People*, p. 698.

7 32. **a superfœtation of dirt**: a secondary engendering, i.e. a double layer, of dirt.

86. **Titan.** The Titans were a race of giants, children of Uranus (heaven) and Gaea (earth), who made war against the Olympian deities.

86-7. **Vaux's superhuman plot:** the plot of Guido Vaux, or Guy Fawkes, and other conspirators to blow up the Houses of Parliament in 1605.

91. **Herculaneum:** one of the cities buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in A.D. 79. The first systematic excavations were made under French rule between 1806 and 1815.

91. **pounce-boxes:** boxes with perforated lids for sprinkling a fine powder on manuscript to prevent the ink from spreading.

92. **Cambro-Briton:** a Welshman. Cambria was the legendary and ancient Latin name of Wales.

927. **Maccaronies** (properly spelled Macaronies): the name usually applied to English fops during the later part of the eighteenth century.

101. **Anderton's:** a coffeehouse on Fleet Street.

1014. **Rosamond's Pond:** a sheet of water in St. James Park, which was filled up in 1770. It was "long consecrated to disastrous love and elegiac poetry." "Fair Rosamond" was Jane Clifford, the mistress of Henry II, who, according to tradition, was compelled by the jealous Queen Eleanor to poison herself (1176).

1014-15. **Mulberry Gardens:** public gardens (now in the grounds of Buckingham Palace), so called from the mulberry trees planted by James I.

1015. **Cheap,** the old name of Cheapside, a street rich in historical associations.

1017. **Hogarth, William** (1697-1764): the famous English painter. See note on p. 273.

1018. **Noon.** The scene of "Noon" is a French Huguenot chapel in Hog Lane.

1019-20. **Louis the Fourteenth;** King of France, 1643-1715. By his revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, which had since 1598 granted to the Huguenots political equality and rights with the Catholics, he drove about fifty thousand industrious Protestant families from France, prostrated the country, and paved the way for the Revolution.

1022. **the Seven Dials:** a locality about midway between the British Museum and Trafalgar Square, and once notorious as a center of poverty. It took its name from a column with seven sundials which marked the meeting of seven streets.

1023. **Thomas Tame:** he succeeded Evans as deputy cashier in 1793.

1025-26. **Westminster Hall:** built by William II. It is now used as an entrance to the Houses of Parliament.

10 34. its original state of white paper: a figure used by John Locke, who denied the existence of innate ideas, to illustrate the condition of the child's mind before the use of the senses.

11 1. posed: puzzled him by putting a question.

11 9-10. unfortunate house of Derwentwater. James Radcliffe (1689-1716), Earl of Derwentwater, was an English Catholic nobleman who supported the Pretender in the rebellion of 1715, and was beheaded in London in the following year.

11 19. John Tipp: he was succeeded in the office of deputy accountant by John Lamb, and became accountant in 1792.

11 24-25. with other notes than to the Orphean lyre: a quotation from *Paradise Lost*, III, 17.

12 5. He sate like Lord Midas: i.e. without any skill in judging of music. Justice Midas is a character in a play by Kane O'Hara (1764). When, in a singing contest, he awards the prize to Pan, it turns out that Apollo was one of the competitors. The classical King Midas was punished with asses' ears for a similar offense.

13 12. "greatly find quarrel in a straw": a quotation from *Hamlet*, IV, iv, 53-56.

13 20. the dusty dead: a phrase from *Macbeth*, V, v, 22.

13 26-27. in two forgotten volumes. *Miscellaneous Works in Verse and Prose of the late Henry Man* is a collection of light and amusing papers on a variety of subjects. Man became deputy secretary in 1793.

13 28. Barbican: a street in London where Milton lived in 1645. Leigh Hunt's pig in his essay *On the Graces and Anxieties of Pig-Driving* "was not to be comforted in Barbican."

13 31. "new-born gauds": a phrase from *Troilus and Cressida*, III, iii, 175.

13 32. Public Ledgers . . . Chronicles. Two prominent London newspapers of the eighteenth century.

13 32-34. Chatham, Earl of (1708-1778), William Pitt; Shelburne, Earl of (1737-1805), William Petty, as prime minister recognized American independence; Rockingham, Marquis of (1730-1782), Charles Wentworth, preceded Shelburne as prime minister; Howe, Sir William (d. 1814), a British general in the American war; Burgoyne, John, a British general who surrendered to the Americans at Saratoga in 1777; Clinton, Sir Henry, a British general in the same war.

14 1-2. Keppel: an English admiral; Wilkes, John (1727-1797), editor of the *North Britain*, was arrested on the charge of accusing the king of falsehood, but liberated under the order of Chief Justice Pratt (Charles; 1713-1794), afterwards Lord Chancellor and Earl of

Camden; Sawbridge and Bull, Lord Mayors of London in latter part of the eighteenth century; Dunning, John (1731-1783), Lord Ashburton, author of a bill in the House of Commons to diminish the influence of the Crown; Richmond, probably a member of the Rockingham ministry.

145. Plumer, Richard: master of the Hertfordshire mansion in which Lamb's grandmother, Mary Field, was housekeeper for fifty years; hence his interest in the family. Plumer was deputy secretary in 1800.

147. the sinister bend: also called "the bastard bar," a term in heraldry indicating illegitimacy.

1412. bachelor-uncle. According to the family pedigree found in Cussans' *Hertfordshire*, Walter Plumer, the uncle of William Plumer, was not a bachelor.

1418. Cave came off cleverly: an inaccuracy of Lamb's. Cave, not Plumer, was cited before the House of Commons on a breach of privilege for having challenged a frank given to the Duchess of Marlborough by Walter Plumer, M.P. See Johnson's *Life of Cave*.

1424. pastoral M—: T. Maynard, who was chief clerk of the old annuities and three-percents from 1788 to 1793, and who, according to Lamb's Key, hanged himself.

1426. that song sung by Amiens: *As You Like It*, II, vii.

1510-11. peradventure the very names . . . are fantastic: an example of Lamb's fondness for mystification. The names in this essay are not fictitious but are found in the *Royal Calendar* and other records.

1511-12. like Henry Pimpernel, and old John Naps of Greece. These names are mentioned in the Induction to the *Taming of the Shrew* as never having existed.

Review Questions. 1. What is Lamb's attitude to his reader? 2. Where does he show a fondness for the past? 3. Find indications of his business training. 4. What impression do you get of his scholarship and range of reading? 5. Analyze the humor in his characterization of Evans, Tame, Tipp, and Plumer. 6. Find examples of Lamb's use of the pun. 7. Explain the following phrases: "his mind was in its original state of white paper," *decus et solamen*, "Orphean lyre," "like Lord Midas," "nib a pen," "wet a wafer," "triple calumniations (£. s. d.)," "superfluity of ciphers," "Conduit in Cheap," and "night's wheels." 8. Note use of the following words: Titan, Herculeum, Cambro-Briton, Maccaronies, Whig, gibcat, hypochondry, pounce-boxes, battenning, manes, tomes, rubric, quirk, and gibes.

III. OXFORD IN THE VACATION

London Magazine, October, 1820

This second contribution from Elia was given the place of honor in the *London*. At the close was the date of its composition, "August 5th, 1820," and the words "From my rooms facing the Bodleian." On leaving Christ's Hospital, Lamb was prevented by poverty and physical infirmity from entering Oxford or Cambridge with his more fortunate schoolmates Coleridge, Hunt, Dyer, Field, and Barnes. He loved, however, to spend his annual holidays amid the associations of those great universities. The charm which these visits had for him is touchingly recorded in his Cambridge sonnet,

"I was not trained in Academic bowers."

15 19. **Vivares, François (1709-1780)**: a French landscape painter who went to London at the age of eighteen and became one of the founders of landscape engraving in England.

15 19. **Woollett, William (1735-1785)**: the most distinguished of the English landscape engravers.

15 25. **notched and cropt scrivener**: an attorney or money lender with close-cut hair. "Notched" may refer to his desk or his quill or the tallies by which he kept his accounts.

15 28. **agnize**: acknowledge. Cf. *Othello*, I, iii, 232.

16 25. "**Andrew and John, men famous in old times**": probably paraphrased from Milton, *Paradise Regained*, II, 7. Lamb refers to those days of the calendar which were once observed as religious holidays in honor of certain saints.

16 28. **the old Basket Prayer-book**: a little duodecimo prayer-book (1749), so named from the publisher T. Baskett (misspelled by Lamb).

16 28-29. **Peter in his uneasy posture**: according to tradition this apostle was crucified head downward. The day sacred to him in the calendar is June 29.

16 29. **holy Bartlemy**: Saint Bartholomew, one of the twelve apostles, commonly called Nathanael. Tradition says that he was flayed alive. The day sacred to him is August 24.

16 30. **the famous Marsyas by Spagnoletti** (Lamb's spelling): a painting of Apollo flaying the satyr, by the Spanish-Neapolitan artist, Jusepe Ribera Spagnoletto (1588-1656).

17 5. "**far off their coming shone**": a paraphrase from *Paradise Lost*, VI, 768.

17 17. **Selden, John** (1584-1654): a jurist, antiquarian, orientalist, and author of legal and theological works. He represented Oxford in Parliament, and was afterwards Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He was one of the most learned men of the century.

17 17. **Archbishop Usher, James** (1580-1656): an Irish theologian and scholar who wrote a notable work on biblical chronology. He became primate of Ireland and took sides with Charles I.

17 19. **the mighty Bodley**: the Bodleian Library of Oxford University, which contains about four hundred and sixty thousand books, twenty-seven thousand manuscripts, and fifty thousand coins. It was first opened in 1488, but was refounded by Sir Thomas Bodley (1545-1613), an English scholar and diplomat.

17 27. **I seem admitted ad eundem**: admitted without loss of class standing in going from one university to another.

17 29. **a Sizar at Cambridge and a Servitor at Oxford** were originally paid students who were exempt from paying the ordinary fees, but waited on the tables at the mess or performed other menial duties.

17 30. **a Gentleman Commoner**: a student who paid full fees and enjoyed special privileges.

18 5. **Christ's**: Christ Church, one of the largest and most fashionable colleges of Oxford, founded by Cardinal Wolsey in 1525.

18 5. **Magdalen**: St. Mary Magdalen College of Oxford, founded by Bishop Waynflete in 1457.

18 13-14. **spits which have cooked for Chaucer**. There is no evidence that Chaucer (1340?-1400) was ever a student at either Oxford or Cambridge.

18 16. **a Manciple**: the officer who had the care of purchasing food for the college. Cf. Chaucer's *Prologue*, 567.

18 22. **what half Januses are we**: Janus was the god of the rising and setting sun, and was represented with two faces.

19 12-13. **Herculanean raker**. Some charred papyrus rolls were found in a buried library at Herculaneum.

19 13. **the three witnesses**: a reference to the disputed passage in 1 John v. 7.

19 14. **Porson, Richard** (1759-1808): a professor at Cambridge, who was a noted Greek scholar and editor of the classics.

19 15. **G. D.**: George Dyer (1755-1841), one of Lamb's schoolmates at Christ's Hospital, and afterwards a student at Cambridge. Later he became a booksellers' drudge, compiling indexes and editing the Valpy edition of the classics. His best known works are his *History of the University and Colleges of Cambridge* and a *Life of Robert Robinson*.

His awkwardness, absent-mindedness, bland credulity, and pedantry made him the butt of Lamb's affectionate banter and practical jokes. He is the hero of Elia's essay *Amicus Redivivus*.

19 17. **Oriel**: a college of Oxford, founded by Adam de Brome and Edward II in 1326.

19 20. **a tall Scapula**. Scapula pirated Stephen's *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* in 1530. A tall book is one whose leaves are not cut down in binding.

20 3. **Clifford's Inn**: one of the inns of chancery in London, originally a law school dating from the reign of Edward III.

20 7. "in calm and sinless peace": a reminiscence of Wordsworth's *White Doe of Rylstone*, l. 48.

21 9. **the Temple**. See note on *The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple*.

21 12. **our friend M.'s**: Basil Montagu, Q. C., editor of Bacon.

21 20. **Mrs. M.**: Mrs. Montagu, mentioned in Carlyle's *Reminiscences*, and called by Irving "a noble lady."

21 21. **Queen Lar**: the chief of the domestic divinities of the Roman household.

21 21. **pretty A. S.**: Mrs. Montagu's daughter, Anne Skepper. She afterwards married Procter, who vouches for the truth of the incident.

21 28. **like another Sosia**: a slave in Plautus' play *Amphitryon*. Mercury is disguised as the double of Sosia, who is thus led to doubt his own identity.

22 2. **Mount Tabor**: according to tradition the scene of the Transfiguration.

22 3. **Parnassus**: the resort of the Muses.

22 3. **co-sphered with Plato**: i.e. absorbed in philosophic reflections. The ancients believed that the souls of the great dead were stationed in spheres or orbits. Cf. Milton, *Il Penseroso*, 88-92.

22 3. **Harrington, James (1611-1677)**: author of the *Commonwealth of Oceana*, a treatise on civil government, modeled on More's *Utopia*.

22 9. This passage in brackets appeared in the original *London* article but was suppressed by Lamb in the volume of 1823.

22 10. **in the house of "pure Emanuel"**: Emanuel College, Cambridge.

22 23. **Give me Agur's wish**. See Proverbs xxx. 8, 9.

23 14-15. **Bath, Buxton, Scarborough, Harrogate**. These popular English watering places may be located on the map.

23 15-16. **The Cam and the Isis**: the two rivers on which Cambridge and Oxford universities respectively are situated.

23 16-17. "better than all the waters of Damascus." See 2 Kings v. 12.

23 18. **Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains:** the mountains from which the pilgrims in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I, had a view of the Celestial City.

23 20-21. **the Interpreter of the House Beautiful:** a character in *Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I, lord of a house a little beyond the Wicket Gate. He symbolizes the Holy Ghost.

Review Questions. 1. Explain the figure at the close of the third paragraph. 2. Has this essay the true flavor of university life and scholarship? 3. Explain the literary allusions in the last paragraph. 4. Analyze the characterization of Dyer. 5. Find an apostrophe and compare with similar passages in Raleigh, Byron, and De Quincey. 6. Note the rambling construction of the essay. 7. Note the phrase "the *better Jude*." Who were the two Judes? 8. Explain the following: agnize, arride, beadsman, Joseph's vest, *variae lectiones*, "those sciential apples," Mount Tabor, Parnassus.

IV. CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE-AND-THIRTY YEARS AGO

London Magazine, November, 1820

The Gentleman's Magazine for June, 1813, contained an article by Lamb entitled *Recollections of Christ's Hospital*. This essay was reprinted in Ollier's edition in 1818, and is referred to in the opening sentences of the present paper. Under the mask of Elia, Lamb here writes in the character of his old schoolmate Coleridge. The earlier essay was a serious and enthusiastic appreciation of the dignity and value of the famous Blue-Coat School; the latter was a supplementary chapter on the humors and hardships of the boys due to the peculiar traditions and discipline of the school. On the same subject Coleridge has written in his *Biographia Literaria*, Chap. I, and Leigh Hunt in his *Autobiography*, Chaps. III and IV.

24 18. **banyan . . . days:** the days on which sailors have no allowance of meat. The name is taken from the Hindoo devotees who abstain from flesh.

24 22. **caro equina:** horseflesh.

25 1. **the Tishbite:** the prophet Elijah.

26 15-16. **the Lions in the Tower.** The royal menagerie formerly kept in this the most ancient fortress and state prison of London was removed to the Zoölogical Gardens in Regent's Park in 1834.

26 18. **L.'s governor**: Samuel Salt, the old Bencher of the Inner Temple. He was called to the bench in 1782 and died in 1792. He occupied two sets of chambers in Crown-office Row, kept a carriage, and had two indoor servants besides the Lambs. Lamb's father, John, was in his service for forty-five years as clerk and factotum, his mother as housekeeper. Salt provided for them generously by various bequests at his death. Charles owed his admission to Christ's Hospital to a friend of Salt's.

27 4. **There was one H**—: Hodges, according to Lamb's Key.

27 8. **My friend Tobin**. Little more than his name is known. In a letter to Wordsworth in 1806 Lamb speaks of a visit from Tobin, and records his death in a letter to Southey in 1815. Tobin was Godwin's pen name in his tragedy *Antonio*.

27 18. **Caligula's minion**. The emperor's favorite horse, Incitatus, was fed at a marble manger with gilded oats. He was made a consul and a priest.

28 2. **paintings by Verrio**. In Newgate Street is seen the hall, or eating room, one of the noblest in England, adorned with enormously long paintings by Verrio and others, and with an organ. See Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography*, Chap. III, p. 57.

28 3. **blue-coat boys**. Christ's Hospital was popularly called the Blue-Coat School from the dress of the pupils, which was the ordinary costume of boys in humble station during the time of the Tudors. It consisted of a blue drugget gown with ample skirts, a yellow vest, knee breeches of Russian duck, yellow worsted stockings, a leathern girdle, and a little black worsted cap usually carried in the hand. This costume is still retained. Christ's was founded as a charity school by King Edward VI on the site of the monastery of the Gray Friars in Newgate Street.

28 8. "**To feed our mind with idle portraiture**": a translation from memory of Virgil's line, *animum pictura pascit inani* (*Æneid*, I, 464).

28 16-17. "**'T was said, He ate strange flesh**": quoted at random from *Antony and Cleopatra*, I, iv.

29 14. **Mr. Hathaway**. We of the grammar school used to call him "the yeoman" on account of Shakespeare having married the daughter of a man of that name, designated as "a substantial yeoman" (Leigh Hunt, *Autobiography*, Chap. III, p. 59).

30 8. **Bedlam**: the hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem in London, originally a priory dating from about 1247, but now used as an asylum for the insane.

30 33. **Holy Paul**: St. Paul's Cathedral, in which stands the statue of John Howard.

30 25. **auto da fé** (Portuguese): act of faith. The ceremony used in Spain and Portugal in executing the judgment of the tribunal of the Inquisition. There was a procession of monks, penitents, and heretics through the streets to the church, where, after a sermon, the condemned were handed over to the civil authorities to be strangled or burned.

30 26-27. "watchet weeds": blue clothes.

31 24. **San Benito**: the short linen dress, on which demons were painted, worn by the heretics condemned by the Inquisition.

32 2. **Rev. James Boyer**. According to Lamb, Coleridge, and Leigh Hunt he was an excellent teacher and a man of wide learning and common sense, but much feared on account of his violent temper and severe discipline. See Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, Vol. I, 145, *Table Talk*, p. 85, and Hunt's *Autobiography*, Chap. III, 66.

32 3. **Rev. Matthew Field**. Hunt gives a delightfully humorous sketch of him in his *Autobiography*, III, 65, corroborative of Lamb's opinion.

32 24. "insolent Greece or haughty Rome": from Ben Jonson's *Lines on Shakespeare*.

32 25. **Peter Wilkins**, *The Life and Adventures of* (1751): a grotesque romance by Robert Paltock of the imaginary island of Graundevolet, inhabited by a race of winged people.

32 34. **Rousseau and John Locke**. Lamb refers to their pedagogical theories. They helped to found the modern methods of training children on the principle of following their natural dispositions.

33 10. **Phædrus**: a Roman writer, originally a Macedonian slave, who lived in the first half of the first century A. D.

33 16. **a sort of Helots**: a class of serfs among the ancient Spartans. They did not receive as severe training as their masters, and served only as light-armed troops in time of war.

33 21. **with a silence as deep, etc.**: Pythagoras, the Samite, founder of a famous mathematical and philosophical school at Crotona in southern Italy in the sixth century B. C. The pupils were banded in a religious fraternity where everything was kept a profound secret from the outer world.

34 3-4. **Ululantes . . . Tartarus**: probably an allusion to Virgil's *Æneid*, VI, 548 *seq.*

34 8. **Flaccus's quibble about Rex**. See Horace, *Satires*, I, 7, 35.

34 9. **tristis severitas in vultu**. See Terence, *Andrea*, V, ii, 16.

34 9. **inspicere in patinas**. See Terence, *Adelphi*, III, iii, 74.

35 5. **the Debates**: in Parliament.

35 22-23. **The author of the Country Spectator**. Ainger refers to an amusing account of the origin of this periodical, founded by Bishop Middleton, in Mozley's *Reminiscences of Oriel College*, Vol. III, *Addenda*.

35 30-31. First Grecian: the highest class, composed of picked boys who were preparing to enter one of the universities.

35 33. Dr. T——e: the Rev. Arthur William Trollope, the successor of Boyle as head master. He retired from the school in 1827 and died soon afterwards.

36 12. Th——: the Right Hon. Sir Edward Thornton, minister to Portugal and to Brazil under Pitt. He was third wrangler at Cambridge in 1789.

36 20. regni novitas: See Virgil's *Æneid*, I, 563.

36 29. poor S——: Scott, died in Bedlam (Lamb's Key).

36 29. ill-fated M——: Maunde, dismissed school (Lamb's Key).

36 30. "Finding some of Edward's race," etc.: quoted incorrectly from Matthew Prior's *Carmen Sæculare* for 1700, st. viii, Edward being substituted for Stuart.

37 5. Mirandula: Coleridge. Mirandula is a variation of the name of Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), an Italian poet and student of Plato.

37 7. Jamblichus: an Alexandrian philosopher of the third century, the founder of the Syrian school of Neo-Platonism.

37 7. Plotinus (204-270 A.D.): a Neo-Platonic philosopher of Egypt, who taught in Rome.

37 11. "wit-combats." The quotation which follows is a close paraphrase of Fuller's account in the *English Worthies* of the wit-combats between Shakespeare and Ben Jonson.

37 12. C. V. Le G——: Charles Valentine Le Grice, one of the Grecians at Christ's Hospital, afterwards a clergyman in his native county of Cornwall. He wrote a translation of Longus's pastoral romance *Daphnis and Chloe*. His brother Samuel was one of Lamb's stanchest friends.

37 25. Nireus formosus: the son of Chiropus and Aglaia, and the handsomest Greek at the siege of Troy.

37 32. the junior Le G——: Samuel Le Grice, who went into the army and died in the West Indies. He is mentioned in Lamb's letter to Coleridge just after the death of his mother.

37 32. F——: Favell, a Grecian in the school, who was given a commission in the army and was killed in the Peninsula. Lamb wrote opposite the initial in his Key, "Favell left Cambridge because he was ashamed of his father, who was a house-painter there." He is the "poor W——" of the *Poor Relations*.

38 7. Fr——: Frederick William Franklin.

38 8. Marmaduke T——: Marmaduke Thompson.

Review Questions. 1. Find instances of Lamb's use of the sense of taste. 2. What is Lamb's method of making his style specific? 3. Point out differences in tone and local color between this essay and the preceding. 4. What were the relations of Lamb and Coleridge at school and afterwards? 5. Where does the author show a fondness for mystification? 6. Explain the allusion to Rousseau's and Locke's pedagogical theories. 7. Look up the biblical allusions in the essay. 8. Examine Lamb's use of the parenthesis. 9. Explain the following: *ultima supplicia*, *ululantes*, Tartarus, and the Debates. 10. Who were Dante, Pindar, Homer, Terence, Cicero, Plato, and Xenophon?

V. THE TWO RACES OF MEN

London Magazine, December, 1820

38 16. "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites." See Acts of the Apostles ii. 9.

38 26. Alcibiades (450-404 B.C.): a great Athenian statesman and general. See Plutarch's *Lives*.

38 26. Falstaff: a character in Shakespeare's *King Henry IV* and *Merry Wives of Windsor*. He borrows from Mistress Quickly, Pistol, and others. For borrowing scenes, see *1 King Henry IV*, III, ii; and *2 King Henry IV*, I, ii; II, i; and V, iv.

38 26. Sir Richard Steele (1672-1729). For exaggerated stories of how Steele borrowed from Addison, see Macaulay's *Essay on Addison*.

38 26-27. our late incomparable Brinsley: the brilliant wit and orator, Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816), author of *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal*. Being recklessly improvident, he was frequently in debt, and many stories are told of his boldness and cleverness in borrowing. See his *Life* by Thomas Moore, and Hazlitt's *Lectures on the Comic Writers*.

39 3. Tooke, Horne: the assumed name of John Horne (1736-1812), an English politician and philologist, author of *The Pantheon*, etc. He was tried several times for libel and treason, and was at one time a member of Parliament.

39 17. Candlemas: February 2, the day of the feast of the purification of the Virgin Mary. In Scotland it is one of the "term days" appointed for payments of money, interest, taxes, etc., and for entry to premises. See Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, Bohn ed.

39 17. Feast of Holy Michael: September 29, one of the quarterly terms in England for paying rents, etc. See Chambers's *Book of Days*.

39 18. *Iene tormentum*: the mildest torture inflicted by the Inquisition.

39 21. the true Propontic: the ancient name of the Sea of Marmora. Locate on the map and explain the comparison.

39 33. Ralph Bigod, Esq.: John Fenwick, editor of the *Albion*. Talfourd says that "he edited several ill-fated newspapers in succession, and was author of many libels, which did his employers no good and his Majesty's government no harm"; also that he was one of Lamb's associates who sometimes "left poor Lamb with an aching head and a purse exhausted by the claims of their necessities upon it" (*Letters of Charles Lamb*, Chap. VII).

40 13. "To slacken virtue, etc.": in Jesus' reply to Satan, *Paradise Regained*, II, 455.

40 29-30. with Comus, seemed pleased, etc. See *Comus*, ll. 152-155.

42 4. Comberbatch, more properly Silas Tomkyn Comberback: the assumed name under which Coleridge enlisted in the King's Light Dragoons in 1793. For the incident see Campbell's *Life of Coleridge*, p. 28. Lamb, who was a frequenter of bookshops, accumulated a large library containing many valuable works. Coleridge frequently borrowed from him, and sometimes forgot to return. See "Letter to Coleridge" of June 7, 1809, Talfourd ed., Vol. II, pp. 217-218.

42 9. like the Guildhall giants. In the Guildhall, the ancient council hall of London (erected 1411-1431), stand two colossal and fanciful wooden figures called Gog and Magog. They were carved by Saunders in 1708. There is an old prophecy that when they fall, then only shall London fall.

42 11. *Opera Bonaventuræ*: Saint Giovanni di Fidenza Bonaventura (1221-1274), an Italian philosopher and theological writer, surnamed Doctor Seraphicus. He was professor in Paris, general of the Franciscans, and a cardinal.

42 13. Bellarmine: Cardinal Roberto Bellarmino (1542-1621), a Jesuit theological controversialist, professor in the Luvain and Roman colleges.

42 13. Holy Thomas: Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225?-1274), surnamed Doctor Angelicus, an Italian theologian and scholastic philosopher of the Dominican order, who taught at Paris, Rome, and Bologna. See "Letter to Barton," Talfourd ed., Vol. II, p. 297.

42 14. Ascapart: a giant thirty feet high in the old romance *Bevis of Hampton*.

42 24. Browne on Urn Burial: Sir Thomas Browne's *Hydrotaphia*, or *Urn-Burial* (1658), "a magnificent descant on the vanity of human life, based on the discovery of certain cinerary urns in Norfolk." See Saintsbury's *History of Elizabethan Literature*, pp. 339, 340.

42 29. **Dodsley's dramas**: Robert Dodsley (1703-1764), an English bookseller and editor of the well-known *Select Collection of Old Plays* (12 vols., 1744), which was used by Lamb in preparing his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*. See "Letter to Manning," Talfourd ed., Vol. II, p. 230.

42 30. **Vittoria Corombona**, or *The White Devil*: a tragedy by Webster (1612), one of the noblest and most perfect of the period. See Saintsbury's *History of Elizabethan Literature*, p. 275.

42 32. **Anatomy of Melancholy** (1621): by Robert Burton, "Democritus Junior," "the fantastic great old man," whose humorous and pedantic vein powerfully influenced Lamb's style.

From the olden time

Of authorship, thy patent should be dated,
And thou with Marvell, Browne and Burton mated.

—BERNARD BARTON, *Sonnet*.

See Lamb's "Letter to Manning" of March 17, 1800, in which he speaks of Coleridge having urged him to forge supposed manuscripts of Burton, Talfourd ed., Vol. I, p. 116. *The Anatomy of Melancholy* is the result of many years of study of men and books, and abounds in quotations from authors of all ages and countries. It is divided into three parts treating of the causes and symptoms of melancholy, of its cure, and of erotic and religious melancholy.

42 33. **the Complete Angler**. See note, p. 321. See also "Letters to Coleridge" of October 28, 1796, and "to Miss Fryer" of February 14, 1834.

42 34. **John Buncl**: the title of a book by Thomas Amory (1691?-1788), so called from the name of the hero, who is a "prodigious hand at matrimony, divinity, a song and a peck." Amory was a staunch Unitarian, an earnest moralist, a humorist, and an eccentric,—traits which must have appealed strongly to Lamb.

43 13. **deodands**: the term applied in old English law to personal chattels which had caused the death of a person, and which were forfeited to the crown to be distributed in alms. The law was abolished in 1846.

43 16. **C.**: Coleridge.

43 19. **spiteful K.**: "James Kenney, the dramatist, chiefly remembered now as the creator of Jeremy Diddler in the well-known farce of *Raising the Wind*" (Kent). He married a French woman and lived for several years in Versailles, where Lamb visited him in 1822.

43 22. **Margaret Newcastle**: Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle (1624-1673), maid of honor to Queen Henrietta Maria, and "distinguished

for her faithful attachment to her lord in his long exile during the time of the Commonwealth and for her indefatigable pursuit of literature" (Chambers).

44 4. **Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke** (1554-1628): author of poems, tragedies, and a *Life of Sidney*, all composed in a severely grave, sententious style. He was stabbed to death by an old servant, who found that he was not mentioned in his master's will.

44 7. **Zimmermann on Solitude**: a book published in 1755 by Johann Georg von Zimmermann (1728-1795), a Swiss physician at the court of Hanover, and author of several medical and philosophical works.

44 10. **S. T. C.**: a third *alias* for Coleridge, to puzzle the reader.

44 16. **Daniel, Samuel** (1562-1619): the author of much poetry and prose, the principal of which are *The History of the Civil Wars*, the *Delia Sonnets*, and *The Complaint of Rosamond*. His best poem is his *Epistle to the Countess of Cumberland*, a favorite with Wordsworth. His command of pure English caused him to be called the "well-languaged Daniel."

Review Questions. 1. Analyze the humor of Lamb's (*a*) classification of men, (*b*) biblical allusions, (*c*) puns, (*d*) Comberback's sophistry, (*e*) exaggerations, (*f*) figures and illustrations, (*g*) characterization. 2. How has a bookish flavor been imparted to the whole essay? 3. What hint is given of Lamb's favorite authors? 4. Find the secret of the tone of distinction in the style. 5. Note the friendly attitude of Lamb to (*a*) his readers and (*b*) his characters.

VI. NEW YEAR'S EVE

London Magazine, January, 1821

This essay has a special interest on account of its tone of melancholy skepticism and its connection with Lamb's controversy with his friend Robert Southey. The views expressed in this essay as also in *Grace before Meat* and *Witches and Other Night Fears* had caused the Laureate to lament, in a review in the *Quarterly*, the "absence of a sounder religious feeling" in Elia's writings. Speculating in his reply on the particular essay which had given color to the charge, Lamb wrote, ". . . Or was it that on the 'New Year'—in which I have described the feelings of the merely natural man, on a consideration of the amazing change, which is supposable to take place on our removal from this fleshly scene?" (Talfourd ed., Vol. I, pp. 338, 339).

"Lamb seems in this essay," says Canon Ainger, "to have written with the express purpose of presenting the reverse side of a passage in his favorite *Religio Medici*. Sir Thomas Browne had there written, 'I thank God I have not those strait ligaments, or narrow obligations to the world, as to dote on life, or be convulsed and tremble at the name of death.' . . . Lamb clung to the things he saw and loved — the friends, the books, the streets, and crowds around him, and he was not ashamed to confess that death meant for him the absence of all these, and that he could not look it steadfastly in the face" (*Life of Lamb*, p. 130).

45 12. "I saw the skirts [train] of the departing Year": from Coleridge's *Ode to the Departing Year* (1790).

45 19. "Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest": from Pope's *Odyssey*, Book XV, l. 84.

46 2. Alice W——n: "Alice Winterton" (Lamb's Key), the fair-haired Hertfordshire girl, and sweetheart of Lamb's boyhood, whose real name was Ann Simmons. The Anna of his sonnets and this Alice, also referred to in *Blakesmoor* and *Dream Children*, were the same person, and it is a tradition of the Widford villagers that Rosamund Gray was drawn from this his first and only love. Ann Simmons married Bartrum, a wealthy pawnbroker of Princes Street, Leicester Square. For the sonnets, see *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*, pp. 101, 102.

46 24. changeling. It was an old superstition that infants were sometimes stolen from their cradles by fairies who left their own weakling elves, called "changelings," in their place. In the Elizabethan writers are numerous references to this belief. In Middleton and Rowley's play *The Changeling* the word means simply "idiot."

46 34. From what have I not fallen, etc. See Lamb's sonnet on *Innocence* (1795): "We were two pretty babes," etc.

48 14. seek Lavinian shores: an adaptation of Virgil's *Æneid*, I, 2, 3, *Laviniaque venit litora*.

48 30. "Sweet assurance of a look": from Matthew Royden's *Elegy on Sir Philip Sidney*.

49 7-8. Phœbus' sickly sister: the moon. In the Greek myths Apollo, or Phœbus, was the sun god; Diana, Cynthia, or Phœbe, the moon goddess. See Gayley's *Classic Myths*, pp. 59-65.

49 8. Canticles: The Song of Solomon viii. 8, 9.

49 9. I hold with the Persian: the Zoroastrian sun worship had its home in Persia.

49 17. Friar John: a tall, lean, wide-mouthed, long-nosed friar of Seville in Rabelais' *Gargantua*. He swore like a trooper and fought furiously with the staff of a cross.

49 25-26. "lie down with kings and emperors in death": a quotation from Browne's *Hydrotaphia*, or *Urn-Burial*.

50 7. Mr. Cotton, Charles (1630-1687): a poet, angler, and friend of Izaak Walton. He is described as "a cheerful, witty and accomplished man." He translated Montaigne's *Essays*.

52 1. Helicon: a mountain in Greece, from which flowed the fountains Hippocrene and Aganippe, the fabled resorts of the Muses.

52 1. Spa: a general name for European watering places, the oldest being situated in a town of that name in Belgium.

Review Questions. 1. What is the prevailing tone of this essay, — cheerful or gloomy, humorous or melancholy? 2. Where has the author used epigram, contrast, short sentences? 3. What do we learn of his religious views, character as a child, tastes, habits, and views? 4. Note the blending of fact with fiction. 5. Explain the biblical allusions, the reference to the household gods, and use of "reluct" and "burgeon."

VII. MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

London Magazine, February, 1821

In reprinting this essay in the *London Journal* Leigh Hunt thus introduced it: "Here followeth, gentle reader, the immortal record of Mrs. Battle and her whist; a game which the author, as thou wilt see, wished that he could play forever; and, accordingly, in the deathless pages of his wit, forever will he play it."

Mr. Percy Fitzgerald and Mr. Charles Kent see a resemblance between the character of Mrs. Battle and Lamb's grandmother, Mrs. Mary Field, but Mr. Barry Cornwall and Canon Ainger regard Mrs. Battle as purely the creature of the author's imagination. All the evidence of the essays, as well as Lamb's poem *The Grandame*, supports the latter view.

53 24. his celebrated game of Ombre. The description occurs in the third canto of *The Rape of the Lock*. The terms used in the game — spadille, basto, matador, punto, etc. — indicate its Spanish origin.

53 28. Mr. Bowles: the Rev. William Lisle Bowles, an English clergyman of antiquarian tastes. His *Sonnets* (1789) greatly influenced Coleridge, and his edition of Pope (1806) caused a controversy between Campbell and Byron. Southey married his sister Caroline.

54 2. Spadille: the ace of spades in the games of ombre and quadrille. See Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, Canto III.

54 7. **Sans Prendre Vole**: a term at cards meaning "without taking the play that wins all the tricks."

54 19. **Machiavel, Niccolo (1469-1527)**: a Florentine author and statesman, who was employed in numerous diplomatic missions to the petty states of Italy, to France, and to Germany. In 1513 he was imprisoned and tortured on a charge of conspiring against the Medici. The reference in the text is to his *Florentine History*.

55 19. **among those clear Vandykes**: Sir Anthony Vandyke (1599-1641), a Flemish painter who spent many years in England. He was knighted by Charles I, to whom he was court painter.

55 20. **Paul Potter (1625-1654)**: a Dutch painter of portraits and animals.

55 26. **Pam in all his glory!** Pam was the familiar nickname of Henry John Temple Viscount Palmerston (1784-1865). At this time he was Secretary of War, a Tory, a follower of Pitt, and advocate of Catholic emancipation. In 1855 he became prime minister.

56 3-4. **the arrantest Ephesian journeyman**. See Acts of the Apostles xix. 24-41.

56 5. **ou! ancestors' money**. Cf. Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, Book I, Chap. V, p. 35, MacMechan ed.: "A simple invention it was in the old-world grazier, — sick of lugging his slow ox about the country till he got it bartered for corn or oil, — to take a piece of leather, and thereon scratch or stamp the mere figure of an ox (or *pecus*); put it in his pocket, and call it *Pecunia*, money."

56 11. **old Walter Plumer**. See notes on *The South-Sea House*, p. 324.

59 12. **Bridget Elia**: Mary Lamb, sister of the author.

59 34. **Bridget and I should be ever playing**: compare with the thought in this last paragraph the art doctrine of *arrested life* in Keats's *Ode on a Grecian Urn*.

Review Questions. 1. The characterization of Mrs. Battle by means of the game: (a) her strenuous personality; (b) her looks and bearing; (c) her literary tastes; (d) her aggressive, argumentative tone. 2. The philosophy of the game of whist with relation to human nature. 3. Comparison of whist with other games; compare Poe's argument for the superiority of whist over chess in his *Murders in the Rue Morgue*. 4. Explain the references to painting, politics, literature, and the Bible. 5. Find an example of Lamb's religious tolerance. 6. Examine the structure of the essay, especially the parts where the author addresses Mrs. Battle.

VIII. VALENTINE'S DAY

The Indicator, February 14, 1821

This hitherto untraced essay of Elia, the source of which is now for the first time pointed out, appeared originally in No. 71 of Leigh Hunt's *Indicator*, where it may be found at pp. 150-152 of the second volume, signed, according to Lamb's not infrequent custom, with four asterisks. William Hone, in his *Every Day Book*, under date 14th of February, transcribed the whole paper with this prefix: "Attend we upon Elia. Hark, how triumphantly that noble herald of the College of Kindness proclaims the day!" (Kent).

60 1. **old Bishop Valentine**: a Christian martyr of the reign of the Emperor Claudius (about 270 A.D.). The custom of sending love missives on the day of his festival, February 14, originated in connection with the heathen worship of Juno at that time. Its association with the saint is wholly accidental.

60 2. **Arch-flamen of Hymen**: chief priest of the Greek and Roman god of marriage.

60 9-10. **Jerome, Ambrose, Austin, or St. Augustine**: fathers of the Latin church in the 4th century A.D.

60 9-11. **Cyril, Origen**: early fathers of the Greek church.

60 11-12. **Bull, Parker, Whitgift**: prelates of the English church, mentioned because of the ecclesiastical tyranny of a purely personal nature which they exercised.

60 14. "Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings": *Paradise Lost*, I, 768.

61 12-13. "gives a very echo to the throne where hope is seated": a paraphrase from Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, II, iv.

61 17-18. the raven himself was hoarse: *Macbeth*, I, v, 39.

61 23. "having been will always be": a free quotation from Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, st. x, ll. 14-15.

62 5. **E. B.**: Edward Francis Burney (1760-1848), a book illustrator and portrait painter. He was a cousin of the novelist Madame D'Arblay (Miss Burney). He illustrated the novels of Richardson and Smollett, also the *Arabian Nights* and various periodicals.

62 25. **Pyramus and Thisbe**: this famous story of the lovers of Babylon is told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, IV, 55-166. See also Gayley's *Classic Myths*, § 78, and Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*. It is the subject of burlesque in the subplot of *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

62 25. **Dido**: the story of the unhappy queen of Carthage is found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, XIV, 2, and in Virgil's *Æneid*, Books I, II,

and III. It was taken as the subject of plays by Gager, Rightwise, and Marlowe.

62 26. **Hero and Leander.** See Musaeus's *De Amore Herois et Leandri* and Ovid's *Heroides*, XVIII, XIX. The story is treated in our literature in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and in Keats's *On a Picture of Leander*.

62 26. **swans more than sang in Cayster:** the Cayster, or Little Meander, is a swift river of Asia Minor, and according to the poets was much frequented by swans. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, II, 253; Martial's *Epigrams*, I, 54; Homer's *Iliad*, II, 461; and Virgil's *Georgics*, V, 384.

62 28. **Iris dipt the woof:** the reference is to the variety of colors used by the artist, Iris being the goddess of the rainbow in Greek mythology.

63 11. **"Good-morrow to my Valentine":** Lamb had in mind the mad-song of Ophelia in *Hamlet*, IV, v:

To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.

Review Questions. 1. What is the secret of the humor in the second paragraph? 2. By what devices does the author give dignity to the subject? 3. What is the effect of the classical allusions? Explain each. 4. What do the quotations contribute to the tone of the essay? 5. Note easy transition to the fourth paragraph which is a short story. 6. Is this ending a violation of unity in the structure of the essay? 7. Rhetorical classification of "the world meets nobody half way," and "Iris dipt the woof." Find other figures. 8. What do you learn here of Lamb's gifts or limitations as a story-teller?

IX. A QUAKERS' MEETING

London Magazine, April, 1821

Both Leigh Hunt and Thomas Hood were impressed with Lamb's Quakerlike demeanor and plainness of dress. In the summer of 1822 Lamb met Bernard Barton, a Quaker poet, who held a clerkship in a London bank. This meeting resulted in a delightful correspondence which extended from 1822 to 1828. Lamb once said to his friend, "I hope I am half a Quaker myself," and Ainger has especially noted Lamb's strong native sympathy for Quaker customs.

63 16. **"Still-born Silence!"** etc.: a quotation from Richard Flecknoe's dramatic pastoral, *Love's Dominion* (1634). It is one of the selections in Lamb's *Specimens*.

64 10. **nor pour wax into the little cells of thy ears**: a reference to the story of Ulysses, who stopped up the ears of the crew with wax that they might not hear the song of the Sirens.

64 18-19. "**Boreas, and Cesias, and Argestes loud**": *Paradise Lost*, X, 699.

64 33-34. **The Carthusian is bound, etc**: a monastic order founded by St. Bruno, who retired in 1086 with six companions to the solitude of La Chartreuse near Grenoble. They wore rude clothing, lived on coarse bread and vegetables, and maintained the rule of unbroken silence, night watching, and frequent prayer.

65 9. **Master Zimmermann**. See note p. 335.

65 19. "**sands, ignoble things,**" etc.: from Francis Beaumont's *Lines on the Tombs in Westminster Abbey*. Cf. Addison's *Thoughts in Westminster Abbey*, and Irving's description of the Abbey in *The Sketch Book*.

65 26. "**How reverend is the view,**" etc.: a free quotation from Congreve's *Mourning Bride*, II, i.

66 27. **James Naylor (1618-1660)**: a Puritan fanatic and Quaker of Yorkshire. Under the delusion that he was the reincarnation of Christ, he entered Bristol, October, 1655, on horseback, naked, in imitation of Christ's entry into Jerusalem. After being convicted of blasphemy by Parliament and tortured, he recanted.

67 6. **John Woolman (1720-1772)**: an illiterate tailor of New Jersey. Lamb refers to the *Journal of the Life, Gospel and Labours* of this humble Quaker, of whom Crabb Robinson said, "His religion is love; his whole existence, and all his passions were love."

68 14-15. **the Loves fled the face of Dis**: refers to the rape of Proserpine by Pluto in the Vale of Enna.

68 21. **caverns of Trophonius**: a famous oracle in a cave in Bœotia, from which those who went to consult the god always returned dejected. Hence arose the proverb applied to a melancholy person, "He has been consulting the oracle of Trophonius."

68 30-31. "**forty feeding like one**": from Wordsworth's little extempore poem *The Cock is crowing*, etc., a favorite with Joanna Baillie.

69 3-4. **the Shining Ones**. See *Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I.

Review Questions. 1. What evidence does this essay give of careful preparation of material? 2. Note finished elaboration of the style. Is it painstaking? suggestive? bookish? 3. What appealed to Lamb in the Quaker character? 4. Was he intellectually in sympathy with them? 5. Find echoes from literature sacred and profane.

X. MY RELATIONS

London Magazine, June, 1821

69 16. I had an aunt. This was a sister of Lamb's father, who lived in her brother's home and contributed something to the family income. She died in February, 1797. Lamb wrote a poem in her honor.

69 23. Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471): a German mystic and ascetic, the reputed author of *De Imitatione Christi*.

69 24-25. matins and complines: canonical hours for divine service in the Roman Catholic Church, the latter being observed at midnight and the former shortly after.

70 18. Brother, or sister, I never had any: a literary fiction intended to mislead, for Lamb is immediately to describe his brother and sister as cousins.

70 19. Elizabeth. Two daughters of John and Elizabeth Lamb were christened by that name, both dying in infancy.

70 24. James and Bridget Elia: John and Mary Lamb, brother and sister of the author. John, who was Charles's senior by twelve years, held a clerkship in the South-Sea House, where he occupied bachelor chambers. Mary kept house for Charles.

70 34. the pen of Yorick: Yorick is the pen name of Laurence Sterne in his *Sentimental Journey*. It is the name of the eccentric parson in *Tristram Shandy* who claims descent from Shakespeare's Yorick! See *Hamlet*, V.

71 7. the phlegm of my cousin's doctrine, etc. In early times the four principal types of temperament, the sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, and melancholic, were supposed to depend on the preponderance of various humors in the system.

71 24-25. that piece of tender pastoral Domenichino: a painting by the Italian artist Domenico Zampieri (1581-1641). Among his works are "Diana and her Nymphs," "Adam and Eve," "St. Jerome," "The Communion of St. Jerome," and "The Martyrdom of St. Agnes."

71 31. Charles of Sweden: the celebrated soldier king, Charles XII (1682-1718).

72 4. the Cham of Tartary: a powerful Eastern prince frequently referred to by the Elizabethan dramatists as the type of haughty tyranny.

72 15. John Murray (1778-1843): a well-known London publisher, founder of the *Quarterly Review*.

73 4. Chanticleer: the name of the cock in the old beast epics and *fabliaux*, e.g. Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale*, *Roman du Renard*, and *Reinecke Fuchs*.

736. **Eton**: one of the most famous schools in England, situated on the Thames twenty-two miles west of London. It was founded by Henry VI in 1440.

7318. **Claude Lorrain** (1600-1682): a French landscape painter. See Van Dyke's *History of Painting*, pp. 136, 137.

7319. **Hobbima** (1638?-1709): a Dutch landscape painter. See Van Dyke's *History of Painting*, p. 216.

7320. **Christie, Alexander** (1807-1860): a Scottish painter who had a studio in London.

7320. **Phillips, Thomas** (1770-1845): an English portrait painter, R.A. 1808; professor of painting, R.A. 1824-1832.

7326. **Westward Ho!** a cry of the watermen on the Thames in old times indicating the direction of their boats. It is the title of a comedy by Webster and Dekker, and of a novel by Charles Kingsley.

7326. **Pall Mall**: a fashionable promenade in London leading from Trafalgar Square to the Green Park. See Hare's *London*, II, 44.

746. "**Cynthia of the minute**": from Pope's *Epistles*, II, l. 20. Cynthia is the moon goddess.

747. **Raphael Sanzio** (1483-1520): the celebrated Italian painter. Among his chief paintings are "The Sistine Madonna," "The Transfiguration," "Marriage of the Virgin," "La Belle Jardinière," "St. George and the Dragon," "St. Michael," "Apollo and Marsyas," "The Vision of Ezekiel," and the Vatican cartoons.

7411. the **Carracci**: Ludovico (1555-1619), Agostino (1558-1602), and Annibale (1560-1609), three Italian painters of Bologna.

7413. **Lucca** [Luca] **Giordano** (1632-1705): a Neapolitan artist.

7414. **Carlo Maratti** (1625-1713): an Italian painter of Madonnas and other religious work, described as "meretricious."

7418. "**set forth in pomp**," etc.: Shakespeare's *Richard II*, V, i, 78-80.

7420. **Hallowmas**: All Hallows or All Saints' Day, November 1.

7513-14. **Thomas Clarkson** (1760-1846): an English abolitionist, author of a *History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade*.

768. "**Through the green plains of pleasant Hertfordshire**": from one of Lamb's early sonnets.

Review Questions. 1. Study characterization of the aunt. 2. In the character of the brother note the blending of (a) the man of the world, (b) the sentimentalist, and (c) the dilettante; also the mingled tone of irony and kindness. 3. What method does Lamb follow: the subjective, objective, psychological, humorous, satiric, burlesque? 4. Is he

frank, or does he keep back his brother's less agreeable traits? 5. In his references to art does Lamb impress you as an amateur or a connoisseur? 6. What is the author's position in regard to cruelty to animals? 7. Find examples of appeal to sense of sight, of hearing, of smell, of taste. 8. This essay may profitably be made the basis of a study of Italian art in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

XI. MACKERY END, IN HERTFORDSHIRE

London Magazine, July, 1821

769. **Bridget Elia**: Mary Lamb, who was ten years older than Charles. Mr. Ernest Rhys says, "It is to his sister Mary that Lamb devotes in 'Elia' his most loving grace of description; to his sister, who as Bridget Elia, lives in our hearts and minds forever."

76 15. **therash king's offspring**. For the story of Jephthah's daughter see Judges xi. 30-40. See also Tennyson's *Dream of Fair Women*, ll. 197-248.

76 16. "**with a difference**": an heraldic term. See *Hamlet*, IV, v, 182.

76 24. **Burton**. See note on p. 334.

77 9. **the Religio Medici**. See note on p. 336.

77 14. **Margaret Newcastle**. See note, pp. 334-335.

78 12-13. **spacious closet of good old English reading**: the library was that of Samuel Salt. See *The Old Benchers*.

78 24-25. **She is excellent to be at play with**. Charles and Mary usually played piquet together.

79 29. "**But thou, that didst appear so fair**": from Wordsworth's *Yarrow Visited*.

81 6. **B. F.**: Barron Field (1786-1846), a lawyer who accompanied the Lambs on this visit. He is referred to as "a very dear friend" in *The Old and the New Schoolmaster*, and the *Distant Correspondents* is addressed to him. He usually attended the Wednesday parties. He became Judge of the Supreme Court in Sydney, New South Wales, and Chief Justice at Gibraltar.

Review Questions. 1. Examine the rhetorical effects in the passage beginning "Still the air breathed balmy." Mr. Ainger calls attention to "the almost unique beauty of this prose idyll." 2. Why are there fewer literary allusions in this essay than in previous ones? 3. Can you find the secret of the effects produced in this character sketch of Mary Lamb mentioned by Mr. Rhys? 4. Find touches of the humorous and pathetic. 5. What were the peculiar relations of the author and his sister? 6. Find examples of graceful transition.

XII. IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES

London Magazine, August, 1821

This essay was originally entitled somewhat oddly and clumsily, *Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen and other Imperfect Sympathies*.

82 5. author of the *Religio Medici*: Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682), one of the writers who most influenced Lamb. See Introduction, p. xxix. The passage quoted occurs in Part II, sec. i.

82 6-7. notional and conjectural essences: the beings of fancy and conjecture. Speculating about the world of spirits, in *Religio Medici*, Part I, sec. xxxiii, Browne says, "I could easily believe, that not only whole countries, but particular persons, have their tutelary and guardian angels."

82 14. "Standing on earth, not rapt above the sky [pole]": quoted imperfectly from Milton's invocation of Urania in *Paradise Lost*, VII, 23.

83 (footnote). Heywood, Thomas: the seventeenth-century dramatist.

83 8. anti-Caledonian. Caledonia was the old poetic name of Scotland.

84 15-16. His Minerva is born in panoply. In Greek mythology, Pallas Athena, the goddess of wisdom, sprang full-armed from the brain of Zeus.

84 25. true touch. Here "touch" means tried metal of proved quality. Cf. *Coriolanus*, IV, i, "my friends of noble touch." The word is also used of (1) a stone to test the quality of metals, and (2) the trial itself.

85 12. John Buncl. See note on p. 334.

85 19. Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519); a great Italian painter, architect, sculptor, musician, and scientist. The "print of a graceful female" was from his famous *Vierge aux Rochers*, or "Virgin of the Rocks," of which there are replicas in the Louvre at Paris and in the National Gallery in London.

86 1. Burns, Robert (1759-1796): the celebrated lyric poet of Scotland.

86 18. Thomson, James (1700-1748). The author of *The Seasons* and *The Castle of Indolence*, though a Scotchman, does not use the Scotch dialect in his poems.

86 19. Smollett, Tobias (1721-1771): a Scotch novelist born near Dumbarton, and author of *Roderick Random* and *Humphrey Clinker*, which is told in a series of letters, and is by many critics considered his best. He also wrote a *History of England*, an independent work,

which has been frequently printed as a continuation of Hume's *History*, which closes at the Revolution.

86 20. **Rory and his companion:** Roderick Random and his school-fellow, the barber, Hugh Strap, who are outrageously gulled on their arrival in London.

86 26. **Stonehenge:** the remnant of a prehistoric Celtic monument of a religious nature, which stands in Salisbury Plain, in Wiltshire. Seventeen great stones, connected in part by slabs resting on their tops, inclose an ellipse, in the middle of which is a slab called the altar. See Rhys's *Celtic Heathendom*, pp. 194, 195.

87 1. **They date beyond the pyramids.** Lamb had in mind the pyramids of Gizeh, the northernmost surviving group of a range of about seventy pyramids extending from Aba Roâsh south to Meidoun. The group dates from about 4000 B.C. De Quincey makes similar use of the pyramids to connote great age in his *Confessions* and *Daughter of Lebanon*.

87 5. **the story of Hugh of Lincoln.** The legend of the torture and murder of this little Christian boy by the Jews of Lincoln in 1255 is told by Matthew Paris, and is the subject of several old ballads in Percy's *Reliques*, the *Golden Treasury Ballad Book*, and Child's *Ballads*. See also Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale*.

87 27. **B—:** John Braham (1774-1856): the most popular tenor singer of his day in London; author of *The Death of Nelson* and other songs. "That glorious singer," wrote Lamb to Manning on January 2, 1810, "Braham, one of my lights, is fled. He was for a season. He was a rare composition of the Jew, the gentleman and the angel, yet all these elements mixed up so kindly in him, that you could not tell which preponderated; but he is gone, and one Phillips is engaged instead" (*Letters of Charles Lamb*, p. 241).

87 32. **the Shibboleth:** a secret password. For its origin see Judges xii. 1-6.

88 4. **Kemble, John Philip (1757-1823):** the great tragic actor, who succeeded Garrick as the foremost interpreter of Shakespeare's heroes. "He was a stately actor, with a somewhat stilted and declamatory style." The still more celebrated Sarah Siddons was his sister, and Charles Kemble, the father of Fanny Kemble, his brother, who was a frequent guest at Lamb's parties.

88 12. **Jael.** She slew Sisera in her tent by smiting a nail into his temples. See Judges iv. 18-22.

88 17. **Fuller, Thomas (1608-1661):** the author of two well-known books, *The Worthies of England* and *The Holy and the Profane State*.

His style, which greatly influenced Lamb, is full of solemn, fantastic quips and quaint conceits.

88 21. Quaker ways. "Do 'Friends' allow puns," — wrote Lamb to his Quaker friend, Bernard Barton, — "verbal equivocations? They are unjustly accused of it, and I did my best in the *Imperfect Sympathies* to vindicate them."

88 27. Desdemona: the young and beautiful heroine of Shakespeare's tragedy of *Othello*. "To live with him" is a phrase in I, iii, 249.

88 32-33. the salads which Eve dressed for the angel. See *Paradise Lost*, V, 315-450.

88 33. Evelyn, John, D.C.L. (1620-1706): an English author, who wrote much on the Arundel marbles, Greenwich Hospital, gardening, numismatics, etc. He was a Royalist during the Civil War and became secretary of the Royal Society. Lamb's reference is to a passage in his *Complete Gardener*.

88 34. "To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse": a free paraphrase from *Paradise Regained*, II, 278.

90 11. Penn, William (1644-1718): the founder of Pennsylvania, and author of *No Cross No Crown*, a book which Lamb liked immensely, pronouncing it "a most capital book, good thoughts in good language."

90 15. I was travelling in a stage-coach, etc. This anecdote called forth a remonstrance from Barton's sister, to whom Lamb replied in a letter of March 11, 1823, explaining that the adventure had not happened to him but had been related to him by the eminent surgeon, Sir Anthony Carlyle, who was an eyewitness of the incident.

90 34. The steps went up. Coaches and private carriages were formerly provided with folding steps.

Review Questions. 1. Note the perfect construction of this essay. 2. Study the satire and humor in the paragraph on the Scotch. 3. Explain and comment on the figure employed in "His Minerva is born in panoply." 4. Is there any animosity in Lamb's criticism of Scotch character? 5. Note with what critical insight and delicacy Lamb suggests Smollett's superiority to Hume. 6. What accounts for the author's admiration for Burns and Thomson? 7. Note the ingenuity and subtle suggestiveness of the close of the paragraph on Jews. 8. Analyze effects, plan, climax, character sketching, etc., in the short story at the close of the essay.

XIII. THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE

London Magazine, September, 1821

"The essay on *The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple* is one of the most varied and beautiful pieces of prose that English literature can boast. Eminently, moreover, does it show us Lamb as the product of two different ages, — the child of the Renaissance of the sixteenth century and of that of the nineteenth. It is as if both Spenser and Wordsworth had laid hands of blessing upon his head" (Ainger).

91 14. **the Temple**: in the Middle Ages a lodge of the Knights Templars of the Holy Sepulcher, which was a military and religious order. A later building of the order, dating from 1184, is the Temple in the Strand. The Templars were suppressed in the reign of Edward II, and the house, after passing through various hands, reverted to the crown. In 1338 it went to the Knights Hospitalers of St. John, who leased it to students of the common law. On the same site now stand the two Inns of Court, called the Inner and Middle Temples, owned by a legal society which grants admission to the bar. The Outer Temple was converted into the Exeter Buildings.

91 21. "There when they came," etc.: from Spenser's *Prothalamium*, st. viii.

92 5. "Of building strong," etc.: an improvised line referring to the "Paper Buildings" facing King's Bench Walk in the Temple.

92 11. **Twickenham Naiades**. Twickenham, a town where Pope lived and had a grotto, was higher up the river above the "trade-polluted waters," and therefore where, to the imagination, river nymphs would prefer to dwell.

92 13. **that fine Elizabethan hall**: the hall of the Middle Temple.

92 25. "Ah! yet doth beauty like a dial-hand," etc.: from Shakespeare's *Sonnet*, civ.

93 4. **the horologe of the first world**. The ancient horologe, or sun dial, was an instrument for showing the time of day from the shadow of a style or gnomon, which was parallel with the earth's axis, on a graduated arc or surface called the dial plate. There were also astral and lunar dials. Mr. Richard Le Gallienne, in his *Old Country House*, quotes from this essay and speaks of the dial as "the natural clock by which to do the beautiful work of idleness."

93 8-9. "carved it out quaintly in the sun." See *3 Henry VI*, II, v, 24.

93 12. **Marvell**, Andrew (1621-1678): joint secretary with Milton under Cromwell, and the last of the lyric poets of the romantic age.

For the influence of his lovely garden poems on Lamb, see Ainger's *Life*, p. 108.

93 17. "What wonderous life is this I lead!" from Marvell's *The Garden*. The entire poem is number 111 in the *Golden Treasury of English Lyrics*.

94 20. **Lincoln's Inn**: one of the Inns of Court, occupied by legal societies which provide instruction and examinations for candidates to the bar. See Hare's *London*, Vol. I, p. 59.

95 12. **The old benchers**: the legal term applied to the senior and governing members of the Inns of Court.

95 17. **The roguish eye of J**—11. Jekyll, the famous wit among the benchers, was the master in chancery; called to the bench in 1805, died in 1837.

95 19. **Thomas Coventry**: called to the bench in 1766, died in 1797.

95 26. **an Elisha bear**. See 2 Kings ii. 23, 24.

96 2. **Samuel Salt**. See note on p. 329.

96 14. **his man Lovel**: the author's father, John Lamb, Sr., who died 1797. The name Lovel occurs in Murphy's *The Citizen* (1757), Bayley's *The Mistletoe Bough*, Clara Reeve's *Old English Baron* (1777), and Townley's *High Life Below Stairs* (1759), from any one of which Lamb may have taken it. There is also a Lovell mentioned in *Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago*, whose name may have suggested the pseudonym of his father.

96 27. **the unfortunate Miss Blandy**: the principal in a celebrated trial for murder in 1752. Her father, a Henley attorney, refused to allow her to receive the attentions of Captain Cranstoun, an adventurer. Mr. Blandy died from the effects of a powder given him by his daughter, who claimed that it was a love philter to change his feelings toward her lover. She was convicted and executed at Oxford in April, 1752. See Leslie's *Our River*.

97 15-16. **Not so, thought Susan P**—: Susannah Pierson, sister of the bencher mentioned below. As a mark of his regard Salt bequeathed her the works of Pope, Swift, Shakespeare, Addison, and Steele.

98 9-10. **the mad Elwes breed**: John Elwes (1714-1789), a noted miser, the son of a wealthy English brewer. He had a morbid disinclination to spend money upon himself, but was extravagant in gaming and speculation.

98 28. **his "flapper"**: in Swift's *Voyage to Laputa*, a family officer, whose business it was "gently to strike with his bladder the mouth of him who is to speak, and the right ear of him or them to whom the speaker addresseth himself."

99 13. **a face as gay as Garrick's**: David Garrick (1717-1779), the famous English actor and manager of Drury Lane Theater, where he brought out twenty-four of Shakespeare's plays, besides many modern comedies. Dr. Johnson said that "his death eclipsed the gaiety of nations." A portrait of John Lamb in Procter's *Memoir of Charles Lamb* shows some resemblance to Garrick.

99 15-16. **next to Swift and Prior**. For a discussion of Swift's verse see Gosse's *Literature of the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 152-153; and for that of Prior, Austin Dobson's essay in Ward's *English Poets*, Vol. III, pp. 18, 19.

99 16. **moulded heads**. Canon Ainger mentions a medallion portrait of Salt done by John Lamb in plaster of Paris, and now in the possession of Mrs. Arthur Tween, a daughter of Randall Norris.

99 27. **"a remnant [semblance] most forlorn of what he was"**: a free quotation from Lamb's own lines "written on the day of my aunt's funeral" (1797).

99 29. **He was greatest . . . in Bayes**: a coxcomb in Buckingham's farce, *The Rehearsal*, intended as a caricature of the poet laureate, Dryden. The character was originally called Bilboa in ridicule of Sir Robert Howard, but was changed when Howard became a friend of the author. Dryden in turn satirized Buckingham as Zimri in *Absalom and Achitophel*.

100 9. **Peter Pierson**: called to the bench in 1800 and died in 1808. Though friends at the bar, he and Salt were not contemporaries on the bench.

100 17-18. **resembling that of our great philanthropist**. Probably John Howard is meant.

100 20. **Daines Barrington (1722-1800)**: the son of Viscount Barrington. He was called to the bench in 1777. He was an enthusiastic naturalist and antiquarian, and wrote *The Naturalist's Calendar* and *Observations on the Statutes*.

100 29. **Barton, Thomas**: called to the bench in 1775, died 1791.

100 34. **Read, John**: called to the bench in 1792, died 1794.

101 1. **Twopeny, Richard (1728-1809)**. He was a stockbroker to the Bank of England, and occupied bachelor chambers in the Temple, but was never a bencher, as Lamb supposed.

101 2. **Wharry, John**: called to the bench in 1801, died in 1810.

101 16. **Jackson, Richard**. On account of his learning and memory he was given the sobriquet of the Omniscient. See Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, April, 1776. He went on the bench in 1770, became a member of Parliament and a minister of the crown in 1782. He died in 1787.

101 19. **Friar Bacon:** Roger Bacon (1214?-1294), a learned English philosopher and scientist, author of *Opus Majus* (1265), a scientific treatise written on request of Pope Clement IV. In Greene's play *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* he is a great magician possessing supernatural knowledge and power. See Schneider's *Roger Bacon* (1873).

101 29. **Mingay with the iron hand:** James Mingay, an eminent king's counsel, noted for his "oratory of infinite wit and most excellent fancy." He went on the bench in 1785 and died in 1812. He was a rival of Erskine.

102 3. **Michael Angelo's Moses:** a gigantic and imposing statue in the church of San Pietro in Vincoli, in Rome. His right hand upholds the tables of the law and clutches the long beard, and the hair is arranged in such a way as to give a suggestion of horns.

102 4. **Baron Maseres** (1731-1824) filled for fifty years the post of Cursitor Baron of the Exchequer. He continued throughout life to wear the costume of the reign in which he was born.

102 13. **I saw Gods,** as "old men," etc. See 1 Samuel xxviii. 13, 14. Cf. Lamb's mention of the picture of the Witch of Endor in *Witches and Other Night-Fears*.

102 28. **R. N.:** Randall Norris (1751-1827), for many years librarian and subtreasurer of the Inner Temple, where he resided for over fifty years. Lamb wrote of him, "He was my friend and my father's friend all the life I can remember. Old as I am waxing, in his eyes I was still the child he first knew me. To the last he called me Charley. I have none to call me Charley now."

103 14. **Urban:** the pseudonym of the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* (founded 1731).

103 20-21. "ye yourselves are old": *Lear*, II, vii, 194.

103 22. **future Hookers and Seldens.** Richard Hooker (1553-1600), the author of *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, was a Master of the Temple, and John Selden (1584-1654), the jurist, antiquary, and orientalist, had quarters in the Inner Temple

Review Questions. 1. What were Lamb's special gifts for writing biographical sketches? 2. In which of the benchers does the author show peculiar interest? 3. Note the tender humor of his portraiture of his father, and contrast with that of his brother John. 4. Lamb has been called "the last of the Elizabethans"; find grounds for this statement in this essay. 5. Compare characterization of Coventry with Irving's Wooter van Twiller. 6. Examine Lamb's use of Italianized, frescoes, quadrate, coeval, spinous, cue, windfall, moidore, hunks, female, quips, and youngers. What can be said of the author's vocabulary?

XIV. WITCHES AND OTHER NIGHT-FEARS

London Magazine, October, 1821

This essay was the unfortunate cause of the controversy between Lamb and his old friend Southey. In an article entitled *Progress of Infidelity*, attacking Leigh Hunt and Hazlitt in the *Quarterly Review* for July, 1823, Southey spoke of unbelievers not always being honest enough to express their real feelings, and charged them with the inability to divest themselves of fear even when they had renounced hope. "There is a remarkable proof of this in *Elia's Essays*," he wrote, "a book which wants only a sounder religious feeling to be as delightful as it is original. In that upon *Witches and Other Night-Fears* he says, 'It is not book or picture, or the stories of foolish servants which create these terrors in children.'" Southey then quoted the passage about little Thornton Hunt, and used it as a text for criticising severely the irreligious training of Leigh Hunt's children. Talfourd explains that Southey intended by this reference to increase the sale of Lamb's book. Lamb felt this slur so deeply that he wrote to Barton on July 10, "Southey has attacked Elia on the score of infidelity. . . . He might have spared an old friend such a construction of a few careless flights, that meant no harm to religion." In the *London* for October Lamb published a long open letter to Southey in which he expostulated with him for doing him an unfriendly office, and defended himself and Hunt vigorously. Southey read the article with surprise and grief. Lamb soon recovered from his resentment, apologized to his friend, received a visit from him, and reëstablished their friendship.

104 11. maidens pined away. A common charge against witches was that of causing their victims to waste away by making waxen images of them and applying tortures to these. See Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584, recently edited by Dr. Nicholson), XII, 16; also Bullen's edition of Middleton's *Witch*, a play with which Lamb was familiar. This superstition is the motive of Rossetti's ballad *Sister Helen*.

104 23. symbolized by a goat. See Matthew xxv. 33.

105 9. Prospero: a wise and good magician in *The Tempest*. See I, ii, for the reference.

105 15. Guyon, Sir: the knight of temperance in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. See the account of the siege of the House of Temperance, Book II, Canto xi.

105 29. Witch raising up Samuel. See 1 Samuel xxviii.

106 14. **Saint George**: the patron saint of England, the same as the Red Cross Knight in Book I of the *Faerie Queene*. The exploit referred to was slaying the monster Error. See Book I, Canto i, 20-26.

108 8. "Headless bear, blackman, or ape": from Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 111.

108 12. **Dear little T. H.**: Leigh Hunt's oldest son, Thornton.

108 17-18. "thick-coming fancies": from *Macbeth*, V, iii, 38.

108 22-23. **Gorgons**: Medusa, Stheno, and Euryale, three sisters with wings, brazen claws, enormous teeth, scaly bodies, and hair entwined with serpents. Whoever looked upon them was turned to stone. **Hydras**: the mythological hydra slain by Hercules was a many-headed water serpent which inhabited the marshes of Lerna in Argolis. **Chimæras**: the chimera of mythology was a strange, fire-breathing monster of Lycia, killed by Bellerophon. **the Harpies**: Celæno, Aëlle, and Ocypete, the daughters of Neptune and Terra. They are represented as disgusting winged monsters, of fierce aspect, with the bodies of vultures, the heads of maidens, and hands armed with claws. They were ministers of the vengeance of the gods.

108 28. "Names, whose sense we see not," etc.: from Spenser's *Epithalamium*, ll. 343, 344.

109 6. "Like one that on a lonesome road," etc.: from Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, ll. 446-451.

110 5. **Helvellyn**: the second peak in height (3118 feet) in the lake district in Cumberland.

110 10. "Where Alph, the sacred river, runs [ran]," etc.: from Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*, l. 3.

110 12. **Barry Cornwall**. See note on p. 320.

110 24. **Ino Leucothea**: the wife of Athamas, king of Thebes. To escape from her mad husband she threw herself into the sea and was changed into a sea goddess.

Review Questions. 1. Examine the fine topic sentence in paragraph 2. 2. Show the perfect keeping between Lamb's subject and his treatment of it. How does he get his weird effects? 3. Find an echo of the leading thought in Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*. 4. Compare with Lamb's "night fancies" De Quincey's architectural dreams. See my edition of the *Confessions*, pp. 129-135. 5. Is there evidence of the influence of the style of the Bible? of Milton?

XV. GRACE BEFORE MEAT

London Magazine, November, 1821

In Lamb's reply to Southey in the *London* for October, 1823, regarding the laureate's attack on the *Essays of Elia*, he said: "Perhaps the paper on *Saying Graces* was the obnoxious feature. I have endeavored there to rescue a voluntary duty — good in place, but never, as I remember, literally commanded — from the charge of an undecent formality. Rightly taken, sir, that paper was not against graces, but want of grace; not against ceremony, but the carelessness and slovenliness so often observed in the performance of it."

111 29. the *Faërie Queene*: the great allegorical and romantic poem by Edmund Spenser (1552?–1599).

112 5–6. *Utopian*: a word derived from Sir Thomas More's political romance *Utopia*, i.e. Nowhere (1516), which gives an account of an imaginary island, the seat of an ideal commonwealth. It means therefore "impracticable," "visionary."

112 5–6. *Rabelæsiæ*: an epithet derived from the name of François Rabelais (1495?–1553), whose books were noted for their buffoonery, riotous license, and their biting satire on the religious corruptions of the time.

113 26. still small voice. See 1 Kings xix. 12.

113 29. Jeshurun waxed fat. See Deuteronomy xxxii. 15.

113 31. Celæno. See Virgil's *Æneid*, III, 245–257, and note p. 353.

114 15. "A table richly spread in regal mode," etc.: from *Paradise Regained*, II, 340–347.

114 28. Heliogabalus: a Roman emperor (204–222 A.D.) notorious for his gluttony and debauchery.

115 3. "As appetite is wont to dream," etc.: from *Paradise Regained*, II, 264–278.

116 15. C——: Coleridge.

116 26. The author of the *Rambler*. Dr. Samuel Johnson published the *Rambler*, a periodical after the plan of the *Spectator*, in London, 1750–1752. For a graphic account of Dr. Johnson's gormandizing, read Macaulay's *Essay on Johnson*.

117 3. *Dagon*: the national god of the Philistines, half man and half fish. The word is derived from the Hebrew *dag*, a fish. See Judges xvi. 23, and 1 Samuel v.

117 6. the *Chartreuse*: the leading Carthusian monastery near Grenoble.

1185. **Lucian**: a Greek satirist and humorist, called the "Blasphemer" on account of his attacks on the religious beliefs of his time.

11814-15. **that equivocal wag, C. V. L.**: Charles Valentine Le Grice. See note on p. 331.

11826. **some one recalled a legend.** The story is told by Leigh Hunt in his account of the Blue-Coat School. See note on p. 329.

Review Questions. 1. Find examples of Lamb's appeal to the sense of taste for literary effects. Cf. Milton's and Keats's similar use. 2. Note the fine epigrammatic sentence in the eighth paragraph. 3. Study the author's use of the short sentence in the tenth paragraph. 4. Pick out the topic sentence in each paragraph and note position. 5. Analyze the humor of Coleridge's axiom about apple dumplings, and Le Grice's antepandial witticism. 6. Explain the biblical and other literary allusions. 7. Explain the following: "those Virgilian fowl," orgasm, wind-fall, epicurism, culinary, tucker, and flamens.

XVI. DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERIE

London Magazine, January, 1822

This paper was written by Lamb a short while after the death of his brother John. The bereavement brought home to him a depressing sense of his loneliness, for his sole surviving near relative was now his sister, whose sad affliction deprived him of her companionship for months at a time. In the delicate and pathetic confidence of this essay he reveals to us the genuine emotions of a heart deprived of the happiness of wedded life. As a protection from the curious, he, as is his custom, blends fact with fiction.

1196. **who lived in a great house in Norfolk.** This house was not really situated in Norfolk, but in Hertfordshire, as is afterwards stated correctly in the essay on *Blakesmoor* (Blakesware).

11910-11. **the Children in the Wood.** The ballad is given in Bishop Percy's *Reliques*, and in Child's *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. It is the story of the little son and daughter of a Norfolk gentleman, who were left with a considerable fortune in the care of an uncle. He, in order to secure the property, hired two ruffians to murder the children. But one of them relented and killed his companion. The little ones were, however, left in the Wayland Wood, where they perished at night of cold and terror. In time the ruffian confessed, and the unnatural

uncle died in prison. The tale is the subject of Thomas Taylor's play *The Babes in the Wood*.

119 26-27. which afterwards came to decay. Cussans says in his *History of Hertfordshire* that the Blakesware house was pulled down in 1822. The "other house" was Gilston, the principal seat of the Plumers, some miles distant.

120 7. **Psalter**y: the version of the Psalms in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

120 28-29. busts of the twelve Cæsars. "I could tell you," wrote Lamb to Southey, "of an old house with a tapestry bed-room, the 'Judgment of Solomon' composing one panel, and 'Actæon spying Diana naked' the other. I could tell of an old marble hall, with Hogarth's prints, and the Roman Cæsars in marble hung around" (Lamb's *Letters*, XLV).

121 24-25. their uncle, **John L**—: John Lamb, the author's brother.

122 25. the fair **Alice W**—n. See note, p. 336.

Review Questions. 1. Note the beautiful simplicity and tenderness of the style, which is admirably adapted to the tone of the essay. 2. How are the characters of the children suggested? 3. Note how delicately the character of the mother is depicted by reflection in that of the imaginary Alice. 4. Is the characterization of Mrs. Field distinct? 5. Compare what is here said of John with that in the former essay, noticing differences in tone. 6. Note the classic notion of incarnation at the close of the essay. 7. What gives unity to the two long sentences beginning, "Then I told how good," etc., and "Then in somewhat a more heightened tone," etc.? 8. Observe the undernote of pathos running throughout the essay. 9. Do you find any humor?

XVII. ON SOME OF THE OLD ACTORS

London Magazine, February, 1822

This was one of three essays originally published in the *London* under the general title of *The Old Actors*. In the volume of 1823 they were abridged and arranged under the title of *On Some of the Old Actors*, *On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century*, and *On the Acting of Munden*.

123 25. **Mr. Barrymore**: Spranger Barry (1719-1777), an Irish actor, the rival of Garrick. He excelled in tragedy.

123 28. **Mrs. Jordan**: the stage name of Dorothy Bland (1762-1816), an Irish actress, whom Genest declares never to have had a superior

in comedy. She was especially admired in the rôle of Hypolita in Wycherly's *Gentleman Dancing-Master*.

124 2-3. her Nells and Hoydens. Nell is the meek and obedient wife of Jobson in C. Coffey's play *The Devil to Pay* (1731); Hoyden is a romping, country girl in Vanbrugh's play *The Relapse* (1697), modernized by Sheridan in *A Trip to Scarborough* (1777).

124 7. story of her love for Orsino. See *Twelfth Night*, II, iv, 110.

124 19. "Write loyal cantons of contemnèd love," etc.: *Twelfth Night*, I, v, 291.

125 8. Bensley, Robert (1738-1817). He retired from the stage in 1796.

125 13-14. Hotspur's famous rant about glory. See *1 Henry IV*, I, iii, 200 *seq.*

125 (footnote). Venice Preserved: a tragedy by Thomas Otway (1651-1685), "the principal tragic poet of the English classical school." He fell in love with Mrs. Barry, who acted in his plays, and who proved his evil genius. He died in a baker's shop near a sponging house in which he was living in abject poverty. Pierre is a conspirator in *Venice Preserved*. See II, iii, p. 318, Mermaid ed.

126 24-25. John Kemble. See note on p. 346.

126 31. Lambert, John (1619-1683): an English general distinguished on the Parliamentary side in the Civil War, and a member of Cromwell's Council of State.

126 31-32. Lady Fairfax: the wife of the fifth Lord Fairfax, a Parliamentary general in the Civil War.

128 23. Duchess of Malfy [Malfi]: a tragedy by John Webster (printed in 1623). See Mermaid ed.

129 33. the hero of La Mancha: Don Quixote de la Mancha, a Spanish country gentleman in Cervantes' romance of that name.

130 15. to mate Hyperion: the son of Cælum and Tellus, the ancient god of the sun, overthrown by Apollo. Keats wrote a fragmentary epic on the theme.

130 22. "thus the whirligig of time," etc.: *Twelfth Night*, V, i, 385.

130 26. Dodd, James William (1740?-1796): an actor in Garrick's company who was very successful in the parts of Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Abel Drugger. He died in the autumn of 1796 soon after retiring from his profession.

132 3-6. so formally flat in Foppington, etc. Lord Foppington is an empty-headed coxcomb, intent only on dress and fashion, in Van Brugh's comedy *The Relapse* (1697), and in Sheridan's adaptation. Tattle, a character in Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695), "a mixture of lying,

foppery, vanity, cowardice, bragging, licentiousness, and ugliness, but a professed beau"; **Backbite**, Sir Benjamin, a conceited, censorious character in Sheridan's comedy *The School for Scandal* (1777); **Acres**, Bob, a country gentleman in Sheridan's comedy *The Rivals* (1775), who tries to ape a man of fashion, and, though a coward, is a great blusterer; **Fribble**, a contemptible mollicoddle in Garrick's *Miss in Her Teens* (1753).

132 31. "put on the weeds of Dominic." The uniform of the Dominican friars was a white robe with a black cloak and pointed cap.

133 3-4. **Richard Suett**: died 1805.

133 14. like **Sir John**, "with hallooing and singing of anthems": said of Sir John Falstaff in *2 Henry IV*, I, ii, 213.

133 17. "commerce with the skies": a paraphrase of Milton's *Il Penseroso*, l. 39, "and looks commercing with the skies."

134 3. **Parsons**: died 1795.

134 7. **Robin Good-Fellow**: the son of King Oberon, but also the generic name for any domestic spirit, elf, imp, or fay with the power to turn himself into any shape so long as he did harm to none but knaves and queans. See Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 47, and *The Mad Pranks and Merry Jest of Robin Goodfellow* (1580), republished by the Percy Society, 1841.

134 9. **Puck**, or **Hobgoblin**, same as **Robin Goodfellow**: a gossamer-winged, dainty-limbed, fawn-faced, mischievous little urchin in *Midsummer Night's Dream*. See also Drayton's *Nymphidia* (1627).

134 16. The "force of nature could no farther go": from Dryden's poem on Milton, "Three poets in three distant ages born," etc.

135 1. **Jack Bannister** (1760-1836): a noted English comedian, the son of Charles Bannister, an actor and bass singer. *The Children in the Wood* is a comedy by Morton (1815).

135 9. **He put us into Vesta's days**. In the most primitive times Vesta was, according to some mythologists, the mother of the gods.

135 23. **In sock or buskin**: in comedy or tragedy. The terms are derived from the costumes of comic and tragic actors in classical times.

135 24. **Palmer**, John (1747-1798): retired from the stage in 1798. He excelled in the rôle of Joseph Surface.

135 31. **Bobby in the Duke's Servant**: a character in Townley's farce, *High Life Below Stairs* (1759).

135 33. **Captain Absolute**: a character in Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775), in love with Lydia Languish, to whom he is known only as Ensign Beverley.

136 3. **Dick Amlet**: a gamester in Vanbrugh's comedy, *The Confederacy* (1695).

136 8-9. **The lies of young Wilding**. Jack Wilding is a young gentleman from Oxford in S. Foote's farce, *The Liar* (1761), who fabricates the most ridiculous falsehoods, which he passes off for facts.

136 9. **Joseph Surface**: a character in Sheridan's *School for Scandal* (1777), whose good is all on the surface, but who is in reality an artful, malicious, and sentimental knave.

136 20. **Ben Legend**: in Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695); younger son of Sir Sampson Legend, a sailor and sea wit, with none of the traditional generosity and frankness of the British tar. Dibdin says that Thomas Doggett was the best actor of the part.

137 13-14. **a Wapping sailor**. Wapping is a quarter of London lying along the north bank of the Thames below the Tower.

Review Questions. 1. The student should read *Twelfth Night* in order to understand this essay properly. 2. Examine with special care what Lamb says about Malvolio. It is a noble specimen of Shakespearean criticism. 3. Analyze also the characters and acting of Dodd, Suett, and Palmer, with reference to the parts taken. 4. Note how skillfully Lamb merges the personality of the actor in the character taken by him. 5. Give the main points made by Lamb in his criticism of the artificial comedy of the eighteenth century. 6. Read the criticisms on Congreve and Sheridan in any good history of English literature, and compare their comedy with Shakespeare's.

XVIII. THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS

London Magazine, May, 1822

A May-Day Effusion was originally attached as a subtitle to this paper. The essay shows with what a keenly observant eye Lamb walked the streets of London. Procter speaks of him as "looking no one in the face for more than a moment, yet contriving to see everything as he went on."

The custom of employing boys to sweep chimneys was not abolished until 1840, after a long agitation by Parliament (see McCarthy's *History of England in the Nineteenth Century*, Vol. I, pp. 267-273). The adult master sweepers hired little boys to do the climbing. The system led to much abuse and even criminal cruelty. The limbs of the sweepers were severely abraded by the friction necessary to force

their way up the rough masonry. Sometimes the boys would stick fast in the narrow openings and would have to be dragged back bruised and otherwise injured; often they were burned by having to ascend chimneys which had not sufficiently cooled. In several instances master sweeps were convicted of abducting boys and employing little girls for this work.

138 1. the peep peep of a young sparrow. "The boy had to climb from the fireplace to the top of the chimney and to announce the accomplishment of his mission by crying out 'Sweep!' when his soot-covered head and face emerged from the chimney-top" (McCarthy's *Nineteenth Century*, Vol. I, p. 269). This precaution was taken to prevent incomplete work.

138 24-25. the old stage direction in *Macbeth*. See IV, i.

139 8. the only Salopian house: Mr. Read's shop. "Saloop" was an aromatic drink, prepared from sassafras bark and other ingredients, at one time much used in London.

141 12. Hogarth. See Lamb's essay *On the Genius and Character of Hogarth*.

141 30-31. "A sable cloud turns forth," etc.: *Comus*, l. 223. Note the halo cast over the subject by poetic association in which enjoyment of the wit is mingled with admiration of its beauty.

142 14. Arundel Castle: a noble mansion on the Strand in London, in the gardens of which were originally placed the famous Arundelian marbles.

142 20. Venus lulled Ascanius. See Virgil's *Æneid*, I, 643-722. When the goddess plotted to make Dido fall in love with Æneas, Cupid went to Dido in the guise of Ascanius, while the latter remained with Venus.

143 18. Jem White: James White, a schoolmate of Lamb's at Christ's Hospital, and for years afterwards "the companion of his lighter moods." In 1795 he published the supposititious *Original Letters of Sir John Falstaff*, a book full of quaint old-fashioned humor that pleased Lamb greatly. He died in 1820.

143 24. the fair of St. Bartholomew. This great national fair with its variety of shows was held at Smithfield, London, from 1133 till 1840, and became an occasion of popular amusement and unbridled license. See Ben Jonson's comedy, *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), and Morley's *Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair* (1857).

144 10. our trusty companion Bigod. See note on p. 333.

144 13. Rochester in his maddest days: John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-1680), a poet of the court of Charles II. He erected

a stage on Tower Hill and played the mountebank, was in a state of inebriety for five years, and the hero of numerous disguises and intrigues.

144 17. **old dame Ursula**: also the name of the pig woman in Jonson's play.

145 2. the "**Cloth**": the clergy, who formerly wore a distinguishing costume of gray or black by which they might be recognized.

145 14-15. "**Golden lads and lasses must,**" etc. See *Cymbeline*, IV, ii.

Review Questions. 1. What literary use does Lamb make of the sense of taste? 2. Examine the use of color, light, and shade. Ainger calls this "a study in black." Defend statement. Cf. with color scheme in *St. Valentine's Day*. 3. Where does Lamb give dignity to homely subjects: (a) by use of learned words; (b) by poetic association (cf. Milton); (c) by classical and biblical allusions? 4. How does he produce his humorous effects? Find examples of pun, parody, and contrast. 5. What poem on a preëxistent state was written by a friend of Lamb's? 6. Explain the figure in "May the Brush supersede the Laurel." 7. Explain the following: *fauces Averni*, kibed heels, yclept, oleaginous, fuliginous, welkin, Cheapside, Hogarth, Rachel (Matthew ii. 18), *incunabula*, quoited, youngers, unctuous.

XIX. A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

London Magazine, September, 1822

In a letter to Bernard Barton of March 11, 1823, Lamb acknowledges his indebtedness for the idea of this essay to his friend, Thomas Manning, mathematical tutor in Cambridge. Mr. Charles Kent and Mr. Carew Hazlitt think that the author owed the suggestion to an Italian poem by Tigrinio Bistonio entitled *Gli Elogi del Porco* (Modena, 1761), "The Praises of the Pig." Bistonio was the pseudonym of the abbot Giuseppe Ferrari. Mr. Richard Garnett and Canon Ainger, however, dispute this opinion, and find the original tale in a treatise called *De Abstinencia* by Porphyry of Tyre in the third century. Manning may have seen the legend in some Chinese form during his travels in China or Thibet. On the other hand, it is more probable that he may have learned it from Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, who brought out a translation of Porphyry in 1823.

145 22. a **Chinese manuscript**: probably a fantastic creation of Lamb's imagination.

145 22. **my friend M.**: Thomas Manning. Lamb was introduced to him by Lloyd in 1799, and a lifelong friendship resulted. For several years an interesting correspondence passed between them, of which Talfourd says, "In his letters to Manning a vein of wild humour breaks out, of which there are but slight indications in the correspondence with his more sentimental friends; as if the very opposition of Manning's more scientific powers to his own force of sympathy provoked the sallies which the genial kindness of the mathematician fostered."

145 26-27. **their great Confucius**: the celebrated Chinese philosopher, traveler, and teacher (550-478 B.C.).

150 30-31. "**Ere sin could blight**," etc.: from Coleridge's *Epitaph on an Infant*, a poem in the joint volume of 1796.

152 9-10. **school . . . over London Bridge**: "an audacious indifference to fact." Lamb's school was not across the river.

153 10. **St. Omer's**: a Catholic college for British youth in the city of that name in France. Lamb, of course, never attended it.

Review Questions. 1. Note the humor of the title. Why better than one like "Tradition of the Origin of Cooking"? 2. Is the effect of the quotation "Ere sin could blight," etc., burlesque or mock heroic? Cf. treatment with *Battle of the Books* and *Rape of the Lock*. 3. Compare humor with that in essays already studied. Is it broader—more delicate? Why? 4. Is there a vein of *satire* in the essay? 5. How does it rank as a short story? 6. Examine point of view and sentence structure, and note effects. 7. Where is there a play on words? 8. Note meaning and use of the words: mast, younkers, booby, crackling, me (in second paragraph), *prælude*, sapers, batten, villatic, brawn (boar's flesh), intenerating, and dulcifying.

XX. ON THE ACTING OF MUNDEN

London Magazine, October, 1822

153 (title). **Munden**, Joseph Shepherd (1758-1832): an English actor whose admiration for Garrick determined him to go on the stage. His first appearance in London was with a company of strolling players in 1790. He created the parts of Sir Robert Bramble, Ephraim Smooth, Caustic, Old Rapid, etc., and acted them with great applause. His greatest triumph was in the rôle of Old Dornton in *The Road to Ruin*. He retired from the stage on May 31, 1824.

153 27. **Cockletop**: a character in O'Keefe's (1747-1833) comedy *Modern Antiques*; or, *The Merry Mourners*.

154 3-4. "There the antic sate," etc. See *Richard II*, III, ii.

154 15-16. like the faces which . . . come, etc. Cf. De Quincey's *Confessions*, Wauchope's edition, pp. 137-140.

154 22. Hogarth. Lamb probably refers to an exhibition of Hogarth's paintings held in London in the winter of 1819-1820.

154 26. Farley, Charles (1771-1859): a London actor and theatrical machinist, author of *The Magic Oak*, *Aggression*, etc. He played with much success the parts of Jeremy in *Love for Love*, Grindoff in *The Miller and His Men*, and Lord Trinket in *The Jealous Wife*.

154 27. Liston, John (1776-1846): a noted London comedian, connected at various times with the Haymarket, Covent Garden, Olympic, and Drury Lane theaters. His most popular rôle was Paul Pry in John Poole's farce by that name. See Doran's *English Stage*, II, 351.

154 31. Hydra. See note on p. 353. Byron nicknamed his mother "Hydra."

155 9. Old Dornton: a great banker in Holcroft's comedy *The Road to Ruin* (1792). He adores his son Harry, whom he spoils by alternate indulgence and sternness.

155 19. "sessa": an exclamation urging to speed. See *King Lear*, III, iv, 104; vi, 76.

155 27. Cassiopeia's chair: a beautiful circumpolar constellation containing thirty stars brighter than the sixth magnitude. It represents the wife of Cepheus, an Ethiopian king, seated in a chair with both arms raised.

155 30. Fuseli, John Henry (1741-1825): a Swiss-English painter and art critic.

XXI. MUNDEN'S FAREWELL

London Magazine, July, 1824

Talfourd mentions a pleasing incident of the evening. Ori account of the dense crowd at the performance, Lamb and his sister were provided by Munden with seats in a corner of the orchestra close to the stage. During the play he saw Munden hand Lamb a huge tankard, which Elia quaffed to the dregs with a relish while his old friend looked on with evident gusto. Half a century later this same occurrence was related to Mr. Kent by Miss Kelly, who observed it from an upper box. It was also upon this occasion that Mary Lamb convulsed her almost tearful brother with the pun, "Sic transit gloria MUNDEN!"

156 15. Sir Peter Teazle: an old gentleman in Sheridan's *School for Scandal* (1777). He marries a country girl who proves vain, selfish,

and extravagant. He loves her but continually nags her for her inferior birth and rustic ways. See Watkins's *Life of Sheridan*.

156 16. **Sir Robert Bramble**: a character in Colman's *The Poor Gentleman* (1802). He is testy but generous, fond of argument but impatient of flattery.

156 18. **Jemmy Jumps**: a character in Shield's opera *The Farmer* (1788).

157 34. **Humphrey Dobbin**: a blunt old retainer and confidential servant of Sir Robert Bramble, under whose rough exterior beats a heart full of kindness.

Review Questions. 1. Analyze the humor in the description of Munden's facial expression. 2. On what ground is his work as an actor compared with Hogarth the artist's? 3. Observe the author's enthusiasm in *Munden's Farewell*. Lamb here shows plainly the joy of the artist in his work. 4. Describe Munden's dress and acting in the part of Old Dozey. 5. What do you learn of Lamb's favorite plays in the last two essays?

XXII. A CHAPTER ON EARS

London Magazine, March, 1821

159 14. **I have no ear.** This confession of Elia should be accepted only in a very limited sense. Lamb seems to have been, as Mr. Macdonald remarks, "not so much without the receptive ear, as without the expressive organ." Canon Ainger, however, speaks of his indifference to music as "one of the best-known features of his personality." I find in the *Poetry for Children* a half-serious poem *To a Young Lady, on being too fond of Music*, the last stanza of which is:

A benefit to books we owe
 Music can ne'er dispense;
 The one does only *sound* bestow,
 The other gives us *sense*.

159 24. **Defoe, Daniel** (1659?–1731), author of *Robinson Crusoe*, *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, *Journal of the Plague Year*, *Colonel Jacque*, *Roxana*, etc. In 1702 he wrote *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, a pamphlet satirizing the High-Church Tories, in consequence of which he was sentenced to stand for three days in the pillory, with the addition of a fine and a long imprisonment in Newgate. Lamb here has

in mind Pope's famous but incorrect statement about the mutilation of Defoe's ears, —

Earless on high stood unabashed Defoe.

The mob, instead of pelting him, drank his health and wreathed the pillory with flowers, and Defoe himself published his caustic *Hymn to the Pillory*, beginning

Hail hieroglyphic state machine
 Contrived to punish fancy in:
 Men that are men, in thee can feel no pain,
 And all thy insignificants disdain.

In the *London* for March, 1825, Lamb published a characteristic paper under the title of *Reflections in the Pillory* (see Shepherd's ed., p. 423).

160 13. Alice W——n. The reader is to guess that the name is Winterton, and to rest assured that he is wrong (Macdonald).

160 22. My friend A's: Lamb's friend and correspondent, William Ayrton (1777-1858), a well-known musical critic.

161 15. Jubal. See Genesis iv. 21.

162 6. Hogarth, William (1697-1764): a celebrated English painter and engraver. Among his best known works are the "Harlot's Progress," "Rake's Progress," "Marriage à la Mode," "The Distressed Poet," "The Enraged Musician," "Industry and Idleness." Lamb wrote an admirable critical essay *On the Genius and Character of Hogarth* (first published in Leigh Hunt's *Reflector*, 1811), which for originality and power is scarcely matched in all English literature of its kind.

162 13. "Party in a parlour," etc.: from a stanza in the original draft of Wordsworth's *Peter Bell* (1819). It was omitted in all subsequent editions.

162 31-32. Like that disappointing book in Patmos. See Revelation x. 10.

162 33. Burton. See note on p. 242.

163 26-27. My good Catholic friend, Nov——: Vincent Novello (1781-1861), an English organist, composer, and musical editor. He was the father of Joseph Alfred Novello, a well-known music publisher in London, of Clara Novello, Countess Gigliucci, the soprano singer, and of Mrs. Cowden Clarke, editor of a Shakespeare concordance.

164 4. that, in which the psalmist, etc. See Psalms lv. 6 and cxix. 9.

1649. "rapt above earth," etc.: "as I thus sat, these and other sights had so fully possessed my soul with content that I thought, as the poet has happily expressed it,

"I was for that time lifted above earth;
And possessed joys not promised at my birth."

— WALTON'S *Complete Angler*, Part I, Chapter IV.

16417. **dolphin-seated ride those Arions**: in Greek mythology, a celebrated player on the cithara, of Methymna in Lesbos, rescued from drowning by a dolphin.

16417. **Haydn, Joseph (1732-1809)**: an Austrian composer, whose principal works are "The Creation," "The Seven Words," "The Seasons," and the Austrian national hymn.

16418. **Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus (1756-1791)**: an Austrian composer, whose six hundred productions included more than forty symphonies, a number of masses, sonatas, quartets, operas, etc.

16418. **Bach**: a noted German family of musicians, among whose members were Johann Michael, Johann Sebastian, Karl Philipp Emanuel, Wilhelm Friedemann, two by the name of Johann Christian, and five by the name of Johann Christoph.

16418. **Beethoven, Ludwig von (1770-1827)**: an Austrian musician, of Dutch descent, among whose compositions are three trios, three piano sonatas, nine symphonies, "Prometheus," "Mount of Olives," and "Kreutzer Sonata."

16429. **Marcion**: an heretical religious teacher of Sinope in Pontus, in the second century, who founded at Rome the Marcionite sect, which lasted until the seventh century or later. He taught that there were three primal forces: the Demiurge, the finite and imperfect God of the Jews; the good God, first revealed by Jesus Christ; and the evil matter, ruled by the devil. He rejected the Old Testament, denied the incarnation and resurrection, repeated baptism thrice, excluded wine from the eucharist, inculcated an extreme asceticism, and allowed women to minister (*Century Cyclopaedia*).

16429. **Ebion**: the supposed founder of the Ebionites, a party of Judaizing Christians which appeared in the second century. A part of them emphasized the obligations of the Mosaic law, and others were more speculative and leaned toward Gnosticism.

16430. **Cerinthus**: an heretical religious teacher of Jewish descent who was born in Egypt in the first century. Milman says that "his system was a singular and apparently incongruous fusion of Jewish, Christian, and Oriental notions."

164 30. **Gog and Magog**: See note on the Guildhall giants on p. 241.

165 7. **Leigh Hunt** (1784–1859): a London essayist, poet, and miscellaneous writer. He edited and practically wrote the *Examiner*, the *Reflector*, the *Indicator*, the *Companion*, the *Liberal*, the *Tatler*, and the *London Journal*, and was the author of the *Story of Rimini*, *Recollections of Lord Byron*, and a delightful *Autobiography*.

Review Questions. 1. Note the originality of the title of this *Essay on Music*. 2. What variants does the author use to avoid the repetition of “ears”? Cf. the opening paragraph of *Poor Relations*, where we find the same trick of style,—ingenuity of phrase and richness of vocabulary. 3. Does the author show familiarity with the work of the great composers? 4. Where does the language drop into archaic forms? 5. Note Lamb’s use of parentheses, of capitals, of italics, of alliteration. 6. Explain the following: *sostenuto*, *adagio*, heresiarch, tritons, mime, *Baralipton*, pillory, *malleus hereticorum*.

XXIII. ALL FOOLS’ DAY

London Magazine, April, 1821

167 2–3. let us troll the catch of Amiens: *As You Like It*, II, v, 50–53. *duc ad me*: more correctly *ducdôme*, a meaningless refrain, metrically parallel to Amiens’s “Come hither.” Halliwell quotes a similar refrain, “Dusadam-me-me,” from a manuscript of *Piers Plowman*, where the printed copies have “How trolly-lolly.” A world of ingenuity has been wasted on this word, to prove it Latin, Welsh, Gaelic, etc. It was corrected by Hanmer to *duc ad me*, “bring him to me.” If any change is necessary, the best is Mr. Ainger’s “Ducdôme,” which makes a rhyme with “come to me,” where at present there is only an assonance (J. C. Smith).

167 13. “the crazy old church clock,” etc.: a quotation from Wordsworth’s poem entitled *The Fountain: a Conversation*.

167 15. **Empedocles**: a Greek philosopher, poet, and statesman, who was born at Agrigentum, in Sicily, and lived about 455–395 B.C. He was said to have thrown himself into the crater of Mount Etna in order that, from his sudden disappearance, the people might believe him to be a god. See Symonds’s *Studies of the Greek Poets*, Vol. I, p. 207.

167 19. **Cleombrotus** (380–371 B.C.): a king of Sparta, who waged war with the Thebans and was defeated and killed by them at the battle of Leuctra.

167 25. **Herodotus** (484?–424? B.C.): a celebrated Greek historian, born at Halicarnassus, in Asia Minor. He wrote a history in nine books, named after the Muses, of the Persian invasion of Greece. He is surnamed “the Father of History.”

167 30–31. **our Monument on Fish-Street Hill**: a fluted column, two hundred and two feet in height, designed by Wren and erected in 1671–1677 in commemoration of the Great Fire of London in 1666, which destroyed four hundred and sixty streets with eighty-nine churches and 13,200 houses. — Baedeker's *London and its Environs*, pp. 110–111.

168 1. **Alexander, the Great** (356–323 B.C.): the famous king of Macedon, son of Philip and a pupil of Aristotle. He conquered Thrace, Illyria, Thebes, Asia Minor, and Egypt, and overthrew the Persian Empire.

168 4. **Mister Adams**: Parson Abraham Adams, in Fielding's novel *Joseph Andrews*, a poor curate whose adventures, chiefly ludicrous, in the company of Joseph Andrews constitute a large part of the book. He was an excellent scholar, brave, generous, and friendly to an excess, and so simple that he never had any intention to deceive and never suspected such a design in others.

168 5–6. **Mistress Slipslop**: Lady Booby's “waiting gentlewoman” in *Joseph Andrews*. She is a personification of the richest humor and the most lifelike reality. Sheridan borrowed some of her traits for his Mrs. Malaprop, and Dickens for his Mrs. Gamp.

168 9. **Good Master Raymond Lully** (1235?–1315): a Spanish alchemist, who went as a missionary to the Mussulmans of Asia and Africa. He was the author of *Ars Magna*, *A System of Logic*, and many other works.

168 11. **Duns Scotus** (1265?–1308?): a great Scotch scholar, born at Dunse. He became a Franciscan friar and held professorships of theology at Oxford and Paris. His name came to be used as a synonym for a very learned man and, being applied satirically to ignorant and stupid persons, gave rise to *dunce* in its present sense.

168 16. **Master Stephen**: a conceited, small-minded youth, in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* (1598). He thinks that all inferiors should be snubbed and bullied, and that all those weaker and more cowardly than himself should be kicked and beaten.

168 16. **Cokes, Bartholomew**: a foolish young squire in Ben Jonson's comedy *Bartholomew Fair*, “unquestionably the most finished picture of a simpleton that the mimetic art ever produced” (Gifford).

168 17. **Aguecheek, Sir Andrew**: a timid, silly, but amusing country squire, fleeced by Sir Toby Belch, in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

168 18. **Master Shallow**: a lying, roguish, weak-minded country justice, in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*. He is supposed to be a caricature of Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote.

168 19. **Master Silence**: a dull country justice in the same play. He is a cousin to Shallow, and prides himself on having "been merry twice and once ere now."

168 19. **Slender, Master Abraham**: a provincial gentleman, cousin to Robert Shallow, in *Merry Wives of Windsor*. He is an inimitable official booby, in love with "sweet Anne Page."

168 23. **honest R**—: according to Lamb's Key, one Ramsay, who kept the London Library, in Ludgate Street.

168 29. **Good Granville S**—: Granville Sharp, the abolitionist, who died in 1813 (Lamb's Key).

168 30. "**King Pandion, he is dead,**" etc.: from the verses *On a Nightingale* formerly ascribed to Shakespeare, but now known to have been written by Richard Barnfield.

168 33. **Armado, Don Adriano de**: a pompous, affected Spaniard, "whom the music of his own vain tongue did ravish," in *Love's Labor's Lost* (1594).

168 33. **Quisada, Don Quixote**: a gaunt country gentleman of La Mancha, the hero of Cervantes's Spanish romance of that name (1615). He is described as a tall, lantern-jawed, hawk-nosed, grizzle-haired man, who styles himself "The Knight of the Woeful Countenance." He is crazed with ideas of chivalry, and goes forth as a knight-errant, thinking windmills to be giants, flocks of sheep to be armies, inns to be castles, and galley slaves oppressed gentlemen.

169 5. **Macheath, Captain**: a fine, bold-faced ruffian, leader of a gang of highwaymen, in Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1727). He finds himself dreadfully embarrassed between Polly, his wife, and Lucy, to whom he has promised marriage.

169 9. **that Malvolian smile**: Malvolio is Olivia's steward in *Twelfth Night* (1614), a conceited, grave, self-important personage, who is tricked by Maria with a forged letter leading him to suppose that his mistress is in love with him, and telling him to dress in yellow, cross-gartered stockings and to smile on the lady. See III, iv, 11.

169 20. **I read those Parables**: (1) the two builders, Matthew vii. 24-27; (2) the talents, Matthew xxv. 14-30; (3) the ten virgins, Matthew xxv. 1-13.

Review Questions. 1. What evidence does this essay furnish of the wide and catholic range of Lamb's reading both in ancient and in modern

literature? 2. Whom does the author invite to his Fools' Banquet? Can you justify the selections? 3. One will note Lamb's intimate acquaintance with the famous Lemprière's *Classical Dictionary* — once the schoolboy's inseparable companion. 4. What suggestions do you find in the essay as to the time of its composition?

XXIV. THE OLD AND THE NEW SCHOOLMASTER

London Magazine, May, 1821

170 21. **Ortelius**, Abraham (1527–1598): a Flemish geographer, who published an atlas, *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (1570), etc. He came to England in 1577, and it was his encouragement that induced Camden to produce his *Britannia*.

170 22. **Arrowsmith**, Aaron (1750–1823): a noted English geographer and cartographer. Among his publications are *A Chart of the World as on Mercator's Projection* (1790), *Maps of the World* (1794), *Maps of North America* (1796), etc.

171 11–12. **My friend M.** See note on p. 270.

171 13. **Euclid**: a famous Greek geometer, who lived at Alexandria about 300 B.C. His principal work is the *Elements* (Ἐτοιχέια), in thirteen books, parts of which have been largely used in text-books of elementary geometry down to the present time.

171 15–16. "small Latin and less Greek": a quotation from Ben Jonson's *Lines on Master William Shakespeare*. It is a good-natured reference of the learned London playwright to his friend's lack of exact scholarship.

172 1. **Bishopsgate**: the principal entrance through the northern wall of old London.

172 1–2. **Shacklewell**. See note on p. 229.

172 17. **Smithfield**: a locality in London north of St. Paul's. It was formerly a recreation ground, and was long famous for its cattle market. In the reign of Queen Mary many martyrs were there burnt at the stake.

172 33. **the Sirens**: sea nymphs who by their singing fascinated those who sailed past their island, and then destroyed them. In works of art they are represented as having the head, arms, and bust of a beautiful young woman, and the wings and lower part of the body of a bird.

172 34. **Achilles**: the son of Peleus and Thetis, and the bravest of the Greeks in the Trojan War. His mother, to prevent him from going to the war, where she knew he was to perish, privately sent him

to the court of Lycomedes, where he was disguised in female dress. There he was discovered by a clever ruse of Ulysses.

173 1. **Sir Thomas Browne** (1605-1682). See Introduction, p. xxix.

173 16. **the North Pole Expedition**: Lamb refers probably to the second Arctic expedition undertaken for the British admiralty by Lieutenant Parry in 1821. A search for the Northwest Passage had been made by Captain John Ross and Lieutenant Parry in 1818.

174 6. **Lily, William** (1468-1522): a noted English grammarian, a friend of Colet, Erasmus, and More, and one of the first teachers of Greek in England. His *Latin Grammar* (1540) was the national textbook, and continued in popular use in various editions for many years. In its revised form, *A Short Introduction of Grammar* (1574), it was used and quoted by Shakespeare.

174 6. **Linacre, Thomas** (1460?-1524): a famous English physician and classical scholar. He taught in Oxford and had among his pupils More and Erasmus.

174 19-22. **King Basileus . . . Pamela . . . Philoclea . . . Mopsa . . . Damætas**: characters in Sir Philip Sidney's pastoral romance, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1590). In modern literature Arcadia is an ideal realm where ambition and crimes are unknown, a land of dream and enchantment, of brave exploit, unblemished chastity, constant love, and undying friendship, where piping shepherds and coy shepherdesses live in rustic simplicity and plenty. See Mahaffy's *History of Classical Greek Literature*, Vol. I, p. 420, and Cross's *Development of the English Novel*, p. 11.

174 23. **Colet, John** (1466-1519): an English theologian and classical scholar, dean of St. Paul's (1505), and founder of St. Paul's School (1512). He was the intimate friend of Erasmus and More, and one of the chief promoters of the "new learning" and indirectly of the Reformation. — *Century Cyclopaedia*.

174 33. **Milton, John** (1608-1674): the great epic poet, author of *Paradise Lost*, *Samson Agonistes*, *Comus*, *Lycidas*, and other poems, and of several eloquent prose works, one of which, the *Tractate of Education to Master Samuel Hartlib*, is mentioned below.

174 34. **Solon** (638?-559? B.C.): a wise Athenian lawgiver. He became archon in 594, and instituted many reforms, improving the condition of debtors, dividing the population into classes, and reorganizing the Boule, the popular assembly, and the council of the Areopagus.

175 1. **Lycurgus**: a Spartan legislator who lived probably in the ninth century B.C. He was the traditional author of the laws and institutions of Sparta.

176 14. **Mr. Bartley's Orrery**: an astronomical machine ingeniously constructed to exhibit the motions of the planets around the sun, etc. The original Orrery was made by Rowley in 1715 under the patronage of Charles Boyle, Earl of Orrery, in whose honor it was named.

176 22. **Even a child, that "plaything for an hour"**: a free quotation from a poem by Lamb in the *Poetry for Children* (1809):

A child's a plaything for an hour;
Its pretty tricks we try
For that or for a longer space;
Then tire and lay it by.

177 23. **Gulliver, Lemuel**: an honest, blunt English sailor, the hero of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), a political prose satire consisting of four imaginary voyages, — to Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa, and the country of the Houyhnhnms. See Gosse's *History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, pp. 159-161.

179 29. **My cousin Bridget**: Mary Lamb, the author's sister.

Review Questions. 1. Look up the numerous geographical references in this essay. 2. Note the structure of the essay as a whole. 3. Contrast the aims and methods of the two schoolmasters. 4. Is Lamb a learned writer? 5. Is there a touch of pathos in this essay?

XXV. MY FIRST PLAY

London Magazine, December, 1821

180 5. **Old Drury**: Drury Lane Theater, one of the principal play-houses of London, situated on Russell Street, near Drury Lane. It was first opened in 1663.

180 5. **Garrick's Drury**. See note on p. 258.

180 15. **My godfather F.**: we know nothing else of Lamb's godfather, but there is a slight probability that he was a Field and a relative, however distant, of Mrs. Lamb.

180 19. **John Palmer**. See note on p. 266.

188 22. **Sheridan**. See note on p. 240.

180 24. **elopement with him from a boarding-school**: she took flight, not from a boarding-school, but from her own home.

181 12. **Seneca, Lucius Annæus** (4? B.C. -65 A.D.): a celebrated Roman Stoic philosopher. He was the author of fifteen prose treatises and nine tragedies. The Emperor Nero was one of his pupils.

181 12. **Varro, Marcus Terentius** (116-27? B.C.): a learned Roman scholar and author. His works number no less than seventy-four titles,

comprising six hundred and twenty books, and embrace almost all branches of knowledge.

181 22-23. the only landed property, etc.: a piece of humorous fabrication.

182 11-12. **Rowe's Shakespeare**: this edition was brought out in 1709 by Nicholas Rowe (1674-1718) and Jacob Tonson (1656?-1736). Rowe was poet laureate and author of *Jane Shore*, *Ulysses*, *The Fair Penitent*, and other tragedies. Tonson was a well-known London bookseller and publisher.

182 25. **Artaxerxes** (1762): an opera by Thomas Augustine Arne (1710-1778), a London composer and author of the operas "Britannia," "Eliza," and the oratorios "Abel" and "Judith."

183 3. **Harlequin**: originally a conventional clown, the servant of Pantaloon, in the improvised Italian comedy. He was noted for his agility and gluttony, and carried a sword of lath. In English pantomime he was dignified and made popular by the acting of Rich, O'Brien, Grimaldi, and Woodward. He hardly exists now save in Christmas pantomimes and puppet shows.

183 7. the legend of **St. Denys**: Saint Denys was the apostle to the Gauls, and was beheaded, it is said, at Paris, 272 A.D. He is the patron saint of France, and is represented in paintings as bearing his own head in his hands.

183 11. **Lun**: so John Rich (1692-1761), who introduced pantomime, called himself when he performed Harlequin.

183 20-21. the **Way of the World** (1700): a comedy by William Congreve (1670-1729).

183 22-23. **Lady Wishfort**: an irritable, decayed beauty, who painted and enameled her face to make herself look blooming, and was afraid to frown lest the enamel might crack. At the age of threescore she assumed all the coy airs of a girl of sixteen. See *The Way of the World*.

184 26-27. to crop some unreasonable expectations: Mr. Fitzgerald points out that in John Forster's copy this is altered in Lamb's own handwriting to *drop*.

184 29. **Mrs. Siddons** (1755-1831): Sarah Siddons, the most celebrated English tragic actress. She took a prominent part in the revival of Shakespeare, playing the parts of the tragic heroines with extraordinary success. Sir Joshua Reynolds painted her as "The Tragic Muse" in *Lady Macbeth*, her greatest rôle. See Hazlitt's beautiful essay on this most remarkable woman; also Lamb's sonnet, inspired by her and originally published in the *Morning Chronicle* in 1794.

184 29. **Isabella**: a nun in Southern's *The Fatal Marriage* (1692). It was a part considered "scarcely inferior in pathos to Belvidera" in Otway's *Venice Preserved* (Chambers). Hamilton painted Mrs. Siddons as Isabella. Campbell says that Mrs. Barry also was unrivaled in that part.

Review Questions. 1. What do you infer from the above paper of Lamb's fondness for the theater, and of his familiarity with plays, actors, etc.? 2. What light does the author here throw on contemporary customs? 3. Study the characterization of the grandfather. 4. The student would do well at this point to familiarize himself with the character of Sheridan, and to read his masterpiece, *The Rivals*, which became so popular in America through the acting of our own beloved Joseph Jefferson. 5. Examine the sentence structure in the sixth paragraph. 6. What is the explanation of "harlequin" and "motley"?

XXVI. MODERN GALLANTRY

London Magazine, November, 1822

185 18. **Dorimant**: a genteel, witty libertine in Etherege's *The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter* (1676). The original of this character was the Earl of Rochester.

186 26. **Edwards, Thomas**: author of *Canons of Criticism*, a very acute commentary upon Warburton's emendations of Shakespeare. He was a mediocre poet, but his sonnets are carefully constructed on the Miltonic scheme, which perhaps accounts for Lamb's exaggerated epithet (Ainger). His sonnet *To Mr. J. Paice* is quoted by Mr. Ainger in his edition of the *Essays of Elia*, p. 394.

187 18. **Sir Calidore**: the knight of courtesy and the hero of the sixth book of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. The model of this character was Sir Philip Sidney. In his quest of the Blatant Beast (the modern Mrs. Grundy) he falls in love with Pastorella, a shepherdess (Lady Frances Walsingham) with whom he has various adventures.

187 18. **Sir Tristan, or Tristram**: one of the bravest and best of the Knights of the Round Table. He loved unlawfully his aunt, the beautiful Isolde, in consequence of which he was slain by her husband, King Mark. The story has been told in English prose by Sir Thomas Malory in part second of the *History of Prince Arthur*, and in poetry by Alfred Tennyson in *The Last Tournament*, and Matthew Arnold in *Tristram and Isolde*. Richard Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde" has told the story in grand opera.

Review Questions. 1. Is the satire in this essay keener than is usual with Lamb? 2. Observe the paragraph structure. 3. Analyze the character of Paice from the hints given. 4. How does Lamb avoid the repetition of "old maid"? 5. This essay well illustrates the author's refined taste, kindness of heart, and soundness of judgment.

XXVII. DISTANT CORRESPONDENTS

London Magazine, March, 1822

189 (sub-title). **B. F.:** Barron Field (1786-1846), an Oxford lawyer, whose brother, Francis John Field, was a fellow-clerk of Lamb's at the India House. From 1816 to 1824 he was judge of the supreme court at Sydney, and a few years afterwards was appointed chief justice of Gibraltar. He was the author of *Geographical Memoirs* and *First Fruits of Australian Poetry*.

190 1. **Mrs. Rowe**, Elizabeth (1674-1737): an exemplary person, and now forgotten moralist in verse and prose. Among other works she wrote *Friendship in Death—in Twenty Letters from the Dead to the Living* (Ainger).

190 2. **Alcander:** a character in Mademoiselle de Scudéry's romance *Clélie*. It is a flattering portrait of Louis XIV as a youth of eighteen.

190 2. **Strephon:** a shepherd in Sidney's *Arcadia*, often used as a conventional name of a lover.

190 2. **Cowley**, Abraham (1618-1667): a royalist poet, who enjoyed a great reputation during his lifetime, but who is now remembered quite as well for the excellent style of his essays.

190 13. **Plato** (427?-347 B.C.): a famous Greek philosopher who founded the Academic school. He was a disciple of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle. His philosophy is still the greatest exposition of idealism. His chief works are the *Dialogues*, which include *The Symposium*, *The Republic*, *Phædrus*, *Critias*, *The Apology*, *Crito*, etc. Lamb here refers perhaps to the familiar definition of man, — "a biped without feathers."

190 30. **Munden.** See note on p. 270.

192 20-21. the late **Lord C.:** the second Lord Camelford, who was killed in a duel with Best in 1804, and who did leave instructions for his burial in "a country far distant."

193 11. **Saint Gothard:** bishop of Hildesheim about 1038.

194 17. **Peter Wilkins's island.** See note on p. 238.

194 18. **Diogenes** (412 ?–323 B.C.): a Greek Cynic philosopher famous for his eccentricities. He emigrated to Athens in his youth, became a pupil of Antisthenes, and lived, according to Seneca, in a tub.

195 6. **ten Delphic voyages**: i.e. to consult the world-renowned oracle of the Pythian Apollo at Delphi.

195 22. “**Ay me! while thee the seas,**” etc.: an incorrect quotation from Milton’s *Lycidas*.

195 25. **Bridget**: Mary Lamb.

195 28. **Sally W**—r: according to Lamb’s Key, Sally Winter, a charming and teasing name, that might have belonged to her who was “sometimes forward, sometimes coy” (Macdonald).

195 32. **J. W.**: James White (d. 1820), a schoolfellow of Lamb’s at Christ’s Hospital, and in later years a friend toward whom he had a great general liking—in spite of some causes of imperfect sympathy. The good fellowship and mirthfulness which was the note of White’s character interposed no ease; nor gave any allowance, seemingly, to the more serious feelings of others. So there were times when Lamb avoided the company of White as he would have turned from the promptings of levity in himself. Nevertheless he always championed him loyally, and was urgent to get others to confess what an immense fellow and a fine wit—“a wit of the first magnitude”—Jem White was (Macdonald).

Review Questions. 1. What is the peculiar form of this essay? Name its advantages. 2. What is Lamb’s division of epistolary matter? its humor? 3. Note the exuberant spirits and rollicking fun of this essay. 4. Study carefully what Lamb says about puns, in the making of which he was himself extraordinarily clever. 5. What is the quality of the humor in the closing paragraph? 6. Note the humor of his reference to thieves and thieving. 7. Examine the author’s diction, explaining such words as visnomy, parasangs, theosophist, flam, corpuscula, etc.

XXVIII. A COMPLAINT OF THE DECAY OF BEGGARS IN THE METROPOLIS

London Magazine, June, 1822

196 2. **Alcides**: Hercules, who performed twelve celebrated labors, in the course of which he delivered the country from various monsters, cleaned the stables of Augeas, etc.

196 24. **Dionysius**, surnamed "The Younger." He succeeded his father, the elder Dionysius, as tyrant of Syracuse, was expelled in 356, restored in 346, and finally expelled in 343. He fled to Corinth, where, to support himself, he kept a school, as Cicero observes, that he might still continue to be tyrant.

196 25. **Vandyke**, Sir Anthony (1599-1641). See note on p. 246.

196 28. **Belisarius** (505?-565): the greatest general of the Byzantine Empire, who conquered the Vandals, the Goths, Sicily, southern Italy, Ravenna, and the Persians, and rescued Constantinople from the Bulgarian invaders. The tale that in old age he was blind and obliged to beg his bread from door to door is now regarded as fictitious.

197 1. **The Blind Beggar in the legend**: Henry, the son of Sir Simon de Montfort. At the battle of Evesham the barons were routed, Montfort was slain, and his son Henry left on the field for dead. A baron's daughter discovered the young man, nursed him back to health, and married him. Their daughter was the "pretty Bessy" mentioned in this essay. Henry assumed the garb and semblance of a blind beggar to escape the vigilance of King Henry's spies. Bessy was wooed by a merchant, an innkeeper, and a gentleman, but was finally won by a knight.

A popular ballad called *The Blind Beggar's Daughter of Bethnal Green* was the earliest form of this story, and upon it was based a play by Chettle and Day entitled *The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green, with the Merry Humours of Tom Stroud* (written before May, 1600, but not printed till 1659). In the *History of Sign-Boards* is the statement that there was formerly in White Chapel Road a public-house sign called "The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green."

197 13-14. **Margaret Newcastle**. See note on p. 242.

197 20. **Lear**: the octogenarian hero of Shakespeare's tragedy *King Lear* (1605), who, being refused hospitality by his ungrateful daughters, Regan and Goneril, spends a night raving in the storm. See III, iv, 111.

197 21. **Cresseid**: the mythical daughter of a Trojan priest, Calchas. She is a character in Chaucer's poem *Troilus and Cressida* (about 1369), also in plays by Dekker and Chettle (acted in 1590), by Shakespeare (acted about 1601), and by Dryden (printed in 1678).

197 25. **Lucian** (120?-200?): a celebrated Greek satirist and humorist. "His *Dialogues of the Gods*, almost Homeric in their freshness and almost Aristophanic in their fun, bring out the ludicrous side of the popular Greek faith; the *Dialogues of the Dead* are brilliant satires on the living" (Jebb).

197 27. **Alexander**, the Great. See note on p. 276.

197 28. **Semiramis**: an Assyrian queen, who founded Babylon, and conquered Egypt, Ethiopia, and Libya. Many marvelous exploits in the Orient were ascribed to her by the Greeks, who regarded her as an almost supernatural being.

197 32. **King Cophetua**: in ballad poetry, a legendary African king who wooed and married Penelophon, a beggar maid. The ballad is found in Percy's *Reliques*, and Tennyson wrote a short poem on the subject.

199 9. **Spital sermons**: sermons preached formerly at the spital or hospital in London, in a pulpit erected expressly for the purpose. Subsequently they were preached at Christchurch, on Easter Monday and Tuesday.

199 12-13. "Look upon that poor and broken bankrupt there": from Jaques's reflection over the wounded stag, in *As You Like It*, II, i, 57.

199 14. **Tobit**: a character in the apocryphal book of the Old Testament of that name. He was blinded by sparrows one night while sleeping outside the wall of his courtyard, but was cured by applying to his eyes the gall of a fish which had tried to devour his son Tobias.

199 29. **Vincent Bourne** (1697-1747): the "dear Vinny Bourne" of Cowper, who was his pupil at Westminster and translated many of his Latin verses. In a letter to Wordsworth in 1815, Lamb says, "Since I saw you I have had a treat in the reading way, which comes not every day, the Latin Poems of V. Bourne, which were quite new to me. What a heart that man had, all laid out upon town scenes, a proper counterpoise to *some people's* rural extravaganzas."

202 7. **Antæus**: a Libyan giant and wrestler in Greek mythology. He was invincible so long as he remained in contact with his mother, the earth. He compelled strangers in his country to wrestle with him, and built a house to his father, Poseidon, of their skulls. Hercules discovered the source of his strength and, lifting him into the air, crushed him.

202 9. **as good as an Elgin marble**: the Elgin marbles are sculptures by Phidias. They were brought from the Parthenon at Athens to London by Lord Elgin (1801-1803), and were purchased in 1816 by the British government.

202 12. **Hercules**. See note on p. 284.

202 17. **the man-part of a Centaur**: the Centaurs in Greek mythology were a people of Thessaly, half men and half horses.

202 18. **some dire Lapithan controversy**: the Lapithæ were a people of Thessaly. At the nuptials of Pirithous and Hippodamia, at which

Hercules, Theseus, Dryas, Mopsus, and the other Lapithæ together with a number of invited Centaurs were present, the famous battle between the Lapithæ and the Centaurs was fought. The quarrel had its origin in the rude behavior of the Centaurs to the Lapithan women. Many of the Centaurs were slain and the rest were obliged to retire to Arcadia.

203 18. **Yorick.** See note on p. 250.

203 31. **blind Bartimeus.** See Matthew xx. 29-34.

204 29. **my friend L——:** Charles Valentine Le Grice. See note on p. 239.

205 7-8. **Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774):** a noted English poet, novelist, dramatist, and miscellaneous author. After a roving existence both in England and on the Continent, he settled down as a literary hack in London. He was a member of Dr. Johnson's Club. Among his principal works are *The Deserted Village*, *The Traveller*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *The History of England*, and *The Citizen of the World*.

205 15. **the "London."** See note on p. 227.

Review Questions. 1. What was Lamb's general attitude to beggars? Cf. that of Wordsworth in *The Old Cumberland Beggar*, where he is romantic and sentimental rather than economic and practical. 2. What instances of famous beggars are cited? 3. Study with especial attention his tremendous description of that truncated Humanity—a passage as sublime as a fragmentary Elgin marble. 4. Note the effect of the short sentence and the short paragraph in this essay. 5. Verify the statement in the Introduction in regard to Lamb's wonderful power of observation. 6. What light is thrown here on the richness and depth of the author's nature? 7. Explain the following: besom, purlieus, crusade, grice, and groundling.

XXIX. A BACHELOR'S COMPLAINT OF THE BEHAVIOUR OF MARRIED PEOPLE

The Reflector, No. 4, 1811; reprinted in the *London Magazine*,
September, 1822

"Notable among the lesser Essays for its sly Elianism. May one point out that this essay (and other things of Lamb's) could not have been written by a married man, nor yet by a bachelor, as bachelorhood goes? By the life of 'double-singleness' which he lived with 'my cousin Bridget,' he belonged in a manner to both worlds, was a freeman

of both those faculties *quoad hoc* — was a bachelor and just himself ; and yet a householder, a family man, with a family circle of acquaintances, in whose marryings and general menageries he interested himself, with little feeling of being an alien or an outsider. In this essay he chooses, for the fun of the thing, to make himself one” (Macdonald).

Review Questions. 1. Analyze the structure of the essay. 2. Is Lamb serious or merely quizzing the reader? 3. Note his use of figures of speech. 4. Note that this essay is marked by the entire absence of bookishness and learned allusion.

XXX. ON THE ARTIFICIAL COMEDY OF THE LAST CENTURY

London Magazine, April, 1822

“The essay on *The Artificial Comedy of the Last Century* has received more attention than its importance at all warrants, from the circumstance that Macaulay set to work seriously to demolish its reasoning, in reviewing Leigh Hunt’s edition of the Restoration Dramatists. Lamb’s essay was originally part of a larger essay upon the old actors, in which he was led to speak of the comedies of Congreve and Wycherley, and the reasons why they no longer held the stage. His line of defense is well known. He protests that the world in which their characters move is so wholly artificial — a conventional world, quite apart from that of real life — that it is beside the mark to judge them by any moral standard. ‘They are a world of themselves almost as much as fairy-land.’ The apology is really (as Hartley Coleridge acutely points out) for those who, like himself, could enjoy the wit of these writers, without finding their actual judgment of moral questions at all influenced by it. It must be admitted that Lamb does not convince us of the sincerity of his reasoning, and probably he did not convince himself. He loved paradox ; and he loved, moreover, to find some soul of goodness in things evil. As Hartley Coleridge adds, it was his way always to take hold of things ‘by the better handle’” (Ainger’s *Life of Charles Lamb*, pp. 171-172).

Commenting on this essay, Mr. William Macdonald says: “This has been found, by the commonplace, a difficult morsel of wisdom to swallow and quite impossible for them to digest profitably. Their view is expressed in Macaulay’s Essay on the Restoration Dramatists. What his lordship there says is unimpeachable common sense, and

very suitable for his purpose and theirs. Nobody could wish them to think otherwise. If such people agreed with the profounder dicta of men of genius, nothing but disaster could result — this frame of things, as Lamb says, would be reduced to chaos. . . . Here I can only say that in proportion as psychology becomes an exact science . . . then more and more will the profound truth of Lamb's contention in this essay become a thing incontrovertible except by that stupidity which it would be a misfortune to conciliate."

213 10. **Congreve**, William (1670–1729): one of the greatest writers of comedy of the Restoration period. Among his most popular plays, which are celebrated for brilliancy of style and for the wit and vigor of the dialogue, are *The Double Dealer* (1693), *Love for Love* (1695), *The Mourning Bride* (1697), and *The Way of the World* (1700).

213 10. **Farquhar**, George (1678–1707): an Irish dramatist, born at Londonderry, and educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He removed to London about 1697 and there produced a number of successful plays, among which were *Love in a Bottle* (1699), *The Inconstant* (1702), *The Stage Coach* (1704), *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707), etc.

214 16. **Ulysses**: in Greek legend, a king of Ithaca. He was the most resourceful of the heroes of the Trojan War, and was especially famous for his wanderings and his exploits on the homeward voyage. His adventures are celebrated in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

214 21. **Alsatia**: formerly a cant name for Whitefriars, a district in London between the Thames and Fleet Street, and adjoining the Temple. It possessed certain privileges of sanctuary, which were derived from the Carmelite convent founded there in 1241. The locality becoming the resort of libertines and rascals of every description, its privileges were abolished in 1697.

215 11. **Wycherley**, William (1640?–1715): a dramatist and courtier at the court of Charles II and James II. He was the author of *Love in a Wood* (1672), *The Gentleman Dancing Master* (1673), *The Country Wife* (1675), and *The Plain Dealer* (1677).

215 18. **Cato**, Marcus Porcius (234–149 B.C.): a Roman statesman, general, and writer, surnamed "The Censor." He sought to restore the integrity of morals and simplicity of manners prevalent in the early days of the republic.

215 24. **Swedenborgian**: the Swedenborgians, or New Churchmen, are a sect that believe in the religious doctrines of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), a Swedish philosopher and theosophist. He taught that spiritual truths are set forth through the correspondence of all material things with the spiritual principles, good or evil, of which they are the

manifestation. His system is founded upon this doctrine of correspondencies, he himself claiming to have been prepared for his office by open intercourse during many years with spirits and angels and God himself.

215 27. **Fainall**: a scoundrel in love with Mrs. Marwood, in *The Way of the World*.

215 27. **the Mirabels**: a peevish old gentleman and his unstable son, in *The Inconstant*.

215 27. **Dorimant**. See note on p. 282.

215 28. **Lady Touchwood**: a brilliant and shameless woman in love with her husband's nephew, Mellefont, in Congreve's *Double Dealer*.

215 32. **Utopia**. See note on p. 262.

216 8. **Angelica**: a witty and piquant woman, the principal female character in Congreve's *Love for Love*. She was the author's favorite character.

217 11. **Sir Simon Addleplot**: a coxcomb always in pursuit of women of great fortune; **Dapperwit**, a vain, half-witted rake; **Miss Martha**, daughter of an old usurer: three characters in Wycherley's *Love in a Wood*.

217 12. **Lord Froth**: a solemn, foolish fop with a coquettish wife; **Sir Paul Pliant**: an uxorious old gentleman: two characters in Congreve's *Double Dealer*.

217 15. **Don Quixote**. See note on p. 277.

217 17. **Atlantis**: an imaginary island in the ocean, the scene of (1) Bacon's allegorical romance *The New Atlantis*; and (2) Mrs. Manley's *The New Atlantis* (1709), a scandalous chronicle of crime reputed to have been committed by persons of high rank, whose names are so thinly disguised as to be easily identified. See Tuckerman's *History of Prose Fiction*, p. 123.

217 24. **School for Scandal**: a play by Sheridan, first produced at Drury Lane Theater, May 8, 1777. It took a position at once as the most brilliant comedy of modern society on the English stage.

217 29. **Palmer**. See note on p. 266.

217 29-30. **Joseph Surface**. See note on p. 267.

218 12. **Charles Surface**: a light-hearted prodigal and reformed scapegrace in *The School for Scandal*. He is the accepted lover of Maria, the rich ward of Sir Peter Teazle. Unlike his brother Joseph, the evil of his character is all on the surface.

219 11. **Sir Peter Teazle**. See note on pp. 271-272.

220 16, 20. **Crabtree**: a mischief-maker, the uncle of Sir Harry Bumber; **Sir Benjamin Backbite**: a very conceited and censorious gentleman;

Mrs. Candour: a slanderous woman with an affectation of frank amiability: three characters in Sheridan's *School for Scandal*.

220 21. Dodd. See note on p. 265.

220 22. Miss Pope. "Since the days of Miss Pope, it may be questioned whether Mrs. Candour has ever found a more admirable representative" (*Dramatic Memoirs*).

220 27. Saturnalia: the ancient festival of Saturn, celebrated in the middle of December as a harvest-home observance. It was a period of mirthful license and enjoyment for all classes.

221 2. Miss Farren. On April 7, 1797, Miss Farren, about to marry the Earl of Derby, took her final leave of the stage in the character of Lady Teazle. Her concluding words were applicable in a very remarkable degree to herself. "Let me request, Lady Sneerwell, that you will make my respects to the scandalous college of which you are a member, and inform them that Lady Teazle, licentiate, begs leave to return the diploma they granted her, as she now leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer." A passionate burst of tears here revealed the sensibility of the speaker, while a stunning burst of applause followed from the audience, and the curtain was drawn down upon the play, for no more would be listened to (Mrs. C. Mathews, quoted by Brewer).

221 26. Kemble. See note on p. 254.

221 26. Valentine Legend: eldest son of Sir Sampson Legend, in *Love for Love*. He is the lover of Angelica, whom he eventually marries. Betterton was a famous actor in this part.

222 4. Niobe: in art, the typical figure of grief, a woman ever weeping. After losing her twelve children, who were stricken by the shafts of Apollo and Artemis, she was changed into a stone, from which water ran continually. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, ii:

She followed my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears.

222 22. Otway. See note on p. 265.

222 23-24. Sir Edward Mortimer: a character in Colman's *Iron Chest* (1796); a most benevolent man, who, haunted by the consciousness of being a murderer, finally confesses his crime and dies.

222 27. My friend G.: William Godwin (1756-1836), a London novelist, historian, and political economist. He was the author of *Political Justice* (1793), *History of the Commonwealth* (1824-1828), *Caleb Williams* (1794), *St. Leon* (1799), *Antonio, or the Soldier's Return* (1801), etc.

Review Questions. 1. What is the ground of Lamb's contention throughout this essay? 2. What are the chief differences morally and æsthetically between the artificial comedy of the eighteenth and the sentimental comedy of the nineteenth century? 3. What does he mean by "quiet Alsatia of hunted casuistry"? 4. Explain the use and value of his figures of speech. 5. Describe the acting of Palmer. 6. What is the author's criticism of the *School for Scandal*? 7. What is his estimate of the acting of Kemble? 8. Examine Lamb's use of the following: amphisbænas, plethory, dulcified, liquefaction, bottomry, misprision, and protasis.

FOREIGN TERMS AND QUOTATIONS¹

- 1 14. *manes*: shades.
- 4 28-29. *toga virilis*: manly gown.
- 5 1. *escritoire*: writing desk.
- 6 1. *bon-vivant*: jolly companion.
- 11 18. *Decus et solamen*: glory and comfort.
- 15 18. *quis sculpsit*: who engraved it?
- 17 27. *ad eundem*: to the same grade.
- 19 11. *variæ lectiones*: various readings.
- 21 2. *in manu*: in hand (possession).
- 21 6. *A priori*: on general principles, or reasoning from antecedent probability.
- 24 22. *caro equina*: horseflesh.
- 30 25. *auto da fé*: act of faith.
- 31 13. *Ultima Supplicia*: supreme punishments.
- 34 3. *Ululantes*: the howling ones.
- 34 8. *Rex*: king.
- 34 9. *tristis severitas*, etc.: stern severity of his countenance.
- 34 9. *inspicere in patinas*: to look upon the plates.
- 34 11. *vis*: force.
- 35 3. *rabidus furor*: raging fury.
- 36 10. *Cicero De Amicitia*: Cicero on Friendship.
- 36 20. *regni novitas*: the newness of the reign.
- 37 25. *Nireus formosus*: handsome Nireus.
- 39 2. *meum . . . tuum*: what is mine . . . what is yours.
- 39 18. *lene tormentum*: gentle torture.
- 41 17. *cana fides*: gray-haired truthfulness.
- 42 11. *Opera Bonaventuræ*: Works of Bonaventure.
- 46 6. *in banco*: in the bank.
- 68 14. *Jocôs Rîsus-que*: jests and laughter.
- 70 24. *par excellence*: preëminently.
- 98 5-6. *Hic currus*, etc.: here were his chariot and his arms.

¹ In the preparation of this appendix the editor would acknowledge the kind assistance of his colleague, Dr. Edwin L. Green, Adjunct Professor of Ancient Languages in South Carolina College.

- 108 17. *ab extra* : from without.
- 112 26-27. *rarus hospes* : rare guest.
- 118 22. *Non tunc illis erat locus* : there was not then a place for them,
i.e. they were not present.
- 118 31. *horresco referens* : I shudder at the mention of it.
- 130 30. *in puris naturalibus* : in its real nature.
- 136 7. *dramatis personæ* : the characters.
- 138 13-14. *fauces Averni* : the entrance to the lower world.
- 143 13. *incunabula* : cradle.
- 149 28. *mundus edibilis* : world of food.
- 149 29. *princeps obsoniorum* : the chief of the viands.
- 149 33. *amor immunditiæ* : love of filth.
- 150 2. *præludium* : prelude.
- 153 13. *per flagellationem extremam* : by extreme whipping.
- 161 9-10. *sostenuto* : sustained.
- 161 10. *adagio* : slowly.
- 163 5. *amabilis insania* : pleasing madness.
- 163 5. *mentis gratissimus error* : most pleasant mental aberration.
- 163 17-18. *subrusticus pudor* : rustic modesty.
- 164 28. *malleus hereticorum* : the hammer of the heretics.
- 166 23. *Stultus sum* : I am a fool.
- 169 27. *tendre* : tenderness.
- 171 30. *tête-à-tête* : familiar conversation.
- 175 22. *cum multis aliis* : with many other things.
- 175 31. *mollia tempora fandi* : pleasant times for speaking.
- 181 10. *vice versâ* : the terms being exchanged.
- 182 7. *pro* : for, instead of.
- 193 32. *melior lutus* : better mud.
- 193 33. *sol pater* : father sun.
- 196 11. *bellum ad exterminationem* : war of extermination.
- 196 29. *obolus* : a piece of Attic money worth about three cents.
- 202 20. *os sublime* : face elevated.
- 202 34. *Lusus Naturæ . . . Accidentium* : freak of nature . . . of accidents.
- 209 14. *per se* : in themselves.
- 223 6. *dénoûment* : the end, sequel, result.

INDEX TO NOTES

- A, My friend, 273
 Absolute, Captain, 266
 Achilles, 278
 Acres, Bob, 266
 Adams, Mr., 276
 Addleplot, Sir Simon, 290
 Aguecheek, Sir Andrew, 276
 Agur, 235
 Alcander, 283
 Alcibiades, 240
 Alcides, 284
 Alexander, 276, 285
 Alice, 244, 264, 273
 Allan C., 228
 Alph, 261
 Alsatia, 289
 Ambrose, 247
Amicus Redivivus, 235
 Amiens, 232, 275
 Amlet, Dick, 267
Anatomy of Melancholy, 242
 ancestors' money, 246
 Anderton's, 230
 Andrew and John, 233
 Angelica, 290
 Angelo, Michael, 259
 Antæus, 286
 anti-Caledonian, 253
 antic, 271
 Aquinas, 241
Arcadia, 279
 Argestes, 249
 Arion, 274
 Armado, 277
 Arrowsmith, 278
 Artaxerxes, 281
 Arundel Castle, 268
 Ascanius, 268
 Ascapart, 241
 Atlantis, 290
 Austin, 247
auto da fé, 238

 B——, 254
 Bach, 274
Bachelor's Complaint, etc., A, 287
 Backbite, Sir Benjamin, 266, 290
 Bacon, Friar, 259
 Bank, the, 229
 Bannister, Jack, 266
 banyan days, 236
 Barbican, 231
 Barnes, 233
 Barrington, 258
 Barrymore, 264
 Bartimeus, blind, 287
 Bartlemy, 233
 Bartley, Mr., 279
 Barton, 258
 Basileus, King, 279
 Basket Prayer-book, 233
 Bath, 235
 Bayes, 258
 Bedlam, 237

- Beethoven, 274
 Belisarius, 285
 Bellarmine, 241
 Ben Legend, 267
 Bensley, 265
 B. F., 252, 283
 Bigod, 241, 268
 Bishopsgate, 278
 Blandy, Miss, 257
 Blind Beggar, the, 285
 Blue-Coat School, 237
 Bobby, 266
 Bodleian, the, 234
 Boreas, 249
 Bourne, Vincent, 286
 Bowles, 245
 Boyer, James, 238
 Bramble, Sir Robert, 272
 Bridget Elia, 228, 246, 280, 284, 338
 Brinsley, 240
 Browne, 241, 244, 245, 253, 279
 Brunswick dynasty, 229
 Bubble, South-Sea, 229
 Bull, 232, 247
 Buncle, 242, 253
 Burgoyne, 231
 Burns, 253
 Burton, 242, 252, 273
 buskin, 266
 Buxton, 235

 C——, 242, 262
 C., Lord, 283
 Cæsars, the, 264
 Calidore, Sir, 282
 Caligula's minion, 237
 Cam, The, 235
 Cambro-Briton, 230
 Candlemas, 240
 Candour, Mrs., 291
 Canticles, the, 244

 Carracci, the, 251
 Carthusian, The, 249
 Cassiopeia's chair, 271
 Cato, 289
 Cave, 232
 Cayster, 248
 Celæno, 262
 Centaur, 286
 Cerinthus, 274
 Cesias, 249
 Cham of Tartary, 250
 changeling, 244
 Chanticleer, 250
Chapter on Ears, A, 272
Character of the Late Elia, A, 227
 Charles of Sweden, 250
 Chartreuse, the, 262
 Chatham, 231
 Chaucer, 234
 Cheap, 230
 Cheapside, 230
Children in the Wood, The, 263
 Chimæra, 261
 Chinese manuscript, 269
 Christie, 251
 Christ's, 234
 Christ's Hospital, 237
*Christ's Hospital Five-and-Thirty
 Years Ago*, 236
Chronicle, The, 231
 Clarkson, 251
 Claude, 251
 Cleombrotus, 275
 Clifford's Inn, 235
 Clinton, 231
 "Cloth," the, 269
 Cockletop, 270
 Cokes, 276
 Coleridge, 228, 233, 270
 Colet, 279
 Comberbatch, 241

- Complaint of the Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis, A*, 284
Complete Angler, The, 242
Confessions, The, 271
 Confucius, 270
 Congreve, 289
 Cophetua, King, 286
 Corbet, 228
 "Cornwall, Barry," 261
 Cotton, Mr., 245
Country Spectator, The, 238
 Coventry, 257
 Cowley, 283
 Crabtree, 290
 Cresseid, 285
 Cunningham, 228
 C. V. L., 263
Cymbeline, 269
 "Cynthia of the minute," 251
 Cyril, 247

 Dagon, 262
 Dalston, 229
 Damætas, 279
 Damascus, 235
 Dan Phœbus, 244
 Daniel, 243, 255
 Dapperwit, 290
 Debates, the, 238
 Defoe, 272
 Delectable Mountains, 236
 Delphic voyages, 284
 deodands, 242
 De Quincey, 271
 Derwentwater, 231
 Desdemona, 255
 Dido, 247
 Diogenes, 284
 Dionysius, 285
 Dis, 249
Dissertation upon Roast Pig, A, 269
Distant Correspondents, 283
 Dobbin, Humphrey, 272
 Dodd, 265, 291
 Dodsley, 242
 Domenichino, 250
 Dominic, 266
Don Quixote, 290
 Dorimant, 282
 Dornton, Old, 271
Dream Children, 263
 Drury, Old, 258, 280
Duchess of Malfy, The, 265
Duke's Servant, The, 266
 Dunning, 232
 Dyer, 233

 E. B., 247
 East India House, 228
 Ebion, 274
 Edwards, 282
 Elgin marbles, 286
 Elia, 227, 250
 Elia, Bridget, 246, 250, 252
 Elia, James, 250
 Elisha bear, 257
 Elizabeth, 250
 Elwes, 257
 Emanuel, 235
 Empedocles, 275
 Ephesian journeyman, 246
 Eton, 251
 Euclid, 278
 Eve, 255
 Evelyn, 255

 F——, 239
 F——, my godfather, 280
Faërie Queene, 262
 Fainall, 290
 Fairfax, Lady, 265
 Falstaff, 240

- Farley, 271
 Farquhar, 289
 Farren, Miss, 291
 Favell, 239
 Fenwick, John, 241
 Field, Mary, 232
 Field, Matthew, 233, 248
 Flaccus, 238
 flapper, 257
 Flower Pot, the, 229
 Foppington, 265
 Fr——, 239
 Friar John, 244
 Fribble, 266
 Froth, Lord, 290
 Fuller, 254
 Fuseli, 271
- Garrick, David, 258
 G. D., 234
 G., My friend, 291
 Gentleman Commoner, 234
 Giordano, Lucca, 251
 Gog, 241, 275
 Goldsmith, 287
 Gorgon, 261
Grace before Meat, 262
 Grecian, 239
 Greville, Fulke, 243
 Guildhall giants, 241
 Gulliver, 280
 Guyon, Sir, 260
- H——, 237
 Hallowmas, 251
Hamlet, 231
 Harlequin, 281
 Harpies, 261
 Harrington, 235
 Harrogate, 235
 Hathaway, 237
- Haydn, 274
 Helicon, 245
 Heliogabalus, 262
 Helots, 238
 Helvellyn, 261
 Herculeaneum, 230, 234
 Hercules, 286
 Hero, 248
 Herodotus, 276
 Hertfordshire, 251
 Hessey, 227, 228
 Heywood, Thomas, 253
 Hobbima, 251
 Hogarth, William, 230, 268, 273
 Holy Paul, 237
 Holy Thomas, 241
 Hooker, 259
 Hoole, 228
 Horace, 238
 horologe, 256
 Hotspur, 265
 House Beautiful, the, 236
 Howe, 231
 Hugh of Lincoln, 254
 Hunt, Leigh, 275
 Hydra, 261, 271
 Hymen, 247
 Hyperion, 265
- Imperfect Sympathies*, 253
 Ino Leucothea, 261
 Interpreter, the, 236
 Iris, 248
 Isabella, 281
 Isis, 235
- Jackson, 258
 Jael, 254
 Jamblichus, 239
 Janus, 228, 234
 Jerome, 247

- Jeshurun, 262
 J——ll, 257
 John, Friar, 244
 John L——, 264
 Johnson, 262
 Jonson, Ben, 278
 Jordan, Mrs., 264
 Jubal, 273
 Jude, 236
 Jumps, Jemmy, 272
 J. W., 284

 K., spiteful, 242
 Kemble, 254, 265, 291
 Kempis, Thomas à, 250
 Keppel, 231

 L——, my friend, 287
 La Mancha, 265
 Lambert, 265
 Lapithan controversy, 287
 Lavinian shores, 244
 Leander, 248
 Lear, 285
 Le G——, 239
 Legend, Ben, 267
 Legend, Sir Sampson, 267
 Legend, Valentine, 291
 Leonardo da Vinci, 253
 Lily, 279
 Linacre, 279
 Lincoln's Inn, 257
 Lions in the Tower, the, 236
 Liston, 271
 Locke, John, 231, 238
 London Bridge, 270
London Magazine, The, 227
 Louis the Fourteenth, 230
 Lovel, 257
 L.'s governor, 237
 Lucian, 263, 285

 Lully, Raymond, 276
 Lun, 281
 Lycurgus, 279

 M., 235, 270, 278
 M——, ill-fated, 239
 M——, pastoral, 232
 Maccaronies, 230
Macbeth, 268
 Macheath, 277
 Machiavel, 246
Mackery End, in Hertfordshire,
 252
 Magdalen, 234
 Magog, 275
 Malfy, 265
 Malvolio, 277
 Mammon, 229
 Man, Henry, 231
 Manciple, 234
 Manning, 270
 Maratti, 251
 Marcion, 274
 Marmaduke T——, 239
 Martha, Miss, 290
 Marvell, 256
 Maseres, Baron, 259
 matines and complines, 250
May-Day Effusion, A, 267
 Midas, Lord, 231
 Milton, 279
 Minerva, 253
 Mingay, 259
 Mirabel, 290
 Mirandula, 239
Modern Gallantry, 282
 Monument, the, 276
 Mopsa, 279
 Mortimer, Sir Edward, 291
 Moses, 259.
 Mount Tabor, 235

- Mozart, 274
Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist,
 245
 Mulberry Gardens, 230
 Munden, 270, 283
Munden's Farewell, 271
 Murray, 250
My First Play, 280
My Relations, 250

 Naps, 232
 Naylor, 249
 Nells and Hoydens, 265
New Year's Eve, 243
 Newcastle, Margaret, 242, 252, 285
 Niobe, 291
 Nireus, 239
 "Noon," 230
 Norfolk, 263
 North Pole Expedition, 279
 Nov——, 273

Old and the New Schoolmaster,
The, 278
Old Benchers of the Inner Temple,
The, 256, 257
 Ollier's edition, 236
 Ombre, 245
On Some of the Old Actors, 264
On the Acting of Munden, 270
On the Artificial Comedy of the
Last Century, 288
Opera Bonaventuræ, 241
 Oriel, 235
 Origen, 247
 Orphean lyre, 231
 Orrery, 280
 Orsino, 265
 Ortelius, 278
 Otway, 291
Oxford in the Vacation, 233

 P——, Susan, 257
 Pall Mall, 251
 Palmer, 266, 280, 290
 Pam, 246
 Pamela, 279
 Parables, 277
Paradise Lost, 247
 Parker, 247
 Parnassus, 235
 Parsons, 266
 Parthians, 240
 Paul Potter, 246
 Penn, 255
Peter Wilkins, 238
 Phædrus, 228
 Phillips, Thomas, 251
 Philoclea, 279
 Phœbus, 244
 Pierson, Peter, 248
Pilgrim's Progress, 236
 Pimpernel, 232
 Plato, 235, 283
 Pliant, Sir Paul, 290
 Plotinus, 239
 Plumer, 232, 246
 Pope, 244, 291
 Porson, 234
 Pr——, 228
Praise of Chimney-Sweepers, The,
 267
 Pratt, 231
 Prior, 258
 Procter, 228
 Propontic, 241
 Prospero, 260
 Psaltery, 264
Public Ledgers, The, 231
 Puck, 266
 pyramids, the, 254
 Pyramus, 247
 Pythagoras, 238

- Quaker ways, 255
Quakers' Meeting, A, 248
 Quisada, 277

 R——, 277
 Rabelæasian, 262
 Rambler, the, 262
 Raphael, 251
 Read, 258
Recollections of the South-Sea House, 229
Relapse, The, 357
Religio Medici, 244, 252
 Richmond, 232
 Robin Good-Fellow, 266
 Rochester, Earl of, 268
 Rockingham, 231
 R. N., 259
 Rosamond's Pond, 230
 Rousseau, 238
 Rowe, 281
 Rowe, Mrs., 283
 Roy, 254
Royal Calendar, 232

 S——, Granville, 277
 S——, poor, 239
 St. Bartholomew, 268
 St. Bride's, 228
 S. T. C., 243
 St. Denys, 281
 St. George, 261
 St. Gothard, 283
 St. Omer's, 270
 Salopian house, 268
 Salt, Samuel, 237, 257
 Samuel, 260
 San Benito, 238
Sans Prendre Vole, 246
 Saturnalia, 291
 Sawbridge, 232

 Scapula, 235
 Scarborough, 235
School for Scandal, 290
 Scotus, Duns, 276
 Selden, 234, 259
 Semiramis, 286
 Seneca, 280
 Servitor, 234
 "sessa," 271
 Seven Dials, the, 230
 Shacklewell, 229, 278
 Shallow, Master, 277
 Shelburne, 231
 Shepherds, the, 236
 Sheridan, 240, 280
 Shibboleth, 254
 Shining Ones, 249
 Siddons, Mrs., 281
 Silence, Master, 277
 Sir John, 266
 Sirens, 278
 Sizar, 234
 Slender, 277
 Slipslop, Mistress, 276
 Smithfield, 278
 Smollett, 253, 254
 sock, 266
 Solon, 279
 Sosia, 235
 Southey, 262
South-Sea House, The, 229
 Spa, 245
 Spadille, 245
 Spital sermons, 286
 Steele, 240
 Stephen, Master, 276
 Sterne, Laurence, 250
 Stonehenge, 254
 Strephon, 283
 Suett, 266
 Surface, Charles, 290

- Surface, Joseph, 267, 290
 Swedenborgian, 289
 Swift, 258

 "Tale of Lyddalcross," 228
 Tame, 230
Taming of the Shrew, The, 232
 T. and H., 228
 Tartarus, 238
 Tattle, 265
 Taylor, 228
 T——e, Dr., 239
 Teazle, Sir Peter, 271, 290
 Temple, the, 235, 256
 Terence, 238
 T. H., 261
 Th——, 239
 Thisbe, 247
 Thomas, 241
 Thomson, 253
 Tipp, 231
 Tishbite, the, 236
 Titan, 230
 Tobin, 237
 Tobit, 286
 Tooke, Horne, 240
 Touchwood, Lady, 290
 Tristan, Sir, 282
Tristram Shandy, 250
 Trophonius, 249
 Twelve Cæsars, the, 264
 Twickenham, 256
Two Races of Men, The, 240
 Twopeny, 258

 Ulysses, 289
 Urban, 259
Urn-Burial, 241
 Ursula, old dame, 269
 Usher, 234
Utopia, 262, 290

 Valentine, Bishop, 247
Valentine's Day, 247
 Vanbrugh, 265, 267
 Vandyke, 246, 285
 Varro, 280
 Vaux, 230
Venice Preserved, 265
 Venus, 268
 Verrio, 237
 Vesta, 266
Vittoria Corombona, 242
 Vivares, 233

 Wainwright, 228
 Walton, Izaak, 229
 "watchet weeds," 238
Way of the World, The, 281
 "Weathercock, Janus," 228
 Westminster Hall, 230
Westward Ho! 251
 Wharry, 258
White Doe of Rylstone, The, 235
 White, James, 268
 Whitgift, 247
 Wilding, 267
 Wilkes, 231
 Wilkins, Peter, 283
 Wishfort, Lady, 281
Witches and Other Night-Fears,
 260
 W——n, Alice, 244
 Woollett, 233
 Woolman, 249
 W——r, Sally, 284
 Wycherley, 289

 "yeoman, the," 237
 Yorick, 250, 287

 Zimmermann, 243, 249

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