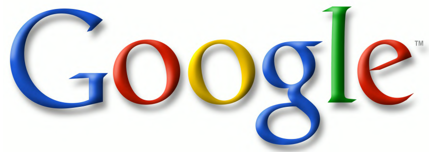

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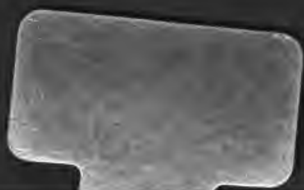

THE WITCHING TIME OF NIGHT.

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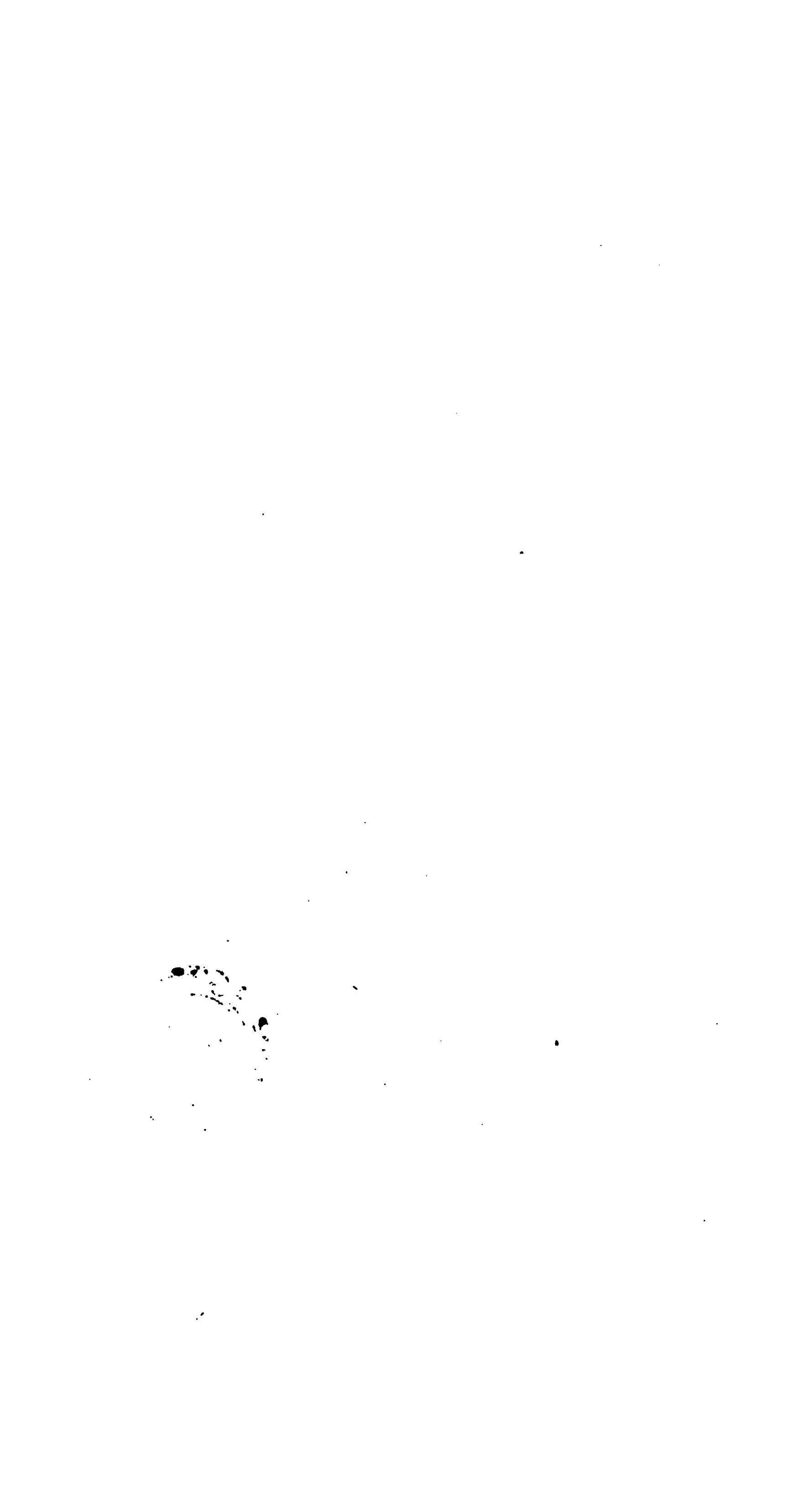

THE WITCHING TIME OF NIGHT:

NOCTURNAL HUMOURS

ON

A VARIETY OF SOCIAL TOPICS.

"To Sleep! Perchance to Dream!"
Hamlet.

LONDON:
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CONTENTS.

PAGE
Advertisement 1
I.—M.P.s 3
II.—Fishmongers 19
III.—Molluscs 31
IV.—Refracted Rays 45
V.—Incompatibles 61
VI.—Actors on Asses 75
VII.—Necessary Evils 91
VIII.—Poppy-Heads 105
IX.—À la Mode 119
X.—Fleecers 133
XI.—Candytufts 147
XII.—Nincompoops 161
XIII.—Backbiters 173
XIV.—Weathercocks 185
XV.—Number One 197
XVI.—Money 211
XVII.—Sabbath—Sunday 225

may not be universally true of all dreams; we accept, however, the observation as strictly correct in respect of our own dreams.

There is a considerable variety in the humour of these Dream Sermons. The satirical vein somewhat predominates in all of them. Perhaps some are a little too personal to be in good taste, but of course we do not think of applying the canons of taste to dreams. The persons, however, alluded to by name have no living correspondences, at least nominally, and therefore the actual world will not be able to complain of scandal. They are very candid, and this would be a merit in a preaoher awake, in a dreamer all that can be said is that it was his humour.

They leave a singularly vivid recollection on emerging from our slumbers, and hence we are able to give a verbatim report of them.

Of course such Nocturnal discourses as these are beneath serious criticism. The Sleeper can scarcely be held responsible either for the choice of his subjects or his mode of treating them. His discretion in publishing them when wide awake is altogether another matter, and of this the public are the proper judges.

He may, however, be allowed to say, in defence of his discretion in committing these night fancies to print, that even "the stuff of which dreams are made," may prove to be the firm texture of useful thoughts, as SHAKSPEARE *says—*

"Thoughts are but dreams till their effects be tried."

SOMNIATOR, Oneiropolis.

SERMON I.

M.P.s.

> "'Tis a mighty distinction to be an M.P.,
> But it wont do for you and it wont do for me;
> And it wont do for many, so far as I see."
>
> *Modern Doggerel.*

We yield to your solicitation, fellow-countrymen, though at some personal inconvenience, to address you on the topic to which you invite our attention. We must confess to some personal vanity that, as the numerous representatives of the constituencies of this great empire,

you should come to seek our advice on such a subject of national interest. The times, as you justly observe, have indeed changed. Who could have imagined two years ago that the electoral franchise would have been by this time so greatly extended in this realm of England? We are all now on a common level, and Tom Jones is, politically, as great a man as the illustrious Mr. Thomas Noddy. But we can't forecast the future. We can never anticipate the exigencies of Parliamentary life. Liberals, like all free associations of people, are so proud of their personal independence, and so impracticably crotchety and individual; and Conservatives are so cunning, and can be so chameleon-like, that there's no knowing what each party may do when they get on the Treasury benches and direct the affairs of the country. The Conservatives, like the monopolizers of the best beds in an hotel, have, in a fit of selfish humour, determined to keep their comfortable quarters, and send us all below into a common indiscriminate level of vulgar equality. Well, there is no help for it; we accept the fact since thus it must be.

As good patriots, you are anxious on the eve of a general election, under these novel circumstances, that you should have the guidance of the best wisdom. We must again say that we are greatly complimented by this numerous and duly-authorized deputation. We are certainly not without our political interests and anxieties, and if we have any thoughts worthy of public entertainment we shall unhesitatingly submit them with as much wisdom and candour as we are able to command.

We have some measure of popular feeling and sympathy, though ourself a dignitary and occupying a seat in the Upper House. The division of the Legislature into two Houses in an old constitutional country like this, we think has its advantages. That men should be ennobled for rendering great State services, is only rendering honour to whom honour is due. That such men should be entrusted with legislative functions is eminently reasonable. If, like the Greeks, we have any *aristoi*, or best men, who by their public services, their great personal stake in the national well-being, their

high culture and approved wisdom, stand out prominently among the rest of their countrymen, we ought naturally to avail ourselves of their invaluable assistance in making and administering the laws of the realm. But we do not altogether like the nomenclature of our political machinery. Names are something, and it would more accord with our notions of national respect and dignity, if terms expressive of legislative inferiority, as applied to the representatives of the people, could be expunged from the national vocabulary. We dont like the phrases "*Lower* House" and "House of *Commons*." House of Representatives, Chamber of Deputies, or some other more descriptive and less invidious phrases would, we venture to think, more accord with the general taste and sense of propriety. This, however, is a small matter, and historical usage and associations will probably incline our countrymen to cling, without much detriment, to their old political language.

You have urged on our attention one point on which you particularly request an opinion. You fear that so many ambitious men will

thrust themselves forward as candidates for Parliamentary seats, who have small personal claims and qualifications for the honour, and that so many more suitable men, of greater modesty and pretensions, will decline the disagreeable and costly contest with them, that there is great danger of many constituencies being driven to the necessity of accepting these intrusive volunteers, and so the House of Commons, like many municipal corporations, will become an assembly of a very commonplace sort of people.

We have had our anxieties on that point, gentlemen, and quite agree with you, that it is a matter deserving the most serious attention of the country. The old state of things was bad enough, when great local magnates carried whole boroughs in their breeches pocket, and handed them over to favourite nominees of their own. That was one way of overriding the free choice of a constituency. But surely the new state of things which threatens us is not much better, if the right men are hindered from coming forward by a host of wrong men, whose mere ambition, or self-complacency, or

impudence, or recklessness of money, or some other commanding personal qualification, has induced them to proclaim their candidature, and left no choice to the constituency but to elect them, or leave them to be returned by such as they have succeeded in befooling. In such a state of things, gentlemen, the franchise is no franchise at all. It is a most gratifying assurance which you give, gentlemen, that in your opinion the franchise and the ballot are not the two all-sufficient securities of your political privileges. What is the use of a vote, and the manner in which you vote, if you are limited in your choice to men who have thrust themselves forward, to the exclusion of their betters, for the honour of representing you? Quite right, gentlemen, you have placed your finger on the weak point in our representative system. The larger the borough now, the greater the danger of its being pocketed, not by some territorial aristocrat, but by some intrusive upstart whom nobody knows, or in the least cares to know.

The House of Commons, gentlemen, in an enlightened and free country like this of the

three kingdoms, ought to be a representative House. Are we likely to have a representative House in the present state of things? We fear not, if by representation is meant the reflection in the national assembly of the best intelligence and culture, the highest social refinement, the greatest political sagacity, and the noblest sentiments of patriotism to be found in the country. In this competitive and enterprising age there are so many adventurers abroad, social *speculatores*, lookers-out for good chances, who say in their secret hearts,

> Get place and wealth,—if possible, with grace;
> If not, by any means get wealth and place;

that society is necessarily thrown into a defensive attitude to protect itself from a threatened demoralization. Most properly, gentlemen, do you deprecate the calamity of incompetency and vulgarity obtruding themselves into the seats of senatorial dignity and power merely to gratify personal vanity, and that ignorance may ventilate its stupidity, and rudeness betray its offensive parts to the shame and reproach of the nation. No one can desire the weakest

and worst parts of our national character to be represented in the national assembly of the realm. Ignorance, impudence, and vanity, are not qualities of which we are proud, and we are acquainted with no theory of representative government which demands that these, and kindred elements of character, shall be reflected in the legislature of the land. You quite approve, we observe, these observations, and we shall therefore proceed to make a few suggestions, which may meet the present exigency if generally acted upon throughout the country.

In the first place, let it be regarded as a social and political offence for any man to offer himself as a candidate for a seat in Parliament.

If any man shall so offend, let him be at once and for ever disqualified by that very act. Let a man's candidature depend on his Public Nomination. The nomination might be conducted in some such way as the following:—Any elector who may wish to propose a candidate shall wait on some duly authorized officer in the municipality, borough, or county, and swear that to the best of his belief his nominee is a fit and proper person to repre-

sent the constituency. The names and addresses of the candidates and their proposers shall then be printed and placarded in suitable public places. Such candidates as may assent to their nomination shall then be published as such. No political agents shall be employed, no committees formed in the interest of particular candidates, no personal or other canvass shall be permitted, and all expenses of the election shall be borne by the constituencies.

Since all public appointments are in these times competitive, and special examinations must now be passed as preliminary conditions of filling civil offices, we suggest that such important functions as those of an M.P. shall be undertaken by no one who has not previously passed a satisfactory examination in the following subjects before a board of examiners selected from the three English Universities:—

1. The Constitutional History of England from the close of the 15th century to the present time.

2. Political Economy.

3. The Literary and Political History of Europe during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries,

This examination shall be preliminary, and only such of the nominees as pass shall be allowed to proceed to the poll. The votes shall be taken by ballot.

Before proceeding to election let each candidate be required to publish a manifesto of his political opinions, to be sworn to as composed by himself, and let him be required to make at least one speech in every ward or district of the constituency of at least thirty minutes' duration, and answer *viva-voce* questions.

We are far from presuming, gentlemen, that these are the best practical suggestions that can be offered, but we think them worthy of being entertained. And we do so for the following reasons:—

First, men will be chosen for senatorial distinction by the public estimation of their fitness and worth. The whole tribe of vain, ambitious folk would thus be effectually excluded from thrusting themselves into an honourable position of public trust. We should hear no more fustian about working-men's candidates and invidious class distinctions in the grand consideration of national representation.

In the second place, constituencies will have the opportunity of learning not merely the political creed of their candidates, but how far they have graduated in the science of politics, and the measure of their knowledge of the principles of legislation.

Then, in the third place, the country will have some guarantee that their senators can write and speak grammatically their mother tongue.

And, further, some means will have been afforded for testing the gentlemanly character and feeling, and the quality of temper of their respective candidates. Bad grammar, bad elocution, bad manners, and bad temper, we would mark as personal disqualifications for the functions of a statesman.

And to crown all, since Parliamentary life is experimental, we would have a register kept by a constituted board of the constituencies, of all the speeches delivered by their members, and of all the divisions in the House during the session. This would be a check on the attendance, and a gauge of the political capacity and sagacity of their representatives.

Such is our programme for amending the representation of the people.

Now your object, and that of all sensible and patriotic people, is to secure the return of the very best men that can be had, and of course to keep them when you are so fortunate as to get them. You will bear with our candour when we offer you a bit of advice on the way to make your M.P.s a really valuable and useful body of men. Some M.P.s, like other men, have very decided moral convictions and sympathies, and are greatly shocked even by such small peccadillos as light weights and scant measures, and are disposed to put forth a strong hand on trades-union inquisitors and the perpetrators of brutal outrages on life and limb in the narrow selfish interest of trade combinations. Now men of this stamp claim the admiration and support of all virtuous and right-minded constituencies. A constituency which ousts such men as these, and for such services, must be very largely composed of inveterate rogues and abandoned rascals, and deserves to be forthwith disfranchised as morally incapable of representation. No high-

minded man ought to consent to sit for such a constituency. It should be handed over to the parsons and missionaries as an infamous district, and be marked on the political map as a dark and barbarian land.

And now for another bit of counsel. The new Reform Bill has so immensely increased the constituencies, especially in the great centres of manufacturing industry, that the working classes, so called, have almost taken the representation into their own hands. Until our programme is accepted and acted upon, this circumstance will be a great temptation to the ambitious nobodies to come out of their obscurity, and by patting and mounting the backs of the new electors, to try and hoist themselves into the dignity of M.P.s. We observe many intelligent artisans in your deputation, and we therefore say to such, be very suspicious of the man who comes forward as "the working-man's candidate." Be very suspicious for two reasons: first, because he only wants to get into Parliament by your aid; and, secondly, because he is either wittingly or ignorantly throwing political dust into your eyes, by leading you

to suppose that a true member of the British Parliament can ever represent a particular class of the people. Send him about his business to learn the alphabet of sound political principles. These aspirants for Parliamentary honours know well that you are now a considerable power in the British constitution, and they hope to profit by your ignorance while they are unable to conceal their own. Have nothing to do with "working-men's candidates," they are a snare and a sham.

The men who profess that they represent classes,
Represent but themselves and their species—called asses.

That cant about class is a bait for mere tools,
Political trickery—gammon for fools—
Humbug for fledglings who, just on the wing,
Are mightily flattered by that sort of thing.
What a hubbub they make! how they giggle with glee!
"The Working-man's Candidate owned an M.P.!
Our own representative, sir, d' ye see!"

Honest friends, it's all fudge, be quite sure of that:
Bow out your candidate,—hand him his hat.
The class we should own is the class of the people,
Whatever their grade or particular steeple.
Broadcloth and fustian are matters of dress,
Not measures of social worth—greater or less.

Justice for all, equal rights, legislation,—
Embracing the welfare of all in the nation,—
Freedom from tyranny, social and civil,
Statecraft and priestcraft and partizan drivel
A commonwealth this for uniting both ends,—
Workmen and gentlefolk, fellows and friends.
Who trades in the trash of distinctions of class
Is bereft of his brains, if not brazen as brass.
Write him not an M.P., but write him down ass!

There is so much political degeneracy amidst the temptations of the times, that we can scarcely affect surprise to see some men, from whom we hoped better things, flirting with this young political lady called the "working classes." It is a weakness, worthy friends; dont be flattered by it, because fine gentlemen have all at once discovered that you deserve their respectful bows and the offer of their ungloved hands. They dont really like this levelling down, it has a good many inconveniences, and it is far from comfortable.—

[Here we awoke. We enjoy a pedestrian tour, and like to doff our stiff professional suit, and shoulder our knapsack. We had had a fatiguing walk from Blackgang to

Freshwater, and arrived there rather late in the evening. Both the hotels at that favourite watering-place were overcrowded with visitors, and we had to accept the accommodation, along with several others, of the floor of a coffee-room for our night's lodging. Here our dream occurred, and probably the novelty of our night quarters had something to do with its suggestion.]

SERMON II.

FISHMONGERS.

Polonius—Do you know me, my lord?
Hamlet—Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.
Polonius—Not I, my lord.

You are wrong, Polonius, quite wrong, my lord knew you from the first when he said you were a fishmonger. If you had known yourself—but self-knowledge is a rare privilege and the pèculiar good fortüne of a wise man—you would have exclaimed at this earlier point of

your intrusive interview, "though this be madness, yet there's method in it." The term—foolish, officious, old chamberlain,—had a meaning in it, a very obvious meaning, a very pertinent and pointed meaning. Hamlet knew you excellent well, better than you knew yourself, old, loquacious courtier. Do you think my lord did not know you when he told you that you should be as old as he, "if, like a crab, you could go backwards?" You couldn't go backwards to his youth, could you? and the retreating gait of the crab might be a crustacean accomplishment, but it did not comport with your wisdom and convenience to walk backwards. Your tendency was all in the opposite direction—forwards. A little more of the crab action would have been to your personal credit and comfort. You were always going forwards, going where you were not wanted, meddling with what did not concern you. Well had it been for you if you had thought of the hint about the crab when you volunteered to get behind the arras of the Queen's bed-chamber; you had not got into that scrape which put an end to your going altogether, whether

backwards or forwards. Had you remembered the crab you might not have been taken for a "rat" and been "dead for a ducat." O yes! Hamlet knew you, Polonius, and that is why he called you a fishmonger, and reminded you of the crab, whose motory habit you as a fishmonger ought to have known something about. It would have pointed a moral for you, and perhaps postponed that untimely "supper" of a "certain convocation of politic worms," who enjoyed their turn to nibble at a fishmonger on the hook.

How now! Why Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, are ye here among the fishmongers? Fie upon you, ye youthful courtiers, that ye condescend to such a craft. You have plainly not been bred up to your vocation, you don't seem quite to like your fishmongering, you bungle at it. At your very first trial you flounder and make such a splash that you are more like fish than fishmongers, and are actually caught in your own net. Doff the flannel apron at once, for your old schoolfellow has "an eye of you." Ah! pity you tried the trade again, after your first failure, especially with your 'cute friend,

Hamlet. He was not so gentle and forgiving the next time he saw you with the strong-flavoured apron on. Here, play upon this pipe. You cannot, say you? I do beseech you. What! know no touch of it? 'Tis as easy as lying. Metaphorical fishmongers do a good deal of lying. Govern these ventages with your fingers and thumbs, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops. You cannot command these to any utterance of harmony, eh! you have not the skill, eh? Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. S'blood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me!

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Flannel Apron,

—Fishmongers of both sexes, we must be frank with you and tell you that we don't like your tribe, our olfactory nerves are disagreeably affected in your presence. You are not a fragrant, savoury folk. Let us define you, even at the risk of creating sensations of nausea and imperiling our sermon by obliging us to withdraw from the pulpit. We are not altogether comfortable at the pit of the stomach before we begin, and we took care to provide ourselves with eau-de-cologne and sal-volatile in case of emergency. A little farther back, if you please, madam. We are sorry you are hard of hearing, but we will endeavour to make ourself audible.

The fishmonger metaphorical, then, unlike the generality of fishmongers literal, does his own fishing. He likes the sport of angling and casting the net, and is best pleased when the fish exposed on his counter is the product of his own piscatory industry. The waters he angles in and where he spreads his toils are very broad and of varying degrees of depth, co-extensive indeed with the whole area of social life. Although necessarily confined to

a part of this broad area, every part is so well supplied with fish that each brother and sister of the craft has a full share of the sport and profit. They do a little fishing at home, for there are a few hidden things beneath the surface there to employ the bait and hook of itching curiosity. But the circle of acquaintance —the bigger pond of social friendship—has more attractions, and promises a better take. They never call on their friends without the rod and the net, the flies and hooks, and all the necessary apparatus of their amusement. True to their craft, they are no sooner seated than they know the particular fly and size of the hook for the occasion, and out goes the rod, and the cunning bait dances on the rippling conversation, and the unsuspicious friend, whose shallow sparkling stream of fluent talk has afforded fine sport for the angler and yielded a fish or two to the basket, is left with a smile and thanks, little thinking that he or she has been entertaining a fishmonger, and contributing to the stock of his trade. Away goes the fishmonger, for the trade is peripatetic, to pay another visit, and

fish in another part of the social pond; or it may be to generously expose the fish already taken, and chuckle over it with a fellow-fishmonger, and turn it to social account. Among the fish probably was just that particular one that was thought to be in deeper water, and where the angling had been done again and again to no purpose, but which having fortunately got into a shallower part of the pond, had been tickled and risen to the bait. That one is worth a whole basket-full of smaller fry. It may be as big as a secret of state, or an equally important private family matter of evil or good fortune, or a nice plump delicious love business, or a haggard domestic skeleton of conjugal incompatibility, or something about pedigree and the bar sinister in a family escutcheon, or a point of moral delicacy in personal character, or a question of money, or anything else out of the variety of curious private concerns interesting to fishmongers, and worth the time and cunning of their craft. You understand us, don't you, sinister-looking, sinuous, ill-savoured fishmongers? This is your defi-

nition, but we need for a moment the eau-de-cologne and the sal-volatile. Thank you, madam, for retiring a little farther back; it is more agreeable to us, and we are glad that you can hear distinctly at a more convenient distance.

It may seem ungallant, and we are very sorry to include the Ladies among the fishmongers. But the ladies have included themselves, and we think we observe a larger number of ladies than gentlemen in the gathering before us. The ladies, it appears, have more time for fishing than the gentlemen, but we must confess to surprise that they have more taste for it too. 'Tis a nasty profession, ladies, and the flannel apron is neither an elegant nor a a lady-like garment. It does not become you, and, as we have said more than once, there is a disagreeable fishy smell about it. The adoption of the craft, by you especially, obliges all gentlemen, who are not fishmongers, to think and speak of you not as in the old complimentary phrase of the fair, but as the unfair sex. Now this is as painful to them as it must be humiliating to you. For your own

sakes and the sake of society, for the common decency and comfort—do give up fishing and fishmongering. Think of the fate of your prototype, that fishmonger-in-chief, old Polonius, what a contemptible life he led of it, and what a disastrous end his fishmongering brought him to. There is no real profit in metaphorical fishing, it is by no means reputable, and if the sport be sensational it will most certainly get you into trouble.

Dr. Johnson had a great contempt for the devotees of the rod. He could never see a disciple of old Walton without contemptuously remarking that there was a worm at one end of the rod and a fool at the other. In his saturnine mood the sport seemed idle and cruel. We will not discuss this point with the ponderous old polemic; but we are entirely at one with him in the whole breadth and severity of his censure as applied to your metaphorical fishing. You are undoubtedly fools, and your sport is both idle and cruel. You get nothing for your bad taste and nasty habit, but the well-merited reputation of being among the most frivolous and malicious people on the

face of the earth. We pronounce you deliberately a nasty folk, for you have a gusto for the garbage and muck of human life, which you take a peculiar pleasure in bringing to the social surface. You are like those noisome birds of prey whose dainties are carrion, corruption, and disgusting ordure; and you are cruel as they in the gloating eagerness of their swoop and the ferocious grasp of their quivering prey. Yes, lady fishmongers, you are suggestive of such imagery to us; the cormorant and the vulture are the bearings in your blazonry, the crests of your despicable and hateful craft.

Ay, flutter your feathers, ye youthful cormorants and venerable old vultures, you don't like your portraiture, do you? There sits old dame Gossip, the descendant of a long line of gossips, the present head governess of that ancient and fashionable seminary Rumour Hall, Flintshire; she has made you what you are, for you all went to school there to be finished in your fishmongering accomplishment. We have heard of you, Lady Scandaltongue, and your ferret-faced niece, the Ho-

nourable Hester Hearsay, and know a little about those daily carriage drives and delicious morning calls, in company with the squire's wife, Mrs. Affable Hawk. You enjoy fine sport in the selecter streams of society. Excellent fishing in Tiburnia and Belgravia, eh? Ah! little Miss Tittle-tattle, is that you with your leering eye and thin wizen visage, you are growing singularly like your godmother, old Mrs. Betty Buzzbee, who carries a heavy honey-bag, but now must be getting too old and corpulent to rise on the wing and hum in the social sunshine. And Kitty Cackleton too, and Fanny Freshnews, and Sally Sneak, and Miss Corkscrew Worm-it-out, ye are all here, we see. We recognize your presence by another sense than that of sight. Pray let us have fresh air, the odour is insupportably offensive; for mercy's sake, the sal-volatile.

(It was a sultry summer night; heavy rain was falling, and as is commonly the case after a long continuance of hot weather, the storm-flood had stirred up the dry feculent deposits in the open street drains, and charged the at-

mosphere with the foul effluvia. We always sleep with our window open, and the fetid stench was diffused throughout our bed-chamber, and became so intolerable, even to our somnolent nerves, that we awoke with sensations of sickness.)

SERMON III.

MOLLUSCS.

"Before you can adjudge *a fact*, you ***must* believe it**;—not suspect it, or imagine it, or fancy it,—but *believe* it."—ERSKINE.

WE have heard a good deal about education of late years. Everybody talks about education. We have become sensible of so many evils, intellectual and moral, physical and social, in our human condition, that we have all awoke up to the conviction that people ought to be educated, and that education is the panacea for

all the ills which afflict society. By all means educate. We must have education. Voluntaries and compulsories, seculars and religionists, you are quite right, insist on, and carry out your schemes of education. Don't squabble over the ways and means, the theories and plans, get education somehow or other, it is the want of the times. Everybody more or less wants education. There are mothers in this nineteenth century, in civilised Great Britain who don't know how to suckle the babes at their breasts, or to feed and clothe their hapless offspring as soon as they begin to run and talk. There are men and women who have not yet learnt the natural uses of air and water, and are dangerously in the dark about the laws of respiration and cleanliness. Their innermost garment is the boundary of their personal knowledge of themselves. The human skin is a *terra incognita*, and as to the stomach, its normal capacity and tastes, as Lord Dundreary says, " no fellow can understand that." Educate most certainly; the necessity is urgent in the extreme. But let your education go a little farther than the three Rs. " Reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic"

are grand rudimental arts, but they do not comprise the whole circle of education. Don't forget the air and water, the skin and stomach, the babies at the breast and the little boys and girls on their legs, and some other useful subjects in the school curriculum which we could mention.

We are not going to be exhaustive on the *quæstio vexata* of education. We know our audience to-day, and we shall address ourselves to you, ye male and female Molluscs *, in the hope of imparting a little more consistency to your pulpy and impressible natures, and, if possible, of putting a backbone, and perhaps a whole skeleton, into your flabby constitution.

Shade of Lord Erskine! we thank you for our text. You reminded us of human Molluscs, my Lord, the moment our eye fell on your very sensible observations addressed to a British jury. Evidence, my Lord, evidence,

* MOLLUSCA or MOLLUSCS.—The term applied to that large division of animals most of which inhabit and form shells. Their bodies are soft, and destitute of an articulated skeleton or vertebral column. The molluscs are for the most part extremely voracious, and are by no means particular in the selection of their food. Their digestive apparatus is always highly developed.
Vide the Natural Histories.

that is the *sine qua non* of all righteous adjudication. Surmisings and fancyings are not the proper antecedents of legal adjudication. People must *believe* before they proceed to pronounce sentence, and they must not believe without *evidence*—clear, cogent, irresistible evidence. If they don't believe and yet adjudge they violate a fundamental principle of the Constitution. But, noble shade of a great advocate, there are multitudes of people who believe *instanter*, who have only to hear something to somebody's advantage, and their soft impressibility of brain is immediately convinced. They don't ask for evidence; if they even thought of it, they would at once spurn the suggestion as a reflection on the veracity and good feeling of those respected friends of theirs who have always got something interesting to tell them. They wouldn't wound the delicate sensibilities of those old acquaintances the Scavengers and Muckrakes on any account, and to ask for evidence would be a direct insult, and most certainly cause a rupture in a long-cherished friendship. In fact these people, my Lord, know nothing at all about evidence and the British Constitution; they are human

Molluscs—soft, sensitive, and easily impressible, like the naked molluscs.

Now, since the molluscs happen to be a very numerous class in the animal kingdom, we suggest, in the interest of popular education, that the jury-box form a part of the educational apparatus of any system of education adopted in the country. We would have every British advocate bound by the obligation of his profession to give a daily lecture on the laws of evidence to a dozen Molluscs, who shall be regularly impanelled and put into a jury-box. We would require a register to be kept in every parish of all the scandal that may be current in it, out of which a variety of interesting cases may be supplied as separate counts at the trial. The prisoner at the bar shall be a Mollusc, when the proceedings cannot be enlivened and made more practically interesting and beneficial by the indictment of any member of the large families of Scavengers and Muckrakes to whom the scandals under investigation may be traced. The trial shall be conducted in open court, to which everybody may have access. It would furnish excellent practice to a large number of barristers without

briefs,—be a source of income, for we suggest that they should be paid out of the public Exchequer,—and would be of great educational service to the community. This is our suggestion, and we shall use our influence as a high ecclesiastical dignitary and a great patron of national education to get a Minute of Council to enforce its practical adoption.

Probably you do not appreciate our proposal, flabby friends, you do not see the necessity of sound instruction in the laws of evidence. We will explain to you the advantage. You are now mere molluscs, pulpy creatures of a low organization, without a fragment of bone or particle of brain. Our scheme of education will raise you into the higher order of vertebral animals, that is to say, you will have a back-bone, spinal marrow, and a skull with a modicum of brain matter. To be candid, we must tell you that the well-being of human society requires that you undergo this transformation. You are too slimy for the general social taste and comfort. You accumulate so much viscous nastiness from the garbage heaps of the Muckrakes and Scavengers, and trail it about wherever you go,

that you are altogether unclean and disgusting. Molluscous humanity is not a normal condition of human nature, you must become vertebral, you must have substance and brains in you or you will be positively unendurable.

You now understand us, and we shall compliment you for the nonce by assuming that you belong to the genus *homo*, and that you have brains enough to listen to and profit by our observations.

What, Mrs. Midas *, are you here to-day? We recognized Miss Matilda, your eldest daughter, and Maude, who married her cousin Matthew Midas, and several more of your children and grandchildren. You have a very large family, Mrs. Midas, you must by this time be of a good age, Mrs. Midas, quite an octogenarian. The present fashion of bonnets is very suitable for you and your family. We observe you all wear them. They leave plenty of room for the ears. The ear is a very

* Once when Pan and Apollo were engaged in a musical contest on the flute and lyre, Midas, an effeminate king of Phrygia, was chosen to decide between them. The king decided in favour of Pan, whereupon Apollo, to punish his bad taste, changed his ears into those of an ass.
Grecian Mythology.

prominent and important feature, quite a characteristic feature in the Midas family. Your daughter Matilda is a fashionable milliner, we believe. Ah! yes, she set the vogue in bonnets this season. Very thoughtful of her to leave plenty of room for the ears. The Midas ears are very long and stand very erect, and require a good deal of room to play about in. Curious muscular action about the Midas ears, quite asinine in their form and motion. No offence, Mrs. Midas, in this comparison. You know we are particularly partial to facts; and facts that are somewhat singular and disagreeable to other people who have very small ears, are not offensive to you and your large family circle, are they, Mrs. Midas? We have our own opinion, Mrs. Midas, about that family feature of yours. You will bear with our candour. It is a little too long and restless for our taste of facial beauty. We don't admire excess in the development of any feature. It is apt to be too obtrusive, and its propensities are liable to be somewhat excessively indulged. Besides it is not complimentary to be treated by other people as if you were merely an animated ear. The molluscs

would think themselves hardly dealt with if they were all testaceous and reduced to the one species of *aures marinæ*. The flora of this world would be singularly uninteresting if every flower was an auricula. And without any desire to wound your family feelings we must honestly say that we congratulate ourselves that our common mother Eve was not a Midas. You will appreciate the force of our remarks when you and your family bethink yourselves what a buzzing, whispering experience you have had all through life. None of your familiar acquaintances meet you as other people's intimates meet them, face to face with all their features in lively play and friendly recognition. You are always taken like an ass by the ear. The Muckrakes and Scavengers always come direct to your ear, and begin humming and buzzing like so many blue-bottles fresh from the last nastiness on which they have been fattening themselves. The drum of your ears must be constitutionally tough, Mrs. Midas. You can't be very irritable in your ears, or the everlasting tickling sensation would be intolerable. You are not subject to the earache, Mrs. Midas.

We wish you were, we say it in kindness, Mrs. Midas, we deliberately say, we wish that you and all your family were subject to that very painful sensation, for it would be somewhat corrective of that listening infirmity of yours, and a little wool in your ears would keep out the earwigs and blue-bottles and other insinuating buzzing friends who always attack your salient feature.

Wool, Mrs. Midas, is, however, only a temporary expedient. We desire to cure you and your family of that listening infirmity;—radically cure you. You seem terrified. Nay, we are not thinking of any surgical operation. Suppress your fears, Mrs. Midas, we shall not propose to crop your ears, albeit the length of them might be advantageously curtailed. That operation we shall leave—not to the surgeon, but to the slower and less painful agency of nature. Now, calm your agitation. In the first place, you must politely decline to be always taken by the ears. Say, "Hands off" to old Mrs. Muckrake, when she next salutes you. That constant pulling naturally promotes their elongation. Then request her to look you in the face, as you wish her to un-

derstand that you have eyes as well as ears. Don't let her put her mouth to your ears on any account. Her habitual whispering encourages that excessive expansion and vigorous movement of the ear which needs correction. Exercise, you must be well aware, promotes the growth and activity of any organ. You want auricular rest. Insist upon repose. Mrs. Muckrake will be much surprised and probably offended; she will say that she cannot communicate with you in any other than in the old familiar way; that, in fact, she is so accustomed to the nice sidling manner of accosting you that she actually does not know any other angle of your facial conformation, and that if she must only look you full in the face she hardly thinks she shall know you. Be very firm. Miss Matilda, be very firm, too; all of you Midases, young and old, male and female, mark what we say,—be very firm. In a generation or two, there will be a remarkable change in the length and breadth and irritable sensitiveness of the Midas' ears. That 's our *modus operandi.* It requires time, but it will be eventually successful. So much for the organ itself.

Now, the next step in the cure is to break with your old connexions the Scavengers and Muckrakes. You are again alarmed. Yes, we know these are your oldest and almost only family acquaintances. Be it so. You must, however, break with them. Cut them boldly and forthwith. Have nothing more to do with them. And we 'll tell you how to do it. At their next visit (whether it be a Scavenger or a Muckrake) keep her in front, oblige her to look right directly into your eyes, tie your cap-strings tightly over your ears—you will hear very well all that she has to say,—and it will be a precaution, lest from long habit you get too much interested in the communication, and, when off your guard, feel yourself suddenly taken by the ears again. Hear her out, for that is common politeness and you do not wish to be rude. And when she has done and is chuckling over this last little heap of her scrapings, look serious and give a doubtful shake or two of the head, and fumble in your pocket for your vinaigrette, and hint about improbabilities and possible misapprehensions. Your visitor will get warm and emphatic; don't relax your seriousness, and keep up the dubious shake of

the head; she will wax warmer and warmer, and spurt out something about your bad manners in calling in question a lady's word. This will give you courage. Now speak out bravely like a true British subject, and ask for *proofs*—irrefragable proofs; tell her that since she last honoured you with a call you have been reading Lord Erskine's speech to an English jury on the laws of *evidence*, and get our text by heart, Mrs. Midas, and repeat it to her. Let her know that you are quite a convert to Lord Erskine's doctrine, and that in future you will never believe anything on mere hearsay,—that you always intend to demand evidence, because evidence is a fundamental principle of the British Constitution. The Muckrakes and Scavengers always turn their backs to evidence, they have an instinctive prejudice against proofs. They will call again, for they wont like to lose you, Mrs. Midas. Stick to evidence, Mrs. Midas. Your proofs, Mrs. Muckrake, your proofs, if you please, I can't believe without proofs; the British Constitution says that faith does not come from hearing, but from proofs. This is the language you are to hold. You will be very

aggravating to the Muckrakes and Scavengers, but then, you know it is educational, and you will become half a barrister,—think of that, Mrs. Midas, half a barrister and a whole sensible, right-minded, honourable woman. What a transformation! A whole woman and half an advocate,—half a Lord Erskine! That is better than being a mollusc; eh! Mrs. Midas. Molluscs have no backbone, no skeleton—they are all pulpy, soft, impressible creatures. Of all animals molluscs—

(At this moment we awoke, and found we were lying on a feather bed. We always sleep on a horsehair mattress, which for some domestic convenience had been removed. We suppose that the disagreeable softness of the feather bed had suggested our fanciful dream about molluscs.)

SERMON IV.

Refracted Rays.

> "Black spirits and white,
> Red spirits and grey;
> Mingle, mingle, mingle,—
> You that mingle may."
> *Macbeth.*

We were quite aware of your susceptibilities, motley brethren of every colour, black, white, red, and grey,—ye refracted rays of the great orb of religious truth—and that is why we issued our invitation to you in such carefully chosen words, that you might not for one moment suppose that, although an Arch-bishop, we claim any ecclesiastical authority over you.

You are Dissenters, we know that; nourished more or less on the acidulous diet of anti-State-Church proclivities. Dissent with most of you is hereditary. Your earliest infantine nourishment was drawn from the nipple of ecclesiastical protest. You couldn't help that,—a nipple of some kind was necessary for you, and of course you opened your mouth to the first that came, and sucked away, and it was not your fault that the milk was impregnated with anti-State-Church acid. Your mother was a dissenter before she married, and she married a dissenter, and brought forth dissenters. That's the genesis of modern dissent. You can't help your birth and breeding. Very few sensible people, however, dissent now,—there's nothing indeed to dissent from, for the Church includes everything and everybody, and has become all things to all men. Mother Church has grown so indulgent that all her children may think and say just what they please. There's not a single conceivable conscience that now suffers the least inconvenience. Mother Church used to be very strait-laced and imperious; at one time she was always using the rod, and even turning her children

out of doors; but all that is changed. Even our dear old Mother has grown wiser. She has done in her time, we will honestly confess, like a good many other mothers, a great deal of mischief. If she had always been as sensible and large-hearted as she is at the present time there would never have been any refracted rays —any dissenters. Well, she is very sorry that she was once so narrow-minded and self-willed, so stern and unmotherly; and she has commissioned us, as her eldest son, to tell you this, and say that she is quite willing, and indeed very desirous to receive you all back again with open arms. This is why we have invited you here to-day.

But there are some difficulties in the way. Just so, and we shall do our best to clear them out of the way. You can't do with an Established Church. That objection flows from the nipple,—it comes out of your mother's milk, and we are not going to reason with sucking babies, but full-grown sensible men and women, accustomed to the strong meat of common sense. An Established Church is a positive Church—a Church that has a foundation; a dissenting Church is merely negative, and is

founded in the chafing memories and treasured wrongs of the past. Since the wrongs are redressed, the memories ought to be forgotten and dissent decently buried in oblivion. We shall compliment your understanding by suggesting, that what is established is much better than what is shaky and always exposed to change and decay. The Established Church is a National Church,—it extends itself over the whole country, caring equally for the poorest and sparsely-populated rural, with the wealthy and populous urban districts of the kingdom. It sends educated men of refined feelings and cultivated taste among poor and widely-scattered populations, to exert a civilizing and social influence. You dissenters can't do that. You can't create and sustain a parochial system. Your educated men can't live in such districts, —they have no means of support—they must be located in towns and populous suburbs, where pew-rents can be paid. Besides, you know, 'tis no use blinking the fact, a Clergyman and a Parish Church are more respectable and socially influential than a little miserable Zion, or Bethel, or Ebenezer, with an uneducated half-starved missionary for its minis-

ter. English society more than ever demands an educated ministry. We must have a learned ministry, and therefore we want men of studious leisure, who are raised above the necessity of cultivating those popular powers of oratory, which are the best marketable commodities under a system of clerical provision that depends on the voluntary contributions of individual congregations. Dissent and the voluntary principle don't meet this pressing exigency of a learned ministry; they create fluent popular speakers, but not profound philosophical divines—a class of men with whom we can't dispense in these days of widely-extending science and bold searching criticism. Modern civilization needs an Establishment for the diffusion of religious influences throughout the country; and an Established Church we English people have—it is one of the recognized national institutions of a professedly Christian land, with ramifications extending deeply and widely throughout every part of the common social condition. The rural districts of the country need religion as well as cities and towns, and only a National Established Church can effectually minister to the need.

Then you have your own views of Church Government, and you think that Methodism or Congregationalism preferable to Episcopacy. Well, *chacun a son goût*, but Church Government is not the first consideration. Your Methodism and Congregationalism have some weak and rather ridiculous peculiarities in them. Be this as it may, differences of opinion on ecclesiastical polity may well be waived in the higher interests of Christian union and liberty.

You shake your head at Bishops. You say your ministers must be independent men, subject to no official dictation. Now, look you, are your ministers independent men, subject to no official dictation? You have an order of lay Deacons, among whom there is generally an Arch-Deacon. Is your minister independent of him or them? A Bishop is a clergyman, an educated man, a gentleman. Are your Deacons or Arch-Deacons generally educated men and gentlemen?

Ah, but there is subscription to articles of religion. You can't stand that. But you do stand it. You have your articles of religion tacitly agreed upon if not expressed. You

know who is sound and who is not sound in the faith. You only tolerate your preacher so long as he preaches your particular orthodoxy. Come, come, no nonsense about articles of religion. You have every one of you subscribed, and woe be to your *independent* minister if he dont subscribe too.

And then the prayers are always read in the Church, and your ministers always pray with their eyes shut and without book. Now, do you really like that twenty minutes of half-preaching, half-praying, half-stick-fast extemporary talk, with the eyes shut and the face contorted with the agony of devotional invention? Is it really devotional and elevating? Is there no sameness, repetition, vulgarity, feebleness in it? This is an age of extensive reading, refined taste, and education; you can't be behind the age, and therefore that 'long prayer,' as you appropriately call it, must often seem to you in very bad taste and be terribly wearisome. You'll ask one of these days for the grand, old, inspiring liturgy of the English Church, we know you will.

We have observed a considerable improvement among a few of you of late years. Some

among you are evidently leaning towards venerable Mother Church. Meeting-houses in many places have yielded to handsome Gothic structures, and you now call your chapels 'Churches.' The liturgy too, here and there, has supplanted the 'long prayer,' and your ministers have assumed the gown. We have always regarded the gown as a proper mark of distinction for members of the learned professions of the Church and the Bar. You have, too, given your ministers a collegiate education, and some have honourably taken their degrees. By the by, talking of degrees, where do the D.D.'s come from, and the LL.D.'s? We know a dissenting minister who had bought a German Ph. D., and he said it was equivalent to an English LL.D., and, as he was an Englishman and lived in England, he thought it better to adopt the English equivalent. That system of selling and purchasing literary degrees is not considered by English Churchmen to be very reputable.

Well, what we have to say to you is simply this: we have a great desire to see our venerable Mother Church the National Church of England, and as we are in a very comprehen-

sive mood just now we should like to welcome you all back. Matters of detail we can easily arrange afterwards. What say you? Will you go in for comprehension? You are all refracted rays now, broken upon some crotchety medium or other, and tinted with a variety of hues;—we want to collect your rays into a focus of natural light for the common social illumination. What say you to comprehension? The Thirty-nine Articles can be no obstacle to you, as you will not be asked to sign them; and as for your ministers, they might sign a hundred and thirty-nine now, for they may sign them in what sense they please. They may even sign them as having no sense at all—as sheer nonsense. *Ex animo* means now, according to every one's mind:—that's the latest ecclesiastical decision about subscribing the Articles. There's an end, therefore, of that difficulty.

We know the history of dissent; it is a noble passage in English history. Those two thousand in 1662 were upright and brave men. *In foro conscientiæ*, that was their motto. Stick to that motto,—there's nothing great and good without conscience. But Mother Church knows

you are all full-grown men and women, and will now allow you to have a conscience. That's more than Dissent will do. Dissenters talk very loudly about liberty of conscience, but neither you nor your ministers dare deny a single article of your unwritten and jealously-guarded creed. You have your heretics and black sheep. That boast about liberty of conscience is all fiddle-de-dee. Truth hasn't a fair field among you. You have long forgotten those wise parting words of John Robinson to the Pilgrim Fathers, when he told them not to conceit themselves with the notion that they had all truth, for there was much truth yet to break forth from the sacred oracles. You persecute your truth-delvers to this day; get up a hue-and-cry against your conscientious truth-seekers and truth-speakers; cut off the supplies, and by a variety of vexatious arts and petty harassings conspire to turn your honest men out of their pulpits. Now Mother Church has made up her mind to respect conscience in future. She has resolved to tolerate all honest and decorous consciences, to practically do away with all impeachments for heresy, and so long as the clergy and their congregations

are mutually satisfied, she will leave truth to take care of itself. She has her heresy-scenters as well as you, but she takes care to put them to considerable trouble and expense in the pursuit of their game. "This arrangement is the most valuable point," says the *Times*,* "in our Church system. It effectually prevents opinions from being overridden, and ensures to every party which can obtain an entrance into the Church a firm standing-ground and a fair hearing." Isn't this a step in the right direction? What then hinders you lovers of religious liberty from returning to the Church? You will find all your favourite colours in the Church,—black, white, red, and grey,—and they all "mingle, mingle, mingle,"—blend in harmony, and bring forth the pure daylight of truth. Yes, "you that mingle may." The human mind is a prism, through which truth in its passage is refracted into its primitive colours, and Mother Church, as a scientific dioptrician, has wisely resolved to lose none of the coloured rays, that she may gather them all into the normal light of day. You may enjoy

* Nov. 26, 1867. Art. on Bishop of Salisbury's Charge.

more religious liberty in the Church than out of it, and have a better chance of discovering and enjoying truth, depend upon that.

See now what a grand change has taken place within the last few years in the intellectual and religious life of the English Church. It embraces a great variety of Church predilections and peculiarities. There are the Broad and the Narrow Church, the High and the Low Church—so that you may be as catholic or contracted, as æsthetic or tasteless as you please. And as to doctrine, the variety is exhaustive. You can't fail to be fitted with your special orthodoxy. We have our Rev. Thunder Blasts and Forked Lightnings for the lovers of the gospel of damnation; and our Rev. Silver Tongues for the believers in the gospel of peace; and our Rev. Cloudy Mists for the nebulous and transcendental; and our Rev. Mathematical Demonstrations for the solution of all the problems of spiritual, supernatural, and moral phenomena; and our Rev. Shifty-Bottoms for such as delight in the uncertainty of never knowing where they are; and our Rev. Grub Moles who are always burrowing under the foundations of things; and our Rev.

Icebergs for the refrigeration of all enthusiasm; and our Rev. Leger Demains who can transmute everything, however unreasonable and repulsive, into truth, beauty, and beneficence: indeed time would fail us to show how many-sided dear Mother Church has become, and how wisely and generously flexible she now is to the spirit and necessities of the age.

Now understand us distinctly. We propose to include all Dissenters in our scheme of comprehension, even those whom some of you call heretics and refuse to associate with—the Unitarians, for example, those arithmetical arch-heretics of whom Dryden—but he was a Papist you know—under the image of a fox, thus contemptuously speaks:

> "With greater guile,
> False Reynard fed on consecrated spoil;
> The graceless beast by Athanasius first
> Was chased from Nice; then, by Socinus nurs'd:
> New swarming sects to this obliquely tend,
> Hence they began, and here they all will end."

We dont observe any of them here to-day. They, you know, are a very respectable class of dissenters, a little stuck-up, starched, and self-conceited, not very congenial, and perhaps a little vulgar in their affectation of respect-

ability, but for all that they are an intelligent and estimable body of people. We have often wondered that they, with their pride of respect-tability, can tolerate dissent. Dissent—excuse our plainness—is not a very respectable thing. Well, we propose to take them into the bosom of the Church, indeed many of them are in already, and as their ministers are generally well-educated gentlemen, and they like the frigid zone of religious life, we'll consent to ordain all their ministers, and convert their ice-houses into chapels of ease, where all the arctic spirituality of our great ecclesiastical common-wealth may find a congenial habitat and freeze in peace.

What say you now to our proposal for comprehension? It wont do, eh? What is that you say, Sir,—Better leave religion to the people. The principle of a State religious Establishment is wrong.—The Irish Establishment, what say we to that? One at a time, if you please. Well, as to the Irish Establishment, so much has been said of late that we wont say anything at all. The Church Establishment in that land of chronic disaffection is only a part of the great Irish question.

Mr. Gladstone, Earl Russell, and their fellow-senators have taken that delicate matter in hand, and we prefer the wisdom of professional to that of amateur statesmen, especially in so delicate and difficult a matter as that of Ireland and its Church. We, however, are not in Ireland, but in England, and we are only talking about the English Church. Quite true, Sir, your observation is quite correct. One-half of England is Nonconformist, we are aware of that fact, and that is why we invited you here to-day to listen to our proposal for conformity, or, we prefer the word, comprehension. It is simply a question of expediency with us. We decline to discuss the abstract question of religious Establishments. We have an Establishment in England, and it is not very easy to get rid of it, and for many reasons very undesirable, even if practicable. Our ground is solely that of expediency. The English Church is now wonderfully comprehensive—marvellously liberal and tolerant, and she is of opinion that if all the coloured rays of dissent met together in her focal communion there would be some reasonable expectation of the

pure white light of truth shining out upon the world. All the coloured rays must meet together, and "mingle, mingle, mingle."

[The morning sun had just risen, and was pouring his rays on the painted Gothic window of our bed-chamber, and the brilliancy of the colours dazzled our slumbering vision and awoke us.]

SERMON V.

Incompatibles.

Conrade—You should hear reason.

Don John—And when I have heard it, what blessing bringeth it?

Conrade—If not a present remedy, yet a patient sufferance.

Don John—I wonder, that thou being (as thou say'st thou art) born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief.

Much Ado about Nothing.

The moment we received your round robin, most unfortunate Incompatibles, requesting our ghostly counsel and aid in your difficulties, the image of Signior Benedick was in our mind's eye, the hero of that famous comedy, "Much Ado about Nothing." Don't imagine that we are disposed to trifle with you, we are

quite aware that your case is no comedy, and we are far from wishing to say that you make much ado about nothing. No, your case is by no means comic; the lines of disappointment and sorrow are very legible in every upturned face on which we are now gazing; you have all much reason to make much ado, for you have managed somehow or other to get into something very like a man-trap, an instrument, as you are aware, which does not discriminate the genders, but catches men and women alike if they should be so incautious as to put their foot into it.

Benedick started well, didn't he? That was a very sensible resolve of his after the handsome acknowledgment he made of the obligations he was under to a woman, when he said, "because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is (for the which I may go the finer,) I will live a bachelor." You Benedicks wish you had stuck to that bit of evanescent wisdom, don't you? And you Beatrices would only have been too happy if you had all left your Benedicks in that mood. But you would seek each other out,

and tickle and teaze one another into the fatal compliance, till at last your Benedick sagely asked himself, "Doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. The world must be peopled;" and your Beatrice exclaimed, "Can this be true? Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much? Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu! No glory lives behind the back of such. And, Benedick, love on, I will requite thee." And so here you are! as incompatible as a sick head-ache or a chronic stomach-pain with a hearty appetite, or a tight boot with a protuberant bunion or a sensitive corn.

What a sensible fellow that Justin was who gave such excellent advice to his friend the worthy Knight of Lombardy, who had made up his mind to marry. It was not your good fortune to have a Justin among your friends. But people about to marry seldom ask for or take advice. Hear, however, the sage Justin, 'tis somewhat too late, but mayhap may secure more attention for that very reason.

"The venture's greater, I'll presume to say
To give your person than your goods away;
And therefore, Sir, as you regard your rest,
First learn your lady's qualities at least:

Whether she's chaste or rampant, proud or civil,
Meek as a saint, or haughty as the devil;
Whether an easy, fond, familiar fool,
Or such a wit as no man e'er can rule.
'Tis true, perfection none must hope to find
In all this world, much less in womankind;
But if her virtues prove the larger share,
Bless the kind Fates, and think your fortune rare,
Ah, gentle Sir, take warning of a friend,
Who knows too well the state you thus commend;
And, spite of all his praises, must declare,
All he can find is bondage, cost, and care.
Heaven knows I shed full many a private tear,
And sigh in silence, lest the world should hear.
But, by the immortal Powers, I feel the pain,
And he that smarts has reason to complain."

Well, it is an old saying that marriage is a lottery;—a lottery, too, with a goodly number of prizes. A good wife or a good husband is a tolerably good thing. We know the meaning of that deep sigh. You have not found that good thing. There were no blanks in the bag, and yet somehow you have all drawn blank disappointment. There is another old saying, that marriages are made in Heaven. You don't quite see that, do you? You would not think it reverent to say so, as it would not comport with your notions of the consummate wisdom of the super-terrestrial

management. Quite right; don't charge Heaven with all the blockheadedness and bungling that foolish men and women exemplify in this world. No; marriages are experiments, speculations, purely human contracts, haphazard manufactures, at least, not a few of them; yours for example; and very sorry manufactures they are. They come out of some old stupid botching carpenter's shop, where the mechanical arts of dovetailing and neat joinery are neither practised nor understood. You have been put together in a very loose shaky sort of way, out of mixed and unseasoned timber, and now there you are unglued, with all your nails started, full of yawning chinks, and ready to go to pieces.

Yes, yes, don't be impatient. You know all this well enough, we are quite aware of that, but if you come to us you must expect to hear something about your bad carpentry. If you, Miss Rose Wood, had no more sense of the fitness of things than to go and unite yourself to that essentially vulgar fellow Mr. Common Deal; and you, Mr. Polished Mahogany, would form an alliance with that dull stupid sister of Deal's; and you, Mr. Hard-

headed Boxwood, could be so absurd as to offer your hand to that ill-tempered chit, a very vixen, the youngest daughter of that old snuffy schoolmaster Birch; and you, Mr. Green Pine, with your lovesick nonsense, would dance attendance on that made-up frivolous girl Miss Theca Veneer, who has not the least substance in her, when your old acquaintance Broadplank offered you his sturdy little daughter Beechy, who would have kept you afloat in your voyage of life,—you must naturally expect that such *mesalliances* would end in chinks and ruptures, and that sooner or later you would all find out that you were ill-assorted, and had made arrant fools as well as very mi-miserable people of yourselves. Yes, yes, don't be impatient, you must consent to hear this.

We said that there was no comedy in your case. We were speaking then in the present tense. Now, at this present time, we fully admit it is all distressing, doleful tragedy—to use a grammatical illustration, your syntax is in hopeless confusion. Your verb is in the passive voice now, and the passive is tragic. *I am taken in, I am done for;* these are passive forms of the verb. But, like the Greeks, you

have had your middle voice, and the grammarians tell us that the middle voice denotes an action *done* by the agent *to himself*, or one which *he does for his own benefit*; or *gets done for his own benefit*. You have done something to yourself, eh! You have done something for your own benefit, eh! Those waggish Greek grammarians, they were poking fun with their middle voice at you poor Incompatibles. Your middle voice was not exclusively tragical; a little of the comical is mingled with the tragical in the middle voice; we may, with Polonius, call it, "the tragical-comical-historical-pastoral." *I have made a fool of myself, I have availed myself of the good offices of a friend in an introduction with a view to matrimony*. These are middle forms of the verb, and the middle has a history, and is somewhat entertaining, so that you have known something, poor Incompatibles, of the historical-comical. We add the word *pastoral* because you have been somewhat sheepish, eh!

> "Horses, thou say'st, and asses men may try,
> And ring suspected vessels ere they buy;
> But wives, a random choice, untried they take;
> They dream in courtship, but in wedlock wake."

Then there has been the active voice in a va-

riety of tenses, when you said *I am thinking about it, I shall make up my mind, I intend to go in for it, I shall pop the question, I have done it.* Then it was all flutter and fear,—sentimental, comical. Do you mind that time? Ah! light up a-bit: a ray or two of sunshine—that's cheerful. We can laugh, you know, sometimes, at our own expense. Some things which you and we have known are a little ridiculous, and we can't help smiling at, though we have smarted in, them. When you were in your active voice, what a comical activity it was. You fell in love with a bonnet, or a shawl, or the fascinating fall of a skirt, or the capacious circularity of a farthingale. Fancy a man marrying a bonnet or a farthingale! Or, you admired some feature of the coveted prize: her hair, her eyes, her nose, her mouth, her foot, her ankle. Fancy a man marrying a nose or an ankle! Or, you liked her singing, or her execution on the piano. Fancy a man marrying a voice, or the tones of a piano! Or you were charmed with his whiskers, or his height, or the straightness of his legs, or his fluent talk, or because he was of a respectable profession, or had a good substantial business,

or plenty of money, or because he wore regimentals, or was a good-looking curate, or was a beau and of the *bon ton*. Fancy a woman marrying any one of these things! Or, you thought you might as well get married, so you got married; or somebody proposed to you, and lest you should not have another offer you accepted the proposal. What comical reasons for marriage! Or, you thought it would be more comfortable, or more respectable, and wouldn't look as though you couldn't if you would. A very comfortable and respectable joke it has turned out! Ha! ha! ha! You are looking grave again. Yes, we know you are in the passive voice now, but we are thinking of the active time, and we may indulge in a laugh at you in your active voice—that was the comical time, when you married your wife's millinery or her anatomy, or your husband's whiskers or straight legs, and thought about the respectable, and the comfortable, and the first chance, and all that sort of thing.

Well, well, don't look so deplorably grave,—we know all about it—you have got the bonnet, and the nose, and the ankle, and the whiskers, and the straight legs, and the re-

spectable thing, and you are not satisfied. Somehow or other the comfortable hasn't come, has it? The fashion has changed and you don't care a straw about any of the bonnets or skirts, past or present. The individual features of your admiration may be all very well and may survive to the present hour, but a wife is something more than particular bits of her anatomy, and a husband something besides whiskers and straight legs. Some of you have private reasons for knowing that a second offer would have come, and even a third and a fourth, and therefore there was no necessity to be so promptly compliant; and with any one of these you had been a happy woman, because they would have yielded to that little trifling bias of yours—the love of having your own way, and would have replied, "By all means, my dear," when you said—

> "One of us two must rule, and one obey,
> And since in man right reason bears the sway,
> Let that frail thing, weak woman, have her way."

Here you are in a very painful predicament, and you want us to help you out of it. That's the point; and we wont shirk it, although we must honestly confess that we don't think it a very small point. It is not by any means *a mathematical* point.

Our text is not a very hopeful one, we candidly allow. Conrade was a very common-place sort of moralist. "You should hear reason," he says. Well, you haven't heard reason, have you? Your reasons for marriage were not very reasonable. And you dont like to be told that there is no "present remedy," and that you must be content with "a patient sufferance." You will indignantly rejoin with Don John—What you, as you say, "born under Saturn," and yet "going about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief." Yes, we were born under Saturn, we can be both grave and gay in our turn, but we are not going to recommend any Saturnalias. You are in the fryingpan now, you would be in the fire then. No, no Saturnalia. We have got a very tough fact to deal with. You are married, *you* are quite sensible of that fact, and *we* can't ignore it. You want to be *un*married. If you look in the Church porch you will see that "Marriages may be solemnized here," but not Divorces, there's not a word about Divorces. A divorce is an act of violence, not a solemnization, and we only do the gentle thing here. You must go to the legally constituted court if you want

any violent processes to be performed on you, we can only exhibit a moral medicine for your particular mischief. We have sedatives and stimulants, tonics and cathartics, which are at your service. We have sedatives for the irritable, and stimulants for the feebly tame, and tonics for the flat, and purgatives for the bad-humoured. Some of you want these medicines—your incompatibilities are in part owing to these moral distempers. Physic is the remedy for some among you. Take physic, not homœopathically, but in good old-fashioned doses; and we recommend a frequent exhibition of your particular medicine. But neither physic nor carpentry will be of any use for some others. Your incompatibility is absolute,—you ought never to have attempted a junction,—the thing was naturally impossible,—you will never be able to manage it,—how, in the name of all that is sensible, you could have ever attempted to manage it fills us with amazement. You were never intended to be together,—you can't be together, and yet you are together, and must remain together. You are antiscii, antithetical, and antipathetical people, and you ought to have

lived on opposite sides of the globe as antipodes. You and your best friends called it a marriage *en convenance*—that was a joke, for you have found no convenience in it. You are circles and squares, triangles and parallelograms, diverging lines, parallel lines, and all sorts of impossible mathematical figures, and if you are not helpless victims you are consummate blockheads to boot. 'Tis a "mortifying mischief," with a vengeance, into which you have managed to get involved. Help you out, indeed! why you were never in, and yet you are in, and can't get out. Something might possibly have been done for you, but you have gone and done something for yourselves which makes your case absolutely hopeless. What business have you with children? Only compatible people have any right to propagate their species. You are not of the same species,—you violate a law of nature. Fie upon ye! The decencies of society and common sense demand that every incompatible birth should be visited with the cat-o'-nine-tails on both delinquents. What can come of two divergent lines but little miserable embarrassments, who don't know which way to look and in what direction

to go. Between you both they will drop through, and yet there they always are alternating between you both, keeping up a sort of connection and common interest between you, when there is no connection and no common interest in anything else. There is nothing for you but moral medicine,—we tell you flatly that there is no "present remedy," nothing but "patient sufferance." Your marriage is "a mortifying mischief," because it is a moral and mathematical blunder. The carpentering in your case has been particularly bad, your glue has all given way, your seams have all opened wide, you are full of chinks and crannies, you are all come to pieces, and the wonder is that you dont come to the ground.

[We awoke, and were nearly on the ground ourself. The side of our bedstead had given way, and we had gradually slipped down, which we suppose had suggested the bad carpentering in our dream and fancifully led us to think of those unfortunate, helpless, and unhelpable ones, the Incompatibles.]

SERMON VI.

ACTORS ON ASSES.

Polonius—The actors are come hither, my lord.
Hamlet—Buz, buz!
Polonius—Upon my honour,—
Hamlet—Then came each actor on his ass.

Hamlet.

PLAYERS are ye, masqueraders, mimics! We should not have thought it to see you now, as ye sit there, such matter-of-fact looking people —plain, straightforward men and women. Players are ye, and the world's your stage! And you are only a sample of all the rest of man and womankind! All are in greater or less degree players! To be honest with you,

we wont affect amazement,—we know you are actors, maskers, dominoes—anything but your own genuine selves—some rather clever in the gammoning art, and some very considerable bunglers. Why, you are acting now, you knaves and impudent wenches. You can't deceive us. Do you think that we don't understand that the Church hour is just the solemn scene, and a small bit of serious business in the drama of social life? You can do the dismal when you think the dismal is to be done. Now we must tell you that we are a great admirer of the legitimate drama, and enjoy a good play as much as anybody. We believe in the theatre as a useful institution, and have a great respect for professional actors who respect themselves;—therefore don't misunderstand us. We quite agree with Hamlet, that they deserve to be "well bestowed" and "well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time." But, then we like the genuine thing, and everything in its place and season. We know what to expect on the stage. It is the place for acting; and, however perfect the illusion for the time being, we know, when it is all over, that we have seen

acting. The admirable art of the actors may have taken us in for a few hours, and we thank and applaud them for it. The illusion has been agreeable. Illusion is the understanding both before and behind the scenes. But the moment the green curtain has descended and the lights are extinguished, and we make our exit from the theatre, we like to feel that we have done with actors and acting. We don't expect to jostle actors in the streets, to sit with them in our homes, to deal with them in the commerce of every-day life; and we certainly don't wish to meet mere actors in the Church, either in the pulpit or the pews. We don't consider ourself an actor, and we would rather that you should come hither in *propria persona.* The real, not the artificial, is the proper thing for the Church. You actors seem to think that there is a conventional Litany-face for the Church, and you always don the dismal here. We don't approve of the dismal on Sunday. You find us serious, but never dismal. Why, the day itself ought to rebuke you, and convince you that you don't perform your part well. Sunday, as the name expresses, is the day of the Sun,—bright, cheerful, refreshing.

Once for all, we say, have done with the dismal, it is not the mood for the Church, and you will never know the right mood till you have done with your acting in it.

> "There are some moody fellows, not a few,
> Who, turned by Nature with a gloomy bias,
> Renounce black Devils to adopt the blue,
> And think when they are dismal they are pious."

Talking of the dismal, and apropos of acting in your sense and after your fashion, let us remind you of a scene in "The Funeral," of that admirable humourist "Dick Steele." *Sable*, the undertaker, is bustling about his business and talking to his men about their duty:

Sable.—"Ha, you!—a little more upon the dismal *(forming their countenances)*; this fellow has a good mortal look,—place him near the corpse; that wainscot-face must be o'top of the stairs; that fellow's almost in a fright (that looks as if he were full of some strange misery), at the end of the hall. So—But I'll fix you all myself. Let's have no laughing now on any provocation. Look yonder,—that hale, well-

looking puppy! You ungrateful scoundrel. Did not I give you ten, then fifteen, and twenty shillings a week to be sorrowful?—and the more I give you, I think the gladder you are!"

That fellow Sable was an actor,—his business was acting business, and he would have his men understand how to act their business. You may think him a fellow of infinite humour, but nothing of the kind,—he didn't see his own joke. The exquisite stroke of humour he had perpetrated he was quite unconscious of,—he was downright angry to find that the more he paid that ungrateful scoundrel to be sorrowful the gladder he was. It spoilt the business-like management of the scene. He wanted fellows with "a good mortal look,"—artificial if not natural, who could be decently posted "near the corpse," and "wainscot-faces" for the top of the stairs, and grave fellows who wouldn't laugh on any provocation. He had to get up decorous funeral scenes. His undertaking was acting and stage management. There was nothing really histri-

onic in Sable,—he was no votary of the genuine mimic art,—he did not, like the true actor, imitate nature, but insulted and smothered it.

Sable had no business to act in his honest vocation, he was an undertaker not an actor, and he only made himself ridiculous and contemptible. Had he come to the funeral upon his business, and not upon his stupid sense of propriety, he would not have been one of those actors who, as Hamlet in our text says, "came upon his ass."

Now why, in the name of all that's honest, can't you understand that acting is an artistic profession with which you have nothing whatever to do in the ordinary business and commerce of everyday life. There is just this difference between the professional player and you: he acts to instruct or amuse, whereas you act to conceal some selfish purpose and to deceive. He is a respectable man, you are either a rascal or a humbug. What, this language is rather too strong, do you say? You like a more delicate and less emphatic selection of words. Just so, you are actors, we are not

an actor. You like to cover up, and to put on false appearances, and to say what you don't mean, and to appear what you are not. You like the mask, and the mealy mouth, and the candied tongue. We don't. They are the wardrobe and stage properties of actors—actors on asses—and we don't belong to the company.

Genuine actors don't ride upon asses—their locomotion is on the substantial and well-made legs of their own honest reputation. But you, Mr. Popinjay Exquisite, and all your *confreres*, you keep your ass and ride him. Your notion of the tip-top gentleman, Mr. Popinjay, is exaltingly asinine. If the gentleman is not inside, the tailor can't help you to dress him outside. You are a bad actor, Popinjay, you are too exquisite, too "loud," you are a frivolous foolish fop, a consummate coxcomb, a laughable caricature,—every gentleman marks you as an actor on his ass. Ha! Miss Corintha Haut-ton, you must dismount from your ass if you really wish to be a lady, you are much too *outre* for the character, you carry too much canvass, your glitter is too dazzling, you lay

on too much colour, your *exterieur* is clamorously stunning. You don't act well, Corintha, and you never will while you join the company of ass-actors. You are mischievous examples, Corintha and Popinjay,—you are ruining the rising generation,—milliners' girls, clerks, and shop-boys, to an alarming extent are mounting their asses and ambling in your wake. Ass-acting, especially on Sunday, is becoming quite intolerable,—you have much to answer for.

Mr. Exquisite and Miss Haut-ton are mere butterflies, who flutter about in the sultry sunshine of social indolence; but you, Dr. Petit Practice, are a professional gentleman with an honourable vocation; and you, Mr. Tardycraft, are a young dentist; and you, Mr. Fredk. Freshwig and old Mr. Rusty Stuffgown, are members of the English Bar, and yet you are among the actors who come upon asses. We never call upon you, Dr. Petit Practice or Mr. Tardycraft in a professional way, but your lackey ushers us into what is very appropriately called the *waiting*-room, and when, after a very considerable trial of our

patience, he comes to usher us into your professional presence, you always consider it preliminary—a mere introduction—and require a future appointment. You just happen to have half-an-hour disengaged the next day. We are full of anxiety, it may be, about a troublesome suspicious swelling, or we have not slept a wink for a week through a racking toothache,—still we cannot enjoy your professional assistance till the disengaged half-hour on the morrow, which you have, with due gravity, and after much conning of your memorandum-book, offered for our convenience. Some patient has always just that moment left you, and another is instantly expected by appointment, although we are never so fortunate as to catch a glimpse of a fellow-sufferer, and are always alone in the waiting-room. That's your professional dodge. We quite understand it. 'Tis all acting. You are toiling, like awkward ass-actors, to make a busy practice by seeming to have one.

Freshwig and Stuffgown, your ass-acting is very transparent. Chambers are very dull,

aren't they?—nothing to do. Court is much livelier,—besides you can sport your wig and gown there, and look as if you had something to do. Now and then for a joke we have called incog at your chambers, and your shrewd boys at eighteen-pence a week play their parts very fairly.

"Mr. Freshwig is in Court, Sir. Mr. Stuffgown has just gone into Court, Sir. Shall I fetch him, Sir?"

"Certainly not. Some case of course in hand. We just wanted his professional aid in the case of Nemo *versus* Nil."

"I'll fetch him, Sir, directly."

"Fetch him from Court, impossible! He may at this moment be opening some important case before the Vice-Chancellor, or probably the Lord Chancellor."

"No, Sir, he said I was to go to him immediately if any gentleman should call upon business. He took no briefs when he left, and he said he was not leading in any case to-day,—and some other gentleman is junior counsel in a case which is now before the Court, and he is merely listening to it, as he takes some in-

terest in the young barrister who is holding his first brief."

"Never mind, my little fellow, our business is not of pressing importance. You can just tell him, on his return from Court, that we called. He seems to be always in Court, and will scarcely care for our little case of Nemo *versus* Nil.

"Will you leave your card, Sir?"

"No, my little man, no. Mr. Freshwig or Mr. Stuffgown might possibly honour us with a call at some professional inconvenience to themselves. Say we called, and that we were not disappointed, as we quite expected to hear that they were in Court,"

You heard of our call, eh! Your boys told you? Did they say anything about Nemo *versus* Nil? You have had that case rather too often; 'tis a very stale and worthless brief that. Ha! ha! We enjoy a practical joke now and then with actors on asses—professional humbugs.

What, must we enrol the parsons among actors on asses! Are you there, Rev. Flowery Period, and Rev. Ornate Primrose, and Rev.

Mountebank Witsnapper, and Rev. Boanerges Windbag? You will ride that favourite ass of your's, precious Popularity, to death. Our wrath kindles at the sight of an actor-parson. Playing tricks in the pulpit! By St. Augustine we'll unfrock you. Buttercups and daisies in the pulpit! Dandyism in the pulpit! Cracking jokes in the pulpit! Wind, mere wind, hot and cold wind, boisterous, noisy wind in the pulpit! And you divines, too! some of you D.D.'s, nay, ye are donkeys, downright donkeys. M.A.'s! we'll write your degree in full, ye are no *Artium Magistri*, but Ass-Mounters. Dismount from your ass, ye parson-actors, or descend from the pulpit,—we'll have no ass-acting in the pulpit, and no ass-acting in the solemn conduct of public worship either. Away with stage properties and actors' wardrobes from the Church. Your chasubles and copes, your tunicles and dalmatics, and all the rest of your millinery trumpery, we say, away with. The Church is not the place for ass-acting. Its sacred penetralia shall not be invaded by clerical tomfoolery. You Rev. Clericus Clothespeg, rector of Feeblesex, and

your two mawkish curates, are arch offenders —worshippers of raiment yourselves, and preachers of this ridiculous fetish to others. We never meet you on the public highways but your stupid ecclesiastical affectations remind us of clothes. Everywhere and at all times you are the incarnation of clothes. You may well blush at our mention of clothes, for ye have thrust the very shame of the first man before the eye of public observation, and unlike him you glory in the covering of your nakedness. We might endure this eternal suggestiveness of clothes in your own silly persons with comparative equanimity, but you, Clothespeg, (we could rend our Episcopal robes in high official and virtuous indignation,) have carried your idolatry of clothes into the Church,—into the very bosom of its sacred mysteries. The eyes of all there are attracted by clothes, the mind is perpetually diverted by clothes, the heart is smothered with clothes. Everything, even in the Church, begins and ends with clothes. You have converted the Church service into a pantomime with gorgeous effects. You

have made yourselves the admiration of milliners, the entertainment and diversion of weak-minded women, and the loathing and scorn of all sensible people. Have ye never read, "Take no thought for your body what ye shall put on." Dismount, dismount, we'll have no ass-acting in the Church.

> "All the world's a stage,
> And all the men and women merely players."

True, melancholy Jacques, true, you moralize wisely,—but all the players are not mounted,—each actor does not come on his ass. Your genuine player holds "the mirror up to nature," and the real men and women players of this world-stage are the embodiments of nature itself. We can do with nature, and bear with all her humours, bad and good. We can recognise and respect the one, and take the necessary measures of defence against the other. When a man acts himself we know him,—he may be an honest man or an unmitigated rascal, but we know him, and this knowledge has a good many social conveniences. Men and women in masks in the ordinary intercourses of social life are a very

provoking sort of people. Who likes to discover, just at the critical time, that what he had all along taken for a friend is only a mask, —that all the expressions of frankness and sympathy, which he has found so refreshing, are so much painted pasteboard, and that whom he always believed to be a real flesh-and-blood man is only an actor on his ass? Is there a true man here among all you ass-actors to whom we can put this question? You, my friend, under these circumstances might feel disposed to kick both the actor and his ass. But he would only bray if you did, to dun your ears and aggravate your temper, just as all these ass-actors would do if we could but reach the seat of their sensation through their thick skins. Ah! have we really touched you to the quick? Beginning to bray out your displeasure, eh! Cease that intolerable noise, we know you are asses,—no more, no more, prythee no more!

[We started from our sleep, aroused by the loud braying of a donkey and the angry objurgations and cudgelling of a boisterous cos-

termonger. We thought of the words of a famous clown, and shouted from the window, "Your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating."]

SERMON VII.

NECESSARY EVILS.

"Dec. 17.—ANNE FAITHFUL, aged 73, for fifty-two years the valued domestic and friend in the family of JOHN CHEERY, Esq., of Brightstone Grange, Yorkshire."

Obituary Notice.

ALL honour to the Cheery family! That is indeed something to chronicle in family annals. Half-a-century and upwards of domestic service and friendship is a rare harvest for a single family to reap out of a single human life as domestic matters generally go in this world.

But Cheery is a good name, and Brightstone goes well with it, and Faithful has the right sterling ring. Brightstone Grange is a genial residence without doubt, and the Cheerys are genial people, and Anne, at the interesting age of twenty-one, found a very comfortable home there, and like a sensible young woman made up her mind to be at home, and do all in her power to be worthy of the household to which it had been her good fortune to be directed; and there she lived for fifty-two long years, and there she died,—happy in her life of domestic service, and honoured with an epitaph and the tributary tear of grateful memory and affection when her service was ended.

Brightstone Grange is in all probability an old-established, well-to-do, as also a well-ordered family residence. There is something manorial about the sound of a Grange,—it suggests the ideas of competence, stability, and comfort,—a good look out and a good look in. Every house on our English soil is not a Grange, and therefore it is hardly to be expected that all the young women of twenty-one who enter our houses as cooks and housemaids should settle with us for life, unless they

settle for themselves in some other more interesting way. But even if we all lived in Granges, there is another obstacle in the way of a fifty-two years of service in the misfortune that we are not all of the family of the Cheerys. The Court Guides and Directories abound with names which, if they also indicate natures and dispositions corresponding, will serve to explain to some extent how it is that some people have hardly as many days as John Cheery had years of domestic service. And it must not be omitted too, as an item in the consideration, that all the young women of twenty-one and upwards are not Anne Faithfuls,—they are not all sensible and well-disposed women, and if they have made up their mind to be at home, they have not, like Anne Faithful, made up their mind to be worthy of their home, and to contribute so far as in them lies to make everything pleasant and home-like. With not a few of these daughters of domestic service the question is merely one of wages and perquisites—their eye is only open to one side of the agreement,—and they intend to do just what they were engaged to do and nothing

more. They are thoroughly up in the theory and practice of the division of labour, and they draw the line pretty sharply, and often very unreasonably and inconveniently. The idea that they are inmates of a home, and that home demands a good many mutual services from all that compose it, which cannot be matters of pecuniary calculation and previous agreement, never enters their heads. One would imagine that some domestic servants had been brought up in a cotton-mill, or pin-manufactory, or some other establishment where the hands are all engaged for specific labour, and are never required to move out of their narrow mechanical sphere. Domestic service is for these hirelings just a commercial bargain, the quantity and quality of which are regulated by the wages, and not always so liberal and good as the wages and good home-comforts reasonably claim. These are not the Anne Faithfuls, but the Sally Sourpans, the Molly Messmeats, the Susan Skimbrooms, and such like domestic nuisances.

We English people are proverbially a domestic people. Home is everything to Eng-

lishmen and Englishwomen. We don't like to live in "flats," and to dine every day of our lives at a restaurant. A comfortable domestic establishment is an essentially English institution. And yet somehow we don't manage this English institution to our mutual satisfaction. Servants are a necessary part of this institution,—necessary to its success and comfortable existence—and yet these servants have come to be almost universally spoken of as "necessary evils." When people speak of necessary evils, they are using the language of despair, and we can't afford to despair in the matter of home-life. A well-ordered and happy home is the backbone of English character and success in life, and we can't afford to have our backbone broken, or even weakened. "Necessary evils" are chronic, and in domestic life are vital mischiefs. We must save our backbone, and therefore we must get rid of "necessary evils."

Every F.R.C.S. knows that the lopping-off practice is not the invariable practice of scientific surgery. We can't lop off our domestic

servants and do our own cooking and housewifery. We must understand the diagnosis of the disease, and penetrate to its sources, and exhibit the specific medicines, and so effect a sound cure. We must convert these "necessary evils" into necessary blessings. This is our task, and we must not shirk it in the interest of our spinal integrity and the common soundness of the English backbone.

Domestic servants we must have—that's clear,—and we must try to keep them. Many a paterfamilias lives in a state of chronic misery, expecting every two or three months to be told by his wife that one or other, or perhaps some two or more, of the maids are going to leave. He does not like his house to be made a public thoroughfare, and to know that every twelvemonths some ten or a dozen people perambulate through the privacy of his home, and that after fifty years of housekeeping he and his domestic concerns are known to about five hundred indifferent people who don't care a straw about him, and who possibly may make him and his affairs the staple of their kitchen talk with as many hundreds more.

That's not agreeable to an Englishman's feelings at least.

The habitual changing of servants is certainly an evil, but we are not disposed to acquiesce in the opinion that it is a necessary evil. There must be something wrong somewhere. Bad servants of both sexes are not uncommon, but there are bad masters and mistresses too. To be candid, we must honestly say that a large measure of blame rests on the mistresses, not a few of whom are very bad managers, from being too fond of managing, or because they are very inconsiderate, or very suspicious, or ridiculously irritable, or confirmedly ill-tempered, or intolerably close, or because of some other infirmity of nature or disposition. Some women were never intended to be mistresses,—neither by nature nor education are they fitted to preside over a household,—they are themselves essentially vulgar people, and servants are quick enough to detect vulgarity in their mistresses, and to rate and respect them accordingly. Their ear is always open to kitchen tittle-tattle, they like to be in the kitchen and talk with the cook about her last place, or

what the cook next door or over the way says about her mistress, and to revel in all the domestic scandal of the neighbourhood. Ah! Mrs. Kitchener, there you are,—that is your taste, we know,—you were never intended for your present station in life—you ought to have been a cook or a scullery-maid, Mrs. Kitchener. Your husband has married a bad specimen of a domestic cook, Mrs. Kitchener. If he is a sensible and refined man, he must wish you were anything but his wife,—anything indeed but his wife or his cook.

And you, Mrs. Skinflint, we know, have a sad reputation for changing your servants. Your maxims of domestic economy and mode of enforcing them are altogether beyond endurance. You pare too closely, Mrs. Skinflint. Poor human nature can't stand your biting parsimony. Low wages and stinted diet are always bad terms in a domestic bargain. You are pennywise and pound foolish, Mrs. Skinflint. Both you and Mrs. Kitchener help to make bad servants and create the "necessary evils" which you affect to deplore.

Mrs. Crossgrain, you never have the same servants in your house five weeks together. Nothing pleases you,—nothing is ever done right, the very best intentions and efforts are received by you as designed annoyances—you never have a word of thanks or commendation on your lips, or a kind approving expression on your face. Your servants give you up as a hopeless, unbearable woman, and by the end of the first month have had enough of you.

We are not surprised, Mrs. Trustnought, that you so miserably fail in the matter of servants. Constitutionally suspicious, you will trust no one. You seem quite to forget that mutual confidence is one of the essential conditions of human existence. Domestic credit is as necessary to the comfort and wellbeing of a household as commercial credit is necessary to the good conduct and stability of trade. Now your suspiciousness violates a first principle of social relationships of any kind. How Mr. Trustnought, if he is not of your disposition and tastes, can endure the eternal jingle of that huge bunch of keys, and your perpe-

tual locomotion to some lock-up or other, where the common necessaries of the household are carefully and miscellaneously imprisoned, we can't understand. Now your neighbour, Mrs. Trusty, has very little trouble with her servants. She assumes the honesty of all about her,—and human nature asks for this honourable assumption—and the consequence is, that she compliments her servants into a right state of moral feeling, and she never complains of the abuse of her confidence. You, on the contrary, act towards them as if they were convicted pilferers,—you lower their self-respect, and to your cost have found that you have actually made many of your many servants what you have presumed them to be. To you, Mrs. Trustnought, society owes not a few of its bad servants.

Sitting next you is Mrs. Harddriver. A most unreasonable woman are you, Mrs. Harddriver—you make a very serious mistake in supposing that the duty of servants is to be always at work. Servants have a lawful leisure from their daily task-work as well as other people. You have no right to expect them to

toil from early morning till late at night. Your house, Mrs. Harddriver, is a dreadful treadmill, and you are as bad as a slave-driver. You are guilty of injustice and cruelty in depriving your servants of a little evening leisure—for self-improvement or correspondence with their friends, or the making up or repairing a necessary article of dress. You are an unreasonable exacting woman, Mrs. Harddriver, and yet you are always complaining of pains in your back and loins, and scarcely do anything yourself all day but hurry and drive your poor worn-out domestics. Is it wonderful that the two or three dozen servants who pass through your treadmill every year come out a broken-spirited, ill-conditioned contribution to the "necessary evils" of social life?

Mrs. Scolder, your irascible temper has spoiled many a good servant,—how many we shall not venture to guess, for you are an old housekeeper, and your name, we are informed, stands permanently on the books of Mrs. Gatherum, of the Domestic Registry Office. It is a bad thing, Mrs. Scolder, to be always

blowing-up. Gunpowder is not a domestic article, and explosions don't promote domestic quietude and comfort. We don't excuse bad temper on the score of constitutional infirmity. Bad temper, like bad manners, is out of place in good society. Why your husband wont stand your temper, how then can you expect that your servants will? Hurricane Hall must be an uncomfortable residence, Mrs. Scolder, for others besides those below-stairs. Happily those below-stairs are not obliged to weather your boisterous north-westerly blasts, they have a privilege which those upstairs don't enjoy—they can give warning—they can go,—and they do go, eh! Mrs. Scolder, rather frequently.

Well, this is our deliberate conviction—that, making all due allowance for the bad principles and fickle dispositions of a considerable number of servants, no small measure of blame attaches to the mistresses of our households, the large majority of whom are their own housekeepers, and not a few of whom make a pretty mess of their so-called housekeeping. We happen to know some highly-

respectable gentlemen who consider their wives rather than their servants "necessary evils," and heartily wish they could give them a month's notice to quit. An intimate friend of ours invariably speaks of his house as "the cauldron," there is always some seething, bubbling scum on the surface of his domestic life to disquiet and annoy him,—his servants are always coming and going,—the daily conversation is always about servants,—the last word he hears at night is about servants,—and he wakes in the morning to hear—

[Unusually early activity and bustle about the house awoke us. It was the morning following New Year's Day, and our housekeeper had received our permission to have a servants' party that evening. There was much, no doubt, to be done in the way of preparation, and the ordinary domestic duty was begun early and performed with more than customary activity and noise. Our excellent housekeeper, Mrs. Boniface apologized after breakfast for the unseasonable disturbance. We amused her with the substance of our dream, which

probably she and her subordinates had been the means of suggesting, and she begged a copy of the sermon when it was printed, to read aloud in the servants' hall.]

SERMON VIII.

Poppy-heads.

"The juice of the Poppy *(Papaver Somniferum)* is the Opium of commerce, cultivated in Turkey and other Eastern countries. It is obtained from an incision in the stalk, made longitudinally just under the bulbous capsule which contains the rudiments of the flower. As it exudes in the form of a gum it is gathered by women and children."—
Vide *Accounts of the Cultivation of the Poppy in India, and the Opium Commerce.*

A biographer of Wordsworth tells us that he shall never forget hearing a poet, and no mean one, read to him, for the first time, the

sonnet on "Crossing Westminster Bridge." When the reader came to the line,

> "Dear God! the very houses seem asleep!"

he says, his flesh crawled, his hair stirred, he trembled with agitation. Now we must confess that we don't quite understand the mood of our friend the biographer, nor perceive how the impressive idea of a great city asleep,—the hush of its streets, the stillness of its habitations—should set the flesh crawling, the hair stirring on end, and convulsing the whole physical frame with agitation. Perhaps he was or is a theologian—a theologian of the gloomy school,—one who looked on all great cities as cities of destruction, and destined to the fate of Sodom and Gomorrha. The slumbers of such cities are indeed awful to contemplate. It is the great city awake,—with its hum of busy life, the whole machinery of its activity in noisy operation, its mind, and hand, and heart at unceasing work,—that stirs us most strongly with the agitating emotions of wonder, admiration, and alarm,—like a mighty steam-engine of many hundred-horse power, roaring, and rattling, and heavily thudding as if it were

bent on the catastrophe of self-destruction. A city like this mighty London, wide awake and at work, rouses us indeed to the creeping, stirring, agitated pitch;—we are calm, like itself, in the season of its repose.

We shall not join Asmodeus in an excursion over the house-tops either of the slumbering or wakeful cities of this great kingdom; at least, not now. We are not disposed for the agitation of the violent emotions, and we could not take the aerial ramble without considerably well-strung nerves. We should see and hear a good deal more than either our mental or physical frame could calmly endure. No, we shall content ourselves with a more agreeable reflection on one phase of the activity of great cities—the philanthropical phase—the strong desire and deeply-stirred purpose to make the heads wise and the hearts sound of their teeming populations, in order that civic society may be a possible, tolerable, and even prosperous and happy condition of the common existence.

It is one of the gratifying signs of our Christian civilization and progress, that the generality

of men and women have come to believe that it wont do for people to congregate together in their hundreds of thousands, and even millions, without having some sense in their heads and right principles in their hearts. Ignorance and vice are the nitro-glycerine and gunpowder which jeopardize the comfort and security of great communities. They must be got rid of at any cost, private or public. Hence the school philanthropy so characteristic of our age. Ragged and reformatory schools, boys' and girls' homes of industry, national and British schools, Sunday and evening schools, schools for adults and infants, schemes of municipal and national education, and an organized State machinery for the promotion of education,—these are the practical expressions of the public belief that the minds of the community must be fed as well as their mouths, that the heart must be disciplined no less than the hand, and that by a comprehensive system of mental, moral, and physical gymnastics people may be brought up to the standard of reasonable and social beings, worthy of our Christian enlightenment and civilization.

This is all right enough; but all ignorance and vice are not in the lowest places of the social condition. There is a large amount of stupidity and moral perversity in all the ascending steps of the great social ladder.

We must add to these educational establishments some others. For example—A school for Young Men and Women for the Exposition of the Principles and Practices of Pecuniary Circumstances and Social Station; a Female Asylum for the Cure of the Marriage-Mania by a liberal training in the virtue of self-reliance, and suggestions on the Economy and Methods of Womanly Independence; a Matrons' Institute for the Exposition of the Morals and Manœuvres of Maternal Match-making; Morning Classes for Fashionable Noodles and Giddy Flirts; a systematic Course of Lectures on the Vagrancy of Morning Calls; another on the Philosophy of At-homes; another on the Ethics of the Drawing-room,—these and some others might be advantageously added for the better education of the neglected upper ten thousand.

There is one establishment, indeed, that we should be very glad to see founded and in good working order—a Hall for Heads of Houses, which are unhappily turned on the grave subject of Parental Responsibility, with an endowed weekly lectureship designed to illustrate the Moral, Social, and Physical Effects of Great Expectations on the Rising Generation of the Well-to-do and Wealthy Classes.

From our point of contemplation, which is not necessarily Westminster Bridge, we are rather disposed to read the line of Wordsworth thus—

Dear God! the Heads of houses seem asleep!

And this moral survey certainly does set our flesh crawling, and hair stirring, and our whole frame trembling with agitation.

There are idlers and dangerous classes in the West as well as in the East of great cities. Vice and vagabondage are the offspring of affluence no less than of poverty; and we can't afford to allow the natural guardians of the social commonwealth to be

slumbering at their posts of duty. Heads of houses asleep are elements of social danger. We must have these narcotic Poppy-headed people awake—alive to the responsibilities of their position, and thoroughly well instructed in the first principles of Parental obligation.

Now you would scarcely think that that shrewd-looking old gentleman, Mr. Closefist Gripecash, is a Poppy-head,—that he is not wide awake to his own and family's interest. All his life he has been speculating, scheming, investing, and with such success that he hardly knows the magnitude of his income. He has a large family, and his ambition is to make them all independent people, and embalm his own memory as the builder of splendid fortunes for his children. His idea is that money is the alpha and omega of human blessedness.

That bulky-looking gentleman on his right, who assumes such an air of self-complacency and importance, is another Poppy-head—Puffy Fatbull, Esq., of Bashan Manor, a successful merchant, with one

sole ambition—that of founding a family—and hence he intends to leave the bulk of his property to his eldest son, Puffy Fatbull, jun., a frivolous, addle-headed, sensual fop about town, who hopes to inherit also a baronetcy, which his father intends to purchase at the expense of his sisters and younger brothers.

That diminutive sharp-featured gentleman a little farther back, is also a Poppy-head, —he has a large family of children, whom he brings up on the most rigid principles of parsimonious economy, cutting down the educational item of expense to the lowest possible figure, and indulging as rarely as possible in the smallest luxury, especially the luxury of a beneficent disposition. You recognise him as an old occupant of that family pew, Mr. Kensall Green, of Necropolis House, Malgravia. He has but one idea,—that of making a splendid exit out of the world. All his concern is what he shall die worth. His one absorbing ambition is to make a magnificent will,—to leave behind him a monstrous estate,—and to

make a sensation when the blinds are drawn down, and he is lying, cold and unconscious, in a back room, awaiting his interment.

There are many Poppy-headed persons of affluent circumstances and easy competence whom we could name as examples of the astounding folly of living with the supreme object of endowing their heirs, but who seem not to have the faintest notion of what a real substantial endowment is.

If the Gripecashes and Fatbulls, sen., and Kensall Greens could but lift up their Poppy-heads and peep out of Hades, and see the ducks and drakes that their descendants are indulging in with their carefully-hoarded wealth, how woebegone would they look, and what consummate asses would they think themselves. Hades is pretty thickly populated with asinine heads of houses, who, if that intermediate state is one of consciousness, are wide-awake enough now.

What is wanted, however, is that parental sires should shake off the narcotic influences of the poppy and be wide-awake in this world. We cordially approve of

the endowment idea,—we justify the parental anxiety to do the best possible thing for its dependent offspring,—a man is bound to provide for his own, especially for those of his own household; but then let him take care that the endowment and provision are of the right kind.

Let us take an illustration of parental wisdom and responsibility from the instincts and habits of that noble animal and king of birds—the eagle. In an old chronicle of an ancient people we are told that they had been treated as the eagle treats her young, when she "stirreth up her nest, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings,"—a beautifully poetic and suggestive example of parental duty. This is the habit of the maternal eagle when the eaglets are fledged and sufficiently grown to leave the nest. By stirring up and discomposing the comfort of the nest she virtually says to her sons and daughters—Now then, turn out. She does not allow them any longer than is absolutely necessary to nestle in idle comfort and depend upon her. She does

not pluck out her feathers and scatter them about the nest with the foolish notion that the little ones are to snugly nestle in them for life, but she spreads abroad her ample pinions and flutters over her brood, rising up in mimic flights above the nest, to teach them to do the same. Then she takes them in turns on her back, soaring aloft into the face of the sun, shakes them off, and sweeps down beneath them, to accustom them to their natural element and the use of their wings; and thus she daily disciplines them till they are no longer timid and dependent and she can trust them to fly alone. That's the idea—stirring up the nest when the young birds are fledged,—disturbing the despicable nest-feeling as soon as the wings are formed and the strength is equal to active personal exertion in the natural element of life. That's the idea—training them up to go abroad and get their own living, and make their own way in the world, and achieve their own independence.

The lesson is a very obvious one to you Poppy-heads—you heads of houses. Your

common-sense duty is to educate thoroughly well, to the utmost of your ability, all your sons and daughters, endow them with knowledge and understanding, give them occupation and a taste for industry,—set your sons up in some profession or business, and qualify your daughters by a liberal culture for the position in life which they may naturally expect to fill, or a position of respectable independency in the event of a reverse of fortune, or the necessity of falling back on their own personal resources. That kind of thing is a real endowment, and an economical one too. That is plainly your parental duty. It is not your parental duty to send abroad into society a lot of empty-headed, frivolous, millinery-loving girls, and a herd of booby, idle, self-indulgent, spendthrift fellows, and to back them with resources for the indulgence of their vanity and powers of mischief. That is not your duty either to them or to society. Besides you yourselves have social as well as parental duties, and you have no right to tie up all your resources and deprive yourselves of the

means and the personal satisfaction of doing some substantial good in your generation. Society has its claims as well as the family, and many of these claims are very miserably responded to through the plea of family interests, which are neither understood nor properly respected by those Poppy-headed people who work and save to leave their children the evil inheritance of a life of indolence, recklessness, and vanity.

Now do wake up, you Poppy-heads, in the bright sunshine of common sense and the healthful feeling of your proper parental obligations. Stir the nest, and teach your fledglings the use of their wings. They are dangerously snug, and wont know how to fly when you have folded your feathers and gone to your rest. Wake up, wake up, you have slept too long already,—it is time to—

[Here we awoke, with a feeling that we had overslept. No one was stirring, and the sun

was high up in the heavens. It was the morning following the servants' party, and they had overslept too.]

SERMON IX.

À LA MODE.

"I now begin to see my vanity
Shine in this glasse, reflected by the foile!
Where is my fashioner? my feather-man?
My linnenner? perfumer? barber? all?"

B. JONSON.

"Why should they not continue to value themselves for this outside fashionableness of the taylor or tire-woman's making, when their parents have so early instructed them to do so."

LOCKE.

"I'll be at charges for a looking-glass,
And entertain a score or two of taylors,
To study fashions to adorn my body."

SHAKESPERE.

TALK of tyranny! where will you find a more vexatious, intolerant, universal, and yet withal ridiculous tyranny than that capricious

thing called Fashion? Who, or what is Fashion? Is it a real flesh-and-blood entity, a high-state functionary invested with absolute authority to cut and mould the outside of both sexes of a community after his own individual taste or fancy? Is it a secret insidious influence which steals over the senses of men and women, and sets them all dreaming in the world's broad daylight, that uniformity in external appearance is a first and last duty of social existence? Is it some Puck or other humorous demon who has survived the old exorcisms, and indulges his sportive pranks with the vestmental integuments, since it is not now permitted to demons to perpetrate more serious injuries on the more sensitive persons of mankind,—a sort of devil among the tailors—the genius of mischief among the modistes and milliners? Who, or what is Fashion? Custom, you say,—the prevailing taste or caprice in the style of personal attire. Just so, but that is only another name for the same entity, influence, demon, or whatever else it may be. This question of Fashion is a very profound social problem. It has a veritable existence and exerts a very potent social sway,

and therefore, whether it has a natural or a nonsensical history, it certainly lives and rules in our midst, and with a licence and authority which society acknowledges and obeys.

It is our decided opinion that Fashion is a pathological phenomenon—a form of social disease, an unintermittent fever of ever-varying symptoms, both endemical and epidemical, contagious and infectious. It is enveloped in all the mystery, and possesses all the attributes of disease. This much is certain about it, that it always makes its first appearance among the titled and wealthy classes of society. It is emphatically the disease of social dignity. It descends through all the lower grades of a community, because all, in greater or less degree, and according to, and even in defiance of, their means, aptitudes, and conveniences, affect their betters, and are profoundly gratified when their betters affect them, even with their diseases. Pathology explains all the phenomena of fashion, that is, so far as pathology can explain anything of the nature, genesis, and diffusion of morbid affections.

A history of Fashion with pictorial illustrations, dear votaries of Modus, would be one of

the most curious and entertaining chapters in social history. Of all caricaturists of poor human nature, Fashion has been the most unmerciful. It has indulged the most rampant and rollicking humour under the gravest demeanour of good faith and complimentary feeling towards the victims of its satirical truculency. The comical thing is that every generation is very serious and perfectly satisfied, and on the very best terms with its special fashions, while the next generation cannot read of or look at their portraitures without cracking their sides with laughter, or commiserating their artificially imposed miseries, or blushing for their unconscious or designed immodesty. And the next generation will laugh at us, and with some reason too,—though we may honestly confess that taste and convenience in dress are in the general better consulted in our days than in times past. But perhaps we, like our forefathers and foremothers, are under the dominant influence of that ridiculous gravity and self-complacency which we wonder and are amused at in them. Really it is very provoking to be the victims of this mischievous genius of Fashion, and most mortifying to think that

all our photographic ingenuity and our prized cartes de visite will some future day furnish another illustrated page in the volume of the freaks of Fashion, and turn up just to afford fun and laughter to posterity.

All nations, civilized and barbarous, have their fashions; but you will not expect us to extend our survey over the wide world, or wander even so far as the Continent of Europe in search of illustrations of the capriciousness of personal dress and decoration; our own country, you will allow, supplies abundant materials for the pen of satire and the pencil of caricature.

The fashions of dress in the fourteenth century, you will probably remember, were very extravagant and singularly grotesque, and Chaucer's Parson, a very plain-spoken cleric, in the "Canterbury Tales" describes them with a minuteness which will interest and amuse the curious. He censures with clerk-like gravity, among other animadversions, the indecencies of that age, in which the dress of gentlemen, on account of its close fit to their persons, served rather to expose than conceal their nudity. We can't quote the Parson here, he is too descriptive.

In Richard the Second's time the nobility were insufferably conceited of their persons; they wore cloth of gold tissue; and a courtier of that period had changes of these costly suits for every week in the year. Queen Elizabeth possessed the habits of all nations, and left behind her a wardrobe of some thousands of different dresses. *Vivant exuviae Reginae!*

Taste is a very capricious thing at all times, and therefore the oddities of dress in different periods, both of beaux and belles, are rather matters of observation than surprise; but personal convenience and comfort are so naturally considered by most people, that it is wonderful indeed when we read of persons of both sexes arraying themselves in such a preposterous style that it was scarcely possible for them to sit, or walk, or even stand in a natural posture. A beau in the reign of Elizabeth wore puffed breeches of such an enormous magnitude that he required the standing or sitting-room of three persons; and a belle, having effectually concealed her head in a huge standing-up ruff made rigid with wire, lengthened her waist with a bodice extending nearly to her knees, and puffed out the few remain-

ing inches of her skirt with a hoop farthingale, and thus resembled the letter Y on the top of a tub. In the early part of the 15th century shoes were worn so long-pointed that it was impossible to move in them until they were gathered up and fastened by cords or chains to the knees. At another time they were made so broad at the toes that a royal edict was issued forbidding their breadth to extend beyond six inches. The Government—just imagine the fun of the thing—had occasionally to interfere in the matter of dress, and persons were officially appointed to stand at the several City gates and cut off, *vi et armis*, any superfluities in the personal attire of pedestrians which violated the prescribed code.

Fashions have originated in very whimsical and ludicrous circumstances. The daughter of a Spanish monarch—'tis an old story—had made a rash vow not to change her linen till the successful completion of a siege. The siege lasted three years, and the discoloured state of her nether clothing became the fashionable tinge for ladies' linen. A Dauphin of France had a deformed shoulder, and wore a full-bottomed wig to conceal it, and thus in-

troduced a long-prevalent style of artificial head-dress for gentlemen, both in France and England. Long-pointed shoes were first worn by a Plantagenet King of England to hide an awkward protuberance on his foot. A lady in the reign of Edward VI. covered a too conspicuous wen on her neck with a piece of black plaster, and thus set the fashion of patches. A foreign princess, remarkable for the fairness of her complexion and the lightness of her modesty, introduced the fashion of leaving the neck and shoulders bare, a practice which was most licentiously indulged in the reign of Charles II., as you may have seen in Lely's portraits of the belles of that period. The Puritan divines of Charles's reign were very severe in their censures of the immodesty of the ladies of his Court and their imitators in the ranks of fashionable and even citizen society. Naked breasts and shoulders were a great scandal to the Puritan clergy.

Even such a hasty and superficial review as we have taken of this subject is sufficient to fortify us in our conclusion that Fashion, which ought properly to belong to the realm of art, and be subject to the principles of a chastened

taste and well-defined rules, has, in a very considerable degree, been a mere pathological development—the irruption and multiform manifestation of a disordered condition of the imaginations, feelings, judgments, and personal independence of a community. The fact that Fashion is but another name for custom in the matter of costume, is proof that not reason, convenience, or the principles of taste have been consulted in its temporary adoption and establishment, but that it is wholly due to vulgar imitation and servility.

Fashion is a most fickle thing, and in one or other detail is always undergoing change. We have seen not a few changes in our time. A while since our ladies were stuffed out with the iron hoops of crinoline—which now stuck up behind, and now before, and now swinging round and round bruised the unprotected limbs of those peg-top caricatures into which our gentlemen of *le beau monde* had converted themselves. At one time bonnets opened with the broad expansion of a fan, at another became closed up like a coal-scuttle, again rose up into a perpendicular peak, again fell down on the back of the head, and now sit in almost

imperceptible dimensions like a saddle on the crown. Now the hair is crimped à la Egyptienne, now it hangs down in long tails after the Chinese fashion, now—and how ineffably frightful!—it is gathered up like a huge abscess or fungus, ycleped a chignon, at the back of the poll. With the disuse of crinoline the long trailing draggle-skirts again sweep the public pathways and gather up the refuse of our dirty streets. A lady of fashion at the present time, with her fantastic points,—saddle bonnet, and extended cerebellum, is worthy to stand beside the oddities of any age, and resembles more than anything else the fitting spouse of a conventional stage motley. Depend upon it the time will come when your ridiculous swallow-tail dress coats, your tasteless trousers of every cut, and your ugly and uncomfortable chimney-pot hats, will afford objects for satire, and astonish and amuse the better taste and ideas of convenience of a future generation.

Nature, which has conferred on woman the ornament of luxuriant hair, has bestowed on men the grace of facial hair. Common sense has convinced most in our day that there is no more reason why a man should shave close than

that a woman should cut off her ornamental tresses. So the moustaches and beards again have it, and the razor is handed back to the barber-surgeon, to be laid up with other dreaded instruments of which the diseased liabilities of humanity may occasionally require the assistance. But Fashion imperils every detail of personal attire, and sets at defiance taste, convenience, common sense, and everything else. If some one high up the social inclined plane should unfortunately be denied the hirsuteness of his sex, beards may once again become barbarous; or, if some leading lady in the world of fashion should unfortunately require padding, and may get it into her head that hips as comparatively big as a spider's are the normal features of female beauty of form, we may be visited again with cushions, bustles, farthingales, and other preposterous devices of the milliner's art, for society is like a flock of sheep in its decisions about costume, and men and women will look up and follow their leaders. Men will take to full-bottom wigs, and women to full-bottom skirts, or any other fashionable monstrosity, and never trouble themselves about the misfortune or

caprice to which they may be indebted for them. Follow my leader is the imperial edict of society in the matter of dress, and Fashion is the final result.

Ladies and gentlemen, we know of only one remedy for the cure of this pestilent disease of Fashion, which plays such fantastic tricks with our poor docile persons, and this is, that we should all set up for ourselves on the common-sense principle of the individuality of the individual. Is it not monstrous that the excessive occipital development of some lady or ladies of the *beau monde* should induce all the fair sex to imitate that deformity, and look so grossly philo-progenitive, as the phrenologists would say, as if they were all bidding for husbands and promising to reward them with large families? Beware of your long fantastic skirt points, ladies, for there is no forecasting the freaks of Fashion, and if petticoats should be pointed too you may exhibit more points than probably you may care to discover. If ladies at the bidding of Fashion have exposed their shoulders and bosoms, there is no knowing what they may wish to show next. "Have exposed," do we

say? Why, only the other day the Paris correspondent of a fashionable paper describes what he saw "at a *fête*, graced by all that is elegant, refined, and aristocratic," in that city. "Now for the dress," he says. "Well, there is nothing to describe till you get very nearly down to the waist." Nothing to describe? Just so, nothing! The ladies were nude thus far; the bust was positively bare! Dress began a little above the waist, and was scarcely more than a matter of skirts. The taste of ladies in civilized Europe is not much in advance of that of the poor African who thought himself admirably attired in a stand-up collar and top-boots. There are some gentlemen who think their "buttokes behind," as Chaucer's Parson phrased it, the most comely part of their persons, but it is not every gentleman who cares, by the adoption of tailless coats, to suggest "the hinder part of the sche ape in the fulle of the moone." Your persons are really not safe, ladies and gentlemen, under the dominion of Fashion,—you have no security for the taste and comfort, and even the decency of your persons, while you suffer yourselves to be the helpless victims of its

caprices, and consent to be mere lay figures in the hands of your tailors and milliners. Take this matter of dress into your own hands; copy what commends itself to your own tastes and judgments, and if you can't copy with confidence and satisfaction, invent, dare to be original, singular, anything but the slave of Fashion. Taste and comfort will atone for originality or singularity, but Fashion makes no amends for its fantastic humours, and the misery and ridicule it inflicts. Set your face like a flint against Fashion, if you don't wish to be made fools of and to forfeit your self-respect.

[We awoke, and wondered what set us dreaming about Fashion. A glance at our clerical habit, and especially our episcopal apron, which it was time to don, excited within us some feeling of the ridiculous.]

SERMON X.

Preached before the Honourable Guild of Usurers, *in their Hall of Mammon, Pluto's Rents, Blackfriars.*

"He lends out money gratis, and brings down
The rate of Usance here with us in Venice.
*   *   *   *   *
and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls Interest: Cursed be my tribe
If I forgive him."

Shylock.

'Tis sad, Shylock, most sad; we pity your sorrows, poor old man. What Fates or

hostile gods planted that thorn Antonio in Venice to harass you with his "low simplicity?" Ah! rate him well, since now it seems he needs your help.

Say this:—

> "Fair Sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
> You spurned me such a day; another time
> You called me—dog; and for these courtesies
> I'll lend you thus much monies."

Excellent sarcasm, i'faith! Virtuous irony! Your turn has come, old, much-wronged usurer, and you deal your measure of noble retaliation right deftly. So may it hap to all Antonios!

Friends of the tribe of Shylock, worthy descendants of the Prince of Usurers, you chuckle at this; we see this pleases you. So would you have it, so bitingly retort on the Antonios of your day! Happily for your craft and comfort, Antonio is not an every-day man, who hates all usury as he hates the devil, and neither lends nor borrows upon advantage. It would turn the world upside down and shake all usurers off its surface,—which the gods forbid!—if all men turned Antonios, and set up

the maxims of vulgar humanity against the honourable laws of usury. Why he has the effrontery to say that usury is the commerce of enemies. Hear him:—

> "If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
> As to thy friends;
> But lend it rather to thine enemy."

He calls it the invention of malignity, the keenest weapon for dealing the wounds of revenge; he makes it the foil of everything kind and generous, and in his low simplicity asks,

> "When did friendship take
> A breed for barren metal of his friend?"

Friendship, forsooth! Friendship's a fool. Will friendship put money in your purse,—cause it to breed and bring forth some twenty, some sixty, and some a hundred-fold? Does friendship say to the scant coffer, be fruitful and multiply? Should not everything be fruitful after its kind, and is not money a kind—a very fruitful kind, and is not usury the natural soil of its fertility? Friendship, forsooth! Why, look you now, what friendship does when it crosses the path of usury

and spurns it from the way, it violates one of the first principles of political economy; it says to that root of all good,—money,—lie there and rot; to money, bright, beneficent, prolific money,—lie there and rust. A fig for your political economists, who talk of money as a mere medium for facilitating exchanges. The grand use of money is as an article of commerce,—a commodity of legitimate trade,—for the purpose of creating the honourable and elevating industry of money-dealing. Now, friendship comes between the money-dealer and his customer, spoils his trade, and deprives him of his rightful profits. It is rank heresy,—an undermining of the faith of every sound financier. Well may your souls loathe friendship, O, ye usurers, as ruinous to your vocation,—the very atheism of your sublime worship. In vain do we seek,—so transparent is your consistency,—for the faintest trace of this ruinous disturbing vice of friendship in you. You have bruised the head of that serpent and delivered your souls from its venom. You have thoroughly assured yourselves that there must be no parleying with friendship, and have

effectually closed the avenues to your heart against its insinuating encroachment. You do well, for if you take it to your bosom it will dangerously humanize you, and poison the very life of your profession. There is nothing germane to usury in the effeminacy of friendship,—it is a weakness of which you are proudly innocent, and a snare from which you are securely defended.

We congratulate you, Honourable Guild of Fleecers, on the triumph of usury over the voices and impulses of humanity. We are not unmindful of the motive that has gathered you together at this time and invited us to plead your cause with an undiscriminating and ungrateful public. Of late years your reputation has declined, although the members of your profession were probably never more or so numerous as at the present time. Your canny craft are legion. You spring up in the civilization and refinement of society, like beautiful flowers in a carefully-cultivated garden. You are not the weeds, and thistles, and thorns of the wild wildernesses of the world, are you? Like a thing of beauty, you are a joy for ever. And

as to your personal respectability, it suffices that we point to the columns of the daily press, and the well-known frequency, genuineness, and candour of your advertisements. Respectable, indeed! Can any but respectable men afford to appear daily in the advertising columns of the newspapers? Do you not court the widest possible publicity? Do you shun the light and creep into corners? Nay, verily you are as demonstrative as the day. There must be some mistake. Society cannot have sufficiently made your acquaintance, to cherish any unworthy suspicions of your professional transactions. We cannot better confute the prejudice which somehow has cropped up against your unimpeachable calling, than by recommending the struggling and the needy to avail themselves of your professional assistance. Be comforted, dear Usurers, under your trials. You know it is always the fortune of merit to suffer reproach in this world. The cloud of ill-repute has rested often before upon the excellent of the earth, be not surprised therefore that it hangs darkly over you. Are you not of the excellent of the earth? Are you not

blest among the blessed? Need we remind you how your great sire, whose words are the text of this discourse, reasoned out your blessedness from the story of Jacob's party-coloured lambs? 'This,' said he, in the rapture of his felicitous argument—

> "This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;
> And thrift is blessing if men steal it not."

You know this blessing. Have you not thriven as honourably as Jacob? Have you not had your breed of party-coloured lambs? And none has touched your thrift or stole your blessing. You have it all. We mark your satisfaction in that nervous clutch. Yes, you have it all. Is not this a consolation? We are here to console as well as justify you. Nor is this all your consolation. For what is Usury but the response to a social demand—the necessary ministration to social convenience on sound principles of commercial morality. Your profession, like other inevitable callings, is the creation of a social necessity. If the necessity is a misfortune, why, look you, ye are among the world's benefactors, you have a mission to misfortune. Yes, Usury may be

written in golden characters, as the comforter of the destitute. We suggest as a motto for your office door—"The needy taken in and cared for." But why inscribe mottoes, and parade a virtue which all know so well who cross your helpful thresholds? What seeker of a loan,—that more than balm of Gilead,—has not found himself taken in by you, and cared for with that maternal anxiety which never suffers its beloved to be out of sight? How easily and insensibly does the happy borrower feel himself glide into the security of your embrace. He knows that he is bound to you by the most enduring ties. But we must not indulge this strain of panegyric. We will spare your virtuous modesty. You have your substantial satisfaction, your exceeding great reward, your sure and certain hold whether in life or death, and these suffice you.

Antonio sneered at Usury, and called it contemptuously interest. Ridiculous man! And what is interest but growth—the growth of capital? And is not growth a good thing,—a natural thing, a necessary thing? Must all things grow but money? We can afford to

be candid in a cause so clear and strong. We know how the Antonios of our time (happily they are few, but scandal has a swift wing and a shrill voice,) have toiled to dim this golden word Usury by calling it excessive interest. Excessive interest! excessive growth! Can there be odium in the abundance of what is good and natural? Does not the grain of wheat become an ear of many grains? And do not men rejoice in the heavy grain and productive harvest? Thus is it with you, ye thrifty sons of Mammon, you put the precious seed of your gold into divers soils, some of which are softer and more yielding to your plough and the rasping of your harrow, and return accordingly. If 5 per cent. is *interest*, and 10, 20, 40, 50 per cent. *usury*, does it not follow that usury is a thriftier and better thing than interest? Nay, do not applaud; restrain, we pray you, the enthusiasm of your admiration. The reasoning, we see, approves itself to you, and no doubt it will be equally convincing to all others.

By the way, that is a curious story told in a venerable Book about the upsetting of the

tables of the usurers in a certain temple. The original is in Greek. Translations are not always correct. There was great confusion, you will remember at the time, from sheep and oxen with their drovers running about in all directions. *You* will naturally think that *they* upset the tables of those honest men. That, indeed, was quite possible in such a mêlée. It is a curious fact, however, that scholars say the English is an accurate version of the Greek.

Only one word in conclusion. If that excellent man, Shylock, who showed so much respect for the letter of his bond, was cheated of his pound of flesh by that hair-splitting impostor, Portia, whom you know was only a sham counsel, with no knowledge of law, *you* and all your tribe have had many a pound of flesh since, haven't you? *You* have picked humanity to the bone. *You* have provided for the bleeding in the bond, eh! Ha! ha! ha! It is not seemly to laugh in a sermon, but you know we are not conventional; and 'tis such a capital joke! Usury, as many a poor bleeding creature knows, is good

interest, but it is a good joke too, eh! Ha! ha! ha!

[Our laughing awoke us. It was just half-past three, so we composed ourself again to sleep. The same audience was before us in our dream, but our humour had altogether changed.]

Ha! ha! ha! Yes, we join in the mocking laugh against you, miserable old Shylock. At him again, Gratiano, thou canst not be too incisive; cut deeper still; bleed him, Gratiano, bleed him, the Court awards it. Give me my principal and let me go, do you say, wretched old usurer? No, no, only the bond, Shylock. The surgeon to stop his wounds lest he do bleed to death was not so nominated in the bond, was it Shylock? You could not find the surgeon, he was not in the bond, was he? There, Shylock, take thy pound of carrion flesh, nor more, nor less, not one drop of blood, mind,—there take thy bond.

Would that we had you all in like manner

upon the hip, ye sons of Shylock, ye sharp-featured, fawning, familiar hypocrites. Ye flesh-scrapers, ye leeches, ye blood-suckers, ye cursed brood of your horrid dam,—hideous, murderous Sin; ye vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? We look on you with detestation and loathing as the foulest brood of hell. Money, money, money! that's your gluttonous shriek. Take it with all your deeds and assignments, your bonds and bills of sale, and gorge your rapacious maw, and groan with the pangs of a retributive repletion. Ah! writhe, wince, wriggle, roll up your snaky spires, show your venomous fangs, hiss, ye horrible reptiles, society spurns you and tramples you in the dust, and spits upon you as of all sinuous, creeping, crawling things the most accursed. Aroynt, ye harpies, ye obscene fowls, ye noisome birds of prey, the stench of your presence is sickness and death to us. Hie ye to your haunts, where the eye cannot reach you, and the memory of you is forgotten. May the veil of a heavy darkness

weigh upon you and cover you with the shadow of death!

"Ay! kennel, puddle, sink; whose filth and dirt
Troubles the silver spring where England drinks.
Now will I dam up this thy yawning mouth,
For swallowing the treasure of the realm.
And ye
Against the senseless winds shall grin in vain,
Who, in contempt, shall hiss at thee again:
And wedded be ye to the hags of hell.
By devilish policy are ye grown great,
And, like ambitious Sylla, overgorg'd
With gobbets of your country's bleeding heart."

Fiends! Vampires! Spawn of ——

[Here again we awoke in a state of considerable excitement, and not wishing any further intercourse with the Usurers we arose and wrote out our dream.

We can only account for this dream about Shylock, and our capricious discourse to Usurers, by the circumstance that we had been reading just before retiring to rest Hood's Poems of "Wit and Humour." In his

"Etching Moralized" occurs the following stanza:—

"So in worldly affairs, the sharp-practising man
Is not always the one who succeeds in his plan,
Witness Shylock's judicial exposure;
Who, as keen as his knife, yet with agony found,
That while urging his *point* he was losing his *ground*,
And incurring a fatal disclosure."]

SERMON XI.

CANDYTUFTS.*

1st Lord—What time o'day is 't, Apemantus?
Apemantus—Time to be honest.
Timon of Athens.

THAT's not a civil answer. It is just such an answer as you might properly give to a sus-

* This title is not adopted with any botanical propriety. The genus of plants *Iberis*, popularly called Candytufts, in allusion, probably, to their original habitat Candia, has nothing whatever to do with the subject of our dream-sermon. The name, we presume, was capriciously chosen, since both the words *Candy* and *tuft* occur in the nomenclature of flattery, as, for example, in Shakspeare's "candied-tongue" and in the compound word "tuft-hunter," a cant term in our national Universities to describe a hanger-on to noblemen and persons of quality, and derived from the tuft in the academical cap of the latter.

picious-looking tramp who asked the time o'day with his fist clenched, and prompted you to seize the other end of your stout oaken stick, in the instinct of self-preservation. Apemantus was not civilly disposed, he was a cynical churlish Athenian—a snappish, sour-tempered philosopher, who went about to mend the manners of his countrymen in a very ill-mannered way, and rather provoked than purified their ill-blood. There are, however, some transparent contemptibles in the world to whom it is not very easy to be civil, and Apemantus met with a couple in those two Athenian lords who accosted him in the hall in Timon's house—"glib and slippery creatures,"—smooth, complimentary, fawning people, who "tender down their services to Lord Timon," whose

> "large fortune
> Upon his good and gracious nature hanging,
> Subdues and properties to his love and tendence
> All sorts of hearts,"

so long as the fortune is large, and hangs upon the "good and gracious nature of its owner," but

"When Fortune in her shifts and change of mood,
Spurns down her late belov'd, all his dependents,
Which labour'd after him to the mountain's top,
E'en on their knees and hands, let him slip down,
Not one accompanying his declining foot."

Timon was a rich man, and a very generous man too, but somewhat too accessible to the many hangers on his bounty. Only the rich and powerful enjoy the homage of flattery and fawning:—

"Why should the poor be flattered?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,
Where thrift may follow fawning."

Poverty has at least one advantage—it hears the truth, somewhat too bluntly, indeed, for the solace of its poor wounded sensibilities, but yet it hears the truth, and that is no small advantage. Poor people meet with a good share of the world's candour,—not very comforting, it is true, but yet it is candour,—plain, out-spoken, nothing-for-you, can't-help-you words, and that is something. They know where they are, what they are, and with whom they have to do. They live and move in the daylight,—cold, cheerless it may be,—but yet

it is daylight. Even that's better than living and moving in the glare of artificial light, which may go out in a moment and leave you in sudden darkness. Poverty has its compensations, and that is no mean compensation which can say, "The world is candid with me, plain, and straightforward, says No! and means it." That No! is not a tithe so cutting and disappointing as the feigned regrets and excuses with which base ingratitude or hollow friendship apologizes for and sugars over its refusal. The reminiscences of poverty are not of a confectionary world, of counterfeit men and women, of fawning compliments and flattering attentions. Poverty has, at least, been spared these chafing memories. We congratulate you, Poverty,

> "Thy nature did commence in suff'rance, Time
> Hath made thee hard in 't. Why shouldst thou
> hate men?
> They never flattered thee."

Flatteries are the courtesies of sneaking self-interest,—the bon-bons of sugar, paint, and tinsel, with which people who have an object in view, endeavour to tickle the vanity of the

frivolous and weak,—the savoury concealments of bitter jealousy or sour envy,—the bouquets of dazzling beauty and fragrance in which the poisonous asp lurks,—flatteries are never friendly—never well-meant,—they are always insincere and selfish—false and designing,—mendacious and mercenary,—hollow and treacherous. The victims of flattery are always people of some measure of consideration,—people of social influence,—of wealth, who may be turned to some account. Timon was a man of substance,—a large-hearted, open-handed man,—a man who never denied himself to others, who took his friends' burdens on his own back, helped them out of their embarrassments, feasted them. Of course he had plenty of friends—fawning, cringing, candied-tongue, flattering friends,—friends who fed and fattened themselves on his lavish prodigality, and fell away from him when they had emptied and eaten him up.

> "The swallow follows not summer more willing,
> than we your lordship."

Very true. His lordship quite understands this now, and therefore replies:—

"Nor more willingly leaves winter; such summer
birds are men."

He lived to know and curse his friends, and to hate every man for their sakes.

"Timon will to the woods; where he shall find
The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.
The gods confound (hear me, you good gods all,)
The Athenians both within and out that wall!
And grant, as Timon grows, his hate may grow
To the whole race of mankind, high and low!
Amen."

When a man comes to pray in this fashion, he has tasted the quintessence of gall,—has been mortally stung,—bitten with a furiously rabid fang,—burnt with an iron at white heat,—probed to the marrow. If flattering, fawning friendship can provoke men naturally gentle and generous so to pray,—then beware of fawning, flattering friends; covet not to be rich, you do but sugar over your life for the flies of flattery to scent you out and stick to you.

"O the fierce wretchedness that glory brings us!
Who would not wish to be from wealth exempt,
Since riches point to misery and contempt?

Who'd be so mocked with glory? or to live
But in a dream of friendship?
To have his pomp, and all what state compounds,
But only painted, like his varnished friends?
Poor honest lord! brought low by his own heart;
Undone by goodness! Strange, unusual blood,
When man's worst sin is, he does too much good!
Who then dares to be half so kind again?
For bounty, that makes gods, does still mar men.
My dearest lord,—bless'd, to be most accurs'd,
Rich, only to be wretched,—thy great fortunes
Are made thy chief afflictions. Alas, kind lord!
He's flung in rage from this ungrateful seat
Of monstrous friends."

Everybody condemns flattery and denounces it as a vice, and yet, curiously enough, notwithstanding this common consent, everybody more or less toys with and encourages it. It is like those attractive and dainty dishes which nobody thinks it prudent to touch, but which everybody nevertheless does touch, and sometimes very freely indulges in. Despite the moral sentiment about it, flattery is known to be agreeable to most people; and an agreeable vice, like a fashionable foible, is readily condoned. A girl likes to be credited with a pretty face, a pretty foot, a sweet voice, a faultless taste, or any other enviable lady-like

quality or accomplishment, whether she possesses them or not. A man's self-esteem is pleasurably fostered when he is flatteringly complimented on the smartness of his wit, the brilliancy of his conversation, the acuteness of his intellect, or anything else of the reputation of which he is ambitious. Men and women like compliments, and flattery is always studiously complimentary;—they enjoy flirtation, and flattery is an exquisite coquette;—there is a delicious tingle and thrill in a lively self-complacency, and flattery stimulates this pleasant emotion and is intensely sensational. The fact is, flattery is a social demand, and therefore what people invite and are ready to reward, is sure to be responded to by an abundant supply. There is not a taste, whether reasonable or ridiculous, which may not be catered for and pandered to. The epicure who is not satisfied with the *repertoire* of his cook's professional skill can have it expanded and embellished to any *recherche* extent. If he has a relish for rottenness, and pronounces putrefaction palatable, he may be regaled by an endless variety of nasty abomination. All the moralists and sa-

tirists in the world will not correct the pleasant vices and freakish tastes of people. The epicure may be confounded, but he will not be converted, by the satirical query of Pope—

> "By what criterion do you eat, d' ye think,
> If this be prized for sweetness, that for stink?"

And the *gourmand* of flattery will indulge in his dish, and find plenty of people ready to serve it up, provided they get paid for their flunkeyism.

Then of what avail is our diatribe against flattery? None whatever. Flattery, like any other article of commercial value, is regulated by the economical law of supply and demand. People of both sexes and of all ages like flattery, and by a variety of little artifices are constantly inviting it. If it does not come spontaneously, they'll provoke it by turning flatterers themselves. It is the most deliciously tickling condiment with which self-complacency delights to regale its taste. We spoil the world's sweetest confection when we rail against flattery. The flattered and the flatterer will hate us as cordially as the Athenians hated Apemantus. Then why touch this tit-bit of

the common social luxury? Only because we are somewhat crochetty in our moral leanings, are in some measure philanthropical in our tastes and feelings; and the clock of time, we fancy, has long since struck the hour which marks the occasion for mutual honesty. That is all. We happen to like candour, straightforwardness, and plain-dealing, and every form of flattery, from the most trivial and playful onwards to its grosser and more mercenary manifestations, is a very degrading vice and a mischievous social evil. Complimentary people may be very agreeable, and may be constitutionally benevolent, but they indulge in a bad habit, and their friendship is of a very flimsy texture. Blarney, Flummery, and Soft-sawder are humourous fellows, but they are sly, dishonest rogues, unworthy the entertainment of honest folk. Wheedle, Spaniel, and Fawner, are insinuating, amorous, coaxing beings, but they are a selfish, contemptible lot. Honey-tongue, Mealy-mouth, and Smooth-face, are an unctuous fraternity, but their attentions are too oily not to be defiling. Lick-spittle,

Slaver, and Bespatter, are excessively and disagreeably moist. Servile, Fulsome, and Courtier are very degraded rascals. Toady, Hanger-on, Flunkey, Tuft-hunter, and Parasite are a sneaking, beggarly set; and Sycophant, who, etymologically values you at a fig, is a disgusting anthropophagus, who is looking out for opportunities of making a meal of you. Flattery is a genus of which there are many species,—a paterfamilias with a very large family, in all of whom may be traced a common characteristic likeness. Selfishness is their distinguishing moral quality, and self-seeking is the impulse and end of all their contemptible industry. They have a keen canine scent for profit,—*odora canum vis*—and belong to that despicable race whose common motto is, *Lucri bonus odor ex quâlibet re*, which may be freely rendered by the following couplet:—

> "There's a fragrance in Gain which appeals to our
> sense,
> And ne'er puts our conscience to any expense."

We should be a great benefactor to our race if we could hit upon some practical

method of ridding society of the whole tribe of fawning, cringing people, who thrive by the dishonest arts of fulsome adulation and mean obsequiousness. Of all forms of lying, flattery is the most barefaced and impudent. Why not make it penal? Is it not of the nature of battery and assault? It has the effrontery to attack your understanding and hoodwink your common sense. Is it not a kind of burglary, when it breaks in upon the privacy of your individuality and drags you off by the nose of your self-complacency? Is it not a pickpocket, when it engages your vanity that it may slyly insinuate its hand into the bosom of your generosity? Is it not an utterer of base coin, when it endeavours to pass off upon you what it knows to be counterfeit? Is it not that species of crime which is legally termed false pretences, by which some substantial advantage is acquired by means of fraudulent representations? Does it not come under the laws of bribery and extortion, since it barters an illicit *quid pro quo*, and under the plausibility of a fair title takes what is not due?

Is it not—to extend the catalogue no farther—downright robbery with violence, inasmuch as it takes its victim in the moment of his weakness, and by causing a spasmodic surrender, enables it to carry off, by a species of force, some present or prospective benefit from the person? Why not, we repeat, make all forms and degrees of flattery penal? That is a short and easy method of dealing with this social delinquency. Let all honest men and women enrol themselves as special constables, and take by the collar or chignon, according as the delinquent may be male or female, every spaniel, toady, flunkey, soft-sawder, or whatever the species may be, and hand them over to the proper tribunals, to be dealt with according to law. We candidly confess that we despair of all moral methods of dealing with the mischief. Make it penal, and try what that will do. Let all honest people turn special constables. 'Tis time that the world was honest.

[Here we awoke, and found that it was time to get up. Our eye fell on our constable's

staff hanging-up by the bed-side, for we had been sworn in the day before for a special emergency, and by way of example to all loyal citizens.]

SERMON XII.

Nincompoops.

"How green are you, and fresh in this old world!"
Pandulph.

Ay, verdant and fresh as the young spring grass! Green? Green as a gooseberry! Ye are all gooseberries, green gooseberries; monosyllabically geese, Michaelmas geese! To drop the figure, simpletons, arrant simpletons are ye all. Who put that crotchet into your heads, ye full grown men and women, to begin the world with being natural? Have you lived so long in this old world as not to know that *a natural* is a noun of ridicule and contempt? The young innocent who has just slipped his

mother's apron strings is hailed by the tyros of his school as a natural. They ask him of his nurse, and his milk diet, and promise him the comfort of his mother's lap when the rough winds of school-life blow too rudely on him. The gentle youth whose eye lacks the keen glance of cunning and suspicion, whose heart-throbs are all generous, whose countenance is lighted up with the beams of frankness and sincerity, and who knows nothing of the great social maxim of self-interest, is a natural. The man who has faith in appearances, who believes what is spoken, who has no idea of shams and deceptions in the commerce of life, is a natural. Have ye really grown up into ripe manhood and not learnt something of the principles and practices of the good old world in which ye live? Greenhorns, lackbrains, mooncalves, ninnyhammers, are ye all.

Why look ye now what sort of a world this would be if all people were like you, raw, simple as mother's milk, unsophisticated as the babe at the breast; why the world itself would become natural! Only imagine the ridiculous thing, human life natural! Ridiculous, did we say? Nay 'tis too serious for the laughter

of ridicule. It would be a real catastrophe. Dear old mother earth would wonder what she had brought forth, and in the throes of her alarm would get out of her orbit and wander no one can imagine whither. Phœbus would withdraw his rays in astonishment, and think that some intruder had come unbidden into his planetary system to overbalance and derange his dependent spheres. Natural, alas! 'Tis well that there are no more of you,—that ye are but few, or the danger would be imminent; ye would turn the world upside down, inside out, and play old gooseberry with the constitution and course of things. You have not come a moment too soon, ye nincompoops, to have that crazy notion of being natural knocked out of your demented heads.

Now understand us plainly, and mark this that if you are hoping to make life a successful experiment you must at once and for ever eschew that verdant notion of being natural, which means being true to a utopian or theoretical nature. None but fools are utopians and theorists. Wise men are always practical. *Prudentissumus quisque negotiosus maxume erat*; that, as Sallust tells us, was the fact

among those practical people the Romans. Their wisest men were eminently practical, always keeping their eye open to the main chance. Negotiatores, mercatores, men of business. Business, that's the word. Lay that down as the basis of your creed. Business is the first practical principle of the oracles of this world, and you have to do, you know, with this world. Here you were born, and here you have to live. Your life will be a sorry superstructure if it is not firmly laid in the solid granite of business. As Hamlet says, speaking as a sensible man of the world,

> "Every man hath business, and desire,
> Such as it is."

Now business cannot do with naturals and nincompoops. It has its own ends and its own means too; and he who would compass the former, must practically acquaint himself with the latter. The code of commercial ethics is an unwritten code, but all save greenhorns and nincompoops know it by heart. There will be found the particular commandment of the precise moral complexion suited to the ends to be gained. The end, you will

bear in mind, is business—to do business. You must look at every man you meet in the light of his marketable value. If you can make nothing out of him, why, plainly, he is nothing to you. In this old world, men are just vendors of commodities,—dealers. If you see a man in any other light it is not pure daylight, you look at him through green spectacles which none but weak-sighted people ever think of using. Avoid that artificial colour green.

How you are gaping! What, not convinced yet? Must we despair of making converts of you. Go to, how do you expect to live in a world like this, if you are sceptical of its very first principles? We catch your murmurs,—"Dishonest, unfeeling, unnatural,"—eh! These are mere sentiments of another world morality—greenhorn prejudices. What have you to do with another world while you are in this? Wait till you get there, and then suit yourselves to your circumstances. We tell you flatly, if you wont receive our doctrine of practical wisdom, you may as well ship yourselves for Terra del Fuego, or join the next hopeful expedition to the North Pole and the discovery of a North-west passage.

Yes, yes, we understand those signs of dissent. A preacher, who is wide-awake like ourself, knows by a glance whether he is tickling his congregation or stroking them backwards. We know those sounds, they are not the purrings of personal satisfaction. We know all that is passing in your hairbrained heads and your soft goose-down hearts, and we will give utterance to your astonishment and indignation.

You would say that the commerce of life should be conducted with a proper measure of regard to personal interest, and which is always consistent with the interest of others; that the moment this measure is exceeded, the balance of mutual interest is unadjusted, and commerce is degraded into extortion, and calls into being the evil practices of cunning and falsehood, and all the corrupt arts of cheating and deception. Quite true; but do you not see that you are moralizing on ethical principles which are not held in honour in this world? Must we summon the shades of Pertinax Macsycophant and Giles Overreach, two worthy knights of happy memory, to prove to you that you must go with the world or go out of it altogether? The victor in this life must stoop to

conquer. He must fawn, and cringe, and smirk complacent grins, and keep a sharp look-out, and take when he can, and hold fast when he has got. He has to make his way in the world,—to mount, round by round, the ladder of success, to climb higher and higher, to get on, ay, to get on, that's the word, that's the *summum bonum* of human life, that's the inspiration and recompense of business; and there is no getting on as this world goes, if there is no management and smoothness and pliancy. You must believe in cunning and cringe, you must not be over nice about the way, if getting on is the aim and scope of your being.

Ah! yes! we heard that, too. "Shams, hypocrites, humbugs," did you say? We guess your meaning. You are moralizing again, green, pea-green, all shades of green, what hope have we of you? Why these worthies, whom you sneer at in your greenness, are the world's trump cards, they sweep all before them, and win every game. Hypocrites are the whetstones of life, they sharpen the wits of your honest men, your greenhorns, and put an edge on their dull bluntness. And

as for shams and humbugs, why you have no poetry in your prosy greensward souls, you are as flat and fresh as a shaven lawn. These are the world's good fellows,—they are the merry part of the commercial entertainment,—the farce in the serious business of life,—the pantomime and fun of the thing. Sneer at humbugs! "How green are you, and fresh in this old world!" Men like humbugs, thoroughly enjoy them, wouldn't unmask them on any account. They are the most numerous and best-fed fraternity in the whole circle of society. There are humbugs everywhere—the majority of men are humbugs. No profession or calling is without its humbugs. Statesmen, doctors, parsons, lawyers, merchants, shopkeepers—all number their fair quota of humbugs. You honest men,—you naturals, are the only exceptional people in this particular,—you have no humbugs, and therefore nobody sees you, nobody hears of you, nobody knows anything about you. You are quite in the background of modest unobtrusiveness. Look, what a pleasant popularity the thoroughgoing humbugs have. How their familiar names emblazon the hoardings and

walls of the town! How their gigantic shops yawn and stretch themselves in the public view,—glistening with glass, and gaslight, and gold! How enviably egotistical they are. What a splendid market they make of all the wise men of Gotham. These are the retail humbugs. There's not one of these stare-you-out-of-countenance fellows among ye. And then, where are your merchant humbugs, those dignified, inaccessible knowing-ones who sit in state in the remotest room of the suite, far back behind an imposing array of clerks, most of whom have "no salary the first year," and never get any salary at all, because they are always in their "first year." And your professional humbugs, where are they? Those canny practitioners who go westward and rent a room or two in a fashionable neighbourhood, and keep a lackey, and get high fees. You have none of them, you are nowhere. The humbugs have it all their own way and carry every thing before them. Hurrah, for humbugs!

Featherbrained simpletons, would that we could pause here, but your ninny naturalism is so ingrained that it betrays itself in your domestic habits and your social intercourse. You

keep up no false appearances in this world of splendidly huge shams and hypocrisies. You don't exceed your means. There's not a day nor hour of your life but you are actually solvent! Can anything be more absurdly natural and nincompoopish? And then you believe everybody is just what he seems to be, says what he thinks, and means what he says. And you, wiseacres, shine out like the harvest moon, and reveal every nook and corner of your innocent selves, and betray all the lights and shadows of your goosecap individuality,—blaze out with all the full-blown glare of a sunflower,—open out like a convolvulus with the first imaginary light and warmth of the social atmosphere, only as quickly to roll up your petals again, when you become sensible of the cold indifference and the lowering cloud of contempt with which the simplicity of your demonstrativeness is regarded. Natural, incorrigibly natural! When you meet a friend, or go into society, you seriously believe all the kind inquiries about your personal health, and that of your wife and children. You think you are really asked out because your company is so acceptable. A mere acquaintance-

ship, dear nincompoops, nothing more; you make up a circle around a self-important centre that just happens to want you to complete the spokes of the social wheel. People must have society—acquaintances,—double-knocks at the door,—occasionally well-filled drawing-rooms; they would be nobodies, like you, if they could not cram their rooms to suffocation once or twice in the year, and weld a few scores of well-dressed people into a hot uncomfortable motionless mass of perpendicular inanity. Society is just that. The fashionable season is just a round of that kind of thing. You dress, and order out your carriage, or hire a cab, to enjoy a jam and a suffocating heat or a draught, and a superficial talk with the interesting individual against whom it may be your good fortune to be thrust; and when you have been winnowed in and out again, you may just go as you came, and nobody thinks any more about you, unless it has been your good luck to tread on some sensitive toe, or on the skirt of some superfluous dress, and then you get a memento and an emphatic benison to boot. This is the humbug social, and society likes this kind of humbug. You don't like it; you can't be natural,

and yet you must be natural, 'tis your nature to be natural. You can't talk for talking-sake; you will answer kind domestic inquiries with interesting particulars,—what a time your wife had of it, and how the baby got through its teething, and what a narrow escape three of your other darlings had in a severe attack of confluent smallpox, from which they are not yet fully recovered; and you are surprised that your interesting acquaintance, at this touching communication, instinctively starts and worms himself into another part of the room, and you try to follow him, dear natural souls, to tell him another little bit of domestic interest, and you find that you can't get near him, that nobody is able to make way for you, and you get jammed closer and closer in the crush of social friendship till you can bear the crush no longer, and—

[At this moment of our unfinished discourse to nincompoops we awoke, and were sensible that we had been suffering from nightmare.]

SERMON XIII.

BACKBITERS.

"And it's, oh! that some splenetic folks I could name,
If they must deal in acids, would use but the same
In such innocent graphical labours:
In the place of the virulent spirit wherewith—
Like the polecat, the weasel, and things of that kith—
They keep biting the backs of their neighbours."

HOOD. *Etching Moralized.*

QUITE right, so say we, Thomas Hood,—acid for etching. We could heartily wish that everybody who has any nitric acid in his constitution would just reserve it for that ornamental and useful graphic art. Etching is an artistic impossibility without a powerful

corrosive, and nitric acid is just the agent for biting and eating into the copper-plate. There are raw places in abundance in a finished etching through which the aquafortis may find its way and secure its grip. Bottle up the acid of your malevolence for the purposes of etching. In the name of all that's generous and human don't pour it over the surface of your social friendships. There are many raw places there, no doubt, and your nitric acid will find them out; but men and women,—though they may have an abundant coating to conceal the metal of their true personality,—don't like the cracks in their waxen surface too curiously pried into, and nitric acid, even in dilution, will bite in wherever there's a crack, or raw place, and leave its corrosive mark. Again, we say, if you are so disagreeably organized as to secrete aquafortis, bottle it for etching purposes,—spare humanity the scarifying effects of your virulent spirit.

There are insects and animals in this world of ours which, if we did not know something about the wonderful economy of nature, we might imagine to be sent by some malevolent

being to be the special torments of others of the animal races. The gad-fly, without doubt, has some valuable qualities, but if our domestic cattle could reason about their existence they would probably conclude that they were created for no other purpose than to deposit their eggs in their poor lacerated backs, and create swellings and abscesses for their special misery. The swarm of gnats in most climates, and their more malignant fellows known as mosquitos in tropical regions, have their service in the economy of nature, but they are sore pests for all that to the human race. The poor Laplanders can scarcely venture out of their miserable cabins in their brief summer-time without smearing their faces and hands with tar as a measure of defence against the swarming myriads of gnats, and as for the West-Indians, they would be bitten to death by their cursed mosquitos, but for the precaution of their gauzes and draperies; and then when we ascend higher in the animal kingdom and come to the weasel species, the ferrets and polecats, what tyrants are they in the rabbit-warren and poultry-yard. All these insects

and animals are back-biting and blood-sucking creatures, although they are not particular where they bite, so long as they can stealthily fasten on their victim. But, good heavens! have we not social pests in sufficient abundance in human life, without men and women mimicking the malignity of the gad-flies, and gnats, and mosquitos, and playing the polecat in our midst? That any one of these noxious animals should captivate a human being and incline him or her to the imitation of its propensities, is something to marvel at. And yet some people are so captivated and so inclined. We don't call them specifically gad-flies and gnats, polecats and weasels, but generically Backbiters. They are all armed with some offensive weapon—a proboscis, a sting, or a fang,—their pleasure is to wound and inject poison, and their luxury is blood. Of all human vermin the genus backbiters are among the most loathsome, cowardly, and malignant. Do you happen to know any? Worse,—have you ever felt the irritation or agony of their furtive wound? Our duty, we know, as an ecclesiastic, is to preach

charity, but we have the heart to grant you absolution when you vent your curses on the backbiter, and, smarting under your injuries, threaten to crush such vermin beneath your feet. They are a cursed brood are backbiters, and only fit to be crushed. What! have our words caused some sensation in that back pew? No wonder, for we recognize you, you odious old woman, Mrs. Botcherby Bug. You are a nauseous backbiter, you come out in the darkness of the night, you disgusting botch-marking blood-sucker, and the odour of you is offensive in the extreme. And you, Mr. Libellouse, you are there too, you are an insinuating dirty backbiter. And Miss Aspersia Broadhint, you are a mincing tip-toe backbiter; and you, Mr. Cynical Brand, you are a snarling cur-like backbiter. And Mrs. Scandal Trumper, you are in that back pew, too, you are a sneaking circulating backbiter. You are all well-consorted, you calumnious, defamatory, foul-mouthed, bespattering, traducing tribe of backbiters;—you are the mosquitos and gad-flies, the polecats and weasels, the bugs and lice of social life.

Blood-suckers are ye all, scarifiers, and feeders on the sore places of poor suffering humanity. Ye hateful crew,

> "Thy name—thy human name—to every eye
> The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
> Exalted o'er thy less abhorr'd compeers—
> And festering in the infamy of years."

Yes, let the "human name" of these hateful vermin Backbiters "hang on high," like the ghastly head of a traitor over the city gates, "to every eye the climax of all scorn," and there let it fester and rot "in the infamy of years." Human language does not afford terms sufficiently withering to be the suitable vehicles of the loathing, detestation, and scorn with which we are affected at the very name of a backbiter. If anything in this world claims a delicate and tender handling, it is personal character. Here human nature is most sensitive and vulnerable. Character is the stipulated term, the essential condition of social existence, and hence it is instinctively guarded with the keenest jealousy. So essential indeed is it that even they, who have consciously bartered it for some selfish indulgence or gain, are constrained to resort to the arts of concealment and false

appearances, that they may not forfeit the reputation of a fair name among their fellows. Such forfeiture is absolute and irrevocable loss. Character is wealth, and is the only treasure which a man cannot afford to part with. When this is gone life is a social ostracism, moral starvation, nakedness, and the most abject beggary.

> "Good name, in man or woman, dear my lord,
> Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
> Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
> 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
> But he that filches from me my good name,
> Robs me of that which not enriches him,
> And makes me poor indeed."

That we should be indebted to that arch-villain and bloodthirstiest of all backbiters—Othello's hypocritical ancient, for this moralizing, does but serve to show how necessary is a good name in the commerce of human life. Even he must have the reputation of "honest Iago," or the villainy of his diabolical slander would have been betrayed and powerless. The devil himself must assume the purity of an angel of light, or evil would look hideous, and revolt

whom it is meant to inveigle and ruin. Only a good name passes current in the social intercourses of the world, and the knave, no less than the honest man, knows it, and will affect a virtue which he does not possess. The honest man cherishes his reputation as the solid ground of his claim to the society and friendship of his fellow men. With this he can walk erect, and look every man in the face in the consciousness of his personal integrity. The faintest breath of suspicion,—the feeblest whisper of doubt,—is like the violence of a rude shock, the sudden rush of a hurricane, on the sensitiveness of his upright soul. He feels it as a stab in a vital part, and bleeds as in a mortal agony. The conviction that his name is but slightly tarnished in the eyes of his fellows,—that he has lost, even in a small degree, their confidence and respect, will embitter every hour and minute of his life, and rob him of every satisfaction and enjoyment to which he is honestly entitled. Filch from him his good name and he is "poor indeed." He knows not how it is, but he feels that he is not held to be the same man in the circle of his

friendships, or in the sphere of his commercial or professional life as formerly. His friends are cool towards, or shy of him; his credit is shaken, his clients drop off. He is conscious of no change in himself. Has fortune then, in her proverbially fickle mood, reversed her wheel? Nothing of the kind. He is cursed with some polecat intimate—some vile back-biter who has bitten him in the dark,—he has been stung by a mosquito,—corroded by some aquafortis acquaintance. The wound may be as trivial as a gnat or- flea-bite, some alleged peccadillo; or it may be like the fatal grip of the weasel, some damning insinuation, through which the very life-blood of an honourable reputation is rapidly sucked out. Jealousy or envy of another's reputation or prosperity, wounded pride, or thwarted ambition, mere wantonness, caprice, or idle and reckless loquacity, may provoke or incline to the back-biting propensity, and mark some hapless victim for its prey. Alas! that men and women should be so ascetically disposed as to find pleasure in discovering and aggravating these mortifications;—that human nature should

secrete a corrosive acid to deface the bright metal of honest character,—and that it should be ever eagerly flowing over the surface of society to creep into the faintest scratch or flaw which some other backbiting enemy may have been successful in inflicting. How can poor victimized honesty

> "Repel a destructive so active;
> For in etching, as well as in morals, pray note
> That a little raw spot, or a hole in a coat,
> Your ascetics find vastly attractive."

The dragon-fly is a beautiful insect, and the variety and vividness of its tints, and the brilliant transparency of its delicate gauze-like wings, give it the appearance of an animated jewel of the most costly materials and consummate workmanship, as it darts in its rapid flight across the meadows on a bright summer's day. But every little boy and girl knows that it is not to be trifled with, and that the bite of its formidable mandibles is a stinging wound. There are delicate and jewelled beauties of the drawing-room too, who flutter in the sunshine of fashionable life, who very much resemble the organism and habits as well as the glittering exterior of the dragon-fly. Their maxillary

development is equally formidable, the speed of their pinions as swift, and their powers of eyesight as active and penetrating. Drawing-room dragon-flies are very beautiful to look at in the brilliancy of the social sunshine, but the boys and girls who frequent the green fields of fashion know that they are not to be trifled with either. A bevy of these beauties in the retirement of the drawing-room after dinner will indulge in a rich post-prandial feast of another kind. If the hostess happen to be a dragon-fly, you may mark the punctual promptitude with which she rises from table, and you may as infallibly distinguish every other dragon-fly by the sudden loss of interest in her partner's conversation, the frequent glances of her eye at the head of the table, and the alacrity with which she rises at the first sound of a rustling movement, and her tripping eagerness to ascend the stairs. Lingering ladies who are slow to quit the dining-room are rarely dragon-flies. Meadow Malignant has no charms for them. Here the Hon. Fanny Faintpraise and Miss Susannah Sneerwell, and old Lady Stigma, and the skittish Theresa Taintall, and

Mrs. Buzz Bruit, are all in their natural element. Meadow Malignant is a breezy sunshiny spot to the dragon-flies of polite society. Acquaintances are lawful prey here. Their judgments and tastes, their weaknesses and peculiarities, their pedigrees and alliances, their circumstances and pursuits, their morals and reputation, their courtships and expectations, will afford delicious entertainment. Fie upon you, ladies! that you should degrade your gentle natures by descending to the level of dragon-flies; and under the thin veil of an affected love of truth and candour, should indulge the base taste for calumny and scandal.

> "The dragon-fly may charm your fond eye,
> And its pinions than fairy wings lighter;
> But if without claws, it has terrible jaws,
> And belongs to the tribe of backbiter."

[A sharp pricking sensation in the back at this moment awoke us, the cause of which was instantly divined.]

SERMON XIV.

WEATHERCOCKS.

" In this mayres yere also, but the .x. yere of the kynge, and .x. day of August, a newe wedyr-cok was sette vpon the crosse of Seynt Paulys steple of Lōdon."

FABYAN. *Chronycle. Anno* 1422.

OUR modern Lord Mayors of London would think their year of office somewhat barren of incident and profit, if the chroniclers of their time thought it worth while to record that a new weathercock had been put on the top of a church-steeple in their mayoralty. But in the tenth and last year of Henry V. it was a

thing to be talked about as a matter of considerable domestic interest, and the "Chronycle of Fabyan" has preserved for us the fact that more than 400 years ago there was "a newe wedyrcok" set up on the cross of St. Paul's steeple. The Lord Mayors of our time hope for something more remarkable during their civic sovereignty than the erection of a weathercock. They can't get a baronetcy or a knighthood out of a weathercock. A seat in Parliament is within the limit of possibility, especially if the Mayor himself should happen to be the weathercock, and the state of the political wind should require the cock to crow in a particular direction.

Fabyan does not tell us when the old weathercock was set up on the cross of St. Paul's, but there was an old one, or he would not have spoken of a new one being set up. Weathercocks have a very considerable antiquity. Perhaps that ancient writer in the first century of our era alluded to weathercocks when he spoke of certain persons being "carried about by every wind of doctrine." It is certainly a weathercock figure of speech, and

we know that the cock was a domestic fowl on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

We shall not, however, go into the archæology of weathercocks. Our antiquarian researches on this point do not enable us to say anything very positive or very edifying on the subject.

The wind is a very ancient fact of this world's history, and has always been blowing from one or other point of the compass. Jason and his Argonauts would hardly dare to set sail in quest of the golden fleece; dire Ulysses and his companion heroes would scarcely venture on their Trojan expedition; the merchants of Tyre and Carthage would never have trusted their precious freights to the treacherous deep, without some mechanical contrivance for knowing which way the wind blew, and these contrivances were to all intents and purposes weathercocks. Perhaps in those days the cock was a peacock, which would have served the purpose very well, and at the same time been a mark of personal respect to that very irate lady Juno.

Our domestic male fowl has always been the

favourite form of a vane. Its diminutive head, unburdened with any considerable quantity of brain, and the noble tuft of tail which it carries, seem naturally to have suggested it as a very suitable form to be the sport of the fitful winds. Weathercocks must never carry any weight in their forepart: they only want expansion and weight behind. A weathercock is nothing if not caudal.

Apropos of weathercocks, a friend of ours once told us that all the memories of his childhood were associated with a bright gilt weathercock perched on the top of the stable premises. He verily believes that he and his brothers and sisters dreamt about that gilt weathercock every night of their lives. The domestic happiness or discomfort depended every day on that weathercock. It was just distinguishable by getting close into the right-hand corner of the breakfast-room window, and regularly every morning his eccentric old father, before sitting down to breakfast, would put on his spectacles and shuffle into the window-corner to look which way the cock's head stood, and the direction of that cock's head decided the domestic

expectations and measure of comfort for that day. That cock controlled the temper of the old gentleman every day of his life. They soon learnt which was the ominous and which the fortunate look-out of the gilt cock, and never a morning passed but the right-hand corner of the breakfast-room window was invaded by mamma and the seven youngsters, not one of whom lost a glance at the gilt cock before the old gentleman made his appearance. They were all grave or gay as the cock might happen to turn his head, and the old gentleman himself could very soon tell before putting on his spectacles whether the cock was looking in a right quarter or not. The rheumatism, or sharp twinges of the gout, and the usual temper of old gentlemen corresponding with those ailments always declared themselves when the family circle looked serious and were quiet, and the spectacles almost fell from the paternal nose with the nervous agitation and irritability of the personal confirmation of the family indicator. If the wind were E. or N.E., or N.N.E. or N., or N.W. or N.N.W., or S.W. or S.S.W., they were prisoners for the day, and doomed to

hear of nothing but rheumatism and the gout and peevish complainings and angry words for the rest of the waking hours. That gilt cock at last became quite unendurable, and many a time would our friend and one of his brothers get up an hour earlier, and at the risk of their necks tie the cock fast for the day with his head in a fine quarter. It was the only way to secure domestic comfort; and many a day's peace and quiet, and many a treat did they get, through this little bit of pardonable deception.

Of course we must not expect that even weathercocks should escape abuse. The mechanical weathercock is unquestionably a useful instrument. Tropical weathercocks are, however, unmitigated evils and nuisances. We are speaking rhetorically, not geographically. The weathercock of the tropics may be as respectable and useful an instrument as that of the temperate zones. But the word has become a rhetorical trope. There is the figurative weathercock as well as the weathercock mechanical. You must all know some members of those numerous families of the Fantail Turnabouts and the Feathershaft Trimmers, and the Shillyshallys and Proteuses. You can't

mistake them, for they have a very peculiar physique, being remarkably expansive and solid in the lower dimensions of their persons. Their centre of gravity is considerably lower down than that of the generality of the human species. The head counts almost for nothing, in their corporeal quantity, like those Dutch toys which are all bodies, and will sit on one end do what you will to put them on any other. Veering about as they do, now turning this way, and now that, and whirling round and round, you would naturally think that they would become so giddy that they could not stand on their legs at all, but their conformation is their security, their breadth and weight below defends them from all the casualties of vertigo—

> The latest wind that may prevail
> Sweeps on their wide expanse of tail,
> And turns them quick to face the gale,
> With sudden bound;
> Till yet another breath of wind
> Shall blow upon their broad behind,
> And then they have another mind
> To wheel around.

No, they are not giddy,—their heads are so small and their quantity of brain so minute, they don't suffer the least inconvenience them-

selves from giddiness. They are weathercocks, meant to vacillate and be the playthings of the winds, and all they want is a pivot and a perch, plenty of feather and tail, and their organization is complete.

We observe by that contemptuous sneer and curl of the lip that you don't admire human weathercocks. They certainly are not an admirable folk. You recal how those ancient Roman weathercocks extolled now Brutus and now Marc Antony, now the conspirators and now the stricken Cæsar. "Live, Brutus, live, live! Bring him with triumph home to his house. Give him a statue with his ancestors. Cæsar's better parts shall now be crowned in Brutus." And then, "We'll burn the house of Brutus. Most noble Cæsar! we'll revenge his death. O, royal Cæsar! Hear the noble Antony. We'll hear him, we'll follow him, we'll die with him." Those Roman citizens were all tails, and spread their feathers to each succeeding wind of eloquence. You can never be sure of the Fantails and Feathershafts. Blow upon them behind and they face about to you as the infallible and only oracle, till another breath catches them in the rear, and they are

off again to crow their approval in some other direction of the wind of opinion or feeling.

Did it ever happen to you to have a weather-cock in the circle of your acquaintance? Of course it did. Everybody knows a weather-cock or two, and confoundedly inconvenient people they are to know too. They are not the least use in counsel, for they will always reflect your own opinion, though it may vary half-a-dozen times in as many minutes. Tell them that yonder cloud is almost in shape of a camel, and they will answer, 'tis like a camel in-deed. Should you happen to think it is like a weasel, you will be told it is backed like a weasel. Or like a whale, and it will be very like a whale. And all this without any desire to fool you to the top of your bent, but because they cannot help being such arrant fools themselves.

> "Some praise at morning what they blame at night;
> But always think the last opinion right.
> While their weak heads, like towns unfortified,
> 'Twixt sense and nonsense daily change their side.
> Ask them the cause; they're wiser still they say;
> And still to-morrow's wiser than to-day."

The matter becomes more serious if you should be so unfortunate as to have a weather-cock in the very small and select circle of your

friends. You can afford to laugh at a weathercock acquaintance,—his broad and well-weighted tail may afford some amusement to you, and your humour may incline you now and then to use him as a toy, and make him turn about to every point of the compass for your own entertainment and that of any of your circle who may enjoy the fun. But you can't afford to laugh at a weathercock friend. You don't choose your friends by their tails; and 'tis a grievous disappointment to you to discover at a critical moment that your friend's gravity is low down behind, and that he whom you have all along believed to be firm on a pair of human legs, with a good head on his shoulders, and as good a heart in his breast, is after all but a big-bodied broad-tailed cock on a pivot. No, no, this is no laughing matter. A weathercock may be all very well on the top of a church-steeple, but no man wishes to be on terms of friendly intimacy with the fac-simile of such a thing, and to make himself ridiculous by calling such a thing his personal friend.

It is not complimentary to be called a weathercock, and sometimes the term is unjustly applied to any one who may happen to change

his opinion. Now opinions are not invariably sound, either in religion, politics, or anything else, and it is rather to be encouraged than not, that people should occasionally change their opinions. A man who makes a boast of never having changed his opinion, very probably never had any opinion to change. You can pronounce no one a weathercock until you have well ascertained that all his ballast is behind, until you have examined and found correct that he carries a tail—a tail, too, sufficiently expansive to catch the shifting breezes of opinion, and that he is actually poised on a pivot. These are the conditions and circumstances of a genuine weathercock. A man with a normal head on his shoulders can turn round to another opinion by the inward force of his own sterling good sense, and on his own normal legs; but if he is constantly changing his opinions you may be sure that he is not on his legs, but on a pivot. No man with the customary weight of brain in his head could endure the giddiness of going backwards and forwards and round and round. If he be in this perpetual and ever-varying motion, you may be confident that he is pivoted, and that his heaviest weight

is behind. He is a weathercock ready poised for all points of the compass, and free to move in any direction, and so often as the varying wind of opinion may chance to blow. Like a weathercock he will stand still till his tail is appealed to,—he has no voluntary motion, and no reason for existence except to tell which way the wind lies. In him you have your weathercock pure and simple. He is to all intents and purposes a human vane. Reserve the trope for him. Don't call the honest thinker by this contemptuous epithet, because he has seen fit to renounce an opinion which can't be made to square with his enlarged knowledge and experience. He is not shifted about in shilly-shally fashion by his tail, but moved forward by his brains. That is just the difference. Your weathercock has very little weight in front,—his centre of gravity is far back in the rear, and he has plenty of tail.

[The shrill crowing of a cock awoke us.]

SERMON XV.

NUMBER ONE.

ORDER! Ladies and Gentlemen, Order! we pray you!—'tis most unseemly to rush into our presence in such tumult and confusion. There, we thought it would come to that, do pray keep back,—you'll all be on your faces presently,—prone, piled up like so many cotton bales. You must be perpendicular, ladies and gentlemen, we really can't preach to you in that prostrate posture. There, there, get out of the aisles; but gently, gently, if you please. Now really, one at a time, the pew doors were not made for people ten abreast. There, you are stuck fast,—fall back some of you. You on the right there, in Mrs. Close-

pen's family pew, you can't stand there like sheep in a railway car; it only holds eight comfortably, and there are positively eighteen of you. Do be careful, Sir, of that pew-door just behind, it will be off its hinges presently, and we like doors on the pews here. They are family pews, Sir, select family pews, made expressly for private use, and kept locked when the family make no appearance. Where are the beadles? Why all this crushing and squeezing? What do you take us for? It is not a playhouse, we assure you. Ladies and gentlemen, you are not in the pit of a theatre. Do you take us for a new sensation drama? In the name of all that's decent and orderly, some of you give way. Fie on you, Sir, fie, that poor lady next you is fainting, you'll be chargeable with manslaughter; keep your arms down, Sir; 'tis brutal, positively brutal. Shrieks! has it come to this? Let no more come there, and turn one-half of these people out, beadles. Quite right, turn them out, never mind their menaces and protests, turn them out, and close the doors.

Well, we have order and some degree of comfort at last. But really, ladies and gentle-

men, your selfish jostling is not creditable to you. You have actually struggled and fought for your places as if you cared for nobody but yourselves. Not one of you now before us would budge a jot,—you are plainly, every one of you, a most egoistical dog-in-the-manger set of people.

We shall not preach the sermon we intended, you are not fit to hear it. We shall preach an extemporary discourse from a text suggested by the scene we have just witnessed, and suitable for such a congregation as you, who have contrived to sift yourselves out of the rest of society as a very disagreeable representative class. You remind us how

> "Man
> Wrestles with man for some slight plank, whose weight
> Will bear but one."
>
> *Richelieu.*

The famous Cardinal was an excellent moralist, like many another self-seeking intriguing priest of all churches. No doubt he spoke feelingly about the plank. He himself was on the plank, and, whether slight or substantial, he only intended that one should be upon it, at least in his lifetime, and it was some inconvenience to his ambitious projects that other

men would wrestle with him for a secure seat on it at the danger of upsetting it altogether. We are quite of his opinion, that it is philosophically absurd for a number of drowning people to catch hold of the same slight piece of floating timber, and especially to try to get astraddle on it; but then it is well known that drowning people will even catch at a straw, which is less hopeful than the slightest conceivable plank; and it is scarcely reasonable, although it may be eminently philosophical, to expect sinking people to be scientific with their heads hardly above water, and to scorn the straw, or to imitate the courtesies of the drawing-room, and politely say, "After you, Sir, if you please." The philosophy is unquestionable and the politeness exquisite, but there are situations in the experiences of human life, and this is one of them, when philosophy, however wise, is the extreme of foolishness, and politeness is a refinement which may be decorously dispensed with.

The Cardinal's plank is an exceptional case, and we know that exceptions are privileged, and enjoy an immunity from reason and rule. When several men are literally out of their

depth in water, a floating plank is a lawful prize, and no one will find fault with him who struggles to secure it. The man who is on it may be filled with dismay as he feels his frail raft rudely grasped and risen upon by his companions in danger, but even he can scarcely say to his unfortunate fellows, "Please let go, for the plank wont bear you." The case is an extreme one, and if the generous maxim of *Number One* may be justified anywhere, it may be when we are all in imminent danger of going to the bottom, and there is only one slight plank to save us.

But this maxim of number one is carried a great deal too far, and into circumstances that are by no means critical. It was not particularly critical, for example, that you should lose the opportunity of hearing us preach to-day. We intend to preach rather frequently, and hope to be often before the public eye, and therefore you might have thought about one another a little more considerately, and not wrestled with each other as if you were struggling for some frail plank or other life-preserver. Now that you are here, however, and have squeezed yourself in at some cost to

your personal comfort and good manners, we will do our best to entertain you. Probably before we have done you may wish yourselves out again.

Number One, that's your maxim is it? What, in the name of all that's tasteful and sensible has made you fall so passionately in love with that perpendicular unit? There's nothing particularly ornamental in a post or in a row of posts. Unite them together with festoons of chains, or bring them into closer juxtaposition in the form of palings, or in some other way that shall destroy their ugly isolation, and you combine them in some form of beauty and usefulness. A solitary post is by no means pretty. The mast of a ship is not a beautiful object when it stands alone; it wants to be relieved by the combination of yards, and ropes, and sails, to hide its too naked individuality. Of all the numbers in the decade, number one is the barest and the ugliest. It is the most upstart and self-conceited of all the figures. Every other figure curves and stoops and combines, as if in mockery and disdain of its rigid and unbending disposition. It stands alone a sulky disagreeable oddity.

It was in a vein of satirical humour, no doubt, and with the purpose of expressing profound moral contempt, that number one was originally used to express the pronoun I. Of all the personal pronouns, I is the most self-contained and pompous. Like number one, it usurps the first place among its fellows. It calls itself the first person singular. We have a very profound contempt for this self-sufficient personal pronoun, and studiously avoid its use. It is another number one, which we must honestly tell you we cordially hate.

What think you then must be the feelings with which we contemplate you at this time? Huddled together though you are, there's not a point of mutual contact among the whole lot of you. You are all units,—ugly number ones; personal pronouns—disagreeable first persons singular. You might as well be posts, —animated posts, posts with the faculty of knocking against and bruising one another. It is a kind wish—and we say it in the interest of social education and with an eye to your individual improvement,—that you may often bruise each other well, and now and then, by

way of wholesome warning, break each others' heads.

Personally, you are a very small, insignificant class of people, like your representative pronoun and your favourite number; yet, like all little people, you take care to make the most of yourselves. Your fussiness and obtrusiveness are notorious. Everywhere the public is victimized by your intolerable presence. Really the human eye and brain have other objects and interests without being everlastingly bidden to look at and think of you and your particular wares. There's scarcely a yard of the good old-fashioned brick wall to relieve the eye and the mind of your ubiquitous personality. We can't look down even on the pavement, but there you are. We verily believe you would label the sky if you could. Whether by road or rail there you are in some staring advertisement at every station and in every carriage. We are even haunted by you on our railway tickets, and are compelled to thrust you in our reticules and waistcoat pockets. We can neither walk, nor ride, nor sit down in peace for you. Your confounded names and trades, and the pictures of your gaudy shops are never

out of our thoughts and memories. Your placards of all sizes and hues, have got into our inmost consciousness, and are photographed in our very souls. Inside and outside there is nothing for us but advertisements. We are absolutely overwhelmed with advertisements; we can read nothing else but advertisements, we feel as if we were fed on advertisements, we dream of advertisements, we shall certainly die of advertisements. It all comes of your number one maxim, your conceited egoism,—your selfish individuality. Even number one itself has become an advertisement, as if the generality of people ever forget number one. Indeed most people know number one, it is the great cardinal number of the commercial world.

Your commercial selfishness, ye gaunt number ones, is sufficiently provoking. You are sent into this world not to have all life to yourselves, but to live and let live. There are space, and air, and light enough in this bright broad world for every one to move and breathe in, and to see and be seen. Pray let us think of number two sometimes and number three, and all the other numbers,—it would be positively refreshing. But no; everywhere, and

at all times, your individuality haunts and harasses us. You hustle us in the streets, to the peril of limb and life; you sit upon and half smother us in the public carriages; you elbow almost our breath out of us in a crowd; you sit like a screen before us at an entertainment; you help yourself first and to the best of everything, and greedily devour every little dainty and rarity within your reach; you seize upon the softest seats and claim the most comfortable places, and dispose yourselves with a sole consideration of your own personal convenience; as if you were the most attractive and agreeable people in all the world,—the comprehension of all that is fascinating to the eye and exhilirating to the feelings,—you post yourselves front and foremost on every occasion. You are not civil, and you are unbearably selfish. *Apres nous le deluge*, that's your motto; *the devil take those in the rear*, that's your benison for numbers two, three, and four; *take care of number one*, that's your practical principle for this life; *charity begins at home*, that's your religion, your piety, and preparation for the life to come.

Ah! Mrs. Budgenought, there you are in

the best pew in the middle aisle. You are rarely behind, Mrs. Budgenought. Your pushing and imperturbable qualities are very patent in a crush. Though you belong to the tender and gentle sex you must be singularly muscular and tough, and you don't seem to suffer much from your social exertion, although you are remarkably tall and stout. We have our own brougham, but we condescend sometimes to make use of the public carriages, and we happened to be yesterday in that Whitechapel omnibus when you got into it near Butchers' Row. You happened to be the last possible passenger on that occasion, for there were eleven inside. We marked the general dismay as you entered; every one's countenance seemed to say that you were quite impossible. Courtesy on side number five, endeavoured to make room for you, and we noticed how you endeavoured to make room for yourself. You and the conductor were quite right—the omnibus was licensed to carry twelve, and the good manners and kind feeling of the insiders did their utmost to accommodate you. But it was a simple question of measurement, Madam, and bounteous nature had blessed you

with more than the average dimensions, and mutual accommodation was out of the question. We see you now, Madam, wriggling and ramming yourself in like a wedge; the gentlemen on either side of you, in admirable temper, merely observed under the operation, that it was not the thin end of the wedge. We marked your scornful look of virtuous indignation. It certainly was not a very polite remark; but if ladies will persist in dovetailing themselves between gentlemen, especially ladies of your *embonpoint*, Mrs. Budgenought, you must expect a joke or two at the expense of your make and manners.

Mr. Michael Mainchance, you are here, are you? Our popularity in our own line of things has drawn you here to-day. We often meet you, Mr. Mainchance, in the City, but you scarcely notice us there, you are always so excessively busy. We can't serve your turn there, eh!

That short sharp cough we know comes from the old baronet, Sir Charity Snugnest. You are close under the pulpit, eh! Sir. We quite expected you among the number ones. We must tell you then, as you are here, that

we don't intend to ask you for another subscription for any benevolent object; we shall keep our promise. There don't rub your bony hands down there with so much glee; we can hear the osseous rattle of your satisfaction. Charity always begins at home with you, and ends there too. We admire the domestic virtues, Sir Charity, but society would be better pleased, and you would enjoy better health if you ventured a little more abroad.

How is that, beadles, how is that? Where does that smoke come from? Something must be smouldering outside under the belfry! Shut all the doors, beadles, but one, and only leave that half-open. Bolt the other half well top and bottom. Keep the smoke out. There's a strong smell, too, of gas in the church! Mrs. Budgenought, you know the smell of gas, don't you detect it? Worse and worse! Surely the main pipe is burst! What is that noise outside, beadles? Actually they are shouting "Fire! fire!" Don't be alarmed, Mrs. Budgenought. Mr. Mainchance, pray be less excited; help poor Sir Charity down there, he must have fainted and fallen for something rattles just below us like a box of dominos. Fire!

Fire! Surely the Church is on fire, and the gas is escaping! Ah! up and off with you! True to your maxim, ye number ones; knock one another about like skittles; tumble over one another; trample, push, elbow away. Don't open the doors, beadles; capital joke, let them squeeze and pitch each other out one by one, 'tis their favourite number. Don't open the doors! Scream away! Capital joke! Fire! Fire! The gas is escaping!

[We awoke, the gas was in fact escaping, but as we always sleep with the windows open we were instantly sensible that there was no apprehension of danger.]

SERMON XVI.

MONEY.

"I say put money in thy purse."

Iago.

PERFECTLY true, Mr. Needy, all you say is perfectly true, you are a member of society—a highly civilized society, abounding in all the conveniences and luxuries of life, capable of ministering to every human want, and indulging every itching fancy,—we are short of nothing, absolutely nothing,—indeed we have a great

deal more than we know what to do with. Such is the superfluity of things, that we are puzzled by their very names, and literally dumbfounded to conceive their use. There are manufactories and markets for everything, delectations and temptations for everybody, so that we may make ourselves as thoroughly comfortable or supremely ridiculous as we please. The social wealth is prodigious—it seems as if all the ingenuity and skill, all the industrial toil, all the natural and unnatural productions of this earth's soil, and this world's brains, had emptied their fulness into the capacious lap of our highly-favoured society. You have not exaggerated in the least the omnifariousness of our social opulence. English society is a perfect *omnium gatherum* of the comfortable utilities and exuberant perplexities of human existence.

'What d' ye lack ? What d' ye lack ?'
Was the dunning stunning clack
Of 'prentices of yore,
As they trumpeted their wares
In the merry thoroughfares
Before their masters' door.

'What d' ye lack? What d' ye lack?'
Belongs to times long back,
When needful things were rare:
Now everything's sufficient,—
In nothing we're deficient;
There's plenty everywhere.

'What d' ye lack? What d' ye lack?'
Cease your dunning stunning clack:
With all things we abound.
We have now so much in store,
That neither rich nor poor
Can ever get aground.

And notwithstanding this extravagance of material superfluity you can't manage to get even a very moderate share of the enjoyment of it. It's a hard case, we'll allow; but, like a good many of this comfortable world's comforters, that's all we can allow. Extremes meet, you know, and although your extremity is by no means the most agreeable end of the two, nevertheless such is the fact; extremes do meet, and we must take off our hats to a good many facts, as well as to a good many people that we don't particularly care to encounter. It is one of the many anomalies in a high state of civilization, that conveniences should be sub-

jected to the commercial law of equivalent values,—in other words, that they should be purchasable quantities. It's a very old notion that of bartering one commodity for another. It may appear to you anomalous, but societies have found by the teaching of experience, that they can't get on without it. And please to understand that everything is not of marketable value—grumbling, for example, is worth nothing on the exchanges of this world;—it's not the least use putting that on the counter,—no one will give you so much as a barleycorn for your bitter complainings and abuse of the social institutions; you must bring something that human beings can feed on, or wear, or turn to some substantial or frivolous account, and as we have a representative value for all these things in the device of a metallic currency, there is no help for it, Mr. Needy, but to tell you in plain English, "Put money in your purse." "Money," as a prudential man of the old times has said, "answereth all things," therefore "put money in your purse."

Not another word, Mr. Needy, about how you are to do it, that's all we have to say to

you; there is money to be had—the mints have coined plenty for the common use, therefore, "put money in your purse."

Honestly? of course honestly, Mr. Needy, pray understand us most distinctly as giving prudential counsel in strictest consistency with all that is upright in character and conduct. We know who it was who gave this advice about putting money in the purse, and to whom. Iago was a double-distilled villain, and Roderigo, his ridiculous tool, was the quintessence of amorous coxcombry. Both were playing a very abominable game with that money in the purse, but, as we just reminded you, "money answereth all things," bad as well as good, and "things" of all shades of moral complexion between these two extremes; therefore just take our advice and don't trouble yourself and us with any moral criticism on the circumstances under which the advice was first given. Again we say, "go provide money—make all the money thou canst,—put but money in thy purse."

The fact is, society has become so intensely commercial of late years, that everything is now

a purchasable commodity. Not merely the necessaries of life—these of course we always expect to pay for,—but even the commonest civilities and attention are rarely now to be had without a fee. Who invented this social impost of fees? We are quite sure that it would have been more than his place was worth for any Chancellor of the Exchequer to have ventured on this system of vexatious direct taxation. The nation would have resented the innovation as a flagrant outrage,—would have denounced it as highly immoral to be required to pay people for doing their duty, or feeing them for the performance of the common courtesies and decencies of life. Whoever invented this practice is guilty of sapping the moral foundations of society and breaking the most natural bonds of the common social intercourse. What, in the name of all that's sacred, is to become of us if the great Christian duty of mutual service inspired by mutual love is to give place to this abominable mercenary habit of doing everything for pecuniary consideration? But what's the use of preaching, society will have its own way in the matter, and there's no help

for it. People who are flush of money, or who like to be taken for gentlemen, or to be thought liberal, what do they care about the morals and manners of the age? Their love of extra attention, and being made comfortable, and nourishing their personal vanity, or some other feeling of an intensely selfish nature, will be sure to operate in support of the fee system, and, therefore, unless we are prepared for a good deal of neglect, and a good many annoyances, we must submit to the social usage, and lay it down as one of the most necessary obligations of social existence to put money in our purse.

Our own judgment and respect for the social morals most decidedly condemn this growing evil, but what are we to do? We have tried to be virtuous on several occasions, and have experienced quite a martyrdom, doing no one a bit of moral service, and doing ourself a great deal of personal discomfort. We have given up our resistance as a hopeless, thankless warfare. Fees are a recognized social institution—and we submit to it like the rest of the respectable world. We fee all the servants, when we

goading harness of a common hack, and somewhat overdosed with the doctrine that hardships are the natural inheritance of all pious people. Money and the devil go together in your creed. You are not a man of the world, Mr. Sourkrout, but a preacher of the vinegar virtues, a spiritual distiller of tartaric-acid,—a shining light, we were going to say, we ought rather to say a lowering cloud over the good people of the gloomy school. Your notion of religious ministration is to act the wet blanket on the natural joyousness and love of reasonable comforts, and innocent lightheartedness of general society. Your sneers are very disagreeable, but they shall not spoil our panegyric of money. Money is a very useful article, and, like all useful articles, we know that it may be abused. Beef and mutton are useful articles, so are Guinness's stout and Barclay and Perkins's porter, but they may be abused by gluttony and drunkenness. The corruption of the best things is the worst of all corruptions,—that we know very well; but we see no reason for indulging in diatribes against the best things because they may be

made the very worst, and degenerate into the most offensive. Money is a power, and if some eminently scientific and economical persons have wept over the waste of power in the wagging of dogs' tails, we are not going to be so inconsistent as to despise so great a power as money. Why money quickens the inventive genius of the world, creates the useful and fine arts, establishes and extends commerce, multiplies material wealth, and advances civilization. Of course it does other things of a very different kind. So does the steam-engine; it propels ships and blows them up. So does the wind; it wafts gentle zephyrs, and diffuses a southerly warmth, and it rages with stormy violence, and pierces to the bones and marrow. So does the sun; it beautifies and enriches the earth with its genial rays, and scorches the crops it has fostered, and breeds pestilence and death. Money, like all great powers, is a power for evil and good,—it can both bless and curse. There's this, however, about money that cannot be said of the steam-engine, or the sun, or the wind,—it is in our own hands and under our own control. We may have the

use without the abuse,—the advantages without the mischiefs of it. Like some preachers we wish to press upon your attention every word of our text—"Put money in your purse." In your purse, mark. That means have it ready for use. Don't hoard it up selfishly, for money is a mighty magician, and when it accumulates and begins to tarnish for want of healthy circulation, it undergoes a mysterious chemical action, and a haunting apparition comes forth from the closely locked coffer, and its owner becomes the victim of a grim spectre which never leaves him day or night. He will think and talk about, see and hear, taste and feel, nothing but money. He will be fascinated by the love of it for its own sake, and will practically worship it. It will rob him of his reason, freeze every fine feeling of his heart, spoil his whole humanity, transform him into a demon, and finish by starving and killing him outright. Don't lock it up for fear of the magician, put it in your purse for ready and judicious use.

Again, we say, "put money in your purse," not with a niggard but liberal hand. Let your porte-monnaie be of ample dimensions;

the old-fashioned yellow bag, or the more ancient pouch at the girdle were goodly vehicles. You may leave too much behind in the strong box, and beware of the magician!

"There's a curse in the strong box,
With its massive bolts and locks,
Laden with glittering store;
A fiend is forming there.
Oh beware! Oh beware!
Unlock the fatal door.

There's rust in the strong box,
With its massive bolts and locks,
The gold has lost its glitter!
Lend, lend your list'ning ear,
Hark! they are sounds of fear,—
The sounds of fiendish titter.

There's doom in the strong box,
With its massive bolts and locks.
The demon lives to curse!
Too late 'tis now to fly;
You heeded not our cry—
"'Put money *in your purse*.'"

[A knock at our door awoke us. We had been imprisoned for a week in the island of Alderney, in consequence of bad weather. No vessel either from the continent or the neighbouring islands had visited us during this time,

and in this uncomfortable position we were waiting for the opportunity of postal communication to send to London for a remittance, as our money was quite exhausted.]

SERMON XVII.

SABBATH—SUNDAY.

"Now, really, this appears the common case
Of putting too much Sabbath into Sunday—
But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?"

HOOD.

IF it is your pleasure, Ladies and Gentlemen, to be informed on our opinions in reference to the social institution of Sunday, we shall be very happy to comply with your request; but you are quite in error when you say that we seem to have studiously avoided touching on subjects about which there is considerable difference of opinion, and which might possibly endanger our popularity with a highly-respectable and influential portion of the community.

We had always flattered ourself that we had a fair share of moral courage, and that our candour is rather inclined to err by excess than by defect. We quite agree with you, that the time has come for enlightened and decided action on a question of so much social importance, as the proper use of the Sunday in a community professedly Christian; and if any argument of ours can clear away the fog of misconception which has enveloped this question, and contribute to decide the public opinion, we will submit it with our usual plainness for your consideration.

We must conciliate your favourable attention to our remarks, by observing at the outset that our professional character and occupation ought to be sufficient guarantees that we do not overlook the *religious* nature of the Sunday, and that we are very sensible of its religious worth as a Christian institution. But we have a *penchant* for logic, and a great respect for that useful human endowment called common sense; and we think that the question of Sunday is one of reason as well as of religious feeling, and therefore we shall fall back on the re-

sources of logic, and take our stand on the impregnable syllogism—If our major and minor premises are unimpeachable our conclusions must be accepted as logically sound.

In the first place, then,

'The Seventh-day is the Sabbath.'

But Sunday is the First day.

Therefore Sunday is *not* the Sabbath.

Again,

There is no authority in the New Testament for calling the first day of the week the Sabbath.

But the first day of the week has been called the Sabbath.

Therefore the first day of the week has been called the Sabbath without authority.

Again,

Sabbath observances were ordained for Jews.

But Christians are not Jews.

Therefore Sabbath observances were not ordained for Christians.

And now let us gather up and bring together our conclusions. Sunday is not the Sabbath. Sunday has been called the Sabbath without authority. Sabbath observances were not ordained for Christians. Now, either you must

deny our premises and prove our logic at fault, or accept our conclusions. So much for the *Sabbath* notion of Sunday.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen, you will please not to misunderstand us. Because we have proved by a rigid logic that Sunday is not the Sabbath, we have not proved, and we do not mean to imply, that Sunday is not a religious institution. As the monument of a great fact in the history of human redemption—the resurrection of the Founder of Christianity,—it claims religious respect, and it is very proper that Christian people should meet together on that day for religious exercises and observances. So far so good. But when some Christian people, with strange ignorance on the subject, say to the rest of society—Sunday is the Sabbath-day, and you must keep the Sabbath by doing no manner of work, and going nowhere but to churches and chapels; we say in reply, —the Sunday is not the Sabbath; Christians have no Sabbath; and there is no precept in the New Testament which enjoins us to spend the whole of the first day of the week in churches and chapels. If Christians ought to

keep the Sabbath, they ought to observe Saturday as the Sabbath-day, and observe it as it is enjoined in the books of Moses. But no Christians do this, and therefore no Christians keep the Sabbath. When the first Christians ceased to observe the Jewish Sabbath we don't exactly know, but that it was very early is certain. Jesus Christ was accused of breaking the Sabbath, and there can be no doubt that his indifference to Sabbatical institutions led to the cessation of the observance among the first Christians. You know a great apostle of Christianity blamed some of his converts for observing days and Sabbaths, and told them that he was afraid he had bestowed upon them labour in vain.

So you see, what a great deal of moral and religious mischief has been inflicted on society by teaching people's consciences to accuse them of a sin,—the sin of Sabbath-breaking—which is no sin at all, because there is no Sabbath to break.

Having extricated the Sunday from the mistaken notion of being the Sabbath-day, we have next to consider how we may best use a day that by general consent is set apart as a day

of leisure. We are staunch advocates for holidays, and recommend you to guard jealously this precious weekly holiday from any invasion. Religious people want it for the necessities of the religious life. Working people want it as a necessary repose from the toil of labour. All people want it for mental and bodily refreshment, and the opportunity of cultivating their social sympathies and affections. Sunday is a blessed break in the monotony and routine of every-day life, and no society can afford to dispense with it. No one doubts that. But, you ask, what are you to do with it? Do with it? Not know what to do with a day of leisure! Really, ladies and gentlemen, that is not a question you ought to ask us, or expect us to answer. We don't know your special necessities, tastes, circumstances, &c. You certainly need religion, and therefore we can advise you so far as to say, take the opportunity of going to church or chapel, as such places are open on Sunday. You need mental improvement, therefore read some useful literature. You need, it may be, the recreation of a walk, or the indulgence of a friendly

visit: enjoy both. Do anything that is agreeable and right, we don't mean right on Sunday, for what is right on Monday or any other day of the week is also right on Sunday. The days of the week have no special moralities. We understand you, ladies and gentlemen, you mean to say that you can't do what is agreeable and what many of you think right. The law of the land is based on Sabbatarian notions of the Sunday, and consequently many places of healthful recreation and profitable instruction are closed against you on the very day you have most leisure and disposition to enjoy them. A real day of rest to you is not to sit all day in your house, or the greater part of it in a pew, but a change of scene, a variation of employment, the indulgence of mental and bodily recreation. Precisely so; rest is not vacuity and idleness. Nothing is more wearisome than doing nothing. Idle people are exposed to corrupt temptations, and if Sunday is an idle day with any people, it is a day of active temptation instead of a day of profitable rest. The Sunday law in England is responsible for a vast amount of moral and physical mischief.

Professedly made in the interests of religion, it is the cause of an immense amount of social discomfort and immorality. Besides it is a law, as we have shown, founded in ignorance, and inspired by a Jewish rather than a Christian spirit. Why should the Zoological and Botanical Gardens on Sunday be accessible to the upper ten thousand, and the British Museum and Crystal Palace on that day be closed to the million? Yes, Sir, we anticipate your objection,—you are not a Sabbatarian, and would see no sin in these places being open, but you are a philanthropist, and wish everybody to be set free from labour on Sunday. It can't be, kind friend. If nobody did any work for others one day in the week, we should all have to minister to our own necessities, cook our own dinners, make our own beds, and do a variety of disagreeable offices for ourselves to which we are not accustomed, or else submit to starve for one day, and spend it in the midst of dirt and discomfort. No, some must be at work,

> "For some must watch while some must sleep;
> Thus runs the world away."

There are some lines running in our head on this topic of the British Museum, and with your permission we will recite them.

Why not open the British Museum
  On Sunday, our great day of leisure?
It has many good things, and to see 'em
  Would give us instruction and pleasure.
O open the British Museum
On Sunday, or else we can't see 'em.

It is meant for the nation, they say,
  And supported by national payment:
Why not open it then on the day
  When the people have on their best raiment?
O open its treasures on Sunday,
And give it a Sabbath on Monday.

Are there things in the British Museum
  Not fit to be seen on a Sunday?
And whoever desires to see 'em,
  Must, for decency, leave it till Monday?
Then fie on the British Museum!
And on all who go there to see 'em!

If some things are not fit for inspection
  On Sunday, because it is Sunday,
Then conceal them, and post a direction,—
  "All indecencies brought out on Monday."
Do but open the British Museum,
We wont ask on a Sunday to see 'em.

We would much rather go on a Sunday,
  If Sunday is the most decent day;
And most piously take care on Monday
  To keep all our dear children away.
Then do open the British Museum
When it's decent to go there and see 'em.

Some folk say, in the British Museum
  That old world things are brought back to view:
We should very much like then to see 'em,—
  For the old world to us is quite new.
We are told, in the very best Book,
That old things we should not overlook.

We have heard that a great excavator—
  Naméd Layard, of Nineveh fame,—
Has brought things of most wonderful natur,—
  Wingéd bulls, and some other strange game.
Of the whale that once swallowed up Jonah
Perhaps the Museum's an owner.

We hear, too, that long extinct nations,
  Such as those that are named in the Bible,
Have left behind such demonstrations
  As prove all objections mere libel.
Now, if we could go just to see 'em,
What a blessing would be the Museum!

Don't be guided by those gloomy people
  Who say, we ought all on a Sunday
To be sitting beneath some tall steeple,
  And leave the Museum till Monday.
All good parsons will learn with much pleasure,
What good use we have made of our leisure.

'Twill delight them to know they are preaching
To people of some education,
And that, under the Museum teaching,
We're rising in edification.
Then give us the boon on a Sunday,—
We rarely can go there on Monday.

You call it the British Museum,
And Sunday is a true British day:
What's British is *tuum* and *meum;*
So, come open it without more delay.
We are partners in this institution.
Let us join in a common conclusion.

Why not open the People's Museum
On Sunday, the popular day?
Say you will; and then see how you'll free 'em
From much that now leads them astray.
O open the British Museum,
And go there on Sunday to see 'em.

We are not in the least surprised, Mr. All-church, at your expressions of disapproval. You don't like our doggerel verses. You and your small shopkeeper friends, Messrs. Bethel and Ebenezer, are incorrigible in your Sabbatarian notions, and you are not going to have them pommelled out by a profane logic—

Your logic's a weapon we care not to know:
Take it back, whence it came, to the regions below.

You are not over-civil, but we can rhyme in our turn, and here is a counter couplet for you—

> Your Sabbath's not Christian, but strictly Hebrew,
> So keep to your Sabbath and write yourself Jew.

But bandying personalities is not at all to our taste. We should certainly like to convince you, and all who think with you, that your ideas of Sabbatical observance are quite alien to the Christian spirit, and quite inconsistent with the enlightened liberty of the Christian life. But we despair of ever convincing you if you set yourselves resolutely against the arguments of reason. Logic is not a demoniacal invention; it is the art of reasoning, and enables the understanding by sure and certain steps to proceed in the acquisition of further knowledge. If religious opinions and practices will not bear the test of a searching logic, we may be quite sure—

[Here Messrs. Allchurch, Ebenezer, and Bethel arose from their seats simultaneously, uttering angry expressions of disapproval, and scornfully affirmed that reason and argument

were the recourse of the enemies of religion,—that we disgraced the Episcopal Bench,—that we were opening the floodgates of all iniquity,—that Sabbath-breaking was the sin of the age, and the prolific root of all evil, and so forth. The stupidity and vulgarity of their attack caused us to utter an exclamation of surprise, and we awoke, repeating aloud the following rhymes:—

If the Sabbath were half as composing
 As nature's sweet Sabbath of sleep,
We would not say a word about closing
 Museums, the Sabbath to keep.
But the Sabbath is just that one day
Which drives all our composure away;
  For it's so artificial,
  That it's quite prejudicial;
  And to ev'ry employment,
  And most harmless enjoyment,
Without reason, keeps urging its—Nay.]

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