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ON THE MONTH OF

MARCH.

*Winter still ling'ring on the verge of Spring,
Retires reluctant, and from time to time
Looks back, while at his keen and chilling breath
Fair Flora sickens.*

THE great operations of nature during this month, seem to be, to dry up the superabundant moisture of February, thereby preventing the roots and seeds from rotting in the earth; and gradually to bring forward the process of fructification in the swelling buds, whilst at the same time, by the wholesome severity of chilling blasts, they are kept from a premature disclosure, which would expose their tender contents to injury from the yet unsettled season. This effect is beautifully touched upon in a simile of Shakespeare's:

And like the tyrannous breathings of the north,
Checks all our buds from blowing.

This seeming tyranny, however, is to be regarded as the most useful discipline; and those years generally prove most fruitful, in which the pleasing appearances of Spring are the latest.

The sun has now acquired so much power, that on a clear day we often feel all the genial influence of Spring, though the naked shrubs and trees still give the landscape the comfortless appearance of Winter. But soft pleasant weather in March is seldom of long duration.

As yet the trembling year is unconfirm'd,
And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving fleets
Deform the day delightful.

As soon as a few dry days have made the land fit for working, the farmer goes to the plough; and if the fair weather continues, proceeds to sowing oats and barley, though this business is seldom finished till the next month. The importance of a dry season for getting the seed early and favour-

ably into the ground, is expressed in the old proverb,

A bushel of March dust is worth a king's ransom.

The mellow note of the thrush, who sings perched on the naked bough of some lofty tree, is heard from the beginning of the month: at the same time, the ring-dove cooes in the woods. The rookery is now all in motion with the pleasing labour of building and repairing nests; and highly amusing it is to observe the tricks and artifices of the thievish tribe, some to defend, and others to plunder, the materials of their new habitations. These birds are accused of doing much injury to the farmer by plucking up the young corn, and other springing vegetables; but some think this mischief fully repaid by their diligence in picking up the grubs of various insects, which, if suffered to grow to maturity, would occasion much greater damage. For this purpose, they are frequently seen following the plough, or settling in flocks on newly-turned up lands.

Some birds, which took refuge in our temperate climate from the rigour of the northern winters, now begin to leave us, and return to the countries where they were bred. The red-wing thrush, fieldfare, and woodcock, are of this kind; and they retire to spend their summer in Norway, Sweden, and other parts of the north.

The gannets, or soland geese, resort during this month to those Scotch isles, where they breed in such numbers, as to cover almost the whole surface of the ground with their eggs and young.

Frogs, which during the winter lay in a torpid state at the bottom of ponds or ditches, are enlivened by the warmth of Spring, and early in this month rise to the surface of the water in vast numbers. They are at first very timorous, and dive to the bottom with great quickness as one approaches; but in the coupling season they become bolder, and make themselves heard to a great distance by their croaking.

Those most elegant fish, smelts or sparlings, begin to run up the rivers in this month in order to spawn. They are of so tender a nature, that the least mixture of snow-water in the river drives them back to the sea.

But nothing in the animal creation is a more pleasing spectacle, than the sporting of the young lambs, most of which are yeaned this month, and are trusted abroad when the weather is tolerably mild. DYER, in his poem of *The Fleece*, gives a very natural and beautiful description of this circumstance.

Spread around thy tend'ring diligence
In flow'ry spring-time, when the new-dropt lamb,
Tott'ring with weakness by his mother's side,
Feels the fresh world about him; and each thorn,
Hillock, or furrow, trips his feeble feet:
O guard his meek sweet innocence from all
Th' innumerable ills, that rush around his life;
Mark the quick kite, with beak and talons prone,
Circling the skies to snatch him from the plain;
Observe the lurking crows; beware the brake,
There the sly fox the careless minute waits;
Nor trust thy neighbour's dog, nor earth, nor sky!
Thy bosom to a thousand cares divide.
Eurus oft flings his hail; the tardy fields
Pay not their promis'd food; and oft the dam
O'er her weak twins with empty udder mourns,
Or fails to guard, when the bold bird of prey
Alights, and hops in many turns around,
And tires her also turning: to her aid
Be nimble, and the weakest, in thine arms,
Gently convey to the warm cote, and oft,
Between the lark's note and the nightingale's,
His hungry bleating still with tepid milk;
In this soft office may thy children join,
And charitable habits learn in sport:
Nor yield him to himself, ere vernal airs
Sprinkle thy little croft with daisy flowers.

Another most agreeable token of the arrival of Spring, is that the bees begin to venture out of their hives about the middle of this month. As their food is the honey-like juice found in the tubes of flowers, their coming abroad is a certain sign that flowers are now to be met with. No creature seems possessed of a greater power of foreseeing the weather; so that

their appearance in the morning may be reckoned a sure token of a fair day.

The gardens are now rendered gay by the crocuses, which adorn the borders with a rich mixture of the brightest yellow and purple. The little shrubs of mezereon are in their beauty. The fields look green with the springing grass, but few wild flowers as yet appear to decorate the ground. Daisies, however, begin to be sprinkled over the dry pastures; and the moist banks of ditches are enlivened with the glossy star-like yellow flowers of pilewort. Towards the end of the month, primroses peep out beneath the hedges; and the most delightfully fragrant of all flowers, the violet, discovers itself by the perfume it imparts to the surrounding air, before the eye has perceived it in its lowly bed. SHAKESPEARE compares an exquisitely sweet strain of music, to the delicious scent of this flower:

O! it came to my ear, like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.

There are several kinds of violets; but the fragrant (both blue and white) is the earliest, thence called the March violet. To these flowers SHAKESPEARE adds the daffodil,

Which comes before the swallow dares, and takes
The winds of March with beauty.

Besides the hazel, the fallow now enliven the hedges with its catkins full of yellow dust; and the alder-trees are covered with a kind of black bunches, which are the male and female flowers. The leaves of honeyfuckles are nearly expanded. In the gardens, the peach and nectarine, the almond, the cherry and apricot-trees, come into full bud during this month. The gardeners find plenty of employment in pruning trees, digging and manuring beds, and sowing a great variety of seeds, both for the flower and kitchen garden.

In the latter part of this month the equinox happens, when day and night are of equal length all over the globe; or rather, when the sun is an equal time above, and below, the horizon. For the morning and evening twilight make apparent day considerably longer than night. This takes place again in September. The first is called the vernal, the latter the autumnal equinox. At these times storms and tempests are particularly frequent, whence they have always been the terror of mariners. March winds are boisterous and vehement to a proverb.

The CURATE.—A Fragment.

O'ER the pale embers of a dying fire,
His little lamp fed with but little oil,
The Curate sat, (for scanty was his hire)
And ruminated sad the morrow's toil.

'Twas Sunday's eve, meet season to prepare
The stated lectures of the coming tyde;
No day of rest to him, but day of care,
At manie a church to preach, with tedious ride.

Before him sprede, his various sermons lay,
Of explanation deepe, and sage advice,
The harvest glean'd from many a thoughtful day.
The fruit of learning bought with heavy price.

On these he cast a fond but fearful eye:
Awhile he paus'd, for sorrow stopp'd his throte:

Reliev'd at length he heav'd a bitter sigh,
And thus complain'd, as well indeed he mote.

"Here is the scholar's lot, condemn'd to fail
Unpatroniz'd o'er life's tempestuous wave;

Clouds blind his sight, nor blows a friendly gale
To waft him to one port—except the grave.

"Big with presumptive hope I launch'd my keale,
With youthful ardour and bright science fraught,
Unanxious of the pains long doom'd to feel,
Unthinking that the voy'ge might end in nought.

"Pleas'd on the summit sea I danc'd awhile
With gay companions, and with views as fair.
Outstript by these, I'm kept to humble toil,
My fondest hopes abandon'd in despair.—

"Had my ambitious mind been led to rise
To highest flights, to Crozier and to Pall,
Scarce could I mourn the missings of my prize;
For searing wishes well deserve their fall.

"No tow'ring thought like these engag'd my breast,
I hop'd (nor blame, ye proud, the lowly plan)
Some little cove, some parsonage of rest,
The scheme of duty suited to the man;

"Where, in my narrow sphere secure, at ease,
From vile dependence, free I might remain,
The guide to good, the Counsellor of Peace,
The Friend, the shepherd of the village swain!

"Yet cruel fate deny'd the small request,
And bound me fast in one ill-omen'd hour,
Beyond the chance of remedy, to rest
The slave of wealthie pride and priestly power.

"Oft as in ruffyt weeds I scour along
In distant chapels hastily to pray,
By nod scarce notic'd of the passing thronge,—
'Tis but the Curate, every child will say.

"Nor circumscrib'd in dignity alone
Do I my rich superior's vassal ride:
Sad penurie as e'er in cottage known,
With all its frowns, does o'er my roof preside.

"Ah! not for me the harvest yields its store,
The bough-crown'd shock in vain attracts my eye,
To labour doom'd, and destin'd to be poor,
I pass the field, I hope, not envious by.

"When at the altar, surplice clad I stand,
The bridegroom's joy draws forth the golden fee;
The gift I take, but dare not close my hand,
The splendid present centres not in me."

The DAISY.

O F all the flow'rs that deck the plain
With native splendour gay,
The Daisy's sweetest in the train,
That decks the charms of May.

We see the gaudy tulip rise,
That shuns the lowly flow'r,
But soon its transient glory dies,
Vain bauble of an hour.

Learn hence, fair Delia, how to frame
The beauties of thy mind;
'Tis meekness paves the way to fame,
And charms all human kind.

Thy mind, that's like the Daisy low,
Let flow'rs of Grace adorn;
So shall thy budding virtues blow
To ages yet unborn.

A TRAIT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

THE following copy of an original letter from this Queen to Heaton, Bishop of Ely, is taken from the Register of Ely:

"Proud Prelate,

"I understand you are backward in complying with your agreement: but I would have you to know, that I, who made you what you are, can unmake you; and, if you do not forthwith fulfil your engagement, by — I will immediately unfrock you. Your's, as you demean yourself,
"ELIZABETH."

Heaton, it seems, had promised the Queen to exchange some part of the land belonging to the see for an equivalent, and did so, but it was in consequence of the above letter.

CHARACTER OF

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

GREAT man? says Voltaire, *we must by no means be lavish of this title.* We can indeed hardly ever apply it at all, if by *great* be meant universally so; that is, *omnibus numeris absolutus.*

The late Dr. Samuel Johnson was a man of great parts, and was indisputably a great man, if great parts simply can make one: but Dr. Samuel Johnson was the meanest of bigots, a dupe and slave to the most contemptible prejudices; and, upon subjects the most important, is known to have held opinions, which are absolutely a disgrace to human understanding.

The President Montesquieu has said, that "the rank or place, which posterity bestows, is subject like all others to the whim and caprice of fortune:" and our Wollaston was so disgusted with the foolish

and iniquitous judgments of men, that he betook himself early in life to retirement,—*propter iniqua hominum judicia*, as he left to be inscribed upon his tomb-stone. If any thing could cure a man's anxiety, and render him indifferent, about what is said or thought of him, now or hereafter, it would be these blind, absurd, iniquitous judgments of men; who break riotously forth into praise or censure, without regard to truth or justice, but just as passion and prejudice impel.

Dr. Johnson "seems, together with the ablest head, possessed of the very best heart at present existing;" says one writer. "Never on earth did one mortal body encompass such true greatness and such true goodness," says another; who observes also, that his *Lives of the Poets* "would alone have been sufficient to immortalize his name." How able his head, or (as a third expresses it) what *stupendous strength of understanding* he might have, cannot be precisely defined; but it is certain, that this *stupendous understanding* was not strong enough to force its way through the meanest prejudices, with which it was once entangled. And for the *very best heart, and such true goodness as one mortal body did never before encompass*,—this is the language of journalists and periodical writers: let us hear the testimony of those, who have always known him personally, and intimately.

Bishop Newton, speaking of the above *Lives of the Poets*, says, "that malevolence predominates in every part; and that, though some passages are judicious and well written, yet they make not sufficient compensation for so much spleen and ill humour." An account of Dr. Johnson, said to be written by the ingenious Miss Seward, sets forth, that he was a man of very great parts, and of many good qualities, which it is far from our intent to deny or detract from; but that his *character was a very mixed*, and (she might have added) a very imperfect, one. His writings are represented as excellent and fine, where not "disgraced, as in his criticisms, with the faults of his disposition. He had strong affections," it is said, "where literary envy did not interfere; but that envy was of such deadly potency, as to load his conversation, as it has loaded his biographic works, with the rancour of party violence, with national aversion, bitter sarcasm, and unchristian-like invective. He turned from the compositions of rising genius with a visible horror, which proved too plainly, that envy was the bosom-serpent of this literary despot. His pride was infinite; yet, amidst all the overbearing arrogance it produced, his heart melted at the sight, or at the representation, of disease and poverty; and, in the hours of affluence, his purse was ever open to relieve them. He was

"a furious Jacobite, while one hope for the Stuart line remained; and his politics, always leaning towards despotism, were inimical to liberty, and the natural rights of mankind. He was punctual in his devotions; but his religious faith had much more of bigot-fierceness, than of that gentleness which the gospel inculcates," &c.

If this representation be in any degree just, and I have never heard of its being either disowned or contradicted, what are we to think of panegyrists, who ascribe to him *such true greatness and such true goodness, as were never before encompassed by one mortal body?*

THE BOAST.

Addressed to Miss ———

LET heroes boast their battles won,
The laurels they've obtain'd;
'Tis mine to boast, 'tis mine alone,
A nobler conquest gain'd.
I've won fair —'s gentle heart,
I've gain'd the nymph I love:
What greater honour can impart,
What bliss superior prove?

Hard seem'd the contest, but at last
The yielding maid was kind;
A mutual passion, she confess'd,
Had long possess'd her mind.

Dear lovely girl, you ne'er will find
A flame more pure than mine,
An heart more grateful, more resign'd
To love's sweet will and thine.

AN EXTRACT FROM

THE VILLAGE, A POEM.

By the REV. G. CRABBE.

YE gentle souls who dream of rural ease,
Whom the smooth stream and smoother
sonnet please;

Go! if the peaceful cot your praises share,
Go look within, and ask if peace be there:
If peace be his—that drooping weary fire,
Or their's, that offspring round their feeble

fire,
Or her's, that matron pale, whose trembling
hand
Turns on the wretched hearth th' expiring
brand.

Nor yet can time itself obtain for these
Life's latest comforts, due respect and ease;
For yonder see that hoary swain, whose age
Can with no cares except its own engage;
Who, propt on that rude staff, looks up to see
The bare arms broken from the withering tree;
On which, a boy, he climb'd the loftiest
bough,

Then his first joy, but his sad emblem now.
He once was chief in all the rustic trade,
His steady hand the straightest furrow made;
Full many a prize he won, and still is proud
To find the triumphs of his youth allow'd;
A transient pleasure sparkles in his eyes,
He hears and smiles, then thinks again and
sighs:

For now he journeys to his grave in pain;
The rich disdain him; nay, the poor disdain;

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Alternate masters now their slave command,
And urge the efforts of his feeble hand;
Who, when his age attempts its task in vain,
With ruthless taunts of lazy poor complain.

Oft may you see him when he tends the
sheep,
His winter charge, beneath the hillock weep;
Oft hear him murmur to the winds that blow;
O'er his white locks, and bury them in snow;
When rous'd by rage and muttering in the
morn,

He mends the broken hedge with icy thorn.
Why do I live, when I desire to be
At once from life and life's long labour free?
Like leaves in spring, the young are blown
away,

Without the furrows of a slow decay;
I, like yon wither'd leaf, remain behind,
Nipt by the frost and shivering in the wind;
There it abides till younger buds come on,
As I, now all my fellow swains are gone;
Then, from the rising generation thrust,
It falls, like me, unnotic'd to the dust.

These fruitful fields, these numerous flocks
I see,

Are others' gain, but killing cares to me;
To me the children of my youth are lords,
Slow in their gifts, but hasty in their words;
Wants of their own demand their care, and
who

Feels his own want, and succours others too?
A lonely, wretched man, in pain I go,
None need my help and none relieve my woe;
Then let my bones beneath the turf be laid,
And men forget the wretch they would not
aid.

Thus groan the old, till by disease oppress'd,
They taste a final woe, and then they rest.
Their's is yon house that holds the parish
poor,

Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken
door;

There, where the putrid vapours, flagging,
play,
And the dull wheel hums doleful through the
day;

There children dwell who know no parent's
care,

Parents, who know no children's love, dwell
there;

Heart-broken matrons on their joyless bed,
Forfaken wives and mothers never wed!

Dejected widows with unheeded tears,
And crippled age with more than childhood-

fears;
The lame, the blind, and, far the happiest
they!

The moping idiot and the madman gay.

Here too the sick their final doom receive,
Here brought amid the scenes of grief, to
grieve;

Where the loud groans from some sad cham-
ber flow,

Mixt with the clamours of the croud below;
Here forrowing, they each kindred sorrow scan,
And the cold charities of man to man.

Whose laws indeed for ruin'd age provide,
And strong compulsion plucks the scrap from
pride;

But still that scrap is bought with many a sigh,
And pride embitters what it can't deny.

Say ye, oppress'd by some fantastic woes,
Some jarring nerve that baffles your repose;

Who prefs the downy couch, while slaves ad-
vance,

With timid eye, to read the distant glance;

Who with sad prayers the weary doctor tease
To name the nameless ever-new disease;
Who with mock patience dire complaints endure,

Which real pain, and that alone can cure;
How would ye bear in real pain to lie,
Despis'd, neglected, left alone to die?
How would ye bear to draw your latest breath,
Where all that's wretched paves the way for death?

Such is that room which one rude beam divides,
And naked rafters form the sloping sides;
Where the vile bands that bind the thatch are seen,

And lath and mud is all that lie between;
Save one dull pane, that, coarsely patch'd,
gives way

To the rude tempest, yet excludes the day:
Here, on a matted flock, with dust o'erspread,
The drooping wretch reclines his languid head;

For him no hand the cordial cup applies,
Nor wipes the tear that stagnates in his eyes;
No friends with soft discourse his pain beguile,

Nor promise hope till sickness wears a smile.
But soon a loud and hasty summons calls,
Shakes the thin roof, and echoes round the walls;

Anon, a figure enters, quaintly neat,
All pride and business, bustle and conceit;
With looks unalter'd by these scenes of woe,
With speed that entering, speaks his haste to go;

He bids the gazing throng around him fly,
And carries fate and physic in his eye;
A potent quack, long vers'd in human ills,
Who first insults the victim whom he kills;
Whose murderous hand a drowsy bench protect,
And whose most tender mercy is neglect.

Paid by the parish for attendance here,
He wears contempt upon his sapient sneer;
In haste he seeks the bed where misery lies,
Impatience mark'd in his averted eyes;
And, some habitual queries hurried o'er,
Without reply, he rushes on the door;
His drooping patient, long inur'd to pain,
And long unheeded, knows remonstrance vain;

He ceases now the feeble help to crave
Of man, and mutely hastens to the grave.

But ere his death some pious doubts arise,
Some simple fears which "bold bad" men despise;

Fain would he ask the parish priest to prove
His title certain to the joys above;
For this he sends the murmuring nurse, who calls

The holy stranger to these dismal walls;
And doth not he, the pious man, appear,
He, "passing rich with forty pounds a year?"
Ah! no, a shepherd of a different flock,
And far unlike him, feeds this little flock;
A jovial youth, who thinks his Sunday's task
As much as God or man can fairly ask;
The rest he gives to loves and labours light,
To fields the morning and to feasts the night;
None better skill'd, the noisy pack to guide,
To urge their chace, to cheer them or to chide;

Sure in his shot, his game he seldom miss,
And seldom fail'd to win his game at whist;
Then, while such honours bloom around his head,

Shall he sit sadly by the sick man's bed

To raise the hope he feels not, or with zeal
To combat fears that ev'n the pious feel?

Now once again the gloomy scene explore,
Less gloomy now; the bitter hour is o'er,
The man of many sorrows sighs no more.

Up yonder hill, behold how sadly flow
The bier moves winding from the vale below;
There lie the happy dead, from trouble free,
And the glad parish pays the frugal fee;
No more, oh! Death, thy victim starts to hear
Churchwarden stern, or kingly overseer;
No more the farmer gets his humble bow,
Thou art his lord, the best of tyrants thou!

Now to the church behold the mourners come,

Sedately torpid and devoutly dumb;
The village children now their game suspend,
To see the bier that bears their ancient friend;

For he was one in all their idle sport,
And like a monarch rul'd their little court;
The pliant bow he form'd, the flying ball,

The bat, the wicket, were his labours all;
Him now they follow to his grave, and stand
Silent and sad, and gazing, hand in hand;

While bending low, their eager eyes explore
The mingled relics of the parish poor:
The bell tolls late, the moping owl flies

round,
Fear marks the flight and magnifies the sound;
The busy priest, detain'd by weightier care,
Defers his duty till the day of prayer;

And waiting long, the crowd retire distrust,
To think a poor man's bones should lie unblest.

*Extract from an authentic Letter relative to
an HINDOO WOMAN'S burning herself
alive with her deceased Husband, dated
Calcutta, July 25, 1779.*

GOCUL Chundes Gofaul, a Bramin of superior cast, whose character as a merchant and a man of integrity was very respectable amongst Europeans, and exceedingly so with every native of this country who had any knowledge of him; for he maintained a great many poor daily at his house, and in the neighbourhood where he lived; and he extended his generosity to many Europeans, by lending them money when in distress. He was Governor Verelst's Banian; and from that circumstance, I believe, you can confirm all I have advanced in Gocul's favour.

Gocul had been confined to his room about a fortnight by a fever and flux: I frequently visited him in that time, but did not apprehend his dissolution was so near, till last Tuesday morning, the 20th inst. when on sending to enquire after his health, my servant informed me he was removed from his own house to the banks of a creek that runs from Collyghaut (a place held sacred by the Hindoos, and where the water is taken up that is used in administering oaths to Hindoos in and about Calcutta) into the river Ganges, as you know is customary with them, in order to die in or near that river, or some creek that runs into it.

Early the next morning I sent my ser-

vant to ask how he was: he brought me for answer that Gocul was in a dying state, as he had been all the preceding night; and whilst I was at breakfast one of his dependants came to tell me he was dead. I went to see him soon after, and found him covered with a sheet. I then enquired if either of his wives (for he had two) would burn with him; but nobody there could inform me. I desired one of his dependants to let me know if either of them resolved to burn, that I might be present: this was about eight o'clock last Wednesday morning. At ten o'clock the corps was carried to Collyghaut, a little village about a mile higher up the creek, and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Calcutta. Between twelve and one o'clock the same day, Mr. Shakespeare, who had an esteem for Gocul, whose nephew Joynerain Gofaul is Mr. Shakespeare's Banian, called on me to let me know that Gocul's first wife Tarrynell was resolved to burn. We accordingly went together, and reached Collyghaut in time, where Gocul lay on a pile of Sandal wood and dry straw, about four feet from the ground, on the banks of the creek, almost naked. His wife, we were told, was praying on the edge of the creek, where we were informed her children (two boys and one girl) one of the boys seven years, the other five, and the girl thirteen months old, were present with her and Kistenchurn, Gocul's eldest brother: that at first sight of her children, the strong ties of human nature struggling with her resolution, drew a tear from her; but she soon recovered herself, and told her children their father was dead, and she was going to die with him; that they must look up to their uncle, pointing to Kistenchurn, who, with his son Joynerain beforementioned, would be both father and mother to them; and that they must therefore obey them in the same manner as they would Gocul and herself if living. Then turning to Kistenchurn, she enjoined him, and recommended him to enjoin Joynerain (who was then at Dacca) to be fathers and protectors to her children, and committed them to their care.

This done, she left her children, and advanced towards the funeral pile, which was surrounded by a vast concourse of people, chiefly Bramins, about eight or ten feet from it, so that there was a free passage round the pile. Mr. Shakespeare and I were in the front of the circle, and had a perfect view of the following scene.

As soon as she appeared in the circle, I thought she was somewhat confused; but whether from the sight of her husband laying dead on the pile, or the great crowd of people assembled, or at seeing Europeans among them, for there were two besides Mr. Shakespeare and myself, I cannot tell: however, she recovered herself almost instantaneously. She then walked unattend-

ed gently round the pile in silence, strewing flowers as she went round; and when she had nearly completed the third time, at Gocul's feet she got upon the pile without assistance, strewed flowers over it, and then laid herself down on the left side of her husband, raising his head and putting her right arm under his neck; and turning her body to his, threw her left arm over him; and one of the Bramins raised his right leg, and put it over her legs without a single syllable being uttered. They being thus closely embraced, a blue shawl was laid over them, and they were not seen afterwards by any body. Some dry straw was laid over the shawl, and then some light billets of Sandal wood were put on the straw; but altogether not sufficient to prevent her raising herself up, throwing all off, and entirely extricating herself from the pile, if she had repented, or from feeling the heat of the fire or smoak she had been inclined to save her life: the dry straw which composed a part of the pile was then lighted. During all which time, that is, from the moment Gocul's wife made her appearance in the circle, to lighting the pile, there was a profound silence. But on the pile being lighted, the Bramins called out aloud, some dancing and brandishing cudgels or sticks, which I took to be praying and a part of the ceremony; perhaps to prevent her cries being heard by the multitude, so as to give them a bad impression of it, or deter other women from following what the Hindoos term a laudable example. But I was so near the pile, that notwithstanding the noise made by the Bramins, and those who danced round it, I should have heard any cries or lamentations she might have made: I am convinced she made none, and that the smoak must have suffocated her in a very short space of time. I staid about ten minutes after the pile was lighted, for such a sight was too dreadful to remain long at; besides, nothing more was to be seen except the flames, which Mr. Shakespeare and I had a perfect view of at a distance, as we returned from the funeral pile.

Gocul's wife was a tall, well-made, good-looking woman, fairer than the generality of Hindoo women are, about twenty-two years of age at most: she was decently dressed in a white cloth round her waist, and an Oorney of white cloth with a red silk border thrown loosely over her head and shoulders; but her face, arms, and feet were bare. I have heard and indeed supposed that women in that situation intoxicate themselves with bang or toddy; but from the relation given me of what passed between Gocul's wife, her children and brother-in-law, as well as what Mr. Shakespeare and I saw at the funeral pile, I am persuaded she was as free from intoxication during the whole ceremony as it is possible; for she appeared to be perfectly

composed, not in the least flurried, except at first for an instant of time, as before observed; but went through it deliberately, with astonishing fortitude and resolution.

This barbarous custom, so shocking to Europeans, if I mistake not, was practised by our ancestors in Britain in the times of the Druids; but whether our countrywomen in those days, who did not sacrifice themselves, were treated with the same contempt after the death of their husbands, as the Hindoo women are, I know not; for by the religion of the Hindoos they never can marry again, or have commerce with another man, without prejudice to their casts, which to them is as dear as life itself; but generally are reduced to perform the most menial offices in the family of which they were before the mistress.

This reflection, together with the great credit they gain amongst the Bramins in undergoing so painful and horrid a religious ceremony, may be very strong inducements to their continuing this practice.

The Moorish government in these provinces have frequently prevented such sacrifices, which I have heard is very easily done; for that any person not a Hindoo, or even an Hindoo of an inferior cast to the victim, barely touching the woman during the ceremony, will have that effect. Job Channock, who obtained the first Phirmaund from the king at Delhi for the English Company, I am told, and I dare say you have heard it too, saved a woman from burning by touching her whilst she was going through the ceremony, and was afterwards married to her. Mr. Verelst was the means of saving the life of Gocul's mother, who intended to burn herself with her husband, and she is now living; but Gocul's wife was so resolute, she declared last Wednesday morning, that if she was not allowed to burn with her husband, she would find means to put an end to her life in the course of that or the next day. As a proof of her composure, and being in her perfect senses, immediately on receiving news of Gocul's death she resolved to sacrifice herself, and took an inventory of all the jewels and effects which she was in possession of.

I have now given you a full and circumstantial relation of the whole matter respecting Gocul Gofaul's wife sacrificing herself on the funeral pile of her husband. Such parts of it as were told me, of what was done out of my sight, I have no reason to doubt; and what I have written, as seen by myself, you may depend on as literally true, which Mr. Shakespeare will confirm in every part. But I omitted to observe, that though the Bramins shed tears when praying by Gocul the night previous to his death, there did not appear the least concern in any of them during the ceremony at the funeral pile, not even in Kistenchurn, the elder brother of Gocul, or any of his dependants.

I am told that Gocul's other wife, named Rajeserry, would also have sacrificed herself, at the same time, if she was not with child: and that if she has preserved a lock of his hair, it is consistent with the Hindoo laws or customs for her to go through the same ceremony by burning herself with that lock of hair, on another pile, whenever she thinks proper. Gocul had four children by this last-mentioned wife, one girl ten years, one girl six years, one boy seven years, and another boy five years of age.

I am, dear Sir, your most
obedient humble servant,
JOSEPH CATOR.

The SOCIAL FIRE.

WHEN beating rains and pinching
winds
At night attack the lab'ring hinds,
And force them to retire—
How sweet they pass their time away,
In sober talk or rustic play,
Beside the Social Fire.

Then many a plaintive tale is told
Of those who ling'ring in the cold,
With cries and groans expire.
The mournful story strikes the ear,
They heave the sigh, they drop the tear,
And bless their Social Fire.

The legendary tale comes next,
With many an artful phrase perplex
That well the tongue might tire;
The windows shake, the drawers crack,
Each thinks the ghost behind his back,
And hitches to the fire.

Or now perhaps some homely swain,
Who fann'd the lover's flame in vain,
And glow'd with warm desire,
Relates each stratagem he play'd
To win the coy disdainful maid,
And eyes the Social Fire.

To these succeed the jocund song,
From lungs less musical than strong,
And all to mirth aspire;
The humble roof returns the sound,
The social Can moves briskly round,
And brighter burns the fire.

Oh! grant, kind Heav'n, a state like this,
Where simple ignorance is bliss,
'Tis all that I require;
Then, then—to share the joys of life,
I'd seek a kind indulgent wife,
And bless my Social Fire.

R O N D E A U.

BY two black eyes my heart was won,
Sure never wretch was more undone.
To Cælia with my suit I came,
But she, regardless of her prize,
Thought proper to reward my flame
By two black eyes!

Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in Suffolk, on the comparative Utility of OXEN and HORSES in Husbandry.

ABOUT five years ago, I took some land into my occupation, and having found the expence of horses very great, I determined, somewhat more than two years ago, to make trial of oxen, and bought one pair. At that time, I am almost certain, there was not an ox worked in this county; on which account my workmen added much to the trouble of breaking them, by their obstinate prejudices against the use of them.

At last I was fortunate enough to select a labourer, who, though totally unused to them, was willing to take proper pains to break them. By his good treatment and temper, they soon became tractable, and as handy both at ploughing and carting as any horses.

Being well satisfied with their performance, I resolved to dispose of all my draft horses, and substitute oxen in their stead. I have now completed my plan, and have not a single cart-horse; but the work of my farm (which consists of upwards of one hundred acres of arable land, and sixty of pasture and wood) is performed with ease by six oxen; together with my statutory duty on the highways, timber and corn, carting, harrowing, rolling, and every part of rural business. They are shod constantly: their harness is exactly the same as that of horses, (excepting the necessary alterations for difference of size and shape) they are drove with bridles, and bits in their mouths, and answer to the same words of the ploughman or carter as horses, and as readily. A single man holds the plough, and drives a pair of oxen with reins; they will regularly plough an acre of land every day, and in less than eight hours time; I believe they will do it in seven, but I would not assert more than I know they perform.

I have a small plantation, in which the trees are planted in rows ten feet asunder; the intervals are ploughed by a single ox with a light plough, and he is drove by the man who holds it. I mention this as an instance of their great docility.

My oxen go in a cart single, or one, two, three, or more, in proportion to the load. Four oxen will draw eighty bushels of barley, or oats, in a waggon, with ease; and if they are good in their kind, will travel as fast as horses with the same load.

I frequently send out eighty bushels of oats with only three oxen; and one ox with forty bushels in a light cart, which I think of all others the best method of carriage. My workmen are now perfectly

reconciled to the use of oxen; and the following reasons determine me to prefer them greatly to horses:—

First; They are kept at much less expence. Mine never eat corn or meal of any sort. During the winter, they are kept in good order for work upon straw, with turnips, carrots, or cabbages; for want of either of the three latter, I allow one peck of bran a day to each ox, whilst in constant work. When my straw is finished, and the spring advances, they eat hay; and if they work harder than common in the seed time, they have bran beside. When the vetches are fit to mow and give them in the stable, they have nothing else. After the day's work in the summer they have a small bundle of hay to eat, and stand in the stable till they are cool, and then turned into the pasture.

I am of opinion, that the annual difference of expence in keeping a horse and an ox, each in condition for the same constant work, is at least four pounds.

Secondly; The value of a horse declines every year after he is seven years old; and is scarcely any thing if he is blind, incurably lame, or very old: But if an ox is in any of those situations, he may be fattened, and sold for much more than the first purchase; and will always fat sooner after work than before.

Thirdly; They are not so liable to illness as horses. I have never had one indisposed.

Fourthly; Horses (especially those belonging to gentlemen) are frequently rode by servants without their master's knowledge, and often injured by it. Oxen are in no danger of this kind.

Fifthly; A general use of oxen would make beef, and consequently all other meat, more plentiful; which I think would be a national benefit.

That it may not be thought, that a pair of oxen will plough an acre of land in a day only upon a very light soil; I must add, that the greater part of my arable land is too heavy to grow turnips to advantage. When my lighter lands are in fine tilth, I make use of a double plough: a single man holds it, and drives one pair of oxen, and will plough two acres a day.

I am well aware, that the method of working oxen with a yoke spares a considerable expence in the article of harness; but they move so much more freely with collars, and can be used with so much more advantage singly by the latter method, that I think it far preferable.

After experience has inclined me to give the preference to oxen, I will not omit in my account the only material inconvenience I have found in working them; which is, they are troublesome in shoeing; at least I have found them so in this country; and, I believe, chiefly because my smith never shod any before. I have them confined in a pound whilst they are

shod, and a man attends the smith. However, I think this disadvantage amply recompensed by more material advantages; and can with great truth affirm, that the longer I have worked oxen, the better I have been satisfied with them.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

MULTUM agentes nihil agendo, hath usually been said of those officious, busy, fluttering things, who are always in a hurry, yet doing nothing: but it may justly be said of man in general. Upon what poor uninteresting objects is he perpetually employed, and with what importance and most serious concern! "Is that the point," said the philosopher, looking contemptuously down upon the earth, "is that the point, which so many nations are partitioning with fire and sword?" When Alcibiades was pluming himself upon his numerous farms and possessions, Socrates drily asked to see them upon a map of the earth, which was hanging before them: not unlike a Grand Seigneur, who, enquiring where England was, which made so much disturbance, was desired to remove his thumb, which hid it upon the map. In short, life, as instituted and conducted by mankind in general, is all vanity, folly, and madness; our speculations nothing but a *Comedy of Errors*, our actions *Much ado about Nothing*.

A MUSICAL ANECDOTE.

MR. Fischer, the celebrated performer on the *oboe*, who is no less remarkable for the irritability of his nerves, than for his skill as a musician, was lately at Windsor, to assist at a concert given by their Majesties to a select party of the Nobility. He was desired to play one of his concertos, which he did with great approbation; but just as he was about to conclude one of his most elaborate cadences, the youngest Prince, Adolphus, who had found means to conceal himself below the music-desk, with great dexterity, whipt the *oboe* out of his hands, and left the astonished musician in the attitude of playing, without an instrument. The figure of Fischer was so extremely ludicrous, and his expression of surprise so striking, that the whole company burst into a loud laugh, and the Royal Pair could not refrain from joining heartily in the chorus. It was some time before they were grave enough to order the Prince to be disgraced for the evening, and poor Fischer was so much disconcerted, that after recovering his haut-boy, he retreated with great precipitation.

LAW AND EQUITY.

JUSTICE, "the mistress and queen of all the virtues," the basis of all social virtue as well as happiness, the very cornerstone on which society is built—this very justice, if exercised too rigorously, would often be found, amidst the combinations and entanglements of human affairs, even to border upon injustice; inasmuch that the civilians have established it into a maxim, that "extreme justice is extreme injustice,"—*summum jus summa injuria*.

It should seem, therefore, that the magistrate, to whom the execution of justice is committed, must not only *do justly*, but (in the language of the Prophet) also *love mercy*. I do not mean, that he should ever act otherwise than the laws direct, or at any time dispense with the right execution of them; but only, that he be governed therein, as often as he can, by the *spirit* rather than the *letter* of them. For in the law, as well as in the gospel, the *letter* frequently *killeth*; as when any statute, from a new and different situation of things and persons, gradually brought on by course of time and change of manners, enforceth proceedings different from, or, it may be, contrary to, the true original intent and meaning of it. The office, therefore, of a magistrate, a Justice of Peace for instance, should be in part a kind of a petty chancery; a court of equity, as well as a court of justice: where a man, although pursued by *law*, may yet be redressed by *reason*, so often as the case will admit of it; and that will be as often as the *spirit* of any law or statute shall be found to clash with its *letter*.

Mean while, it must be carefully noted, that the magistrate has no power to decide according to equity, when it is opposed to written and positive law, or stands in contradiction to it: no, not even the Judge, much less the Justice. It is a maxim, *ubi lex non distinguit, nec nos distinguere debemus*; and again, *judicandum ex legibus, non de legibus*: and an ancient pronounced it very dangerous for a Judge to seem more humane than the law. The danger consists in its opening a latitude of interpretation, and thereby giving room to subtlety and chicanery, which, by gradually weakening, would in time destroy the authority and tenor of law: for, "though all general laws are attended with inconveniences, when applied to particular cases; yet these inconveniences are justly supposed to be fewer, than what would result from full discretionary powers in every magistrate." *Hume*.—So that the dispensation of equity seems reserved, and with good reason, not to the Judge who is tied down by his rules, but to the law-giver or supreme legislator: according to that well-known maxim, *ejus est interpretari cujus est condere*.

It is not meant, therefore, as is said before, that the magistrate should ever dispense with law, or act against it; but only, that he should, as far as he can, temper it with lenity and forbearance, when the *letter* is found to run counter to the *spirit*. For instance; our ancient Saxon laws nominally punished theft with death, when the thing stolen exceeded the value of twelve pence: yet the criminal was permitted to redeem his life with money. But, by 9 Hen. I. in 1109, this power of redemption was taken away: the law continues in force to this very day; and death is the punishment of a man who steals above twelve-pennyworth of goods, although the value of twelve pence now is near forty times less than when the law was made. Here the *spirit* is absolutely outraged by the *letter*: and therefore might not a Justice, when a delinquent of this sort is brought, endeavour to soften the rigour of this law; or rather to evade it, by depreciating the value of the thing stolen, by suffering the matter to be compromised between the parties, and, where the character of the offender will admit of it, instead of pursuing the severities of *justice*, by tempering the whole procedure with *mercy*?—This, and such like modes of acting, may be said indeed to be straining points; but, unless such points be strained occasionally, magistrates must often act, not only against the *spirit* of the laws, but against the dictates of reason, and the feelings of their own hearts.—Sir Henry Spelman took occasion, from this law, to complain, that "while every thing else was risen in its value, and become dearer, the life of man had continually grown cheaper."

Fortescue has a remarkable passage concerning this law. "The civil law," says he, "where a theft is manifest, adjudged the criminal to restore fourfold; for a theft not so manifest, twofold: but the laws of England, in either case, punish the party with death, provided the thing stolen exceeds the value of twelve pence." But, is not this comparison between *Civil* and *English* law astonishingly made by a man, who was writing an apology for the latter against the former? What?—is it nothing to settle a proportion between crimes and punishments? and shall one man, who steals an utensil worth thirteen pence, be deemed an equal offender against society, and suffer the same punishment, with another, who plunders a house, and murders all the family.

A PANEGYRIC UPON IMPUDENCE.

—He that has but impudence,
To all things has a fair pretence.

ORATORS and men of wit have frequently amused themselves with maintaining paradoxes. Thus, Erasmus

has written a panegyric upon *folly*: Montaigne has said fine things upon *ignorance*, which he somewhere calls "the softest pillow a man can lay his head upon:" and Cardan, in his *Encomium Neronis*, has, I suppose, defended every vice and every folly. It is astonishing to me, that no one has yet done justice to *impudence*; which has so many advantages, and for which so much may be said. Did it never strike you, what simple, naked, uncompounded *impudence* will do? what strange and astonishing effects it will produce? Aye, and without birth, without property, without principle, without even artifice and address, without indeed any single quality, but the *æ frontis triplex*, "the front of threefold brags."—Object not folly, vice, or villainy however black: these are puny things; from a visage truly bronzed and seared, from features muscularly fixed and hardened, issues forth a broad overpowering glare, by which all these are as totally hid, as the spots of the sun by the lustre of his beams. Were this not so, how is it, that *impudence* shall make impressions to advantage; shall procure admission to the highest personages, and no questions asked; shall suffice (in short) to make a man's fortune, where no modest merit could even render itself visible? I ask no more to insure success, than that there be but enough of it: without success a man is ruined and undone, there being no mean. Should one ravage half the globe, and destroy a million of his fellow-creatures, yet, if at length he arrive at empire, as Cæsar did, he shall be admired while living as an hero, and adored perhaps as a god when dead: though, were the very same person, like Cataline, to fail in the attempt, he would be hanged as a little scoundrel robber, and his name devoted to infamy or oblivion.*

Pray, what do you think the elder Pliny suggests, when he affirms it to be "the prerogative of the Art of Healing, that any man, who professes himself a physician, is instantly received as such?" He certainly suggests, that such sort of professors in his days, like the itinerant and advertising doctors of ours, had a more than ordinary portion of that bold, self-important, and confident look and manner, which, with a very little heightening, may justly be called *impudence*. And what but this could enable a little paltry physician, of no name or character, to gain so mighty an ascendancy over such a spirit, as that of Lewis XI. of France? Read

* Father Mascaron observed from the pulpit, "that the hero was a robber, who did at the head of an army, what a highwayman did alone."

"I am a pirate," said one of that order to Alexander the great, "because I have only a single vessel: had I great fleet, I should be a conqueror."

the account in Philip de Commines; and then blame me, if you can, for thinking so highly of this accomplishment.—True it is, that Lewis was afraid of death even to horror, and so as not to bear the sound of the word; and I grant, that on this same fear the empire of physic, as well as the empire of divinity, is chiefly founded: but I insist, that neither the one nor the other will ever be raised effectually, without the aid and co-operation of this great and sovereign quality.

Pope Gregory VII. who governed the church from 1073 to 1085, is celebrated for having carried ecclesiastical dominion to the height: for he was the first who maintained and established, that popes, by excommunication, may depose kings from their states, and loose subjects from their allegiance. And how did he effect this? Not by genius or eloquence; not by a knowledge of canon law, and the constitutions of the holy see; no, nor by the arts of policy and grimaces of his religion (with all which he was amply endowed) but by a most insolent, daring, usurping spirit. He seized the papal chair by force, as it were; threw the church into confusion to gratify his ambition; made kings his slaves, and bishops his creatures; and established in his own person a tyranny over things both spiritual and temporal.—But my admiration of impudence transports me too far: I will say no more upon it.

A MAN OF HONOUR.

MONS. VOLTAIRE, observing upon certain *dramatis personæ* in Congreve's Plays, says, that "their language is every where that of *men of honour*, but "their actions are those of knaves: a proof, that he was perfectly well acquainted "with human nature, and frequented what "we call polite company." So that the arrantest scoundrel, the blackest and most detestable villain, by frequenting polite company, and pretending to an higher and more refined integrity, may be denominated a *man of honour*. What a perverse and ridiculous use of words, which convey an idea just the contrary to what they express!—"We know very well," says Bruyere, "that an honest man is a man "of honour; but it is pleasant to conceive, that every man of honour is not "an honest man." Pleasant indeed; but this is not the worst: society suffers from this abuse of terms. "By separating the "*man of honour* from the man of virtue," says Hume, "the greatest profligates have "got something to value themselves upon; "and have been able to keep themselves "in countenance, though guilty of the "most shameful and dangerous vices. "They are debauchees, spendthrifts, and

"never pay a farthing they owe: but they "are *men of honour*, and therefore to be "received as *gentlemen* in all companies." *Sua nostri mores coegerunt.*

A DECISION by the KING of PRUSSIA.

THE Amsterdam Gazette, of 13 Feb. 1784, records the following decision by the King of Prussia. A soldier of Silesia, being convicted of stealing certain offerings to the Virgin Mary, was doomed to death as a sacrilegious robber. But he denied the commission of any theft; saying, that the Virgin, from pity to his poverty, had *presented* him with the offerings. The affair was brought before the King, who asked the Popish divines, whether, according to *their* religion, the miracle was impossible? who replied, that the case was extraordinary, but not impossible. Then said the King, the "culprit cannot "be put to death, because he denies the "theft, and because the divines of his religion allow the present not to be impossible; but we strictly forbid him, under "pain of death, *not to receive any present "henceforward from the Virgin Mary, or "any Saint whatever.*"—This, I take it, was answering fools according to their folly, and is an instance of wisdom as well as wit.

GOOD-NATURED CREDULITY.

A CHALDEAN peasant was conducting a goat to the city of Bagdat. He was mounted on an ass; and the goat followed him, with a bell suspended from his neck. "I shall sell these animals," said he to himself, "for thirty pieces of "silver; and with this money I can purchase a new turban, and a rich vestment "of taffety, which I will tie with a sash "of purple silk. The young damsels will "then smile more favourably upon me; "and I shall be the finest man at the "Mosque." Whilst the peasant was thus anticipating, in idea, his future enjoyments, three artful rogues concerted a stratagem to plunder him of his present treasures. As he moved slowly along, one of them slipped off the bell from the neck of the goat; and fastening it, without being perceived, to the tail of the ass, carried away his booty. The man, riding upon the ass and hearing the sound of the bell, continued to muse, without the least suspicion of the loss which he had sustained. Happening, however, a short while afterwards, to turn about his head, he discovered, with grief and astonishment, that the animal was gone, which constituted so considerable a part of his riches: And he enquired, with the utmost anxiety, after his goat, of every traveller whom he met.

The second rogue now accosted him, and said, "I have just seen, in yonder fields, "a man in great haste, dragging along "with him a goat." The peasant dismounted with precipitation, and requested the obliging stranger to hold his ass, that he might lose no time in overtaking the thief. He instantly began the pursuit; and having traversed, in vain, the course that was pointed out to him, he came back fatigued and breathless to the place from whence he set out; where he neither found his ass, nor the deceitful informer, to whose care he had entrusted him. As he walked pensively onwards, overwhelmed with shame, vexation, and disappointment, his attention was roused by the loud complaints and lamentations of a poor man, who sat by the side of a well. He turned out of the way, to sympathize with a brother in affliction; recounted his own misfortunes; and inquired the cause of that violent sorrow, which seemed to oppress him. Alas! said the poor man, in the most piteous tone of voice, as I was resting here to drink, I dropped into the water a casket full of diamonds, which I was employed to carry to the Caliph at Bagdat; and I shall be put to death, on the suspicion of having secreted so valuable a treasure. Why do not you jump into the well in search of the casket, cried the peasant, astonished at the stupidity of his new acquaintance? Because it is deep, replied the man, and I can neither dive nor swim. But will you undertake this kind office for me, and I will reward you with thirty pieces of silver? The peasant accepted the offer with exultation; and, whilst he was putting off his cassock, vest, and slippers, poured out his soul in thanksgivings to the holy prophet, for this providential succour. But the moment he plunged into the water, in search of the pretended casket, the man (who was one of the three rogues that had concerted the plan of robbing him) seized upon his garments, and bore them off in security to his comrades.

Thus through inattention, simplicity, and credulity, was the unfortunate Chaldean duped of all his little possessions; and he hastened back to his cottage, with no other covering for his nakedness, than a tattered garment which he borrowed on the road.

L'AMOUR TIMIDE.

By the late Sir JOHN MOORE, Bart.

To ———

IF in that breast, so good, so pure,
Compassion ever lov'd to dwell,
Pity the sorrows I endure,
The cause—I must not—dare not tell.
The grief that on my quiet preys—
That rends my heart, that checks my tongue,
I fear will last me all my days,
But feel it will not last me long.

On the POWER and VIEWS of

F R A N C E .

THE rivalry which subsists between Britain and France seems not likely to terminate, except in the ruin or degradation of one of these kingdoms. From the issue of the last disgraceful war, and from a variety of circumstances, which shall be laid before the public in this speculation, the scale of the latter seems to preponderate in a degree truly alarming to every Briton. Possessed of this advantage, and fully sensible of the possession, our rival kingdom is ardent and indefatigable in improving it to the utmost. Every nerve is exerted; public alliances are contracted, and secret negotiations every where in agitation; *while at the same time, like the midnight incendiary, she silently feeds the flame of discord she has contributed to raise.*

To the thinking mind it must appear astonishing, that the increasing power of France, and her improvement in political sagacity, are either unknown, or unattended to by a people hitherto famous for good sense, and to many of whom the following circumstances can be no secret.

When Lewis the XIV. assumed the reins of government, he found himself at the head of a great kingdom, which Cardinal Richelieu may be said to have subdued and new modelled. The feudal influence, and consequence of the great lords, were at an end; and the former rivals of Majesty had become the humble satellites of the throne. The Huguenots were no longer formidable. He felt himself absolute, the uncontrolled disposer of the rights and privileges, the lives and fortunes of his subjects. In such a situation, and considering the character of the monarch, it is not surprising that views of conquest should occupy his mind. During the course of a long reign, immense sums and the blood of millions were sacrificed to the darling object of his ambition. But, ardent, impetuous, and overbearing, while he believed himself able to cope with the united arms of Europe, he paid little attention to the concealment of his designs. Jealousy and alarm were therefore generally diffused, which produced confederacies that put a stop to the career of his victories. Though, in the end, he in part succeeded, yet what he acquired was hardly an equivalent for the blood and treasure expended in the acquisition, and he died a prey to gloom and discontent in the arms of Maintenon and bigotry.

It was in this reign that Colbert gave existence to commerce and a French marine, and though they have both suffered exceedingly in subsequent wars, yet their general progress, and astonishing increase, are so severely felt by this kingdom, that they cannot now be called in question.

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The slight sketch of this part of the history of France, as connected with Britain, is drawn merely to elucidate what follows: to impress on the public a truth which appears not at all attended to, and upon which hangs the prosperity, perhaps the existence of Britain, as an independent nation.

Something that appears like greatness in the character of Lewis XIV. the lucky assemblage of wise statesmen and able generals, who united their efforts in giving respectability and eclat, if not constant success to his ambitious schemes; the bustle and activity of his reign; the useful establishments that were formed; the magnificent works that were executed; the number of men of science and of genius, which appeared at that period; all contribute to dazzle the mind, and persuade us that France had then reached the summit of power and glory. But the fact is, that she has now more real strength and power than when under the dominion of that monarch.

On this important and alarming truth we wish to fix the attention of every Briton.

The enumeration of every circumstance which has contributed to give additional force to the kingdom of France, since the period alluded to, would far exceed the bounds allotted for this speculation. A few of the causes shall be produced. These, with their obvious effects, will be sufficient to convince the most incredulous, and rouse the most lethargic reader.

I. The commerce of our rival nation has been gradually extending since the epoch referred to, and has brought along with it an influx of wealth. From this a double advantage is derived: riches, which, in this age, are more than ever the sinews of war, are not wanting to the views of ambition, and the number of expert sailors is every day increased. From this source springs another advantage, which France did not formerly possess. The lower and middle ranks of life have emerged into consequence, and are no longer considered by the nobility and the monarch as objects of contempt, as beings of an inferior species. Their rights and privileges are attended to; they do not now look upon themselves as slaves in a land which they inhabit through necessity and with regret; but as members of a community, of which they form a respectable part, and to which they are attached from interest, from patriotism, from ever thing that can influence the reason or passions of men. In their former abject condition, they may be considered as an inert mass, incapable of exertion; or, if at any time scourged by the rod of power, they were compelled to assume the appearance of activity, and second the views of the despot, still their aid was feeble and reluctant. But now, our rival kingdom has,

by this important revolution, made the invaluable acquisition of millions of patriots who consider her interest as their own, and who will sacrifice every thing in the defence of that parent state, in whose bosom they are protected and cherished. This may be termed a *creation* of strength, of a kind the most stable and permanent.

II. Aided by an extended commerce, France has formed a *marine*, which must strike this nation at once with astonishment and regret. Nor will our regret be lessened, when we see her pursuing this object with the wisest and most indefatigable exertion. Our rulers know, or ought to know, that to rival us on the ocean is now the great aim of the French government; that, in respect of this, every other pursuit is only secondary; and that a kingdom rich, populous, united, and jealous of our naval glory, must succeed in the fatal design, if not counteracted by a spirit and wisdom to which the present cabinet seem utter strangers.

III. The *manufactures* of France keep pace with her commerce. The time was, when the endeavour to rival us in the woollen manufacture was treated with ridicule and contempt. The total loss of the Levant trade, is a melancholy and convincing proof of our mistake; or, if a farther proof is wanting, it is beyond a doubt, that broad cloth of the finest quality, equal in every respect to ours, and sold at as low a price, is now produced in France, with this peculiar advantage, that it is not so slight as English cloth, and therefore preferred in the northern markets. We at present treat the attempts at competition in the fabrication of hardware with equal ridicule; and it must be acknowledged, that in this the French have not hitherto succeeded: the specimens they have produced are, in every respect, inferior to our Birmingham and Sheffield ware. But their perseverance in the attempt, the eagerness with which they pursue it, the progress they have already made, the encouragement of every kind which is bestowed by government on the undertaking, should all teach us to mix trembling with our mirth. Their success in the woollen trade was, at the commencement, infinitely more unpromising. The past should instruct us as to the probabilities of the future. In every thing France is anxious to rival us, and in every thing will she probably succeed, unless a ray from above illuminate our ministers as it did the apostles of old: but, as this is not likely to happen, we must trust to the spirit and indignation of an injured people, which, we hope, will soon banish ignorance and imbecility from the councils of the throne.

We must not endeavour to rest satisfied with the consolation that an absolute monarchy, where trade is looked upon with contempt, can never rival a free state in commerce and manufactures. This argu-

ment, when applied to France, is exceedingly fallacious. There has been (as we have already observed) a silent and gradual progress in the state of that kingdom, of which this nation is not aware. The diffusion of science and philosophy has helped to eradicate the false and narrow ideas which formerly prevailed there on that and many other subjects; and our writers upon government, and the rights of mankind, are perhaps no where more admired than in France. The consequence of this is, that, though the outward form of government remains, its temper and character are changed. A despotic monarch, an insolent nobility, and a brutal soldiery, no longer rule without controul, over an oppressed and unhappy nation: of the laws, which always existed, there is in general an equal and impartial execution: the people at large have arrived at political consequence, and feel their weight in the scale. The body of the nation have become sensible that they have rights which ought to be maintained; while the king and his ministers are convinced, that on the maintaining them depend the happiness and prosperity of the whole. Instead, therefore, of deceiving ourselves with a false state of things, we should reflect, that a nation possessed of the advantages just mentioned, will probably succeed in every scheme, whether of a political or commercial nature.

After having considered the present state of the *commerce, marine, and manufactures* of France; if we cast our eyes on the situation and extent of that country, whose numerous ports are washed both by the ocean and Mediterranean; if we reflect that it contains more than twenty-four millions of inhabitants; we ought not surely to be blind to the danger, nor partake of the astonishment and stupor of our political watchmen; who, instead of desecrating danger from the height to which they have been raised, are stunned and giddy from the elevation.

IV. The political consequence of France has only been held up in one point of view. There is another light in which she must be exhibited, that should lead her to be regarded by Britain with a jealous and a watchful eye:—we had almost said as an object of terror. But never shall the hearts of our brave countrymen receive from us an impression of the kind. Should the humiliating day ever arrive, when, in weighing ourselves in the balance with France, we should give way to pusillanimous dependency, every expedient would be in vain, and the fun of Britain be set for ever. Our desire is only to awaken, to rouse, to alarm. As soon as our fellow citizens appear conscious of their situation, we shall with the utmost confidence entrust the rest to the spirit, vigour, and good sense of a powerful nation.

Without farther preface, what we have next to observe is, that the power of France, such as we have represented it, becomes more dangerous to us, as it is solely directed against the British nation. A striking feature in our contests with France, during the reign of Lewis XIV. and long afterwards, is, that we never engaged singly in the quarrel, and that the depression of England was not the primary, the only object of that kingdom. The state of things is now totally changed, and to our degradation and destruction does every scheme which she undertakes ultimately tend. For this she has quitted her favourite idea of continental acquisitions; for this she has raised that universal jealousy of British ambition, the consequences of which we felt so severely last war; for this, unsubsidized, and to her own disadvantage, did she support and give success to American resistance; for this, are we, by her intrigues, without a friend or ally in Europe, while she herself is strengthened by alliances with all the leading powers on the continent?

To this critical situation we wish to turn the attention of our countrymen: on this we intreat them to dwell with all the attention and solicitude the importance of the subject demands. The danger is great, and is every day increasing. Our all is at stake. While the rest of Europe stand aloof and behold us as *the accursed thing* of the Jews, our Gallic foe looks with exultation on his future prey, and meditates when and where to give the mortal blow.

O D E.

To the Rev. THOMAS WARTON,

POET LAUREAT.

By PETER PINDAR.

TOM! what the devil wilt thou say
Of our GREAT MAN, on New-year's Day?
Exhausted seems the store-house of thy brain,
Thy Muse of late so feeble grown,
And G— such TRIFLING things has done,
That we shall have a lamentable strain.

By way of TRAP-DOORS into heav'n,
The K— SOME CAARITIES hath giv'n;
These in thy LYRICS thou might'st well
have hinted,
But p—x on't! ev'ry gracious act,
(For fear that God might DOUBT THE FACT)
His M— has order'd to be PRINTED.*

* It is a known truth that whenever a certain GREAT MAN gives but a solitary sixpence to a beggar, a hint is communicated to some of the attendants, that it would not make a bad appearance in the public papers.

The story also of the Deer,
In Windsor Park (the BARD too there)
When G— so lash'd a thousand Bucks and
Does.

And horse-whip'd too among the rest,
The Windsor Barber like a beast,
Already hath grown stale in verse and prose.

What, Thomas! NOTHING NEW to sing
Of our sweet Sov'reign Lord the K—?

Thank God I've stumbled on a recent story;
Accept a subject for the praise,
Sublime the theme for Lyric lays,

A theme that crowns the K— with endless
glory.

Not only NATURALIST, MUSICIAN,
And so forth—G— is an OPTICIAN,

A MARVELLOUS OPTICIAN let me say;
Who being told, that in the Fleet,
Confin'd (I do presume for debt)

A man of Optic Science starving lay:

Inspir'd by novelty's keen rage,

He instantly dismiss'd a page

The poor imprison'd famish'd wretch to
bring:

PAGE to the gloomy prison went,
Proclaim'd his Master's good intent,

And brought the artist soon before the K—.

The K—, as usual, soon began,

To show'r his questions on the man,

As quick as light'ning, and as thick as hail;

Star'd at his works with admiration,

Call'd him an honour to the nation,

Then nobly sent him back again to jail! †

Now, Thomas, is not this sublime,

Will not this deed adorn thy rhyme,

And bid thy Muse not only SING but ROAR?

And if for NOVELTY she thirst,

It sure must charm—for I'll be curst

If ever M— DID THE LIKE before!

† The Fleet Prison knows the truth of this story
as well as the Poet.

A POEM on the ART of WRITING.

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED TO

Her GRACE the DUTCHESS of DEVONSHIRE.

By Mr. WILLIAM NOLAN.

SING, O my muse! the man who first
design'd
The glorious art to paint the human mind—
Which (like the sun) gives universal light,
Dispels the shades of intellectual night,
And fills the world with knowledge and
delight.

To thy peculiar pow'r, great art, we owe
Th' exalted blessings which from science flow.
In vain had Greece excell'd in arts and arms,
In vain had prov'd how sacred wisdom
charms—

Without thy friendly aid! her Heroes all—
Would undistinguish'd, with Barbarians
fall—

Through thy bright glass—old Nestor we
admire—

And Hector's heroic, martial manly fire—
Flow—half divine—the sapient sage has
taught—

How—more than man—the god-like hero
fought,

How—the Prince of Bards—(immortal Homer)
soar'd,