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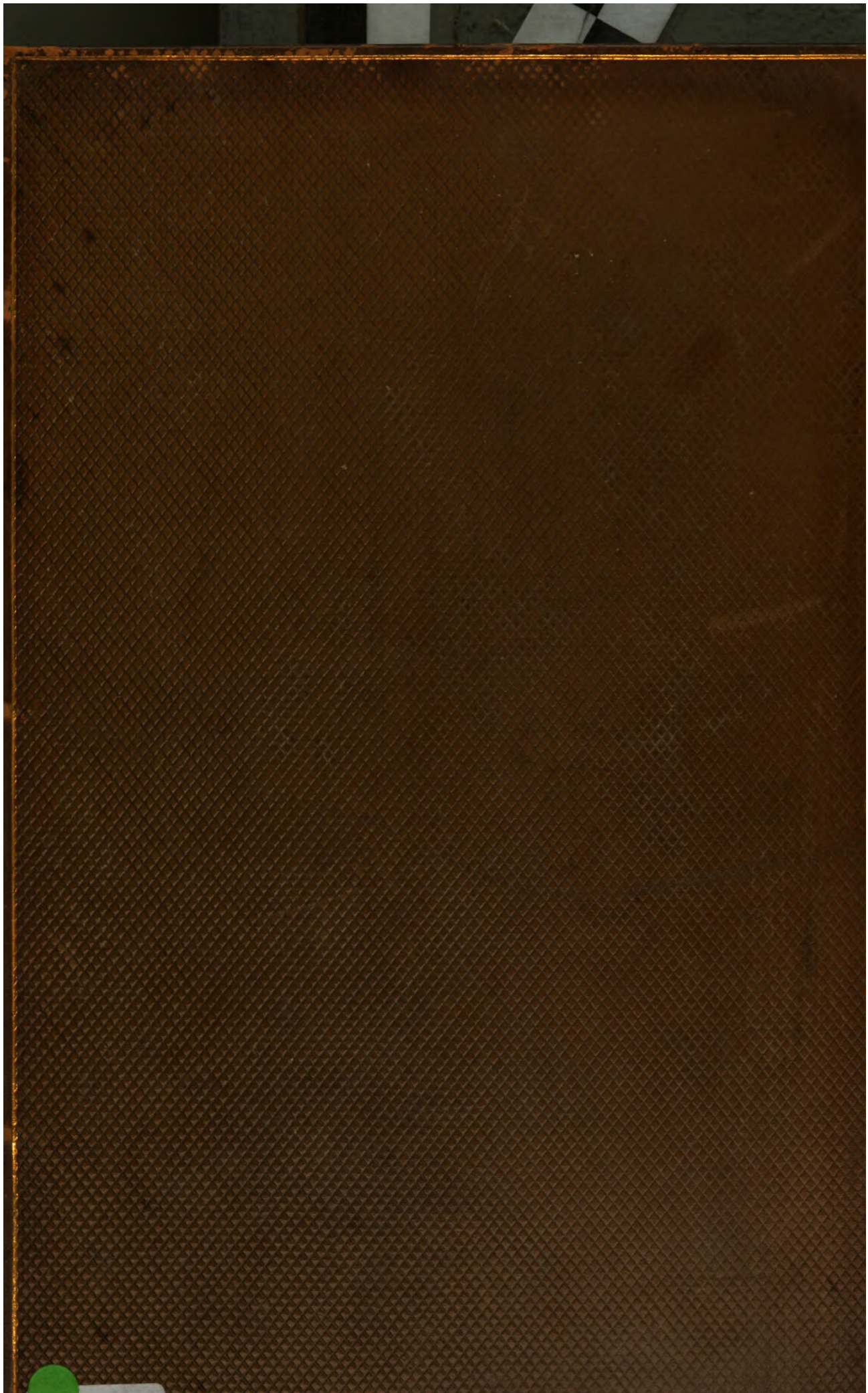
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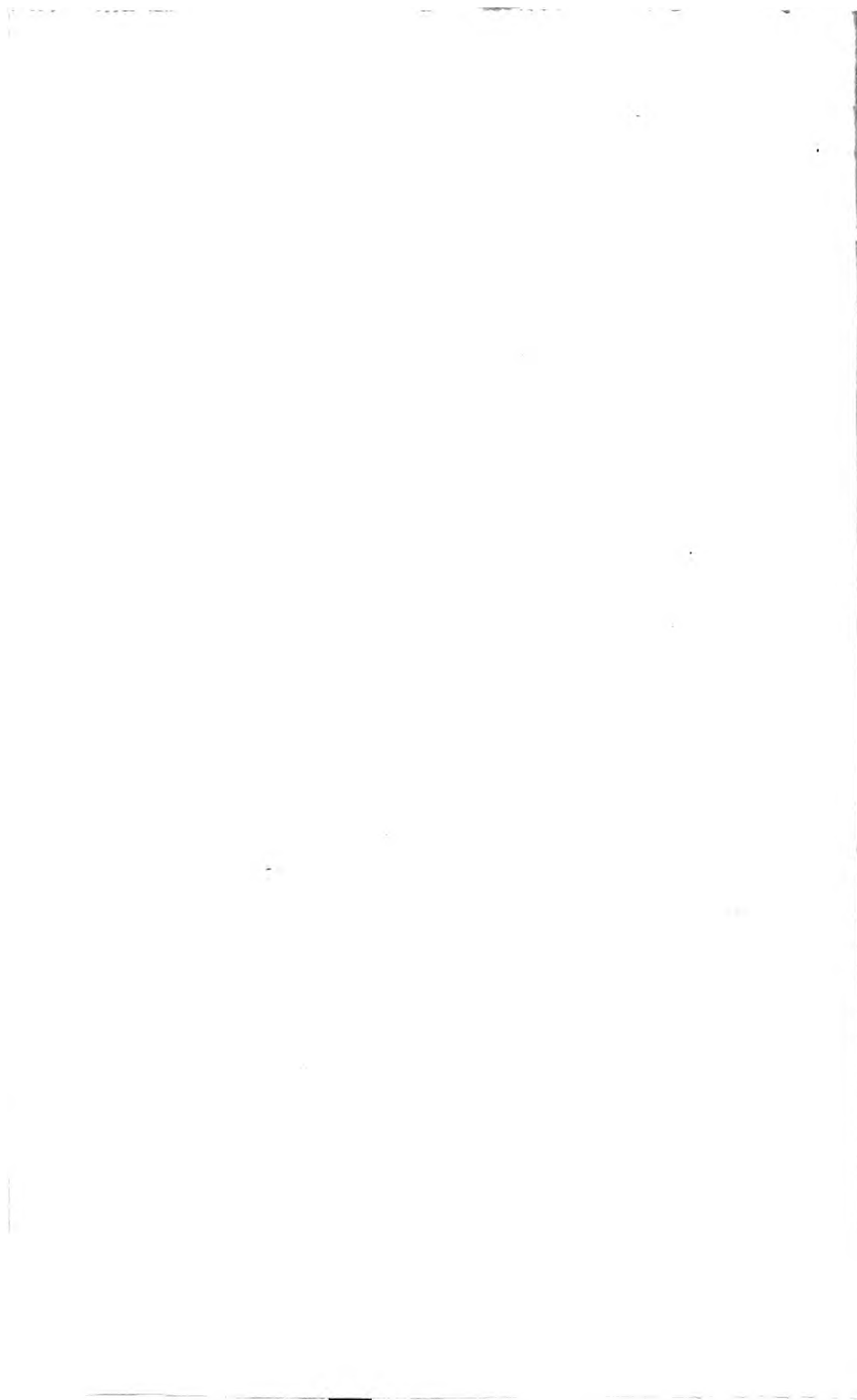




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THE . PICTURE :

A NOSEGAY

FOR

AMATEURS—PAINTERS—PICTURE-DEALERS—PICTURE-
CLEANERS—LINERS—REPAIRERS—AND
ALL THE CRAFT :

BEING

The Autobiography

OF

A HOLY FAMILY, BY RAPHAEL,

FAITHFULLY WRITTEN FROM

ACTUAL DICTATION OF THE PICTURE ITSELF.

BY

GH



~~~~~  
" Let the galled jade wince—our withers are unwrung."—SHAKESPEARE.  
~~~~~

LONDON :

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

AND SOLD BY

HATCHARD & SON, PICCADILLY.

—————
M.DCCC.XXXVII.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY JAMES MOYES, CASTLE STREET,
LEICESTER SQUARE.

P R E F A C E.

WHEN first I was applied to by a Picture, for which I had the highest esteem, to assist in noting down the circumstances of its long and eventful career, I felt some hesitation lest, owing to former ill-treatment, it should be betrayed into expressions of violence that might not be altogether palatable to a portion of the community. Yet a little reflection convinced me that such was an unworthy, if not cowardly, motive for declining the invitation; and I stepped forward with proportionate alacrity in aid of injured innocence, and cheerfully entered upon the task required.

To shew that there was some ground for my first suspicion, I have only to relate what actually has occurred.

A Solomon of the print trade was selected lately to publish a set of Architectural Etchings; and solely because the name of our gracious Queen ADELAIDE appeared on a part of one of the plates, he demurred—nay, refused to do so; choosing, by mystification, to twist this trivial circumstance into an expression of disloyalty: and, in spite of every argument offered to correct his mistake, prevailed in having the startling letters erased, before he would consent to be the publisher. Thus, ignorance too frequently does maintain its ground against good sense!

The only intention in using the name of the august personage in question was, to mark the period in which she was a blessing to us.

My own justification will be very short. I am but an Amanuensis; and my Principal has been too long a sufferer in various ways to fear any further attack.

THE PICTURE,

§c. §c.

CHAPTER I.

I CAME into this world, not in the usual way of common mortals, being born of one parent only ; and his a mighty name among the illustrious, which obtained credit and honour during his own time ; and since that period has been pronounced with respect, and even veneration, throughout all civilised nations : increasing in renown as the day became distant when it first was heard.

It is usual in biography to find some account of the father ; and there are writers who have gone back to an earlier generation. Mine can only interest mankind through his living works. Why, then, should I fatigue you by a recital of the date and place of his birth, or where, and under whom he studied ? circumstances in themselves of little consequence, and

already known to those who have thought the inquiry useful.

In short, I am a *Picture* by the hand of “the divine *Raffaello Sanzio d’Urbino*.” I am old indeed, but moulded in so intellectual and fine a clay, that I can well remember every incident of my past life, and return, as if it were but yesterday, to that remote hour, when I was first presented to the gaze, and consigned to the guardianship, of an admiring world.

The progeny of my revered parent were so numerous, that it could not be expected we should long remain united under his own roof, and we were soon scattered over many districts and countries, and committed to various custody; for, notwithstanding the natural affection he bore us, he knew that a day of separation must arrive—that we were of a nature to endure much longer than himself; and sagely predicted, from the esteem we were calculated to inspire, we might at least expect kind treatment from strangers: besides, he foretold that by this expedient his own reputation would be extended to the most distant regions,—a very pardonable wish in so modest and great a man.

An important part of what the author of my being intended, has certainly been realised; but the sufferings that many of us have undergone

were never within his contemplation : and the only consolation we now feel, is in knowing that his fame is exalted beyond the reach of slander, and that he has been spared the pain of witnessing the barbarous inflictions and cruel degradation to which we have been subjected, since his departure from us.

My own history may furnish a sample, and afford a knowledge, of what has befallen the greater part of our race ; and since my memory fails me not in the most minute particular, I shall, without concealment, and with all fidelity, relate whatever I consider important towards the attainment of that object, beginning from my earliest infancy. I have a very reasonable wish, moreover, that by this exposure of our family calamity, I shall not merely stamp with infamy the authors of such unmerited and ignorant persecution, but invite (if not secure), for future generations, at once a wiser and gentler treatment.

When first I saw the light, there was a sense of superiority within me, which contrasted strangely with the lowliness of the apartment in which I found myself. Its decoration (if so it could be called) was of the humblest description ; and what was wanting in splendour, seemed to be compensated by confusion. In

one part, near the light, stood an easel, on which I had been placed ; the tables and other furniture were covered with books, that appeared to have been in continual use ; casts of figures, and fragments of plaster ; with numerous drawings and sketches, of every variety of execution, and embracing all objects, animate and inanimate, with colours, oils, and pencils. These were rather piled upon each other than disposed in symmetrical order, and the floor was covered in a similar manner. Neither did the walls exhibit a bare surface. In the midst of all this stood my beloved parent. His eye was earnestly directed towards me—I instantly recognised him, and thought I perceived a smile of satisfaction upon his countenance. He presently quitted me, however, to enter upon some new occupation, and I was, for the first time, left to my own reflections.

What usually engages the attention of ordinary mortals at a sober or late period of life, was my earliest consideration ; and I endeavoured to satisfy my mind as to how I had been produced, and to what end, and went so far as to speculate upon the probable term of my duration (for I knew that I was perishable in every part). Impressed as I was with my own excellence, and power of yielding pleasure

to the most refined taste, and doubting thus early if I had any equals, yet was I sufficiently candid to allow that I owed every thing to my great originator, at whose magic touch I appeared, and felt a lively pleasure while he remained near me.

With this feeling of gratitude, strongly entertained, and though I have before declined entering into his history for the edification of others, yet was it natural that I should indulge in solitary reflections upon him : as one who is borne along a pleasant river may be led to consider its source.

It was evident to me, that he, from whom I had derived so much that was admirable, must have been originally gifted beyond the common mass of aspirants to fame—that he had diligently improved every hour of his short life, and variously enriched his mind by deep study of whatever was greatest in history (whether sacred or profane), poetry, or fable (and this opinion was strengthened by the worn condition of the books I have before mentioned), that he had looked through nature with a discriminating power, descending even to her minutest productions ; but with that delicacy of taste and skill of selection, which taught him to

reject every thing that was unworthy or mean. To these must have been added practical application without remission, and willingly bestowed. I conceive he must have been happy when he possessed the suffrages of the worthiest of mankind, and felt that he deserved them.

It will not be denied, that such a combination of powers in full activity, could but be productive of the most brilliant results. Such have, by this time, been universally admitted ; and without arrogating to myself any intrinsic merit, or giving way to the conceits commonly inseparable from small pretension, I may be permitted to feel exultation in being one of his offspring.

A quiet sense of excellence is surely not presumption. This failing will hardly by any be considered a characteristic of my nature ; all beholders must, on the contrary, remark my simplicity, and that I am of the most retiring constitution. It has, indeed, often pained me to observe others around, of far humbler pretensions, thrusting themselves forward, and even meeting with a kind reception, through their impudence. This, however, I was sure, must have arisen solely from the ignorance of those who favoured them, and it was reasonable that

my indignation, if I felt any, should be transferred to these injudicious individuals.* There would be none to practise deception, if men could not be found possessed of credulity.

After this declaration of modesty, I feel some reluctance to enter upon a description of myself; yet it must be done, in order to obviate any misconception, and I will hope for this favourable construction of my intention.

Whoever look'd upon me, saw at once
 A landscape of such beauty, as no land
 Save Italy could shew. The blue above
 Melted by sweet gradation into light.
 Mountain was seen afar: the middle ground
 In undulation swell'd; disclosing oft
 Water, reflecting clear its wood-clad bounds.
 The spire shot up; and nearer, graceful trees
 Gave shade. Upon a bank in front,
 (Luxuriant with herbage and fair flow'rs,)

* Further evil may hence be traced. The prescriptive confidence, accorded to a certain class, is attended with some temptation. Since the standard of excellence is deeply hidden, and not to be made manifest like a problem of Euclid, an opportunity arises (and is in too frequent operation) for the perversion of knowledge to mercenary purposes. The *author* of a picture is a constant subject of dispute; and one of those uncertainties never satisfactorily settled.

Even a practitioner of the Art may be found willing to propagate error through interest, disappointment, or, possibly, confined views.—AMANUENSIS.

The Virgin sat : with anxious eye cast down.
While beautiful, as pure! in modest robe
Twin-colour'd, deck'd. The child upon her lap
Was all a child ; yet with a heav'nly face.
The young St. John, though playful, shewed respect :
St. Joseph stood apart and watch'd the rest.

CHAPTER II.

MY abstraction from every thing but my own thoughts had continued for several days, and I began to find myself involved in a confusion of ideas,—when, as the sun approached the meridian one morning, I heard an unusual bustle at the door of the apartment. Presently it was opened, and a Cardinal entered, attended by one or two others, and walking slowly across the room, they placed themselves before me. It was a satisfaction to perceive that *Raffaello* himself was present; for by this circumstance, I was greatly relieved from the apprehension I should otherwise have felt, in being suddenly brought into so strange a presence. It appeared afterwards that this was a high dignitary of the Romish Church, and that his office was held in great respect; which was evident from the attentions he received from those about him.

The Cardinal maintained great gravity, and his robes were of richer material and different

fashion to any I had before seen. A variety of circumstances denoted that he was of a much higher order than either of his companions, which should have insured from him greater politeness; so that I confess I was greatly surprised he should join them in staring at me incessantly, which at that time I could only consider an extraordinary rudeness. In short, he stood foremost of the party, and practised this the most pertinaciously of the whole.

Much conversation from time to time took place, the purport of which I could not understand; but from the gestures by which it was attended, it was easy to guess it was occasioned by some difference of opinion; and at its close, I perceived that a number of pieces of yellow-coloured metal, which I soon learned were denominated money, were counted from a silk purse, and placed upon the table. It was to arrive at the just number of these that so long a discussion had been carried on.

When ended, I distinctly heard some order given, which appeared to have reference to me; and parties being satisfied, the strangers quitted the room, leaving me again to solitude. The interview had so deranged me, that I could not soon recover my self-possession, but remained agitated during the remainder of the day; and

night stole into the chamber without my being conscious of it. At these moments we do not exactly sleep, but only become invisible.

The morning dawned, and I was early accosted by a person who measured my body very accurately, both height and breadth. It was far beyond me to discover for what purpose: however, in a very few days the elucidation appeared, and I found myself compassed about by a bordering of gilt wood, cut into singular devices of by no means inelegant design, and firmly secured within it by nails behind, intended no doubt to prevent any intention of escape. This precaution need not have been very rigidly observed, for I was convinced of the safety it afforded me, and was even satisfied, from the reflection I saw in a mirror opposite, that it improved my personal appearance.

No sooner was this ceremony accomplished, and I felt the comfort of being, as it were, in a house of my own, where I should be more free from intrusion of any sort, and might ruminate without molestation, than I was approached by two athletic men of shabby appearance, who abruptly lifted me from the ground, and carrying me down the stair upon their shoulders, brought me into the street. For a few seconds they rested on the lower step of the door-way,

during which I heard *Raffaello* pronounce a strict charge that they would use every caution with me. I then little thought it was the last time I should behold him, or I must have expired with grief; and at the same time my mind was too much harassed by the recollection of late events to permit an expression of concern for what I considered a temporary separation.

When the door closed, I was placed on a carriage that had been provided, and moved slowly along. As my face was upwards, the rays of the sun darted upon me with a force that was almost intolerable; though the inconvenience of this exposure might have been in some degree mitigated, by a glutinous fluid which some days previously had been spread over the whole surface of my body, and gave me a shining appearance. My annoyance was not confined to the sun alone; for, although we moved but at a foot pace, the roughness of the pavement caused me to tremble at every nerve, threatening my speedy dissolution. My only hope lay in the probable shortness of the journey.

It makes me smile when I now consider how much importance I attached to this trifling incident, when compared with the sad vicis-

situdes and tedious journeyings I afterwards underwent, as will hereafter appear.

We presently arrived at the palace of the Cardinal: he was at home to receive me; and, by his direction, I was carried into a handsome gallery above, and hung in a lofty position in the centre of one of its sides. This gallery led to a noble saloon in which his Excellency usually sat. Its decoration was splendid, and I perceived that the richness and glitter of my border only accorded with every thing about it. One circumstance, I had afterwards occasion to remark, which puzzled me exceedingly to account for; the place I occupied was directly opposite a large window, the light from which shone so powerfully upon me during the day, that my eyes were nearly destroyed by the blaze. After a time I could see nothing; and I foolishly judged, by a kind of analytical reasoning, that my beholders must be in the same predicament. This could surely not have been the case, or I was denying the discrimination of so learned and great a man as my new master, the Cardinal.

Those who have passed much time in the dwelling of one of these great churchmen, must be fully aware of the monotony which reigns throughout the establishment. One day passes

so like another, that scarcely a novelty can be found worthy of being recorded. I was favourably situated for knowing whatever transpired in the mansion, since no one could obtain an audience within, without passing before me; but all strangers entered alike with solemnity and state, and retired in the same order; and it was a very rare occurrence that one among the visitors condescended to observe me.

There were indeed, at particular seasons, persons who came in shoals into the palace, and apparently for the express purpose of gazing at me, and those by whom I was surrounded; but they were evidently from foreign countries, and talked in so unintelligible a jargon, that it was impossible to reduce what they said to reason. It cannot then be wondered at, that I have forgotten the very sound of their voices.

The Cardinal himself, after the first injunction I heard given, "that great care was to be used towards me," paid me no sort of attention. It might have proceeded from pride, or indifference, or a total ignorance of my character, which hitherto had not been generally applauded;* but there were, even in these

* This expression may have fallen from the Picture in

early days, some among his retainers, who never passed along the gallery without shewing a marked devotion to me. They always approached making the sign of the Cross, would kneel on the ground before me for a short or longer period, and I observed their lips were in constant motion; but, as they uttered nothing aloud, my penetration did not extend far enough to convince me of the reasonableness of their purpose, or why I was singled out in particular for this homage. It was at least agreeable to me to notice their civility, after the ruder salutes I had met with before from my porters.

I had learnt that all good and evil are judged of by comparison, but conceived that the rule was sometimes carried too far, or misapplied; for I have since more than once had occasion to remark, that, notwithstanding my high birth and quality, I have been totally dis-

mere simplicity of narration; at the same time, it does admit of a very pointed application. But few genuine opinions are to be obtained on any subject, and perhaps fewest of all upon this. People too commonly pass judgment upon works of art by help of the wrong sense—shutting their eyes, and opening wide their ears. The *vox populi*, it is known, will be triumphant, and therefore may very safely be adopted.—AMANUENSIS.

regarded, merely because one of my brethren was beside me, who enjoyed higher favour. The justice of this is not very apparent, yet it can no doubt be explained by the wisdom of those who make it the ground of their decision and conduct.

I had always been taught to consider that the points of recommendation in a picture or statue were fixed and inherent, and not conventional. That their foundation would surely be discovered in the great principles of nature; but, instead of expecting a literal transcript of her works, I was to look for the heightening of a poetical imagination. This would render them liable to be mistaken by the commonalty; but it is not likely that I should have been misled, since I proceeded from a very learned school.

By this time, I began to weary of a life passed without change and almost in total silence and seclusion. I felt myself a prisoner; suffering severe punishment without having offended. No criticism ever arose as to my merit or defects. I could have borne positive censure, whether deserved or not, better than neglect; but this relief was denied me: and I was doomed to look still on the few who came to worship at my feet, without other variety.

My temper was so soured, that these I began to hate for their senseless servility.

At this critical juncture, and after several years passed in the manner described, a fortunate event occurred,—the Cardinal died. There may have been some who lamented the circumstance, but by me the news was received with unmixed pleasure. It is true I had received no harsh treatment from him, yet it opened to me a prospect of something new.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER the ceremony of the funeral was ended, and which was attended with great pomp, and occasioned more confusion in the palace than had been witnessed in my time, it was taken possession of, and entered upon, by a relative of the cardinal, but not of the same profession. He was a layman, bearing some title, and brought with him a wife and numerous train of children. I had observed women, and children also, pass through the gallery occasionally, from the time of my first arrival; but was positively assured that the cardinal had no possession in them, which I was glad to learn, since I found it was considered dishonourable, and even a high offence, in one of his degree, to be so surrounded.

The young noble whose property I now was, in common with all the valuables and

furniture, had been living in great extravagance, and incurred heavy debts, in which he had been encouraged by the prospect of his relation's death, and by which event he would succeed to considerable possessions ; but so deeply was he involved, that his newly acquired wealth was insufficient to carry on his former wasteful expenditure ; and, after a few months of riot and licentious mirth within the palace, at which I was often grievously ashamed, it was determined that every thing should be sold. An auction soon followed ; and I was thus released from what I had long considered "splendid misery."

It happened that I was the first lot offered to public competition ; whether from accident, or as a mark of superiority, I never could learn. The contest to obtain possession of me was very severe, and lasted a considerable time ; during which the seller enlarged upon my merits and identity in such a strain of fulsome compliment, occasionally repeating the same, as made me blush, and would infallibly have turned the head of one of less solid merit. Why he should have enforced the last-named quality with so much zeal and argument, it is difficult to guess, and might reasonably have been omitted, since I was

present before the whole company to speak for myself.

There was much discussion during the sale, as to whether I had received any injury since I came from the hand of the painter. It brought to my recollection the shock my nerves experienced from the jolting of the stones, in the transit from his house; and I could have said a good deal upon it, but I kept my own counsel. At length I was knocked down (it has a harsh sound, but is merely figurative), and fell to the possession of a merchant of Genoa. He paid a high price for me, and I was rejoiced at it; not from any foolish vanity, but that I thought it would ensure me his protection.

My new master did not appear to have a very clear understanding of me, nor am I aware that I afforded him much enjoyment. It may be, that he was partly influenced by ostentation in making the acquisition, which was not less common at that period than at present. However, his command of money overcame all opposition; and, in spite of many regrets expressed that I should be suffered to quit my native city, he made me his own. His object in visiting Rome had been to witness the festivities of Easter, possibly connected

with some mercantile speculation ; and these being ended, he began to think of his departure for the Genoese republic.

Whatever the real motives might have been, which first induced the merchant to notice, and finally purchase me, one thing was certain—that he had parted with a large sum to obtain the gratification ; and he was, as well, of a fraternity who are not insensible to the difficulties which attend the acquirement of wealth. Thus, it very naturally followed that he should express much anxiety as to my safe transport. Orders were accordingly given to the principal carpenter of the place ; and, two days afterwards, the ceremony took place of encasing me for travel. Had the merchant exercised a little judgment, and assisted at this critical operation, much after vexation might have been avoided ; but he was a novice in such matters, and trusted every thing to the heavy hand of the workman.

The first object of attention was my frame, which had as yet received no fracture, though its original lustre was somewhat impaired ; and this part of the labour was skilfully performed. But how was my convenience attended to ? A large pad was formed by stuffing a

coarse linen bag with wool, which was firmly fixed in the centre of the lid within; so that when it was placed upon the box, it pressed with great violence upon me, in order, as I heard the good man say, to keep me quiet. I believe I exclaimed at this barbarity, but was unheeded, and the nails were immediately hammered in all round. The sense of suffocation was at first extreme. That might, however, have been patiently borne, had it not been for the pressure of the pad, which came directly upon my face, and flattened my features.

I was soon left in a chamber to myself, in which I remained nearly a week, without hearing a sound of any kind, except the bell of St. Peter's, which fell distinctly upon my ear, and could not be far off. This period was favourable to thought; and I indulged in a review of the past, though it led to melancholy feelings. Raphael was long since dead; so likewise the cardinal, from whom, though I could not admire his haughty behaviour, I had received no positive injury. I was now in the hands of a fourth guardian, and might be transmitted through hundreds, without any security of their worthiness for the charge. My chance of mere existence appeared great,

but I sighed for some assurance that I should escape mutilation.

At length, the carriage came to the door that was to convey the merchant from Rome. He took his seat, as well as his attendants; but there was not space for me to share the inside with him. I was accordingly attached by cords to the hinder part, in which situation I was deprived of the advantage of springs. We pursued the road to Florence, by way of Perugia; and, while in this town, where we passed a day, it would have been a source of great delight to me to visit some of the first-born of our family, and likewise others of the name of Perugino, with whom we were nearly connected; but I could not escape from my bondage, and this gratification was prevented.

Florence was reached in time, and afterwards Genoa. The journey had been long and tedious, over roads sometimes mountainous, and always rough and bad. I was convinced my constitution had been much shattered by it; so that, when we at last drove up to the merchant's residence, if I were in too weak a condition to shew great signs of pleasure, I, at least, felt a respite from acute suffering, and longed once again to meet the light and breathe the fresh air. However, the time

of my release was not so near as I had thought probable.

The merchant, fatigued with his long journey, retired to rest ; the servants moved off in different directions ; and I was deposited in my narrow cell against the wall ⁱⁿ ~~and~~ the marble hall of entrance.

While in this situation, I continually heard footsteps passing to and fro, but was not noticed by any body ; till a day of leisure arrived, when it was resolved I should be taken from my prison, and undergo an examination. Several persons had been invited to pass judgment upon me ; but whether there were of the medical faculty among them, or not, had not been stated, though I secretly hoped it might be so.

When I was taken out, and placed near the light, I observed consternation in every countenance before me. The merchant, in particular, appeared lost in grief. The pad, which had given me so much uneasiness during my journey, it was now seen ought never to have been placed there. The friction had been incessant from the moment of starting ; and one or two loose nails, which were carelessly left in the case, had danced upon me from first to last. The result of all this was, that both of my cheeks had been deprived of

their colour, one eye was nearly obliterated, and scars and scratches, from the infliction of the iron, were to be observed every where. Many expressions of pity passed from mouth to mouth, but I was still the victim. What was to be done? This is a question that generally comes too late. At length, one of the party, who, it appeared, was a doctor to our species, suggested his ability to restore me, and I was accordingly moved to his shop.

He spoke of me in very flattering terms, shewed me to his friends with exultation, and predicted a speedy cure. In a short space he had performed his promise, by putting in a new eye for the one that had perished, restoring the lost carnation, after applying a thick coating to receive it, and plastering the numerous minor wounds most dexterously. To make his work complete, he freshened up every portion of the surface by a cunning artifice of his own; so that, when I was restored to my proprietor, he was enchanted at my recovery, and dismissed the artist with a liberal present. For my own part, I lost herein much of my former self-complacency.

I was now advanced to the principal drawing-room of the mansion, and occupied a distinguished place in it. For many weeks, visitors

were continually arriving expressly to pay their respects to me; and, what is very unaccountable, though I still smarted under the ⁱⁿafflictions I had undergone, not one of the number ever discovered that I had been indisposed, or indebted to the good doctor of the town. The general exclamation was, "*Raffaello il Divino!*"

The first time I heard this expression it filled me with delight; it appeared to indicate that my seductive qualities could penetrate even the disguise I wore. However, the words were too frequently repeated to prevent my discovering them to be mere empty sounds—a listless exclamation, by way of saying something. I was sometimes amused by listening to the parrot in the corridor, which spoke with equal fluency and equal sentiment.

All things considered, I had every reason to be well satisfied with my present situation. I saw sufficient company at all times to prevent dulness, and received great attention from the master of the house, as well as his fair daughter. This accomplished young lady did me the honour to make a small copy of me on paper, to grace her *album*.* It continued

* Lest the use of the word album, in this place, should excite some surprise, it being well known to be of recent fashionable adoption, it may be as well to state, that the word

to be the talk of the whole city for months, and excited the greatest admiration : some of the most noted connoisseurs went so far as to declare, that, in point of delicacy and sweetness, the miniature even exceeded the original ; if it were deficient in force, that must be attributed to the difference of size alone ! Now this was, to say the least, a little provoking, particularly as it was often repeated before me without delicacy, and would, before I had seen so much of the world, have raised my highest indignation. As it was, I satisfied myself by recalling a story that had once been told in my presence. It described a person who determined upon self-destruction, but swallowed so large a dose of poison, that it failed to produce the effect intended, and only created great sickness at the time, and nausea for ever after.

The custode of the casa was my particular friend. He never conducted strangers through the saloon without singling me out for their first regard ; and every expression he used towards me, if now and then a little inapplicable, was in the highest degree complimentary. He was an old man, and would some-

used by the Picture had very much the same sound, and certainly in meaning was identical. — AMANUENSIS.

times, when the room was unoccupied by all besides, cross himself before me, then kneel, and remain in this posture for an hour at a time, with his eye fixed, and a slight motion of his lips, precisely after the manner I had witnessed formerly in the palace of the cardinal.

Among the acquaintances of the merchant was the first painter of Genoa. He had spent much time with me, and one day they entered the room together. A very long conversation was carried on between them, of which I was evidently the subject; and the day following, the painter brought with him an easel, colours, and pencils, and commenced making a copy of me of precisely the same size. It seemed to cost him much trouble; but, upon the whole, he succeeded tolerably well. My master was continually at his elbow, watching the progress. In the same year, he repeated this a second and a third time, and I noticed that great secrecy was observed, and no third person permitted to know what was going on. When the whole were complete, I was astonished to behold the painter studiously making cracks all over the surface of his work, disfiguring it exceedingly; and then, by some application, giving it a dirty and worn appearance, so that its bloom was destroyed, and the copies all

looked quite as old as myself. They knew what they were about, however. Shortly afterwards, these copies were despatched to different distant countries, and sold as originals at very high prices, and where they all maintain that character to the present day.*

I longed to discover the cheat, but, upon reflection, was as well pleased that the buyers should pay the penalty which their conceit had properly entailed upon them, when they meddled with things of which they had no knowledge.

About this period, the reigning pope, who had heard of me from the painters about his person, conceived a wish to place me in his palace of the Vatican, and despatched one of them, in whose judgment he placed great confidence, to treat with the merchant at Genoa. He was favourably received, not so much from the high station of his employer, as the interest which traders of every description feel in

* In process of time, one of these copies found its way to England, and was received into a collection of the first consequence. There were, among the discerning, some to whom its general merit was questionable : yet it had passed through the hands of a dealer of great repute, and was the possession of high rank ; two very important circumstances, and which did not fail to gain the public voice in favour of its authenticity. — AMANUENSIS.

whatever relates to pecuniary speculation. He was in ecstasy with me; and a bargain was nearly concluded, with every prospect to me of revisiting Rome, when a difference arose as to the fee to be paid to the agent for his favourable report, which could not be accommodated, and he departed as he came.

At his return, I was informed, he assured his holiness that I was but an indifferent copy, and that the original must have perished in its first journey some years before.

What an opening is here afforded to the moralist, for descanting on the depravity of the human heart! Yet I must be content with having mentioned the disgraceful fact.

CHAPTER IV.

THE time was fast approaching when I was to cross the Alps. If, as the ancient notion was, I was to encounter barbarians, I was, at least, leaving some dishonesty behind.

A German baron was at Genoa, whither he had come for the advantage of a milder air. He was an intimate acquaintance of my master, and spent much of his time with him. The lady, his only child and heiress, might have been some attraction; and he was aware, also, that her father was rich. Be this as it may, a good understanding existed between the young people, and eventually they were married. The baron did not, however, remove his bride from the paternal roof, and the three continued to reside together in great harmony.

The merchant was far advanced in years, and not many months had elapsed after this event, when he died. Thus I became the property of the baron, whose health being fully

established after the necessary delay in the south, he became anxious to return to his own country, and inhabit his castle on the Rhine.

A day was accordingly appointed, and a travelling carriage provided for the pair. They carried with them nothing of consequence, except two small pictures (which had been great favourites with my late master) and myself.

The journey over the Appenines and Alps, the route we pursued, was extremely dangerous, and at certain parts almost impracticable; yet I did not suffer so much from it as on a former occasion, in the conveyance from Rome. Experience had taught something, and the fatal pad was omitted. Indeed, in other respects, more common sense had been exercised in preparing me for the change of place. The inhabitants of trading cities have a good understanding, generally, of the arrangement of packages, to ensure their safe transport.

As nearly as I can recollect, we were four weeks upon the road,—a tedious period to be so immured and jolted, without even the relief of looking about one; but when we arrived at the baron's castle, and I was taken from my concealment, it was perceived I had undergone no material change. I could even have ad-

mired the beautiful scenery around me (for it deserved to be so called), displaying, as it did, mountain clad with vines, intermixed with rock, and a fine river flowing between: the castle itself was a venerable and picturesque object; but I missed the blue sky and genial temperature of Italy.*

The baron had no regard for me from my own particular attraction. He might have smiled upon me while his mistress was engaged in making her miniature copy, and I know he never quitted his post by her side. Indeed I had reason to be pleased with him, when fairly considered, for, when one has often been exposed to overt acts of violence from those on whom we naturally lean for protection, some gratitude is due

* Much stress has been laid on the advantages of climate in the preservation of pictures; and there can be no doubt that damp situations are altogether unfavourable to them: yet, great as this evil may appear, it is slow in its operation, and as nothing, when compared to the monkey-tricks that are wantonly practised upon them. The spreading on, and rubbing off, of varnish, cannot be too severely reprobated. It is often worse than useless, when moderately applied; and frequently resorted to as a concealment of reparation and defects. The caprice of some has led them to incorporate a red or yellow powder with this convenient, but dangerous, fluid, for a purpose which certainly requires their explanation.

AMANUENSIS.

to others so circumstanced, who merely leave us in tranquillity. His predilections, moreover, were of an opposite character. When not engaged in repelling petty aggressions from his neighbours, his whole energies were directed to the chase ; nor did he differ in this from those who surrounded him. It was not likely, therefore, I should meet with much notice from such a people. I was consigned, with my two little friends and fellow-travellers, to an empty apartment in the lower part of the castle, and then forgotten.

One thing has ever remained an enigma to me with respect to my companions. They were termed conversations ; but I never heard a single word pass between them.

The quiet of my present situation was unbroken : not a sound could reach me from without, and vacancy reigned within. The massive, stained, uneven stone walls, so far as could be seen from the narrow window that gave light, stood in dismal contrast to the silken hangings to which I had been accustomed. I could perceive big drops of water standing over their whole surface, and sometimes streaming to the floor. The unwholesome moisture penetrated my whole frame, and made me shudder. It pained me afterwards to learn, that my good

mistress had suffered equally from the sad change, and finally fell a victim to it.

How long I continued in this gloomy confinement, I cannot very accurately state; but am convinced the period exceeded twenty years. How I survived it, is not easily to be accounted for. The continual humidity of the place had made such inroads upon my constitution, that, before I was released, the flesh began to fall from my bones at the extremities, and every part of me was incrustated and much obscured by a fixed unsightly mildew. I had endured much before; but, of all the ills that ever yet assailed me, Damp was my steadiest enemy.

After the death of the countess, my master had frequent parties of friends staying at the castle; and among them, at times, were travellers from foreign countries. Upon one occasion, a marquis of the French court was his guest. This noble possessed a smattering of what is termed *Vertú*; and with it united a taste, whether real or pretended, for antiquities. He prevailed on the baron to attend him in an examination of the vaults, and lower parts of the structure, and by this accident my door was first opened. The Frenchman approached, and eyed me with more of suspicion than sagacity in his countenance; and, after a pause, remarked, "that I must

have been something once." In the sequel, he caused my removal to one of the upper rooms, where the light shone freely upon me. His stay was still protracted at the castle; and in the interval he paid several visits to me alone. At his departure for France, I was presented to him by the baron, as a memento of his visit to Germany.

My new master, whether he valued me or not intrinsically, or whatever were the motives of his care, according to the bustle of his country, made every useful arrangement for my removal; and I reached France in due time, without additional suffering, notwithstanding my very weak condition—finding myself presently after in his handsome hotel in Paris.

I was not long in the French capital, without discovering that I was among a people differing widely from all I had known before. They talked incessantly; and, it appeared to me, most upon subjects with which they were least acquainted—as if to make up by noise what they wanted in knowledge. I had a pretty good acquaintance with tongues, from my long travel, but I had to learn till now the full use of the word *chatter*. When I was the subject of conversation, they advanced so many absurd and contradictory opinions, that I pitied

their blindness, and forbear to mention them, being willing to suppose that they spoke in confidence before me, and expected secrecy.

Among the jokes that were passed upon me by this light-hearted (I had almost, in anger, said light-headed) people, a lady exclaimed, that I squinted most horribly! I burned to resent the insult; but, upon closing one of my principal eyes, with a wish to ascertain her meaning, I found I had no sight whatever in the other; a circumstance I had not till now discovered, probably from the almost total darkness in which I had been so long confined. The truth is, I was looking through an eye that did not belong to me, which must have given a ridiculous expression. The same lady remarked, that the colour of my cheeks was more suited to the dancers of their opera, than becoming to a modest woman.

On one point there was perfect agreement: viz., that I was in a most emaciated and woful state. Some thought me beyond the possibility of a cure; and a few doubted whether it would not be more merciful, and certainly prudent, rather than incur expense, with so little hope, to let me die a natural death at once.

A Frenchman, however, has an idea that every thing which belongs to him has some

value ; and disappointed by what he had already heard, nor willing to yield readily to opinions that wounded his vanity, was pleased to observe, that, at a late party assembled for the purpose of criticism, one person viewed me with more particular attention, and differed materially from the rest when his judgment was asked. He assured the marquis that my case was not so desperate as was supposed ; that in spite of all the unpleasant remarks advanced, he might listen to him with advantage ; that his was not a vague opinion, since he had devoted much study, and many years' practice, to the remedy of such diseases as the one he was deploring ; and begged he might be allowed to exercise his skill in this instance. He spoke with so much confidence, and yet not arrogantly, and shewed such a lively interest, that it was agreed he should next day come to the hotel, and enter upon his professional labour.

The first step taken, and which was insisted upon as of the highest importance, and, indeed, indispensable, was to *line* me cautiously. It was attended, I should think, with complete success ; for it was perceptible immediately afterwards that I had acquired much strength from the operation, and really felt prepared to undergo any further regimen that might be

prescribed, as well as a confidence to submit to it with patience.

He now carried me into a room where no other person was present, placing me in a position to receive the strongest light, and locked the door to prevent intrusion. He took a seat, and entered into a minute examination of me from head to foot; sometimes with the assistance of glasses. After this, and a very long consideration, he decided upon removing by solvents, with which he was well acquainted, the corroded varnish from my surface, that had been unsparingly laid on, whereby he would more clearly *feel his way*, and *read the picture*. You see I am enabled now to speak more technically on these points (and a dunce I must have been were it otherwise), having been so long accustomed to listen to this mysterious and imposing language, to all, at least, but the initiated. Accordingly he was diligent to effect his purpose, and did not relax till it was complete.

When the varnish was *rolled off*, he gave a shout of delight that rings in my ears to this hour, and it had the effect of bringing the marquis to the door to inquire into the cause; but he was assured that all was going on well, and prevailed upon to retire, without interrupting the further progress.

With the first varnish had likewise come away my false eye, as well as the offensive rouge, together with a plaster, resembling putty, that had been laid on to receive them. Soon afterwards followed the original varnish, which it now appeared clear had only been chafed by the action of the pad in these parts, in the journey from Rome, so as to obscure them, and make it appear to the eye of ignorance, that a complete substitution was necessary. My eyes were now of equal service to me, and I perceived the operator to be in a state bordering on ecstasy.

The Genoese quack richly deserved to have been stopped in his iniquitous practice, if Death had not settled that point long ago.

I now displayed to the artist (for he surely merits that name) my original lustre. The wounds occasioned by the loose nails were found to be of a trivial description, and the pad before complained of, had protected the vital parts from their assaults. It remained only for my preserver to pass a thin coat of varnish over me, and the marquis was then summoned, to witness what had been done.

He expressed more surprise than pleasure; for I had ceased to interest him very greatly; but acknowledged the work had been inge-

niously performed, and instantly paid for it: though, I am ashamed to say, not half the price that had been given to the pretender who operated upon me at Genoa. He suggested one thing beforehand, with which my benefactor was reluctantly forced to comply. After inquiring who was my author, and being modestly answered that there was every appearance of my having proceeded from *Raphael* or *Julio Romano*, he said I should be christened; and, preferring the sound of the latter name, it was at his command presently inserted at full length upon the hem of my principal garment.

I had often before, and have since, had occasion to notice the vast importance attached to a name. The object referred to was of very secondary consideration, and sometimes not examined at all, provided a suitable pedigree could be established. How forcibly was I at this time struck with the absurdity of giving way to so unsubstantial a bias, when I perceived that the genuine productions of one might be so easily transferred to another by a simple stroke of the pencil!

I was now brought into the world again, and it certainly appeared to me a resuscitation. I was fully revenged upon the lady who had

passed her ill-natured strictures upon me ; and not a care seemed to oppress, save a painful thought of the cruel humiliation, whereby I was henceforth to face every body in a false character—as a *splendid lie* !* I might be the jest of my associates, but the marquis was answerable.

Several years now passed without my noticing any thing worthy of being recorded. My tarnished frame had been regilt while the restoration was going on, and I was considered by the master of the house in no other light than as a portion of the furniture. Crowded assemblies were frequent in the saloons, where affectation and trifling usually prevailed.

At this period, a civil commotion reigned in the capital, occasioned, as I heard, by a scarcity of provisions, and several unpopular

* It will possibly be remarked, that this conceit is a plagiarism of my own, for I confess I have several times heard it of late years, from the mouth of those ephemeral smatterers, self-styled “ deeply dyed in art,” and used by them to express a confusion of bright colours heaped together without any regard to consistency, or foundation in nature, but emanating from some favoured performer. However, the Picture spoke distinctly ; and being of some standing in the world, it is more than probable that these moderns were unconsciously, or otherwise, repeating an idea that had originated before their time.—AMANUENSIS.

enactments passed at the time. The marquis, from the station he held in affairs, was a most obnoxious individual, and had been more than once threatened. At length tumult became general in the streets, and our hotel was surrounded by an ungovernable mob. They were repressed awhile, but at length overcame all opposition, bursting into the mansion, and spreading themselves through the apartments. The object of their vengeance had escaped; but they were not satisfied till after a pillage of every thing movable, and the destruction of what remained.

In this critical hour I had nothing to expect but sudden annihilation. However, the glitter of my frame attracted the cupidity of a Jew among the plunderers, who dislodged me from the wall, together with three of my companions, and, in the confusion, succeeded in carrying us off unobserved.

He bore us to the upper story of a house, situated in a narrow street in an obscure quarter of the town. Next day we were all stripped of our frames, which he burned before our sight, for the purpose of obtaining the precious metal that covered them*, and we were con-

* It is a lamentable fact, that very many frames of exquisite carving, of the period of Louis XIV. and others,

signed to a closet. I did not long remain in this confinement, for the Jew, in dread of detection, took an early opportunity of carrying us from his lodging in the dusk of the evening, and we were sold at a very low price to a broker of the Quai Voltaire.

Our new master had a suspicion, from the easy terms upon which he had obtained possession of us, that we had been stolen, and therefore placed us out of sight, in a room filled with lumber of all sorts, intending to conceal us till any inquiry should cease.

In this unworthy situation, exposed to the trampling of rats, I remained for several years, unheeded and forgotten, when the broker died, and was succeeded by another, who took possession of his stock. I then, for the first time, submitted to a valuation, and was estimated to the successor at the ignominious price of five francs! There appeared no prospect of a deliverance from the degradation into which I had fallen; and I might as well have been despatched at once, as continue to drag on so pro-

have been thus wantonly destroyed. In some of these works a beauty is to be found which entitles them to the consideration of works of art; and it is well known of what importance they are to the advantageous display of the finest pictures.—AMANUENSIS.

fitless an existence, when, after ten or twelve years more passed without notice, discoloured by smoke, and almost hidden with dust, a fortunate circumstance led to my release.

CHAPTER V.

THE English, who were a great trading nation, had several among them who were in the habit of making journeys to the Continent in search of works of art, and other objects of curiosity, wherein they carried on a traffic. One of these gentlemen was at Paris, and by chance led to the shop of the broker on the quay. He spent a considerable time in the house, and selected a great number of articles from the various rooms, having found a few in the one which I inhabited. When it came to a settlement for the whole, a slight difference existed between them as to the exact sum that should be paid; and to make all right, myself, and one or two others, were thrown in, rendering the bargain satisfactory to the buyer. It did not follow, as a matter of course, that these wandering dealers were complete judges of all they collected, therefore my new protector was not conscious he had any prize in me; still they

observed the tolerably secure plan of obtaining at the lowest possible price, and extorting from their customers the highest.

After the settlement of this affair, my present possessor pursued his route towards Italy, whither he was bound, carrying me with him, as well as his other purchases, and arriving in a short time at Marseilles. The very name of Italy was cheering to me; and I contemplated with great satisfaction the near prospect of re-entering it: but when we had reached so far, he calculated the inconvenience I had already cost him on the road, and the expense and trouble that would follow, and resolved to part with me in that city. A gentleman of the place, to whom I was shewn, took a fancy to me, and upon making an offer of ten Louis to obtain the possession, it was readily accepted.

This gentleman was more and more pleased when he had examined me attentively at his own residence, with some of the dirt removed; and though I was still in a state not to exhibit the false name (which the restorer of Paris had added as faintly as he was permitted), yet he supposed me to be the work of some good Italian painter. He shewed me to several of his friends, hoping for a confirmation of this opinion; however, he did not receive much en-

couragement from them, for they one and all remarked, upon hearing how little I had cost, that that might convince him I could not be of very high descent. Surely, this was a very unsatisfactory way of arriving at a conclusion ! and I longed for language to repel so flimsy an argument.

From further experience, I can confidently state, this mode of reasoning is more general than would be believed ; and I always found, that the importance of an object was admitted, by the multitude, in proportion to the rank of its possessor.

I was ever indebted to my good guardian on one point, beyond the attention and favour he shewed me. Every overture from the renovators of the city (and they were frequent) to clean and *get me up*, as they termed it, was firmly resisted by him. He had the good sense to prefer a certain portion of positive beauty to the risk of total wreck, in the attempt to increase it.

Several years passed away, and I thus remained in a state of tranquillity, honoured at least by one ; and although conscious I was not looking like myself, but far otherwise, yet receiving as much admiration as satisfied my modesty, while ten times greater might be my

due. It is something, after long and active persecution, to be only at rest.

Towards the close of my good master's life (for I must ever speak of him with respect), he was called upon to join others of his family at Naples, who had long been settled there, and were by no means in flourishing circumstances. He engaged a passage in a vessel that sailed directly between the two places ; and as I had been so much his companion, he would not hear of leaving me behind. We accordingly embarked ; he in a cabin, and I, encased as formerly, in the hold. It was a most stinking abode ; and I was pressed on all sides by bales of merchandise, besides being in continual rough motion. However, it was of a more soothing description than what is found at the hinder part of land-carriages, as I had proved by experience ; nor did it last long, for on the fourth day we were safely landed at our destination, owing to a very favourable wind.

When we reached the hotel at Naples, the first thought of my guardian was to examine how I had fared on the voyage. The lid was taken from my case, and I was placed against the wall in the anteroom to his apartment, facing the stair. He then hastened in search of his relations, and was grieved at finding

them in a state of destitution, with but slender means of his own to afford assistance.

It happened, that at this time there was a person in the same hotel, who had been despatched by a nobleman from England to visit the principal cities of Italy, and make purchase of such pictures of that school, as his judgment could recommend, to enrich the gallery of his patron at home. This person, in passing by the open door of the apartment, was attracted by my appearance, and stopped a few seconds to gaze at me. I found I had excited an interest in him; and soon after the return of my guardian (whose circumstances he had inquired into), he introduced himself, with a request to be allowed to examine me more attentively. These were the exact words used, after a forced compliment of some length, and I inferred from them that the English were a very wordy people, prone to long speeches upon little occasions; but was wrong in attributing to the whole what only belonged to a distinct class; nor did I perceive at the instant, that this was part of the art employed by the foreigner to carry his hidden point.

The favour was naturally granted; and it was no longer to be concealed that I had made a strong impression. After feeling his way as

to the probability of obtaining me, he said I was the *sort* of picture he had been looking for, though he had no great knowledge of such matters ; and, at a word, if my proprietor were disposed to sell me, he would give five hundred piastres ! He was pretty confident of my origin, and expected, by this apparent liberality, to make the acquisition without the slightest opposition.*

My poor guardian, who in the first instance had no thought of a cession, was certainly surprised at the magnitude of the offer. He hesitated in giving his decision ; during which silence, the Englishman's eyes were fixed upon me, and which I could not but mark, though he took great pains to conceal the expression.

* To an attentive observer of character, and one fond of tracing the progress of cause to effect, it would afford a rich treat to be present on an occasion of this kind. No artifice is considered unworthy that may tend to insure success. The apparent unconcern ; the ingenious departure from, and return to, the main object ; the gentle attempt at depreciation ; doubts as to originality ; bold assertion of extensive repairs, and loss of the finer glazings ; all are called into play, while the fever of acquisition is burning within, and nothing but long habit could enable the skilful actor to go through the part with a steady countenance. Many have affirmed that the acme of cunning is to be met with in the practised horse-dealer : let them become purchasers of pictures ! — AMANUENSIS.

My guardian the while was occupied with heavy thoughts. He pictured to himself the present distress of his family, and what might hereafter follow, nor was he insensible to the relief within his reach. After a reasonable pause, he submitted to necessity, and agreed to take the money: it was paid at the instant, and I delivered to the hireling collector, with considerable regret at the change of masters. The Englishman declared afterwards in my presence, that rather than lose me, he would have increased the price given at least one half.

I know not how such conduct as this is reconcilable with feelings of honesty: possibly my notions of plain dealing may be something too rigid, owing to my having been brought up to tell a simple story with the utmost clearness, avoiding the ambiguity appertaining to many of my fraternity. Yet, surely, in this case, unfair advantage was resorted to, and in a double sense: first, by working upon the necessities of another; and secondly, in taking possession of the desired object without the payment of what was known to be a just equivalent.

I grew more into favour with my new possessor as he became better acquainted with me;

and he speedily decided that the lid of my case should be replaced, and, as the best means of safety, I should be again shipped in the first vessel sailing direct for London. A very few days afforded this opportunity, and I was once more committed to the inconvenience and accidents of the sea.

England was at this time at war with Holland. We had weathered one or two severe gales, and met with considerable detention in the Mediterranean; neither had we long escaped from that sea, or made much progress up the English Channel, when we were attacked by a Dutch vessel of war. At the onset, she fired several shots, and one passed close by me, disturbing the packages in my neighbourhood. Resistance was vain. Our captain prudently surrendered; and we were led up Channel as a prize to Holland, and soon reached Amsterdam.

Before I was extricated from this difficulty, and while lying in safe custody in this city of waters, in which the general damp cast a chill over me, nearly equalling that I had long suffered under in the Baron's castle, I indulged in quiet reflections; and had serious thoughts, immediately upon obtaining my liberty, of giving to the world some account of the various

incidents of my past life. Their singularity might afford amusement to many, and the exposure of certain abuses, I considered would not be without its use, and possibly lead to wholesome reformation ; but, upon maturer thought, it occurred to me, that my pilgrimage was not nearly run out ; that in proportion as the changes which affected me had been frequent and unexpected, I might look for a continuance of the same, furnishing, in all likelihood, further important matter, and it seemed wiser to defer this project for the present, with a determination to act upon the intention at a later period.

After the condemnation of all the property in the captured vessel according to the laws of Holland, I was removed to a warehouse belonging to the crown, and soon advertised for public sale, together with the merchandise it contained.

The Dutch, as well as their present enemy, the English, were a people well versed in trade ; but this difference of character might be observed between them ; that while the latter, after having so enriched themselves, would indulge in the expenditure, and attempt to equal the display of the first nobles of the land ; the former were in general content with a simpler

mode of life, and much addicted to assembling about them, for their recreation, objects of taste, such as pictures, &c., which their fortunes placed within their reach, and for which they paid liberally. They had many good painters of their own in that department of the art which relates to rural life, and to which they gave the decided preference (whether from nationality or any other cause), and made them almost exclusively the objects of their attention, as a decoration to their houses.

When the auction took place, a retired trader of this class was among the company it assembled ; and, perhaps somewhat mechanically, offered a bidding for me of fifty guilders. He met with no opposition, and I was knocked down to him ; but I judged from his countenance that it was unexpected ; nor did he appear too well pleased at the circumstance. I was, however, conveyed at once to his house ; and his first step afterwards, was to send for a painter of his acquaintance, that they might together sit in judgment upon me.

CHAPTER VI.

THIS painter possessed no originality, though he had a considerable aptitude for imitation; and had upon many former occasions been useful to my new proprietor, by repairing accidents and deficiencies in his pictures, which were numerous, and all of his own school. He had a great nicety of hand, and performed this with considerable address.

When he arrived, and I was presented, the question first proposed to him was, to what school he thought I belonged? He did not answer in a hurry; but at last said, that from a certain degree of dryness or severity which he perceived in my execution, he thought I must be early German: not (as he confessed) that he was much acquainted with such works, but rather founding his opinion upon general report. My owner acquiesced in this decision without further inquiry, having previously viewed me with very similar feelings; and

added, that while he was much pleased with the landscape part of me, yet he had no relish for the figures, or what he chose to term the *superstitious*: besides, he said it was monstrous that children should be represented perfectly naked in the open air. Finally, he asked his adviser with great interest if he thought he could expunge these, and convert me into landscape altogether?

The painter found he had an operation to perform, exceeding in difficulty his former practice; yet few men like to be beat, and he was not of that number. He allowed that it would be attended with considerable trouble, and cost him much time, but expressed a willingness to enter upon the experiment, with some assurance of success; stipulating only, that to insure this, every thing must be left to his own discretion; nor would he even consent that his patron should be present while the work was in progress.

The operator had no difficulty in continuing the objects of the back-ground through that part of the canvass occupied by the figures, which he did with a white crayon over them, so as to please himself. He then determined upon employing nothing but water-colour, *i. e.* colour ground with size, without the use of

oil ; and, as the surface was tolerably smooth, he did not deem it necessary to efface any of the under part to receive the new. He was aware also, that, by this process, he would be able to match the old colours with the greatest exactness, and without the risk of a change afterwards ; and that, in fact, his art was not likely to be detected, which was expected with great earnestness by his employer.

After three weeks of the most unremitting toil, he brought his labour to an end. The success attending it was not only satisfactory to himself, but likewise to my owner, who praised his ingenuity again and again ; declaring that, in this, he had exceeded all former exploits. To say the truth, he had managed the whole in a very deceptive manner ; and, though it might not have been part of his contemplation, posterity were indebted to him as well, for the means adopted—the total rejection of oil. My owner enjoyed by anticipation, the sensation I should cause among his friends, and mentally defied their lynx eyes to discover the metamorphosis.

A heavy frame of ebony had been provided, in which I was fixed. I was now carried into the largest room of the house, and which contained the greatest number of pictures, and

hung ; but in a situation as far from the light as was convenient. There was, very probably, a motive in this, though it was not mentioned openly before me. Indeed, had my owner considered it, I was now totally deprived of sight, and my ears were keenly alive to all that passed within their sphere of utility ; for it is found that the loss of one sense increases the activity of that which remains.

The pictures that hung around me, I found, through this channel, were all of Dutch origin. I heard incessantly mentioned the names of *Potter, Berghem, Ruysdael, Douw, Ostade, Cuyp, Rembrandt, Both*, and a host of others. These were harsh, uncouth sounds, and contrasted vilely, as I thought, with the softer language of Italy. They were, however, always pronounced with the greatest respect ; and the works to which they applied appeared to be viewed with an intensity of delight.

It struck me as a singularity, that I never heard any devotion offered to *design* or *expression* ; or the qualities even mentioned, except upon one occasion, when a party of connoisseurs assembled before a picture by Potter. It represented some pigs, and it was agreed that the expression of the animals was admirable !

In proportion, however, as silence was ob-

served with regard to these qualities (and which I had been taught to consider of first importance), long harangues were frequent in praise of the charm of *finish*. As I was attentive to the remarks that passed, I was not slow to perceive that a grand mistake existed as to the meaning of the favourite term. The speakers certainly described *extended labour*, which I knew to be very distinct from it, and might have read a lecture in support of my position; though, in all likelihood, I should have failed to remove strongly rooted prejudices. I could have shewn that there was more *essential finish* in the slightest production of my inimitable progenitor, than could be found in all those efforts of patience which have secured admirers to the Dutch masters.

If these reasoners had been aware to what length it conducted, they must have been confounded by their own degrading theory. It was no less than assigning to the *hand* precedence of the *head*, depriving painting of its lawful title to be considered a *fine art*, one dependent upon *mental power*, and classing it among the mechanical.

It may seem that I am wandering from myself, nor was it my wish from the first to enter into speculations concerning others; but

the motives for action are so various, and involved in so much obscurity, that we are irresistibly drawn to consider them. The truth is, from my first entrance into this company, though I had been introduced to a few of the visitors, and others had remarked me as a novelty only, in general I was left very much to myself, appearing to excite no pleasure in any ; and my owner had his private reasons for not bringing me forward, or pressing a nearer notice. It is plain I was considered as a Gothic production at best.

I can remember that, upon one occasion, a gentleman present, who had travelled beyond the flat country, ventured to speak in terms of rapture of the scenery he had witnessed in the south, and pointed to me as an illustration of a fine mountainous distance ; but he commanded little attention, and the conversation soon changed to the silent canal, and the pastoral scenery around Haerlem.

There appeared so little creative power among the people with whom I was now sojourning, that I was much surprised one day, upon hearing my owner assure a foreigner that I had cost him *one hundred Louis*, and had been purchased of an Italian Prince, who found himself in difficulty while in Holland ! This

gentleman had been surveying me with some intention of making me his own, but the treaty was broken off from some cause or other. I found, however, afterwards, that this species of invention was by no means uncommon, and often resorted to when one of my Dutch companions was bartered or sold; and which I was enabled to detect by a comparison of contradictory statements. The Prince of Orange, upon one occasion, honoured my owner by a visit, and me by a notice: *he* was told, instead of *one*, that I had cost *two hundred Louis*; though the Italian Prince kept his place in the narrative!

Nevertheless, it must not be supposed that Holland alone furnishes examples of this romantic tendency. I met with it incidentally while in Italy; nor had I been many days in this country, when a palpable instance of the like nature came within my observation.

Sometimes the deceptions that were practised before me were of a most ludicrous nature, and often mentioned exultingly by the cunning proprietor and his confederates. It would be tedious were I to relate many of them; but one, from the mirth it excited, I will not pass unnoticed.

A rich amateur from beyond the sea, had heard of a Wouvermans, of the highest quality,

in the possession of my owner. By description, the composition was so familiar to him, that there appeared no chance of mistake ; besides, he had the print actually engraved from the very subject, Still he added the precaution of bringing with him a connoisseur who could not be deceived ; and, so fortified, came by appointment to inspect the picture. The proprietor had an accurate copy, that had been made two or three years before, over the face of which he strained the original canvass, and replaced it in its frame. In this state of things the strangers arrived, and passed a long examination of the picture. Seeing but one, it was finally approved, and purchased at no inconsiderable price. At the suggestion of my owner, the purchaser then placed his seal at the back of the canvass as a security against fraud ; and it was packed and shipped for its destination, after the true one had been carefully removed ! Though the picture does not obtain credit for originality universally, yet it certainly still exhibits the seal at the back,—an unquestionable evidence with some.

I considered my present situation far from a creditable one. It was my fate to become acquainted with tricks such as that I have just described, and others of minor consequence

were of frequent occurrence, and I heartily sighed to be emancipated from it ; but no hope on this subject had presented itself, till the following circumstance, which, in the sequel, was every way propitious to me.

We had now reached the end of the eighteenth century. If, when I have before alluded to dates and time, some inconsistencies shall appear, they must be attributed to no intentional misrepresentation, but the confusion arising from frequent long seclusions, and the circumstance of my thoughts being generally occupied by subjects of more importance.*

A dealer of some extent, from London, was now in Amsterdam, and called upon my owner. He had been in the habit of occasionally passing over to that country, and selecting specimens of the best Dutch pictures, such as would suit the market at home. Be not surprised at the language I use, nor think it merely a fashion of speech adopted from intercourse with a mercantile people. A time had arrived when we, who should interest only the intellect of

* There is, indeed, a probability, that the picture remained a much longer time in the house on the Quai Voltaire than it has intimated ; and, possibly, at that period passed through the hands of several proprietors, without its even being conscious of it. — AMANUENSIS.

men, and exist as one of their highest sources of enjoyment, had become a common means of speculation and profit—as much so as bales of cotton, or hogsheads of sugar.

The attraction to our house, was the great reputation of a Cuyp which it contained, and which had not been very long an inmate. It hung by my side. This picture he bought, as well as one or two others of minor consequence; and while the treaty was going on, was struck with my singular appearance, so different to the rest. He directed some very inquiring glances at me, unobserved by the Dutchman, and was secretly assured that he had discovered my real character. Keeping this to himself, and without my having been previously mentioned, when it came to the settlement (and the sum required was considerable), he proposed my being included, as an *odd subject*, which was consented to upon a small advance in the payment.

Had the good Dutchman but resisted awhile, he might have found that I should then have become principal in the negotiation;* but he

* I was here forcibly reminded of a coincidence with a pleasant story. A party of travellers were dining liberally at an inn; while at a separate table, in the same room, sat

had never felt any affection for me, and was in too good humour with the transaction altogether, to know any regret at my quitting him.

No sooner had my English purchaser received me at his lodging, than, forgetting every thing besides, he sought for a confirmation of his suspicions in my favour. The pure portion of sky and distance had first riveted his attention; and he was now able to discover that a great part of the subject was spurious. He removed a small circle of this, finding little resistance from the vehicle employed, when there appeared below, what was before but a green bank, flesh tint of the sweetest tone and texture! By a shifting of the canvass into different lights, he soon perceived the boundary of complete figures. Conviction flashed upon him—he was in possession of a work of the great Raphael! disguised partly, but possibly uninjured in every essential.

Intoxicated with the good fortune, he could

an individual (who was, in truth, a great glutton) with nothing but a pot of mustard before him; but which he was extolling highly. After a time, he begged of one and another for a slice of beef, or pork, or any thing, merely to taste the *Mustard*. When accorded, he set to, and devoured the substance most voraciously, forgetting the sauce altogether.—
AMANUENSIS.

not sleep, but counted the hours till he should reach London with his treasure. Without its admitting of a very accurate solution, he was assailed by that restlessness which is felt by those who are surrounded by danger, and a prey to apprehension.

His departure was not delayed. A case having been provided, I was packed with more caution than I had hitherto received, and by his own hand; and we only awaited the sailing of the packet.

CHAPTER VII.

I WAS now to behold England—that country of vast political influence, and acknowledged power—of which I had heard so much, and many of the inhabitants of which I had before seen. The thought gave me pleasure, possibly heightened by former disappointment. On quitting Holland, no feeling of regret oppressed me; and I could not help thinking at the time of Voltaire's witty and severe adieu to that country and people; but which I shall not repeat here.

We were safely brought to the opposite shore, and I entered London, a capital teeming with animation and boundless in extent; and (which was of greatest consequence to me) of so much wealth, that there was little or no doubt, if persons could be found within it capable of appreciating my merit, it would soon be rewarded.

We passed the custom-house formalities,

and in half an hour I was in the house of my proprietor. In less than a week from the time of our arrival, I was inspected by a very skilful operator in cases such as mine, who confirmed the first hopes of my new lord and master, and was instructed forthwith to *set me to rights*.

Those who have had access, like myself, to the sanctum of one of these gentlemen, may imagine my proprietor's anxiety of mind while this operation was going on. It is true that, under any circumstances, he could not suffer much loss, yet upon the successful issue depended really a small fortune.

The difficulty to be encountered was far less than had been anticipated. The laborious modern additions of the patient Dutchman, came away by the simplest experiment;* and I stood

* It would not surprise me to learn that many regarded this statement with incredulity: at the same time, numerous instances occur in which, upon the simple attempt to remove the varnish from a picture, a great portion of the subject disappears with it, occasionally to the mortification of its owner, and shewing it to have been a recent addition.

I remember witnessing an amusing example of this, where an amateur of some practice had bought a work representing a trumpeter mounted on a gray horse, and giving breath to his instrument. He commenced friction with the finger upon the discoloured surface; when presently the *man of war and sound* vanished in all his gallantry, leaving the steady animal wholly unencumbered.

without disguise before the admiring pair, in a situation, not only to hear their expressions of delight, but mark the pleasure of their countenances. I was, in fact, in a state of purity, and could now discover as well that I was in a room of small dimensions, and rather mean appearance, which did not seem to accord with the great name I had heard of the country, and cast a slight gloom over my spirits, in unison with the smoky air I perceived about me. This, however, was soon dissipated; and I was not long in discovering that I had taken alarm too hastily, and that, in all that regarded their power and wealth, the English had not been misrepresented.

The ecclesiastical pomp of the holy city had been familiar to me—I had figured in the splendid establishment of the republican merchant—my station had been among the rich and the noble of other countries; yet appearances now denoted that England was the spot where luxury held her sway, and extended her influence into every department of civilised life.

Thousands were here talked of with the same fluency and unconcern that were every where else observed with hundreds; and I found, moreover, that the guinea, which is

their usual medium of exchange, far exceeds in value the coin which other nations have adopted for the same purpose. Thus, without entering into a minute calculation of differences, I was content to wonder at their exalted ideas, and capability of supporting them.

Even in this famed land, as elsewhere, it was evident that many persons, who enjoyed great reputation in various professions, displayed much obtuseness of perception when brought to consider *me*. However, upon this point I was pretty well fortified by long experience to exercise patience; and it might have added to my self-esteem, as shewing that my high qualities (of which I had always been conscious, perhaps even to a fault,) were of a very subtile nature, and only to be fathomed by a favoured few.*

* It is a question with me, whether any country contains more individuals qualified to discover the merit of a picture than England; yet the number is, and must of necessity always have been, limited every where: and even these owe their distinction to study. It would be depriving the subject of all dignity to suppose it otherwise. Practical excellence is only one degree added to the theoretical, which is essential to the clear comprehension or enjoyment of a work, however perfect, placed before us.

Will any reasonable person, when once informed of the combination of powers requisite for the production of a fine

Often had I heard, while in Holland, great praise bestowed upon a picture, print, or drawing, and marvelled at the intense interest it excited, from possessing the simple quality of *rarity*. This it was difficult to reconcile upon rational principles, since mere accident can confer no merit; and to be one of the few, is no assurance against being one of the bad.

There was some prospect, that upon quitting the curious Dutch (who never had struck me as being particularly intellectual), I should leave this puerile prejudice behind; but I am bound in justice to that people to declare, that I found it equally prevalent in London as at Amsterdam.

It now occurred to me to be brought face to face with several of these worthies (*usurpers* they might be called), when it required but a moderate exercise of judgment to be convinced of the artificial state of things that upheld them. Without any disadvantage, their single recom-

picture, contend for an instant (according to the general practice) that all are equal judges of it, that have equal sight? As well might the greatest genius in musical composition be told, that every one around him could determine with the same certainty what was harmony in sound, without a portion of his science, provided he were not deaf!

Both conclusions are false, and both are reached through want of fair consideration. — AMANUENSIS.

mendation might have been extended to its utmost limit; nay, were they even extinct, I ask, what loss? A vacancy would be left for something more deserving, and men's thoughts released from an unprofitable consideration.

It is said the English are a reforming people; and it is to be hoped that, in this instance at least, they will act upon the advice of their own great poet, and "reform it altogether." Let it be remembered (as I have somewhere heard it said) that an antiquarian zeal in searching for that, which, when found, is not worth preserving, is no encouragement to true art, nor evinces the most distant acquaintance with it.

If, after a long and active pursuit, the acquirement be considered in the light of a victory, by the *simply rational*—those who assign to the pearl its true price—it will be viewed as a negative cause for triumph.

A frame was prepared of great splendour to receive me; and, beyond this, it was secured in a case of fine mahogany, with folding doors, and a silk curtain hung over the front. Thus elevated upon an easel, in the best apartment of the house, was I stationed to receive company.

Advertisements in praise of me filled the

newspapers, and private despatches had been sent to all the nobles of the land, and even royalty itself, to announce my arrival; and I never, till now, felt the full influence of court favour. For several days, carriages continued to arrive in quick succession at our door (after the discreet hour); and, in less than a week, I had been introduced to half the nobility then in London. The intervals not appropriated to the great were filled up by visits from others of less note; so that, from early day to the decline of light, I was never alone.

As it had never been very distinctly intimated, I was at a loss to conceive to what all this ceremonial might lead, or when it was to end; and, for some time, I really imagined that my proprietor was himself a person of high rank, who had taken pleasure in assembling his friends around him by way of gala, and to celebrate a highly valued acquisition. There was nothing in his appearance or conversation that rendered the idea ridiculous. It gave me a very exalted opinion of an individual, who could so long forget all other enjoyments, and use so much energy in a disinterested display of merit to the world.

Alas! the brightest illusions fade: that I should have given way to this is remarkable,

after my long experience. I heard once more the mention of *money*, and with it came the remembrance of past indignities, and a dread of their renewal; but it chanced more favourably.

A noble lord desired to know my price: he was answered, four thousand guineas! No objection was made; and, before the sun went down, I was advanced to that position in his handsome gallery which I now occupy, and where I shine the brightest ornament.

Since I have been here domiciled, many intervals of repose have been passed in a scrutiny of my neighbours. This originated in mere curiosity, but led insensibly to more systematic speculation. I find some of my companions personating characters which do not belong to them; others that have been admitted into a society of which they are wholly unworthy; and not a few, that have, like myself of old, been victims to bungling restoration. My eye is so practised on this point, that I could not be deceived; yet *these* receive their share of admiration, standing, as they do, conspicuous to the wide world.

I might have fancied, for a moment, that all this would suddenly be changed; and though I flattered myself that it was now my

destiny to correct false taste by silent agency alone, so that the excellent should at once appear to all, and mediocrity be checked in its presumption, the delusion was soon apparent, and the ardour of my wishes allowed to cool; since it is clear that no impression can be made, without a gradual preparation for its reception.

Possibly the grievances complained of exist every where in an equal degree. They may be lamented, but must be referred to time alone with a hope of reformation. It is sufficient for me to have recorded my particular sentiments; and I shall remain quiet among my associates, not wishing vainly to disturb the harmony which reigns within our walls.

After I had become acquainted with the aristocracy of this great nation, and witnessed their dignified bearing, and habitually honourable expression of feeling, how unfortunate it is, thought I, that the arts generally are not made the more immediate objects of their protection, and entered upon with that earnestness which they freely devote to less important subjects!* Their wealth and leisure so far

* From this remark and what follows, it is clear that the Picture has not attained to its great age without having acquired just notions within its sphere of observation. Under

well qualify them for the charge, and the pursuit itself would command the respect of all: besides which, a wholesome check would thereby be opposed to the prevailing offensive system, which then must soon meet with merited derision. As it is, a lavish but misdirected expenditure serves only to enrich a few, whose popularity may not have been legitimately acquired, and tends to retard rather than advance the object most desirable. Still, as I before advanced, time must develop this happy change.

It has even been whispered in my presence, that instances do arise where men are found base enough, and lack not the necessary assurance, to abuse the confidence reposed in them by the inexperienced, and employ this advan-

the direction of a high-minded class of society, there would be no danger that merit would be obstructed through petty jealousies; and the absence of all mercenary motives would ensure to every object to be transferred its true price, to the utter confusion of those empirics who practise upon the credulity of the rich, and revel in the ignoble spoil.

It may reasonably be doubted, whether any monarch of modern times, among the number of those who were considered patrons of art, really possessed a safe internal guide, with the exception of our own unfortunate Charles I.; and very few among the opulent, who could indulge to any extent, are more favourably circumstanced.—AMANUENSIS.

tage to place in their hands works every way contemptible, under a high-sounding appellation. However, while I mention the circumstance, and consider the effrontery required in such conduct, with the chances of ruinous exposure, I do confess it to be scarcely within the range of credibility.

* * * * *

Having no ties binding me to my native country, I shall be content to end my days in England. If I have a regret, it is that my influence is curtailed by too much seclusion. My paramount hope is, that I may one day become national property.

I hear that a public gallery is on the eve of completion, where I should receive a cordial welcome. As I have never seen the edifice, it would be improper to enlarge upon its widely-reported defects and insufficiency.

FINIS.

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


A HINT
TO THE
ARBITERS OF TASTE
AND OTHERS,
BUT MOST ESPECIALLY
THEIR WILLING DUPES.

BY
ONE WHO CHOOSES TO THINK FOR HIMSELF—
PETER PINDAR THE LITTLE.

‘ If you take a stick to walk with, let it have strength to support you.’—*Anonymous*.

LONDON :
— MAY 1845.



A HINT

TO THE

ARBITERS OF TASTE, &c.

WHEN Journals and Reviews assume a power,
Proclaiming what to shun, and what devour,
Those who have yet to learn what they would teach,
Yet dive in matters far beyond their reach—
With self-sufficiency in all, and each !
Art-Unions and Gazettes, their sail unfurl'd,
Launch their unmeaning dicta for the world ;
And Athenæums are allowed to tread,
Just, periodically, to mislead ;
Neglect, or mangle, what should be upheld,
By ignorance prompted, cunningly impell'd :—
Usurping sovereignty o'er every art,
With balm to soothe, or sting to raise a smart.
So blind to truth this empty, clam'rous rout—
They think our ears are long as theirs, no doubt !

Who hold a rod — too well their backs would suit —
 But feebly held, we seek in vain good fruit : —
 And easy listeners are content to hear
 Their idle praise, or calumny severe ! *
 'Tis time some independent from the crowd
 Start from his lethargy and speak aloud ;
 Check the wide spread of asinine decrees,
 And hope for sounder, though by slow degrees ;
 Put in a word of antidote — one word,
 To neutralise the poison freely poured.
 Frail vessels wanting ballast *may* be swamped,
 And *must* our energies be ever cramped ?
 Fain would these tricksters now detect a flaw,
 Drawn from their own, and not from reason's law ;
 Seek some minutest slip (not worth the search),
 Leaving all graver error in the lurch.

* These gentlemen, it may be, easily flatter themselves that they represent the oracles of old, and that all they are bold enough to print will be received without inquiry, and with the same fearful humility ; but times are changed, and so, most assuredly, are the speakers. There are many now who can see as far into a mystery as themselves : clearly so, where mental exertion is required.

And now, again, convinced of something new,
 Find some bright spark that always was in view :
 Concealed, indeed, from their perceptions dull,
 Till, by some accident, revealed in full.*

Such praise—how little worth ! such censure, less !
 Freedom, indeed !—true license of the Press !
 Unhappy liberty, that not improves,
 But gives conceit the very power it loves !
 Of no avail to bolster up the weak —
 Snapp'd in an hour, forsooth, as saplings break ;
 While genius, like the oak, spreads wide, though high,
 And mocks all fretful blasts that pass it by.

The diamond, though obscure within the mine,
 Possesses still the quality to shine ;
 It must be brought to light for general proof,
 Yet he of science knows it in the rough.
 Not so with these, who cheat the public ear,
 And wanting knowledge, hope to rule by fear ;
 Fear in their victims, who should but defy,
 Or heedless let their barbless arrows fly.

* We have all heard of finding a "mare's nest." It is discovered nowhere so frequently as in our periodical literature.

And thus it may be with a conscious few,
 Who feel their strength, and quietly pursue,
 Uninfluenced, a course which wisdom points,
 Trusting futurity alone anoints.*

In *Painting*, *Wilson* † was a martyr once.
 The ban is now removed ; none dare denounce
 As doubtful now what justice has decreed.
He shines for ever, from detraction freed.
 And in a sister art, how many bards ‡
 Have sunk awhile, through ignorant awards !

* Posterity not only remembers and does justice to the deserving, but punishes mediocrity and all below it by forgetfulness. Who ever hears of Sir Thomas Lawrence now, or the fortunate architect of Regent Street (Nash), so petted and puffed in their day—and that day not distant—without the accompaniment of a small degree of ridicule ?

† The fate of this greatest of landscape-painters clearly shews that the evils of which we are complaining are of long standing ; and there was in his day *one* whose own reputation was then secure, and has been deservedly maintained, but whose name will never be freed from the tarnish it acquired by a studied neglect and depreciation of contemporary excellence. Will any one doubt that Sir Joshua Reynolds is alluded to ?

‡ Even Byron, in the beginning, met with his share of anathe-

A Pugin* lives to-day — as yet, his fame
Is basely trampled on by those I name !

It long has been so, and will be, I ween,
Till some one think with me, and step between ;
Himself, well arm'd, to roll away the cloud
That dims our vision, and inform the crowd.

A task awaits him ; let it not dismay !

I wish success, and only point the way.

Invited ridicule needs no defence,

And bays may here be won at small expense.

One word of truth will triumph in the end,

O'er all the pages falsehood ever penn'd.

matising ; but he soon shewed he could wield a lance against the whole phalanx of detractors, and then his adversaries prudently laid down arms.

* This highly gifted architect and man has been obliged to defend himself in print against an unwarrantable attack in *Fraser's Magazine* ; and it was hoped to deter him from this justice to himself by intimidation. In this instance, besides most unfair strictures generally, the indelicacy of allusions to private family matters was resorted to. However, Mr. Editor found in the end that he had been trifling with an edged tool, or, in other words, " caught a Tartar." Sneers at the wise are quite compatible with the exaltation of mediocrity.

To-day, where look for aid our sense to clear ?
 Blinder than we, our only guides appear !
 Behold these worthies at the festive board
 Of *A. the rich, Sir Thomas, or My Lord !*
 Strange how they get there—yet it comes to pass !
 (Let this be thought a property of brass !)
 With editorial pride they take their place,
 And scarcely wait the decency of grace ;
 So many *little* things they have to tell :
 Some patient hearers are secure as well.
 (No small advantage where so many charged,
 Not with ideas, but sound, would be enlarged.)
 Each word that's spoken now *must* be a hit,
 Their pliant natures even sheer nonsense fit ;
 Loud laughter* flows without the aid of wit.

* It would be well to determine what is legitimate laughter. Loud noises are not necessarily music, though music may make considerable noise. In the other case there is *grinning* as well (a bastard of the same family). This shews itself in being constantly in readiness to celebrate the dullest speech, if it proceed from one of *rank* or *worldly consideration*, and requiring no other provocative. It has been thought that the true *laugh* is amiable, and

Now is their time to launch the current joke,
 So lately glean'd from what another spoke ;
 Nor always very decent in the choice—
 Yet who would quarrel with a Mentor's voice ?
Impromptu now and then is aptly shewn,
Prompted by one away (it should be known) ;
 Nay, own their modesty in this, I crave ;
 Preferring others' thoughts to those they have.*

Still have they power to harm—would it were dead,
 And worthier monitors would take the lead !
 They might be found, were courage but their own,
 To mount the breach and hurl the foremost stone ;
 Crushing the hydra while it yet have life —
 No less an easy than a useful strife.
 Its strength is not inherent, only lent
 By our credulity : how vainly spent !

emanates from the heart ; certain it is that the *grin* does not travel so far, issuing only from the empty skull.

* It may always be remarked that those who have little or nothing of their own to communicate are proportionably prolific in the good sayings of others. They might be assimilated in this to the carrier pigeon, were it not that they are incapable of a lofty flight.

In art 'bove all we feel the monstrous wrong—
 Weaker the Critic, as the Genius strong !
 Were he but honest (though with little sense),
 His fault were venial ; pardon his pretence.
 But interest moves him first, and fashion next
 (All thought of usefulness a sly pretext).
 Vainly he struts along in borrow'd guise,
 And freely offers folly to the wise.
 Even malice is employ'd to crush the good —
 To drown real talent in a poisonous flood :
 No venom lacks that little minds can bring—
 'Tis simple sport harsh epithets to string.
 Nor this alone, pernicious though the act,
 Condemning merit in the face of fact ;
 A choice expedient in this vile attempt
 Exalts the worthless, meriting contempt ;
 Pretension unsustain'd is puff'd on high,
 To meet erroneous popularity.
 Witness the nauseous praise of meanest things,
 What cavilling on false premises it brings !
 And these, just oracles of what is best,
Weavers of error rather—a true pest !

Who has not heard the vacant cackling goose,
 When on the green the feather'd train's let loose ;
 And mark'd the sympathy through all the drove,
 Till discord echoes from the neighb'ring grove ?
 Just so our critics ape the silly birds ;
 They plan in concert, and they print in herds.
 One starts a dogma (be it ne'er so wild),
 The rest approve, repeat, caress the child.*
 Puerilities go forth enough to stun ;
 Through all the gamut twaddle has its run.

We turn from chattering brutes whene'er we can—
 Why list we to their counterpart in man ?

Painting is left without a leg to stand,†
 So active here this all-dissecting band ;

* How strikingly it appears that our writers (*weekly* and *monthly*) fall into the same heterodox views ! One would suppose that the volumes of obtuse reasoning we have spread before us came from a single source of error ! And so they do. It is much easier to follow than lead.

† It is a curious fact that the examinations we are called upon to read on this head never, though by accident, deviate into right. Often a mixture of blame and commendation are so incompatibly interwoven as to defy all human comprehension. Certes, obscurity may serve as a shield to want of understanding !

Their mawkish instruments would raise a smile,
Were not some victim suffering the while.*

Quotation serves them well—oft misapplied—
Whether to glorify or eke deride.

Take but one specimen of sage remark,
Endeavour to extract the smallest spark ;
I will be *true*, though all rest i' the dark.

“ We, going round the gall'ry e'er and anon,”

“ A picture of surpassing merit fixed on ; ”

“ Into the catalogue we scarce need look,”

“ It *was* a Stanfield† (65, per book),—”

“ The Mole at Ancona —— ”

“ That is not painting—it is limpid water,”

“ Running o'er sands—(that is) that is the sea ;”

“ That Trajan's arch ; that overhanging sky ”

“ No other, sure, than that of Italy !”

* Most amusing would it be, and perhaps instructive, after reading a panegyric on some one high in popular favour, to go back to a former notice of this enviable individual in the same unerring organ. Discrepancies might be discovered.

† Here appears to be an odd jumble of the tenses. But the critics ought to know.

“Can any thing be more bright, or more clear,”
 “Or more translucent?”* Well! *Oh dear! oh dear!*
 Description most perspicuous! Synonymes
 Ring changes, sweeter than our village chimes.
 And oh, most scenic! †
 We have not seen this miracle new wrought,
 But breathless wait the treat, so wisely taught;
 ’Tis pleasant once to hear within these halls,
 That *Nature’s self* hangs on the honour’d walls!
 The name of editor is wondrous great,
 But stands at discount, it would seem, of late.
 We might expect (per contra) after this
 The following, attended by a hiss; ‡
 For those who lavishly let honey fall,
May also spare a modicum of gall.
 Oh, Turner, Turner! — William Mallard John —
 R.A. to boot! — think’st thou by tricks like these

* *Vide Literary Gazette*, May 10, 1845, p. 298.

† There are men in vogue who would not wish to be too frequently reminded of former days.

‡ It was scarcely necessary to explain by a note to what animal this musical sound is most familiar.

To gull the world, and thrive? If so, go on!

Secure, at least, art thou thyself to please.

Give us more *Bird-cages*,* and *Rembrandt's Daughters*!*

Spin out a brain which no one understands!†

And since thou lov'st to fish in troubled waters,

Why now and then a *Pilate washing hands*!*

So shall thy fame be spread through yet unpeopled
lands!

No! this were heresy to scorch the quill;

The mere *R.A.* keeps angry critics still.

* *The Bird-cage, Rembrandt's Daughter, and Pilate Washing his Hands*,—three pictures by the artist, which underwent very severe criticism at the time they were produced, and possibly invited it.

† I am not quite exact in this part of my text, but I am using an imaginary quotation from my seniors. There is *one* favoured individual who would appear to comprehend our great painter; I mean the "Undergraduate of Oxford." To the mind of every intelligent reader there is much severer sarcasm in his book, directed to its hero, than all which the trading censors united could have contrived. Hyperbole must always lead to suspicion, and the deification of erring mortals is positively profane.

Arouse, ye patrons of an art so bright,
 Think for yourselves—more likely you'll be right !*
 By indolence no more your senses bind ;
 Wake to your province, be no longer blind ;
 Most abject is the slavery of mind !
 Cast off that snake-skin prejudice, supplied
 By easy credence in an erring guide.
 Take *Nature* by the hand—she ne'er misleads—
 But charms, informs, in every step she treads.
 Farewell, ye busy men—look for repose—
 Your reign is not for *ever*, nor our doze ; †
 Nay, ye have subjects now awake, who spurn
 Your puny doctrines—inwardly they burn

* We have long laid claim to a more general acquaintance with the fine arts than those of any other country, and I think that a fair investigation would establish this claim. At the same time we are foremost in resigning our opinions and our purses to a very questionable tribunal. A striking instance of the danger in following too implicitly incompetent guides was exhibited in the late sale of drawings by Callcott ; but there will be another leaf to turn over in this history if they should ever again be brought to the hammer.

† Truly there is reason for supposing the world to be asleep when such trash as above quoted has been so long suffered to pass unnoticed.

To tumble in the dust a misused power :
The public do but wait a better hour ;
When trick unmask'd, free thought is left to all,
And ignorance on stilts *must* have a fall.

Enough is said. May some one take the task
To silence triflers : this is all I ask !

NATIONAL GALLERY.

STRAY LEAVES,

SUPPOSED TO HAVE ESCAPED FROM THE CUSTODY OF

Hunch.

P. P. Y^E L.

N.B. THESE SCRAPS, WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN WORTH STOOPING FOR, WERE FOUND AT THE FOOT OF THE FOUNTAINS IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE, AND MUST HAVE BEEN DRIVEN THERE BY THE LATE PREVAILING EASTERLY WINDS. THEY ALL APPEAR TO BEAR UPON ONE SUBJECT OF GREAT INTEREST, AND WITH THIS RESTORATION, IT IS HOPED THERE ARE MANY OTHERS YET IN STORE.

Second Impression.

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1847.

By way of Preface.

GENTLE EXPOSTULATION WITH PUNCH.

OUR WELL-BELOVED ! We have known thee now for several years, and acknowledge thy usefulness ; yet the imperfection which is in all things else has likewise a place in thee. The gnat and the camel is an adage for thy consideration. Why sleepest thou upon great occasions ? or wakest whilst thou hadst better be dozing for thy refreshment ? Thou hast caught cold by this already ; and a cold, thou knowest, is the forerunner of consumption. A *Great Gun** has exploded before now. How long wert thou not paddling in the spray of those little fountains ? It was enough to set thy readers a-wheezing ; and they all thought

* A facetious but ephemeral little publication.

it far beyond a joke. The Temple itself was then in front. Why not have stepped boldly in, and warmed thyself within its glowing saloons? (Alas, they do become more raw and uninviting every day!) But, no; the damp quarter was quitted only to remove thy battery to the height of Hyde Park Corner. A brisk fire was there kept up, but badly directed,—indeed it was so, Punch! Hadst thou desired to see Wyatt's work nearer at hand, and so get rid of too lofty a pedestal, it had been well; but to summon all thy strength, and exhaust thy sympathy, in vindication of a flat-topped arch of no invention, it really was a waste of powder altogether. Thy modesty will pardon these hints, for we shall have but one more to give.

After all, dear Punch! thou art a great solace to us. We have much for which to be thankful to thee. Thou lovest the arts, so do we. Thy "Designs and Decisions of the Competent Persons," and "Fine Arts at every Station," are delicious proofs of thy comprehension of them; and that charming head-piece to thy "Almanac"

for the month of October last!—Who can forget it? Yet here we condole with thee; it was thy misfortune not to be universally understood, for a few in their simplicity supposed it to be caricature. Had that been thy humour, thou mightest have raised the heartiest laugh, as thou art wont to shew *almost* weekly to all, perhaps, but “HB.”

As a last word, we suggest greater care in future in relation to the papers upon thy shelves. It is evident that sufficient weight is not always placed upon them. Carelessness leads to—we don't know what; and somewhere about that hump of thine a safer deposit might surely be found.

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I.

PINDAR,* PYE,† AND PUNCH.

It will be remembered that this giant of wits (Peter), who, moreover, was the disinterested, the honourable supporter of the great Wilson,‡ once, in his eloquent strain, called upon Pye to be more watchful of the important passing events of his day. So every one now entreats his friend Punch to be up and stirring during the present artistic commotion. His vigilance is expected.

II.

AGE OF CHALK.

WE have all heard of a "Golden Age;" and Byron, more recently, has talked of an "Age of Bronze;" this may, emphatically, be called "an

* Dr. Walcot, an excellent critic on art.

† Poet-laureate.

‡ The unfortunate but most admirable Landscape-painter of England — nay, almost of the world.

Age of Chalk." Lectures have lately been given, at the National Gallery, to prove the attractions of this *pure material*, and a few very striking illustrations in support of the new theory were produced. The audiences were by no means unanimous in approving of what they heard and saw; indeed the murmurs were pretty general; and some few among the discontented, having been deprived of their gold, were excited to such a pardonable degree of indignation, that it was feared the house would have been pulled down about the ears of all. However, the dissent was carried before another house, and, for the moment, peace was obtained.

Rubens, Velasquez, Cüyp, and Titian, were not *chalkists*—they belonged to the golden age; yet, even after death, undue means were resorted to to convert *them!* According to report, † M*****y is a chalkist, E**y is a chalkist, L*****r is a chalkist, and S*****d is a chalkist. The Keeper's fame rests upon chalk, and the great President himself, so far as can be gathered from the intemperately written documents produced, inclines to the side of chalk. N*****n (not Sir Isaac) has delivered a paper signifying his satisfaction at

† Whoever will read this attentively through may be convinced—as has before been advanced—that a *Crusade* is going on against ancient Art.

chalk ; though it finishes with a modest reservation which renders his opinion less weighty and hardly to be considered. It is but one *dot* more added to the millions he has before inflicted upon the elephant's tooth. *Art-Union* is a chalkist : he may really be said to be at the bottom of the pit itself, "hand, head, and heart," and all.*

We have said that E**y is a chalkist ; so he is, and something more, which it would be very difficult, if possible, to describe. But the best chance of making the discovery lies in going straightway to the British Institution, now open, in Pall Mall, and placing one's self before a——(?) in the left-hand upper corner of the north room, called a Magdalen !

The chalkists, even, are fond of gold in a certain way ; but it should be obtained honestly : and though sometimes called *dirt*, we do protest against their putting it into their purses by robbing us of what we possessed by lawful inheritance. Poor

* A. U. fond of illustration to an excess, though applied only to the simplest tale that ever lady told—a sort of *butter-upon-bacon* taste, we confess—has enlisted *Minerva* herself as a head-piece to the yellow cover. Somewhat bold this, since the goddess belongs elsewhere ; but she will remain her time. And to create further richness, we suggest for a tail-piece another of the mythology, *Momus*—in the propriety of which, every one will acquiesce who has waded through one number.

Rubens! so rich before, is not left with as much to shew as would coin into a half-sovereign! *

III.

STREET NUISANCES.

THE chalkists are in great force in Pall Mall, and do require watching. They have lately accumulated there such a heap of the dazzling matter, as to be painful to all eyes that look upon it. The nuisance would be intolerable, were it not likely that the greater part would soon be *burnt* for lime—or something else.

IV.

A GOLDEN DREAM.

WE slept—and the most delicious visions of warmth and harmonious brightness floated through the brain the while; but waking, after the sad month of October, we were made to feel, in stern

Vide his allegory of "Peace and War."

reality, the oppression of chilling rawness that had been prepared for us. Some would say the change was seasonable! Poor credulists!

When Marsyas submitted to his suffering, could the mockery have been added of assuring him he would recover from its effects very soon? *

V.

HARMLESS APPLICATIONS.

WE do not forget that St. John Long, the renowned Quack, possessed a *hocus-pocus* sponge, which it was said, by being saturated with milk alone, acquired the admirable property, with gentle friction, of scarifying young ladies, even to the death. What became of this precious relic, after the good doctor's demise, we never heard; but rather suspect it descended to Messrs. Seguier and Brown, together with a supply of the milk. Possibly Punch could tell.

* The healing plaster recommended in the "Copy of Minutes of the Trustees, &c." (p. 15), is to be derived from "Time" and "an impure atmosphere acting on fresh varnish!"

VI.

A DISAGREEMENT AMONG DOCTORS.

LONG arguments have been adduced in certain quarters to prove the non-existence of glazings in painting; longer still to shew that these imaginary portions of a picture are dirt, or muddy varnish; and longest of all, to make it appear that the said repudiated glazings had not been interfered with!

VII.

“SOME PEOPLE HAVE A COMFORTABLE
CREED.”—BYRON.

IT cannot be said exactly that any trustees could be made to believe that black is white; but it does seem possible, from what we hear and see, to satisfy the minds of some that the rawest white possesses the warmth and glow of orange or Aurora. It may be, too, they have heard of the favourite expressions so bandied about of late, viz. “fresh grey” and “pearly grey,” assumed as generic, and alike applicable to all pictures: but

might they not have guessed that they belong rather to the sun of morning than that of evening, and in which Rubens, with some others, delighted so much? Only think of a "fresh grey sunset," and what a confused idea is conjured up!*

VIII.

AN ADDITION IF NOT A CORRECTION.

PEARLY GREY may be found in the greatest perfection amid the glowing richness of Rubens' fine landscape with the château, in the National Gallery; but it is seen through the now exploded warmth of transparent colour or *glazing*. Remove that, and it becomes *leaden grey*.

IX.

IMPORTANCE OF NAMES.

WOULD not the widow *Crump* have rejoiced, could she but lawfully have changed her name

* Since error is to be dreaded when introduced by a single voice, what may not our fears be if it shall be sanctioned and led forward by influential combination?

for the euphony of *Somerville* or *Sidney*? And the plebeian *Lancret*, would he not have chuckled on being received as the aristocratic, courtly *Watteau*? But it might not be; and *Crump* is still *Crump*; and *Lancret*, *Lancret*! Who in the world is that presumptuous being who fancied he would be *Holbein*? Shakespeare has said something about “a rose with any other name,” and so on. Most truly said it is, and it were well to be more considered in the purchase of a picture; but no less true is it, we opine, that nettles must not be mistaken for roses: there is no carrying the necessary odour along with them; and a sting will stick to them to the last.

X.

OUT OF RECKONING.

IT has been ignorantly supposed that the National Gallery is a depository of fine and perfect pictures of a former age, established for general admiration as well as general instruction; and that guardians were expressly appointed to watch over and protect them from injury and alteration. This is a sad mistake,—a tale that *Punch* might have

told *to the marines*,—since it has been found to be merely an hospital for the decrepid and imperfect, where doctors (it is to be hoped, the most skilful within reach) are always in attendance with their nostrums, and instruments for dissection and flaying.

 XI.

“ BIRDS OF A FEATHER,” ETC.

THIS adage has never been doubted,—still, of late, it has taken so *endearing* a turn, that we think there must be something more than common at the bottom of it. “ Dear sir,” and “ Dear E——,” and “ My dear E——,” pass to and fro in such rapid succession, that one might be led to suspect a conspiracy of kindness. This is all very cheap to the easy conscience, and so also may it be held by all of us, if only in the end we are not called upon to pay for it too DEARLY.

 XII.

FAMILIAR LETTER TO PUNCH.

DEAR MR. P.

(Though perhaps *you* do not like the *Dear*, officially used), but never mind: what I

want is, to express to you my admiration—that yours is a journal not altogether *one-sided*, nor *changing-sided*, nor indifferent to *all sides*, and having the reverential bow (the Scotch write it boo) ever ready for the *powers that be*. Had all others been equally honest, many letters might have been produced before the Trustees for their guidance in the late picture question—and wholly divested of the suspicious *Dears*—that would have stayed for awhile their complaisant acquiescence. You remember, I'm sure, in days long past, the *Rejected Addresses* collected and presented to us by the admirable brothers (Smith). Why not, in your searching way, look after, and lay before us a few of the *Rejected Letters?* which could not fail, at the present moment of uncertainty occasioned by mystification and intrigue, to be most kindly received.

Yours,

WHOEVER YOU WILL!

XIII.

IDLENESS OCCASIONALLY GOOD.

WE have been told that “Titian’s Bacchus and Ariadne has been rather undercleaned than otherwise,” but might not the operator have been a little

stinted in time? or his phials have been empty? He had the precept of Reynolds before him for staying his hand in doing, and why not, he may have thought, in undoing? Pictures, as well as verses, can be polished into great flatness. However, we will for once suppose him to have been seized with a fit of the “*dolce far niente*,” at the moment of stopping his *precious* labours, and we are ourselves even, vagabond or charitable enough to wish it had occurred while engaged in the melting compliments to Rubens, Velasquez, and Cüyp. It would be unreasonable in any case to desire the overworking of one who had before displayed such industry. We are not—and we know it—to ride a willing horse (or any other animal, it may be supposed) to death; who then, for an instant, would hesitate to spare the man?

XIV.

COLOUR OF THE EYES.

IT is a curious fact, and one, perhaps, not generally known, that black eyes are most unfavourable to the arts. So firmly is this fixed in our minds, that we have long held it to be the most important truth revealed by *astrology*. Fancy an

unlucky wight, without this knowledge, being in the mind to give an artist a trifling commission to the amount of a few hundreds; and with it, having the power of ascertaining the prudence of such a step.

Blue eyes are oftenest to be relied upon, though they are not insisted on as a *sine quá non*; and any shade of *grey*, though not positively “fresh or pearly,” must not be at once repudiated, and may conduct their owner in a right direction. All we would advise is, to look with suspicion upon the *black*, and test the truth or fallacy by all around. O John Varley, of pleasant memory!

XV.

ETHER.

THERE are strong indications that the active spirits of the National Gallery are presuming a little too far upon the new and important discovery in the use of ether, and they should hear, that with all their art pain may result from it in some quarter or other. “What!” say they, “can mere canvass and panel suffer under operation, while flesh and blood are exempt?” Indeed it may be so—and so it has been sadly proved! Sympathy

for the victims avails but little now; yet it may be mentioned for future notice, that the skill and excellence of surgery lies in *preserving*, not *maiming*.

XVI.

WINE AND PICTURES.

IF you would make your *new meagre wine* pass muster with your friends, be cautious in keeping the rich old standards out of the way, otherwise you must resort to the trick of adulterating them. Is this maxim singular in its application?

XVII.

USEFUL CAUTION.

TAKE care of your fine old drawings and prints! Your fine old pictures are approaching the vanishing point.

NOTE.—We have heard enough of “glazing;” a term, unworthily mystified as it has been, to veil from common sense a daring injury committed. The simple truth (and there is no dirty varnish upon that) just amounts to this,—a

picture is commonly constructed partly of solid, and partly of transparent colours: and it matters not to inquire into their preparation or application,—they are simply *solid* and *tender*. Enough to know that the latter of these have small power of resistance against the hateful solvents applied, and are thus easily carried away by them, to the destruction of the whole work, as has been unhappily the case of late with several of the pictures in the National Gallery. Rubens' Letters have been tortured, to no purpose, in the vain hope of extenuation.

One of the small-fry Editors, who have undertaken the unclean task of upholding the present abuse of power,—these scavengers for a clique,—asks with arrogance, meant for argument, “What do the ‘people,’ including amateurs, CONNOISSEURS, collectors, and dealers, *know* about the mechanical and artistical combinations that produce a picture?” We, the “people,” &c. tell *his Sapience* he had better let pictures alone, and, having declared himself of the scrubbing fraternity, give his French a good *rubbing up*. If, however, he will be at work unadvisedly, let him try his hand upon his own *greasy-golden* decaying *gums of the varnish*:* which would puzzle even the National Gallery cleaners, with their best energies, to disentangle or sweep away.

* *Vide*—A. U. January 1847, p. 34.





