FUN,
ANCIENT AND MODERN.

BY
DR. MAURICE DAVIES,
AUTHOR OF "UNORTHODOX LONDON," ETC.

Jest and youthful jollity,
Quips and cranks and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks and wreathed smiles.

Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.  

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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FUN,

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

FLORAL GAMES.

Just as the Provençal literature formed the connecting link between ancient and mediæval times, so do the Floral Games join the mediæval to the modern era. The two institutions known as the Courts of Love and the Floral Games are not unfrequently confounded one with the other. In that curious halo of uncertainty which has gradually got to surround the language and literature of the Provençal poets, these characteristic institutions have become almost hopelessly blended,
so that it requires some patient investigation and collation of original authorities to place the matter in its true light.

By way of clearing the ground, it may be said that there are two grand distinctions between the Courts of Love and the Floral Games; one chronological, and the other geographical. The element common to the two was the poetic contest; but the Floral Games stood to the Courts of Love almost in the relation of effect to cause. When the Courts of Love began to lose their prestige, and threatened to die out from public regard, the Floral Games were instituted in order to retard the process of dissolution. One might venture to call the period of the Floral Games a Renaissance era. Their establishment was, in fact, an effort to galvanise into new life the effete existence of the prior institution. Chronologically, as well as in the way of cause and effect, the Floral Games followed the Courts of Love, and were their subsequent outcome and result. In the different arrangements of troubadour annals, it is usual to end the period of decline with the close of the thirteenth century. M. Fauriel, it is true, carries it on another fifty years, and the definite establishment of the Floral
Games belongs to these supplementary decades, dating as it does from the year 1323.

But not only by lapse of years were the games separated from, or rather a posterior development of, the courts; there was also a radical change in the way of geographical limitation. While the Courts of Love were held at many different centres, the Floral Games were entirely localised at Toulouse, the old capital of the south of France, and destined to hand down even to our unromantic and degenerate days the traditions of the gay science.

Though approaching so near to our own times, however, as to stand clearly within the historical period, and even to approach the limits of what is technically known as modern history, the Floral Games have really accumulated around themselves the veriest Egyptian darkness of the Middle Ages. They have their mythical period, like all other histories; and their traditional foundress, or at least restorer, Clémence d'Isaure, is, on the one hand, denied the honour of substantial existence at all, while, on the other hand, her votaries give names, parentage, and dates with the utmost exactitude. A third theory, steering a middle course between these two extremes, has been recently
put forward by Dr. J. B. Noulet, a citizen of Toulouse, who, blending zeal for the literary fame of his city with the most intense orthodoxy, has adopted the notion that Clémence is only an allegorical name for the Virgin Mary, and that to her, as the personification of divine clemency, is due the origin of those ceremonies which even now prevail at Toulouse in the beginning of the mois de Marie, and are beyond question veritable links connecting us with old troubadour times. His tract, "De Dame Clémence Isaure, substituée à Notre Dame la Vierge Marie comme Patronne des Jeux Littéraires de Toulouse," published in 1852, is amusing from the ardour with which it contests a point which might almost seem too visionary and unpractical for these material times. But Toulouse is one of the old border cities between the past and the present; and though the Provençal songs are heard no more in the old sonorous language, and the floral prizes are given for less poetic exercises, still she retains in her archives those monuments which carry us back straight to an age of chivalry; and let her sceptical citizens catch as they may the contagion of an age of Huxleys and Darwins, there stands at the Hôtel de Ville the statue of Clémence
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d’Isaure, “plain for all men to see; and underneath is written” the epitaph, which clearly associates her memory with that of the Floral Games:

If such a lady as Clémence d’Isaure ever did exist, she could not have adopted a better method of bewildering her fellow-citizens than by giving such an epitaph engraven on her statue. Witness the widely varying interpretations of its meaning given by two who have attempted to decipher it. M. de Saluste, chef du Consistoire de l’Hôtel de Ville, reads it thus:

Clementia Isaurica Lucii Isaurici filia ex praecella Isauricorum familia, quem in perpetuum coelibatam optimam vitam delegisset casteque annis quinquaginta vixisset, forum frumentarium, vinarium, piscarium et holitorium pratum septenarium in publicum usum statuit, Capitolinis populoque tolosano legavit, hac lege, ut quotannis Ludos Florales in aedem publicam, quam sua ipsa impensea extruxit, celebrent, rhosas ad monumentum ejus deferant, et de reliquo ibi epulentur; quod si neglexerint sine quingentis fiscus vendicet conditio supra dicta. Hos sumptus utiles fieri mandat, ubi requiescit in pace. Valete Fideles.
Like the historic inscription in the “Pickwick Papers,” which ultimately turned out to be “Bil Stumps his mark,” this enigmatical epitaph has also provoked the following “Explication par M. de Ponsan”:

Clementia Isaurica Ludovici Isauri filia ex præclara Isaurorum familia cum in perpetuum cœlibatum optimam vitam delegisset castaque annis quinquaginta vixisset, forum frumentarium, vinarium, piscarium et olitorium patriæ suæ in publicum usum statuit, Capitolinis populoque tolosano legavit hac lege ut quotannis Ludos Florales in aedem publicam quam ipsa sua impensa extruxit celebrent, rosas ad monumentum ejus deferant, et de reliquo ibi epulentur, quod si neglexerint sine controversia fiscus Tendicet conditione supra dicta. Hic sibi voluit fieri monumentum ubi requiescit in pace. Vivens fecit.

Gratefully accepting the civic bequests of this amiable and exemplary spinster lady, the more sceptical citizens of Toulouse, notwithstanding, decline to attribute to her either the foundation or the restoration of the Courts of Love, which old tradition just as persistently associates with her name.

If, however, there have been sceptical gentlemen in Toulouse to question the rights of Dame Clémence, there have been also strong-minded
females who were ready to contend for the honour of their sex, and who avowed their belief in Clémence in the following protest, claiming, in a sort of mediæval Woman’s Rights fashion, the privilege of taking part in the contests of the Jeux Floraux:

A vous, Monsieur le Chancelier,
Très-nobles capitones aussi,
Maistres qui avez bruit singulier
Et à tous ceux qui sont icy;
Supplient humblement les femmes,
Tant les moyenes que grandes dames,
Disent que Madame Clémence,
Que Dieu pardoient par sa clémence,
Laquelle les trois fleurs donna
Jadis voulut et ordonna;
Que qui voudroit dicter,
Sans les femmes en excepter,
Et d’un vouloir fort libéral,
Fist un Edit tout général
Comprenant masles et femelles, &c.

Passing by the apocryphal claims, then, of this doubtless exemplary lady, we come to the positive information supplied by M. de Caseneuve, in the second chapter of his work on “L’Origine des Jeux Fleureaux de Toulouse,” published at that place in the year 1659. The previous chapter is devoted to an account and glorification of the Courts of Love.
He says that lest Toulouse should forfeit her ancient title of “Palladienne,” conferred on her by all antiquity, seven of her citizens, unable to bear “le long silence des Muses,” combined to rekindle in the youth of the city and province the fires of the ancient enthusiasm—these are the very periods of the old historian. Remembering the connection of the Provençal language and literature with the Courts of Love, they proceeded to restore the ancient usage under the name of Floral Games, but with a difference. “Knowing,” says Caseneuve, “that the Muses were the daughters of Heaven, and that all the glory of their craft was to sing the praises of God, they agreed that the true motive of this re-establishment was to restore to poetry its ancient lustre, and render themselves able to make verses in Romance—c’est à dire en leur langue vulgaire—and so to celebrate the praises of God, of his mother (sic), and all the saints in Paradise”—a very interesting testimony to the transition from chivalric to religious ideas, and lending perhaps no little support to Dr. Noulet’s theory of the legend of Clémence. The result of this conclave was the sending a long circular letter throughout Languedoc, inviting the recipients to contend for the prize of
the golden violet. The letter, which is too long to quote, summons the competitors in these words:

Fam vos saber que tols affats  
Et tols negociis delaissats,  
Al dict loc seven, so Diu plats,  
Lo premier jour del mes de May;

which, being translated from its bastard Latin, means: "We let them know that, having laid aside all business, they shall be at the appointed place (please God) on the first day of the month of May." The prize is announced in the following couplet:

A cel que la fara plus vetta  
Donarem una Violetta.

The first Floral Game accordingly took place in 1325, the register whereof remains among the archives of Toulouse. The expenses were paid from the revenues of the city, and the number of seven was afterwards retained among the entrepreneurs, who were entitled "Maintenedors del Gay Saber," or patrons of the gay science. The golden violet and the beau titre of doctor in the gay science were adjudged to M. Arnaud Vidal, for a song in honour of "The Virgin Mother of God." For some
time these Floral Games were called simply the Feast of the Violet; but afterwards the competition became so great, that in 1355 second and third prizes were added, namely, the silver eglantine and marigold or souci.

The Floral Games being thus instituted, laws were from time to time framed for their regulation. For instance, they were to be kept sweetly orthodox. No Jew, Saracen, heretic, schismatic, or excommunicated person could contend for the flowers; nor could any lady unless she could bring ample proof that she had not been aided in her composition by anybody else—a regulation which certainly indicated the dying out of chivalry. No one could gain the prize a second time until three full years had elapsed from his first success; and during these years he must still attend and bear part in the Floral Games. None could be bachelor in the gay science until he had gained one of the three flowers; or doctor until he had gained all three, and also graduated as bachelor. On his passing the required ordeal, he was admitted to the professorial chair, and received a book and academical cap. Should no fête be held, or worthy candidate present himself, the flower was to be offered up on the high
altar of one of the churches in the city. It may not be amiss to add a translation of one of these poems. It gained the silver souci in 1471, and was called "Dansa de Nostra Dona" (La Danse de Notre Dame). The old jingle of the original rhyme, which runs through the whole poem, has been preserved, as well as the metre. This effusion, it may be mentioned, is one of those cited by M. Noulet to prove the identity of Clémence d’Isaure with the Virgin:

O Virgin, flower of excellence,
On this, the earliest morn of May,
I cannot rest, or brook delay,
To show for thee my reverence!

Thou art of such high eminence,
So worth all homage we can pay;
My adoration points the way
To where is all beneficence.

Ne’er may our love know decadence:
Oh, grant me still the grace, I pray,
To keep my will firm fixed for aye
And based on thy magnificence.

I ask thee, then, in deepest sense
Of thy regard, through life’s brief day,
While all its blessings pass away,
Show, Mother, thine omnipotence.

Bring back to paths of penitence
Those fallen ones who from thee stray
And hasten on to quick decay;
Oh, pardon them their deep offence.
Unhappy; be thou their defence,
For them thou holdest hope's sole ray;
Queen, who the deathless realm dost sway,
Oh, free them from their fear intense.

We shun them like the pestilence.
Thou art the lily pure and gay,
Who drivest every sin away
Before thy gentle influence!

Thy clemency is our defence.
Do thou thy Saviour-Son then pray
To guard us from the sins that slay;
And lead to paths of innocence!

A quarter of a century afterwards, the Dame de Villeneuve recited some stanzas addressed, like the preceding, to the Virgin under the title of Clémence. "One loves," says the doctor, who is the crème de la crème of Roman Catholic orthodoxy, "to meet at this solemnity, where the poets, entering the field of meeting, contend for the flowers offered for their emulation—let us even say, for their vanity—a lady of illustrious origin, who piously asks from the divine Mother that flower precious above all others, 
estette doucette fleur, née sous le manteau d'une Vierge sacrée pour notre salut." The poem is headed thus: "Aquesta Causo dictet la Dona de Villanova l'an 1496":


INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

When Spring hath smiled away the snow,
And bloom the gentle buds of May,
Ye offer, for our science gay,
The choicest flowers of all that grow.

O Queen of Love, sweet clemency,
In whom alone I seek my rest,
Should my poor stanza prove the best,
I'll claim the flower that springs from thee.

Sweet flower, that 'neath thy sacred vest
Doth ever own its mystic birth;
Of all the fragrant growths on earth,
Thine influence is the holiest.

To kiss thee, flower of noblest name,
Is aye my sovereign desire;
And quench within that heavenly fire
The violence of my sin's wild flame.

Mother of Christ, who art so pure,
Grant me the grace to wear thy crown;
Grant strength to tread the serpent down
And gain the joy that shall endure.

Dating no doubt from a period farther back than even the troubadours—namely, the *Ludi Florales* of the ancient Romans—these Floral Games have undergone that transition since the days of the mythic Clémence which is undoubtedly destined to supervene on all the dear romantic institutions of the Middle Ages. The college of the gay science has been gradually *utilised*. In the reign of
Louis XIV., a severe reform was imposed upon this institution, which, in the nature of things, was pretty certain to fall into abuses. Aldermanic dinners as well as, or even more than, literary exercises had come to be the method of commemorating Dame Clémence. The Grand Monarque by letters patent changed the college of the gay science into a veritable academy, and as such it existed up to the time of the Revolution. The literary contests were resumed in 1806; and in memory of the past, the prizes adjudged for the best discourse in prose, ode, epistle, elegy, sonnet, and "apologue" in honour of the Virgin were still a golden amaranth and eglantine, a silver violet, marigold, and lily. Such an interesting link is the city of Toulouse between the present and the past.

The Fête of the Floral Games is celebrated every year with the same pomp as before the Revolution. The third of May, when the prizes are distributed, is a day of merriment for Toulouse. The capitol is decorated with flowers and verdure, and the fête opens with a eulogium on Clémence d’Isaure, whose statue, crowned with roses, stands in the court. The prize poems are read by the authors, and the degree of master conferred on those who have won three prizes. Honorary degrees, accompanied by
more substantial rewards than flowers, have been occasionally bestowed on distinguished poets. At the end of the sixteenth century, the academy gave Ronsard a statuette of Minerva in silver. Since 1698, too, the records of the floral fêtes, the prize poems, &c., have been printed by the academy.

The interest, however, is purely archaic, and the effect on contemporary literature apparently inappreciable. Larousse, in the "Dictionnaire Universel du 19me Siècle," from whom these concluding remarks have been abridged, tells us that in the year 1866 the academy of the Jeux Floraux received no less than 820 compositions for competition, and 670 in the following year. He seems to say, however, that quantity rather than quality is the order of the day; and, cruelly enough, quotes by way of evidence a stanza from a prize poem of 1873, written by an abbé of Bordeaux, entitled "France du Midi." After stigmatising it as "une production lyrique sans valeur aucune," he says, "On y lit des pauvretés de ce genre:

O terre du midi, terre du ciel chérie,
Magnifique séjour, admirable patrie!
Ah que tu parais belle! . . .

*     *     *     *

Le mai's turc, ainsi que le riz de la Chine,
Sans peine y prend racine!
et cette énumération géographique:

Le Tarn tombe et se change en un torrent qui gronde;
La Garonne est un lac sous le nom de Gironde;
La Dordogne nourrit la truite et le saumon, &c.

Truly such bathos was never found even in the worst of the troubadours. The poetic spirit, which seems to have died out with the last of the troubadours, declines to be forced even by floral fêtes; and by so doing lends a new illustration to the old proverb, “Poeta nascitur, non fit.”
For the English reader, Chaucer may well be taken as the horizon on which the old and modern times meet. The Troubadour literature was purely sui generis and parenthetical, while the difficulties of the Provençal language will always be sufficient to render any extensive acquaintance with that literature the privilege of the few. But with Chaucer we tread on the heels of modern English. Perhaps the best evidence we could have as to the state of flux in which our language was about the time of Chaucer, is afforded by the circumstance that Gower wrote his three principal poems in three different languages; the "Speculum Meditantis" in Norman French; the "Vox Clamantis" in Latin, and the "Confessio Amantis" in English. But we like
to think of Dan Chaucer as our first English poet pure and simple. Ascham calls him our English Homer; and, if that personification be allowed, we may find in him at least as copious a comic vein as we did in the blind bard who sang "The Battle of the Frogs and the Mice," as well as the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey." Warton says that "they who look into Chaucer..., will find his comic vein, like that of Shakspere, to be only one of mercury imperceptibly mingled with a mine of gold." We question the accuracy of this proportion; but are content to accept it, just as by-and-by we shall discern the comic vein in the bard of Avon, without pausing to assess exactly the proportion which Shakspere's humour bears to his pathos. Enough that the funny vein is there in either case.

By way of fixing Chaucer as thoroughly as possible in the pose of our ideal Englishman and autochthonous poet, we install him as first in the long line of cockney poets. We localise him in London by applying to himself his own words in the "Testament of Love:" "Also the citye of London that is to me so dere and swete, in which I was forth growen; and more kindly love have I to that place than to any other in yrth, as every
CHAUCER AND HIS SURROUNDINGS. 21.

kindly creture hath full appetite to that place of his kindly engendrure." (B. i. § 5.) So too it is customary to matriculate him at Cambridge, on the strength of another passage in his "Court of Love":

My name, alas, my herte why makes thou straunge.
Philogenet I called am fer and nere,
Of Cambridge clerke.

That Chaucer died in 1400 we know, from his tomb in Westminster Abbey. The date of his birth is uncertain; and we may well leave antiquaries to wrangle about this, as scholars squabble about the birthplace of Homer. We are in quest of fun, and shall not seek that element fruitlessly in the sparkling lines of the "Canterbury Tales." With regard to the quality of that fun, we may well accept the dictum of that thoroughly kindred spirit, the present author's friend of many years, lately deceased, Charles Cowden Clarke. Those readers whose good fortune it was to be familiar with the mercurial fun of Boythorn's prototype will not be sorry to be presented with a page from "The Riches of Chaucer." Mr. Clarke says:

"Like Shakspere, it would be difficult to decide in which style lay Chaucer's great power—the
humorous or the pathetic. It is to be regretted that his tales of the former cast should be almost, without exception, either positively nasty or unjustifiably licentious; yet are they related with a spirit, vivacity, and ease that have never been surpassed. Full extenuation for the coarseness of his stories, as well as for the startling nudity of various epithets and descriptions, will be made by everyone who has become acquainted with the history of the public exhibitions that were extremely popular during the age of this poet. It is difficult to reconcile the fact of ladies of elegant minds, graceful perceptions, and unaffected womanly tendencies, like the Good Queen Ann, the Duchess Blanche, the Countess of Salisbury, and the Marchioness of Pembroke are described to have been, deriving amusement from the annual burlesque festivals that were in high vogue during his time—such as the 'Feast of Fools,' 'The Feast of the Ass,' and the feast of the 'Lord of Misrule,' in which ecclesiastics and laymen, rich and poor, all assisted, all countenancing and committing monstrous ribaldries and indecencies. At the 'Feast of Fools,' during the service of mass, the ceremony was interrupted by the motley crowd of masqueraders rushing into
the church, uttering ribald jests, singing indecent songs, and discharging upon each other and the audience filth and the bodies of dead animals.

"The story of the Cock and the Fox, in the Nun's Priest's Tale, is allowed by all judges to be the most admirable fable (in the narration) that ever was written. The description of the birds, the delightful gravity with which they are invested with intellectual endowments, are conceived in the highest taste of true poetry and natural humour."

**THE COCK AND THE FOX.**

Now every wise man, let him hearken me:
This story is all so true, I undertake,
As is the book of Lancelot du Lake,
That women hold in full great reverence.
Now will I turn again to my sentence.

A col fox, full of sly iniquity,
That in the grove had wonned yearés three,
By high imagination forecast.
The samé night throughout the hedges brast
Into the yard where Chanticleer the fair
Was wont, and eke his wivés to repair,
And in a bed of wortés still he lay
Till it was passed undern of the day,
Waiting his time on Chanticleer to fall,
As gladly do these homicidés all
That in await liggén to murder men.

O falsé murderer! rucking in thy den,
O newé Scariot, newé Ganelon!
O false dissimuler, O Greek Simon!
That broughtest Troy all utterly to sorrow.
O Chanticleer, accursed be the morrow
That thou into thy yard flew from thy beams
Thou were full well ywarnéd by thy dreams
That thilke day was perilous to thee :
But what that God forewot must needes be,
After the opinion of certain clerkés,
Witness on him that any perfect clerk is,
That in schoolé is great altercation
In this matteré, and great disputis on,
And hath been of a hundred thousand men :
But I ne cannot boult it to the bren,
As can the holy Doctor Augustin,
Or Boece, or the Bishop Bradwardin,
Whether that Godde’s worthy foreweeting
Straineth me needly for to do a thing
( Needely clepe I simple necessity)
Or elles if free choice be granted me
To do the samé thing or do it naught
Though God forewot it ere that it was wrought,
Or if his weeting straineth never a deal
But by necessity conditional.
I will not have to do of such mattere ;
My Tale is of a Cock, as ye may hear,
That took his counsel of his wife with sorrow,
To walken in the yard upon the morrow
That he had met the dream, as I you told.
Womenne’s counsels be full often cold ;
Womenne’s counsels brought us first to woe,
And made Adam from Paradise to go,
There as he was full merry and well at ease :
But for I n’ot to whom I might displease
If I counsel of women wouldé blame—
Pass over, for I said it in my game.
Read authors where they treat of such mattere,
And what they say of women ye may hear,
These be the cocke’s wordés and not mine :
I can none harm of no woman devine.
Fair in the sand to bathe her merrily
Lyth Partelote, and all her sisters by,
Against the sun, and Chanticleer so-free
Sang merrier than the mermaid in the sea,
(For Phisiologus sayeth sikerly
How that they singeth well and merrily).
And so befell that as he cast his eye
Among the wortés on a butterfly,
He was ware of this fox that lay full low :
Nothing he list him thenné for to crow,
But cried anon, “Cok! cok!” and up he start
As man that was affrayed in his heart,
For naturally a beast desireth flee
From his contrary if he may it see,
Though he ne'er erst had seen it with his eye.

This Chanticleer, when he 'gan him espy,
He would have fled, but that the fox anon
Said: “Gentle sir, alas! what will be done?
Be ye afraid of me that am your friend?
Now, certes, I were worse than any fiend
If I to you would harm or villany.
I am not come your counsel to espy ;
But truély the cause of my coming
Was only for to hearken how ye sing,
For truély ye have as merry a steven
As any angel hath that is in heaven;
Therwith ye have of music more feeling
Than had Boece, or any that can sing.
My Lord, your father (God his soule bless!)
And eke your mother of her gentleness,
Have in my house ybeen to my great ease,
And certés, Sir, full fain would I you please.
But for men speak of singing, I will say,
(So may I brouken well my eyen tway,)
Save you, ne heard I never man so sing
As did your father in the morrowning:
Certés it was of heart all that he sung :
And for to make his voice the moré strong
He would so pain him, that with both his eyen
He musté wink, so loud he wouldé криен,
And standen on his tiptoes therewithal,
And stretchen forth his necké long and small.
And eke he was of such discretion,
That there n'as no man in no region
That him in song or wisdom mighté pass.
I have well read in Dan Burnel the ass
Among his Vers, how that there was a cock,
That for a Priestés son gave him a knock
Upon his leg when he was young and nice
He made him for to lose his benefice;
But certain there is no comparison
Betwixt the wisdom and discretion
Of youré father and his subtilty.
Now singeth, Sir, for Sainté Charity :
Let see, can ye your father counterfeit?
This Chanticleer his wingés 'gan to beat,
As man that could not his treason espy,
So was he ravished with his flattery.
Alas! ye lordés, many a false flatour
Is in your court, and many a losengeour,
That pleaseth you well moré, by my faith,
Than he that sothfastness unto you saith.
Readeth Ecclesiast of flattery :
Beware ye lordés of their treachery.
This Chanticleer stood high upon his toes
Stretching his neck, and held his eyen close,
And 'gan to crowen loude for the nones;
And Dan Russell the fox start up at once,
And by the gargat hente Chanticleer
And on his back toward the wood him bear,
For yet ne was there nb man that him sued.
O destiny! that mayst not be eschew'd,
Alas that Chanticleer flew from the beams,
Alas his wife ne raughté not of dreams!
And on a Friday fell all this mischance.
It is, however, no part of our present plan to give the works of Chaucer at length. That plan is purely fragmentary; and well indeed does Chaucer accommodate himself to such a method. That scathing critic of England and the English, M. Taine, says, in his treatise on our literature, that Chaucer marks a period of decline, and the data on which he founds his assertion are exactly the facts that adapt Chaucer to our present purpose. M. Taine says that, in Chaucer's time, the serious element had declined in books as in manners, and in works of art as in books. He takes his stand on architecture. Architecture, he says, instead of being the handmaid of faith, became the slave of phantasy. It was exaggerated, became too ornamental, sacrificing general effect to detail; shot up its steeples to unreasonable heights, decorated the churches with canopies, pinnacles, trefoiled gables, open-work galleries. He quotes M. Renan ("Art du Moyen Age") to the effect that "its whole aim was continually to climb higher, to clothe the sacred edifice with a gaudy bedizenment, as if it were a bride on her wedding morning." "Before this marvellous lacework," asks M. Taine, in propriâ personâ,
"what emotion can one feel but a pleased astonishment? What becomes of Christian sentiment before such scenic ornamentations? In like manner literature sets itself to play." It becomes funny, in fact. We may therefore be content for the moment to repeat Sir Peter Teazle's remark to Joseph Surface on the subject of sentiment, and to open the pages of Chaucer very thankfully indeed, secure of finding that contemporary comment on the manners and customs of the times, which is the object of our search in thus tracing the "one increasing purpose" which runs along the ages, in jocose as well as in serious matters.

The prologue to the "Canterbury Tales" is just such a series of character-portraits as we may find in *Vanity Fair*, or any satirical production of our own time. Who, for instance, does not recognise the ecclesiastical lady of every age in the following consummate sketch of the Prioress?

There was also a Nun, a Prioress,
That of her smiling was full simple and coy,
Her greatest oath n'as but by Saint Eloy,
And she was cleped Madam Egantaine;
Full well she sangé the service divine,
Entuned in her nose full sweetely.
And French she spake full fair and fetisly,
After the school of Stratford atté Bow,
For French of Paris was to her unknow.

* * * * *

But for to speaken of her conscience
She was so charitable and piteous
She woulde weep if that she saw a mouse
Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bled.
Of smalle houndes had she that she fed
With roasted flesh and milk and wastel bread,
But sore wept she if one of them were dead
Or if men smote it with a yardé smart,
And all was conscience and tender heart.

Full seemely her wimple ypinched was
Her nose tretisé, her eyen grey as glass;
Her mouth full small and thereto soft and red,
But sikerly she had a fair forehead:
It was almost a spanne broad I trow,
For hardily she was not undergrow.

Full fetise was her cloak, as I was 'ware.
Of small coral about her arm she bare
A paire of beades gauded all with green,
And thereon hung a brooch of gold full sheen,
On which was first ywritten a crowned A,
And after Amor vincit omnia.

Who does not recognise the ecclesiastical spinster
of the present, down to the dainty-fed pug-dog,
the personal ornamentation, the Stratford-atte-Bow
French, and the erotic motto mixed up with the
paraphernalia of piety? Verily, as Solomon says,
there is no new thing under the sun, and history
repeats itself in individuals as well as in epochs
and events!

The poor parson of the town, too, serves to
tell us by way of pleasant antithesis, that there was such a thing as a clerical "profession" even in the merry old days of our ancestors, though perhaps benefices were not quite so openly sold and bought as at present. The science of advertisements has greatly developed since Chaucer's time, and in no department is the increase more observable than in the "ecclesiastical market."

There is a fine satiric touch running through the whole of the following picture, beautiful though it is:

A good man was there of religion
That was a poore Parson of a Town.
But rich he was of holy thought and work
He also was a learned man, a clerk,
That Christes gospel truly woulde preach
His parishens devoutly would he teach.
Benign he was and wonder diligent,
And in adversity full patient
And such was he yproved often sithes;
Full loath were he to cursen for his tithes.
But rather would he given out of doubt
Unto his poore parishens about
Of his off’ring, and eke of his substance;
He could in little thing have suffisance.
Wide was his parish and houses far asunder
But he ne left naught for no rain nor thunder;
In sickness and in mischief to visit
The farthest in his parish much and lite
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staff:
This noble ensemple to his sheep he yaf
That first he wrought and afterward he taught.
Out of the gospel he the wordes caught
And this figure he added yet thereto
That if gold ruste what should iron do?
For if a priest be foul on whom we trust
No wonder is a lewed man to rust.
And shame it is that if a priest take keep
To see a fouled shepherd and clean sheep.
Well ought a priest ensample for to give
By his cleanness how his sheep ought to live.
He sette not his benefice to hire,
And let his sheep accumbred in the mire,
And ran unto London, unto St. Ponle’s
To seeken him a chantery for souls
Or with a brotherhood to be withhold,
But dwelt at home, and kepte well his fold,
So that the wolf ne made it not miscarry
He was a shepherd and no mercenary.
And though he holy were and virtuous
He was to sinful men not dispitous,
Ne of his speech dangerous, ne digne,
But in his teaching discreet and benign.
To drawen folk to heaven with fairness
By good example was his business.
But it were any person obstinate
What so he were of high or low estate
Him would he snibben sharply for the nones.
A better priest I trow that nowhere none is.
He maited after no pomp or reverence,
Nor waked him no spiked conscience.
But Christes lore and his apostles twelve
He taught, but first he followed it himself.

But all this is too finical for our French critic.
Listen again to M. Taine: “In the fourteenth century, the second age of feudalism, they had on one side the stone fretwork and slender efflorescence
of aerial forms, and on the other finical verses and diverting stories, taking the place of the grand old architecture and the old simple literature. It is no longer the overflowing of a true sentiment which produces them, but the craving for excitement. Consider Chaucer, his subjects, and how he selects them. He goes far and wide to discover them, to Italy, France and the popular legends, the ancient classics. His readers need diversity, and his business is to 'provide fine tales;' it was in those days the poet's business.* The lords at table have finished dinner, the minstrels come and sing, the brightness of the torches falls on the velvet and ermine, on the fantastic figures, the motley, the elaborate embroidery of their long garments; then the poet arrives, presents his manuscript—richly illuminated, bound in crimson velvet, embellished with silver clasps and bosses, roses of gold: they ask him what his subject is, and he answers 'Love.'"

The earliest monument of French literature in the thirteenth century is the celebrated "Roman de la Rose" of Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung. For two hundred and fifty years it was, says Mr. Walter Besant, in his book on French humorists,

* Froissart.
a sort of Bible in France, the source of morality, religion, and philosophy. A portion of this (for the original errs sadly on the side of longwindedness) Chaucer transplanted into English, in the old trouvére metre of the original. Here is a line for line:

Li robe ne faict pas le moyne.
Habit ne makyth monk ne frere.

In the month of May, a youth of twenty summers wanders into the Garden of Delight. There he meets Myrtle, the master of the garden, and Ivy, the mistress:

And wot ye who came with him there?
The Lady Gladness, young and fair.

Sweet-Thought, Sweet-Speech, and Sweet-Looks make up a company much in keeping with our present plan. He loves Rosebud, and Reason thus argues with him—we quote the heterodox argument in the pleasant version of Mr. Besant:

Love is but madness, I tell you true,
The man who loves can nothing do.
He has no profit from the earth;
If he is clerk he forgets his learning;
If anything else, whatever his worth,
Great is his labour and little his earning.
Long and unmeasured and deep the pain;
Short is his joy; the fruition vain.
On this allegory, in which is conveyed the incompatibility of reason with love, Jean de Meung subsequently engrafted his opinions on most sublunary matters. Venus comes to the aid of Bel Accueil. The Rose is plucked; and then we are immersed in the "Opinions of Jean de Meung." Among these, may be mentioned especially: (1) hatred of monks and friars; (2) a sort of misogynist reaction against the troubadour devotion to the fair sex; (3) proclivity towards scientific teaching; (4) a mild republicanism, such as crops up also in Gower's "Confessio Amantis." The cream of De Meung's portion of the allegory is found in the picture of Faux-Semblant the hypocrite, who thus enunciates his views on the subject of Charity Organisation:

Let dying beggars cry for aid,  
Naked and cold on dunghill laid.  
There stands the hospital with door  
Wide open to receive the poor.  
Thither let all who please repair;  
For help nor money can I spare.

All his teaching, as Mr. Besant epigrammatically observes, is summed up in the maxim that we are to seek a pure life. The "Romance of the Rose" was, however, absolutely the only cheerful book of
the time. There had been a Golden Age, and that *aurum priscum* might come again. Such was the hope held out. Europe was dreaming of the Renaissance, as the birds twitter an hour before dawn.

Here, in the slightly modernised version of Mr. Charles Cowden Clarke, is the

**PORTRAIT OF MIRTH, LORD OF THE GARDEN, AND HIS MISTRESS GLADNESS.**

Full fair was Mirth, full long and high,
A fairer man I never sigh,
As round as apple was his face,
Full ruddy and white in every place.
Fetis he was and well beseie
With meetly mouth and eyen grey.
His nose by measure wrought full right
Crisp was his hair and eke full bright.
His shoulderes of large brade
And smallish in the girdlestead.
He seemed like a portraiture
So noble he was of his stature,
So fair, so jolly, and so fetise
With limbes wrought at point devise,
Deliver, smart, and of great might,
Ne saw thou never man so light.
Of beard unneth had he nothing
For it was in the firste spring.
Full young he was and merry of thought
And in samette with birdes wrought,
And with gold beaten full fetously
His body was clad full richely.
Wrought was his robe in strangé guise
And all to-slittered for quaintise,
In many a place, low and high;
And shod he was with great maistry
With shoon decoped and with lace
By drury and eke by solace.
His lefe a rosen chapelet
Had made, and on his head it set.

And weeten ye who was his lefe?
Dame Gladness there was him so lefe
That singeth so well with glad courage
That from she was twelve years of age
She of her love grant to him made.
Sir Mirth her by the finger had
Dancing and she him also.

Great love there was betwixt them two.
Both were they fair and bright of hue,
She seemed like a rose new
Of colours, and her flesh so tender
That with a briar small and slender
Men might it cleeve I dare well sain.
Her forehead frounceless all plain;
Bent weren her eyebrows two
Her eyen grey and glad also,
That laughed aye in her semblant,
First ere the mouth by covenant.*

I n’ot what of her nose describe
So fair hath no women alive:
Her hair was yellow and clear shining
I wot no lady so liking.
Of orfrays fresh was her garland;
I who have seen a thousand
Saw ne’er I wis no garland yet
So well ywrought of silk as it
And in an over-gilt samite
Yclad she was by great delight,
Of which her lefe a robe yweared
The merrier she in beauté fared.

* Her eyes, as it were by agreement, anticipated her mouth in laughter.
CHAUCER AND HIS SURROUNDINGS. 37

Perhaps in no fragment of his voluminous works did the Morning-star of Song make his music heard more humorously than in the following ode on a subject never out of date:

**CHAUCER TO HIS EMPTY PURSE.**

To you my purse, and to none other wight,
Complain I, for ye be my lady dear;
I am sorry now that ye be so light,
For certes ye now make me heavy cheer:
Me were as lief be laid upon a bier
For which unto your mercy thus I cry,
Be heavy again, or elles must I die.

Now vouchsaf en this day ere it be night
That I of you the blissful sound may hear
Or see your colour like the sunne bright
That of yellowness ne had never peer.
Ye be my life, ye be my heartés cheer,
Queen of comfort and of good company,
Be heavy again, or elles must I die.

Now purse that art to me my lives light
And saviour, as down in this world here.
Out of this towne help me by your might,
Sithen that you will not be my tresor,
For I am shaven as nigh as any frere
But I prayen unto your courtesy
Be heavy again, or elles must I die.

There is some more twittering before the Renaissance. There were reformers before the Reformation, in literature as well as in theology. Lydgate, the Monk of Bury, twitters in his
"Dance of Death;" and Skelton, the laureate (when the laureateship was an academical honour), twitters too in rhymes which he honestly enough himself describes:

Though my rhyme be ragged
Tattered and gagged,
Rudely rainbeaten,
Rusty, moth-eaten,
If ye take well therewith,
It hath in it some pith.

His speciality is comic buffoonery; but, every now and again, even in his maddest freaks, his muse gives an inkling of the melody which would prevail in the poetry of Surrey and Wyatt. The very quaintness of the spelling seems to give a flavour to the verse, and to protest against manipulation. Here is one of Skelton's best in its original form:

TO MAISTRES MARGARET HUSSEY.

Mirry Margaret
As midsomer flowre,
Gentyll as faucon
Or hauke of the towre,
With solace and gladnes
Moch mirth, and no madnes,
All good and no badnes,
So joyously
So maydely
So womanly
Her demeynyng
In every thyng
Far, far pasynge
That I can endite
Or suffice to write
Of mirry Margaret
As mydsomer floure
Gentill as faucon
Or hawke of the towre.

As pacient and as styll
And as ful of good wil
As faire Isiphyll
Oliander
Sweete pomaunder
Good Cassander;
Stedfast of thought
Wel made, wel wroght,
Far may be sought
Erst that ye can fynde
So curteise so kynde
As mirry Margaret
This midsomer floure,
Gentyll as faucon
Or hauke of the towre.

M. Taine, speaking of him, says: "A clown, a tavern Triboulet, composer of little jeering macaronic verses, Skelton makes his appearance—a virulent pamphleteer, who, jumbling together French, English, and Latin phrases with slang and fashionable words, invented words, intermingled with short rhymes, fabricates a sort of literary mud with which he bespatters Wolsey and the bishops." There is
nothing like a little bit of free criticism from a frank outsider. But still M. Taine confesses of this literature that "it lives. It is a coarse life, still elementary, swarming with ignoble vermin." But it lives. Here is just one final shovelful of the literary mire by way of illustration as to this polyglot style:

Where to should I rehers
The sentence of my verse?
In them be no scholes
For brain-sick frantic foles.
Construes hoc, domine Dawcock.
    Ware the hawke,
    Maister Sophista,
Ye simplex silogista,
The devilish dogmatista,
Your hawke on your fista
To hawke where you lista, &c.

"Many of the jests in the Latin collection," says Mr. Wright, "are put in the mouths of jesters, or domestic fools, fatui, or moriones, as they are called in the Latin and in England, where these jest-books in the vernacular tongue became more popular, perhaps, than in any other country. Many of them were published under the names of celebrated jesters, as the 'Merrie Tales of Skelton,'

John Skelton was poet laureate at the courts of Henry VII. and VIII., and appears to have figured as much in the character of jester as poet. The following is perhaps one of the best of his tales:

HOW SKELTON CAME HOME LATE TO OXFORD FROM ABINGDON.

Skelton was an Englyshman borne, as Skogyn was, and hee was educated and broughte up at Oxfoorde, and there was he made Poete Lauriat. And on a tyme he had ben at Abbington to make mery, when that he had eate salte meates. And hoe did com late home to Oxforde; and he did lie in an inne named the Tabere, whyche is now the Angell; and he did drynke, and wente to bed. About midnight he was so thyrstie, or drye, that he was constrained to call to the tapster for drynke, and the tapster hearde him not. Then hee cryed to hys oste and hys ostes, and to the ostler for drinke. And no man would here hym. Alack! sayd Skelton I shall peryshe for lacke of drynke. What reamedye? At the last he dyd crie out and sayd Fyer, fyer, fyer! When Skelton heard every man bustle hymselfe upward, and some of them were naked, and some were half asleep and amased, and Skelton did crie, Fier, fier! Styll that every man knew not whither to resort. Skelton did go to bed and the ost and ostis and the tapster, with the ostler, dyd runne to Skeltons chamber with candles lyghted in theyr hands, saying Where, where, where, is the fyer? Here, here, here, said Skelton, and poynpted hys fynger to hys mouth, saying Fetch me some drynke to quench the fyer and the heat and the drinesse in my mouthe. And so they dyd.
HOW THE WELSHMAN DYD DESYRE SKELTON TO
AYDE HIM IN HYS SUTE TO THE KYNGE FOR
A PATENT TO SELL DRYNKE.

Skelton, when he was in London went to the kynge's courte, where there dyd come to him a Welshman saying "Syr, it is so that many dooth come upp of my country to the kynges court, and some doth get of the kynges by a patent a castell, and some a parke, and some a forest, and some one fee and some another, and they doe lyve lyke honest men, and I should lyve as honestly as the best, if I might have a patent for good drynke, wherefore I doe praye you to write a fewe woords for me in a lytle byll to geve the same to the kynges handes, and I will geve you well for your laboure. I am contented sayde Skelton. Syte downe, then, sayd the Welshman and write. What shall I wryte? sayde Skelton. The Welshman said wryte "dryncke." Nowe sayde the Welshman wryte "more dryncke." What nowe? said Skelton. Wryte now "A great deale of dryncke." Nowe sayd the Welshman putte to all thys dryncke "A littell crome of breade, and a great deale of dryncke to it," and reade once again. Skelton dyd reade "Dryncke, more dryncke, and a great deales of dryncke and a lytle crome of breade and a great deale of dryncke to it." Then the Welshman sayde Put oute the litle crome of breade, and sette in all dryncke and no breade. And if I myght have thys sygued of the kynges, sayde the Welshman, I care for no more as long as I lyve. Well, then, sayde Skelton, when you have thys sygned of the kynges then will I labour for a patent to have bread, that you wyth your dryncke and I with the bread may fare well, and seeke our livinge with bagge and staffe.

The foregoing is a satire upon a prevalent practice of the sixteenth and beginning of the following century, of obtaining letters patent of monopoly from the Crown, and likewise on the drinking propensities of the Welsh.
PANTAGRUELISM.
PANTAGRUELISM.

In the fifteenth century there was commenced in Germany that crusade against folly which culminated, one hundred years afterwards, in the revival of letters and the Protestant Reformation. Setting aside, as foreign to our present purpose, the serious aspects of that movement, it is most interesting and appropriate to regard it from its comic side. As the strong protest of common sense against un-common nonsense, it is quite inevitable that such a phase should belong to the Renaissance; and, in our very natural bias towards the serious—nay the sacred—elements in the movement, it is possible that we are disposed to undervalue, or even lose sight altogether, of the secular and satirical ingredients.

The troubadours in their songs and Dan Chaucer in his merry stories, poked sly fun at the monks
and nuns. Roger Bacon brought the great battery of his "Opus Majus" to bear on the citadel of human ignorance; and plucky John Skelton dared to burlesque even the future lord cardinal himself. But the two works which produced the greatest effect in this way, and in which the protest against fooldom is, as it were, concentrated and brought to a focus, are Sebastian Brant's "Ship of Fools," and "The Praise of Folly" by Erasmus. The latter is one of the earliest specimens of a pun on the title-page; for the "Encomium Moriae" is really the praise of Sir Thomas More. Add to these the "Utopia" of More himself; throw in by way of artistic illustration Holbein's "Dance of Death;" and we have what it is neither incongruous nor irreverent to call a very considerable comic element in the revival of letters.

Sebastian Brant's book, the ever-celebrated "Ship of Fools," is one which is to be, as Captain Cuttle said, "made a note of." It was published in Germany about 1494, and translated into English by Barklay some few years later. It was the book of the sixteenth century, as much as the "Romaunt of the Rose" in France, or "Piers Plowman" in England, during a previous period. The writer
took for his motto that evergreen one, "Stultorum numerus est infinitus"—the number of fools is unbounded (who shall say that maxim is even yet quite out of date?). The book is, in fact, a series of bold woodcuts illustrated by letter-press, after the manner of the "Dance of Death," or Mr. Doyle's "Manners and Customs of ye English" in Punch. The "Ship of Fools" is the great ship of the world, into which the different descriptions of fools are being conveyed in boat-loads. The cuts form as complete a picture of ye manners and customs of that period as Chaucer's prologue to the "Canterbury Tales," for an earlier date. It was a shaft designed to hit folly as it flew with a shaft from its own quiver.

Barklay every now and then throws in a dash of local colour with so unsparing a hand that, had he lived in these thin-skinned and litigious days, he would certainly have been indicted for libel. For instance, he was a priest at Ottery in Devonshire; and thus makes reference to the secondaries of the adjoining college:

Softe, fools, softe; a little slack your pace,
Till I have space you to order by degree,
I have eight neighbours that first shall have a place
In this my ship, for they most worthy be.
They may their learning receive costless and free
Their walles abutting and joining to the schooles,
Nothing they can, yet nought they learn or see,
Therefore they shall guide this our Schippe of Fooles.

Max Müller capitally epitomises the book in his
"Chips from a German Workshop." He says:
"His satires are not very pungent nor powerful
nor original. But his style is free and easy. Brant is
not a ponderous poet. He writes in short chapters,
and mixes his fools in such a manner that we
always meet with a variety of new faces. People,
he adds, "are always fond of reading the history
of their own times. If the good qualities of their
age are brought out, they think of themselves or
their friends; if the dark features of their con­
temporaries are exhibited, they think of their
neighbours or enemies. Now the 'Ship of
Fools' is just such a satire which ordinary people
would read and read with pleasure. They might
feel a slight twinge now and then; but they would
put down the book at the end and thank God that
they were not like other men. There is a chapter
on misers—and who would not give a penny to a
beggar? There is a chapter on gluttony—and
who was ever more than a little exhilarated after
dinner? There is a chapter on church-goers—and
who ever went to church for respectability’s sake or to show off a gaudy dress?” “We sometimes wish,” he concludes, “that Brant’s satire had been a little more searching, and that, instead of his many allusions to classical fools (for his book is full of scholarship) he had given us a little more of the chronique scandaleuse of his own time.”

In order to remedy any defects of this kind, Badius, four years after the first edition of Brant came out, published a supplement on that more dangerous and delicate topic, “Foolish Women.” The plates are even more graphic and the letterpress is more caustic than in Brant’s book. Not only so; but, as if to illustrate the remark that the Reformation had its comic side, Geiler, who preached at Strasbourg up to his death in 1510, actually took the “Ship of Fools” as the subject of his discourses, and prefaced each of them with that evergreen motto, in which the nettle-blossom figures so conspicuously, “Unbounded is the number of fools.” The subdivisions of his sermons he called, “Bells in the Fool’s Cap.” Verily, he was a bolder man than even Rowland Hill or Mr. Spurgeon in their pulpit oratory.
Here is the author's opinion of those who cannot keep their own counsel:

Of other foles a number yet I fynde
Which by theyr bablynge wordes and langage
Can nae kepe close the secrete of theyr mynde.
But all theyr counsel out they shewe at large.
So that oft thereof procedeth great damage.
As Murder, myschefe, hatered and debate.
That after they repent. But then it is too late.

He is a naturall foll and vndiscrete
And to hym selfe ingendryth of great stryfe
Which can nae hyde his counsell and secrete
But by his foly it sheweth to his wyfe
And all that he hath done in his hole lyfe
Or that to do here after he doth purpose
To every man suche a fole wyll disclose.

Thus olde storyes doth oft recorde and tell
By theyr examples whiche they vnto vs gyue
That women ar no kepars of councell
It goeth through them as water through a syue
Wherfore let them that quyetly wolde lyue
No more of theyr counsell to any woman showe
Than that they wolde that euery man dyd knowe.

Into the Shyp come vsurers and okerers.

A shamefull sort of Folys doth remayne
Wors than all other spoken of before
Whose synfull lyfe and fals discetyfull trayne
I shall reuyle with words sharpe and sore
This sort is othr ennemy to the pore
Full of lyes, conetyse gyle and foule vyleness
Content with no treasour, nor innumerable ryches.
The power of the lawe ought sharply to chastise
With extreme rigour and mortall punysshment
This sort infectyf that foloweth this vyce
This ravenynge sort worthy paynes violent
Against our lordes dyuyne commandement
By theyr vnmekenes, the pore of maketh bare
Of londe and goodes that levyhge them in care.

Though the Jewes lyve in errour and derknes
Gyuen to vsury (as labourynge men oft sayes)
Yet are they more gyuen to pyte and meknes
And almes: than christen men ar now adayes
In vsury we ensue the Jwes wayes
And many other synnes fowle and abomynable
Rennynge without measure which is intolerable.

For his usury the Jewe is out exyled
From christen costes yet of us many one
With the same vyce is infect and defyled
The pore by the ryche is etyn to the bone
Almes is banysshed, pyte is there none
Cruell crauynge spoyleth them that erst had nought
The pore is vexed and to a begger brought.

Of new fassions and disgesed garments.

Drawe nere ye Courtiers and Galants digised
Ye counterfayt Caytiffs, that are not content
As God hath you made: his warke is despysed
Ye thinke you more crafty than God omnipotent.
Unstable is your mynde: that shewes by your garment.
A fole is knowen by his toyes and his cote
But by theyr clothinge nowe may we many note.

Some their necks charged with colers and chaynes
As golden withithes: theyr fyngers full of rynges
Their necks naked: almost unto the raynes
Their slewes blasinge lyke to a Cranys wynges
Thus by this deuysinge such counterfayted thinges
They dysfourme that figure that God Hymself hath made
On pryde and abusion thus ar theyr myndes layde.

Come nere disgysed foles : receyue your fole's Hode
And ye that in sundry colours are arrayed
Ye garded galants wastinge thus your goode
Come nere with your Shirts bordered and displayed
In fourme of Surplys. Forsoth it may be sayde
That of your Sorte right fewe shall thryue this yere
Or that your faders werith such Habyte in his Quere.

So we can see there was a good deal of method
in the madness of this period. There was some­thing more than the merely negative element of harmlessness. There was the “increasing purpose.”
It is exactly as Erasmus says in the introduction
to his “Encomium”—it might almost seem with reference to the Turkish complication and Dr. Slade’s case: “Comical matters may be so treated
of as that a reader of ordinary sense may possibly thence reap more advantage than from some more big and stately argument: as while one, in a long­winded oration, descants in commendation of rhetoric or philosophy, another, in a fulsome harangue, sets forth the praise of his nation; a third makes a zealous invitation to a holy war against the Turks; another confidently sets up for a fortune-teller; and a fifth states questions upon mere impertinences. But,” he concludes, “as nothing is more childish
than to handle a serious subject in a loose wanton style, so is there nothing more pleasant than to treat of trifles, and to make them seem nothing more than what their name imports”—another excellent idea of what we are here calling Fun!

What better specimen of that rollicking vein of ironical fun which runs through this panegyric of Folly upon herself, is there than that laboured argument wherein she shows that Folly is not only the characteristic mark, but the very glory, of the female sex?

Readers must recollect that it is all ironical; and even if it had not been, Erasmus was a celibate, and therefore had no business to know whether the female sex was wise or foolish. He says:

“Because it seemed expedient that man, who was born for the transaction of business, should have so much wisdom as should fit and capacitate him for the discharge of his duty herein; and yet, lest such a measure as is requisite for this purpose might prove too dangerous and fatal, I was advised with for an antidote, who prescribed this infallible receipt of taking a wife—a creature so harmless and
silly, and yet so useful and convenient, as might mollify and make pliable the stiffness and morose humour of men.

"Now that which made Plato doubt under what genus to rank woman, whether among brutes or rational creatures, was only meant to denote the extreme stupidity and folly of that sex—a sex so unalterably simple that for any of them to thrust forward and reach at the name of wise is but to make themselves more remarkable fools, such an endeavour being but a swimming against the stream—nay, the turning of the course of nature, the bare attempting whereof is as extravagant as the effecting of it is impossible. For as it is a trite proverb that an ape will be an ape though clad in purple, so a woman will be a woman—that is, a fool—whatever disguise she takes up!"

That is sufficiently unorthodox. It is the same story, from the Praxagora of Aristophanes figuring in parliament, in her husband’s inexpressibles, down to Punch’s advice to young persons about to marry, “Don’t.” We evidently have not quite got rid of the dangerous (or, at all events, the nettle-blossom) element yet.
PANTAGRUELM.

"THE PRAISE OF FOLLY."

It is a common observation, that "a wise father has many times a foolish son;" nature so contriving it lest the taint of wisdom, like hereditary dis­tempers, should otherwise descend by propagation. Thus Tully's son Marcus, though bred at Athens, proved to be a dull insipid soul; and Socrates' children had (as one ingeniously expresses it) "more of the mother than the father," a phrase for their being fools. However, it were the more excusable, though wise men are so awkward and unhandy in the ordering of public affairs, if they were not so bad or worse in the management of their ordinary and domestic concerns; 'but, alas! here they are much to seek: for place a formal man at a feast, and he shall either by his morose silence put the whole table out of humour, or by his frivolous questions disoblige and tire out all that sit near him. Call him out to a dance, and he shall move no more nimbly than a camel; invite him to any public entertainment, and by his very looks he shall damp the mirth of all the spectators, and at last be forced liked Cato to
leave the theatre, because he cannot unstarch his gravity nor put on a more pleasant countenance. If he engage in any discourse, he either breaks off abruptly, or tires out the patience of the whole company if he goes on; if he have any contract, sale, or purchase, or any other worldly business to transact, he behaves himself more like a senseless stock than a rational man, so as he can be of no use or advantage to himself or his country; because he knows nothing how the world goes, and is wholly unacquainted with the humour of the vulgar, who cannot but hate a person so disagreeing in temper from themselves.

What was it in the infancy of the world that made men naturally savage unite into civil societies, but only flattery, one of my chiefest virtues? For there is nothing else meant by the fables of Amphion and Orpheus with their harps; the first making the stones jump into a well-built wall, the other inducing the trees to pull their legs out of the ground and dance the morris after him.

What was it that quieted and appeased the Roman people, when they brake out into a riot for the redress of their grievances? Was it any sinewy starched oration? No, alas! it was only
silly ridiculous story told by Menenius Agrippa, how the other members of the body quarrelled with the belly, resolving no longer to continue her drudging caterers, till by the penance they thought thus in vain to impose they soon found their own strength so far diminished, that, paying the cost of continuing a mistake, they willingly returned to their respective duties. Thus when the rabble of Athens murmured at the exaction of the magistrates, Themistocles satisfied them with such another tale of the fox and the hedgehog; the first whereof being stuck fast in a miry bog, the flies came swarming about him and almost sucked out all his blood; the latter officiously offers his service to drive them away. "No," says the fox, "if these which are almost glutted be frightened off, there will come a new hungry set that will be ten times more greedy and devouring: the moral of this he meant applicable to the people, who, if they had such magistrates removed as they complained of for extortion, yet their successors would certainly be worse.

With what highest advances of policy could Sertorius have kept the barbarians so well in awe, as by a white hart, which he pretended Diana had
presented him, and which brought him intelligence of all his enemies' designs? What was Lycurgus's grand argument for demonstrating the force of education, but only the bringing out two whelps of the same bitch, differently brought up, and placing before them a dish and a live hare; the one that had been bred to hunting ran after the game, while the other, whose kennel had been a kitchen, presently fell a-licking the platter. Thus the before-mentioned Sertorius made his soldiers sensible that wit and contrivance would do more than bare strength, by setting a couple of men to the plucking of two horses' tails; the first, pulling at all in one handful, tugged in vain; while the other, though much the weaker, snatching off one by one, soon performed the appointed task.

Instances of like nature are Minos and King Numa, both which fooled the people into obedience by a mere cheat and juggle; the first by pretending he was advised by Jupiter, the latter by making the vulgar believe he had the goddess Egeria assistant to him in all debates and transactions.

Among all the trophies that, for tokens of gratitude, are hung upon the walls and ceilings
of churches, you shall find no relics presented as a memorandum of anyone that was ever cured of folly, or had been made one dram the wiser. One perhaps after shipwreck got safe to shore; another recovered when he had been run through by the enemy; one, when all his fellow-soldiers were killed upon the spot—as cunningly, perhaps, as cowardly—made his escape from the field; another, while he was hanging, the rope broke, and so he saved his neck, and renewed his license for practising his old trade of thieving; another broke gaol and got loose; a patient, against his physician’s will, recovered of a dangerous fever; another drank poison which, putting him into a violent looseness, did his body more good than hurt, to the great grief of his wife, who hoped upon the occasion to have become a joyful widow; another had his waggon overturned, and yet none of his horses lamed; another had caught a grievous fall, and yet recovered of his bruises; another had been tampering with his neighbour’s wife, and escaped very narrowly from being caught by the enraged cuckold in the very act. After all these acknowledgments of escapes from such singular dangers, there is none (as I have before intimated) that
return thanks for being freed from folly—folly being so sweet and luscious that it is rather sued for as a happiness, than deprecated as a punishment.

Had I as many tongues as Argus’ eyes,
Briareus’ hands, they all would not suffice
Folly in all her shapes t’ epitomise.

The presiding genius of all this special kind of fooldom down to and including Hudibras was, beyond doubt,

Rabelais, laughing in his easy-chair.

Pantagruelism was on the face of the earth; and just as the heroic age was written down in “The Battle of the Frogs and Mice,” or Shakspeare’s “Troilus and Cressida,” so was the transcendentalism of the troubadours, and the mystic piety of monks and nuns, in the pages of Gargantua and Pantagruel; so were the pretensions of the nascent Royal Society in the Hudibrastic poem of “The Elephant in the Moon.”

What can be more thoroughly to our point—that there was a palpable method in the madness even of Rabelais—than the inscription over the ideal monas-
tery of the Thelemites—so called because the rule was, "Do what thou wilt?" It ran:

Here enter you, pure, honest, faithful, true
Expounders of the Scriptures old and new,
Whose glosses do not the plain truth disguise,
And in false light distract and blind our eyes.
Here shall ye find a safe and warm retreat
When error beats about and spreads her net.
Strange doctrines here must neither reap nor sow,
But Faith and Charity together grow.

HOW WOMEN ORDINARILY HAVE THE GREATEST LONGING AFTER THINGS PROHIBITED.

Truly, quoth Ponocrates, I have heard it related, and it hath been told me of a verity, that Pope John XXII. passing on a day through the Abbey of Touerone, was, in all humility, required and besought by the abbess, and other discreet mothers of the said convent, to grant them an indulgence, by means whereof they might confess themselves to one another, alleging that religious women were subject to some petty secret slips and imperfections which would be a foul and burning shame for them to discover and reveal to man, how sacerdotal however their functions might be; but that they would freelier, more familiarly, and with greater cheerfulness, open to each other their offences, faults, scrapes, and escapes, under the seal of confession. "There is not anything for you," said the Pope, "fitting for you to impetrate of me which I would not most willingly condescend unto; but I find one inconvenience, you know. Confessions should be kept secret; and you women are not able to do so." "Exceedingly well," quoth they, "most holy father, and much more closely than the best of men." The holy father on the very same day gave them in keeping a pretty box, wherein he purposely caused a little linnet to be put, willing them very gently and
cautiously to lock it up in some sure and hidden place, and promising them “by the faith of a Pope” that he would yield to their request, if they would keep secret what was enclosed in that deposited box, enjoining them withal not to presume one way or other, directly or indirectly, to go about the opening thereof, under pain of the highest ecclesiastical censure—eternal excommunication. The prohibition was no sooner made, but that they did all of them boil with a most ardent desire to know and see what kind of thing it was that was within it; they thought it long already that the Pope was not gone, to the end they might jointly with more leisure and ease apply themselves to the box-opening curiosity. The holy father, after he had given them his benediction, departed and withdrew himself to the pontifical lodgings of his own palace, but he was hardly gone three steps from without the gates of their cloister, when the good ladies throngingly and in a huddled crowd, pressing hard on the backs of one another, ran thrusting and shoving who should be first at the setting open of the forbidden box, and descrying of the quod latitat within. On the very next day thereafter the Pope made them another visit, of full design, purpose, and intention (as they imagined) to dispatch the grant of their sought and wished for indulgence; but before he would enter into a chat or communing with them, he commanded the casket to be brought unto him; it was done so accordingly, but by your leave the bird was no more. Then was it that the Pope did represent to their maternities how hard a matter and difficult it was for them to keep secrets revealed to them in confession unmanifested to the ears of others; seeing that for a space of four-and-twenty hours they were not able to lay up in secret a box which he had highly recommended to their discretion, charge, and custody.

There can be no question that Rabelais was a great teacher as well as a consummate professor of the art of fun. We may indeed be thankful that he found out fun was more in his line than physic or divinity. He taught men in the vernacular, for
fun is the universal language; only unfortunately he had not hit upon the harmless kind of fun. He is like his own Panurge, or spirit of mischief, in more respects than that one of being able to make an address in thirteen different languages. It is a pity that there is not one good woman or one good priest in his books; greater pity still that their pages are defaced with indecency far beyond the fashion of his age and nation, neither of which was squeamish.

The same count appears, no doubt, in the indictment against Hudibras, but not to the same degree. Butler is broad, beyond a doubt; but he can be funny without overstepping the boundary-line. "The Elephant in the Moon" is legitimate burlesque, and the contest of those lunar inhabitants the Subvolvani and the Privolvani is as funny as the Big-end and Little-end people in Lilliput.

May not the dénouement be taken to heart by more than one boat-load in our contemporary ship of fools? When the ridiculous mouse is discovered as the simple cause of all the mischief, Butler moralises:

But when they had unscrewed the glass,
To find out where the impostor was,
And saw the mouse that, by mishap,
Had made the telescope a trap,
Amazed, confounded, and afflicted
To be so openly convicted,
Immediately they got them gone
With this discovery alone:

That those who greedily pursue
Things wonderful instead of true,
That in their speculations choose
To make discoveries strange news,
And natural history a gazette
Of tales stupendous and far-fet,
Hold no truth worthy to be known
That is not huge and overgrown,
And explicate appearances
Not as they are, but as they please,
In vain strive nature to suborn,
And for their pains are paid with scorn.
SHAKSPEERE FUN.

THE FALSTAFF TETRALOGY.

When the classic ancients, as Coleridge calls them, went in for a theatrical representation, they were determined to have enough of it. To the tragic trilogy they appended the satyric drama, which made altogether a tetralogy—a kind of three courses and a dessert; and in the four plays containing the history of Sir John Falstaff we have a tetralogy which admirably serves our purpose as an illustration of Shaksperian Fun. The "Famous Victories" no doubt formed the source for the trilogy of Prince Hal, comprising the first and second parts of Henry IV. and also the chronicle-play of Henry V.; while the "Merry Wives of Windsor," written, it is said, at the command of Queen Elizabeth, to exhibit her favourite knight, Sir John
Falstaff, in love, exactly fills the place of the satyric drama, or comic afterpiece, in the old classical series of four plays.

In adapting Professor Dowden's admirable Shakspere Primer for the purpose of scholastic lecture-lessons, the author has found something like a chrestomathy necessary; and nothing of the purpose being ready to hand, he has been driven to construct one for himself. Slightly toning down the broad humour of Sir John Falstaff, according to the different standard of taste in the Elizabethan and Victorian age respectively, he finds that the pages in his Shakspere chrestomathy which deal with the fat knight's humour serve admirably the purpose of the present volume. Commencing with the first part of Henry IV., we have, as our earliest specimen of Falstaffian fun, the celebrated

**HATCHING OF THE HOAX.**

[In the folio of 1623 the companions of Sir John and the Prince are described by the happy term of "Irregular Humourists."]

*Scene: London—An apartment of the Prince's.*

*Enter the Prince of Wales and Falstaff.*

*Fal.* Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?
Prince. Thou art so fat-witted, with drinking of old sack and unbuttoning thee after supper and sleeping upon benches after noon, that thou hast forgotten to demand that truly which thou wouldst truly know. What hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack and minutes capons I see no reason why thou shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time of the day.

Fal. Indeed, you come near me now, Hal; for we that take purses go by the moon and the seven stars, and not by Phoebus, he, "that wandering knight so fair." And, I prithee, sweet wag, when thou art king, as, God save thy grace (majesty I should say, for grace thou wilt have none)—

Prince. What, none?

Fal. No, by my troth, not so much as will serve to be prologue to an egg and butter.

Prince. Well, how then? come, roundly, roundly.

Fal. Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let not us that are squires of the night's body be called thieves of the day's beauty: let us be Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon; and let men say we be men of good government, being governed, as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we steal.

Prince. Thou sayest well, and it holds well too; for the fortune of us that are the moon's men doth ebb and flow like the sea, being governed, as the sea is, by the moon. As, for proof, now: a purse of gold most resolutely snatched on Monday night and most dissolutely spent on Tuesday morning; got with swearing "Lay by" and spent with crying "Bring in;" now in as low an ebb as the foot of the ladder and by and by as high a flow as the ridge of the gallows.

Fal. By the Lord, thou sayest true, lad. And is not my hostess of the tavern a most sweet woman?

Prince. As the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the castle. And is not a buff jerkin a most sweet robe of durance?

Fal. How now, how now, mad wag! what, in thy quips and thy quiddities? what a plague have I to do with a buff jerkin?

Prince. Why, what have I to do with my hostess of the tavern?
Fal. Well, thou hast called her to a reckoning many a time and oft.

Prince. Did I ever call for thee to pay thy part?

Fal. No; I'll give thee thy due, thou hast paid all there.

Prince. Yea, and elsewhere, so far as my coin would stretch; and where it would not, I have used my credit.

Fal. Yea, and so used it that, were it not here apparent that thou art heir apparent—But, I prithee, sweet wag, shall there be gallows standing in England when thou art king? and resolution thus fobbed as it is with the rusty curb of old father antic the law? Do not thou, when thou art king, hang a thief.

Prince. No; thou shalt.

Fal. Shall I? O rare! I'll be a brave judge.

Prince. Thou judgest false already: I mean, thou shalt have the hanging of the thieves and so become a rare hangman.

Fal. Well, Hal, well; and in some sort it jumps with my humour as well as waiting in the court, I can tell you.

Prince. For obtaining of suits?

Fal. Yea, for obtaining of suits, whereof the hangman hath no lean wardrobe. 'Sblood, I am as melancholy as a gib cat or a lugged bear.

Prince. Or an old lion, or a lover's lute.

Fal. Yea, or the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe.

Prince. What sayest thou to a hare, or the melancholy of Moor-ditch?

Fal. Thou hast the most unsavoury similes; and art indeed the most comparative, rascalliest, sweet young prince. But, Hal, I prithee, trouble me no more with vanity. I would thou and I knew where a commodity of good names were to be bought. An old lord of the council rated me the other day in the street about you, sir, but I marked him not; and yet he talked very wisely, but I regarded him not; and yet he talked wisely, and in the street too.

Prince. Thou didst well; for wisdom cries out in the streets, and no man regards it.

Fal. O, thou hast wonderful iteration and art indeed able to corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal; God forgive thee for it! Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew nothing;
and now am I, if a man should speak truly, little better than one of the wicked. I must give over this life, and I will give it over by the Lord, an I do not; I am a villain; I'll be lost for never a king's son in Christendom.

Prince. Where shall we take a purse to-morrow, Jack?

Fal. 'Zounds, where thou wilt, lad; I'll make one; an I do not, call me a villain and baffle me.

Prince. I see a good amendment of life in thee; from praying to purse-taking.

Fal. Why, Hal, 'tis my vocation, Hal; 'tis no sin for a man to labour in his vocation.

Enter Poins.

Poins. Now shall we know if Gadshill have set a match. O, if men were to be saved by merit, what hole were hot enough for him? This is the most omnipotent villain that ever cried "Stand" to a true man.

Prince. Good-morrow, Ned.

Poins. Good-morrow, sweet Hal. What says Monsieur Remorse? what says Sir John Sack and Sugar? But, my lads, to-morrow morning, by four o'clock, early at Gadshill! there are pilgrims going to Canterbury with rich offerings, and traders riding to London with fat purses: I have vizards for you all; you have horses for yourselves; Gadshill lies to-night in Rochester: I have bespoke supper to-morrow night in Eastcheap: we may do it as secure as sleep. If you will go, I will stuff your purses full of crowns; if you will not, tarry at home and be hanged.

Fal. Hear ye, Yedward; if I tarry at home and go not, I'll hang you for going.

Poins. You will, chops?

Fal. Hal, wilt thou make one?


Fal. There's neither honesty, manhood, nor good fellowship in thee, nor thou camest not of the blood royal, if thou darest not stand for ten shillings.

Prince. Well, then, once in my days I'll be a madcap.

Fal. Why, that's well said.
Prince. Well, come what will, I'll tarry at home.

Fal. By the Lord, I'll be a traitor then, when thou art king.

Prince. I care not.

Poins. Sir John, I prithee, leave the prince and me alone; I will lay him down such reasons for this adventure that he shall go.

Fal. Well, God give thee the spirit of persuasion and him the ears of profiting, that what thou speakest may move and what he hears may be believed, that the true prince may, for recreation sake, prove a false thief; for the poor abuses of the time want countenance. Farewell; you shall find me in Eastcheap.

Prince. Farewell, thou latter spring! farewell, All-hallow summer! [Exit Falstaff.

Poins. Now, my good sweet honey lord, ride with us to-morrow I have a jest to execute that I cannot manage alone. Falstaff, Bardolph, Peto, and Gadshill shall rob those men that we have already waylaid; yourself and I will not be there; and when they have the booty, if you and I do not rob them, cut this head off from my shoulders.

Prince. How shall we part with them in setting forth?

Poins. Why, we will set forth before or after them, and appoint them a place of meeting, wherein it is at our pleasure to fail, and then will they adventure upon the exploit themselves; which they shall have no sooner achieved, but we'll set upon them.

Prince. Yea, but 'tis like that they will know us by our horses, by our habits, and by every other appointment, to be ourselves.

Poins. Tut! our horses they shall not see: I'll tie them in the wood; our vizards we will change after we leave them: and sirrah, I have cases of buckram for the nonce, to mask our noted outward garments.

Prince. Yea, but I doubt they will be too hard for us.

Poins. Well, for two of them, I know them to be as true-bred cowards as ever turned back; and for the third, if he fight longer than he sees reason, I'll forswear arms. The virtue of this jest will be, the incomprehensible lies that this same fat rogue will tell us when we meet at supper: how thirty, at least, he fought with; what wards, what blows, what extremities he endured; and in the reproof of this lies the jest.
Prince. Well, I'll go with thee: provide us all things necessary and meet me to-morrow night in Eastcheap; there I'll sup. Farewell.

Poins. Farewell, my lord. [Exit.

Prince. I know you all, and will awhile uphold The unyoked humour of your idleness: Yet herein will I imitate the sun, Who doth permit the base contagious clouds To smother up his beauty from the world, That, when he please again to be himself, Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at, By breaking through the foul and ugly mists Of vapours that did seem to strangle him. If all the year were playing holidays, To sport would be as tedious as to work; But when they seldom come, they wish'd for come And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents. So, when this loose behaviour I throw off And pay the debt I never promised, By how much better than my word I am, By so much shall I falsify men's hopes; And like bright metal on a sullen ground, My reformation, glittering o'er my fault, Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes Than that which hath no foil to set it off. I'll so offend, to make offence a skill; Redeeming time when men think least I will.

Then come

THE RESULTS OF THE HOAX.

Scene—The Boar's-Head Tavern, Eastcheap.

The Prince and Poins.

Enter to them Falstaff, Gadshill, Bardolph, and Peto; Francis following with wine.

Poins. Welcome, Jack; where hast thou been?

Fal. A plague of all cowards, I say, and a vengeance too!
marry, and amen! Give me a cup of sack, boy. Ere I lead this life long, I'll sew nether stocks and mend them and foot them too. A plague of all cowards! Give me a cup of sack, rogue. Is there no virtue extant?

Prince. Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter? pitiful-hearted Titan, that melted at the sweet tale of the sun's? if thou didst, then behold that compound.

Fal. You rogue, here's lime in this sack too: there is nothing but roguery to be found in villanous man: yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in it. A villanous coward! Go thy ways, old Jack; die when thou wilt, if manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring. There live not three good men unhanged in England; and one of them is fat and grows old: God help the while! a bad world, I say. I would I were a weaver; I could sing psalms or any thing. A plague of all cowards; I say still.

Prince. How now, wool-sack! what mutter you?

Fal. A king's son! If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild geese, I'll never wear hair on my face more. You Prince of Wales!

Prince. Why, you horrid round man, what's the matter?

Fal. Are not you a coward? answer me to that: and Poins there?

Poins. Zounds, ye fat carcase, an ye call me coward, I'll stab thee.

Fal. I call thee coward! I'll see thee hanged ere I call thee coward: but I would give a thousand pound I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight enough in the shoulders, you care not who sees your back: call you that backing your friends? A plague upon such backing! give me them that will face me. Give me a cup of sack: I am a rogue, if I drunk to-day.

Prince. O villain! thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drunkest last.

Fal. All's one for that. [He drinks.] A plague of all cowards, still say I.

Prince. What's the matter?
Fal. What's the matter! there be four of us here have ta'en a thousand pound this day morning.
Prince. Where is it, Jack? where is it?
Fal. Where is it! taken from us it is: a hundred upon poor four of us.
Prince. What, a hundred, man?
Fal. I am a rogue, if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them two hours together. I have 'scaped by miracle. I am eight times thrust through the doublet, four through the hose; my buckler cut through and through; my sword hacked like a hand-saw—ecce signum! I never dealt better since I was a man: all would not do. A plague of all cowards! Let them speak: if they speak more or less than truth, they are villains and the sons of darkness.
Prince. Speak, sirs; how was it?
Gads. We four set upon some dozen—
Fal. Sixteen at least, my lord.
Gads. And bound them.
Peto. No, no, they were not bound.
Fal. You rogue, they were bound, every man of them; or I am a Jew else, an Eb rew Jew.
Gads. As we were sharing, some six or seven fresh men set upon us—
Fal. And unbound the rest, and then come in the other.
Prince. What, fought you with them all?
Fal. All! I know not what you call all; but if I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish: if there were not two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then am I no two-legged creature.
Prince. Pray God you have not murdered some of them.
Fal. Nay, that's past praying for; I have peppered two of them; two I am sure I have paid, two rogues in buckram suits. I tell thee what, Hal, if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face, call me horse. Thou knowest my old ward; here I lay, and thus I bore my point. Four rogues in buckram let drive at me—
Prince. What, four? thou saidst but two even now.
Fal. Four, Hal; I told thee four.
Poins. Ay, ay, he said four.
Fal. These four came all a-front, and mainly thrust at me. I made me no more ado but took all their seven points in my target, thus.
Prince. Seven? why, there were but four even now.
Fal. In buckram?
Poins. Ay, four, in buckram suits.
Fal. Seven, by these hilts, or I am a villain else.
Prince. Prithee, let him alone; we shall have more anon.
Fal. Dost thou hear me, Hal?
Prince. Ay, and mark thee too, Jack.
Fal. Do so, for it is worth the listening to. These nine in buckram that I told thee of—
Prince. So, two more already.
Fal. Their points being broken,—
Poins. Down fell their hose.
Fal. Began to give me ground: but I followed me close, came in foot and hand; and with a thought seven of the eleven I paid.
Prince. O monstrous! eleven buckram men grown out of two.
Fal. But, as ill-luck would have it, three misbegotten knaves in Kendal green came at my back and let drive at me; for it was so dark, Hal, that thou couldst not see thy hand.
Prince. These lies are like their father that begets them; gross as a mountain, open, palpable.
Fal. What, art thou mad? art thou mad? is not the truth the truth?
Prince. Why, how couldst thou know these men in Kendal green, when it was so dark thou couldst not see thy hand? come, tell us your reason: what sayest thou to this?
Poins. Come, your reason, Jack, your reason.
Fal. What, upon compulsion? Zounds, an I were at the strappado, or all the racks in the world, I would not tell you on compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion! if reasons were as plentiful as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I.
Prince. I'll be no longer guilty of this sin; this sanguine coward, this horse-back-breaker, this huge hill of flesh——
Fal. 'Sblood, you starveling, you elf-skin, you dried neat's
tongue, you stock-fish! O for breath to utter what is like thee! you tailor's-yard, you sheath, you bow-case, you vile standing-tuck—

Prince. Well, breathe awhile, and then to it again: and when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this.

Poins. Mark, Jack.

Prince. We two saw you four set on four and bound them, and were masters of their wealth. Mark now, how a plain tale shall put you down. Then did we two set on you four; and, with a word, out-faced you from your prize, and have it; yea, and can show it you here in the house; and, Falstaff, you carried your self away as nimbly, with as quick dexterity, and roared for mercy and still run and roared, as ever I heard bull-calf. What a slave art thou, to hack thy sword as thou hast done, and then say it was in fight! What trick, what device, what starting-hole, canst thou now find out to hide thee from this open and apparent shame?

Poins. Come, let's hear, Jack; what trick hast thou now?

Fal. By the Lord, I knew ye as well as he that made ye. Why, hear you, my masters; was it for me to kill the heir-apparent? should I turn upon the true prince? why, thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules; but beware instinct: the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter; I was now a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and thee during my life; I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. But, lads, I am glad you have the money. Hostess, clap to the doors: watch to-night, pray to-morrow. Gallants, lads, boys, hearts of gold, all the titles of good fellowship come to you! What, shall we be merry? shall we have a play extempore?

Prince. Content; and the argument shall be thy running away.

Fal. Ah, no more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me!
Surely the very essence of fun is comprised in

**FALSTAFF'S PATERNAL LECTURE.**

*Fal.* Well, thou wilt be horribly chid to-morrow when thou comest to thy father; if thou love me practise an answer.

*Prince.* Do thou stand for my father, and examine me upon the particulars of my life.

*Fal.* Shall I? content; this chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown.

*Prince.* Thy state is taken for a joined-stool, thy golden sceptre for a leaden dagger, and thy precious rich crown for a pitiful bald crown!

*Fal.* Well, an the fire of grace be not quite out of thee, now shalt thou be moved. Give me a cup of sack to make my eyes look red, that it may be thought I have wept; for I must speak in passion, and I will do it in King Cambyses' vein.

*Prince.* Well, here is my leg.

*Fal.* And here is my speech. Stand aside, nobility.

*Hostess.* O, this is excellent sport, i'faith!

*Fal.* Weep not, sweet queen: for trickling tears are vain.

*Host.* O, the father, how he holds his countenance!

*Fal.* For Heaven's sake, lords, convey my tristful queen;

_for tears do stop the flood-gates of her eyes._

*Host.* O, he doth it as like one of these players as ever I see!

_Fal._ Peace, good pint-pot; peace, good tickle-brain. Harry, I do not only marvel where thou spendest thy time, but also how thou art accompanied; for though the camomile, the more it is trodden on the faster it grows, yet youth, the more it is wasted the sooner it wears. That thou art my son, I have partly thy mother's word, partly my own opinion, but chiefly a villanous trick of thine eye and a foolish hanging of thy nether lip, that doth warrant me. If then thou be son of me, here lies the point: why, being son to me, art thou so pointed at? Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a micher and eat blackberries? a question not to be asked. Shall the son of England prove a thief and take
purses? a question to be asked. There is a thing, Harry, which thou hast often heard of and it is known to many in our land by the name of pitch; this pitch, as ancient writers do report, doth defile; so doth the company thou keepest; for, Harry, now I do not speak to thee in drink but in tears, not in pleasure but in passion, not in words only, but in woes also; and yet there is a virtuous man whom I have often noted in thy company, but I know not his name.

Prince. What manner of man, an it like your majesty?

Fal. A goodly portly man, i'faith, and a corpulent; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye and a most noble carriage; and, as I think, his age some fifty, or, by'r lady, inclining to three score; and now I remember me, his name is Falstaff; if that man should be lewdly given, he deceive me; for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks. If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then, peremptorily I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff; him keep with, the rest banish. And tell me now, thou naughty varlet, tell me, where hast thou been this month?

Prince. Dost thou speak like a king? Do thou stand for me, and I'll play my father.

Fal. Depose me? if thou dost it half so gravely, so majestically, both in word and matter, hang me up the heels for a rabbit-sucker or a poulter's hare.

Prince. Well, here I am set.

Fal. And here I stand; judge, my masters.

Prince. Now, Harry, whence come you?

Fal. My noble lord, from Eastcheap.

Prince. The complaints I hear of thee are grievous.

Fal. 'Sblood, my lord, they are false: nay, I'll tickle ye for a young prince, i'faith.

Prince. Swearest thou, ungracious boy? henceforth ne'er look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace: there is a demon haunts thee in the likeness of an old fat man; a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag, that roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in him, that reverend vice, that grey iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years? Wherein is he good, but to
taste sack and drink it? wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it? wherein cunning, but in craft? wherein crafty, but in villany? wherein villanous, but in all things? wherein worthy, but in nothing?

Fal. I would your grace would take me with you; whom means your grace?

Prince. That villanous abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan.

Fal. My lord, the man I know.

Prince. I know thou dost.

Fal. But to say I know more harm him than in myself, were to say more than I know. That he is old, the more the pity, his white hairs do witness it; but that he is, saving your reverence, a sinner, that I utterly deny. If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked! if to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old host that I know is lost: if to be fat be to be hated, then Pharaoh's lean kine are to be loved. No, my good lord; banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish Poins; but for sweet Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff, and therefore more valiant, being, as he is, old Jack Falstaff, banish not him thy Harry's company, banish not him thy Harry's company; banish plump Jack, and banish all the world.

Prince. I do, I will.

[A knocking heard.]

[Exeunt Hostess, Francis, and Bardolph.

BARDOLPH'S NOSE.

Scene—Eastcheap. The Boar's-Head Tavern.

Enter Falstaff and Bardolph.

Fal. Bardolph, am I not fallen away vilely since this last action? do I not bate? do I not dwindle? Why, my skin hangs about me like an old lady's loose gown; I am withered like an old apple-john. Well, I'll repent, and that suddenly, while I am in some liking; I shall be out of heart shortly, and then I shall have no strength to repent. An I have not forgotten what the
Insider of a church is made of, I am a peppercorn, a brewer’s horse; the inside of a church! Company, villainous company, hath been the spoil of me.

Bard. Sir John, you are so fretful, you cannot live long.

Fal. Why, there it is; come sing me a song; make me merry. I was as virtuously given as a gentleman need to be; virtuous enough; swore little; dined not above seven times a week; went to a tavern not above once in a quarter—of an hour; paid money that I borrowed, three or four times; lived well and in good compass: and now I live out of all order, out of all compass.

Bard. Why, you are so fat, Sir John, that you must needs be out of all compass, out of all reasonable compass, Sir John.

Fal. Do thou, amend thy face, and I’ll amend my life; thou art our admiral, thou bearest the lantern in the poop, but ’tis in the nose of thee; thou art the Knight of the Burning Lamp.

Bard. Why, Sir John, my face does you no harm.

Fal. No, I’ll be sworn; I make as good use of it as many a man doth of a Death’s-head or a memento mori: I never see thy face but I think upon hell-fire and Dives that lived in purple; for there he is in his robes, burning, burning. If thou wert anyway given to virtue, I would swear by thy face; my oath should be “By this fire, that’s God’s angel;” but thou art altogether given over; and wert indeed, but for the light in thy face, the son of utter darkness. When thou runnest up Gadshill in the night to catch my horse, if I did not think thou hadst been an ignis fatuus or a ball of wildfire, there’s no purchase in money. O, thou art a perpetual triumph, an everlasting bonfire-light! Thou hast saved me a thousand marks in links and torches, walking with thee in the night betwixt tavern and tavern: but the sack that thou hast drunk me would have bought me lights as good cheap at the dearest chandler’s in Europe. I have maintained that salamander of yours with fire any time this two-and-thirty years; God reward me for it!

Bard. ’Sblood, I would my face were in your stomach!

Fal. God-a-mercy! so should I be sure to be heart-burned.

Enter the Prince and Peto, marching, and Falstaff meets them, playing on his truncheon like a jife.

Fal. How now, lad! is the wind in that door, i’faith? must we all march?
Bard. Yea, two and two, Newgate fashion.

* * * * *

Prince. I have procured thee, Jack, a charge of foot.

Fal. I would it had been of horse. Where shall I find one that can steal well? O for a fine thief, of the age of two-and-twenty or thereabouts! I am heinously unprovided. Well, God be thanked for these rebels, they offend none but the virtuous; I land them, I praise them.

Prince. Bardolph!

Bard. My lord?

Prince. Go bear this letter to Lord John of Lancaster, to my brother John; this to my Lord of Westmoreland. [Exit Bardolph.] Go, Peto, to horse, to horse; for thou and I have thirty miles to ride yet ere dinner time. [Exit Peto.] Jack, meet me to-morrow in the temple hall at two o’clock in the afternoon.

There shalt thou know thy charge; and there receive Money and order for their furniture.

The land is burning; Percy stands on high;
And either we or they must lower lie. [Exit.

Fal. Rare words! brave world! Hostess, my breakfast come!
O, I could wish this tavern were my drum! [Exit.

THE MARCH THROUGH COVENTRY.

Scene—A public road near Coventry.

Enter Falstaff and Bardolph.

Fal. Bardolph, get thee before to Coventry; fill me a bottle of sack: our soldiers shall march through; we’ll to Sutton Co’fil to-night.

Bard. Will you give me money, captain?

Fal. Lay out, lay out.

Bard. This bottle makes an angel.

Fal. An if it do, take it for thy labour; and if it make twenty, take them all; I’ll answer the coinage. Bid my lieutenant Peto meet me at town’s end.
Bard. I will, captain; farewell. [Exit.

Fal. If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the king’s press horribly. I have got, in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. I press me none but good householders, yeoman’s sons; inquire me out contracted bachelors, such as had been asked twice on the banns; such a commodity of slaves as fear the report of a caliver worse than a struck fowl or a hurt wild-duck. I pressed me none but such toasts-and-butter, with hearts no bigger than pins’ heads, and they have brought out their services; and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, where the glutton’s dogs licked his sores; and such as indeed were never soldiers, but discarded unjust serving-men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters and ostlers trade-fallen, the cankers of a calm world and a long peace, ten times more dishonourable ragged than an old faced ancient; and such have I, to fill up the rooms of them that have bought out their services, that you would think that I had a hundred and fifty tattered prodigals lately come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks. A mad fellow met me on the way and told me I had unloaded all the gibbets and pressed the dead bodies. No eye hath seen such scarecrows. I’ll not march through Coventry with them, that’s flat: nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had gyves on; for indeed I had the most of them out of prison. There’s but a shirt and a half in all my company; and the half shirt is two napkins tacked together and thrown over the shoulders like an herald’s coat without sleeves; and the shirt, to say the truth, stolen from my host at Saint Alban’s, or the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry. But that’s all one; they'll find linen enough on every hedge.
PRINCES AND SMALL BEER.

(From the "Second Part of King Henry IV.")

Scene—London. A street.

Enter Prince Henry and Poins.

Prince. Before God, I am exceeding weary.

Poins. Is't come to that? I had thought weariness durst not have attached one of so high blood.

Prince. Faith, it does me; though it discolors the complexion of my greatness to acknowledge it. Doth it not show vilely in me to desire small beer?

Poins. Why, a prince should not be so loosely studied as to remember so weak a composition.

Prince. Belike then my appetite was not princely got; for, by my troth, I do now remember the poor creature, small beer. But, indeed, these humble considerations make me out of love with my greatness. What a disgrace is it to me to remember thy name! or to know thy face to-morrow! or to take note how many pair of silk stockings thou hast, viz. these, and those that were thy peach-coloured ones! or to bear the inventory of thy shirts, as, one for superfluity, and another for use! But that the tennis-court-keeper knows better than I; for it is a low ebb of linen with thee when thou keepest not racket there; as thou hast not done a great while, because the rest of thy low countries have made a shift to eat up thy holland; and God knows, whether those that bawl out the ruins of thy linen shall inherit his kingdom; but the midwives say the children are not in the fault; whereupon the world increases, and kindreds are mightily strengthened.

Poins. How ill it follows, after you have laboured so hard, you should talk so idly! Tell me, how many good young princes would do so, their fathers being so sick as yours at this time is?

Prince. Shall I tell thee one thing, Poins?

Poins. Yes, faith; and let it be an excellent good thing.

Prince. It shall serve among wits of no higher breeding than thine.
Poins. Go to; I stand the push of your one thing that you will tell.

Prince. Marry, I tell thee, it is not meet that I should be sad, now my father is sick: albeit I could tell to thee, as to one it pleases me, for fault of a better, to call my friend, I could be sad, and sad indeed too.

Poins. Very hardly upon such a subject.

Prince. By this hand, thou thinkest me as far in the devil’s book as thou and Falstaff for obduracy and persistency: let the end try the man. But I tell thee, my heart bleeds inwardly that my father is so sick: and keeping such vile company as thou art hath in reason taken from me all ostentation and sorrow.

Poins. The reason?

Prince. What wouldst thou think of me if I should weep?

Poins. I would think thee a most princely hypocrite.

Prince. It would be every man’s thought; and thou art a blessed fellow to think as every man thinks: never a man’s thought in the world keeps the road-way better than thine: every man would think me an hypocrite indeed. And what accites your most worshipful thought to think so?

Poins. Why, because you have been so lewd and so much engraffed to Falstaff.

Prince. And to thee.

FALSTAFF ON "SHERRIS."

Fal. Good faith, this same young sober-blooded boy doth not love me; nor a man cannot make him laugh; but that’s no marvel, he drinks no wine. There’s never none of these demure boys come to any proof; for thin drink doth so over-cool their blood, and making many fish-meals, that they fall into a kind of male green-sickness; they are generally fools and cowards; which some of us should be too, but for inflammation. A good sherris-sack hath a two-fold operation in it. It ascends me into the brain; dries me there all the foolish and dull and crudy vapours which environ it; makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble fiery and delectable shapes; which, de-
livered o’er to the voice, the tongue, which is the birth, becomes excellent wit. The second property of your excellent sherris is, the warming of the blood; which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale, which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice; but the sherris warms it and makes it course from the inwards to the parts extreme: it illumineth the face, which as a beacon gives warning to all the rest of this little kingdom, man, to arm; and then the vital commoners and inland petty spirits muster me all to their captain, the heart, who, great and puffed up with this retinue, doth any deed of courage; and this valour comes of sherris. So that skill in the weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it a-work; and learning a mere hoard of gold kept by a devil, till sack commences it and sets it in act and use. Hereof comes it that Prince Harry is valiant; for the cold blood he did naturally inherit of his father, he hath, like lean, sterile and bare land, manured, husbanded and tilled with excellent endeavour of drinking good and good store of fertile sherris, that he is become very hot and valiant. If I had a thousand sons, the first humane principle I would teach them should be, to forswear thin potations, and to addict themselves to sack.

KING HENRY'S REFORMATION.

Enter the King and his train, the Lord Chief Justice among them.

Fal. God save thy grace, King Hal! my royal Hal!
Pist. The heavens thee guard and keep, most royal imp of fame!
Fal. God save thee, my sweet boy!
King. My lord chief justice, speak to that vain man.
Oh. Just. Have you your wits? know you what 'tis you speak?
Fal. My king! my Jove! I speak to thee, my heart
King. I know thee not, old man: fall to thy prayers;
How ill white hairs become a fool and jester!
I have long dream’d of such a kind of man,
So surfeit-swell'd, so old and so profane;
But, being awaked, I do despise my dream.
Make less thy body hence, and more thy grace;
Leave gormandizing; know the grave doth gape
For thee thrice wider than for other men.
Reply not to me with a fool-born jest:
Presume not that I am the thing I was;
For God doth know, so shall the world perceive,
That I have turn'd away my former self;
So will I those that kept me company.
When thou dost hear I am as I have been,
Approach me, and thou shalt be as thou wast,
The tutor and the feeder of my riots:
Till then, I banish thee, on pain of death,
As I have done the rest of my misleaders,
Not to come near our person by ten mile.
For competence of life I will allow you,
That lack of means enforce you not to evil:
And, as we hear you do reform yourselves,
We will, according to your strengths and qualities,
Give you advancement. Be it your charge, my lord,
To see perform'd the tenour of our word.
Set on. [Exeunt King, &c.

Of all the grim Hogarthian strokes of pure
humour in Shakspere, there is perhaps nothing to
equal the following account (in "King Henry V.") of

FALSTAFF'S DEATH.

Scene—London. Before a tavern.

Enter Pistol, Hostess, NYM, BARDOLPH, and Boy.

Host. Prithee, honey-sweet husband, let me bring thee to
Staines.
Mrs. Ford. We burn daylight: here, read, read; perceive how I might be knighted. I shall think the worst of fat men, as long as I have an eye to make difference of men's likings: and yet he would not swear; praised women's modesty; and gave such orderly and well-behaved reproof to all uncomeliness, that I would have sworn his disposition would have gone to the truth of his words; but they do no more adhere and keep place together than the Hundredth Psalm to the tune of "Green Sleeves." What tempest, I trow, threw this whale, with so many tuns of oil in his belly, ashore at Windsor? How shall I be revenged on him? I think the best way were to entertain him with hope, till the wicked fire of lust have melted him in his own grease. Did you ever hear the like?

Mrs. Page. Letter for letter, but that the name of Page and Ford differs! To thy great comfort in this mystery of ill opinions, here's the twin-brother of thy letter: but let thine inherit first; for, I protest, mine never shall. I warrant he hath a thousand of these letters, writ with blank space for different names—sure, more—and these are of the second edition: he will print them, out of doubt; for he cares not what he puts into the press, when he would put us two. Well, I will find you twenty lascivious turtles ere one chaste man.

Mrs. Ford. Why, this is the very same; the very hand, the very words. What doth he think of us?

Mrs. Page. Let's be revenged on him: let's appoint him a meeting; give him a show of comfort in his suit and lead him on with a fine-baited delay, till he hath pawned his horses to mine host of the Garter.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I will consent to act any villany against him, that may not sully the chariness of our honesty. O, that my husband saw this letter! it would give eternal food to his jealousy.

Mrs. Page. Why, look where he comes; and my good man too: he's as far from jealousy as I am from giving him cause; and that I hope is an unmeasurable distance.

Mrs. Ford. You are the happier woman.

Mrs. Page. Let's consult together against this greasy knight. Come hither.

[They retire.]
THE DÉNOUEMENT.
(“Merry Wives of Windsor.”)

Scene—A room in the Garter Inn.

Enter Falstaff and Bardolph.

Fal. Bardolph, I say—

Bard. Here, sir.

Fal. Go fetch me a quart of sack; put a toast in’t. [Exit Bard.] Have I lived to be carried in a basket, like a barrow of butcher’s offal, and to be thrown in the Thames? Well, if I be served such another trick, I’ll have my brains ta’en out and buttered, and give them to a dog for a new-year’s gift. The rogues slighted me into the river with as little remorse as they would have drowned a blind bitch’s puppies, fifteen in the litter; and you may know by my size that I have a kind of alacrity in sinking; if the bottom were as deep as hell, I should down. I had been drowned, but that the shore was shelvy and shallow—a death that I abhor, for the water swells a man; and what a thing should I have been when I had been swelled! I should have been a mountain of mummy.

Re-enter Bardolph with sack.

Bard. Here’s Mistress Quickly, sir, to speak with you.

Fal. Come, let me pour in some sack to the Thames water: for my belly’s as cold as if I had swallowed snowballs for pills to cool the reins.

It is said that “The Merry Wives of Windsor” was written in a fortnight, as well as done to order. There are, perhaps, signs of haste, as well as of artificiality. Professor Dowden’s estimate is probably the correct one. He says: “It is a sunny play”—we might alter a letter, and say a funny play—“to laugh at, if not to love.”
NATIONAL FUN.
Fun may be described as a lower kind of humour, just as humour is an inferior species of wit. The essence of humour is incongruity. Humour depends on violent contrasts, as wit on abstruse resemblances. Humour deals in strong antitheses, where wit delights in clever combination. Surprise, then, is equally a constituent—equally the life and essence of humour, as of wit. But it results from the opposition rather than the suddenly discovered relation of the ideas brought together.

Sydney Smith's illustration is to the point here. He says: "If a tradesman, of a corpulent and respectable appearance, with habiliments somewhat ostentatious, were to slide down gently into the mud, and dedecorate a pea-green coat, I am afraid we should have the barbarity to laugh. If his hat
and wig, like treacherous servants, were to desert their fallen master, it certainly would not diminish our propensity to laugh; but if he were to fall into a violent passion, and abuse everybody about him, nobody could possibly resist the incongruity of a pea-green tradesman, very respectable, sitting in the mud, and threatening all the passers-by with the effects of his wrath. Here, every incident heightens the humour of the scene—the gaiety of his tunic, the general respectability of his appearance, the rills of muddy water which trickle down his cheeks, and the harmless violence of his rage! But if, instead of this, we were to observe a dustman falling into the mud, it would hardly attract any attention, because the opposition of ideas is so trifling and the incongruity so slight.”

Now, with these broad definitions and the illustration appended to them before us, there is not much difficulty in defining the difference between wit and humour, though there are innumerable instances to be cited which stand so nearly on the frontier line between wit and humour, that it is difficult to assign them their actual category.

A very practical test of the difference between wit and humour is afforded by laughter.
One would not by any means go the length of those persons who say that you laugh at humour, but not at wit. Still, the amount of laughter excited by broad humour and refined wit is so vastly different that it suggests the possibility of constructing a sort of jocometer, where the laughter produced should be marked off on a graduated scale, and rise gently from the quiet chuckle with which a profound piece of wit is received up to the unbridled guffaw that hails a genuine Joe Millerism.

Another broad distinction between wit and humour—so broad and palpable indeed that we make it the basis of our present division—is that whilst wit is an individual gift, humour is frequently national. You can mark off certain nations as definitely by the character of their humour as you can by the colour of their faces. If one were to read aloud the following epigrammatic bits of humour all in nearly the same tone of voice, persons would at once arrange them according to their nationalities:

"Honesty's the best policy, my friend. I ken weel, for I've tried baith."

"Are you guilty or not guilty, prisoner?"

"Honesty's the best policy, my friend. I ken weel, for I've tried baith."

"Are you guilty or not guilty, prisoner?"
asked the clerk of arraigns. "Faith, an' what are you put there for but to find out that?"

"Thunderin' long words ain't wisdom; and stoppin' a critter's mouth is more apt to improve his wind than his onderstandin'.”

"Have you counted all those pigs, Sambo?"

"All except one, massa, and him run about so much I couldn't count him."

Readers will not have failed at once to assign these bits of humour severally to North Britain, the Sister Isle, and our friends, white and black, on the other side the Atlantic; and such, after due respect paid nearer home, we propose to make the heads of our present subdivision.

Ireland! What a fairy land of romantic humour opens up at mention of that name! Every bull, of whatever age or clime, is at once localised in the land of the shamrock, and Pat made its hero. A thousand years and more ago wrote old Hierocles: "A friend having written to a pedant to buy him some books, and his commission having been neglected, when they met some time afterwards the pedant said (that is, as we have heard it Hibernicised, Pat said), 'That letter you wrote me about the books I niver resaved.'"
A bull, which must by no means be passed over in this recapitulation of the family of wit and humour, is exactly the counterpart of a witticism; for as wit discovers real relations that are not apparent, bulls admit relations that are not real. The pleasure arising from bulls proceeds from our surprise at suddenly discovering two things to be dissimilar in which a resemblance might have been suspected.

It is not difficult to analyse the reason why the bull is so peculiarly indigenous to Ireland. It lies, no doubt, in that happy insouciance—that volatile nature that prompts Paddy to "out with" whatever comes uppermost, without stopping to think whether what he is going to say or do violates the established order of things. Hence the happy incongruity which attaches to the Irish character.

It were easy to quote bulls to any extent. Let us cull a few at random.

An Irishman, living in an attic, was asked on what floor he dwelt. "Sure if the house were turned topsy-turvy I'd be livin' on the first flure."

Another said that the moon was twice as good as the sun, because it shines at night, when you
want it, whereas the sun shines by day, when we don’t want him.

An Irish peasant being asked why he permitted his pig to take up its quarters with his family, made an answer abounding with satirical naïveté: “Why not? Doesn’t the place afford every convenience that a pig can require?”

Two Irishmen having fallen out, the one threatened to knock the other down and bade him “go to the divil!” whereupon the man went to a magistrate to lodge his complaint, which he wound up by saying: “He bid me go to the divil, and sure enough I came straight to your honour.”

Sydney Smith disliked the modern Athens, and this perhaps made him as severe on Scotch wit and humour, as on the climate of Scotland. “It requires,” he says, “a surgical operation to get a joke well into a Scotch understanding. Their only idea of wit (or rather that inferior variety of the electric talent which prevails occasionally in the North, and which, under the name of wut, is so infinitely distressing to people of good taste) is laughing immoderately at stated intervals. They are so imbued with metaphysics that they even make love metaphysically. I overheard a young
lady of my acquaintance at a dance in Edinburgh exclaim in a sudden pause of the music, ‘What you say, my lord, is very true of love in the aibstract, but——’ Here the fiddlers began fiddling furiously, and the rest was lost.”

It is very true that the wit of the Scotch is very different from the English—still more so from the Irish—and that its dry pithy character was not at all akin to Sydney Smith’s own, who was wont to hug and fondle a joke as it were, and cling to it until he had extracted every particle of amusement it contained; but, certainly, it would be a libel to ignore the faculty of humour in the land of Robert Burns and Christopher North.

If you remark to an old Scotchman that “It’s a good day,” his usual reply is, “Aweel, sir, I’ve seen waur.” Such a man does not say his wife is an excellent woman. He says, “She’s no’ a bad body.” A buxom lass, smartly dressed, is “No’ sae vera unpurpose-like.” The richest and rarest viands are “No’ sae bad.” The best acting and the best singing are designated as “No’ bad.” A man noted for his benevolence is “No’ the warst man in the worlilt.” A Scotchman is always afraid
of expressing unqualified praise. He suspects that if he did so it would tend to spoil the object of his laudations, if a person, male or female, old or young; or, if that object were a song, a picture, a piece of work, a landscape, or such, that those who heard him speak so highly of it would think he had never in his life seen or heard anything better, which would be an imputation on his knowledge of things. "Nil admirari" is not exactly the motto of the normal Scotchman. He is quite ready to admire admirable things, but yet loath to admit, even by inference, that he has never witnessed or experienced anything better. Indeed, he has always something of the like kind which he can quote to show that the person, place, or thing in question is only comparatively good, great, clever, beautiful, or grand. Then, when anybody makes a remark, however novel, that squares with a Scotchman's ideas, he will say, "That's juist what I've offen thought!" "That's exactly ma way o' thinking!" "That's juist what I aye say!" "That's juist what I was actually on the point o' sayin'!"

An old shoemaker in Glasgow was sitting by the bedside of his wife, who was dying. She
took him by the hand and said: "Weel, John, we’re gawin’ to part. I have been a gude wife to you, John." "Oh, just middling, Jenny, just middlin'," said John, not disposed to commit himself. "John," says she, "ye maun promise to bury me in the auld kirkyard at Str’avon, beside my mither. I could na rest in peace among unco’ folk in the dirt an’ smoke o’ Glasgow." "Weel, weel, Jenny, my woman," said John, soothingly, "we’ll just try ye in Glasgow first, an’ gin ye dinna lie quiet, we’ll try you in Str’avon."

At Hawick, the people used to wear wooden clogs, which make a clanking noise on the pavement. A dying old woman had some friends by her bedside, who said to her: "Weel, Jenny, ye are gaun to heaven, and gin ye should see our folk, ye can tell them that we’re all weel." To which Jenny replied: "Weel, gin I should see them, I’se tell em. But you maunna expect that I’se to gang clank, clanking thro’ heaven looking for your folk."

A recent number of the Quarterly contains an excellent article on Yankee wit and humour, and rightly assigns smartness as the essence of this variety of Anglo-Saxon humour.
It has been remarked that if a Yankee were shipwrecked overnight on an unknown island, he would be going round, the first thing in the morning, trying to sell maps to the inhabitants. "Put him," says Lowell, "on Juan Fernandez, and he would make a spelling-book first and a salt-pan afterwards." A long, hard warfare with necessity has made him one of the handiest, shiftiest, thriftiest of mortals. In trading he is the very incarnation of the keenest shrewdness. He will be sure to do business under the most adverse circumstances, and secure a profit also. This propensity is portrayed in the story of Sam Jones. That worthy, we are told, called at the store of a Mr. Brown, with an egg in his hand, and wanted to dicker it for a darning-needle. This done, he asks Mr. Brown if he isn't going to treat? "What, on that trade?" "Certainly; a trade is a trade, big or little." "Well, what will you have?" "A glass of wine," said Jones. The wine was poured out, and Jones remarked that he preferred his wine with an egg in it. The storekeeper handed to him the identical egg which he had just changed for the darning-needle. On breaking it, Jones discovered that the egg had
two yolks. Says he: "Look here, you must give me another darning-needle."

The following comment on one of our British institutions—the railway refreshment bar—is from "The Boy at Mugby," and is worthy of the writer of "American Notes:"

"Another time a merry wide-awake American gent had tried the sawdust and spit it out, and had tried the sherry and spit that out, and had tried in vain to sustain exhausted nature upon butter-scotch, and had been rather extra bandolined and line-surveyed through, when as the bell was ringing and he paid Our Missis, he says, very loud and good-tempered: 'I tell yew what 'tis, marm, I la'af. Theer! I la'af. I dew. I oughter ha' seen most things, for I hail from the unlimited side of the Atlantic Ocean, and I haive travelled right slick over the limited, head on through Jee-rusalem and the East, and likeways France and Italy, Europe, Old World, and am now upon the track to the chief Europian village; but such an institution as yew, and yewer young ladies, and yewer fixins, solid and liquid, afore the glorious tarnal I never did see yet! And if I hain't found the eighth wonder of monarchical creation, in finding yew, and yewer young ladies,
and yewer fixins, solid and liquid, all as aforesaid, established in a country where the people air not absolute loo-naticks, I am extra double darned with a nip an frizzle to the innermostest grit! Wheerfur—Theer! I la'af. I dew, ma’arm; I la’af! And so he went, stamping and shaking his sides, along the platform all the way to his own compart­ment.”

We do not generally credit the German nation with any great sense of the humorous, but there is on record a most characteristic story illustrative of Teutonic humour. A German soldier was being flogged, and it was observed that the more he was thrashed the louder he laughed. The officer bade them lay on harder, as he seemed to like it; and as the severity of the punishment increased he was fairly convulsed with laughter. “O dis is gut!” he kept on crying out until he had got his quantum. As he was going off, roaring with laughter, the officer called him aside and asked him to explain himself. “O dis is gut!” he still exclaimed; “you’ve got the wrong man!”

In the national poetry and music of nationalities are often imbedded stores of national fun. We see the national features, as it were, exaggerated.
Among the imitative arts, poetry and music are those in which we find most faithfully reflected the national peculiarities of a people. The songs they sing, and the music they sing them to, and the instruments with which they accompany such singing, are often more accurate criteria of popular sentiment than the houses they build or the pictures they paint—ay, than even the language they use. The song often, if not always, antedates the written speech. Poetical literature (paradox though it seems to say so) comes before prose literature in a language. Homer is centuries older than Herodotus. Why? Why, because the jingle of rhythm or of rhyme is a memoria technica, enabling matters to be remembered which would be forgotten if set down in plain prose. We underrate the power of poetry and music as expressions of national character. They are exactly to the national features what we call expression on a person’s face. All faces are composed of the same features, but it is that nameless, undefinable thing called expression which differentiates them. So, too, if we take perfect music set to noble words, or get popular music and popular words wedded together, then we have, in the truest sense of the term,
national music; we mean not only those songs which have become adopted as badges, like "God save the Queen" and "Rule Britannia"—these are national songs only in a smaller and more restricted sense of the word; not, again, "Tommy, make room for your uncle," or "Whoa, Emma"—these are only the reigning favourites of the street organs; but where words and melody go deep down into a people’s heart, and touch the very springs of being—there we have the real national music and song.

Taking, then, the average Englishman, Welshman, and Scotchman—even including the Irishman as *nolens volens* a British subject, and also throwing in the American as the representative of Greater Britain—can we, by anatomising these, and putting side by side with them certain typical pieces of poetry and snatches of song, prove our present position, and discern that fitness of things between the man and the music? Can we even go that one step farther, and trace this fitness of things in the instrumental adjuncts of such poetry and music?

The expression, National Song, may be taken in two senses, one narrow and technical, the other wide and comprehensive. In the former it would include only such poems as have actually been
adopted as national badges, such as "God save the Queen" and "Rule Britannia;" in the others it includes all those poems in which the national peculiarities come prominently forward. The divisions are not indeed exclusive; the former class may be regarded as the climax—the concentration of the latter and larger. The loyalty of the Englishman (and we speak only of Englishmen for the moment) may be supposed to reach its zenith in what is called, par excellence, the "National Anthem;" his love for the sea and his love of liberty, in that which stands second only to it, and which tells at once how Britannia rules the waves, and how Britons never shall be slaves.

The natural order, then, which a literary study of this subject would assume, is first and principally an enumeration of national songs according as they embody these national peculiarities, and, incidentally alone or perhaps somewhat longer, notice those which stand as what may be called representative songs.

Were our purpose an antiquarian one, a strict chronological order would be necessary. Chronology in any case is of first importance, for the development of national literature, as of national
life, has been gradual and orderly. Were we speaking purely from a musical point of view only, the national musical instruments would have to be noticed in due succession—the harp, the fiddle, the pipe—because these have unquestionably influenced the character of national melodies. But when the study is primarily a literary one, it seems more natural to trace the poems back to those passions which most deserve the name of popular or national, which characterise us English in distinction from the rest of the world. If some kind power will only “the giftie gie us, to see ourselves as others see us,” for awhile, then perhaps we may catch those traits in our national poetry and national music which differentiate us from the rest of mankind.

Now it may be ungallant, but at the same time it is probably true to fact, if we yield the preference to war rather than love, in those two conflicting emotions which sway the human breast, and give rise to the martial and the tender strains of poetry respectively. Without for one moment conceding to our friends across the Channel the position they assume, namely, that the English are not a polite, a chivalrous nation, we do, as a fact,
find that war, rather than love, is the inspiration of some of our earliest poetry.

Dr. Crotch gives us the "Chanson Roland," which he says the Normans sang as they advanced to the Battle of Hastings; and in this we may discern a very fair embodiment indeed of the "stand-offishness," the "come-if-you-dare" spirit which has since become so significant of English character. In these spontaneous outbursts of nationality, quite as much as in actual jeu d'esprit, the humour, if not the actual fun of a people crops up to the surface.

Even the troubadours—and they wandered as far away from Provence as England—were quite as often martial as love singers. The only jongleur whose name is in any degree popular in England is Blondel de Nesle, and his song was not an ode piped to a lady-love, but to his prisoned king. Percy, in his "Reliques of Ancient Poetry," gives us the thanksgiving song for the victory at Agincourt:

Our king went forth to Normandy
With might of grace and chivalry,
The God for him wrought marv'lys.
Wherefore England may call and cry,
Deo Gratias!

But, in good truth, we must pass on far beyond
the days of troubadours before we can regard the English national character as fixed, or at all events as musically stereotyped. We must leap over the times of Saxons and Normans—pass by the Wars of the Roses, when there was more fighting than singing done in England—nay, pass the theological days of Mr. Froude's pet monarch Henry VIII., ere we come to that cast of English character, the traits of which remain until the present time impressed upon our national popular minstrelsy. Even though we fail to find distinctively national music in the pages of our most thoroughly national poet Shakspere, yet we shall not be far wrong in fixing on the Elizabethan as the most archaic period for our present study.

But even so, when we look at the immense mass of national poetry and music which has been called forth by a modern struggle like the American War, it seems strange that we find so little in the way of contemporary poetry or music to commemorate such a national event as the defeat of the Spanish Armada. We have to unearth the poems from old miscellanies, and the tunes are mostly love-songs and jigs. Queen Bess danced one herself in her sixty-ninth year.
Of older date than either of our national melodies, properly so called, is one that ranks very near them in popular estimation, and is of the very essence of martial character—"The British Grenadiers." The exact date is quite uncertain, but it is probably three hundred years old, and is still played by the band of the Grenadier Guards. The words are more modern, being about one hundred years; but in these national airs the tune as often inspires the sentiment as vice versa. It runs thus:

Some talk of Alexander
    And some of Hercules,
Of Hector and Lysander,
    And such great names as these.
But of all the world's brave heroes
    There's none that can compare,
With a tow, row, row, row, row, row,
    To the British Grenadier.

This martial element, again, is wholly lacking in the Shaksperian songs. The Roundheads went to battle with hymn-tunes; the Cavaliers sang drinking-songs. The national air which was to represent England as queen of the sea, was yet to come until the time of "Rule Britannia;" and this demands a word or two, for we know strangely little of our principal national songs.
Southey says that this "noble ode in honour of Great Britain will be the political ode of this country as long as she maintains her political power." It was written by the poet Thomson, for a masque, called "Alfred," which was performed at Clifden House, near Maidenhead, the residence of Frederick, Prince of Wales, to commemorate the accession of George I. Dr. Arne afterwards altered it into an opera, and it was played at Drury Lane in 1745, and again in 1751.

Now, how many—or how few—of us know the full words of this national song!

AN ODE.

When Britain first, at Heaven's command,
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of the land,
And guardian angels sung this strain:
"Rule, Britannia, rule the waves,
Britons never will be slaves."

The nations, not so blest as thee,
Must in their turns to tyrants fall;
While thou shalt flourish, great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.
Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
But work their woe, and thy renown.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main;
And every shore it circles—thine.

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
Shall to thy happy-coast repair:
Blest isle! with matchless beauty crown'd,
And manly hearts to guard the fair.
"Rule, Britannia, rule the waves;
Britons never will be slaves."

The Jacobites took "Rule Britannia" and twisted it round to their purpose by means of verbal alterations; but there seems very good reason to think we served them a quid pro quo in adapting "God save the Queen" from them.

It is marvellous how little we know of our national anthem, just as of our national poet Shake­spere; but we do know it was sung at Drury Lane and Covent Garden in 1745, during the rebellion; Dr. Arne harmonising it for Drury Lane, and his pupil, Burney, for Covent Garden. The Daily Advertiser and other papers speak of the enthusiasm with which it was received; and Victor, writing to
Garrick, in 1776, says that it was sung to the music of an old anthem, which was written—words and melody—for the Chapel of St. James, and for King James II., too, when the Prince of Orange landed "to deliver us from popery and slavery; which petition in favour of the Stuarts, God Almighty," says Victor, "in his goodness, was pleased not to grant."

Both Dr. Arne and Dr. Burney recollected to have heard it sung, "God save great James our King;" but the plain fact of the case is, that we do not know where our national anthem came from. Tradition—but nothing else—dates it back as far as the beginning of the seventeenth century, and assigns it to Dr. John Bull, who, it is said, wrote it in honour of James I. That it was meant for a James, and not a George, is about all we can say for certain. The amended version of it stands in the Gentleman's Magazine for October, 1745, and comprises the three well-known verses which are now sung. There have been endless varieties of it, and additions to it, one only of which deserves notice. When George III. went to Drury Lane Theatre, May 15, 1800, after having been shot at by Hatfield, Sheridan wrote
the following impromptu (?) verse, and had it sung:

From every latent foe,
From the assassin's blow,
    God save the King!
O'er him Thine arm extend,
For Britain's sake defend
    Our father, prince, and friend;
    God save the King.

Of love-poetry in general it would be difficult to say it was national, simply because it is universal. But even so it has its idiosyncrasies; and it is interesting to trace the characteristics of those songs which have become crystallised in popular estimation. They are not the quaint concetti of Herrick and Waller, not the simply spooney effusions, if one may so say, of very recent times, but such unselﬁsh yet manly passion as is enshrined in "The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington," "Sally in our Alley," or "All in the Downs." Occasionally, too—or not occasionally, but so often as to constitute a real note and mark of this kind of composition—there is a strong self-assertion about even the most unmistakable love-ditty, which we may be pardoned for asserting to be thoroughly English—quite the reverse of the spasmodic, ultra-
spooney school. Here is a specimen. Perhaps we could scarcely fix on a fitter one as characteristic of the British love-song:

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a maiden's fair?

*     *     *

If she be not fair for me,
What care I how fair she be?

Here, too, one would mention that exquisite little gem, the words of which are by Ben Jonson, but the authorship of the music not even guessed at:

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine.

If we were to consult our friends across the Channel as to what were the national characteristics of English people, we should, of course, be told that they were closely connected with those two expressive but unromantic monosyllables, beef and beer; and certainly there is, in our national poetry, an element, no doubt handed down from our Saxon forefathers, where these monosyllables are prominent. "The Roast Beef of Old England" was
written by Fielding, afterwards expanded by Leveridge, and illustrated by Hogarth, who hated Frenchmen. He had been nearly shot as a spy when sketching the gate of Calais, and wrote:

With lantern jaws and meagre cut,
See how the half-starved Frenchmen strut,
    And call us English dogs.
But soon we'll teach those bragging foes
That beef and beer give heavier blows
    Than soups and roasted frogs.

They certainly have been great institutions in their time. The taste now seems turning in favour of the French cuisine and cellar; but here is the old-fashioned sentiment enshrined in song:

When mighty roast beef was the Englishman's food,
It ennobled our hearts and enriched our blood,
Our soldiers were brave and our courtiers were good.
    O the roast beef of Old England,
    And O for Old England's roast beef.

But since we have learned from effeminate France
To eat their ragouts as well as to dance,
We are fed up with nothing but vain complaisance.
    O the roast beef, &c.

When good Queen Elizabeth sat on the throne,
Ere coffee and tea and such slipslops were known,
The world was in terror if she did but frown.
    O the roast beef, &c.
In those days, if fleets did presume on the main
They seldom or never returned back again,
As witness the vaunting Armada of Spain.
    O the roast beef, &c.,

A PARODY.

As once on a time a young frog, pert and vain,
Beheld a large ox grazing on the wide plain,
He boasted his size he could quickly attain.
    'O the roast beef of Old England,
    And O for Old England's roast beef.

Then eagerly stretching his weak little frame;
Mamma, who stood by, like a cunning old dame,
Cried, "Son, to attempt it you're surely to blame."
    O the roast beef, &c.

But, deaf to advice, he for glory did thirst;
An effort he ventured more strong than the first,
Till swelling and straining too hard made him burst.
    O the roast beef, &c.

Then Britons, be careful, the moral is clear;
The ox is Old England, the frog is Monsieur,
Whose threats and bravadoes we never need fear
    While we have roast beef in Old England.
    Sing O for Old England's roast beef.

"Sir John Barleycorn" represents the other
national institution—beer—and Queen Mary, wife of
William III., once offended Purcell monstrously by
asking to have the air to which "Barleycorn" was set
sung to her in his presence; but was afterwards wise
enough to incorporate it into one of his own airs. “The Little Barleycorn,” a parody on the original “Sir John,” pays only a left-handed compliment to the merits of the national beverage after all. It might be sung by a Good Templar:

Come, and do not musing stand,
If thou the truth discern;
But take a full cup in thy hand,
And thus begin to learn.

Not of the earth, nor of the air,
At evening or at morn;
But, jovial boys, your Christmas keep
With the little barleycorn.

It is the cunningest alchemist
That e'er was in the land;
’Twill change your mettle when it list,
In turning of a hand.

Your blushing gold to silver wan,
Your silver into brass:
’Twill turn a tailor to a man,
And a man into an ass, &c.

Sir John Barleycorn might well pray to be saved from his friends!

Love of home is another English characteristic; another point of contrast with the French character, so it is said, if we must make odious comparisons. The old Wykehamist song, “Dulce Domum,” of which the origin is very likely apocryphal, enshrines this tradition as the domestic trait in the
English character. The old story goes that the Winchester boy, kept in school when the others went home, wrote the Latin words, and then fell homesick and died. It is a pity to spoil such a pretty story with anything like scepticism; but probably the legend is an ex post facto account of the origin of the plaintive air, and still more plaintive words, still sung by the Wykehamists. It was translated in the Gentleman’s Magazine for March, 1796, beginning:

Sing a sweet melodious measure,
Waft enchanting lays around.
Home’s a theme replete with pleasure!
Home, a grateful theme resound!
Home, sweet home, an ample treasure!
Home with every blessing crowned!
Home, perpetual source of pleasure!
Home, a noble strain resound!

But then the Englishman’s home is larger than his house, though still not so large but that the American, when he paid a visit to England, said he was afraid to go out because the island was so small he felt in danger of slipping over the edge into the sea. The same idea in a more complimentary—that is in a national—shape, is set to
an old tune strongly resembling the "Rogues' March," and christened, "The nice little, tight little Island;"

Daddy Neptune, one day,
To Freedom did say,
"If ever I lived upon dry land,
The spot I would hit on
Would be little Britain."
Says Freedom, "Why, that's my own island!"
O what a snug little island,
A right little, tight little island!
Seek all the globe round,
There is none can be found
So happy as this little island!

In this insularity, in the consciousness of that silver thread which runs round England, the Englishman’s nationality comes to a focus. It culminates in the sea-song, and will, no doubt, until we get the submarine tunnel. After that—perhaps the deluge—perhaps England will fulfil the prediction which has been made more than once by enemies and alarmists, and sink to a second-rate naval power. Even now, perhaps, the circumstance of our having replaced wooden ships with ironclads makes the song a little old-fashioned, but the sentiment enshrined in "Heart of Oak" is thoroughly national still; so are the names of
the writer and composer. The words are by David Garrick, the tune by Dr. Boyce:

Come cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer,
To add something more to this wonderful year.
To honour we call you as freemen, not slaves,
For who are so free as the sons of the waves?
Heart of oak are our ships, heart of oak are our men:
    We always are ready;
    Steady, boys, steady;
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

* * * * *
We'll still make them fear, and we'll still make them flee,
And drub 'em on shore as we've drubbed 'em at sea.
Then cheer up, my lads, with one heart let us sing,
Our soldiers, our sailors, our statesmen, our king!
Heart of oak, &c.

There is a regular Britannic climax!
Our classic in this department is, of course, Charles Dibdin. Wherever the English language is known, there is known "Tom Bowling."

Here a sheer hulk lies poor Tom Bowling,
The darling of our crew;
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
    For Death has broached him to.
His form was of the manliest beauty,
    His heart was kind and soft;
Faithful below, he did his duty,
    But now he's gone aloft.
Tom never from his word departed,
   His virtues were so rare;
His friends were many and true-hearted,
   His Poll was kind and fair.
And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly,
   And many's the time and oft!
But mirth is turned to melancholy,
   For Tom is gone aloft!

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
   When He, who all commands,
Shall give, to call life's crew together,
   The word to pipe all hands.
Thus Death, whom kings and tars despatches,
   In vain Tom's life has doffed;
For though his body's under hatches,
   His soul has gone aloft.

It would be easy for a purist to find out that this song verged on profanity; but there is something in the adoption of the tar's language, the talking in the tongue "understood of the people," that sends it straight home to the heart. A very successful writer of songs for sailors, at the present day, is Dr. W. C. Bennett, brother of the mercurial Sir John. In his little volume bearing that title, and appropriately dedicated to the Duke of Edinburgh, he, as it were, posts Dibdin up to the present day, with a capital poem called "Oak and Iron."
OAK AND IRON.

A SONG FOR OUR IRONSIDES.

Yes, the days of our wooden walls are ended,
And the days of our iron ones begun;
But who cares by what our land's defended,
While the hearts that fought and fight are one?
'Twas not the oak that fought each battle,
'Twas not the wood that victory won;
'Twas the hands that made our broadsides rattle,
'Twas the hearts of oak that served each gun.

Then be ours iron ships or oaken,
So long as Britons serve each gun,
The spell of glory lives unbroken,
Our foes shall strike to us or run.

They may change the stuff in which we're floating,
But what matters that to old Dame Fame?
She'll ship with English tars, unnoting
The change, while we are still the same.
So long as English blood is sailing
The ships in which with us she swims,
She sticks to us with pride unfailling,
And victory, with her, shares her whims.
In oak or iron, who will doubt us?
As long as Britons serve each gun,
There's the knack of drubbing foes about us,
Of making foes to strike or run.

Then don't let any friends mistake us;
We are as our fathers chose to be,
We are what those fathers chose to make us,
The roamers and rulers of the sea!
Their sons if we should have to prove us,
Our ships of iron well we know
Will bear undimmed their flag above us,
And our kinship with our sires will show.
Would any hear Trafalgar's thunder,
    Or know how Camperdown was won?
Whether oak or iron decks are under
    Our feet, our foes shall strike or run.

WELSH SONGS.

In embarking on a study of Welsh literature, however sketchy, one is strongly tempted to become archaeological, and at a certain break in the narrative to insert the well-known words, "About this time happened the deluge." Suffice it to say, that the Cymry, from whom the principality is still named Cambria, were probably the second of the great masses of emigrants from Asia into Europe. They followed and pushed before them the Gaels (the Celtic language, "as every schoolboy knows," being still divided into the Gaelic and the Cymric). From the Continent they came to England—then not England but Albion—so named because the Dover cliffs seemed alps (high mountains) to these adventurers. They left, so we are told, the name of Britain behind them (from Prydain, one of their kings, who disputes the palm with Brut, the Trojan), left traces
undoubtedly in Cumber-land, and, after being thirteen hundred years domesticated here, they repelled the invasion of Julius Cæsar; on which occasion Caswallon the king held high jinks at Caer Lud—now London—whereat, we are told,

Full twenty thousand beeves and deer
Were slain to find the guests with cheer!

Eventually they were conquered by the Romans, but only for a time. It was not until the arrival of the Saxons that they had to retire to their mountain fastnesses, where they still remain, and relative to which Taliesin (not a Heathen Chinee, but one of their earliest bards) sang:

A serpent that coils,
And with fury boils,
From Germany coming with armed wings spread,
Shall subdue and enthrall
Broad Britain all
From Lochlin ocean and Severn's bed,

And the British men
Shall be captives then
To strangers from Saxonia's strand;
They shall praise God, and hold
Their language old,
But except wild Wales they shall lose their land.

(From Borrow's "Songs of Europe.")
To the sceptical destructive eye of modern criticism, this prophecy has a suspiciously ex post facto appearance too. However, prophecy or no prophecy, they were dispossessed. The very name of Cumrie was changed to Saxon Wales—meaning (like that other Gaelic word Albion) a hilly, mountainous region—the term being kindred with wold, wood—and even wall. Thenceforward they assumed the always poetical character of a people with a grievance; and they outpoured their national wail, not like us English on the merry fiddle or pipe, but on the properly plaintive harp. "Everywhere," says a most distressingly frivolous writer on this subject, "man has been found giving utterance to his musical impulses, not only by means of his lungs, but through a ceaseless variety of mechanical devices, including organs, harps, sackbuts, dulcimers, trumpets, drums, flageolets, bagpipes, fiddles, trombones, oboes, and hurdy-gurdies."*

Mr. Edward Jones—we may have heard that name before in connection with Wales—who held the appropriate office of bard to George IV., when that first gentleman in Europe was Prince of Wales—says that the bard was originally a constitutional

appendage of the druidical hierarchy, which was divided into three classes—priests, philosophers, and poets.

At the triennial assembly or *Eisteddfod*, these bards took their various degrees in music; and (auc. Mr. Jones) "early in the twelfth century harmony and verse had approached their utmost degree of perfection in Wales."

Mr. Jones is an encomiast, as might be expected from a gentleman with that particular cognomen—Jones the bard; but he sums up the subjects of Welsh poetry in a way that makes him worth quoting:

"They"—the Welsh—"were equally addicted to love and war. When they forsook the camp, they did not return to agriculture, commerce, or the mechanic arts, but passed their leisure in hunting and other manly sports and games, in converse with the fair, and in recounting their exploits amidst libations of mead at the tables of lords and princes. Hence they learnt to write verse and sound the harp.

"Another cause," he continues, "which operated with equal power on our poetry was the strength and beauty of the language in which it was con-
veyed. Notwithstanding the multiplicity of gutturals and consonants with which it abounds,” he adds in a half-apologetic tone, “it has the softness and harmony of the Italian with the majesty and expression of the Greek.”

Then he breaks out in poetry:

Of all the tissues ever wrought
On the Parnassian hill,
Fair Cambria’s web, in art and thought,
Displays the greatest skill.

The poetry was strongly alliterative. We English thought we had done a great thing when, in the year 1800, a young lady wrote the following line on the occasion of a gentleman named Lee planting a lane with lilacs:

Let lovely lilacs line Lee’s lonely lane!

where not only every word but every syllable begins with \( l \); but this was nothing to the performance of a Welsh bard, with an unpronounceable name, who wrote a poem of twelve lines, every syllable of which except the last began with \( g \). It must have been very pretty, but rather monotonous. The impression left would probably be the reverse
of that on the gentleman who read through Johnson’s Dictionary, and when he had finished said it was a clever work but rather disconnected.

Besides the harp, one ought to add, there was another instrument largely affected by Welsh bards, and which exhibits in a remarkable degree the national habits of thrift and economy as well as of poetry. This was the horn, on which, after the instrumentalist had played, he used it for drinking out of. This horn (again says our much-quoted Mr. Jones)—this “jovial horn” was a frequent subject of the Cambrian muse.

Still, as no less an authority than Mr. Brinley Richards tells us, the harp is essentially the exponent of Welsh melody. “Welsh music is essentially harp music,” he says, “and exhibits in almost every phrase evidence of the influence of the instrument upon its development.”

“Perhaps the quality which, beyond all others, characterises the poetry of Wales is pathos.”* Were they not people with a grievance? “The Welsh people have always been distinguished for the possession of intense feeling. The same remark is applicable to all the Celtic races. The

* Eclectic Review.
French and Irish people share the quality in an eminent degree. The Saxon and the Gaelic tribes are more characterised by strength of judgment and power of reasoning, as well as solidity of character and determination of purpose; while the Celts (Cymry?) are distinguished by more vivid imagination, more brilliant wit, finer taste, and deeper pathos. These constitute the poetical element."

Hence the celebrity of the Welsh hymns. Here is one which, though it suffers in translation, yet retains much of its original fire:

Babel's waters are so bitter,
There is naught but weeping still.
Zion's harps so sweet and tuneful
Do my heart with rapture fill.
Bring Thou us a joyful gathering
From the dread captivity;
And until on Zion's mountain
Let there be no rest for me.

In this land I am a stranger,
Yonder is my native home,
Far beyond the stormy billows,
Where sweet Canaan's hillocks bloom.
Tempest wild from sore temptation
Did my vessel long detain;
Speed, O gentle eastern breezes,
Aid me soon to cross this main!

* Dr. Thomas Price. Reprint from Eclectic Review.
And the same spirit breathes through the secular song called "The Ash Grove," in John Oxenford’s translation (Mr. Brinley Richards begs to say the air of "Cease your funning" was borrowed from this, and not vice versa):

The ash grove, how graceful, how plainly 'tis speaking,
   The harp through it playing has language for me;
Whenever the light through its branches is breaking,
   A host of kind faces is gazing on me.
The friends of my childhood again are before me,
   Each step makes a memory as freely I roam;
With soft whispers laden, its leaves rustle o'er me—
   The ash grove, the ash grove alone is my home.

My lips smile no more, my heart loses its lightness,
   No dream of the future my spirit can cheer;
I only would brood on the past and its brightness,
   The dead I have mourned are again living here.
From every dark nook they press forward to meet me,
   I lift up my eyes to the broad leafy dome,
And others are there looking downwards to greet me—
   The ash grove, the ash grove alone is my home.

One is delighted to find, however, that even the Cambrian muse can descend to the comic sometimes. It has not, fortunately, struck the stratum of the English music-hall comic yet; but there is a pretty facilis descensus in the following, which
is N. E. D. I. Jones in the original, Teddy Jones in its English dress:

When Teddy Jones was twenty-one
He saw sweet Laura's bright cheek flushing,
While through his heart and every vein
The lambent fire of love was gushing.
He met his uncle Bees and said:
"O uncle, I am so delighted,
Laura and I have fallen in love,
And our true hearts are plighted.
Then tell me truly, uncle Bees,
How much will keep a wife!
Will love and three pounds ten a month
Maintain us both for life?"

"Teddy, my boy, what is the use
Of this impatience, haste, and flurry?"
"What is the use? Indeed I wish
To marry Laura in a hurry.
For every coxcomb that she meets
Wishes to be her warm adorer,
Their sidelong glances shoot asquint
Straight to the face of Laura.
Then tell me, truly, &c.

My calculation has been made,
And no one here will ever doubt it,
That three pounds ten a month, with love,
Is more than twenty pounds without it.
And I must live and love, or die
And leave my love for evermore, ah!
I deem it best to live and love,
And marry my sweet Laura.
Then let me tell you, uncle Bees,
I think, upon my life,
That love and three pounds ten a month
Will keep me and my wife."
There is something irresistibly droll in a comic song all double d’s, double l’s, and w’s, varied only with an occasional y, just for euphony’s sake. The hymn, either of the ancient druid or modern Methodist, seems in place, but the comic song incongruous in the extreme.

Thus, then, to sum up what has been said, there seems reflected in the national minstrelsy of the blended Saxon and Norman on one hand, and of the pensive Cymric Celt upon the other, very evident traits of their individualities. The collective character reaches a climax in each instance; and the national air, where we can identify it, expresses the national idiosyncrasies very clearly and thoroughly.

The national air par excellence, “God save the Queen”—whether its source be Jacobite or Brunswick one—seems adequately to embody in its staid time, and in the staccato character of such a passage as

\[
\text{Scatter her enemies,} \\
\text{And make them fall,}
\]

the bold—one had almost used the ill-omened word bumptious—character of the composite Briton. “Rule Britannia” illustrates the same characteristic embodied in naval proclivities; “The British
Grenadiers” in military matters; “The Roast Beef of Old England” aptly conveys our national cuisine; “John Barleycorn” our national tap. The thoroughbred Briton (qua Briton) has a horror of kickshaws, calls claret the washing out of wine-casks, and cannot enjoy the boulevards or the stones of Venice without his accustomed accompaniments of “rosbif” and “p’lale. John Bull is a composite hybrid animal, and his national minstrelsy bewrays him. His most amiable feature is his home-love. Perhaps, after all (if one chose to be severely, unkindly, analytical) even this may resolve itself into a strongly expressed opinion that an Englishman’s house is his castle; just as Hobbes, of Malmesbury, resolved all the cardinal virtues into selfishness. John Bull—let us say it politely—is a national Proteus, and so has several melodies which attain the distinction of being national ones.

The Welshman, on the contrary (why should one feel inclined to smile when mentioning a native of the Principality?), is in the condition of an English gentleman who has seen better days. He has retired in dudgeon, centuries since, to his mountain fastnesses; and is far too dignified to indulge even the modified feeling of the Gael or the Irishman
towards the fussy persevering Saxon who has supplanted him. He has outgrown national grievances, and has no aspirations for Home-Rule. He has no one air which attains the dignity of a national air, in the same sense as "God save the Queen;" but a whole corpus of pretty, plaintive, sentimental minstrelsy, coming straight down from his bardic and druidical ancestors, and partaking more or less of the "Poor Mary Ann" character. One rejoices to hear that Welsh minstrelsy is looking up, and that Eisteddfodau (that is the distressing plural of Eisteddfod) are on the increase.

Or stay! Did we say Wales had no national air equivalent in its degree to "God save the Queen?" That were to do injustice to the Principality as the titular source of our Prince of Wales, on the one hand, and to Mr. Brinley Richards' very admirable national air, on the other. Shall we not rather say that England and Wales, like England and Scotland, are now so thoroughly one, their interests so completely merged and fused, that no separate national air is needed; but that, if such a superfluity be at any time desirable, it is admirably supplied in the stirring strains of "God bless the Prince of Wales!"
SCOTTISH POETRY AND MUSIC.

It was the proud boast of the ancient Athenian that he was indigenous, sprung from the soil. He took in consequence as the national emblem the grasshopper, because, by a most delightfully illogical process of petitio principii, he begged the question that this insect was indigenous too. A more thorough acquaintance with the science of entomology would have corrected his views with regard to the grasshopper, but need not have modified them much as to the Attic muse; and the same observation may be made with regard to Scotland. We are dealing with an eminently original subject when we speak of Scottish song. It is no lack of national esprit de corps, no depreciation at all of English national literature, to say that it bears evident marks of the composite nature appertaining to the English national character. It is inevitable that it should do so; for the Englishman is of a mixed race himself—a splendid instance (could an Englishman say less?) of success in such crossing of races. In his literature, too, he has
been eminently eclectic. From Italy he drew, not indeed his earliest, but his very early inspiration. The similarity of structure between the "Canterbury Tales" and the "Decameron" of Boccaccio is no chance one. Our first sonnets earned for the sonneteer the name of the English Petrarch. Spenser, amid all his native wood-notes wild, is full of French expressions; and, at a later age, German influences came to bear on a language and literature where there was a strong Saxon element to assimilate them; and it is a fact not so generally recognised as it might be, that while all these external influences were being brought to bear upon our national literature, there was quietly growing up in our midst a literature that was not foreign but native, autochthonous or indigenous in the truest sense, for it grew up on the Scottish border, and out of the long struggle for Scotch independence and feuds which there took place between the English and the Scotch; but by-and-by, the sword was wreathed with the olive-branch, and out of the din of battle there grew up that thoroughly characteristic body of minstrelsy which we denominate first the Border minstrelsy, and afterwards the Scotch national poetry and music;
another and a very graphic instance of how from the strong there comes forth sweetness, and from the bitter is evolved the very reverse.

When we speak of Scottish national poetry we by no means intend to signify the Gaelic element therein. We may be pardoned even by the most devoted son or daughter of Caledonia, even Professor Blackie himself, for looking on the Gaelic as bearing the same relation to general Scottish minstrelsy which the Cymric, or Welsh, does to English. It is the ancestral literature, no doubt; the original literature, if we will; but not the literature which obtained when the national character was fixed in historic times. Were our object purely an archæological one, we might be tempted to linger over Ossian, and accept him for the Homer of Scottish literature, as unquestioningly as Dr. Blair himself did. But even granting Ossian the fullest antiquity, and Fingal himself the substantiability, claimed for them, neither the Gaelic bard nor the northern monarch is to our present purpose. Our remarks rather arrange themselves under the orthodox three heads; touching separately, first, what we may call the *inception*, or *genesis*, of Scottish national poetry and song, prior
to the fusion of the two nations—the Scotch and English—into one; secondly, the development of that literature during the struggle which marked that difficult process of amalgamation, when the national poetry came to its climax, in the days of the Scottish cavaliers and the Jacobite songs; and, thirdly, the period of perfection succeeding the complete fusion of the two nations into one, and represented by the poetry of Burns and Sir Walter Scott; the former of whom is rightly regarded as marking the dawn of romantic poetry, not only in the northern, but also in the southern portion of the happily united nation.

At a time when the English muse was silent, or comparatively so, and when most unpoetical work was being done in England, at the beginning of the Wars of the Roses, poor ill-fated James I. of Scotland, who lived from 1394 to 1437, was sighing his poetical soul away among the roses at Windsor, where, during his captivity, he looked down from the Round Tower and saw his future wife, fair Jane Beaufort, walking in the garden among the May leaves and the songs of birds. He had beguiled the tedious hours with the works of Chaucer and Gower until they had got into his constitution. He him-
self was a minstrel and a poet; and, in a long poem, called "The King's Quire," he gives us what we may fitly enough fix on as the firstfruits of our Scottish muse. It is indeed a very fair earnest of what was to follow. The stanzas are polished ad unguem; and if the subject be a wee bit monotonous and tinged with an inevitable melancholy, the poem is still not so mournful as "In Memoriam." It is indeed "lengthened sweetness long drawn out;" but it is on the appropriate subject of love; and if a royal lover's sighs are not interesting, especially when that royal lover is a real artist too, the reader must be painfully unromantic, and had better betake himself permanently to prose.

The dialect of the poem requires less adaptation to fit it to English ears than that of Chaucer himself does—considerably less, indeed, than many bits of Robert Burns.

Here, for instance, is a regal encomium upon early rising:

The longè dayès and the nightès eke
I would bewail my fortune in this wise,
For which again distress comfort to seek
My custom was on mornès for to rise
Early as day; O happy exercise
By thee come I to joy out of torment.
But now to purpose of my first intent.
Bewailing in my chamber thus alone,
Despairèd of all joy and remedy,
For-tirèd of my thought, and woe-begone,
And to the window gan I walk in hye,
To see the world and folk that went forby;
As for the time (though I of mirthis food
Might have no more) to look it did me good.

Then it was that his majesty's early rising was
rewarded with a sight of his pretty Jane. He
tells of her golden hair, her rich attire, her jewel­
lery, the very "hook she had upon her tissue
white" to loop up her dress for walking, and thus
sums up the account of her "youth in goodli-
head":

In her was youth, beauty with humble port,
Bounty, riches, and womanly feature:
(God better wote than my pen can report)
Wisdom largèss, estate and cunning sure,
In word, in deed, in shape and countenance
That nature might no more her child advance.

Such, for all practical—or rather for all poetical
—purposes, may well be fixed upon as the pre­
liminary study in Scottish song. Is it not another
case like that alluded to by Anacreon, where, when
the bard wished, as he says, to sing of the Atreidæ
and of Cadmus, he was carried away by his bar­biton, which would discourse only of love? Mac­pherson's Ossian, genuine or fictitious, would give
NATIONAL FUN.

us our Atreidæ; but Eros breathes through the plaintive stanzas of King James's tuneful "Quire." Nor was his majesty a solitary singer. The time was as tuneful as that green herbary was where he saw his fair charmer. "It is remarkable," as Craik observes, "that this space of a hundred and fifty years, during which the earliest Scotch poetry flourished, exactly corresponds to the period of decay and almost extinction of poetry in England which intervenes between Chaucer and Surrey. On the other hand," he adds, "with the revival of English poetry in the latter part of the sixteenth century, the voice of Scottish song almost died away." He means, of course, that it died away for the time being only—though, by-the-way, he does not say so—but it is an excellent instance at once of the compensation running through the established order of things, and also of the sort of entente cordiale between the two nations in literary matters, that the English and Scottish bards seem to come to the front alternately, like the two people in the old-fashioned weather-houses, one of whom retired when the other put in an appearance.

Schoolmaster Henryson, Friar Dunbar, Bishop Gawain Douglas, and Sir David Lyndsay form an
admira ble catena of bards down to the era of Surrey and Wyatt, when the English muse revived; and what we notice chiefly is the extremely slender divergence between the two tongues at this time. Here, for instance, are a couple of stanzas from Dunbar, where there is the merest *soupçon* of idiomatic Scotch:

The wavering world’s wretchedness,
The failing and fruitless business,
The misspent time, the service vain
For to consider is ane pain.

The sugared mouths, with minds therefra,
The figured speech with faces tway:
The pleasing tongues with hearts unplain
For to consider is ane pain.

But if there was an *entente cordiale* in the dominions of Captain Pen, far otherwise was it in those of Captain Sword. The very nearness of the two nations, geographically and linguistically speaking, augmented their differences—for who can quarrel like two intimate friends or near relations?

There were *gests* and historic ballads written upon the story of Wallace, for instance; and on the occurrence of any great national event or victory, the genius of the country broke into songs which the Scottish maidens used to sing. A single stanza
of a Scottish ballad, composed after the defeat of the English at Bannockburn, has been preserved (Aytoun’s “Scotch Ballads”).

Sir Philip Sidney, in his discourse of poetry, speaks thus of the old Border ballad of “Chevy Chase”: “I never heard the old song of Piercy and Douglas that I found not my heart more moved than with a trumpet!” It is indeed one that may well stir the national sympathies of any reader or listener, no matter on which side of Tweed he happens to dwell. The opening is a household word; the jingle of the rhythm the very same as that of the “Lays of Ancient Rome”:

God prosper long our noble king  
Our lives and safetyes all;  
A woefull hunting once there did  
In Chevy Chace befall.

To drive the deere with hound and horne  
Earl Percy took his way;  
The childe may rue that is unborne  
The hunting of that day.

Then there is the dénouement:

With that there came an arrow keen  
Out of an English bow,  
Which struck Earl Douglas to the heart,  
A deep and deadly blow.
Who never spoke more words than these:
   "Fight on, my merry men all;
   For why, my life is at an end—
   Lord Percy sees my fall."

Then, leaving strife, Earl Percy took
   The dead man by the hand;
And said: "Earl Douglas, for thy life
   Would I have lost my hand.

   "O Christ! my very heart doth bleed
   With sorrow for thy sake,
   For sure, a more renowned knight
   Mischance did never take!"

The "Gaberlunzie Man," too, is a thoroughly characteristic ballad on the subject of love rather than war, and the tricks supposed to be permissible in each. It is said to describe one of the roving adventures of King James V. (1512-42).

THE GABERLUNZIE MAN.

(The Gaberlunzie was a travelling pedlar or tinker.—Chambers.)

The pawky auld carle came o'er the lea
Wi' mony gude e'ens and days to me,
Saying, "Gudewife, for your courtesie,
   Will ye lodge a silly poor man?"

The night was cauld, the carl was wat,
   And down ayont the ingle he sat;
My dochter's shouthers he 'gan to clap,
   And cadgily ranted and sang.
"O wow," quo' he, "were I as free
As first when I saw this countrie,
How blithe and merrie wad I be,
And I wad never think lang."
He grew canty and she grew fain;
But little did her auld middy ken
What thir slee twa togidder were sayen,
When wooing they were sae thrang.

Between the twa was made a plot;
They raise a wee before the clock,
And wilyly they shot the lock,
And fast to the bent are they gane.

Upon the morn the auld wife raise,
And at her leisure put on her claise,
Syne to the servant's bed she gaes
To speir for the silly poor man.

She gaed to the bed where the beggar lay;
The strae was cauld—he was away;
She clapt her hands, cried, "Dulefu' day!
For some o' our gear will be gane."

Some ran to coffer, and some to kist,
But nought was stown that could be mist;
She danced her lane, cried, "Praise be blest!
I've lodged a leal poor man.

"Since nathing's awa', as we can learn,
The kirm's to kirm, and the milk to yearn,
Gae butt the house, lass, and waken my bairn,
And bid her come quickly ben."

The servant gaed where the dochter lay;
The sheets were cauld—she was away;
And fast to her gudewife 'gan say,
"She's aff wi' the Gaberlunzie man."

"O fie gar ride, and fie gar rin,
And haste ye find these traitors again!
For she's be burnt, and he's be slain,
The wearifu' Gaberlunzie man."
Some rade upo' horse, some ran a-fit;
The wife was mad and out o' her wit;
She could na gang, nor yet could she sit,
But aye did curse and did ban.

Passing over the marvellous outburst of literary productions which belongs to the revival of learning in England, which (as it has been well said) "shot forth like a harvest" in the exuberant literature of the Elizabethan age, and was continued through the reigns of the first three Stuarts, we come to a period when, in the struggle of the exiled family to regain the English throne, we meet with another copious and characteristic department of Scottish national literature.

In his splendid edition of Jacobite songs, Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, truly says that they form a literature of themselves. "They have," he continues, "no affinity with the ancient ballads of heroism and romance, and one part of them far less with the mellow strains of our pastoral and lyric muses. Their general character is that of a rude energetic humour that bids defiance to all opposition in arms, sentiments, or rules of song-writing. They are the unmasked effusions of a bold and primitive race, who hated and
despised the overturning innovations that prevailed in church and state, and held the abettors of these as dogs, or something worse—being too base to be spoken of with any degree of patience or forbearance. Such is the prevailing feature; but there are among them specimens of sly and beautiful allegory. These last seem to have been sung openly and avowedly in mixed parties, as some of them are more generally known; while the others had been confined to the select meetings of confirmed Jacobites or hoarded up in the cabinets of old Catholic families, where to this day they have been preserved as their most precious lore."

Writing as he did in 1819, Hogg has some exceedingly interesting anecdotes to tell in reference to the old and new succession in Scotland. For instance, the Princess of Wales, mother of George III., mentioned with some appearance of censure the conduct of Lady Margaret McDonald, who harboured and concealed Prince Charles when, in the extremity of peril, he threw himself on her protection; and Prince Frederick answered: "Wouldn't you, madam, have done the same in the same circumstances? I am sure—I hope in
God you would." The king himself, too, having been told of a gentleman in Perthshire who had not only refused to take the oath of allegiance to him, but had never permitted him to be named as king in his presence, said: "Carry my compliments to him—but no; stop—he may perhaps not receive my compliments as King of England. Give him the Elector of Hanover's compliments, and tell him that he respects the steadiness of his principles."

He was heard to express himself one day before a dozen gentlemen of both nations with the greatest warmth as follows: "I have always regarded the attachment of the Scots to the Pretender—I beg your pardon, gentlemen" (what a clever lapsus linguae!) "to Prince Charles Stuart I mean—as a lesson to me whom to trust in the hour of need."

The other party—opposed to the Cavaliers—does not seem to have been a musical one. Hogg says he has searched in vain for any songs previous to 1715. The Whig songs occupy a very meagre appendix indeed, at the end of the second thick volume of the Jacobite ditties. Possibly the wish might have been in some degree the father of the thought. It is very easy not to find what you don't want to find. Naturally, the Whig songs
would not be so popular as the Jacobite ones; but there is a spice of Scotch humour in some of those which he does insert.

Possibly we ought to give the preference to the Whig effusions. Here is one very characteristic, where love and loyalty involve the hero in an awkward complication:

**HAUD AWA FRAE ME, DONALD.**

Hand awa, bide awa,
   Hand awa frae me, Donald,
Your principles I do abhor;
   No Jacobites for me, Donald.
Passive obedience I do hate,
   And tyranny I flee, Donald;
Nor can I think to be a slave,
   Where now I can be free, Donald.

Your king, with all his right divine,
   Claims you as property, Donald.
And you, upon that very plan,
   Will do the same by me, Donald.
For all the promises you made
   I would not give a fig, Donald;
For every woman, you must know,
   Is at her heart a Whig, Donald.

Even Highland Maggie, though she's bred
   Up under tyranny, Donald,
No sooner you her rights invade
   Then she'll a rebel be, Donald.
For all that you can say or do
   I'll never change my mind, Donald;
Your king takes so much of your heart,
   To me you'll ne'er be kind, Donald.
Highland Maggie was evidently a strong-minded female; and some of us may think Donald well off his bargain with that political young lady—if she was a young one. Then again, if we did take “God save the King” from the Jacobites, we turned their own weapon against them with a vengeance. The rival versions are very edifying. Here is a Whig stanza:

Come let the toast go round,  
Let mirth and joy abound,  
Let’s drink and sing,  
To George, whose gentle sway  
Blessing bestows each day,  
Whom brave and free obey,  
Father and king.

Shame to our country’s foes,  
Frenchified fools and those  
Who wish our thrall.  
From France and Jacobites,  
Rome and her Pagan rites,  
Smooth knaves and hypocrites,  
God save us all!

Then audi alteram partem:

THE KING’S ANTHEM.

God bless the Prince, I pray,  
God bless the Prince, I pray,  
Charlie, I mean.  
That Scotland we may see  
Freed from vile Presbyt’ry,  
Both George and his Fackie.  
Even so. Amen.
God bless the happy hour,
May the Almighty power
Make all things well;
That the whole progeny
Who are in Italy
May soon and suddenly
Come to Whitehall.

God bless the church, I pray,
God save the church, I pray,
Pure to remain,
Free from all Whiggery,
And Whig’s hypocrisy,
Who strive maliciously
Her to defame.

These songs become the funnier in proportion as they become more thoroughly Scotch, and so catch the quaint humour of the ones they travestied. For instance, here is an exceedingly good one set to the tune of “Highland Laddie,” and full of quiet humour:

When you cam over first frae France,
Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie!
You swore to lead our king a dance,
Bonnie laddie!
And promised on your royal word,
Bonnie laddie!
To make our duke dance o’er his sword,
Bonnie laddie!

When he began to you to play,
Bonnie laddie!
You quat the green, an’ ran away,
Bonnie laddie!
The dance then turned into a chace,
Bonnie laddie!
It must be owned you wan the race,
Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie!

It is pleasant, as the old satirist says, to stand on the shore, when the winds and waters are at strife, and watch the commotion; and so it is pleasant enough to stand here, and from our vantage-ground of the present view the struggle of the Stuarts to regain the throne. But do not let us forget that it was a great struggle. There is a humorous side to it, no doubt, as it comes to us in these quaint old songs; but in the main the theme is intensely sad, and we continually find our sympathies dragging us, in spite of ourselves, over to the side of Prince Charlie; just as when we read over the songs that have sprung out of the American War we find ourselves ever and anon veering to the South, even when we feel we ought to veer North.

One can scarcely open a page of the "Jacobite Song-book" without being conscious of intense pathos blending thus curiously with the humorous element. In the best known of all the songs—"Charlie is my Darling"—this strange combination is perceptible both in words and music. After
NATIONAL FUN.

The pathos of the situation is well described in the following little poem:

"Thus rises the modern man," writes M. Taine, in his "History of English Literature," "impelled by two sentiments: one democratic, the other philosophic. From the shallows of poverty and ignorance he exerts himself to rise, lifting the weight of established society and admitted dogmas, disposed either to reform or to destroy them, and at once generous and rebellious. . . . This new spirit broke out first in a Scottish peasant, Robert Burns. In fact, the man and the circumstances were suitable. Scarcely ever was seen together more of misery and talent."

With the misery we are only incidentally concerned, in so far as that throws into the poetry
of the individual the same element of pathos, which national efforts for liberty infused into the two earlier departments of Scotch poetry. In that beautiful ode to the "wee, modest, crimson-tippit flower"—the mountain daisy—we already have Burns's presentiment of a fate which was but too truly realised. The slender stem is crushed by the ploughshare, and—

Such is the fate of simple bard
On life's rough ocean luckless-starred,
Unskilful he to note the card
   Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
    And whelm him o'er.

Such fate to suffering worth is given
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven
   To misery's brink,
Till wrench'd of every stay but Heaven,
    He, ruined, sink.

E'en thou who mourn'st the daisy's fate
That fate is thine—no distant date.
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
   Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight
    Shall be thy doom.

On the other side, there is nothing in any language funnier than the "Address to the De'il,"
and especially the concluding hope for his amendment:

An’ now, old Cloots, I ken’ ye’re thinkin’
A certain bardie’s rantin’, drinkin’,
Some luckless hour will send him linkin’
To your black pit;
But, faith, he’ll turn a corner jinkin’,
An’ cheat you yet.

But fare ye well, auld Nickie-ben!
O wad ye tak a thought an’ men’;
Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
Still hae a stake.
I’m wae to think upon yon den,
E’en for your sake!

Very much, indeed, to the purpose are the words of another great Scotchman who ought not to be passed over in the muster-roll even of Scottish poets, albeit his writings are named in common language as prose—the Chelsea philosopher, Thomas Carlyle. He says:

"With men of upright feeling we are not required to plead for Burns. In pitying admiration he lies enshrined in all our hearts, in a far nobler mausoleum than that of marble; neither will his works, even as they are, pass away from the memory of man. While the Shaksperes and Miltons roll on like mighty rivers through the country of thought, bearing fleets of traffickers
and assiduous pearl-fishers on their waves, this little Valchesa fountain will also arrest our eye; for this also is of nature’s own and most cunning workmanship, and bursts from the depths of the earth with a full gushing current into the light of day; and often will the traveller turn aside to drink of its pure waters, and muse among its rocks and pines.”

They snatched him from the sickle and the plough
To gauge ale-firkins—

adds Coleridge, in a fine satiric invocation to the ghost of Maecenas. So they did; very incongruous was his calling, and very free did he make with those same ale-firkins, and the barley-bree in general. He was, in many respects, the round man in the square hole; but he was still the first-fruits of the romantic school of poetry in Britain, and, par excellence, the national poet of Scotland.

The most exuberant collection of funny Scotch stories is to be found in Dean Ramsay’s “Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character.” Disavowing the idea of merely stringing together a number of funny stories, or compiling a Scottish Joe
Miller, the Dean treats his subject as illustrative of Scottish character, and aptly dwells on the fitness of Scottish phraseology for conveying either pathos or fun. He compares the expression “auld lang syne” with its English equivalent, and shows how such a word as “lintie,” for linnet, conveys much of the affection of the speaker for the little songster. Dr. Norman Macleod met a Scottish emigrant in Canada; and while the man dwelt eloquently on the advantages of his new home, he wound up by saying: “But, oh sir, there are nae linties in the wuds!”

The Dean’s stories of Scotch bairns are capital. Young Scotland can be as dry on occasion as his grown-up relations. There was the little girl who came home and boasted she was second in her class. Being pressed as to the number of her class-fellows, she was constrained to admit, “Ou, there’s jist me and anither lass.” Another little one, questioned as to the meaning of “the pestilence that walketh in darkness,” replied, “Ou, it’s just bugs.” But one of the best of these bits of juvenile humour must be given in the Dean’s own words:

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"The innocent and unsophisticated answers of children on serious subjects," he says, "are often very amusing. Many examples are recorded, and one I have received seems much to the point, and derives a good deal of its point from the Scottish turn of the expression. An elder of the kirk having found a little boy and his sister playing marbles on Sunday, put his reproof in this form, not a judicious one for a child: 'Boy, do ye know where children go to, who play marbles on Sabbath-day?' 'Ay,' said the boy, 'they gang doun to the field by the water below the brigg.' 'No,' roared out the elder, 'they go to hell and are burned.' The little fellow, really shocked, called to his sister, 'Come awa', Jeanie, here's a man swearing awfully.'"

What, again, can possibly be funnier on that same subject of swearing than the following description of it by a Scotch lassie: "Oor John sweers awfu', and we try to correct him; but," she added, in a candid and apologetic tone, "nae doubt it is a great set-off to conversation." The writer with whom the Duke of Athole made an appointment which he failed to keep, began swearing at the Duke's negligence. "At whom
did he swear?" somebody asked; and the narrator replied, "Oh, he didna swear at anything particular, but juist stude in ta middle of ta road and swoor at lairge."

As might have been expected, perhaps, Dean Ramsay is especially copious in clerical stories and those trenching on theological topics. He tells us how a man who was asked what Adam was like, first described our general forefather somewhat vaguely as "just like ither fouk." Being pressed for a more special description, he likened him to a horse-couper known to himself and the minister. Why was Adam like that horse-couper? "Weel," replied the catechumen, "naebody got onything by him, and mony lost."

"A lad had come for examination previous to his receiving his first communion. The pastor, knowing that his young friend was not very profound in his theology, and not wishing to discourage him, or keep him from the table unless compelled to do so, began by asking what he thought a safe question and what would give him confidence. So he took the Old Testament and asked him, in reference to the Mosaic law, how many commandments there were. After a little
thought, he put his answer in the modest form of a supposition, and replied cautiously, 'Aiblins a hunner.' The clergyman was vexed, and told him such ignorance was intolerable, that he could not proceed in examination, and that the youth must wait and learn more; so he went away. On returning home he met a friend on his way to the manse, and on learning that he too was going to the minister for examination, shrewdly asked him: 'Weel, what will ye say noo if the minister speers hoo mony commandments there are?' 'Say, why I shall say ten, to be sure.' To which the other rejoined with great triumph: 'Ten! Try ye him wi' ten! I tried him wi' a hunner, and he wasna satisfied.' Another answer from a little girl was shrewd and reflective. The question was: 'Why did the Israelites make a golden calf?' 'They hadna as muckle siller as wad mak a coo.'

The "Noctes Ambrosianæ" of Professor Wilson are a nineteenth-century adaptation of the "Noctes Atticae," and infinitely more interesting than the work of Aulus Gellius. Christopher North—such was the writer's nom de plume—was for years the life and soul of Blackwood, in which the "Noctes" appeared; and the Quarterly Review, while depre-
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ciating Professor Wilson as a poet, a novelist, and a critic, gives him the palm, above all other writers, as a rhapsodist. "As Christopher North," says the reviewer, "by the loch, or on the moor, or at Ambrose's, he is the most gifted and extraordinary being that ever wielded pen. We can compare him, when such fits are on, to nothing more aptly than to a huge Newfoundland dog, the most perfect of its kind; or, better still, to the 'beautiful leopard from the valley of the palm-trees,' which, in sheer wantonness, and without any settled purpose, throws itself into a thousand attitudes, always astonishing, and often singularly graceful."

An apologist of the "Noctes Ambrosianæ" says that, had Shakspere written about Falstaff once a month for twenty years, we should have said the same of him as some persons have said of Professor Wilson's prolixity. "If the shepherd, at his best," he adds, "could be taken out of the 'Noctes' and compressed into a compact duodecimo volume, we should have an original piece of imaginative humour which might fitly stand for all time by the side of the portly knight." Accordingly he gives us, in one portable tome, "The Comedy of the Noctes Ambrosianæ," which faith-
fully enough presents us with the more salient features of the unwieldy original. From this we select the following extracts:

THE SHEPHERD RELATES HOW THE BAGMEN WERE LOST IN THE SNOW.

Shepherd. . . . Wae's me, wae's me! for that auld woman and her wee granddaunchter, the bonniest lamb, folk said, in a' the Highlands, that left Tamantowe that nicht, after the merry strathspeys were over, and were never seen again till after the snow, lying no five hunder yards out o' the town, the bairn wrapt round and round in the crone's plaid, as well as in her ain, but, for a' that, dead as a flower-stalk that has been forgotten to be taken into the house at nicht, and in the mornin brittle as glass in its beauty, although, till you come to touch it, it would seem to be alive!

North. With what very different feelings one would read an account of the death of a brace of bagmen* in the snow! How is that to be explained, James?

Shep. You see the imagination pictures the twa bagmen as cockneys. As the snow was getting dour at them, and giein them sair flaffs and dads in their faces, spittin in their verra een, ruggin their noses, and blawin upon their blubbery lips till they blistered, the cockneys wad be waxing half feared and half angry and damnin the "Heelans" as the cursedest kintra that ever was kilted. But wait awee, my gentlemen, and you'll keep a lowner sugh or you get halfway from Dalnacardoch to Dalwhinnie.

North. A wild district, for ever whirring, even in mist snow, with the gorrock's wing.

Shep. Whist, haud your tongue, till I finish the account o' the death of the twa bagmen in the snow. Ane o' their horses—for the creturs are no ill mounted—slidders awa down a bank, and gets jammed into a snow stall, where there's no room for turnin'.

* Commercial travellers.
The other horse grows obstinate wi' the sharp stour in his face, and proposes retreating to Dalnacardoch, tail foremost; but no being sae weel up to the walkin' or the trottin' backwards as that English chief Townsend, the pedestrian, he cloits down first on his hurdies, and then on his tae side, the girths burst, and the saddle hangs only by a tack to the crupper.

North. Do you know, James, that though you are manifestly drawing a picture intended to be ludicrous it is to me extremely pathetic?

Shep. The twa cockneys are now forced to act as dismounted cavalry through the rest of the campaign, and sit down and cry—pretty babes o' the wood—in each ither's arms! John Frost decks their noses and their ears with icicles, and each vulgar physiognomy partakes of the pathetic character of a turnip making an appeal to the feelings at Halloween. Dinna sneeze that way when ane's speakin', sir!

North. You ought rather to have cried, "God bless you!".

Shep. A' this while neither the snaw nor the wund has been idle; and baith cockneys are sitting up to the middle, poor creturs, no that verra cauld, for driftin' snaw sure begins to fin' warm and comfortable, but wae's me, unco, unco sleepy, and not a word do they speak! And now the snaw is up to their verra chins, and the bit bonny braw stiff fause shirt-collars, that they were sae proud o' stickin' at their chapts, are as hard as airm, for they've gotten a sair Scotch starchin, and the fierce north cares naething for their towsy hair a'smellin' wi' Kalydor and Macassar, no it indeed, but twirls it a' into ravelled hanks, till the frozen mops bear nae earthly resemblance to the ordinary heads o' cockneys; and hoo indeed should they, lying in sic an unnatural and out-o'-the-way place for them, as the moors atween Dalnacardoch and Dalwhinnie?

North. Oh James! say not they perished!

Shep. Yes, sir, they perished; under such circumstances it would have been too much to expect of the vital spark that it should not have fled. It did so, and a pair of more interesting bagmen never slept the sleep of death. Gie me the lend o' your handkercher, sir, for I agree with you that the picture's verra pathetic.
Here, again, is the shepherd's opinion of

ROASTED GOOSE.

Shepherd. Do you ken, sir, that I admire guses, tame guses, far mair nor wild ones. A wild guse, to be sure, is no bad eatin, shot in season; out o’ season, and after a long flicht, what is he but a sickle o’ banes? But a tame guse, off the stubble, sirs (and what’n a hairst this’ll be for guses, the stocks hae been sae sair shucken!), roasted afore a clear fire to the swirl o’ a worsted string; stuffed as fu’s he can hand, frae neck to doup, wi’ yerbs; and devored wi’ about equal proportions o’ mashed potawtis and a claish o’ aipple-sass; the creeshy breist o’ him shinin’ out ower n’ its braid beautifu’ rotundity, wi’ a broonish and yellowish licht, seemin’ to be the verra concentrated essence o’ tastefu’ sappiness, the bare idea o’ which, at ony distance o’ time and place, brings a gush o’ water out o’ the pallet. His theeghs slightly crisped by the smokeless fire to the preceese pint best fitted for crunchin’; and, in short, the toot-an-sammal o’ the bird a perfeck specimen o’ the beau-ideal o’ the true bird o’ paradise—for sic a guse, sir (but oh, may I never be sae sairly tempted!), wad a man sell his kintra, or his conscience, and neixt day strive to stifle his remorse by gobblin’ up the giblet pie.

Charles Lamb himself did not surpass this encomium in his ecstatic admiration of roast pig.

Among quite recent Scottish fun one of the most humorous productions is contained in a volume of “Lyrics, Legal and Miscellaneous,” by George Outram, of which a third edition was published in 1874. The following poem is spun out almost like its own subject. It refers to
the well-known longevity of annuitants, and is called

THE ANNUITY.

I gaed to spend a week in Fife—
    An unco week it proved to be,
For there I met a waesome wife
    Lamentin' her viduity.
Her grief brak out sae fierce an' fell,
I thought her heart wad burst the shell;
An'—I was sae left to mysel'—
    I sell't her an annuity.

The bargain lookt fair enough—
    She was just turned o' saxty-three;
I couldna guess she'd prove sae tough
    By human ingenuity.
But years have come, an' years have gane,
An' there she's yet as stieve's a stane—
The limmer's growin' young again
    Since she got her annuity.

She's crined awa' to bane an' skin,
    But that it seems is nought to me;
She's like to live, although she's in
    The last stage o' tenuity.
She munches wi' her wizened gums;
An' stumps about on legs o' thrums,
But comes—as sure as Christmas comes—
    To ca' for her annuity.

She jokes her joke, an' cracks her crack,
    As spunkie as a growin' flea;
And then she sits upon my back,
    A livin' perpetuity.
She hurkles by her ingle-side,
An' toasts an' tans her wrinkled hide;
Lord kens how long she yet may bide
    To ca' for her annuity!
I read the tables drawn wi’ care
   For an Insurance Company;
Her chance o’ life was stated there
   Wi’ perfect perspicuity.
But tables here or tables there,
She’s lived ten years beyond her share,
An’s like to live a dizen mair,
   To ca’ for her annuity.

I gat the loon that drew the deed,
   We spelled it o’er right carefully;
In vain he yerked his souple head,
   To find an ambiguity.
It’s dated, ’tested, a’ complete,
The proper stamp, nae word delete,
An’ diligence, as a decreet,
   May pass fra her annuity.

Last Yule she had a fearful hoast,
   I thought a kink might set me free;
I led her out, ’mang snaw an’ frost,
   Wi’ constant assiduity.
But deil ma’ care, the blast gaed by
An’ missed the auld anatomy;
It cost me just a tooth, forbye
   Discharging her annuity.

I thought that grief might gar her quite,
   Her only son was lost at sea,
But aff her wuts behuved to flit
   An’ leave her in fatuity!
She threeps, an’ threeps, he’s livin’ yet,
For a’ the tellin’ she can get;
But catch the doited runt forget
   To ca’ for her annuity!

If there’s a sough o’ cholera
   Or typhus, wha sae gleg as she?
She buys up drugs, an’ baths, an’ a’
   In siccan superfluity!
She doesna need, she's fever-proof,
The pest gaed o'er her very roof;
She tauld me sae—and then her loof
Held out for her annuity.

Ae day she fell, her arm she brak,
A compound fracture as could be;
Nae leech the cure would undertak
Whate'er was the gratuity.
It's cured! She handles 't like a flail,
It does as weel in bits as hale;
But I'm a broken man mysel'
Wi' her, an' her annuity.

Her broozled flesh an' braken banes
Are weel as flesh an' banes can be.
She beats the taeds that live in stanes
An' fatten in vacuity!
They die when they're exposed to air,
They canna thole the atmosphere;
But her! expose her onywhere,
She lives for her annuity....

The Bible says the age o' man
Threescore an' ten perchance may be;
She's ninety-four, let them wha can
Explain the incongruity.
She should hae lived afore the Flood,
She's come o' patriarchal blood,
She's some auld pagan, mummified
Alive for her annuity.

She's been embalmed inside an' out,
She's sauted to the last degree;
There's pickle in her very snout
Sae caper-like and cruety.
Lot's wife was fresh compared to her;
They've kyanised the useless kuir,
She canna decompose nae mair
Than her accursed annuity.
FUN, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

The water-drap wears out the rock
As this eternal jaud wears me;
I could withstand the single shock
But no' the continuity.
It's pay me here, an' pay me there,
An' pay me, pay me, evermair;
I'll gang demented wi' despair—
I'm charged for her annuity.

IRISH FUN.

The study of ancient Erse literature is one thing, that of Irish literature—as commonly understood by people who use the term—is another. There is no more reason why, in discussing national fun, we should go back to Celtic times than to Roman. Our subject is Irish—not Erse or Hibernian. One would, therefore, no more digress into archaeology in this case, than one would devote more than a passing reference to the Celtic bards, in treating of the national poetry of Scotland, or to the Cymric bards of Wales, in discussing that of the Principality. We cannot too often repeat that Saxon, Cimbric, Celtic, and Erse poetry are one thing, and English, Welsh, Scotch, and Irish another, and quite a different thing. So much for
archæology. Let us by no means neglect it, but keep it in its place as a merely preliminary study to that in which we are engaged, being mostly antiquarian, while ours is literary; being, moreover (softly be this spoken), inclined to be dry and abstruse, whereas it must be our own fault if this be not interesting and lively, being the study, not of a dead language and literature, but of one which is living—very much so, indeed—in our midst at the present moment.

On this subject, Thomas Moore will be a witness quite beyond suspicion, and this is what he says in his "Letter on Music," prefixed to the "Irish Melodies":

"Though much has been said of the antiquity of our music, it is certain that our finest and most popular airs are modern; and, perhaps," he adds, "we may look no farther than the last disgraceful century for the origin of most of those wild and melancholy strains, which were at once the offspring and solace of grief. . . . Mr. Pinkerton is of opinion that none of the Scotch popular airs are as old as the middle of the sixteenth century; and, though musical antiquaries refer us, for some of our melodies, to so early a period as the fifth
century, I am persuaded that there are few of a civilised description . . . which can claim quite so ancient a date as Mr. Pinkerton allows to the Scotch. But," he goes on, with a true spice of Irish humour, "music is not the only subject upon which our taste for antiquity is rather unreasonably indulged; and, however heretical it may be to dissent from these romantic speculations, I cannot help thinking that it is possible to love our country very zealously, and to feel deeply interested in her honour and happiness, without believing that Irish was the language spoken in Paradise, or that our ancestors were kind enough to take the trouble of polishing the Greeks;" for which two assertions he quotes, in a foot-note, the "Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin," and O'Halloran's "History of Ireland," respectively.

Thomas Moore himself, in fact, forms an excellent frontier-line for a division of the subject. A fairly comprehensive glance may be given by noticing: (1) the Irish minstrelsy which preceded those called par excellence the "Irish Melodies;" (2) the Irish melodies themselves, and Moore as their adapter; (3) those that have appeared since Moore's time, and which are capitallly summarised
in Samuel Lover’s “Lyrics of Ireland.” The principle embodied in those same Irish melodies is, it would appear, exactly that which should obtain in the case of national music of any kind. It was a process of adaptation rather than of creation pure and simple. Moore took the beautiful wild melodies of his native land and civilised them (to use his own expression). What Sir John Stevenson did for the music he did for the words; and the consequence is that we have here again, in the music of Ireland, another realisation of the Laureate’s idea, “perfect music set to noble words,” or vice versa if we like to say so. The poems themselves are delightful to read as poems; the melodies delightful to listen to as Lieder ohne Worte; but each more delightful than ever when heard in combination. Moore is the Burns of Ireland; and he himself again institutes, or suggests, the comparison. He says he would very willingly give up all claims on Ossian to have been able to claim Robert Burns as an Irishman.

Ignoring, then, the attractions which a disquisition on early Fenian poetry might possibly hold out to some persons, we may well fix as the point of departure upon Carolan, whom some have
called the last of the bards, and whom Goldsmith named the greatest bard. Turlogh O'Carolan—to give him his patronymic in full—dates no farther back than 1670, which was the year when he was born in Meath county. His father was a reduced Irish gentleman, and he himself lost his sight when eighteen years of age. To beguile his loneliness he learnt the harp, the ancestral instrument of his race, and by-and-by tried his hand at poetry too. Thus was he literally the Irish Homer; and on the frontispiece to Hardiman's "Irish Minstrelsy" we have a very romantic picture indeed of Carolan, in a slashed coat, with his long curls trailing over his shoulders, and his sightless eyes rather too prominently displayed. His collars are turned down like Lord Byron's—as was then the poetic mode, for the portrait is dated 1831—and he is scratching away in real bardic fashion at a very primitive-looking harp.

Carolan wandered the country over quite en troubadour, harp in hand, and, like a Provençal bard, too, "feigned or fancied himself in love." Love, real or fictitious, has always been a requisite with the troubadour. Carolan's love poetry is voluminous, and for the most part in the old Erse
language. He fell in love, however, with an English lady, who knew no more of the old Irish than we do; consequently the bard felt bound, on principles of gallantry, to address his lady-love in English. His knowledge of this tongue was, however, very fragmentary; and the result is consequently rather distressing. It is curious enough, however, as the production of a blind Irish bard in the seventeenth century, in a language that was foreign to him:

On a fair Sunday morning, devoted to be
Attentive to a sermon that was ordered for me,
I met a fresh rose on the road by decree,
And though mass was my notion, my devotion was she.
   Welcome, fair lily, white and red—
   Welcome was every word we said;
Welcome, bright angel of noble degree,
I wish you would love, and that I were with thee;
   pray don't frown at me with mouth or with eye.
   So I told the fair maiden with heart full of glee,
   Though the mass was my notion, my devotion was she.

But alas! Carolan had another devotion, and that was—Muse of Erin, must we confess it?—whisky. Here is an ode translated from the original Irish. Tradition has preserved the account of its composition. The bard, in one of his excursions, visited an old friend whom he found in
bed, suffering rather from melancholy than illness. He drew near the bedside, took his harp, played and sang the song, "Whisky is the potion," and the effect was instantaneous—irresistible. The dispossessed started up, joined the festive board, and was "sick no more" (Hardiman’s "Irish Minstrelsy"). Of course critical people nowadays declare this characteristic chanson à boire—called "Carolan’s Receipt"—is not Carolan’s at all, just as they question the very existence of Anacreon; but such destructive criticism clearly should have its limits:

WHISKY IS THE POTION THAT CAN CURE EVERY ILL.

At the dawning of the morn, ere you start from your bed,
Try and clear away the vapours which the night has shed.
    If drowsy, or if dull,
      At the bottle take a pull,
And comfort through your bosom the gay draught shall spread.
    Moistening, cheering, life-endearing,
      Humour-lending, mirth-extending—
Be the whisky ever near thee through the day and the night;
      'Tis the cordial for all ages,
Each evil it assuages,
      And to bards, and saints, and sages
        Gives joy, life, and light.

O whisky is the potion that can cure every ill:
      'Tis the charm that can work beyond the doctor’s skill.
If sad, or sick, or sore,
Take a bumper brimming o'er,
And sprightliness and jollity shall bless thee still;
Still seducing, glee-producing,
Love-inspiring, valour-firing—
'Tis, the nectar of the gods; it is the drink divine.
Let no travelled dunce again
Praise the wines of France or Spain.
What is claret or champagne?
-Be the whisky mine!

O bright will be your pleasures, and your days will be long;
Your spirits ever lively, and your frame still strong.
Your eyes with joy shall laugh
If heartily you quaff
Of the liquor dear and cheering to the child of song;
Gout-dispelling, colic-quelling,
Agues-crushing, murmurs-hushing—
To the limbs all old and feeble it will youth restore;
And the weak one who complains
Of his weary aches and pains,
If the bottle well he drains
Shall be sick no more.

Translated by Thomas Furlong.

Shocking to the nerves of a Good Templar as this song must, perhaps, in any case be, it is almost ironical in its hyperbole, and reminds one not a little of Anacreon’s universal drinking song.

It is too true, however, that Carolan’s faith issued in works in this respect. He died in 1737, and up to the very last stimulated his faculties with
a taste of the usquebaugh. His wake, we are told, lasted four days, and on each side of the hall was placed a keg of whisky, which was replenished as often as emptied. Need it be said that crowds attended to mourn the "head of all Irish music?" The funeral was one of the greatest that had ever taken place in Connaught.

Among the more poetical traditions attaching to this last of the bards there is a very pretty one. Though blind, he recognised his first love, after the lapse of twenty years, by the touch of her hand. The lady's name was Bridget Cruise; "not a pretty name," says Lover, "but it deserves to be recorded as belonging to the woman who could inspire such a passion." Possibly the fact—if even it be a fact—is no proof of the depth of devotion. The loss of one sense is often compensated by preternatural sensitiveness in another. Lover has himself enshrined the memory of the circumstance in a tender poem of his own, which he has also set to appropriate music, called, "True Love can ne'er Forget."

At the end of "Carolan's Poems," or the poems by and relating to Carolan, in Hardiman's "Irish Minstrelsy," there are two poems, the juxtaposition of which strikes one as particularly Hibernian.
First we have "Carolan’s Lament over the Grave of McCabe," and directly after, "McCabe’s Elegy on the Death of Carolan." Now it puzzles one to think how even two Irishmen could wake one another; but the difficulty disappears when we read that McCabe was a humourist, and calling on Carolan after a long absence, disguised his voice, and represented himself as a stranger who had come from McCabe’s neighbourhood. Carolan fell into the trap, and eagerly inquired whether he knew Charles McCabe. "I once knew him," answered the wag, "but this day week I was at his funeral." Thereupon Carolan dictated his elegy impromptu, like a true bard; and the result, ridiculous as the occasion was, affords a good specimen of his more serious style:

O what a baffled visit mine hath been;
How long my journey, and how dark my lot!
And have I toiled through each familiar scene
To meet my friend, and yet to find him not?

Sight of my eyes; lost solace of my mind!
To seek, to hear thee, eagerly I sped;
In vain I came; no trace of thee I find,
Save the cold turf that shades thy narrow bed.

My voice is low, my mood of mirth is o’er;
I droop in sadness, like the widowed dove.
Talk not of anguish; talk of pain no more:
Nought strikes us like the death of those we love.
McCabe’s elegy—which was really an elegy—is quite as much to the purpose. It concludes with the stanza:

O ye blest spirits dwelling with your God,
   Hymning His praise as ages roll along,
Receive my Turlogh in your bright abode,
   And bid him aid you in your sacred song.

Dryden has happily described music as “inarticulate poetry;” and Tom Moore says that he always felt, in adapting words to an expressive air, that he was bestowing upon it the gift of articulation, and thus enabling it to speak to others all that was conveyed in its wordless eloquence to himself.

Now, in estimating the causes of this necessity—the apparent dearth, that is, of national words for the national music—we must remember that, as Edmund Spenser (who lived in Ireland) says: “It is ill time to preach among swords.” He was speaking of parsons, but we may apply the same maxim to poets and poetising. We know that, in England, the Wars of the Roses made an absolute blank in literature. But when England, in the fulness of her prosperity, had her Shakspere, Spenser, Sidney, and Bacon, the English language
in Ireland was a foreign one. The very office of
the bard had been proscribed. The wonder rather
is that Ireland has done so much in the way of
national poetry, than that she has not done more.
The growth of that poetry culminates in Moore.
Truly it has been said of him, and by a brother
bard, too, that "to the finest national music in the
world, he wrote the finest lyrics; and if Ireland
never produced, nor should ever produce, another
lyric poet, sufficient for her glory is the name of
Thomas Moore."

All the varying phases of Ireland's history are
reflected in these songs. Moore said it of Irish
song in general. We can say it with added
emphasis of his songs. Irish music is the truest
comment on Irish history. "The tone of defiance
succeeded by the languor of despondency; a burst
of turbulence dying away into softness; the sorrows
of one moment lost in the levity of the next; and
all that romantic mixture of mirth and sadness
which is naturally produced by the efforts of a
lively temperament to shake off or forget the
wrongs that lie upon it—such are the features of
our history and character which we find strongly
and faithfully reflected in our music," says Moore,
and there are many airs which it is difficult to listen to without recalling some period or event to which their expression seems applicable. Sometimes ... we fancy we behold the brave allies of Montrose marching to the aid of the royal cause. ... The plaintive melodies of Carolan take us back to the times in which he lived, when his poor countrymen were driven to worship their God in caves, or to quit for ever the land of their birth; and in many a song do we hear the last farewell of the exile mingling sad regret for the ties he leaves behind him, with sanguine expectations of the honours that await him abroad—such honours as were won on the field of Fontenoy, where the valour of the Irish Catholics turned the fortune of the day, and extorted from George II. that memorable exclamation: 'Cursed be the laws which deprive me of such subjects!'

The first number of the "Irish Melodies" appeared in 1807, and from its publication may be dated the revival of Irish song. Here, again, is Moore's own description of his work—a lyric poem in itself:

Dear harp of my country, in darkness I found thee,
The cold chain of silence had hung on thee long;
When proudly, my own island harp, I unbound thee,
And gave all thy chords to light, freedom, and song.
The warm lay of love and the light note of gladness
Have wakened thy fondest, thy liveliest thrill;
But so oft hast thou echoed the deep sigh of sadness,
That even in thy mirth it will steal from thee still.

A covert vein of sly fun often runs through these "melodies," though they are, as a rule, sentimental.

THE TIME I'VE LOST IN WOOING.

Air—"Peas upon a trencher."

The time I've lost in wooing,
In watching and pursuing
  The light that lies
  In woman's eyes,
Has been my heart's undoing.
Though Wisdom oft has sought me,
I scorn'd the lore she brought me
  My only books
  Were woman's looks,
And folly's all they've taught me.

Her smile when Beauty granted,
I hung with gaze enchanted;
  Like him, the sprite,
  Whom maids by night
Oft meet in glen that's haunted.
Like him, too, Beauty won me;
But, while her eyes were on me,
  If once their ray
  Was turn'd away,
Oh, winds could not outrun me.
And are those follies going?
And is my proud heart growing
   Too cold or wise
   For brilliant eyes
Again to set it glowing?
No—vain, alas! th’ endeavour,
From bonds so sweet to sever;
   Poor Wisdom’s chance
   Against a glance
Is now as weak as ever!

Although Moore has avowed himself incredulous as to the early origin of Irish music properly so called, it is interesting to notice in his case another proof how much better men are than their creeds; or how much of their creeds, literary as well as religious, they often choose to keep esoteric. Though Moore did not believe in the venerable antiquity of his country’s songs, he celebrated it nevertheless by a kind of pious fraud in one of the best known and most characteristic of all his melodies, “The harp that once through Tara’s Halls.” Tara or Teamor, in the county of Meath, was the royal seat and court of legislation of the kings of Ireland until the year 560! Walker (the name is suggestive) assigns it as the royal residence of the king with an unpronounceable name, who was the Irish Solon, and
flourished—so says Walker—B.C. 768 (fifteen years or so before Rome was built). This monarch was an illustrious patron of letters and the arts. To him we must ascribe the institution of those seminaries at Tara, which were celebrated for many ages. Here the bard basked in royal favours, and the very name of the place is said by one inventive etymologist to perpetuate the recollection of that circumstance. Teamor, we are told, was so called for its celebrity in melody above all the palaces in the world; “Tea” signifying melody or music, and “mur” a wall. Teamor, therefore, means the wall or hall of music; Tara being a modern corruption. At all events there was the Teamorian Fes, or convention of the bards, and the Psalter of Tara, which was the great national register. So that there was poetical license and to spare for Moore’s beautiful lyric.

Perhaps no one ever surpassed Moore in the matter of these little concetti. He could press anything into the service of his lyrics. What if he did not believe all the traditions of Tara or the Golden Age of Brian Boru? Do we suppose Tennyson believes in the gospel truth of Caerleon or the veracity of Vivien and Merlin?
Talking of Brian Boru, who succeeded to the throne of Ireland A.D. 1001, Mr. Moore has another pretty legend touching him too. Under this monarch, it is written in the annals of the bards that the sun of science which had been so long obscured now shone forth with increased splendour. Brian the Brave—as this same poet calls him—having vanquished the Danes and the Northmen, applied his energies to repair the ravages committed by them; and having restored to his country the blessing of peace, he re-established the colleges and other institutions for learning and piety, so that prosperity and social improvement became generally diffused. Such were the effects of this monarch’s policy that, as some poetical authorities tell us, a maiden of great beauty adorned with jewels and gold travelled from end to end of the island without being molested—a worthy result to compare with St. Patrick’s banishment of the reptiles!

The bardic verses are thus translated in French:

Une vierge, unissant aux dons de la nature
De l’or et de rubis l’éclat et la valeur,
À clarté du jour, ou dans la nuit obscur,
D’une mer jusqu’à l’autre allait sans protecteur,
    Ne perdait rien de sa parure,
    Ne risquait rien pour sa pudeur.
Irish humour is very largely bound up with the convivial and comic songs; but with the former one may be content to make short work. The six-bottle days are largely celebrated in song; and it is a question how far this bacchanalian poetry is responsible for the drinking customs prevalent elsewhere than in Ireland. Addison says (Spectator, No. 569): "No vices are so incurable as those which men are apt to glory in; one could wonder how drunkenness should have the good luck to be of the number." And yet we know the Hon. Joseph himself illustrated that particular kind of glory in his later days. As an instance of how Moore could press the most unlikely subjects into his song, and refine them in the process, his drinking lays may be put in as evidence. Sheridan was a case in point, too, in this respect. We like that most bacchanalian melody, "Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen," in spite of that objectionable moral:

Fill the pint bumper quite up to the brim,
And let us e'en toast them together!

Lover quotes Tom Moore's "Fill the bumper,"
as being the very model of a bacchanalian song:

Fill the bumper fair!
Every drop we sprinkle,
From the brow of care
Smoothes away a wrinkle.

But as a "debasement of things pompous" for the glorification of inebriety, there is nothing to equal the third verse of "One bumper at parting:"

How brilliant the sun looked in sinking!
The waters beneath him how bright!
O trust me, the farewell of drinking
Should be like the farewell of light.
You saw how he finished by darting
His beam o'er a bright billow's brim;
So, fill up, let's shine at our parting
In full liquid glory like him.

But the comic muse of Ireland does not rely on inebriety for her humour; and we have done our duty to conviviality (so-called) in discussing Carolan and the "crater." Allusion was made above to St. Patrick's feat of clearing Ireland from noxious reptiles; and the memory of that circumstance is capitally preserved in the old song, "St. Patrick was a Gentleman." This is a sort of mosaic production—the work of many bards—and is constantly
receiving additions, like one of the topical songs in a modern burlesque.

O, St. Patrick was a gentleman,
Who came of decent people;
He built a church in Dublin town
And on it put a steeple.
His father was a Gallagher,
His mother was a Brady,
His aunt was an O'Shaughnessy,
His uncle an O'Grady.
So success attend St. Patrick's fist,
For he's a saint so clever;
O, he gave the snakes and toads a twist,
And banished them for ever!

The Wicklow Hills are very high,
And so's the Hill of Howth, sir;
But there's a hill much bigger still,
Much higher nor them both, sir.
'Twas on the top of this high hill
St. Patrick preached his sarmint,
That drove the frogs into the bogs,
And banished all the varmint.
O success, &c.

There's not a mile in Ireland’s isle
Where dirty varmin musters,
But there he put his dear fore-foot
And murdered 'em in clusters.
The toads went pop: the frogs went hop,
Slapdash into the water,
And the snakes committed suicide
To save themselves from slaughter.
O, success, &c.
Nine hundred thousand reptiles blue
He charmed with such discourses,
And dined on them at Killaloe
In soups and second courses.
Where blind-worms crawling in the grass
Disgusted all the nation,
He then gave a rise, which opened their eyes
To a sense of their situation!
O, success, &c.

No wonder that those Irish lads
Should be so gay and frisky,
For sure St. Pat he taught them that
As well as making whisky.
No wonder that the Saint himself
Should understand distilling,
Since his mother kept a shebeen shop
In the town of Enniskillen.
O, success, &c.

O, was I but so fortunate
As to be back in Munster,
'Tis I'd be bound that from that ground
I never more would once stir.
For there St. Patrick planted turf
And plenty of the praties,
With pigs galore—a plenteous store—
And cabbages—and ladies!
Then my blessing on St. Patrick's fist,
For he's the darling saint, O!
O, he gave the snakes and toads a twist—
He's a beauty without paint, O!
One of the greatest advantages of experience is that it tides us over national prejudices. The mere voyage along the stream of time often does the same for communities as actual travel does for individuals. Just as travel, by letting us see the cities of many men and learn their customs, rubs off the sharp angles of the individual character, so does it happen with communities. There was a time when English people thought Frenchmen lived on frogs, were always very thin, and painfully polite. Children, even now, believe that one Englishman could conquer and kill any number of Frenchmen. When the child grows up he will see the folly of such an idea; and when nations grow up they learn the fallacy of many of those national prejudices which pass current during the period of a people's immaturity.

There are some persons who cling to the belief that America has little poetry and less music deserving the name of national. They will concede the claim of Longfellow to be called a national poet;
possibly, also, of Edgar Allan Poe and William Cullen Bryant. Yankee cram and nigger melodies represent, in their estimation, the sum total of the literature and music of a great nation. They will even relent so far as to include "Yankee Doodle" among national anthems; but with regard to anything like a national poetry or a national minstrelsy—a national muse, in one monosyllable—they will calmly survey the whole of the American continent, and with truly insular importance (one had almost said impudence) observe, in the language of Sir Charles Coldstream, that "there is nothing in it." You may take those people to the British Museum, you may seat them before the two bulky octavos of "Duyckink's American Literature" or "Grimwold's American Poets," pelt them with duodecimos referring to the last war, nay, hem them in with the thirteen huge folios of "American Vocal Music"—it is no use. It is, as Wordsworth says, "throwing words away;" worse still, throwing books away. There is no national American poetry, not a note of national American music.

In that case our present labour would resolve itself into a disquisition on nothing at all. Let us see what we can make of that rather unpromising
subject, not unmindful of the old motto, *ex nihilo nihil fit*.

If Mr. Pinkerton be right in his estimate of the comparatively modern date attaching to the Scotch songs, and Thomas Moore in that of the Irish songs, each of these literatures being relegated to so recent a period as the sixteenth century, then really the literature of America is almost as ancient as that of these two portions of the British Empire. Can we even claim an English literature, properly so called, before the Elizabethan age? In less than another hundred years, after that age, we find the lines laid down for an American literature. George Sandys, while treasurer for the colony of Virginia, about the year 1625, wrote probably the earliest English verse produced in America. He translated Ovid; and Michael Drayton, the author of "Polyolbion," thus addressed him in a poetical epistle:

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My worthy George, by industry and use,
Let's see what lines Virginia will produce.
Go on with Ovid, as you have begun
With the first five books; let your numbers run
Glib as the former; so it shall live long,
And do much honour to the English tongue.
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The earliest native produce in the way of rhyme
is from the pen of a colonist whose name has not been recorded. The song is stated in the "Massachusetts Historical Collection" to have been taken down memoriter in the year 1785, from the lips of an old lady aged ninety-six. The author has been dated back to so respectable an antiquity as 1630. He writes in rather a Mark Tapley strain of jollity as to the merits of his new home. He complains, to wit, not that it is *toujours perdrix* at the American table, but *toujours pumpkin*. He writes thus:

If fresh meat be wanting to fill up our dish,  
We have carrots and pumpkins, and turnips and fish.  
'Stead of pottage and puddings, and custards and pies,  
Our pumpkins and parsnips are common supplies;  
We have pumpkins at morning and pumpkins at noon,  
If it was not for pumpkins we should be undone.

If barley be wanting to make into malt,  
We must be contented and think it no fault,  
For we can make liquor to sweeten our lips  
Of pumpkins and parsnips and walnut-tree chips.

However, he concludes:

But you whom the Lord intends hither to bring,  
Forsake not the honey for fear of the sting;  
But bring both a quiet and contented mind,  
And all needful blessings you surely will find.

These lines were written, let us recollect, only
fourteen years after the death of Shakspere. There is nothing very old-fashioned about them; so that if America, in the two hundred and forty years which have since gone by, has done little in the way of poetry and nothing in the way of music, she must have been far less go-ahead in these respects than she has the credit of being in other matters.

A convenient method of dividing our subject, if it be possible to make fractions of nothing, will be to regard separately: (1) the colonial period of American poetry—that is, the poetry that preceded the War of Independence (1775-1783); (2) the poetry which was elaborated between the severance from the mother-country and the late War of Secession between North and South; and lastly, the immense body of national poetry and music to which that terrible struggle gave birth.

It is not perhaps generally known that Benjamin Franklin tried his hand at poetry. Let it rather be said he wrote a certain kind of prose run mad, in so far that it was arranged in separate lines, and had a certain rhythm and also something like rhymes attaching to it. But Franklin was a printer pure and simple, as far as poetry was concerned, and
should have let his connection with the muse stop short there. His best poem smacks of the shop. It is on the subject of paper:

Various the papers various wants produce,
The wants of fashion, elegance, and use;
Men are as various; and, if right I scan,
Each sort of paper represents some man.

Then he runs through the different kinds. Here, for instance, is an idiotic antithesis:

Pray note the top, half powder and half lace,
Nice, as a bandbox were his dwelling-place,
He's the gilt paper which apart you store,
And lock from vulgar hands in the scrutoire (sic).

Mechanics, servants, farmers, and so forth,
Are copy paper, of inferior worth;
Less prized, more needful, for your desk decreed,
Free to all pens, and prompt at every need.

In fact, he himself depreciated the calling of the poet, for he goes on:

What are the poets, take them all in all,
Good, bad, rich, poor, much read, not read at all?
Them and their works in the same class you'll find,
They are the mere waste paper of mankind.

It is not so difficult as it might at first sight
appear, to trace the growth of American humour, such as we now know it, from the Puritan antecedents of that country.

There was a quiet undercurrent of fun in the Roundhead, different in kind rather, perhaps, than in degree, from that of the gay Cavalier. The Cavalier was not always gay, any more than the troubadour was always gallant; neither were Noll’s Roundheads always singing hymns. We claimed a comic side for the Reformation, and these were its direct outcome; so that the transition from Miles Standish to Sam Slick is not so violent as we might be disposed to think. As a matter of fact, however, a good deal of the earliest American literature did run in the direction of psalmody; and much of this was quite in the spirit of Tate and Brady. For instance, here is a stanza from the Psalter of 1640, “faithfully translated for the comfort of the saints”:

O happie hee shall surely bee
Who taketh up, and eke
Thy little ones against the stones
Doth into pieces breake.

It is not irreverent to say that we can trace a kindred spirit in these lines, and some nearly two
centuries later, where Gallagher thus quietly pokes fun at Conservatism:

The owl, he fareth well
In the shadows of the night,
And it puzzleth him to tell
Why the eagle loves the light.

But there is about the Yankee humour of the present—that of Judge Haliburton, Mark Twain, Orpheus C. Kerr, the "Biglow Papers," Artemus Ward, and others—an abandon, a naturalness, and withal, in many cases, an innocence, a harmlessness, that seem exactly to realise that idea of dangerless absurdity with which we set out, and to which we have thus worked up. There is no ulterior object beyond that of provoking a smile and letting off superfluous mirth. It is, in fact, just the spirit that is discernible in the Irish bull, which is, perhaps, fun in its most compressed and concentrated form.

We need not even go so far as these classical fun-makers just quoted. Take up the last number of an American paper, and you shall read extracts—see nettle-blossoms blooming there, or very often transplanted into English journals and jest-books,
which thoroughly realise our position. Here is a recipe for a lecture, to wit, which no doubt has often served a lecturer as his guide, philosopher, and friend:

"Get yourself chock-full of a subject, pull out the-bung, and let natur' caper."

Here, too, is another, full of the driest fun, clipped from an American paper:

"It would be very difficult to convince a dog with a tin can and pebbles tied to his tail, that there was not something radically wrong in the constitution of the American Republic."

There is more, perhaps, in keeping with the old prosaic traditions of the Puritan founders of New England in early American literature than of what we now assign to the muse; and of course, if we were determined to be archaological at any price, we should go back to the Red Indian times (we might just as reasonably as go back to Celtic times in England).

We should find poetry enough and to spare in that beautiful Indian Edda, "The Song of Hiawatha," with its frequent repetitions, with its wild reverberations; but it would be no more American than the nigger melodies are American, acclimatised
though they are in America now. Such traditions will always be dear to those (in Longfellow’s words)

Whose hearts are true and simple,
Who have faith in God and Nature,
Who believe that, in all ages,
Every human heart is human;
That, in even savage bosoms,
There are longings, yearnings, strivings,
For the good they comprehend not;
That the feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Touch God’s right hand in that darkness,
And are lifted up and strengthened.

Those again who sometimes, in their rambles

Through the green lanes of the country,
Where the tangled barberry bushes
Hang their tufts of crimson berries
Over stone walls gray with mosses,
Pause by some neglected graveyard
For a while to muse and ponder
On a half-effaced inscription
Written with little skill of songcraft;
Homely phrases, but each letter
Full of hope and yet of heart-break—
Full of all the tender pathos
Of the Here and the Hereafter.

“Miles Standish” and “Evangeline” point us back to the real antiquity of America; but Longfellow belongs to another age; and we may well fix on the
truly national anthem of "Yankee Doodle" as our point of departure. It is said that the incident of "going down to camp" alluded to in it belongs to 1775. The song was sung at Bunker's Hill, but the tune is very much older. It has been traced to the time of Charles I. in England, and is said to have been imported from Holland, where it was sung by the labourers, who received as much buttermilk as they could drink, and a tenth of the grain they reaped. Hence the beautifully musical words:

Yanker didel, doodel down,
Didel, dudel lanter;
Yanke viver, voover vown—
Botermilk und Tanther.

That is, buttermilk and tenth.

The broadside from which the more modern "Yankee Doodle" is taken bears date 1818. It is full of distinctive American humour. Here is a gem or two:

Father and I went down to camp,
Along with Captain Gooding,
And there we see the men and boys
As thick as hasty pudding.

CHORUS.

Yankee Doodle, keep it up;
Yankee Doodle Dandy;
Mind the music and the step,
And with the girls be handy.
Here is a description of a bayonet:

Captain Davis had a gun,
    He kind of clapped his hand on't,
And stuck a crooked stabbin' iron
    Upon the little end on't.

Then the bard becomes personal:

There was Captain Washington,
    And gentlefolks about him;
They say he's got so ternal proud
    He will not ride without 'em.

Eventually the bard, not being of a warlike turn, says:

But I can't tell you half I see—
    They kept up such a smother;
So I took my hat off, made a bow,
    And scamper'd home to mother.

Tom Paine, in 1798, wrote a song that deserves to be called an American national song quite as much as "Rule Britannia" does an English national one. It was called "Adams and Liberty," and he received seven hundred and fifty dollars from its sale; more than eleven dollars a line, as his matter-of-fact biographer
says. There is a regular "Rule Britannia" twang in the burden:

Ye sons of Columbia, who bravely have fought
For those rights which unstained from your sires had descended,
May you long taste the blessings your valour has bought,
And your sons reap the soil which your fathers defended.
'Mid the reign of mild peace
May your nation increase,
With the glory of Rome and the wisdom of Greece.
And ne'er shall the sons of Columbia be slaves
While the earth bears a plant or the sea rolls its waves.

Let Fame to the world sound America's voice;
No intrigues can her sons from their government sever.
Her pride are her statesmen, their laws are her choice,
And shall flourish till liberty slumbers forever.
Then unite heart and hand,
Like Leonidas' band,
And swear to the God of the ocean and land,
That ne'er shall the sons of Columbia be slaves
While the earth bears a plant or the sea rolls its waves.

In 1818—the "Yankee Doodle" year—the American flag, having already, during the progress of the revolution, undergone several changes, was thus settled by Congress:

"Be it enacted that from and after the fourth day of July next, the flag of the United States be thirteen horizontal stripes, alternate red and white, that the union be twenty stars, white, in a blue space. And that on the admission of a new state

"
into the union one star be added to the union of the flag; and that such addition shall take effect on the fourth day of July next succeeding such admission."

The United States flag now contains thirty-one stars; and it was explained in 1777 that these stars represent "a new constellation."

On this device is founded the song of "The Star-spangled Banner," which divides with "Hail Columbia!" the honour of being the national hymn of America. The former was written by Key, of Baltimore, the latter by Hopkinson, of Pennsylvania, in 1798.

Of course the two American poets best known in England are Edgar Allan Poe and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow; and it is no paradox at all to say that, from the fact of their being so well known, they are less national than many others who are not so thoroughly appreciated on this side the Atlantic. They are rather cosmopolitan than national. We claim "The Raven" and the "Psalm of Life" as belonging to English literature—the literature of Greater Britain. The mere mention of those two names surely ought at once to lift American literature out of the "Yankee Doodle" stratum. Where,
for instance, out of Shelley, shall we find anything to equal the music of that poem, "The Bells" of Edgar Allan Poe? He is the very Savage of American literature, with all Richard Savage's faults, or misfortunes, and more than Savage's talents—almost the talents of Swinburne himself. That wonderful composition, "The Bells," so often murdered by ranting mouthy "elocutionists," should only be read through music, with just the soupçon of an accompaniment. But in good truth the poet mostly does the music for himself. It is wild, like that of the Æolian harp sometimes, but it is, at all events, thoroughly original. The little poem, "Annabel Lee," is a good instance at once of Poe's beauty and his peculiarities—his faults, if we like to call them so:

It was many and many a year ago,  
In a kingdom by the sea,  
That a maiden there lived, whom you may know  
By the name of Annabel Lee;  
And this maiden she lived with no other thought  
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child, and she was a child,  
In this kingdom by the sea;  
But we loved with a love that was more than love,  
I and my Annabel Lee;  
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of heaven  
Coveted her and me.
And this was the reason that long ago,
   In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
   My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her hightborn kinsmen came
   And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
   In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
   Went envying her and me.
Yes, that was the reason (as all men know
   In this kingdom by the sea)
That a wind came out of the cloud by night,
   Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger far than the love
   Of those who were older than we—
   Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in heaven above,
   Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise but I feel the bright eyes
   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so all the night-tide I lie down by the side
   Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
   In her sepulchre there by the sea,
   In her tomb by the sounding sea.

There is nothing of the "Yankee Doodle" element here. The word-painting is perfect; the structure musical to a degree. The imagery is perhaps a little sensuous and overdrawn, but we
must remember what the man's life was. The marvel is that so much music remained.

Even bolder still—fraught, it would seem, with that poetic ebriety which was, alas! too common a phase with his muse—is the last stanza of that weird poem, "Lenore":

Avaunt! To-night
My heart is light,
   No dirge will I upraise;
But waft the angel on her flight
   With a paean of old days!
Let no bell toll,
Lost her sweet soul,
   Amid its hallowed mirth,
Should catch the note,
As it doth float
   Up from the damned earth.

To friends above, from fiends below,
   The indignant ghost is riven;
From hell, unto a high estate
   Far up within the heaven.
From grief and groan
To a golden throne
   Beside the King of Heaven!

Not only does Longfellow's calm muse stand at the very antipodes of this, but it is comparatively seldom that one gets, even in such a distinctively national poem as "Evangeline," anything more than a passing touch of local or national colour.
It is in such passages as these that we detect the really national poet, catching his inspiration from his surroundings:

Then from a neighbouring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest of singers,
Swinging aloft on a willow-spray that hung o'er the water,
Shook from his little throat such floods of delicious music
That the whole air, and the woods, and the waves seemed silent to listen.
 Plaintiff at first were the tones, and sad; then soaring to madness
Seemed they to follow, or guide, the howl of frenzied Bacchantes.
Then single notes were heard in sorrowful, low lamentation;
Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in derision.
As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the branches.

Yankee humour, thoroughly national in every sense of the word, is a study in itself, flowing out as a sort of offset from a contemplation of national poetry. In no volume, perhaps, does the humour impinge so cleverly on contemporary national life as in the celebrated "Biglow Papers," by Mr. Lowell. The description of the poet, Hosea Biglow, by his father, gives us the rustic bard under inspiration, and also thoroughly conveys the national twang.
He writes:

"Hosea he come home considerabal riled, and
arter I gone to bed I heern him a-thrashin' round like a short-tailed bull in fli-time. The old woman ses she to me ses she ‘Zekle,’ ses she, ‘our Hosee’s got the chollery or suthin’ another,’ ses she; ‘but don’t you be skeered,’ ses I, ‘he’s oney a-makin’ pottery,’ ses I. ‘He’s ollers on hand at that busynes like Da and Martin;’ and sure enough come mornin’ Hosy he cum downstairs full chizzle, hare on end and cote-tails flyin’, and sot rite off to go and read his verses to Parson Wilbur, bein’ he haint any great shows o’ book larnin’ himself. Bimeby he cum back and said the parson was dreffle tickled with ‘em, ‘as I hoop you will be, and sed they wuz true grit.’ Hosy ses he sed suthin’ anuther about Simplex Mundishes, or sum sech feller; but I guess Hosy kind o’ didn’t hear him, for I never hearn o’ nobody of that name in this villadge, an’ I’ve lived here man and boy seventy-six year come next tatur-diggin, an’ thar aint nowheres a kitting spryer’n I be.”

The poetry of the American War of Secession is a study in itself, which is mostly connected with anything funny in the way of antithesis; though we shall see a comic vein anon even in so serious a subject. Too recent to have yet got into cyclo-
paedias or collections of poetry, it is only to be found in little contemporaneous volumes, but their name is legion. Perhaps the best one is a volume called "Poems of the War," by Baker, published at Boston in 1864; the "Songs of the Soldiers," the "Lyrics of Loyalty," and the "Rebel Rhymes"—three wicked-looking little duodecimos, all bearing the same date 1864, and surely serving to show us that the war was not without a muse. Not only so, but these effusions have been set to music, which, whatever we may think of its artistic excellence, is certainly characteristic and far more abundant than even the Christy Minstrel répertoire itself.

There is much dignity in the invocation prefixed to Mr. Baker’s volume. It begins thus—with a sort of Tennysonian ring about it:

O country, bleeding from the heart,
If these poor songs can touch thy woe,
And draw thee but awhile apart
From sorrow’s bitter overflow,
Then not in vain
This feeble strain
About the common air shall blow.

As David stood by prostrate Saul,
So wait I at thy sacred feet;
I reverently raise thy pall
   To see thy mighty bosom beat.
   I would not wrong
   Thy grief with song;
   I would but utter what is meet.

Then follows a succession of battle-pictures of no common kind. The incidents of the war, where the call of duty clashed so rudely with the domestic habits that had grown up in a long experience of peace, naturally called all the poets of America to the front. Here are a few telling lines, where Mr. Baker pictures the collision between the soldier’s call and the ties of home:

Brave comrade, answer! When you joined the war,
   What left you?
   Wife and children, wealth and friends,
   A storied home whose ancient roof-tree bends
   Above such thoughts as love tells o’er and o’er.

Had you no pang or struggle?
   Yes, I bore
   Such pain at parting as at hell’s gate rends
   The entering soul, when from its grasp ascends
   The last faint virtue which on earth it wore.

You loved your home, your kindred, children, wife,
   You loathed to plunge into war’s bloody whirl,
   What urged you?
   Duty! Something more than life.
   That which made Abraham bare the priestly knife
   And Isaac kneel; or that young Hebrew girl
   Who sought her father coming from the strife.
In thousands and thousands of instances must such a wrench have been experienced. But let us lay aside the poet pure and simple—though even he is full of battle-pieces as Aytoun’s “Lays of the Cavaliers”—and take up the first of those same wicked little duodecimos, the Lyrics of Loyalty. The compiler states it as his purpose to preserve some of the best specimens of lyrical writings which the then present rebellion called forth, and there certainly figure the names of a very goodly array of battle-poets indeed.

Here is a snatch from the “Appeal” of Oliver Wendell Holmes, well known to us by his pleasant, gossipy “Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table”:

Listen, young heroes! your country is calling!
Time strikes the hour for the brave and the true!
Now, while the foremost are fighting and falling,
Fill up the ranks that have opened for you.

Stay not for questions while Freedom stands gasping,
Wait not till honour lies wrapped in his pall!
Brief the lips’ meeting be, swift the hands’ clasping—
“Off for the wars!” is enough for them all.

Break from the arms that would fondly caress you
Hark! ’tis the bugle-blast; sabres are drawn!
Mothers shall pray for you; fathers shall bless you;
Maidens shall weep for you when you are gone.
Never or now! cries the blood of a nation,  
Poured on the turf where the red rose should bloom;  
Now is the day and the hour of salvation—  
Never or now! peals the trumpet of doom!

Even Hosea turns hero—or rather, let us say,  
the creator of Hosea—and well the author of the  
"Biglow Papers" turns Tyrtæus and chants his  
war-song. His topic is "The Present Crisis":

'Tis as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves  
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our fathers’ graves;  
Worshippers of light ancestral make the present light a crime.  
Was the Mayflower launched by cowards, steered by men behind  
their time?  
Turn those paths towards Past or Future that make Plymouth  
rock sublime?

They were men of present valour—stalwart old iconoclasts,  
Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue was the Past's;  
But we make their truth our falsehood, thinking that has made  
us free,  
Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while our tender spirits flee  
The rude grasp of that great impulse which drove them across  
the sea.

New occasions teach new duties! Time makes ancient good  
uncouth.  
They must upward still and onward who would keep abreast of  
truth.  
Lo, before us gleam our camp-fires, we ourselves must pilgrims be;  
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate  
winter sea,  
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key!
Then there is another whose name is well known—Theodore Tilton. His war-hymn, "God save the Nation," had been twelve times set to music in the year 1864! Pretty well, this, for a nation with no poets and fewer composers!

Thou who ordainest, for the land's salvation,
Famine and fire and sword and desolation,
Now unto Thee we lift our lamentation—
God save the nation!

By the great sign, foretold, of Thy appearing,
Coming in clouds, while mortal men stand fearing,
Show us, amid this smoke of battle, clearing,
Thy chariot nearing!

By the brave blood that floweth like a river,
Hurl Thou a thunderbolt from out Thy quiver!
Break Thou the strong gates! Every fetter shiver!
Smite and deliver!

Slay Thou our foes, or turn them to derision!
Then, in the blood-red Valley of Decision,
Make the land green with peace, as in a vision
Of fields Elysian!

It never seems to strike these martial bards that there are two sides to every question. The South was praying just as hard as the North; and certainly our present editor must have been a man of singularly eclectic turn of mind. We have only to shut up a little blue duodecimo with a red back,
and to open another little red duodecimo with a brown back, and hey, presto! the whole tune is changed. The Southerners are the patriots now. They rejoice in the name of rebels:

Rebels! ’tis our family name!
Our father Washington
Was the arch-rebel in the fight,
And gave the name to us—a right
Of father unto son.

But, most of all, they pride themselves on their chivalry. They are gentlemen—the Cavaliers against the Roundheads. We no longer recognise well-known names among the singers in the “Rebel Rhymes.” Many of them are anonymous; many were written by ladies. Here is a female battle-call—at least a very small portion of a very long one, written by a lady named Ketchum, dedicated to her countrymen the Cavaliers of the South, and headed, “Nec temerè nec timidè:”

Gentlemen of the South,
Gird on your flashing swords.
Darkly along your borders fair
Gather the ruffian hordes!
Ruthless and fierce they come,
Even at the cannon's mouth.
To blast the glory of your land—
Gentlemen of the South!
Ride forth in your stately pride,
Each bearing on his shield
Ensigns your fathers won of yore
On many a well-fought field.
Let this be your battle-cry,
Even to the cannon's mouth,
Cor unum via una! Onward,
Gentlemen of the South.

Of course this is begging the question, with all a woman's tact—that the Northerners are not gentlemen. The masculine bards are not so squeamish. There is a little gem, "The Flight of Doodles," commencing:

I come from old Manassas, with a pocket full of fun—
I killed forty Yankees with a single-barrelled gun;
It don't make a niff-a-stifference to neither you nor I,
Big Yankee or little Yankee, all run or die.
I saw all the Yankees at Bull Run,
They fought like the devil when the battle first begun.
But it don't make niff-a-stifference to neither you nor I,
They took to their heels, boys, and you ought to see 'em fly.

The "Songs of the Soldiers" are exactly what the name imports, selected not for literary merit but because they were "favourites in the camps"—very much of the "John Brown's body is a-mouldering in the dust" order. There are a few of the old well-known names appended still; but mostly they are songs written by soldiers and for
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soldiers. Many of them are parodies. "Scots wha hae" is a special favourite; but a very good one is a clever travestie on "The Fine Old English Gentleman," in which there is a quiet protest against the assumption by the South of that "grand old name of gentleman." It opens thus:

Down in a small Palmetto State, the curious ones may find
A ripping tearing gentleman of an uncommon kind,
A staggering swaggering kind of chap who takes his whisky straight,
And frequently condemns his eyes to that ultimate vengeance
which a clergyman of high standing has assured me must be a sinner's fate—

This South Carolina gentleman, one of the present time.

The liberty taken with the fourth line of the metre is agreeably illustrated in the last stanza:

Of course he's all the time in debt to those who credit give,
Yet manages upon the best the market yields to live.
But if a Northern creditor asks him his bill to heed,
This honourable gentleman instantly draws two bowie-knives and a pistol, dons a blue cockade, and declares that in consequence of the repeated aggressions of the North and its gross violations of the constitution, he feels that it would utterly degrade him to pay any debt whatever, and that, in fact, he has at last determined to secede—

This South Carolina gentleman, one of the present time.

A thoroughly humorous article in the Quarterly
The strokes of wit,” it says, “that are the most delightfully surprising are often the most evanescent. A flash, and all is over. You must be very much on the qui vive to see by its lightning, or you may find yourself in the predicament of the poor fly, who turned about after its head was cut off, to find it out. Not so with humour. It is for ‘keeping it up.’ It does not cut you short. Wit gives you a nod in passing, but with humour you are at home. Wit is a later societary birth. Humour was from the beginning. There are persons who have a sense of humour to whom the pranks of wit are an impertinence.

“The Yankee character is in itself an exceedingly humorous compound. A strange hybrid indeed did circumstance beget there in the New World upon the old Puritan stock; and the earth never before saw such mystic practicalism, such cast-iron enthusiasm, such sour-faced humour, such close-fisted generosity.” Here is a second specimen of
A "TRADE."

"Reckon I couldn't drive a trade with you to-day, square," said a genuine specimen of the Yankee pedlar, as he stood at the door of a merchant in St. Louis.

"I reckon you calculate about right, for you can't noways."

"Wall, I guess you needn't git huffy about it. Now here's a dozen genooine razor-strops, worth two dollars and a half. You may hev 'em for two dollars."

"I tell you I don't want any o' your traps, and you may as well be going along."

"Wall, now look here, square. I'll bet you five dollars, that if you make me an offer for them 'ere strops, we'll have a trade yet."

"Done," said the merchant, and he staked the money. "I'll give you sixpence for the strops."

"They're your'n," said the Yankee, as he quietly pocketed the stakes.

"But," continued he, after a little reflection, and with a burst of frankness, "I calculate a joke's a joke; and if you don't want them strops I'll trade back."

The merchant looked brighter. "You're not such a bad chap after all," said he. "Here are your strops; give me the money."

"There it is," said the Yankee, as he took the strops and handed back the sixpence. "A trade is a trade, and a bet is a bet. Next time you trade with that 'ere sixpence, don't you buy razor-strops."

"Highfalutin'" is the special form Yankee humour assumes. "What," the reviewer asks, "but a suppressed sense of humour in both speaker and auditors could possibly have carried off such a speech as that attributed to Webster:

"'Men of Rochester, I am glad to see you; and..."
I am glad to see your noble city. Gentlemen, I saw your falls, which I am told are one hundred and fifty feet high. That is a very interesting fact. Gentlemen, Rome had her Cæsar, her Scipio, her Brutus; but Rome in her proudest days had never a waterfall one hundred and fifty feet high. Gentlemen, Greece had her Pericles, her Demosthenes, her Socrates; but Greece in her palmiest days never had a waterfall one hundred and fifty feet high! Men of Rochester, go on. No people ever lost their liberties who had a waterfall one hundred and fifty feet high!"

"There was," says the Quarterly, "a paper in Cincinnati, which was very much given to highfalta in on the subject of 'this great country,' until a rival paper somewhat modified its continual bounce with the following burlesque:

"'This is a glorious country! It has longer rivers and more of them, and they are muddier and deeper, and run faster, and rise higher and fall lower, and do more damage than anybody else's rivers. It has more lakes, and they are bigger and deeper, and clearer and wetter, than those of any other country. Our rail-cars are bigger, and run faster, and pitch off the track oftener, and kill
more people than all other rail-cars in this and every other country. Our steamboats carry bigger loads, are longer and broader, burst their boilers oftener, and send up their passengers higher; and the captains swear harder than steamboat captains in any other country. Our men are bigger, and longer, and thicker; can fight harder and faster, drink more mean whiskey, chew more bad tobacco, and spit more and spit further than in any other country. Our ladies are richer, prettier, spend more money, break more hearts, wear bigger hoops, shorter dresses, and kick up the devil generally to a greater extent than all other ladies in all other countries. Our children squall louder, grow faster, get too expansive for their pantaloons, and become twenty years old sooner by some months than any other children of any other country on the earth."

"There are," continues the Review, "persons so destitute of a sense of humour that they cannot make merry, have no ear for a jest, no eye for the 'gayest, happiest attitude of things,' no heart to rejoice in it. And the puritanical spirit would fain have human nature reformed and restamped according to this dull and dismal pattern; would, in truth, make this life a preparatory process to fit us for a
smileless eternity, and begin by trying to paralyse the risible muscle of the human face. But the greatest and wisest men have not been of this type. They could laugh as well as weep, and they lived in fuller perfection of spiritual health. The deepest seers have frequently been the men who not only felt the seriousness of life, but who also saw the province of humour as a pleasant reconciler of opposites, and who bore their lot and wrought their work in a brave spirit. The most earnest—we do not mean the grimmest—of men have had the keenest sense of fun.”*

Among these genial souls was certainly Judge Haliburton. What splendid “Change for American Notes” was that given to England in the shape of comments on our institutions by the evergreen Sam Slick! In the following, which is the very crème de la crème of such experiences, Sam Slick is an attaché at the English Embassy, and spending some time at an English country-house. It is called:

A JUICY DAY IN THE COUNTRY.

A wet day is considerable tiresome, anywhere or anyhow you can fix it; but it’s wus at an English country-house than any.

where else; 'cause you are among strangers, formal, cold, and gallus polite, and as thick in the headpiece as a puncheon. You han't nothin' to do yourself, and they never have nothin' to do; they don't know nothin' about America, and don't want to. Your talk don't interest them, and they can't talk to interest nobody but themselves. All you've got to do is to pull out your watch and see how time goes—how much of the day's left—and then go to the winder and see how the sky looks, and whether there's any chance of holdin' up or no.

Well, that time I went to bed a little airlier than common, for I felt considerable sleepy, and considerable strange, too; so, as soon as I cleverly could, I off and turned in.

Well, I am an airly riser myself—I allus was from a boy. So I waked up jist about the time that day ought to break, and was a-thinkin' to get up; but the shutters was to, and it was as dark as ink in the room, and I heer'd it rainin' away for dear life. "So," sais I to myself, "what the dogs is the use of gittin' up so airly? I can't get out and get a smoke, and I can't do nothin' here; so here goes for a second nap." Well, I was soon off again, in a most beautiful of a snore, when all at once I heard thump, thump, agin the shutter, and the most horrid noise I ever heer'd since I was raised. It was sunthin' quite onairthy.

"Hallo!" sais I to myself, "what in natur' is all this hubbub about? Can this here confounded old house be harnted? Is them spirits that's jabbering gibberish there, or is I right awake or no?" So I sets right up on my hind legs in bed, rubs my eyes, opens my ears, and listens agin, when whop! went every shutter agin, with a dead, heavy sound, like somethin' or other thrown agin 'em or fallin' agin 'em, and then comes the unknown tongues in discord chorus like.

So I jist hops out o' bed, and feels for my trunk, and outs with my talkin' irons, that was already loaded, pokes my way to the winder, shoves the sash up, and out with the shutter, ready to let slip among 'em. And what do you think it was? Hundreds an' hundreds of them nasty, dirty, filthy, ugly black divils o' rooks, located in the trees at the back eend o' the house. Old Nick couldn't a slept near 'em.

"You black, evil-looking, foul-mouthed villins!" sais I; "I'd..."
like no better sport than just to sit here, all this blessed day, with
these here pistils, and drop you one after another, I know." But
they was pets, was them rooks, and of course, like all pets, ever-
lastin' nuisances to everybody else.

Well, when a man's in a fever, there's no more sleep that
hitch; so I dresses and sets up. But what was I to do? It was
just half-past four, and—as it was a-rainin' like everything—I
know'd breakfast wouldn't be ready till eleven o'clock, for nobody
wouldn't get up if they could help it—they wouldn't be such fools.
So there was jail for six hours an' a half!

Well, I walked up an' down the room as easy as I could, not to
waken folks; but three steps and a round turn makes you kinder
dizzy. So I sets down again to chew the end of vexation.

"Ain't this a hansum fix?" says I. "But it serves you right.
What business had you here at all? You always was a fool, an'
always will be to the end o' the chapter." "What in natur' are
you a-scoldin' for?" says I. "That won't mend the matter.
How's time? They must soon be a-stirrin' now I guess." Well,
as I'm a livin' sinner, it was only five o'clock. "O dear!" says
I. "Time is like women and pigs; the more you want it to go
the more it won't. What on airth shall I do? Guess I'll strap
my razor."

Well, I strapped and strapped away, until it would cut a
single hair pulled straight up on end out o' your head—take it off
slick. "Now," says I, "I'll mend my trousers I tore a-goin' to
see the ruin on the road yesterday." So I takes out Sister Sall's
little needle-case, and sews away till I got'em to look considerable
jam agin. "And then," says I, "here's a gallus button off; I'll
jist fix that." And when that was done there was a hole to my
yarn sock; so I turned to and darned that.

"Now," says I, "how goes it? I'm considerable sharp set.
It must be gettin' tolerable late now." It wanted a quarter to
six! "My sakes!" says I, "five hours an' a quarter yet afore
feedin' time! Well, if that don't pass! What shall I do next?"

"I'll tell you what to do," says I, "smoke. "It'll take the
edge of your appetite off; and if they don't like it, they may
lump it. What business have they to keep them horrid, screechin',
infern'l, sleepless rooks to disturb people that way? "Well, I
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just pop in an’ breakfast with him an’ his wife. There’s some natur there; but here it’s all cussed rooks and chimbly-swellers an’ heavy men, an’ fat women, an’ lazy helps, an’ Sunday every day in the week.” So I fills my cigar-case an’ outs.

Before, however, coming to contemporary Yankee humour—eye-openers, as we elected to term them—it is necessary, even to the slenderest chronological arrangement of our subject, that we should return on our steps a little, and chronicle the development of fun at home.
BROAD GRINS.
We shall probably not be far wrong if we place
the frontier-line between Fun, Past and Present,
somewhere near Colman's "Broad Grins" and the
"Rejected Addresses."

Young-George Colman was broad, very broad;
and as long as that is the case—as long as the fun
is not presentable to a mixed audience—so long it
is difficult to say that the increasing purpose is
wrought out, or the ideal harmlessness in fun
attained.

It was the proud boast of one of the very
funniest souls that ever lived to delight us—
Thomas Hood—that his muse had never been
"high-kirtled;" and that, in all his works, there
was nothing in reference to which, after he was
dead, his children should have occasion to blush
with shame when they reflected that the author was their father.

Why should we, like those people of whom he said, they "think they're pious when they're only bilious"—think we are funny when we are only nasty?

The distinction we are claiming for our present period is that we have grown out of that childish fallacy; that we have separated the wheat from the tares; that we do not think it necessary to be indecent in order to amuse. That state of things came in somewhere about the time of the "Rejected Addresses."

As to the fun of Colman's "Broad Grins," there can be no doubt at all; but we seek in vain for any characteristic extract which we should not be sorry to read. Prodigiously funny is the picture of Sir Thomas Erpingham in "The Knight and the Friar." To wit:

Yet though Sir Thomas had an iron fist,
He was at heart a mild philanthropist;
Much did he grieve, when making Frenchmen die,
To any inconvenience to put 'em.
It quite distressed his feelings, he would cry,
That he must cut their throats, and then—
He cut 'em.
So too there is a thoroughly Hogarthian character in the picture of poor Ozias Polyglot, in the story of the "Two Parsons" (who had, we may recollect, only one under-garment between them):

Ozias Polyglot, a Kentish curate,
So much his orthodoxy manifested,
That by one heathen power he was detested,
Who to poor Polyglot was most obdurate;
This mythologic deity was Plutus—
The grand divinity of cash.

It is all very well for George to invoke the aid of Swift, who made so merry with the "Nine." Or to add:

Come, Sterne! whose prose with all a poet's art
Tickles the fancy, whilst it melts the heart
Since at apologies I ne'er was handy,
Come, while fastidious readers run me hard,
And screen, sly, playful wag, a hapless bard
Behind one volume of thy "Tristram Shandy."

If they cannot as wits protect him, young George says: "Prithee as parsons suffer 'em to save me." But it is no use. We feel we must pass over Colman before we can even approach our ideal of harmless incongruity—of dangerless fun.

It is most amusing to find even Colman talking propriety sometimes; and, in reference to the
comedies of Terence, asking, with quite a professional air: "Suppose they were new English dramas to be produced at Drury Lane or Covent Garden, could they be conscientiously reported, in official language, as 'not containing anything immoral or otherwise improper for the stage?' or, supposing them licensed, would a modern audience, if it tolerated the general indecency of the plots, endure the gross profligacy of some particular incidents?" Colman, as we know, was more than usually particular in his official capacity of examiner of plays. Perhaps that was what he meant when he said: "The knack of getting out of myself has relieved me frequently in many a weary mile of my worldly pilgrimage; for I have marched with more peas in my shoes than most of my neighbours."

Happily no such previous process of self-emancipation is required in the case of James and Horace Smith. The best proof of the harmlessness attaching to "Rejected Addresses" is that not one of the authors so freely travestied felt aggrieved. Perhaps they laid the flattering unction to their souls, which the present writer once heard Mrs. Cowden Clarke, with all a lady's dexterity, enunciate when she was about to travesty Longfellow's
"Song of Hiawatha," namely, that you could not burlesque that which had not originally some elements of the sublime in it. What can possibly be funnier than the climax of the fireman’s death in the parody on "Marmion":

Fools! 'Od rot 'em,
Were the last words of Higginbottom!

Or, the burlesque of Wordsworth’s theory of "vivid emotions" in the "Baby’s Début!"—Nancy Lake, aged eight, is drawn on the stage in a child’s chaise—who does not picture the little girl in the poem, "We are Seven?"

THE BABY’S DÉBUT.

(W. WORDSWORTH.)

My brother Jack was nine in May,
And I was eight on New Year’s Day;
So in Kate Wilson’s shop,
Papa (he’s my papa and Jack’s)
Bought me last week a doll of wax,
And brother Jack a top.

Jack’s in the pouts, and this it is—
He thinks mine came to more than his:
So to my drawer he goes,
Takes out the doll, and O my stars
He pokes her head between the bars,
And melts off half her nose!
Quite cross, a bit of string I beg,
And tie it to his pegtop's peg,
And bang, with might and main,
Its head against the parlour door.
Off flies the head, and hits the floor,
And breaks a window-pane.

This made him cry with rage and spite;
Well, let him cry, it serves him right.
A pretty thing, forsooth,
If he's to melt, all scalding hot,
Half my doll's nose, and I am not
To drag his pegtop's tooth!

Aunt Hannah heard the window break,
And cried, "Oh, naughty Nancy Lake,
Thus to distress your aunt!
No Drury Lane for you to-day."
And while papa said, "Pooh! she may,"
Mamma said, "No, she sha'n't!"

Well, after many a sad reproach,
They got into a hackney-coach,
And trotted down the street.
I saw them go: one horse was blind,
The tails of both hung down behind,
Their shoes were on their feet.

The chaise in which poor brother Bill
Used to be drawn up Pentonville
Stood in the lumber-room;
I wiped the dust from off the top,
While Molly mopped it with a mop,
And brushed it with a broom.

My uncle's porter, Samuel Hughes,
Came in at six to black the shoes
(I always talk to Sam);
So what does he but takes and drags
Me in the chaise along the flags,
And leaves me where I am.
My father's walls are made of brick,
But not so tall and not so thick
As these; and, goodness me!
My father's beams are made of wood,
But never, never half so good
As those that now I see.

What a large floor! 'tis like a town
The carpet, when they lay it down,
Won't hide it, I'll be bound.
And there's a row of lamps!—my eye!
How they do blaze! I wonder why
They keep them on the ground.

At first I caught hold of the wing
And kept away; but Mr. Thingumbo, the prompter man,
Gave with his hand my chaise a shove,
And said, "Go on, my pretty love;
Speak to 'em, little Nan.

"You've only got to curtsy, whisper,
Hold your chin up, laugh, and lisp,
And then you're sure to take.
I've known the day when brats, not quite
Thirteen, got fifty pounds a night;
Then why not Nancy Lake?"

But while I'm speaking, where's papa?
And where's my aunt and where's mamma,
Where's Jack? Oh, there they sit.
They smile, they nod; I'll go my ways,
And order round poor Billy's chaise,
To join them in the pit.

And now, good gentlefolks, I go
To join mamma and see the show;
So bidding you adieu,
I curtsy like a pretty miss;
And if you'll blow to me a kiss,
I'll blow a kiss to you.
But it is when we come to the two witty canons of St. Paul’s—Sydney Smith the major and Barham the minor canon—that we at length reach our ideal of harmless mirth. Do we always realise the fact that these two essentially funny parsons were contemporaneously members of the same cathedral chapter? And when we contrast them with those other two ecclesiastics, Swift and Sterne, do we not see what a really prodigious advance we have, in a few generations, made in this elimination of the harmful, the dangerous element from our fun?

We may call them round men in square holes, or vice versa, if we like. The question of the compatibility of their peculiar vein of humour with their calling may well be left open. We can, at all events, claim for them, on the testimony of their writings, that they succeeded—where Swift and Sterne failed—in excising, to a very large and hitherto unrealised degree, the dangerous element from their fun.

As an instance of the way in which Sydney Smith clung to a joke, and would not let it go until he had got all the fun out of it, we may quote his description of a voluminous widow whom an ambitious young man was about to marry.
“Going to marry her!” he exclaimed, bursting out laughing; “going to marry her! Impossible! You mean a part of her. He could not marry her all himself. It would be a case, not of bigamy, but of trigamy. The neighbourhood or the magistrates should interfere. There is enough of her to furnish wives for a whole parish. One man marry her! It is monstrous! You might people a colony with her; or give an assembly with her; or perhaps take your morning walk round her—always supposing there were frequent resting-places, and you were in rude health. I once was rash enough to try walking round her myself, but only got halfway, and gave it up exhausted. Or you might read the Riot Act and disperse her; in short, you might do anything with her but marry her.”

Sydney Smith used to describe himself as a “fat parson in a pudding-bag,” alluding to his voluminous white tie; and there is no instance, perhaps, where the want of the locative case is so perceptible in English as in a title of the kind just quoted. The French can exactly express their meaning by a preposition which is untranslatable in our less manageable vocabulary. When they say “la dame aux camélias,” we know exactly what they mean,
and try to represent our knowledge by saying "the lady with the camellias." But the effort is inadequate, and our inner feeling confesses it at the very time we use it.

So, too, with regard to the title which Sydney Smith—the parson in question—loved to apply to himself. The witty canon not only had French blood in him on the mother's side (to which fact many attribute his mercurial temperament), but he was a practised French scholar himself, speaking fluently but writing shakily, as is so often the case with those whose knowledge of that language is colloquial. There was little, indeed, of the conventional parson about him, and none of the traditional influence of the white cravat; an influence sometimes held (but surely on most illogical grounds) to be fatal even to the most innocent kind of fun. Are we always properly sensible of our obligations to this same large parson in the pudding-bag?

It would perhaps be difficult to select any single volume which is capable of giving more unmingled pleasure to the reader than Lady Holland's life of her distinguished and pudding-bagged father. Of all the memories that circle round that historic
spot in the Old Court suburb of Kensington, none seem so thoroughly to belong to us in our day and generation as those connected with Sydney—as his compeers called him. The Honourable Joseph has receded into the past; but the witty canon is, at all events for another half-century or so, perennial.

But in that expression—the witty canon—which has come to be so indissolubly connected with Sydney Smith, and to a lesser degree in his own self-chosen appellation of the large parson in the pudding-bag, there is involved a tacit injustice to one whose character is but half estimated when we regard only the humorous to the exclusion of its other and higher phases. The *bon-mots* and plays upon words due to this merry soul have passed into the common stock, and become a part of that kind of literature. He is a master in the gentle craft. He is our laughing philosopher; but did it ever occur to us to catch him in his serious moods or to speculate upon the lasting effects he produced upon the philosophy, the religion, the literature of the period over which his life-work extended—say from the establishment of the *Edinburgh Review* down to his death in 1845—for he died in harness? It is quite impossible to estimate aright the beauty and
brilliancy of the one better known side of his character, unless we compare and contrast it with the more subdued and less generally appreciated excellencies of his sober vein of thought. This is one charm of Lady Holland’s biography of her father. She did not—she would not be likely to—look upon him, when his memory was consecrated by death, as merely the jester, or the conversationalist wont to keep the table in a roar; and the result is that the lights and shadows blend pleasantly in these pages, and give us that complete picture of the man which is so essential to any adequate appraisement of his place in modern prose literature.

Apropos of sermons, to wit—for is it not a parson in a pudding-bag of whom we speak?—he said: “The English, generally remarkable for doing very good things in a very bad manner, seem to have reserved the maturity and plenitude of their awkwardness for the pulpit. A clergyman clings to his velvet cushion with either hand, keeps his eye riveted upon his book, speaks of the ecstasies of joy and fear with a voice and a face which indicate neither, and pinions his body and soul into the same attitude of limb and thought, for fear of being called theatrical and affected. The most in-
trepid veteran of us all does no more than wipe his face with his cambric sudarium; if by mischance his hand slip from its ordinary grip of the velvet, he draws it back as from liquid brimstone, or the caustic iron of the law, and atones for this indecorum by fresh inflexibility and more rigid sameness. Is it wonder, then, that every semidelirious sectary who pours forth his animated nonsense with the genuine look and voice of passion, should gesticulate away the congregation of the most profound and learned divine of the Established Church, and, in two Sundays, preach him bare to the very sexton!''

It was said of Archdeacon Hare that you never knew what was in the Communion Service of the Church of England until you had heard him read it; and, even after making all allowances for a daughter's prejudices, we can readily accept the assurance that Sydney Smith's own matter and manner in the pulpit were the very reverse of this 'holoplexia,' as he terms it. Indeed, as no man is a hero to his own valet, it is questionable too whether a clergyman's daughter, from the very familiarity of her association with her parsonic papa at home, is not likely to be his sharpest critic in
church. She says: "My father’s religion is tinctured, in great measure, by his character—it has nothing intolerant, repulsive, or morose in his hands. He first seeks to inspire the love of God by painting the world overflowing with beauties of form, colour, sight, taste, smell, feeling; the mind of man filled with genius, fancy, wit, imagination, eloquence—properties and feelings totally unnecessary to the mere bare, cold existence that might have been the lot of man, but bestowed upon him in such variety and profusion as almost baffles the comprehension, and shows the boundless love of the Creator in placing such happiness within the reach of His creatures."

It was even so that this parson himself pressed the idea into the service of the great argument he was commissioned to work out. "We count over," he said, in his sermon on the immortality of the soul, "the pious spirits of the world, the beautiful writers, the great statesmen, all who have invented subtly, who have thought deeply, who have executed wisely; all these are proofs that we are destined for a second life; and it is not possible to believe that this redundant vigour, this lavish and excessive power, was given only for the gathering
of meat and drink. If the only object is present existence, such faculties are cruel, are misplaced, are useless. They will show us that there is something great awaiting us—that the soul is now young and infantine, springing up into a more perfect life when the body falls into dust.” So too in the first sermon he preached in Bristol Cathedral after he was appointed to the canonry, when (to use his own words) he gave the most Protestant Mayor and Corporation such a dose of toleration as would last them for many a year; he introduced with consummate effect the legend of the wayfaring man coming to Abraham’s tent, and when the patriarch was going to drive him forth for his heterodoxy, the divine voice staying him with the remonstrance: “Abraham, Abraham, have I borne with this man for three-score years and ten, and canst not thou bear with him for one hour?”

Peter Plymley was, we now know, among the prophets in the matter of Catholic Emancipation; but do we quite award a due niche among those prophets to the parson in the pudding-bag on the score of education? He was surely forecasting—even if only in some enthusiastic millennial kind of way—the present equality of the sexes in educa-
tional matters, when he wrote thus in the Edinburgh Review on the then vexed question of Female Education: "There is a very general notion, that the moment you put the education of women upon a better foundation than it is at present, at that moment there will be an end of all domestic economy; and that if you once suffer women to eat of the tree of knowledge, the rest of the family will soon be reduced to the same kind of aerial and unsatisfactory diet. Can anything," he continues, in his own most characteristic style, "be more perfectly absurd than to suppose that the care and perpetual solicitude which a mother feels for her children depends upon her ignorance of Greek and mathematics; and that she would desert her infant for a quadratic equation?"

Most fitly, indeed, in reference to this parson in a pudding-bag, Tom Moore wrote:

Rare Sydney! thrice honoured the stall where he sits;
And be his every honour he deigneth to climb at!
Had England a hierarchy formed all of wits,
Whom but Sydney would England proclaim as its primate?

As an instance of Barham's style in the "Ingoldsby Legends," we select one that is less
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hackneyed than "The Naughty Little Boy" or "The Jackdaw of Rheims." It was one that was thrown off rapidly too, being a mere analysis of a Haymarket play, and so is a better instance of spontaneous fun than any more laboured performance could possibly be. It seems to possess all the elements of the ludicrous without a jarring discord along its course:

**MARIE MIGNOT.**

Miss Marie Mignot was a nice little maid,  
Her uncle a cook, and a laundress her trade,  
And she loved as dearly as anyone can  
Mister Lagardie, a nice little man.  
    But oh, but oh!  
    Story of woe!  
A sad interloper, one Monsieur Modeau,  
    Ugly and old,  
    With plenty of gold,  
    Made his approach  
    In an elegant coach.  
    Her fancy was charmed with the splendour and show,  
    And he bore off the false-hearted Molly Mignot.  

Monsieur Modeau was crazy and old,  
And Monsieur Modeau caught a terrible cold;  
His nose was stuffed and his throat was sore,  
He had physic by quarts and doctors a score.  
    They sent squills,  
    And pills,  
    And very long bills;

* This has been slightly altered in transcription.
And all they could do did not make him get well;  
He sounded his M's and N's like an L.  
A shocking bad cough  
At last took him off;  

And Mister Lagardie, her former young beau,  
Came a-courting again to the Widow Modeau.

Mister Lagardie, to gain his éclat,  
Had cut the cook's shop, and followed the law;  
And when Monsieur Modeau set out on his journey  
Was an articled clerk to a special attorney.  
He gave her a call  
On the day of a ball,  
To which she'd invited the court, camp, and all.  
But poor dear Lagardie  
Again was too tardy,  
For a Marshal of France  
Had just asked her to dance.  

In a twinkling the ci-devant Madame Modeau  
Was the wife of the Marshal Lord Marquis Dinot.

Mister Lagardie was shocked at the news,  
And went and enlisted at once in the Blues.  
The Marquis Dinot  
Fell a little so-so,  
Took physic, grew worse, and had notice to go.  
He died, and was shelved, and his lady so gay  
Smiled again on Lagardie, now placed on full pay—  
A Swedish Field-Marshal, with a guinea a day;  
When an old ex-king  
Just showed her the ring;  
To be queen she conceived was a very fine thing.  
But the king turned a monk,  
And Lagardie got drunk,  
And said to the lady, with a deal of ill-breeding,  
"You may go to the devil, and I'll go to Sweden."

Thus between the two stools,  
Like some other fools,
Her ladyship found
Herself plump on the ground.
So she cried, and she stamped, and she sent for a hack,
And she drove to a convent, and never came back.

MORAL.

This legend quite plainly will teach you the guilt
Of coquetting, and ogling, and playing the jilt,
Such folks gallop awhile but at last they get spilt.
Had Marie Mignot
Behaved comme il faut,
Nor married the miser, nor Marquis Dinot,
She had ne'er been a nun; whose fate very hard is,
But the mother of half-a-score little Lagardies.

Two of Barham’s jeux d’esprit connect him closely with a pair of honoured names in our Pantheon; the first with Theodore Hook, the second with him who perhaps more thoroughly than any other realises our ideal of harmless fun—Hood.

LINES
LEFT AT MR. THEODORE HOOK’S HOUSE, IN JUNE, 1834.

As Dick and I
Were a-sailing by,
At Fulham Bridge I cocked my eye,
And says I, “Ad-zooks!
There’s Theodore Hook’s,
Whose sayings and doings make such pretty books.”
"I wonder," says I,
Still keeping my eye
On the house, "if he is in—I should like to try."
With his oar on his knee,
Says Dick, says he,
"Father, suppose you land and see!"

"What, land and sea?"
Says I to he;
"Together? why, Dick, why, how can that be?"
And my comical son—
Who is fond of fun—
I thought would have split his sides at the pun.

So we rows to shore
And knocks at the door,
When William—a man I've seen often before—
Makes answer and says,
"Master's gone in a chaise
Call'd a homnibus, drawn by a couple of bays."

So I says then,
"Just lend me a pen,"
"I will, sir," said William, politest of men;
So, having no card,
These poetical brayings
Are the record I leave of my doings and sayings.

Richard H. Barham.

The other specimen, which we may term Barham upon Hood, is perhaps as happy an instance of parody as we could select. Here is the original by Hood:

I remember, I remember
The house where I was born,
And the little window, where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor brought too long a day;
But now I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember
The roses, red and white,
The violets and the lily-cups,
Those flowers made of light;
The lilacs, where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday—
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing:
My spirit flew in feathers then,
That is so heavy now,
And summer-pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow.

I remember, I remember
The fir-trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky;
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from heaven
Than when I was a boy.

Now let us listen to Barham's adaptation of this
beautiful little poem:

NURSERY REMINISCENCES.
I remember, I remember,
When I was a little boy,
One fine morning in September,
Uncle brought me home a toy.
I remember how he patted
Both my cheeks in kindest mood;
Then said he, “You little fat-head,
There’s a top for being good!”

Grandmamma—a shrewd observer—
I remember gazed upon
My new top, and said with fervour,
“Oh how kind of Uncle John!”

While mamma, my form caressing—
In her eye the tear-drop stood—
Read me this fine moral lesson,
“See what comes of being good!”

Then comes a modulation into the minor:

I remember, I remember,
On a wet and windy day,
One cold morning in December,
I stole out and went to play.

I remember Billy Hawkins
Came, and with his pewter squirt
Squibb’d my pantaloons and stockings,
Till they were all over dirt.

To my mother for protection
I ran, quaking every limb;
She exclaimed, with fond affection,
“Goodness gracious! look at him!”

Pa cried, when he saw my garment
(’Twas a newly-purchased dress),
“Oh you nasty little varmep,
How came you in such a mess?”
Then he caught me by the collar—
Cruel, only to be kind—
And, to my exceeding dolour,
Gave me several slaps—behind.

Grandmamma, while yet I smarted,
As she saw my evil plight,
Said—'twas rather stony-hearted—
"Little rascal! serve him right!"

I remember, I remember,
From that sad and solemn day,
Never more, in dark December,
Did I venture out to play.

And the moral which they taught I
Well remember, thus they said:
"Little boys, when they are naughty,
Must be whipp'd and sent to bed."

When Lord Chatham asked Dr. Henneker for a
definition of wit, he replied: "Wit, my lord, is
what a pension would be if given by your lordship
to your humble servant—a good thing well ap­
plied;" and here arises an interesting question: Is
it true of the wit as of the poet—nascitur, non fit?
In our reply to this question it may seem presump­
tuous to differ from so great an authority as the
witty canon of St. Paul's himself. But Sydney
Smith was such a thorough specimen of the born
wit, that we may doubt whether he was not by that
very fact incapacitated from forming an opinion. It
came so naturally to him that he could scarcely con­ceive it not doing so to others. He says he believes a man might sit down as systematically and success­fully to the study of wit as he might to the study of mathematics; "and I would answer for it," he says, "that by giving up only six hours a day to being witty, he should come on prodigiously before midsummer, so that his friends should hardly know him again."

Sydney Smith himself tells a good story in illus­tration of this deficiency of a sense of fun. He had been treating the company at dinner to one of his best things, and observed all the table, as usual, in a roar, except one phlegmatic gentleman, who showed no symptom of a smile. Some time after the ladies had retired from dessert, this gentleman broke out into a tremendous laugh, and said: "Oh, I see, Mr. Smith, you meant that"—referring to his remark during dinner—"for a joke, didn’t you?" "Well, sir, I rather think I did." It had just pene­trated the inappreciative strata of his brain. Sydney Smith makes a Scotchman the hero of his story.

The truth probably is, that wit is as much a gift as beauty or strength. Of course we all have a certain amount of it, and it may no doubt be in-
creased by exercise, just as strength by training, or beauty by Madame Rachel. But the real thing comes unsought.

"Humour," said Douglas Jerrold, speaking of one of these self-made men in the sphere of wit, "humour! why he sweats at a joke like a Titan at a thunderbolt."

It is this ethereal character of wit that gives the charm to repartee, because we are pretty sure that must be impromptu; though we are told that even Richard Brinsley Sheridan used to keep a large stock of good things ready to be produced at the fitting occasion.

It requires the born wit to shine at repartee. In this respect Sydney Smith was facilis princeps. "Mr. Smith," said a beautiful young lady walking in the garden, "I fear I shall never bring this pea to perfection." "Then permit me," said Sydney Smith, taking her by the hand, "to lead perfection to the pea."

He was advised, when ill, to take a morning walk upon an empty stomach. "Upon whose?" was his inquiry.

The conversation turning on pictures, a critic standing before one began to talk technicalities.
“Immense breadth of light and shade, sir.” “Yes,” he replied, “about an inch and a half.” “The look he gave me,” says Sydney Smith, “ought to have killed me.”

The real impromptu is a scarce article; some of those compositions so named being very laboured compositions indeed; but where it does exist it is a pure and brilliant scintillation of wit, and marks its author a master in the gentle craft. Again we must go to the inexhaustible Sydney Smith for the single instance we adduce. Coming home one day, he found Jeffrey (who was a very little man) playing with his children, and riding, for their amusement, on a young donkey. He exclaimed:

Witty as Horatius Flaccus,
As great a Jacobin as Gracchus,
Short, but not as stout as Bacchus,
Riding on a little jackass.

Apropos of surprise, too, is the story of Sheridan’s boots. After challenging the company to guess how he came by them, and having exhausted all guesses as to his having borrowed, begged, or stolen them, he said: “Do you give it up? I bought them and paid for them.”
There is another element which enters largely into the composition of wit, and that is conciseness. According to the old proverb, "Brevity is the soul of wit." This gives the charm to the epigram; it is wit in miniature. Dean Swift's last epigram—almost the last flickering of that wild, wayward mind before it went out for ever—is a case in point.

As he was taking exercise during one of his mental attacks, they pointed out to him a magazine for arms and stores. He wrote:

Behold a proof of Irish sense,
And Irish wit is seen;
When nothing's left that's worth defence
They build a magazine.

The most formal shape into which fun can fall is perhaps the simile, and a better instance could not be adduced than Sydney Smith's metaphor of Mrs. Partington and her mop, in his speech to the electors at Taunton on the rejection of the Reform Bill by the Lords:

"The attempt of the Lords to stop Reform reminds me very forcibly of the conduct of the excellent Mrs. Partington in the great storm off
Sidmouth. In the winter of 1824 there set in a great flood upon that town; the tide rose to an incredible height; the waves rushed in upon the houses, and everything was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime and terrible storm, Dame P., who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house in mop and pattens, trundling her mop, squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused; Mrs. P.'s spirit was up; but I need not tell you that the contest was unequal. The Atlantic beat Mrs. Partington. She was excellent at a slop or a puddle; but she should not have meddled with a tempest. Gentlemen, be at your ease, be quiet and steady. You will beat Mrs. Partington."

Great exaggeration, when it falls short of the dignity of hyperbole or irony, is a fruitful source of fun. Witness the following by the master in the craft from the *Edinburgh Review*:

"Insects are the curse of tropical climates. Flies get entry into your mouth, into your eyes, into your nose; you eat flies, drink flies, and breathe flies. Lizards, cockroaches, and snakes
get into your bed; ants eat up the books; scorpions sting you on the foot. Everything bites, stings, or bruises; every second of your existence you are wounded by some piece of animal life. An insect with eleven legs is swimming in your teacup; a nondescript with nine wings is struggling in the small beer; a caterpillar with several dozen eyes in his belly is hastening over the bread and butter. All nature is alive, and seems to be gathering all her entomological hosts to eat you up, as you are standing, out of your coat, waistcoat, and breeches. Such are the tropics. All this reconciles us to our dews, fogs, vapours, and drizzle; to our apothecaries rushing about with gargles and tinctures; to our old British constitutional coughs, sore throats, and swelled faces.”

Sydney Smith has some observations on the limits of the humorous, which are very much to the purpose in our present work. He says:

“The sense of the humorous is as incompatible with tenderness and respect as with compassion. No man would laugh to see a little child fall. It is an odd case to put, but I should like to know if any man living could have laughed if he had seen Sir Isaac Newton rolling in the mud? I believe that
not only senior wranglers and senior optimi (sic) would have run to his assistance, but that dustmen, and carmen, and coalheavers would have run and picked him up and set him to rights. It is,"’ he concludes in a splendid climax, “a beautiful thing to observe the boundaries which nature has affixed to the ridiculous, and to notice how soon it is swallowed up by the more illustrious feelings of our minds. Where is the heart so hard that could bear to see the awkward resources and contrivances of the poor turned into ridicule? Who could laugh at the fractured ruined body of a soldier? Who is so wicked as to amuse himself with the infirmities of extreme old age? or to find subject for humour in the weakness of a perishing dissolving body? Who is there that does not feel himself disposed to overlook the little peculiarities of the truly great and wise, and to throw a veil over that ridicule which they have redeemed by the magnitude of their talents and the splendour of their virtues? Who ever thinks of turning into ridicule our great and ardent hope of a world to come? Whenever the man of humour meddles with these things, he is astonished to find that in all the great feelings of their nature the mass of mankind always think and act right;
that they are ready to laugh, but that they are quite as ready to drive away with indignation and contempt the light fool who comes with the feather of wit to crumble the bulwarks of truth, and to beat down the temples of God."

Somebody said—very personally and by no means kindly—of the late Douglas Jerrold, that the reason of his being called a caustic writer was because he blackened every character that he wrote about. Without going to this length, we may certainly, if Mr. Mark Lemon's "Jest Book" be accepted as an authority, regard Douglas Jerrold as the specimen *par excellence* of a sarcastic wit.

"We row in the same boat you know," said a literary friend to him. This literary friend, it is observed, was a comic writer, and a comic writer only. Jerrold replied: "True, my good fellow, we do row in the same boat, but with very different skulls."

He was walking with a party of literati in the country, and in the course of their walk they stopped to notice the gambols of a little donkey. A very sentimental poet present said he should like to send the little thing as a present to his mother. "Do," replied Jerrold, "and tie a piece of paper
round its neck, with the motto, 'When this you see, remember me.'"

Douglas Jerrold evidently accepted as a definition of wit the lines quoted in the same book:

True wit is like the brilliant stone
Dug from Golconda's mine,
Which boasts two various powers in one—
To cut as well as shine.

Genius, like that, if polished right
With the same gifts abounds;
Appears at once both keen and bright,
And sparkles while it wounds.

If this be the true ideal, we can scarcely believe that Foote wrote a libel on the British public when he makes a publisher say: "Why, who the deuce will give money to be told that Mr. Such-an-one is a wiser and better man than himself? No, no; 'tis clean out of nature. A good sousing satire, now, well powdered with personal pepper, and seasoned with the spirit of party, that demolishes a conspicuous character and sinks him below our level—there, there we are pleased; there we chuckle and grin, and toss the half-crown on the counter."

So too, with regard to those instances where fun, as it were, shaves the edges of profanity,
thus tends to contradict our present definition, in respect of harmlessness and absence of pain.

We probably never hear the most sparkling witticism which violates these conditions without conscience putting in its protest. Funny as undoubtedly was Dean Swift’s address to his parish clerk, when he found that functionary the only member of his congregation, “Dearly beloved Roger,” &c., it cannot but excite regret that he should have thus burlesqued words which, next to those of Holy Writ, he was bound to respect. The following story may, perhaps, on the cui bono principle, be allowed to pass muster, but it is open still to question:

THE DEAN AND THE TAILOR.

A tailor in Dublin, near the residence of Dean Swift, took it into his head that he was specially and divinely inspired to interpret the prophecies, and particularly the Book of Revelation. Quitting the shopboard, he turned out a preacher, or rather a prophet, until his customers had left his shop, and his family was likely to famish. His monomania was well known to Dean Swift, who benevolently watched for some convenient opportunity to turn the current of his thoughts. One night the tailor, as he fancied, got a revelation to go and convert Dean Swift, and the next morning took up his line of march for the Deanery. The Dean, whose study was furnished with a glass door, saw the tailor approach, and instantly surmised the nature.
of his errand. Throwing himself into an attitude of solemnity, and with his eyes fixed on the tenth chapter of Revelation, he waited his entrance. The door opened, and the tailor commenced in an unearthly voice the message: "Dean Swift, I am sent by the Almighty to announce to you——" "Come in, my friend," said the Dean, "I am in great trouble, and no doubt the Lord has sent you to help me out of my difficulty." This unexpected welcome inspired the tailor, strengthened greatly his assurance in his own prophetic character, and disposed him to listen to the disclosure. "My friend," said the Dean, "I have just been reading the tenth chapter of Revelation, and am greatly distressed at a difficulty I have met with; and you are the very man to help me out. Here is the account of an angel that came down from heaven, who was so large that he placed one foot on the sea, and the other on the earth, and lifted up his hands to heaven. Now my knowledge of mathematics," continued the Dean, "has enabled me to calculate exactly the size and form of the angel; but I am in great difficulty, for I wish to ascertain how much cloth it will take to make him a pair of breeches, and as that is in your line of business, I have no doubt the Lord has sent you to show me." This sudden exposition came like an electric shock to the poor tailor. He rushed from the house, ran to his shop, and a sudden revulsion of thought and feeling came over him. Making breeches was exactly in his line of business. He returned to his occupation, thoroughly cured of his prophetical revelations by the wit of the Dean.

The same may be said of beauty. It is destructive of fun. It must be surprise, and surprise only, that is excited by the collocation of apparently incongruous ideas.

When the simile, for instance, is beautiful, it passes into allegory, and is no longer witty but sublime, and per se beautiful. “The Pilgrim’s
Progress," e.g., is not witty, because it is sublime.

In reference to this we may quote a story which has often been repeated, of a little child walking with its father on a starlight night. Observing it to be gazing intently upwards, the father asked what the child was thinking of? and the reply was: "I am thinking if the wrong side of heaven be so beautiful, what must the right side be?" By-and-by, being asked what it thought of the stars, the child said: "I think they are gimlet holes to let the glory through." Now these ideas would be witty only they are so beautiful as a child’s innocent appreciation of the most beautiful sight in nature.

Such, too, was the character of Sydney Smith’s remark shortly before his death. In the early spring he saw a crocus just shooting its flower above the soil, and stooping and pointing at it with his stick, he said: "See the resurrection of the world!"

A good example at once of the limitation—the frontier line, so to say, between beauty and wit—and at the same time of the single step that separates the sublime and ridiculous, is where the sur-
prise is made to result from a sudden change from the sublime to the ridiculous, as for instance in the following lines:

**THE GRAVEDIGGER.**

"Old man, old man, for whom dig'st thou this grave?"
I asked as I walked along;
For I saw, in the heart of London streets,
A dark and a busy throng.

'Twas a strange wild deed; but a stranger wish
Of the parted soul to lie
'Midst the troubled numbers of living men,
Who would pass him idly by!

So I said: "Old man, for whom dig'st thou this grave,
In the heart of London town?"
And the deep-toned voice of the digger replied:
"We're a-laying a gas-pipe down."

Perhaps the most remarkable instance on record of the combination of actual beauty with the pun, is in the following sonnet by Hood:

The world is with me and its many cares,
Its woes, its wants, the anxious hopes and fears
That wait on all terrestrial affairs—
The shades of former and of future years—
Foreboding fancies and prophetic tears,
Quelling a spirit that was once elate.
Heavens! what a wilderness the earth appears,
Where youth, and mirth, and health are out of date.
But no! A laugh of innocence and joy
Resounds like music of the fairy race;
And, gladly turning from the world's annoy,
I gaze upon a little radiant face,
And bless, internally, the merry boy
Who makes a son-shine in a shady place.

In the following instance the incongruity is obtained by the vein of common domestic anxiety blending with the beautiful poetic love for his child, which was so characteristic a feature of Hood's nature:

A PARENTAL ODE TO MY SON.
AGED THREE YEARS AND FIVE MONTHS.

Thou happy elf!
(But stop, first let me kiss away that tear.)
Thou tiny image of myself!
(My love, he's poking peas into his ear!)
Thou merry, laughing sprite,
With spirits feather-light,
Untouch'd by sorrow and unsoil'd by sin;
(Good heavens! the child is swallowing a pin!)

Thou little tricky Puck,
With antic toys so cunningly stuck,
Light as the singing bird that wings the air,
(The door, the door; he'll tumble down the stair!)
Thou darling of thy sire.
(Why, Jane, he'll set his pinafore a-fire!)
Thou imp of mirth and joy;
In love's dear chain so bright and strong a link!
Thou idol of thy parents. (Drat the boy!
There goes my ink!)
Thou cherub—but of earth;
Fit playfellow for fays, by moonlight pale,
In harmless sport and mirth;
(That dog will bite him if he pulls its tail!)
Thou human humming-bee, extracting honey
From ev'ry blossom in the world that blows;
Singing in youth's elysium ever sunny;
(Another tumble—that's his precious nose!)

Thy father's pride and hope!
(He'll break the mirror with that skipping-rope!)
With pure heart newly stamped from nature's mint.
(Where did he learn that squint?)
Thou young domestic dove!
(He'll have that jug off with another shove.)
Dear nursling of the hymeneal nest,
(Are those torn clothes his best?)
Little epitome of man!
(He'll climb upon the table—that's his plan).
Touched with the beauteous tints of dawning life.
(He's got a knife!)

Thou enviable being!
No storms, no clouds, in thy blue sky foreseeing;
Play on, play on,
My elfin John;
Toss the light ball, bestride the stick.
(I knew so many cakes would make him sick!)
With fancy buoyant as the thistle-down,
Prompting the face grotesque, and antic brisk,
With many a lamb-like frisk.
(He's got the scissors, snipping at your gown!)

Thou pretty opening rose!
(Go to your mother, child, and wipe your nose!)
Balmy and breathing music like the south,
(He really brings my heart into my mouth.)
Fresh as the morn and brilliant as its star,
(I wish that window had an iron bar!)
Bold as the hawk, yet gentle as the dove.
(I tell you what, my love,
I cannot write, unless he's sent above.)

The very ideal of harmless fun is attained in Hood's "Letters to Children," of which we extract specimens from Mrs. Broderip's life of her father. She says:

"The following letters were written by Tom Hood to Dr. Elliot's children, of whom he was very fond."

17, Elm Tree Road, St. John's Wood, Monday, April, 1844.

MY DEAR MAY,

I promised you a letter, and here it is. I was sure to remember it; for you are as hard to forget as you are soft to roll down a hill with. What fun it was! only so prickly. I thought I had a porcupine in one pocket and a hedgehog in the other. The next time before we kiss the earth we will have its face well shaved. Did you ever go to Greenwich fair? I should like to go there with you, for I get no rolling at St. John's Wood. Tom and Fanny only like roll and butter; and as for Mrs. Hood she is for rolling in money. Tell Dunnie that Tom has set his trap in the balcony, and has caught a cold; and tell Jeanie that Fanny has set her foot in the garden, but it has not come up yet. Oh, how I wish it was the season when "March winds and April showers bring forth May flowers!" for then of course you would give me another pretty little nosegay. Besides, it is frosty and foggy weather, which I do not like. The other night when I came home from Stratford, the cold shrivelled me up so that when I got home I thought I was my own child! However, I
hope we shall all have a merry Christmas. I mean to come in
my most ticklesome waistcoat, and to laugh till I grow fat, or at
least streaky. Fanny is to be bowd a glass of wine. Tom's
mouth is to have a "hole" holiday, and Mrs. Hood is to sit up to
supper! There will be doings! And then such things to eat;
but pray, pray, pray mind they don't boil the baby by mistake
for a "plump" pudding, instead of a plum one. Give my love to
everybody, from yourself down to Willy, with which, and a kiss,
and up hill and down dale,

Your affectionate lover,

Tom Hood.

Devonshire Lodge, New Finchley Road, St. John's Wood,
July 1st (1st of Hebrew falsity).

My dear Dunnib,

I have heard of your doings at Sandgate, and that you were
so happy at getting to the sea, that you were obliged to be flogged
a little to moderate it, and keep some for next day. I am very
fond of the sea, too, though I have been twice nearly drowned by
it; once in a storm in a ship, and once under a boat's bottom
when I was bathing. Of course you have bathed, but have you
learned to swim yet? It is rather easy in salt water, and diving
is still easier, even than at the "sink." I only swim in fancy,
and strike out new ideas. Is not the tide curious? Though I
cannot say much for its "tidiness," it makes such a slop and
litter on the beach. It comes and goes as regularly as the boys
of a proprietary school, but has no holidays.

And what a rattle the waves make when the stones are rough.
You will find some rolled into decent marbles and bounces, and
sometimes you may hear the sound of a heavy sea at a great dis-
tance like a giant snoring. Some people say that every ninth
wave is bigger than the rest. I have often counted, but never
found it come true except with tailors, of whom every ninth is a
man. But in rough weather there are giant waves, bigger than
the rest, that come in trios, from which I suppose Britannia rules
the waves by the rule of three. When I was a boy I loved to
play with the sea, in spite of its sometimes getting rather
"rough." I and my brothers chucked hundreds of stones into
BROAD GRINS.

it, as you do; but we came away before we could fill it up. In those days we were at war with France. Unluckily it's peace now, or with so many stones you might have good fun for days in pelting the enemy's coast. Once I almost thought I nearly hit Boney! Then there was looking for an island, like Robinson Crusoe. Have you ever found one yet surrounded by water? I remember once standing on the beach, when the tide was flowing, till I was a peninsula, and only by running turned myself into a continent. Then there's fishing at the sea-side. I used to catch flat-fish with a very long string line. It was like swimming a kite. But perhaps there are no flat-fish at Sandgate—except your shoe-soles. The best plan if you want flat-fish where there are none, is to bring codlings and hammer them into dabs. Once I caught a plaice, and seeing it all over red spots, I thought I had caught the measles. Do you ever long, when you are looking at the sea, for a voyage? If I were off Sandgate with my yacht (only she is not yet built), I would give you a cruise in her. In the meantime you can practise sailing any little boat you can get. But mind that it does not flounder or get squamped, as some people say, instead of "founder" and "swamp." I have been squamped myself by malaria, and almost foundered, which reminds me that Tom junior, being very ingenious, has made a cork model of a diving-bell, that won't sink. By this time I suppose you are become instead of a land-boy a regular sea-urchin; and so amphibious that you can walk on the land as well as on the water—or better. And don't you mean when you grow up to go to sea? Should you not like to be a little midshipman? or half a quarter-master, with a cocked-hat, and a dirk that will be a sword by the time you are a man? If you do resolve to be a post-captain, let me know; and I will endeavour, through my interest with the Commissioners of Pavements, to get you a post, to jump over, of the proper height. Tom is just rigging a boat, so I suppose that he inclines to be an Admiral of the Marines. But before you decide, remember the port-holes, and that there are great guns in those battle-doors that will blow you into shuttlecocks, which is a worse game than hoop and hide—as to a good hiding. And so farewell young "old fellow," and take care of yourself so near the sea, for in some places they say it has not
even a bottom to go to if you fall in. And remember when you are bathing, if you meet with a shark, the best way is to bite off his legs, if you can, before he walks off with yours. And so, hoping you will be better soon, for somebody told me you had the shingles,

I am, my dear Dunnie,

Your affectionate friend,

Tom Hood.

P.S. I have heard that at Sandgate there used to be lobsters, but some ignorant fairy turned them all by a spell into bolsters.
COCKNEY POETS.
COCKNEY POETS.

The prescribed limits of our subject compel us almost to close our disquisition with Hood, who, besides realising perfectly our ideal of harmless mirth, has the high honour to head the list of modern Cockney poets. The living representatives of that school we may have to deal lightly with, or omit altogether; but the school itself is far too important to be overlooked even in the briefest sketch of a subject that demands far more exhaustive treatment.

Before proceeding to any disquisition on the Cockney school of poetry, it would be well—according to Mrs. Glasse's historic formula, "First catch your hare"—to decide this absorbing question: "What is a Cockney?" In what sense are we going to use the word? for it has more significations than one; and it is necessary to clear the ground some-
what by deciding under what aspect we will view the chameleon.

There are at least three distinct and well-defined stages in the definition of a Cockney, on which it will be well for a moment to expatiate.

In the first place it may be said of the Cockney, as of the poet, "nascitur, non fit." According to the common—one had almost written the vulgar—conception, a Cockney is an individual born within the sound of Bow bells; and although the literal acceptation of the term would considerably narrow our range, yet it is remarkable how wide the sphere would still be. We might draw up a very respectable list of poets—perhaps, as we have seen, including Chaucer himself—who were thus Cockneys by actual birth and local habitation. This prosy London, this big, overgrown metropolis, which strikes us as destitute of anything like poetry, has been strangely fertile in autochthonous bards—singers, who might have claimed as their own emblem the symbolic grasshopper on the top of the Royal Exchange. Many—it may be most—of those whom we assemble in our Cockney Walhalla, will be found privileged to take their place there by right of birth.

But beyond this mere accident of birth, we may
reasonably extend our regards so far, at all events, as to include what may be termed naturalised Cockneys; those who, though born elsewhere, have become, by long residence or other associations, acclimatised in London. Now here at once our circle widens immensely, and our Pantheon becomes populous indeed. To London, as the head-quarters of literary activity, has gravitated throughout the ages the long procession of poets—often impecunious, always ambitious—who have come, like uncommercial Dick Whittingtons, expecting to find the streets paved with gold, and finding them too often, as De Quincey did, a very stony-hearted stepmother indeed. Dr. Johnson, with his ponderous MS. of "Irene" in his pocket, and Tobias Smollett, with some other equally unsaleable tragedy in his, are representative men among these uncommercial travellers who are concentrated in Cockaigne as a focus. To these, and such as these, the very bricks and mortar of the big unsightly city seem a source of fascination, and, what is to our present purpose, of poetic afflatus. They babble of green fields while taking a walk down Fleet Street or starving in a Shoe Lane attic. In the very agony of death, as the most unmitigated Cockney of them all said, they
feel the daisies growing over them. A very phenomenal race indeed are these Cockneys not born, but made. M. Taine, newly landed by the way at Newhaven (and that Dieppe route never does agree with Frenchmen), wrote the particulars of his acclimatisation as follows:

"Here we are at Newhaven, then at London. The sky disgorges rain; the earth returns her mist; the mist floats in the rain—all is swamped. Looking round us, we see no reason why it should ever end. Here truly is Homer's Cimmerian Land. Our feet splash. We have no use left for our eyes. We feel all our organs stopped up, becoming rusty by the mounting damp. We think ourselves banished from the breathing world, reduced to the condition of marshy beings dwelling in dirty pools. To live here is not life. We ask ourselves if this vast town is not a cemetery, in which dabble busy and wretched ghosts. Amidst the deluge of moist soot, the muddy stream with its unwearying iron ships, like black insects, which take on board and land shades, makes us think of the Styx. . . . We become melancholy; we are disgusted with others and with ourselves. What can people do in this sepulchre?"
Without taking into account the effects produced on a Frenchman by recent *mal de mer*, we must confess that such a description is scarcely over-drawn. Tom Hood put it into verse in his celebrated "Ode to November;" and certainly to lisp in numbers—for the numbers come under such circumstances and with such surroundings—is to poetise under difficulties. Perhaps these manufactured Cockneys

Are cradled into poetry by wrong,
And learn in suffering what they teach in song.

But they teach us a good deal more. They tune their pastoral pipe amongst all these influences so much the reverse of idyllic; and therefore it is we call them phenomenal, and shall hope to recur to them when we have devoted sufficient time to our subject proper. For there is yet an inner circle, a very *crème de la crème* of Cockneydom. Not of these native or naturalised Cockneys do we think when we speak technically of the Cockney poets; and we will be technical first of all, however we may extend our boundaries afterwards. The *Quarterly Review*, in that trenchant style which was less familiar fifty or sixty years ago than now, when we have the
Saturday and the World, spoke of a certain writer in the following words:

"It is not that the author has not powers of language, rays of fancy, and gleams of genius—he has all these; but he is unhappily a disciple of what has been somewhere called Cockney poetry, which may be defined to consist of the most incongruous ideas in the most uncouth language. Of this school Mr. Leigh Hunt . . . aspires to be the hierophant. The author"—he is speaking of John Keats—"is a copyist of Mr. Hunt; but he is more unintelligible, almost as rugged, twice as diffuse, and ten times more tiresome and absurd than his prototype."

The genesis of this Cockney school of poetry appears to have been due to a violent revulsion from the Lake school, with which it was pretty nearly contemporaneous. In fact it was—we may put it in the present tense, and say is—only the outcome in poetry of those two opposite forms of thought which gives us our High Church and Low Church in ecclesiastical matters, our Conservatism and Radicalism in politics. On one side we had Wordsworth, with his "vivid sensations," Southey, with his ponderous epics, and Coleridge, with his magnificent opium dreams. These, be-
ginning by being violent republicans, nicknaming one another "citizen," and starting schemes of pantisocracy, settled down eventually into respectability and ultra-conservatism in Cumberland. These were the Church and State poets of the Lake school, beloved by the Quarterly, thick-and-thin advocates of the existing order of things, exceedingly shocked and horrified when anybody reminded them how furiously they had written calídā juventā of "the cause of Christ and civil liberty."

Such a school was bound to have its antipodes, and these poetic New Zealanders are our Cockneys proper. Some of them—many of them—most of them, perhaps—were born Cockneys, others were naturalised; but to whichever of these two classes they belonged, they were to the very joints and marrow permeated with the influences of Cockaigne—political, poetical, and religious, or irreligious; bold Bohemians, to whom M. Taine's moist soot is the very source of inspiration, and the muddy stream a fountain of Castalia.

Arrived thus at the very centre of our subject, let us devote a few minutes severally to hierophant Hunt, and then shoot off centrifugally once more and include some of the outer circle.
We do not believe that these men were only, as Gifford would have us believe, one rank above the simpering Della Cruscans, at whom he levelled his "Baviad" and "Mæviad." Nobody, perhaps, does believe that now, though it is still sometimes the fashion to affect such a literary creed. But the special point to dwell upon is that these Cockneys, proper or improper, are a magnificent instance of the doctrine of Horace:

Naturam expellas furca tamen usque recurret.

All their Cockney surroundings did not stamp nature out of them. They had not to rush off to the Lakes to be romantic and respectable. They were romantic—whether respectable or not is beside the matter—here in M. Taine's foggy London.

Of course these are the merest glimpses we can, under existing circumstances, give to our Cockney poets. Hunt, for instance, was put into Horsemonger Lane for libelling the "first gentleman in Europe;" and this is the picture he gives of his prison in his autobiography:

"I papered the walls with a trellis of roses; I had the ceiling coloured with clouds and sky; the barred windows I screened with Venetian blinds;
and when my bookcases were set up with their busts, and flowers and a pianoforte made their appearance, perhaps there was not a handsomer room on that side the water. I took a pleasure, when a stranger knocked at the door, to see him come in and stare about him. The surprise on issuing from the Borough, and passing through the avenues of a gaol, was dramatic. Charles Lamb declared there was no other such room except in a fairy tale. But I possessed yet another surprise; which was a garden. There was a little yard outside the room, railed off from another belonging to the neighbouring ward. This yard I shut in with green palings, adorned it with a trellis, bordered it with a thick bed of earth from a nursery, and even contrived to have a grass plat. The earth I filled with flowers and young trees. There was an apple-tree from which we managed to get a pudding the second year. As to my flowers, they were allowed to be perfect. Thomas Moore, who came to see me with Lord Byron, told me he had seen no such heartsease. . . . Here I wrote and read in fine weather, sometimes under an awning. In autumn my trellises were hung with scarlet runners, which added to the flowery investment. I used
to shut my eyes in my arm-chair and affect to think myself hundreds of miles off."

Surely here is a faculty of finding, nay of creating, poetry in unexpected places. "Kind Hunt," too, on whose monument at Kensal Green stand the appropriate words: "Write me as one who loved his fellow-men," has something to say, as well as Keats, about the grandeur of the dead. He writes:

"I wonder how I can talk of these things as calmly as I do; but I am myself in my seventy-fifth year, and I seem to be speaking more of those whom I am to join again shortly than of such as have left me at a distance. Like them, too, though alive I decay; and when I go to bed and lie awhile on my back before turning to sleep, I often seem to be rehearsing, not without complacency, or something better, the companionship of the grave. May all of us who desire to meet elsewhere do so, and be then shown the secret of the great, the awful, yet, it is to be trusted, the beautiful riddle; for why (let it be asked again) so much half-beauty here, and so much need for completing it, if complete it is not to be? I do not think that enough
has been made of that argument from analogy, divine as was the mind of Plato that suggested it. Oh, why did any kind of religious creed ever put such injustice into its better portion as to render it possible for any of the Maker's infirm creatures to wish it might not be true even for others' sakes? . . . As to the fulfilment of these yearnings on earth to be made entire in a future state, I can no more believe in the existence of regions in space, where God has made half-orbs in the heavens or half-oranges on their trees, than I can believe He will fail to make these anxious, half-satisfied natures of ours, which thus crave for completeness, as entire and rounded in that which they crave for as any other fruits of His hands."

Not a little of what we now call Bohemianism, and a good deal of what offends the code of Grundy, may we find in this same autobiography; but there is real religion in this extract, and we may find it expounded—curiously so—in the "Religion of the Heart," which strikes one as being no less marvellous an outcome from Hunt's freethinking than Comte's elaborate ritual from his Positivism. Hunt has plenty of loyalty in him, too, though it did not run
in the direction of the first gentleman in Europe. Hear how he writes to his American editor in reference to our present Queen:

"I succeeded, in one instance, beyond my highest dreams, when the beloved sovereign, who had already honoured the 'Legend of Florence' more than once by her presence at Covent Garden, commanded it to be played under her own roof. Hail, grand old castle of Windsor, with thy mighty historic names and gorgeous heraldries! There is a corner in thee, with one little memory in it, made so great and bright to myself that I may be pardoned for oftener turning my eyes to it in thought than to the richest emblazonment in thy chapel."

In a few metrical lines, too, we may see how a Cockney poet can hit his reviewer back when he likes. They are from "The Feast of the Poets," when Apollo has come to earth and holds a levée of living poets. Gifford makes his way for an audience, and this is how he succeeds:

Then a hemming was heard, consequential and snapping,
And a sour little gentleman walked with a rap in.
He bowed, looked about him, seem'd cold and sat down,
And said: "I'm surpris'd that you visit this town."
To be sure, there are one or two of us who know you,
But as for the rest they are all much below you.
So stupid in general the natives are grown,
They really prefer Scotch reviews to their own;
So, what with their taste, their reformers, and stuff,
They have sickened myself and my friends long enough."

"Yourself and your friends," cried the god in high glee;
"And pray, my frank visitor, who may you be?"
"Who be?" cried the other, "why really—this tone—
William Gifford's a name, I think, pretty well known."
"Oh, now I remember," said Phoebus; "ah, true,
The Anti-La-Cruscan, who writes the review!
My visit, just now, is to poets alone,
And not to small critics, however well known."
So saying, he rang, to leave nothing in doubt,
And the sour little gentleman bless'd himself out!

Equally striking are the portraits of literary ladies in the "Blue-Stocking Revels; or, The Feast of the Violets."

Poetry! Is there not poetry in the very title of the "Feast of the Violets!"

And in truth it depends on yourselves, darling creatures,
Which shade of the hue shall illustrate your natures;
For though ye set out with the right one, nay, though
I myself, as I now do, the blessing bestow,
Yet the stockings themselves, I must tell you, are fated,
And just as they're worn will be loved or get hated.
Remaining true violet, glimpses of heaven,
As long as you're wise and your tempers are even.
But if you grow formal, or fierce, or untrue,
Alas, gentle colour; sweet ankle, adieu!
Thou art changed, and Love's self at the changing looks blue.
Seize the golden occasion, then, you who already
Are gentle, remain so; and you who would steady
Your natures and mend them, and make out your call
To be men’s best companions, be such once for all.

And remember that nobody, woman or man,
Ever charmed the next ages, since writing began,
Who thought by shrewd dealing sound fame to arrive at,
Or had one face in print and another in private.

Take a range one degree wider still, and see
Charles Lamb, that Cockney of the Cockneys, travelling lonelily enough along the sands of the great desert with that fatal remembrance as his guest, and the sister to whom he devoted his life ever at his side to prevent the recollection dying out from his brain. He says all the poetry was knocked out of him early in life, along with the romantic ideas of a golden-haired young lady at Islington. Probably most of us, whether Cockneys or young men from the country, suffer more or less from golden-haired young ladies at some time in our lives. Fortunate for us if we get it over early, as children their measles and whooping-cough.

Listen to his plaintive dirge:

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES.
I have had playmates, I have had company
In my days of childhood, in my joyful schooldays.
All, all are gone—the old familiar faces.
I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drink late, sit late, with my bosom cronies—
All, all are gone—the old familiar faces.

I loved a love once, fairest among women,
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her.
All, all are gone—the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man;
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly—
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghostlike I paced round the haunts of my childhood;
Earth seem'd a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

For some they have died, and some have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed.
All, all are gone—the old familiar faces.

Some people think that in order to attain the poetical they must go a long way back or a good way off, just as they think they cannot get respectable scenery without suffering, like poor Taine, in crossing the Channel and scampering through foreign cities, and being fleeced by continental hotel-keepers. There is plenty of fine scenery without going out of Middlesex and Surrey; and the streets of London are full—choke-full—of poetry. Nor do they lack the sacred bard, as the brave men who lived before Agamemnon did. Here are the sacred bards, none the less sacred
because their monuments are fresh at Kensal Green, or you elbow them in the streets, or crack jokes with them at dinner at the Garrick or Savage Club. There is poetry enough in London at this moment to send out condensed, like the tinned milk or potted meat, and start twenty Cockney schools in the Colonies or Central Africa.

Never talk to your Cockney, born or naturalised, of the brave days of old. Without disbelieving in the past, he believes so thoroughly in the present that the past takes subordinate rank, and the practical and poetical lose their sharp edges of opposition. Taine—our own oft-quoted Taine—said Wordsworth could have extracted a sonnet out of an old tooth-brush. "What for no?" as Meg Merrilies asks. Heaven knows we have enough of monotony and routine in our daily avocations and surroundings. Honour to those men who gild the bitter pill. Honour to the Cockney poets who make our vers de société, just as to the men who make our underground railways, and who are going, one of these days, to convert London into that Richardsonian Utopia, Hygeiopolis—the City of Health—where none but doctors shall die of starvation.
These Cockneys proper link the Cockneydom of to-day with its progenitors in the past—with the Golden Age of Cockaigne—the age of Chaucer, Spenser, and old Utopian Thomas More himself, born under the very shadow of Bow Church, let alone the sound of its bells, which must have broken his baby slumbers over and over again in his cradle down Milk Street.

Utopia! No, Cockaigne is not that, any more than it is a Hygeiopolis just at present. It is not a Land of Nowhere. There is the immense advantage: Sir Thomas never could fix his Utopia, for just when Hythlodæus was going to give the latitude and longitude, something always interrupted the colloquy. But we know our Cockaigne, and should find it difficult, perhaps, to exceed the enthusiasm of the following lines, quoted from one who is doing as much as any man to sustain the reputation of London poetry at the present moment:

**BOW BELLS.**

At the brink of a murmuring brook,
A contemplative Cockney reclined;
And his face wore a sad sort of look,
As if care were at work on his mind.
He sighed now and then, as we sigh,
When the heart in soft sentiment swells;
And a tear came and moistened each eye,
As he mournfully thought of Bow Bells.

I am monarch of all I survey
(Thus he vented his feelings in words),
But my kingdom, it grieves me to say,
Is inhabited chiefly by birds.
In this brook that flows lazily by,
I believe that one tittlebat dwells,
For I saw something jump at a fly,
As I lay here and longed for Bow Bells.

Yonder cattle are grazing, 'tis clear
From the bob of their heads up and down;
But I cannot love cattle down here,
As I should if I met them in town.
Poets say that each pastoral breeze
Bears a melody laden with spells;
But I don't find the music in these,
That I find in the tone of Bow Bells.

I am partial to trees as a rule,
And the rose is a beautiful flower
(Yes, I once read a ballad at school,
Of a rose that was washed in a shower);
But although I may dote on the rose,
I can scarcely believe that it smells
Quite so sweet in the bed where it grows,
As when sold within sound of Bow Bells.

No, I've tried it in vain once or twice,
And I've thoroughly made up my mind,
That the country is all very nice,
But I'd much rather mix with my kind.
Yes; to-day, if I meet with a train,
I will fly from these hills and these dells;
And to-night I will sleep once again
(Happy thought!) within sound of Bow Bells.
EYE-OPENERS.
Our concluding phase of Fun was to bear the title of "Eye-openers;" an expression which has been perhaps too exclusively applied to Yankee humour only. There is a good deal in the way of this same eye-opening going on in England too; so much, in fact, as to fill us with dismay as we contemplate the rich stores available, while we regret that we have no third volume available to devote to the exuberant subject of Recent Fun and Contemporary Eye-openers.

Perhaps it would be difficult to describe humour better than by terming it, in Foote's words, "clever nonsense," and the ideal of clever nonsense was never more successfully attained than in a little volume called "Songs of Singularity,"
from which the following sweet poem is an extract:

**BY THE GLAD SEA-WAVES.**

He stood on his head on the wild sea-shore,
And joy was the cause of his act;
For he felt as he never had felt before,
   Insanely glad, in fact.
And why? In that vessel that left the bay,
   His mother-in-law had sail'd
To a tropical country far away,
   Where tigers and snakes prevail'd.
And more than one of his creditors too—
   Those objects of constant dread—
Had taken berths in that ship *Curlew*,
   Whose sails were so blithely spread.
Ah! now he might hope for a quiet life,
   Which he never had known as yet:
'Tis true that he still possessed a wife,
   And was not quite out of debt.
But he watched this vessel, this singular chap,
   O'er the waves as she up'd and down'd;
And he felt exactly like Louis Nap,
   When "the edifice was crown'd."
Till over the blue horizon's edge
   She disappear'd from view;
Then up he leapt on a chalky ledge,
   And danced like a kangaroo.
And many and many a joy some lay
   He peal'd o'er the sunset sea,
Till down with a "fizz" went the orb of day,
   And then he went home to tea.
EYE-OPENERS.

But though we may object to anything in the shape of an American monopoly in this respect, it is still quite certain that we must cross the Atlantic to realise perfection in the art of eye-opening, and so, perhaps, to attain the closest approximation to our ideal of harmless incongruity, which, for practical purposes, may stand synonymous with this same "clever nonsense." It would probably be difficult to surpass the quaint humour of this little picture of domestic life by the author of the "Biglow Papers":

THE COURTIN'.

BY LOWELL.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown,
An' pecked in thru the winder;
And there sat Huldy, all alone,
'ITH no one nigh to hinder.

Agin' the chimbley crooknecks hung,
An' in among 'em 'rusted
The old queen's arm, that gran'ther Young
Fetched back from Concord—busted.

The wannut logs shot sparkles out
Toward the poottiest—bless her!
An' leetle fires danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

The very room, 'cos she was in,
Looked warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full as rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin'.
She heerd a foot, and knowed it tu,
A-raspin’ on the scraper;
All ways to once her feelin’s flew,
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin’ o’ litered on the mat,
Some doubtful of the seekle;
His heart kept goin’ pitty-pat,
But hern went pity Zekle!

An’ yet she gin her cheek a jerk
Ez tho’ she wished him furder,
An’ on her apples kep’ to work
Ez ef a wager spurred her.

"You want to see my pa, I s’pose?"
"Wal, no; I cum designin’—"
"To see my ma! She’s sprinklin’ clo’es
Agin to-morrow’s i’nin’!"

He stood a spell on one fut fust,
Then stood a spell on t’other;
An’ on which one he felt the wust
He couldn’t ha’ told you nuther.

He was six foot o’ man A 1,
Clean grit an’ human natur’;
None couldn’t quicker pitch a ton,
Nor dror a furrer straiter.

He’d sparkled with full twenty girls;
He’d squired ’em, danced ’em, druv’ ’em,
Fust this one and then that by spells;
All is—he couldn’t love ’em.

But ’long o’ her his veins would run,
All crinkly, like curled maple;
The side she breshed felt full o’ sun
Ez a South Side in Ap’l.
She thought no voice had such a swing
   Ez his'n in the choir—
My! when he made Ole Hundred ring
   She knew the Lord was nigher.

Sez he, “I'd better call ag'in."
   Sez she, “Think likely, mister.”
The last word pricked him like a pin,
   An’—wal, he up and kist her!

When ma bimeby upon ’em slips
Huldy sot pale as ashes,
All kind o' smily roun' the lips,
   An’ teary roun' the lashes.

Her blood riz quick, though, like the tide
   Down to the Bay of Fundy,
An’ all I know is they wuz cried
   In meetin’, come nex’ Sunday.

The model of the “Hans Breitmann Ballads” was, probably, the “Biglow Papers.” Charles G. Leland, the author, is a much-travelled Yankee, who has translated a good deal from the German, and caught the style severely. The hero is said to have been a German trooper in the Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry.

BALLAD OF THE MERMAID.

BY HANS BREITMANN.

Der noble Ritter Hugo
Von Schwillensaufenstein
Rode out mit shpeer und helmet,
   Und he coom to de panks of de Rhine.
Und oop dere rose a meer-maid,  
   Vot hadn't got nodings on,  
Und she says, "Oh Ritter Hugo,  
   Where you goes mit yourself alone?"

Und he says, "I rides in de greenwood,  
   Mit helmet und mit shpeer,  
Till I gooms into ein Gasthaus,  
   Und dere I trinks some peer."

Und den outsphoke de maiden  
   Vot hadn't got nodings on,  
"I don't dink mooch of beoplesh  
Dat goes mit demselves alone.

"You'd petter coom down in de wasser,  
   Where dere's heaps of dings to see,  
Und haf a shplendid tinner  
   Und drafel along mit me.

"Dere you sees de fisch a-schwimmin',  
   Und you catches dem eferyone."
So sang dis wasser maiden  
   Vot hadn't got nodings on.

"Dere ish drunks all full mit money  
In ships dat vent down of old;  
Und you helpsh yourself, by doonder!  
   To shimmerin' crowns of gold.

"Shooost look at dese shpoons und vatches!  
Shooost see dese diamant rings!  
Coom down and fill your bockets,  
   Und I'll giss you eferydings.

"Vot you wantsh mit your schnaps und lager?  
Coom down into der Rhine!  
Der 'ish pottles der Kaiser Charlemagne  
   Vonce filled mit gold-red wine!"
Dat fetched him—he shtood all shpell-pound!
She pooled his coat-tails down,
She drawed him oonder der wasser,
De maiden mit nodings on.

With a final bonne bouche from the varied dainties presented to us by our American cousins, we conclude this “thing of shreds and patches,” our disquisition on “Fun, Ancient and Modern.” The legend of “The Good Little Boy,” which follows, has been only very slightly altered by the present author for public reading, in deference to some easily intelligible English prejudices. He offers every apology for tampering with so perfect a work of art:

THE STORY OF THE GOOD LITTLE BOY WHO DID NOT PROSPER.

BY MARK TWAIN.

Once there was a good little boy by the name of Jacob Blivens. He always obeyed his parents, no matter how absurd and unreasonable their demands were; and he always learned his book, and never was late at school. He would not play hookey, even when his sober judgment told him it was the most profitable thing he could do. None of the other boys could ever make that boy out, he acted so strangely. He wouldn’t lie, no matter how convenient it was. He just said it was wrong to lie, and that was sufficient for him; and he was so honest that he was simply ridiculous. The curious ways that Jacob had surpassed everything. He wouldn’t play marbles on Sunday; he wouldn’t rob birds’-nests; he wouldn’t give hot pennies to organ-grinders’ monkeys; he didn’t seem to take any interest in any rational amusement. So the other boys used to try to reason it out, and
come to an understanding of him; but they couldn’t arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. As I said before, they could only figure out a sort of vague idea that he was “afflicted;” and so they took him under their protection, and never allowed any harm to come to him. This good little boy read all the improving books; they were his greatest delight. This was the secret of it. He believed in all the good little boys they put in the improving books; he had every confidence in them; he longed to come across one of them alive once, but he never did; they all died before his time may be. Whenever he read about a particularly good one he turned over quickly to the end to see what became of him, because he wanted to travel thousands of miles and gaze on him. But it wasn’t any use. That good little boy always died in the last chapter; and there was a picture of the funeral, with all his relations and the Sunday-school children standing round the grave, in pantaloons that were too short and bonnets that were too large; and everybody crying into handkerchiefs that had as much as a yard and a half of stuff in them. He was always headed off in this way. He never could see one of those good little boys on account of his always dying in the last chapter.

Jacob had a noble ambition to be put in an improving book. He wanted to be put in with pictures, representing him standing on the doorstep giving a penny to a poor beggar woman with six children, and telling her to spend it freely, but not to be extravagant; and pictures of him magnanimously refusing to tell on the bad boy who always lay in wait for him round the corner and welted him over the head with a lath. That was the ambition of Jacob Blyens. It made him feel uncomfortable sometimes when he reflected that the good little boys always died. He knew it was not healthy to be so good. He knew that it was more fatal than consumption to be so supernaturally virtuous as the boys in the books were. He knew that none of them had ever been able to stand it long; and it pained him to think that if they put him in a book he wouldn’t ever see it; or even if they did get the book out before he died, it wouldn’t be popular without a picture of his funeral at the end. It couldn’t be much of an improving book that didn’t tell about the advice he gave to the community when he was dying. So, at last, he had
to make up his mind to do the best he could under the circum-
stances—to live right, and hang on as long as he could, and have
his dying speech all ready when his time came.

But somehow nothing ever went right with this good little
boy. Nothing ever turned out with him the way it turned out
with the good little boys in the books. They always had a good
time, and the bad boys had the broken legs. But in his case
there was a screw loose somewhere, and it all went the other
way. When he found Jim Blake stealing apples, and went under
the tree to read to him about the bad little boy who fell out of a
neighbour’s apple-tree and broke his arm, Jim fell out of the tree
too, but he fell on Jacob and hurt him, and broke his arm, and
Jim wasn’t hurt at all. Jacob couldn’t understand that. There
wasn’t anything in the books like it.

One thing that Jacob wanted to do was to find a lame dog that
hadn’t any place to stay, and was hungry and persecuted, and
bring him home and pet him, and have that dog’s imperishable
gratitude. At last he found one and was happy. He brought
him home and fed him; but when he was going to pet him, the
dog flew at him and tore all the clothes off him except those that
were in front, and made a spectacle of him that was quite
astonishing. He examined authorities, but could not understand
the matter. It was the same breed of dogs that was in the books,
but it acted very differently. Whatever this boy did he got into
trouble. The very things the boys in the books got rewarded for
turned out to be about the most unprofitable things he could
invest in.

He was a little discouraged, but he resolved to keep on trying,
anyhow. He knew that so far his experiences wouldn’t do to go
in a book; but he hadn’t yet reached the allotted term of life for
good little boys, and he hoped to be able to make a record yet, if
he could only hold on until his time was fully up. If everything
else failed, he had his dying speech to fall back on.

This boy always had a hard time of it; nothing ever came out
according to the authorities with him. At last one day, when he
was around hunting up bad little boys to admonish, he found a
lot of them in an old iron foundry, fixing up a little joke on
fourteen or fifteen dogs, which they had tied together in long
procession, with empty nitro-glycerine cans made fast to their tails. Jacob's heart was touched! He sat down on one of those cans (for he never minded grease when duty was before him), and he took hold of the foremost dog by the collar, and turned his reproving eye on wicked Tom Jones. Just at that moment Alderman McWelter stepped in full of wrath. All the bad boys ran away. Jacob remained in conscious innocence. The alderman took him by the ear, turned him round, and hit him a whack in the rear with the flat of his hand; and in an instant that good little boy shot out through the roof, and soared away towards the sun, with the fragments of the fifteen dogs stringing after him like the tail of a kite. And there wasn't a sign of that alderman or that old iron foundry left on the face of the earth. As for Jacob Blivens, he never got a chance to make his last dying speech, unless he made it to the birds; because, although the bulk of him came down all right on a tree-top in an adjoining county, the rest of him was apportioned around among four townships, and so they had to hold five inquests on him. You never saw a boy scattered so.

Thus perished the good little boy who did the best he could, but didn't come out according to the books. Every boy who ever did as he did prospered except him. His case is truly remarkable. It will probably never be accounted for.

Our task is done. If the present writer's position in these volumes seems to resolve itself into that of the mere showman, he can honestly assure his readers that such a circumstance has resulted from no want of industry on his part. It would have been easier far for him to have concocted a long disquisition on his subject, than it has been to select from so wide and varied a field of literature extracts which, in his judgment, appeared worthy to stand as representatives of the different
stages in our definition. But besides being somewhat of an impertinence for him to tell his readers his ideas of the subject, or to prescribe to them what they were to laugh at and why, it would have been a violation of the method laid down in limine if he had done otherwise than, as it were, empanel his readers as a jury to test the truth of the definitions submitted to them. He is but a very humble advocate, laying before them his view of the case, for them to adopt or reject on their own judgment. He has said that Fun consists in harmless incongruity; but he has not defined Fun; nor does he believe it can be defined any more than the beauty of a rose or the flavour of a peach. It is above the logician's art, and all he can do is to grapple with it as long as it is in his province, and where it transcends that, quietly to confess the fact, and leave it in nubibus.

He hopes, however, that his brief disquisition has not entirely lacked utility. He feels sure that it has not altogether lacked interest, though of a light kind; and that not from any merit in his treatment, but from its having brought his readers (by his instrumentality, if we will) into the company of those merry souls who, had they done nothing else in their day and generation, have left
us pleasant legacies to beguile the often dull routine of life.

A London clergyman wrote to the author in these very pertinent words. He said: “I had a very practical proof of the efficacy of such subjects in promoting good feeling which it may not be out of place to mention. It was once my lot to preach to the troops at one of our metropolitan barracks; and although it was a sine qua non that the whole service and sermon should be got into an hour, and though I honestly tried to speak in a way to interest the men, I used constantly to find my gallant grenadiers falling asleep, or opening their capacious jaws in a yawn, and gazing up at the clock. But one evening I lectured to them on Tom Hood—told them, in simple words, the story of his chequered life—read them that ‘Song of the Shirt’ which endeared him so to the poor, and then some of his humorous pieces. It was the ‘one touch of nature’ which ‘makes the whole world kin.’ They found I had some tastes in common with them—that I was not always preaching, reading, or writing sermons; and I assure you I found them far more attentive at church ever afterwards.”

If the author has succeeded at all in impressing
upon his readers the importance of the harmless element in genuine fun, he will not have preached his secular sermon altogether in vain. He believes in fun—real, honest, harmless fun. The sources of laughter and tears lie much nearer together than is always supposed; and the old synonym of wit and wisdom is full of truth and of happiest suggestion. "Man," says Hazlitt, "is the only animal that laughs and weeps; for he is the only animal that is struck with the difference between what things are and what things ought to be." One could easily merge from pleasantry into pathos if he followed out that idea; but, at all events, let us claim some little method for our madness—the temporary insanity is over now.

Beyond such a purpose of being what Mr. Theodore Martin, in his translation of Horace, terms "somewhat insane," there has been no conscious effort in this work. No doubt critics will say that, in this respect, success has been perfectly attained. It is without the slightest idea of deprecating criticism, fair or unfair, that he applies to himself words written by Ralph Waldo Emerson. He says—and so, by way of tag, says the writer of these volumes:

"It strikes me very oddly that good and wise men at Cambridge and Boston should think of
raising me into an object of criticism. I have always been, from my very incapacity of methodical writing, a 'chartered libertine,' free to worship and free to rail; lucky when I could make myself understood, but never esteemed near enough to the institutions and mind of society to deserve the notice of the masters of literature and religion. I have appreciated fully the advantages of my position; for I well know that there is no scholar less willing or less able to be a polemic. I could not give an account of myself if challenged. I could not possibly give you one of the 'arguments' on which any doctrine of mine stands; for I do not know what arguments mean in reference to any expression of a thought. I delight in telling what I think; but if you ask me how I dare say so, or why it is so, I am the most helpless of mortal men. . . . I shall go on just as before, seeing whatever I can and telling what I see.'

FINIS.
FUN,
ANCIENT AND MODERN.