

# **The barber's shop / [R.W. Proctor] ; illustrated by William Morton.**

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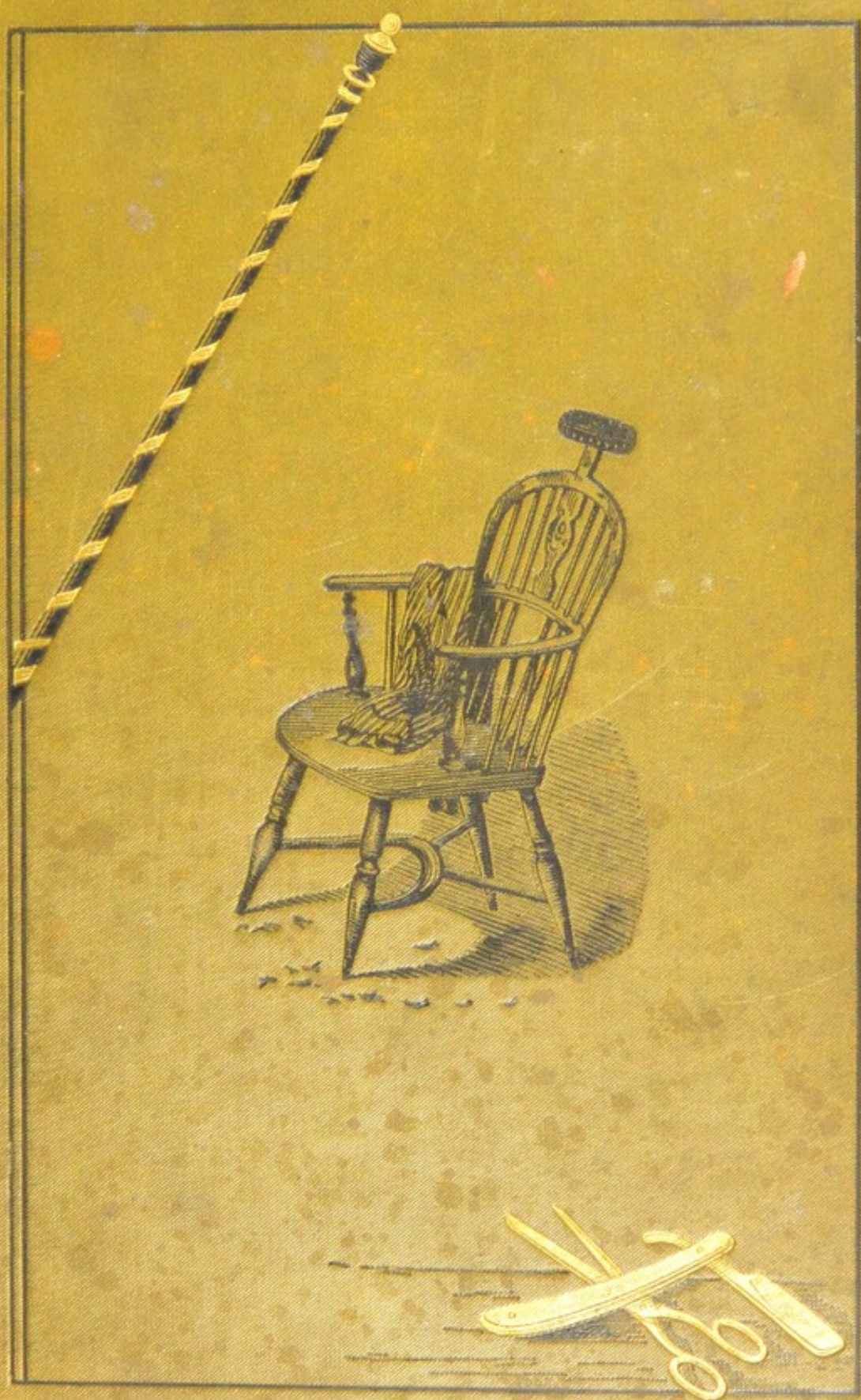
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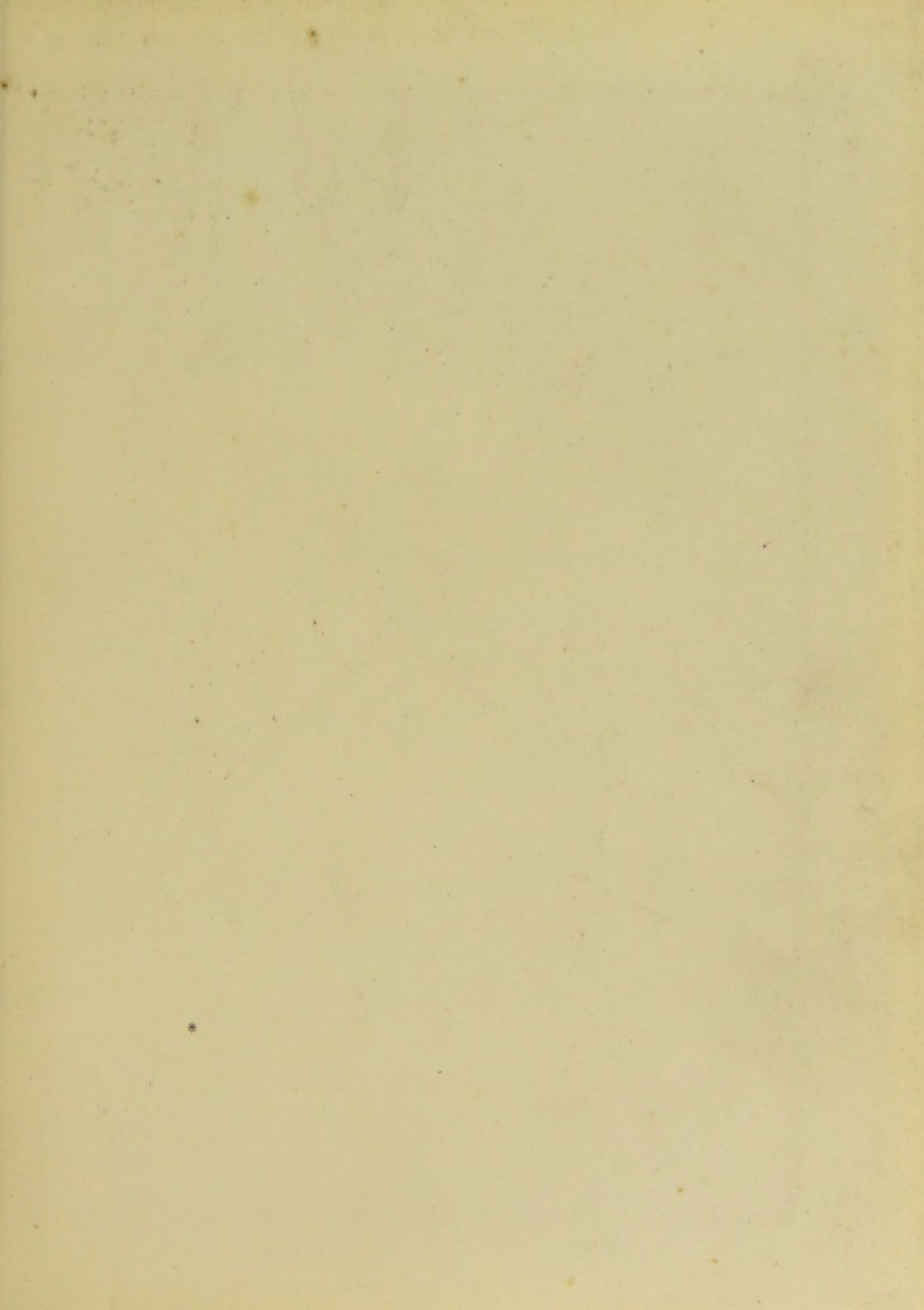


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THE BARBER'S SHOP.













THE  
BARBER'S SHOP:

BY

RICHARD WRIGHT PROCTER.

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM MORTON.

---

"TRIFLES, LIGHT AS (H)AIR."—*Othello*.

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REVISED AND ENLARGED,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY WILLIAM E. A. AXON.

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**Manchester :**

ABEL HEYWOOD & SON, 56 & 58, OLDHAM STREET

**London :**

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL & CO.

1883.

2280  
MOCTER, Richard Wright (1816-81)  
BARBERING  
BEARDS

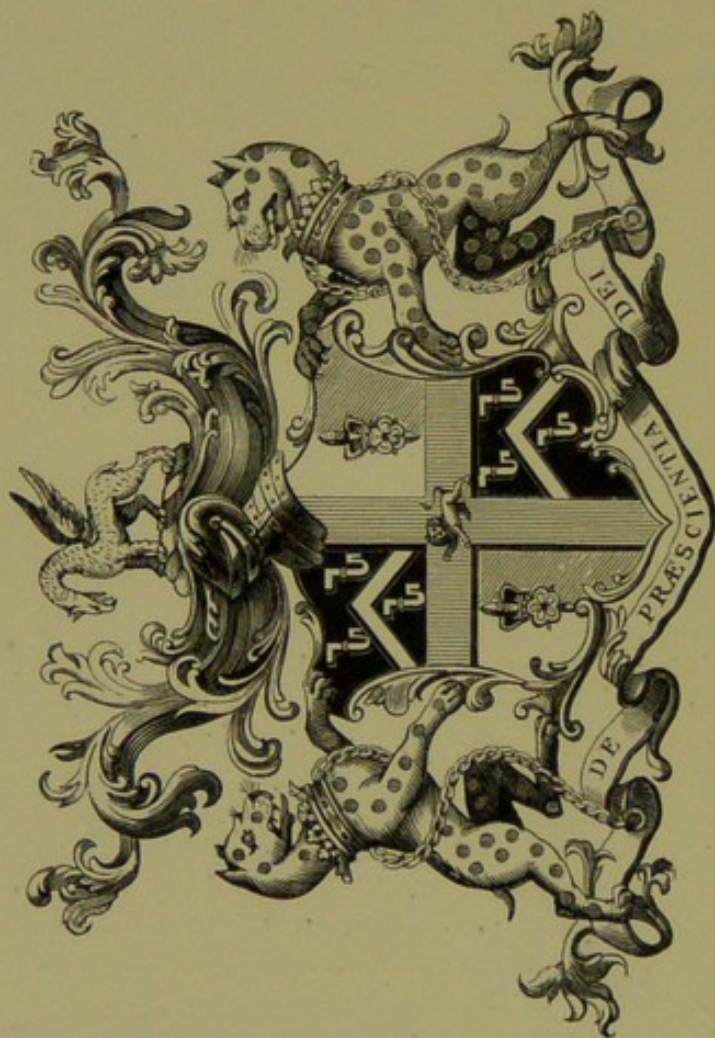


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BARBERS' ARMS. (From a Trade Form issued at Barbers' Hall.)



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## ADVERTISEMENT.

IN offering to the public this greatly enlarged edition of the late Mr. Procter's "Barber's Shop," the publishers desire to say that the MS. had been carefully prepared for the press by its author, and that it has been followed with scrupulous exactness. The illustrations include several etchings and some additional wood engravings, chiefly from drawings by the author's friend and artistic colleague, Mr. William Morton. The book has been seen through the press by another of Mr. Procter's friends, Mr. William E. A. Axon, who has prefixed to it a biographical sketch of the author.





*IN MEMORIAM.*

*Hush ! I will give you this leaf to keep :*

*See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand !*

*There, that is our secret : go to sleep !*

*You will wake, and remember, and understand.*

1881.





IN MEMORIAM :

RICHARD WRIGHT PROCTER.

AMONGST the literary worthies of Manchester, an honourable place must always be assigned to the author of "The Barber's Shop," who did much to foster a popular taste for local history, and whose life was itself an interesting example of the beneficial and refining effects of the love of literature.

RICHARD WRIGHT PROCTER was born 19th December, 1816, in Paradise Vale, at the foot of Green Bank, near Broughton Bridge, Salford. This is now a densely populated and dingy district, but its bygone rural attractions are still recorded in such place names as Wheat Hill, Spring Field, Garden Lane, Posy Street, and others that smack of fair meadows and country lanes.

His education was begun in one of the "dame's schools," then almost the only provision for the training of young children. When about six years old he received occasional lessons in a school conducted by Mr. Ralph Crompton, at Bury. His impressions of Bury he has recorded in one of his later Books, and has included in it a graphic portrait of his uncle, who was resident there—"A robust practical person, with a trifle of eccentricity in his manner, and with a partiality for brevity of speech,"

who was chary of words but generous of deeds. PROCTER'S father died in 1823, and his mother endeavoured to gain him admission as a blue coat boy at Chetham's Hospital, but his scanty and spasmodic opportunities for instruction had not qualified him for a scholarship.

He has left an account of this anxious period :—  
 "About the close of my eighth year we removed from Salford to Manchester ; at that period my mother's health was seriously impaired, and she endeavoured to secure, ere the crisis of her death arrived, an asylum for me in Chetham's College. But as her anxious efforts in that direction proved fruitless, she turned her attention to a scholarship of minor value at the Lancasterian School, where my stay was exceedingly brief. It was about this time that my mother, accepting the invitation of her kinsfolk, spent a few weeks on her native Fell Side. During the absence of my mother and two brothers I was left in the charge of an acquaintance named Slack, who lived at the first house in Bradshaw Street, Shude-hill. Mr. Slack was a teacher at the School attached to Every Street Chapel, Ancoats, and on this long journey I accompanied him every Sunday morning. At his home my daily reading lesson was a consecutive chapter in the Bible. His garret was occupied as a Commercial School by Mr. Francis Looney, a superior instructor, who kindly gave me a daily lesson in writing. In the following year (after a strange series of vicissitudes on my part in the meantime), I had again the pleasure of meeting Mr. Looney at the shop of David Dodd, with whom he was a customer and neighbour. Again, too, he set me oc-



casional copies in writing, drawing, and pen-printing. In the latter art I attained some proficiency, and, changing the pen for the graver, reaped from it some pecuniary advantage, chiefly cutting letters and emblems on glasses, at a certain recompence per dozen."

In 1826 his mother died, and in the same year, when he was only nine years and two months old, he was apprenticed to a hairdresser, and he followed that business almost to the end of his life.

In the "Barber's Shop" he has sketched with much vividness and humour the character of his master, David Dodd, and the many odd customers who frequented his shop. In another unpublished note he says:—"It was at one of David's customary carousals in those early days that he, seeing a readiness on my part to drain beer jugs, and to light pipes in order that I might take puffs at the tobacco, gave me my will at both, to surfeit and cure me. He succeeded in his aim. I was then the merest boy, but certainly I have never smoked pipe or cigar since; nor have I once been 'over the line' with liquor, although liking and enjoying a friendly glass occasionally. In this way, I believe, confectioners wean their boys from the love of sweet-meat, and the plan seems worthy of adoption by other persons."

MR. PROCTER has himself told how keen was his boyish hunger for literature. His first bookish purchase was made at a stall in Shudehill Market, where he bought a twopenny number of the *Mirror* at half price. This was the first of a long series of purchases by which he accumulated a somewhat large, though very miscellaneous



collection of books. He thus became acquainted with the eccentric "Old Jacob"—whose portrait he has very graphically sketched,—with Wroe, the reformer, who in four months had thirteen processes for libel,—with James Weatherley, and others of the bookselling fraternity. To these "mousings" amongst books he owed some of the careful finish of his style. The boy's literary tastes did not, however, prevent him from the enjoyment of more worldly pleasures, and "the turf, the stage, and the ring" were of them. Several pugilists were amongst the regular visitors to the shop, and to their narratives he seems to have given a greedy ear. He was also an attender at the old Kersal Moor races, and had a vivid remembrance of the green and gold of Mr. Thomas Houldsworth. His first attempts at authorship were made in the columns of the *Manchester and Salford Advertiser*. "I have," he says, "the partiality of a first affection for the editor (the late Mr. G. Condy). It was in his pages that I emerged from the chrysalis state of manuscript into the glory of full-blown print. Fired with my successful beginning, I tilted my Pegasus in all directions as wildly and as wisely as Quixote tilted at the windmill. My vernal effusions were inflicted upon most newspapers and magazines in the district, many an editorial sanctum being no doubt illuminated at my expense. A rhyming Robin Hood, I was continually aiming at the Poet's Corner; and although I frequently missed my mark, now and then the target was pierced much to my satisfaction. Restless with anxiety as to the fate of my contributions, I have often heard old James



Williams pushing the *Advertiser* underneath our door so early as four o'clock on Saturday morning. Leaping out of bed at the welcome sound, I have turned the paper to the familiar page, and placed my hand over the poetical department, so that my happiness or misery might be gradually revealed, and not overpower me with its sudden fulness." He adopted "Sylvan" as his *nom de plume*, and has himself made pleasant allusion to his quest into the region of verse. "The rhymes of this anonymous minstrel have never been printed collectively upon foolscap, nor bound in calf, nor lettered with dubious veracity 'Poetical Works,' consequently they have escaped the critical hands who knock down books (like ninepins in a skittle alley) as fast as they stand up for judgment. Yet, in his spring-time, friends (usually indulgent and often indiscreet) were desirous that his metrical pieces should be published, promising to procure a list of subscribers sufficient to exhaust a small edition. . . . With discretion superior to his years, and with more firmness of purpose than Eve displayed before the tempter in Eden, the nameless youth declined the alluring yet fatal apple. . . . Thus Sylvan's effusions remain scattered abroad, maintaining a vagrant kind of existence. True gipsies of literature, they have long nestled in the retired nooks and poets' corners of newspapers, or have pitched their nameless tent among the sheltering leaves of magazines."

His verse earned the warm admiration of Ebenezer Elliott, but he himself has said :—" Since the new light of poesy broke upon my intellect, perhaps no piece of mine



xx. *IN MEMORIAM: R. W. PROCTER.*

has yielded me more pleasure than did a simple Christmas hymn, which was adapted to an impressive tune by my Sunday School companions, and sung at my door one Christmas morning, thus gradually awakening me from my sleep. There was a mystical charm about that awaking which is still remembered. In that instance poetry was indeed its own reward. The refrain rang through my dreaming ears like angel music :—

He lived—example pure to give ;  
He died—that we might Time outlive."

About 1836 Mr. PROCTER—then in his twentieth year—appears to have been interested in the "temperance cause," and many contributions, in verse, from his pen appeared in the *Manchester and Salford Temperance Journal*, which had also Charles Swain, Isabella Varley, and Henry Anderton amongst its supporters.

In 1840 he married at St. Mary's Church, in the Parsonage, Eliza Waddington, of Salford, who died in 1867. The young couple sought to add something to the income derived from the razor, and towards the close of the year he bought the remains of what had been a circulating library. "Sylvan" and his good wife busied themselves in cleaning, in covering with paper or cloth, and in making good in MS. the leaves that were missing in print, and so restored some of the cripples to active service. The couple of hundred volumes so obtained were afterwards augmented by the purchase of a thousand volumes from Mr. Penks, who was giving up his circulating library. It was not until July 13, 1845, that he was able



to record in his diary:—"‘Out of debt, out of danger,’ is a notable axiom. I have this morning cleared away the last of my little incumbrances, and now stand perfectly free and independent of the world. It is a proud hour; for after a persevering up-hill struggle, I have at length reached the table-land. How soothing to my tread are the flowers which have strewed my path in perspective so many years!" He now ventured to come out professionally, by placing a sign above his windows, on which might be read in conspicuous gold character, "R. W. PROCTER'S Library."

He continued to keep open this modest temple of literature after he had given up, some years previous to his death, the business of hairdresser.

He was not one of the mob of gentlemen who write with ease. On the contrary, he wrote slowly and corrected with careful anxiety as to the niceties of phrase and construction. He preferred to revise and polish his thoughts whilst they were in MS. When they had passed from his hands the matter still occupied him, and he was sometimes anxious to change an inadequate synonym for one that more fully expressed his exact shade of meaning. His care in such matters, though not finical, was far greater than is common in an age of quick writing and careless reading. Of his desire to be exact to have *the* word that would convey his meaning and present his thought in the precise garb that he thought would best impress the reader, many examples came within my own experience during the long years of our friendship.



In later years he was a literary recluse. Content with the retirement of his little back parlour, the companionship of his books, and the pleasures of his compositions, he declined all invitations to social enjoyment, from whatever quarter they might come. At one period he occasionally presented himself at the meetings in Old Millgate, whence has sprung the present flourishing Manchester Literary Club. But nothing in later years could overcome the inherent shyness of his nature, and whilst gratefully acknowledging the kindness of his friends he steadily declined their hospitalities. Once only in later years was he known to break through these hermit habits, and then it was to visit a friend who was detained by sickness in his own home. Long will the memory of the pleasant afternoon dwell in my mind.

He was naturally shy and sensitive, but when this outward crust of reserve was penetrated, he became a charming companion. He could talk as well as write, and the same quaint fanciful and gentle humour which gives interest to his books permeated his talk. His conversation like his writings was full of memories of bygone Manchester.

For the Millgate in which so many years of his life had been passed he had a special reverence, and liked to linger upon the many memories that clustered round its ancient gables, most of which have now disappeared or are likely to disappear. The remembrances of Wood the pedestrian were mingled with those of the Wilsons, those early and facile singers of Lancashire men and manners; of the eccentric Joshua Brooks, and of John Critchley



Prince, who once occupied a miserable garret in this street. If he delighted to recall the bygone glories of a time when the Millgate stood amid pleasant fields, with rural stiles, and was the abode of wealth and fashion, still more was he pleased to conjure up those men whose names have given it a lasting connection with the literary history of the district. He had been the true friend of most of that group which included John Bolton Rogerson, Sam Bamford, John Critchley Prince, and some who, like William Rowlinson and Thomas Arkell Tidmarsh were called away before they could justify the praises and the hopes excited by their early efforts. Of those who met at the "Poet's Corner" few now survive. The effusions read at these meetings were collected into a volume called the "Festive Wreath," which is now a rare and highly-prized book. To this Mrs. Linnæus Banks—then Miss Isabella Varley—and others also contributed. Mr. PROCTER'S circulating library not only contained the novels demanded by his customers but many local books of importance. The works of those we have named and the earlier literary periodicals of the district were amongst them. The most important portions of Mr. PROCTER'S library has found a home in the Manchester Free Library. Some of his local tracts were very rare, as for instance the *Phoenix* and the *Falcon*. The latter is believed to be the only copy in existence, and Mr. PROCTER has added to its value by appending in his neat handwriting the names of the contributors.

The singular minuteness of his information, his unrelaxing, painstaking industry, and the exactness of his



statements, are abundantly exemplified in two large and handsome volumes, "Manchester Streets" and "Bygone Manchester." These are, in fact, collections of a long series of articles which he contributed to the *Manchester Guardian*. Throughout these valuable and interesting records his style is lucid and somewhat quaint, and the humorous element is not obtrusive, but constantly bubbles up. Pervading all is a gentle and delicate vein of sentiment. There is a poetical aroma characterising everything that proceeded from his graceful pen. His publications were not numerous. In 1855 he issued a small volume entitled "Gems of Thought and Flowers of Fancy," his aim being to bring together all his favourite poems of various English writers into one book. Two—the first and the last—pieces are his own. Shortly afterwards appeared "The Barber's Shop," with illustrations by William Morton. This was his favourite work, and in subsequent years he continued to add to its store of biographical gossip and quaint reflection, so that the new edition now offered to the public may almost claim to be a new work, so largely has it been augmented.

In 1860 he published his "Literary Reminiscences;" in 1862, "Our Turf, Stage, and Ring;" in 1866, "Manchester in Holiday Dress;" in 1874, "Manchester Streets;" and in 1880, "Bygone Manchester." To do justice to these books it is requisite that the reader should constantly bear in mind the object of their genial and chatty writer. Whoever expects to find in them a methodical history of the events which have transformed a small manorial village into a mighty city will be grievously



disappointed, and equally fruitless will be the labour expended upon it by any seeker after guide-book lore. Mr. PROCTER is neither historian nor systematic cicerone, but a pleasant gossip upon the days that are no more. The *Zeitgeist* has touched him indeed, but only lightly, and with the very edge of her wing. His eyes are turned to the past, and his delight is to turn away from the rushing tide of human life which foams through the great city, and to watch the peaceful meandering of the pellucid stream which ran through the olden village, wherein the foundation was laid of the commercial supremacy of our nation. The great charm of the book is contrast. Those who are familiar only with the Manchester of to-day—one of the most modern places in existence—in turning over these pages will continually be startled and amused by the evidences of a former state of affairs now almost beyond conception. Arm in arm with our author we wander through the few streets which formed Old Manchester. The present disappears; the warehouses—stately palaces of commerce—vanish “as at the touch of an enchanter’s wand;” and in their place rise the quaint burgages of those whose fair daughters tempted the Flemings from their marshy fields. Lounging at the doors (for “fine old Leisure” was not then dead) stand well-to-do townsmen in doublet and hose, chatting, it may be, with some demure damsels, and raising their caps to the lady in ruff and farthingale who sweeps by on her way to church. A quaint old town it was, with a fine church, at whose foot ran a shining river glittering in the summer sunshine, and sparkling with many-



coloured fish—a quaint old town, with a bridle for refractory scolds, and a ducking-stool for still more unmanageable termagants, with a dungeon for recusants and a gallows for thieves. Through the old streets we wander, and listen to Mr. PROCTER as he tells us of their origin, and of the more modern associations which have clustered round them.

Mr. PROCTER'S life was spent almost entirely in the city, but the choice of his early pseudonym of "Sylvan" shows a love of the green trees and the fresh air. It may be his country rambles were enjoyed with a keener zest because of their unfrequency. Thus he says:—"Once, and once only, we chanced to be at Cartmel—a sea-girt valley reached by crossing the sands from Lancaster, and placed at the foot of the Fells which herald the grand mountain range of the Lake District. It was Sunday; the stillness was impressive, and as we loitered among the mounds and headstones and scattered sheep the bell rang out for morning service, and we entered the ancient priory church. One member of the limited congregation was the lord of the neighbouring lands (the Earl of Burlington)\* paying due homage to the Lord of all. During the sermon birds were flying from opened window to window, or singing on the war-worn banner, as it waved fitfully from the ceiling. Here and there, along the aisles, were monumental brasses, which shone in the vivid sunlight. Though all this might be commonplace to the isolated villagers, the scene afforded to us, who had passed our Sundays busily within a crowded city, an

\* The present Duke of Devonshire.



agreeable specimen of Sabbath life in the country. It was a glimpse of a fresher existence—a breathing of a purer atmosphere than we had hitherto shared.” In such rambles—only too rare,—in company with some congenial spirit like “Old Mortality” (Mr. John Owen, to whom he dedicated the “Memorials of Manchester Streets”) or with his artist friend of earlier years, Mr. William Morton, who illustrated many of his books, he would find refreshment and inspiration.

He lost something by the absence of communion with his fellows, with those who would gladly have recognised his worth and rendered to him the homage due to his talents and to his blameless life. There was latterly even a pessimistic flavour about his writing, but it was held in constant check by a genial spirit and popular sympathies. He was a regular attender at the Chetham's Library and the City Library, where he was frequently to be seen on the Sunday evenings, revelling in some old world records. His last visit to Chetham's venerable foundation was on the 23rd of August, 1881. His interest in literature continued to the end. About a week before his death he sent a note to the *Palatine Note Book* about one of De Quincey's early stories. When this article appeared in the October number its writer was in the grave. He was particularly gratified to receive from the then Mayor of Manchester (now Sir Thomas Baker) an invitation to meet Mr. Harrison Ainsworth at the banquet given to the Lancashire Novelist, in the Town Hall, September 15th, 1881. Mr. PROCTER spoke of this shortly before his death. He died on Sunday the 11th

xxviii. *IN MEMORIAM: R. W. PROCTER.*

of September, 1881, and on the following Wednesday was buried at St. Luke's churchyard, Cheetham Hill. Mr. PROCTER's death removed from Manchester a notable man, for this quiet and unobtrusive citizen rendered good service to the community. Those of his own circle, narrow only by his own wish, lamented the loss not only of an accomplished writer but of a steadfast friend, whilst the city at large deplored the death of one who had devoted himself with unfailing energy and love to the task of recording the fast fading memories of her ancient days.

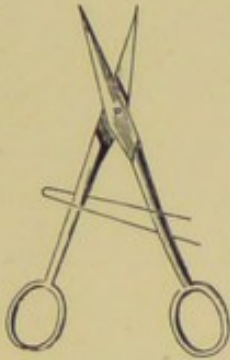
W. E. A. A.



## PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

“



PREFACE," says D'Israeli, in his *Curiosities of Literature*, "being the entrance to a book, should invite by its beauty. An elegant porch announces the splendour of the interior." This is admirable advice for an architect, who possesses the organ of constructive-

ness, and trades on it ; but what can the poll of a barber possess in common with a porch—or how shall it extract beauty and similitude from a splendid interior? If D'Israeli had said plainly that a preface should be bright and keen as a razor, yet soothing as honey soap ; long and graceful as ringlets, yet short and crispy as crop-hair ; that its component parts should harmonise withal, like the two halves of a pair of weeding scissors when neatly riveted : why, then I might have more fully realised his ideal in my prefatory matter.

Taking leave of D'Israeli, and also of banter, I cannot help feeling seriously that at the present time the literary standard is high, and that practised hands are exceedingly clever—higher and cleverer in prose than in poetry ; so if inclined I might here imitate to advantage the diffident style usually adopted by beginners, and assure the public that, writing only for my own individual amusement, I have no idea of winning an audience ; that I publish to please my friends, not to gratify my ambition. But as such assertions would lack sincerity, no one who plumes himself on being an honest speaker could make use of them. Never yet was there an author who wrote without the hope of being read : neither do I. To be read, and to be worthy of the reader's attention, are my chief aims.

A word of acknowledgment is due to Mr. MORTON, and to Mr. LANGTON, for their illustrations, which are specimens of what Manchester can produce in pictorial Design and Engraving. It may be, that some persons, while caring little for the author's portion of the book, will yet prize the pictures, and shall thus be induced to save the tares for the sake of the wheat. When we sail in a leaky vessel, we should not forget the life-preservers.

R. W. P.

*Royal Oak, and Peace*

*Rejoicing Day, 1856.*



## PREFACE

TO THE REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION.

"It comes again."—*Hamlet*.



PEN and a Pencil, becoming united, produced an original little book, which was given with becoming diffidence to the world.

The aforesaid Pen and Pencil are much indebted to the gentlemen of the press, who received the tiny tonsorial venture with kindly approval. In return for such evidences of *good taste*, we greet them with an Eastern salutation indicative of good feeling: "May their shadows never be less."

Not entirely for our performance, but rather for the promise indicated, was, we believe, the critical encouragement given. In the present edition, therefore, we have conscientiously put forth our best endeavours for the purpose of expanding our literary and pictorial blossom into fruit. Much of the leisure of many years (during which space of time countless "new-born chins have

grown rough and razorable") has been given, since the date of its first appearance, to the maturing of the work.

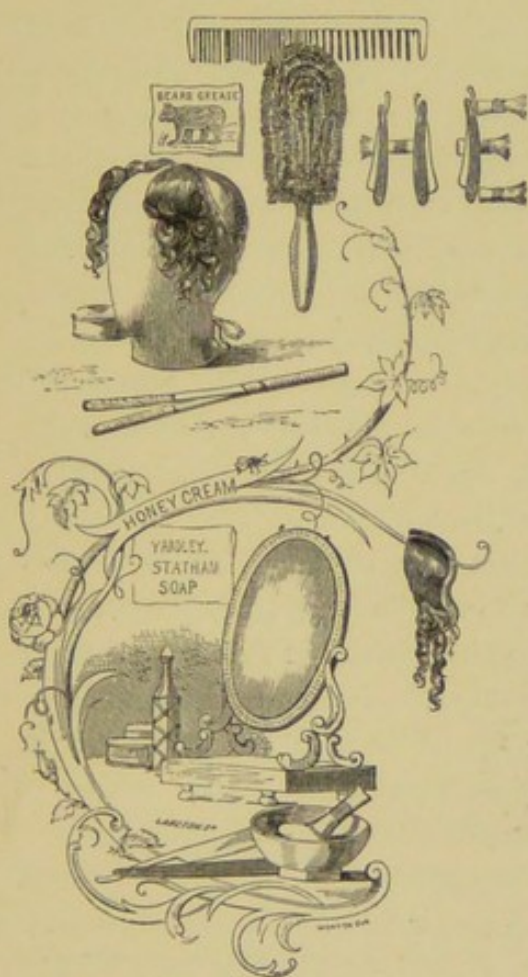
For permission to copy various memorials of the Barbers' Company, and for certain items of information, we are indebted to the courtesy of the officials in charge of the historic Hall, in Monkwell Street.

R. W. P.



## CHAPTER I.

THE BARBER'S CLERK TAKES UP THE PEN IN LIEU OF  
THE LATHER BRUSH.



BARBER'S SHOP  
has always been a favourite and convenient house of call—in a literary sense—for authors of every grade, country, and period, from the dreamy time of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," and of their immortal hero, the barber-surgeon of Bagdad, to Don Quixote de la Mancha, with his shaving basin of glittering brass; from Gil Blas of Santillane to Roderick Random and Tom Jones; and downward even to our

own day. In the same category may be included the genial British Essayists, and even—

Sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child ;

for tonsorial allusions are scattered through his plays almost as thickly as the famous autumnal leaves were strewn upon the brooks of Milton's Vallombrosa ; and who seems never more happy than when peering into the shop, or when making his characters perform their wit contests within the shadow of its pole. According to one of his recent editors, the undying dramatist was much nearer to the shop than, with all his marvellous prescience, he would dream of or approve ; for it appears that his own Anne Hathaway, when a widow, re-married with one Richard James, barber and peruquier.\* Butler, also, has displayed a lingering fancy for beards, periwigs and barbers. On recently looking over his "*Hudibras*," I was impressed by his frequent allusions to that favourite ensign of manhood, the beard. I had previously read the witty Cavalier epic without noticing the peculiarity referred to ; but then that first reading was in the far-away days when I was "juvenile and curly," when my beard was as viewless as the Invisible Prince, and when my whiskers were as yet—like the good time coming,—afar off. So numerous are Butler's references to hair in its manifold forms, that I fancied he had been originally a trimmer of that commodity, and had thus become familiar with the hirsute appendages he loved to dwell

\* *Athenæum*, June 5th, 1858. Another commentator protests against the barber-ous story. Will the "learned Thebans" ever agree when treating of matters Shakesperian ?



on. Probably the best description extant of a beard is that of the Puritan knight's : it is quaintly elaborated, almost every hair being analysed and furnished with a meaning. "To Philip Nye's Thanksgiving Beard" is also rendered full justice in a separate poem. The idea, however, of Butler being a hair-dresser is speedily set at rest by a reference to the "Lives of the Poets," wherein he is briefly described as the son of a British yeoman, from whom he received such scholarly education as a limited income would allow ; and, further, that he spent most of his life in the houses of great families. Still, although Samuel Butler never cropped Roundhead or trained the flowing locks of Cavalier, it is quite evident he possessed the taste and genius requisite for shining in the hair-dresser's shop, had he not taken to poetry in preference.

The barber's shop has proved a kind of wayside stile, where the aforesaid authors, while musing over their deathless books, have rested and diverted themselves during their mental journeys, leaving a kindly wish or a pleasing reminiscence for the benefits received. So often, too, has the genial owner of the shop been introduced to our notice, that it would be an easy task to raise a visionary troop, or form a shadowy procession, of the lively craftsmen. Mercury, the first acknowledged shaver, would, of course, claim priority in the march. The second and third worthies must needs be Crusellus, our famous trade oracle of ancient Rome, and Silence, the charming prattler of the city of the Caliphs, who, with open razor in hand, sang the song and danced the dance of the Zantout. Surely this loquacious Silence



was the identical operator with whom King Archelaus stipulated to be shaven mutely and in peace ; surely, again, he was descended in a direct line from King Midas's barber, who, out of his mere love of communication, whispered to the earth that the Phrygian monarch wore the ears of an ass. Conspicuous amongst the followers of Mercury, Crusellus, and Silence would be found an Imperial amateur operator, the Emperor Commodus ; and as he claimed to be unequalled upon earth, he would walk alone in shadow-land. The merry Figaro of Seville, and the barber-baron of Germany (who had erst been friseur-general to the gods and goddesses of the theatre), would be succeeded by the trusty Strap and the patient Partridge, duly paired. Next, Burchiello the Florentine, and Allan Ramsay ; then Sir Richard Arkwright and Lord St. Leonards. Barber George, the fistic champion, and Bat Pidgeon, would clear the way for Don Saltero and Jasmin the tonsor-troubadour. Side-by-side, the shining lights of the metropolis, Day and Martin ; also our three courtiers in chief, to wit, the versatile genius who curled the locks and won the favours of Nusseer ood Deen, late King of Oude ; Olivier le Dain, originally the haircutter and afterwards the favourite of Louis the Eleventh ; and Nicholas Stagebeck, who rose from the shop to win a similar position at the court of Christian the Second of Denmark. Nor must we overlook John Kay, the self-taught caricaturist of a past generation, or the London shaver-sculptor of our own era. Last, though certainly not the least, we might gaze on Giovanni Battista Belzoni.





Belzoni as the Patagonian Samson. After spirited sketch by Van Assen, drawn in 1804.

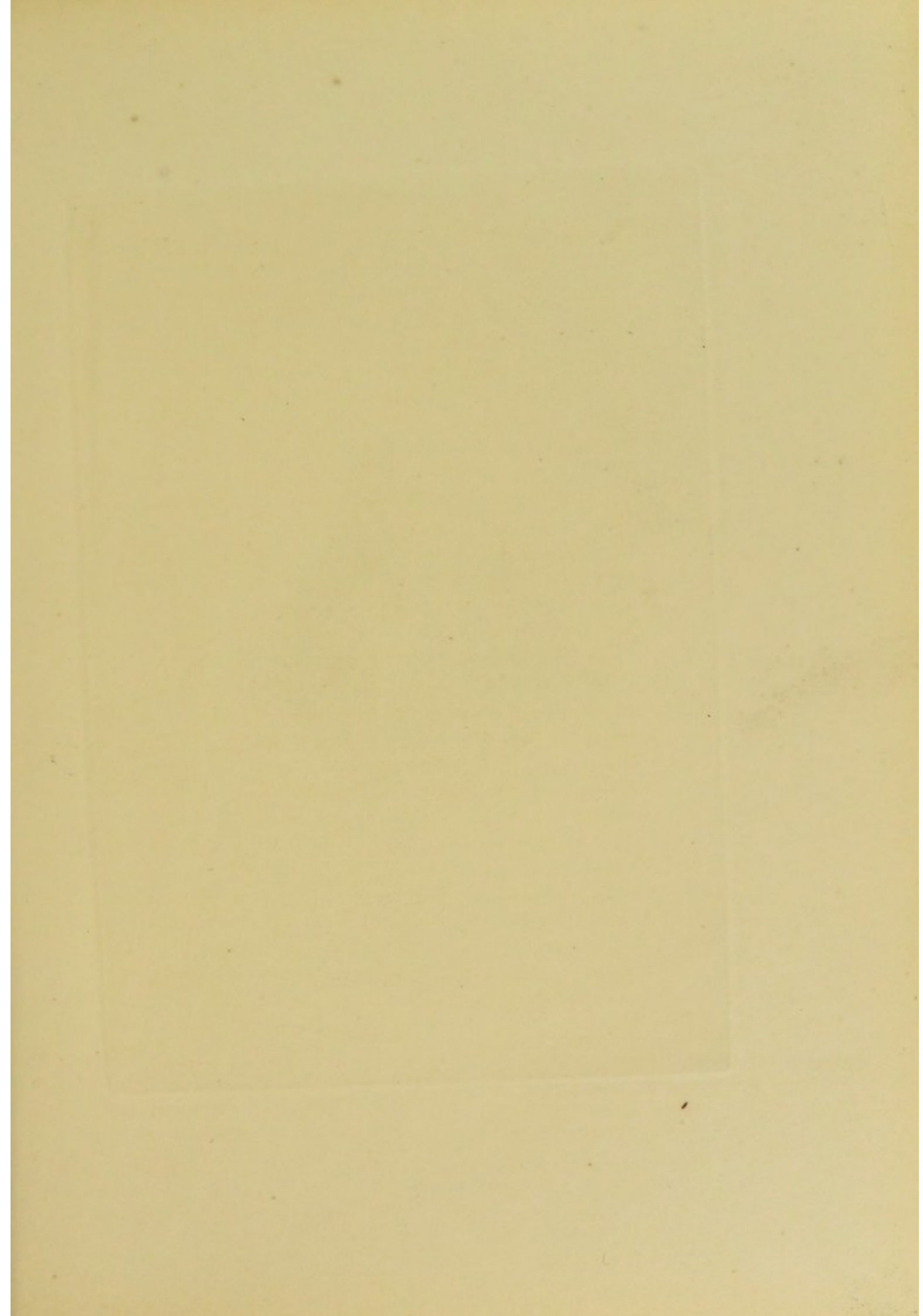
Had we desired to give preference to the "mould of form," by placing the most commanding presence in front, after the manner of the armour-cased champion in the coronation processions, we should doubtless have summoned to our aid this gigantic son and assistant of a Paduan hairdresser; but believing that all must be well that ends well, we have reserved him in order that our tonsorial train may be wound up with due dignity, thus filling the reader's eyes with manly beauty long after the ideal procession has slowly melted into space.

Belzoni, though best known as an Eastern explorer, who found his own untimely grave while searching for

ancient tombs, spent nine years in England, sustaining various characters of public interest and prominence. While practising as a lather-boy for his father, a translation of Robinson Crusoe is said to have fallen in his path, creating a passion for wandering. He ran away from Padua, but soon repenting, returned to his parent's shop, and worked steadily at his business during several years. Once more quitting home to improve his position, he traversed several European nations. The first appearance in this country of the Italian shaver was at a showman's booth in Bartholomew Fair.

There, in 1803, and afterwards at Sadler's Wells and elsewhere, he figured as the Patagonian Samson. One of his Herculean feats consisted in carrying a group of five men, which number he subsequently increased to seven, in imitation of the Strong Man described in Wilhelm Meister. One of Belzoni's stage associates, Thomas Ellar, the harlequin, has left an interesting record of that period. "I became acquainted," writes Ellar, "with Signor Belzoni, then styled the French Hercules, at the Royalty Theatre, Wellclose Square, in 1808; his salary two pounds per week; it closed after the second week. September, in the same year, I saw him performing in Bartholomew Fair. In 1809, we were jointly engaged in the production of a pantomime at Crow Street Theatre, Dublin, he as an artist to superintend the last scene. The columbine was a lady of great beauty, and is now [1840] the wife of the celebrated Thomas Moore, the poet."







*Zentendon*



Belzoni being industrious and frugal during his career as a showman, his savings enabled him to visit Egypt, where his researches and discoveries rendered him celebrated and comparatively rich. On his return towards England he again visited Padua, but this time not to lather, shave, or cut hair. He was received with public rejoicing, a medal being struck in his honour. When, a few years afterwards, their famous townsman died, the grateful Paduans erected a statue to his memory, in return for the glory he had reflected on the place of his birth. Belzoni expired at Benin, on his way to Timbuctoo, December 3rd, 1823, at the age of forty-five. The sailors amongst whom he died placed a simple memorial above his grave, with a kindly request that each European who visited the spot would clear the dust from the stone, and keep the railing in due repair.\*

Other sons of hairdressers—as my Lord Tenterden ; Turner, the master-spirit of English art ; Falconer, the shipwrecked seaman poet ; Bishop Jeremy Taylor, and how many more ?—though emerging from the portals of the shop to enter upon their diverging pathways to fame, are not included in our trade procession, which is limited to actual or mythological operators.

The painter's pencil, scarcely less frequently than the author's pen, has lingered lovingly about the barber's shop. Here is laid the scene of the *Blunt Razor*, by Bird (the sometime rival of Wilkie), which is a careful, unexaggerated transcript of the place, when tie-wigs and

\* Chambers's Book of Days, vol. ii. Also, *Notes and Queries*, Second Series, viii., 163



pig-tails, that now look so antiquated, were still in fashion. George Cruikshank's rendering of the ludicrous incident of the clown and the Preston shaving lass will be familiar to all readers of Grimaldi's memoirs, and to many frequenters of the picture galleries. Less known, although more elaborate, is Mulready's characteristic view in a village shop, where the haircutter is shown in the act of combing out the long rough hair of a boy, certainly not the same youngster who, when his hair was cut the first time, had his head washed with brandy instead of rose oil to gratify the vanity of his wealthy mother.†

Worthy, also, of more than a passing word in review are Hogarth's pictorial satires anent wigs and shaving—the Tempting Moment, by Collins—the water-colour drawings of William Hunt—the Market Day, by O'Neil—and the characteristic painting by Solomon, of a recent scene in a hairdresser's shop in Brittany. Nor should we forget the remarkable series of caricatures by John Kay, originally an Edinburgh shaver—the book illustrations of Alfred Crowquill—the spirited sketches of Walter Geikie, the deaf and dumb son of an Edinburgh perfumer—or Mambrino's last helmet bearer, by Julius Ibbetson ;—inasmuch as these pictures tend to place the tonsor in a pleasing position, and prove his shop to be an object of universal interest. To such an extent has this interest been awakened, that even reviewers (gentle-

† At the sale of the late Earl of Ducie's effects, in 1853, the painting in question, originally purchased, it is stated, for seventy pounds, was knocked down to a dealer for seven hundred and fifty pounds.



men composed, according to the popular idea, of acids and ice) have received into their frigid souls a "genial current" from the atmosphere of the hairdresser's shop, and their natural irritation has been soothed by the emollient properties of honey-soap. Becoming pleasantly anecdotal, they have drawn their critical thrones around the familiar shaving chair, and have told us that the barber's shop is a place almost within the precincts of the Temple of Learning—that it may be said to be on the confines of Trade and philosophy—and that although science has renounced connexion with the tonsorial art, the associations of the shop with literature are not so easily cast off.

On the stage—which "holds, as 'twere, the mirror up to Nature"—who has figured so frequently or to so much mirthful advantage as the hairdresser? From the redoubtable musical Figaro to the dancing Fitz-Frizzle, his dramatic visitations have been joyous and manifold. The best actors have brought their best talents to bear in portraying the tonsorial character. Quick, as Razor; Suett, as Gossip; Bannister, as the mock peruquier; Farren, as Frissac; Matthews, as Morbleu; Rice, as Fitz-Frizzle, will live in the tenacious memory of the old playgoer. Why the character should always be found upon the comedian's *rôle*, or why it should be rendered more or less farcical, with never a shade to chequer the merry sunlight, is something paradoxical. Albeit the haircutter is cheerful—as a matter of business—during business hours, he is not without his share of serious thought and acute feeling.



The members of the theatrical profession are peculiarly indebted to the razor,—and the razor to them,—as we are assured by a dramatic authority. It appears that on those special occasions when actors and managers muster at their appointed rendezvous for the purpose of forming season engagements, faces are shaven with the greatest nicety, as one of the conditions of the profession. Not a vestige of beard, whisker, or moustache must be visible. These are placed as offerings on the shrines of Thalia and Melpomene ; Indian ink and sepia being adopted as convenient substitutes. Now and then a natural moustache presents itself, but in vain, as the experienced manager prefers the more useful ornament which art can supply.

Although the trade has been thus fortunate at the hands of authors, painters, critics, and actors, certain high-minded oracles of the press have treated our homely offices with occasional sneers ; but as this is essentially and especially a sneering age, we may allow the frothy taunts to evaporate in silence, like the foam in our lather-box.

All previous delineators of this subject have treated it from the outside. They have peered into the sanctuary, not peered out of it. I, on the contrary, purpose to sketch the shop from its innermost recesses. A genuine interior view will be, at the least, a novelty, and will ensure a stereoscopic and complete effect.

Recently, tonsorial dissertations have become very numerous ; and they are so invariably light, racy, and agreeable, that one is well-nigh tempted to believe the



excellence lies in the subject, apart from the pen. If such be the truth, as appearance indicates, I may venture into the field of friendly competition, relying confidently upon the strength of my superior acquaintance with the theme. Although I shall not be enabled to boast, in the complacent language of Sir Richard Baker, that, "if all other of our chronicles were lost, this only would be sufficient to inform posterity of all incidents memorable or worthy to be known" touching our ancient and favoured craft, I may, perchance, add another link to the chain which binds the barber and his shop so permanently to the good opinion of mankind—a good opinion, truly, when the proverb runs thus :—

Walk into their shops, and see  
What witty fellows these shavers be.

Do not be deterred by the *Boston Transcript*, nor by any other doubtful authority, that tells you two years of an old man's life is wasted by attending the hairdresser's shop—that the wearing of your beard will keep you out of many a painful scrape—and that the cost of shaving would build you an ornamental cottage. Ornamental nonsense! Walk in frankly and often. Accept the invitation of the pole. Think of Marc Antony, who got himself barbered ten times over before going to feast with Cleopatra, the voluptuous, dark-eyed Queen of Egypt. Think, too, of Molière, the wittiest of French wits, and the long visits he used to pay to his cherished friend the friseur of Pezenas. Nor must we forget Sir Richard Steele, who paid fifty pounds a year to his



peruquier, and never rode out for an airing, save in a black, full-bottomed dress periwig. How different this from the price—six pounds only—paid for the last periwig worn by Sir Peter Lely. The genial atmosphere and pleasant chat of the place will not only enliven the passing hour, but will lengthen out your days to such an extent that a year or two, more or less, will never be missed.

If the name of Plutarch, Herodotus, Pliny, or other time-proof classic, be incidentally met in the course of this narrative, the reader is desired to accept such learned allusions as the writer hereof has accepted them upon trust, from British translations. To him, the originals are sealed books ; but the “well of English undefiled” will amply serve the purpose, as it served Chaucer. When passing from the mist, as it were, to the cloud—from doubtful historians to fabled mythology—no college lore will be needed to cultivate the fancy. Without such formal aid, Mercury may be introduced in the dutiful act of shaving his royal parent Jupiter ; the vain Narcissus may fondly admire his moustache in the flowing mirror ; while the water-queen, in fairy fashion, may wreath her glittering tresses in the sunbeam.

Readers familiar with the writings of Plutarch will recollect his allusions to the geniality and consequent longevity of beard trimmers. In more modern times their maximum age appears to be one hundred and five years. Beneath that patriarchal weight of decades and units one Philip Lautier, a French peruquier, practising in Shoreditch, London, sank gradually into his grave in



the summer of 1768. Water was the favourite drink of the abstemious monsieur, who ate only once a day. Perchance Goldsmith was a customer of Lautier's, and so became impressed with the idea that "man wants but little here below."

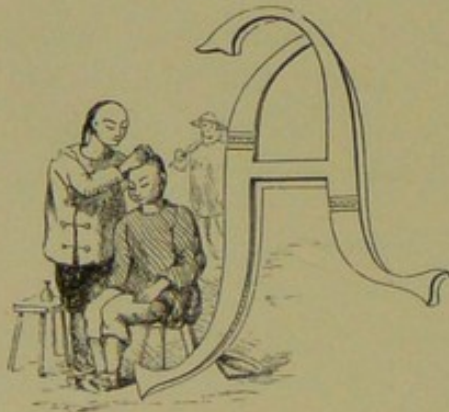
Should the reader still feel disposed to rely on the assertion of the American scribe, rather than confide in the assurance of this official narrative, he may seek and find a certain remedy in China, where little time or money is wasted in listening to the melody of the tonsor's tongue. Silence is one of the virtues of the Chinese practitioner. As a rule he talks less and works more than the traditional Figaro of other lands ; but as he does not run into the opposite extreme of sullenness, the merry tale is sometimes as briefly told, the current news as quaintly narrated, and familiar chat as pleasingly rendered among the pigtails as elsewhere.

## CHAPTER II.

JOHN CHINAMAN—PERPETUAL MOTION.

"Who soaps my chin,  
And tickles my skin?  
My Barber!"

*From the First Book of Celestial Classics.*



MID shops that dazzle the eyes of observers by their gilded carvings and other splendid decorations, the shaver of the Celestial Empire is usually shopless. He perambulates the highways and by-ways, ringing a small bell or snapping his steel tweezers to procure

him customers. He carries with him a portable seat, containing drawers for brushes, razors, strops, and towels, while fire is conveyed in a charcoal furnace, surmounted by a large basin filled with hot water. All these are suspended from a pole borne across his shoulder. When any person hails him for a cast of his office, the stool is placed in a convenient part of the street, with the sky for a canopy. For shaving the head, cleansing the ears, and



putting the eye-brows in order, the barber's recompense amounts to a trifle over a halfpenny. Such, at least, was the usual charge a few years ago, and as the progress of change is much slower in China than in England, the mercurial tonsor's recompense is probably the same still. The operation finished, he once more rings his bell, lifts his portable seat, and trots on his way in search of another engagement. The mode of operation is much the same at Madras, and in Japan, where a whistle, instead of a bell, is used as a signal. How much the Chinese shaver of flesh and blood resembles the spectre barber of German romance, and the barber-baron of the stage! This spectral German operator was a mysterious denizen of "the barber's village," a fairy-haunted retreat near Reichenberg, on the Rhine.

In China, where each native man goes whiskerless and with head shaven, expert wielders of the razor are of necessity numerous. In that mysterious land the clippings and shavings of the hair are appropriated to the purposes of agriculture. In England the hair clippings were carefully hoarded by apprentices as perquisites, and were regularly bought by bricklayers to mix with mortar. This was the custom of the trade in the beginning of my experience; but human hair has long ago ceased to be generally used for building purposes. I know not to what use hair clippings can be now applied, unless they are burned as charms against witchcraft; to which end our grandmothers held burned hair to be more efficacious than even the nailed-up horse-shoe. The Chinese have the credit of originating, as well as preserving, the pigtail,



With the view of corroborating the evidence of the rhyming proverb touching the wit of the craft, allow me to introduce a curious anecdote, breathing the spirit of the Land o' Cakes:—Some years ago, at Glasgow, an eccentric beard trimmer, named Richard Witherspoon, proclaimed that he had found out the theory of perpetual motion. Richard possessed wit, and the rarer gift of genuine humour; but he possessed also a Scotchman's fondness for mountain dew. One fine afternoon in summer he appeared in the market without coat or shoes, capering about to the tune of "Sic a wife as Willie had I wad nae gie a button for." At length he exclaimed—"God be praised for a' His mercies, I've found it! I've found it! my bread's baken!" The people of the market immediately gathered about Richard, crying impatiently, "What's this, Richie? What hae ye found?" "What hae I found? I've discovered the *perpetual movement*! Ye'll ne'er see Richie Witherspoon scum the chafts o' the ungodly for a bawbee, a' yer days again. Twenty thousand pound! My bread's baken! I'm gaun up to Lunnon the morn." "Ay, Richie, that's fortunate, we wad like to see 't." "O weel, I wat ye may see 't, and hear 't too," says Richie; "it's our gudewife's *tongue*; it's gaen sax weeks, night and day, and it'll never stap mair!"

In giving characteristic examples of the trade, there is no necessity for limiting them to China and Witherspoon, nor even to prose. From a card issued by a clever professor nearer home, might be quoted verses worthy of the Hebrew tailors, who appear to have taken Parnassus upon a joint lease; in virtue and remembrance, it may



be, of the harp that was anciently hung upon the willow. The card in question is headed, "Important to the Lovers of a good Shave," and after a few commonplace prose particulars, proceeds with the poetry, of which one stanza is here presented—

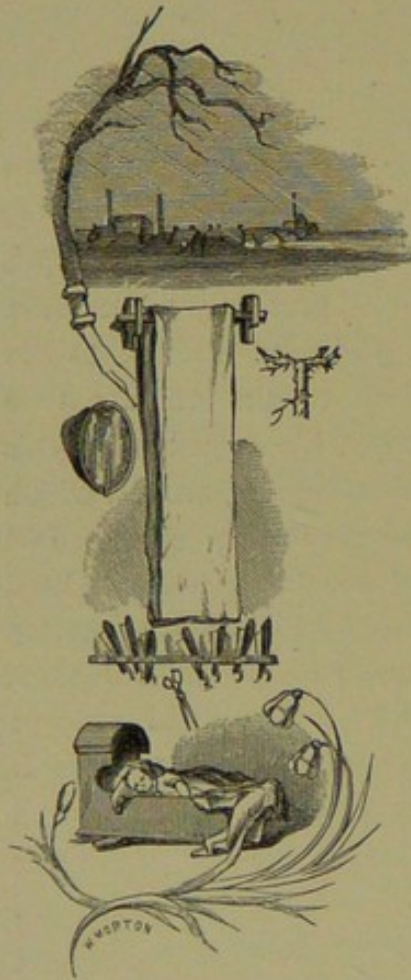
With nerves correct, with steady hand,  
As a Corinthian pillar grand,  
    Upon its solid base ;  
Yet shaving easy, and so clean,  
That not a vestige can be seen  
    Of beard, upon the face.

Not bad for a barber, is it? the idea of the Corinthian pillar more especially.

Not wishing to multiply these instances, I will quit the shops of other shavers, coming presently to our own. For a time, the general may yield its interest to the individual,—the tens give place to the units. One particular haircutter,—his shop,—his apprentice,—his customers,—may form a common centre, around which the Trade will fitfully linger, or pleasantly shine. Did you ever see a Catherine-wheel revolving, when lighted by a pyrotechnist? or a Chromothrope, when expanded and variegated by a magic lantern?

## CHAPTER III.

### BRIEF AND EXPLANATORY.



MAY be casually observed that the writer hereof was not a barber by birth: neither curling-tongs nor lather brushes came to me by inheritance,—not even a razor by way of codicil. Reverting for a moment to the beginning of my career, the admission may be frankly made that butterflies, rather than beards,—honey-bees in preference to honey-soap,—engaged the attention of my opening years, without an idea of Figaro's shop, even in prospective. While ranging at will over the Salford meadows, their sunny verdure was never shadowed

by the tri-coloured Manchester pole.



Although a strict injunction has been laid on the author's pen to be cheerful, if not merry, throughout the course of this narrative, I find it well-nigh babbling of those green fields of childhood, after the manner of Falstaff when dying in the hands of Dame Quickly ;—well-nigh sucking melancholy out of a thought, as the peerless Monsieur Jaques sucked melancholy out of a song. But such under-currents must be carefully avoided as the depths are always gloomy ; better to bridge the hidden chasm, and keep while we may with the pleasant sunshine. In this respect the little Nautilus—fairy skimmer of the ocean—may teach us a serviceable lesson.

The scenes and incidents fitting for present consideration are those of a more general character, which mainly linked themselves, through a strange series of years, with one tonsorial establishment. Into that establishment I was not ushered in the customary manner ; father never pressed me to business, neither did mother draw me back to her apron-strings ; they had entered on their pathless pilgrimage prior to the date of my indenture. Leaving such personal matters aside, we may now enter upon events more varied, circumstances more peculiar (and for the most part unrecorded), by passing at once beneath the pole and portal of a certain bygone Figaro.

## CHAPTER IV.

### WHAT THE SHAVER SAID TO THE LATHER BOYS.

"Though a barber, I am not ashamed of my trade,  
For by shaving a fortune is easily made,  
From the King on the throne to the cobbler in stall,  
The principal thing's to shave well and shave all."

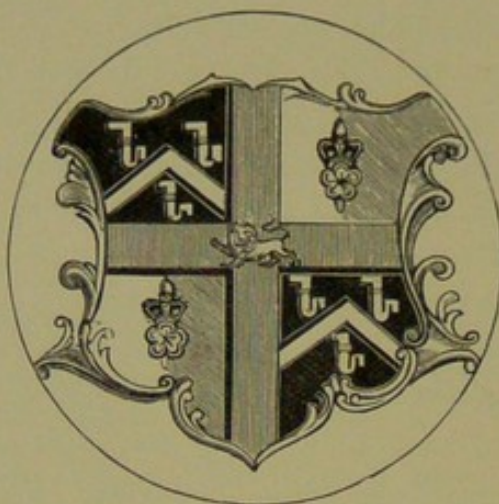
*Anonymous.*



LD as our universal father, Adam, though beards may be, and though Shavers, like Shakespeare, belong to all time, this veritable record interferes but little with either the hair harvest or the hair reapers prior to Saint Valentine's Eve, in the year of grace eighteen hundred and twenty-six, at which date the writer hereof went upon trial, previous to signing his name to "**This Indenture.**" The legal document binding me to the trade was, of course, accompanied by seals and signatures and words of warning ; but no formal admonition was delivered to me as to each London hairdresser's apprentice. As the printed form issued at head-quarters in Monkwell Street will be somewhat of a curiosity to the provincial brethren of the business, it is here appended in full :—"BARBER'S



HALL.—It is proper and necessary for me to explain to you (my lad, who have this day been bound) the nature and obligation of the agreement you have entered into with your master. You are henceforth to look upon your master as your parent, and as such to love, honour, and obey him. You are, during the seven years of your servitude, to consider your time no longer as your own, but the property of your master, and accordingly to employ it all in his service, except only that part of it which the laws of your country have set apart, and dedicated to public worship. You are, in everything else, to consult your master's credit and advantage; to be sober, careful, and diligent in his business, and neither to wrong him yourself, or suffer him to be wronged by others; always remembering that you hope in time to become a master yourself, and that you must in reason expect to be treated by your apprentices and servants as you shall behave to your master during the course of your apprenticeship. Lastly, to enable you to continue in the performance of your duty, let me advise you to avoid the company of the idle, the vicious, and profane, whose conversation and example cannot fail, sooner or later, to debauch your principles, and drive you into unjustifiable and destructive practices, such as must end in your inevitable ruin. By pursuing the advice now given to you, you will, among other advantages, secure to yourself the favour of your master, the good opinion of the world, and what is above all—the blessing of Almighty God."



Seal of the Barbers' Company.

This official document has awakened a few congenial fancies of my own, which will best reveal themselves in rhyme. For this purpose I may re-string a long-neglected lyre, hanging, like the harp of Tara, mute and idly upon the wall.

## WHAT THE SHAVER SAID TO THE LATHER BOYS.

## A NEW PARODY ON THE OLD "PSALM OF LIFE."

Tell me not, in joyless numbers,  
Shaving is a hopeless trade ;  
Learn to shave man while he slumbers !  
Soon your fortune will be made.

Beards are real ! Beards keep growing !  
And the barber's is their goal ;  
Though the few refrain from mowing,  
Many hasten to the pole.

Not the soap, with brush combining,  
Is your destined aim or end ;  
Razors sharp, and scissors shining,  
With your future prospects blend.



Years are short, and youth is fleeting,  
And your hearts, in love with Time,  
Still, like merry drums, keep beating  
Hopeful march to manhood's prime.

In the world, where business presses,  
Raise your art, exalt your life !  
Trim the braids, perfume the tresses,  
Curl the maiden, deck the wife !

Trust the Future and the Present,  
Let the Past its beacon raise ;  
Shave the men both swift and pleasant ;  
Plait the women while you praise.

Lives of tonsors oft remind us  
We may conquer Fate's commands ;  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Statues, raised by grateful hands.

Statues, that perchance another,  
Sailing o'er life's bounding wave,  
A forlorn tonsorial brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart and shave.

Let us, then, be up, improving,  
And we may, ere life depart,  
With earth's master-minds be moving,  
High beyond the barber's art.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE FIRST AND THE LAST SHAVE.



“A Young Shaver.”

“Now Jove, in his next commodity of hair, send thee a beard.”

*Twelfth Night.*

AT the early age of nine years, I was initiated into the arts and mysteries connected with my calling,—the “divine art of dressing chins and top-knots,” as, with



native politeness, Master Chastellier was wont to style it. Scissors in hand, the harvest of top-knot hair was timidly approached; and the multiplicity of beards, some of them wild enough for Hercules, or frowning Mars, puzzled me strangely. Early practice for my razor was afforded by the chin of an obliging friend of the family, whose sensations during the progressive trials were not to be envied. Intervals of silent suffering were varied by moments of acute pain, which forced a murmuring utterance, notwithstanding his complacency. My *début* with the heated curling-tongs was still less propitious, and was more injurious in its result than Hubert's well-known essay with similar instruments in the tearful presence of Prince Arthur. Being one day entrusted with the dressing of a lady's ringlets, they were so much burned through inexpertness that some of the curls came off in my fingers, even as the singed and forfeited beard perished in the Court of the angry Vathek, or upon the chin of Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse. Luckily the ringlets were on the block—not the head—so a new fillet repaired the damage. But a truce to noviciate blunders. A modern professor of the tonsorial art calls the attention of ladies and gentlemen to the "Singeing" of hair as the best method of preserving and restoring it, at the same time conferring a beautiful appearance. But with my early experience of the singeing process, I cannot conscientiously endorse the professor's recommendation.

Not long ago the singeing operation was tried upon the beard, at the Greyhound Inn, Tetbury, Gloucestershire, proving most effective in the trial. A tailor of that



small town, possessing a full flowing beard, fell asleep amongst his boon companions, one of whom, a farmer, and a wag, suggested a practical joke—which is usually so enjoyable to all concerned, save the victim. Lighting a spill, he placed it to the beard. The flame quickly spread, and when the tailor, springing to his feet, began to dance without waiting for music, the farmer laughed loudly at the novel fun he had suddenly created. It is needless to add that the skin was singed as well as the beard. The result of a trial for damages was a verdict awarding twenty-five pounds to the plaintiff, with all costs pertaining to the suit. How much better and cheaper had the said beard been bought at the hair-dresser's shop !

The obliging friend referred to as taking the place of the traditional sheep's head in the shaving trials was a singular character in his homely way, still faintly remembered by the cognomen of "Tin John." He was eccentric at times ; gentle and good natured always ; and wiser people frequently took undue advantage of his peculiarities. Though naturally joyous, a hopeless sorrow had checked his mirthful impulses, causing a jarring conflict of opposite elements. Thus placed at a permanent disadvantage in the battle of life, few persons could comprehend him thoroughly. Little known and less understood, might have served for his motto or his epitaph. We who can preserve the golden mean,—the happy medium,—in all things, even to the cutting of a curl or the shaving of a beard, have reason to be grateful. John, full of whims, was well nigh alone in the world.



Yet the loneliest spirit cannot be utterly isolated in his Crotchet Castle. As Picciola nurtured his simple prison flower, and as the Preston hermit fed his consoling robin, so Tin John found companionship in a dumb favourite. Fortunately for himself, his days were not prolonged. The consecrated mould of the churchyard covered him, years ago, from my view. When he lay stretched in his lonely cellar, insensibly awaiting his Last Shave, with his pet Grimalkin for chief mourner, I wondered what the mission of such a life could possibly be. But no solution of the mystery presented itself, unless it were to suffer through a certain modicum of years on earth, in order to make heaven surer and sweeter. But why question thus vaguely? If "God has a plan for every man," why not for Tin John?

From the early day when first I placed my razor upon the face of Tin John, to the present hour when I take my pen to chronicle that maiden operation, many a noteworthy customer has sat under my hand who will never sit under barber's hand more; many a scene of interest has passed before my eyes; many a deep impression has been forced upon my mind. Some of these I will endeavour to depict, howsoever faintly, during the progress of this truthful story,—this narrative of *hair-breadth* adventures.

Return we now to our immediate text—the young shavers. In the contemplation of our Last Shaves there must of necessity be something saddening; but in the idea and realisation of a First Shave—"when the little beardling is first detached from the maiden chin, and

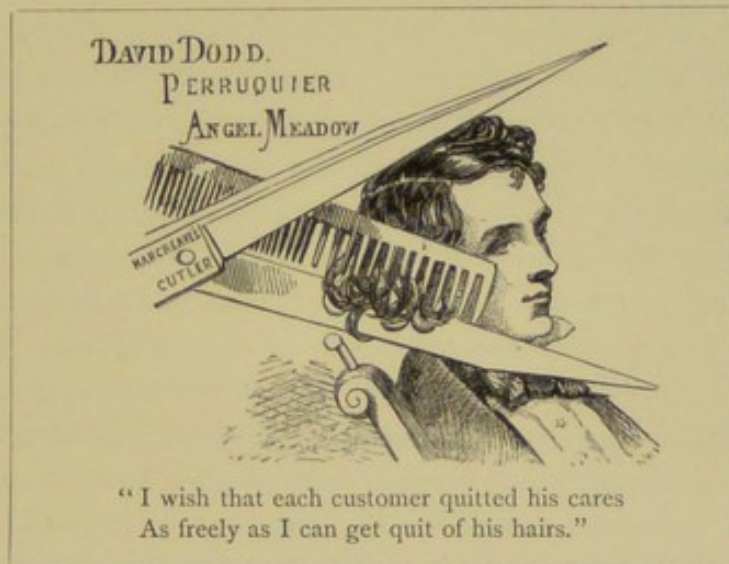
when ideas of life begin to expand along with the whiskers,"—there has, on the contrary, always been something droll. The subject loses nothing of its genial humour in the hands of the late William Henry Hunt, the eminent painter, by whose permission I am enabled to adorn this chapter with a graphic picture illustrative of an interesting incident in the life of a young amateur operator. At the sale of the Art Collection of the late Mr. John Clowes Grundy, of Manchester, towards the close of the year 1867, the original water colour drawing of "A Young Shaver" (a present from the artist to his friend the art publisher) realised one hundred and sixty-nine pounds one shilling.



## CHAPTER VI.

DAVID.

"You know me, my lady—I am David."—*The Rivals.*



The name in the above card—which is silent as regards bleeding and tooth-drawing—is introduced because the story of our shop would be very imperfect without a pen-and-ink sketch of its master, "Old David." Old he was not, in reality, though generally so called, for he died at the age of forty-six, before his eye had quailed at the discovery of his first grey hair—the first deserter

from his raven crop ; or ere his beard had become, like the beard of Hamlet's father, a sable silvered. Yet the appellation was justified, for David was one of those strange characters we occasionally meet, whose existence knows no summer ; their spring-time disappears, and immediately the soberness of autumn sets in, without any apparent interregnum. In his latter days, his boon companions styled him Doctor Dodd, after his celebrated and unfortunate namesake ; later still, retaining only his mock title, he was briefly addressed as Doctor.

A wise division of time, the philosophers tell us, will enable a man to accomplish much ; and there appears to be truth in the remark, for it enabled David, in his early manhood, to pay his court to two young women at the same period. Resembling Captain Morris, of convivial memory, he had a great store of love in his breast, and finding one shrine insufficient for his devotions, he kindled two flames with the torch of Cupid, and kept them pleasantly burning. I cannot say whether many youths are equally wayward and selfish, though it is to be hoped not ; nor can I tell whether one performance charmed both audiences—whether the actor merely repeated his part, with variations—or whether, after delighting the baker's daughter on the Monday night, an entirely new farce, fresh scenery, decorations, and the like, were requisite to please the shoemaker's niece, on the Tuesday. All this is now a buried secret, with mould and grass and flowers lying over it, for David has long ago returned unto dust, and his grave was never pressed by a stone. When his double courtship ended, and he decided on



marriage with the shoemaker's niece, the baker's daughter rather speedily followed his example by wedding her father's foreman. In his matrimonial preparations David was sufficiently commonplace; no procession of hair-cutters dressed in full tonsorial costume lengthened his church-bound train, nor added glory to his homeward march at the completion of the ceremony. Such honour was reserved for Tobias Tims and the Barber-Baron. Only for those apochyphal worthies has the craft stepped forth as wedding-guests, with cutting-comb placed in the hair, and in each supple right hand a painted pole surmounted with a powdered wig. Although David's wedding was enlivened by none of these rare accessories, seasonable congratulations hailed him as a matter of course from various quarters; some for mere custom's sake,—some for banter,—others through better feeling. That every moon, like the first, might contain essence of honey, was the burden of those salutations. But such merry-go-round of happiness is out of question. The blythest Yorick will find sufficient of sadness wherewith to temper his jocularity, for in the domestic calendar of every man there are dark days.

The honeymoon over, and romance having yielded to reality, David sought out a likely shaving place. As his exchequer forbade him to be ambitious, he engaged a cellar, in a wide thoroughfare. While arranging his curls and combs, his blocks and razors, his brushes and strops, he chanced to look across the street, and whom should he espy but his rejected sweetheart. She was standing, as mistress, in the doorway of a large flour store. One

glance was enough for David : his eye, like the magical orb of the Caliph, was vastly penetrating at times. From that lowly window he never projected his tricoloured pole, nor affixed his sign, but finding his position untenable, he decamped the same night, by the sweet silver light of the moon. He had suddenly discovered (so he said, in explanation to his wife) that the neighbourhood was unfit for his business, and that a cellar would not suit him at all.

On removing to another locality the shop rose and prospered during a brief space of time. David was steady at his trade, while Mary was neat and frugal in her domestic arrangements. In the course of years came three children to their dwelling, two of whom died in infancy, having their monodies duly written by their sire ; the surviving child was, after a severe illness, laid out for interment, but she showed signs of life just in time to prevent the sexton receiving his dues. Mary never assisted at the shaving business, nor lathered manly chin during all the days of her short life. My acquaintance with her was suddenly ended ; a violent cold being unexpectedly followed by fever and death. On the morning succeeding the interment—dreary at the best—we found ample food for moralising in our desolated home.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SHOP.

"This shop of Figaro's is most handily situated."—*Barber of Seville.*

DAVID was thirty-two years of age when first I knew him ; the number of my own summers, as already stated, being nine. His shop, like many a goodly prototype, had seen better days. I formed its acquaintance as the ivy claims companionship with the oak—in its "sear, its yellow leaf;" and certainly I adhered to its declining fortunes quite as tenaciously. Even in my time, the shop had a liberal share of public favour, though in a humbler way than heretofore. It never was one of those sparkling, ambrosial, fashionable emporiums which boast of cutting rooms for gentlemen, and dressing apartments for ladies, where all is formal and artificial as you may please ; where the starched and stately busts that display their (h)airs in the window, are just as emblematical of the manners of the establishment as of the skill of the perfumer. Neither was it a Wolsey's palace, to rival the fortunate tonsor of Temple Bar ; nor was a censer swinging therein, to suggest a comparison to some modern Petruchio. On the contrary, ours was an unpretending place, and literally a barber's shop ; where

artizan, trader, soldier, and seaman mingled their shades of character; while each paid down his coin for the freedom of the chair or the chat, so long as he chose to enjoy either. With the higher branches of the trade we never interfered. It was foreign to our practice to wait upon ladies at the family mansion, for the pleasant purpose of decorating them for the ball, or the bridal; pleasant, in sooth, when Southey thus sings—

The rose-pomatum that the friseur spreads  
 Sometimes with honour'd fingers for my fair,  
 No added perfume on her tresses sheds,  
 But borrows sweetness from her sweeter hair.

Happy the friseur who in Delia's hair  
 With licens'd fingers uncontrol'd may rove !  
 And happy in his death the dancing bear,  
 That died to make pomatum for my love !

Nor did we attend gentlemen at their baronial halls, to set forth their private virtues to the best public advantage; neither did it enter into our province to aid with perfumed artifice the Romeos of the stage "in luring their Juliets from the balcony into their arms; indeed, of theatrical wig makers we had then only one in the entire town of Manchester. We have now several, including a Parisian coiffeur and a French chamber peruquier. To us the Captain was never indebted for his alluring yet awe-inspiring whiskers; nor the Chancellor for the majestic wig that at once adorned his person and added dignity to the House of Peers.\* It is

\* "Believe me," wrote Richard Cumberland, "there is much good sense in old distinctions. When the law lays down its full-bottomed periwig, you will find less wisdom in bald pates than you are aware of."



true that "ornamental hair manufacturer" was painted on our half-door, but it was nothing more than a flattering fiction. Seldom did ornamental hair pass through our fingers, and the weaving-frame was almost a stranger to our bench. So I cannot recount, with Hugh Strap, how many days I have sat "weaving hair till my toes were numbed by the cold, my fingers cramped, and my nose as blue as the sign of the periwig that hung over the door." Once, David affirmed, he had made a wig that gave great delight to himself and to his customers ; but in my ears it always sounded like a tradition. Still, it seemed unfair to doubt his assertion, when he pointed in confirmation to the battered wig-stand, which during many years had occupied a corner of the room, looking what it really was, a forlorn relic of the past. The bare block was its only crown. During my experience it never was surmounted by periwig, peruke, scalp, or other contrivance of hair,—legal, theatrical, or domestic. David was not alone in his pride of wig-making ; in that respect he was surpassed by Edmund Harrold, a conscientious friseur of an older school, who once, among other strange conceits, got his head shaven as an atonement, because he had mis-fitted a customer's wig. How different this procedure to the confidence shewn by a French tonsor when similarly circumstanced :—Dr. Franklin, while officiating as American Ambassador at Paris, ordered a wig from a celebrated *artiste*. When the ornament was brought home the following dialogue ensued : "I think," said Franklin, trying on the peruke, "you took measure of my head?" "I had that honour." "Well, then, you



have bungled the business very much, for the wig does not fit." "Not fit! impossible; the peruke is perfect." "Certainly it is too small." "Permit me the honour to observe that—it is your excellency's head that is too large."

It is quite clear we had no visitor of the John Edwin stamp, whose store of theatrical head-gear cost him upwards of a hundred pounds, and who had wigs in his collection which had decorated the heads of kings and chancellors, beaux, philosophers, and jockeys. Here were seen the Full-bottoms, Tyes, Full-Bobs, Night-cap wigs, Minister-Bobs, Naturals, and Half-Naturals, side by side with the Grecian Flies, Curley-Boys, Airy-Lavants, Qu-Perukes, Duvilliers, and Bag-Wigs. No wonder that upon the stage Edwin looked the perfect Peeping Tom, and enacted Jemmy Jumps and the learned Lingo in matchless style.

Still more remarkable was the flaxen full-bottomed periwig worn by Colley Cibber in the Fool in Fashion, which was usually brought on the stage in a sedan, by two chairmen, to the infinite amusement of the audience.

Our interior walls were simply furnished with full return or entrance race lists, humorous caricatures of the trade, theatrical benefit bills, concert programmes for our musical friends, engraved portraits of public worthies; but nothing so rare as the list of barbers' forfeits, which was familiarly met in Shakespeare's days, and an isolated copy of which was, until recently, exhibited in its frame by an ancient member of our fraternity, at Stratford-

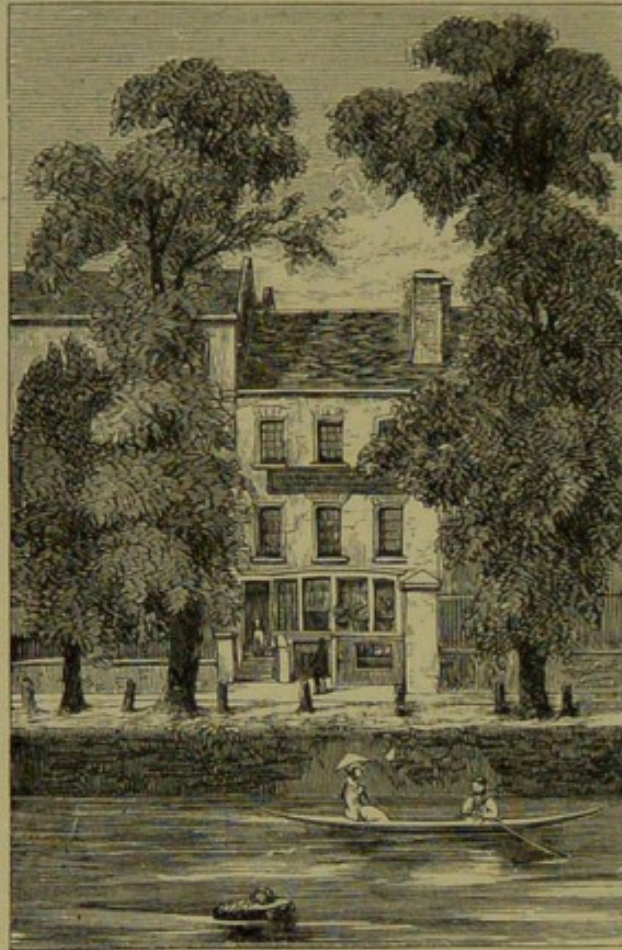


upon-Avon. Nothing had we, either, so curious in character as the Latin inscriptions hung around the shop of Hew Hewson, the original of Smollett's Strap,—who, by the way, survived to the age of eighty-five, and was buried, in 1809, at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London. Another claimant for this distinction was put forward by Mr. Faulkner, in his "History of Chelsea." The historian states he resided seven years with the widow of W. Lewis, hairdresser, of Lombard Street, Chelsea, and had thus opportunities of knowing that Mr. Lewis was the original of Strap. He began business in Chelsea, it is stated, by the advice of Smollett, and died there about the year 1785.

Our walls enclosed no ornament of such historic interest as the keys of Venice, exhibited by the heir of Manini the last Doge, in his perfumer's shop at Saint Denis. Those keys, confided to the hereditary keeping of the family, reposed beneath a glass shade on the mantel-piece, for the edification of customers, while awaiting their turn to be trimmed at the hands of that perfumer of the blood-royal. Neither could we boast of old-world gimcracks similar to those displayed on the walls and ceiling of Don Saltero's museum, in Cheyne-walk, Chelsea.

Don Saltero, it is well known, was the most noted barber-surgeon of our great-great-grandfather's time. Besides pleasing the eye with rarities from the stores of antiquity and natural history, he won the ear with strains of music from the violin, or the rebeck gay. His shop, which he converted into a coffee-house (where the *literati*





Museum and Coffee House. From "Historical and Literary Curiosities."  
By the late C. J. Smith.

of the day sat in council), afterwards became a tavern. The front of this hostelry exhibits to the present day, I believe, the name and period of its founder—"Don Saltero's, 1695"—as an attraction to all people who love odd men and odd things. It is recorded that Richard Cromwell, "a little, and very neat old man,



with a placid countenance," was one of the frequenters of the Spanish Don's establishment.\*

David Dodd was peculiarly adapted to his business ; he had a genius for it ; and if genius be innate, as many sound reasoners have advanced, he was born to cut a figure over the heads of his customers, and to suit their fancy to a hair. He possessed a fund of homely and unique humour, which constituted him a favourite, in the comprehensive language of the press, with all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. Nor did he lack that general intelligence, that cheerful every-day interest in the goings on of the world, which are entailed on the shop, and descend from barber to clerk, though not made conditional in our indentures. There are, of course, exceptions to this, as to all other rules. A few of our brethren prefer being quietly meditative ; they are too retiring in disposition to volunteer their opinions on passing events, or to press customers to purchase toilette luxuries when not wanted. Like the silent parrot of Joe Miller, they talk little, but think the more. Of this class, perhaps, the most notable member on record was worthy John Abbott, of Canterbury, father of Lord Chief Justice Tenterden, for whose life story the reader is referred to Lord Campbell's biographies of the principal Judges of England. It is related of Baron Tenterden that he one day took his son to a shed then standing

\* This rare curiosity shop, linked so closely with the Steele and Addison period, and celebrated in verse by its eccentric owner, was taken down in the beginning of 1866. It is stated that clay pipes have been dug up by the dozen upon its site.



opposite to the western front of Canterbury Cathedral, and said, "Charles, you see this little shop ; I have brought you here to view it. In that shop your grandfather used to shave for a penny, which is the proudest reflection of my life." The parting words of remarkable men form an interesting series, not the least characteristic being the farewell utterance of this judge. A few minutes before he expired, being in a half-unconscious state, he slowly murmured, "Gentlemen of the Jury, you may retire."

Canterbury has been outvied by Cambridge in the number of its uncommon shavers. In the county town last-named the father of Bishop Jeremy Taylor kept a shop in the early part of the seventeenth century ; Robert Forster, "the Flying Barber," trimmed his friends of the University so dexterously that they purchased for him a silver basin, and illustrated his handiwork in a humorous print ; while John Jacklin, a rhyming eccentricity of more recent date, has furnished a page for Hone's Year Book.

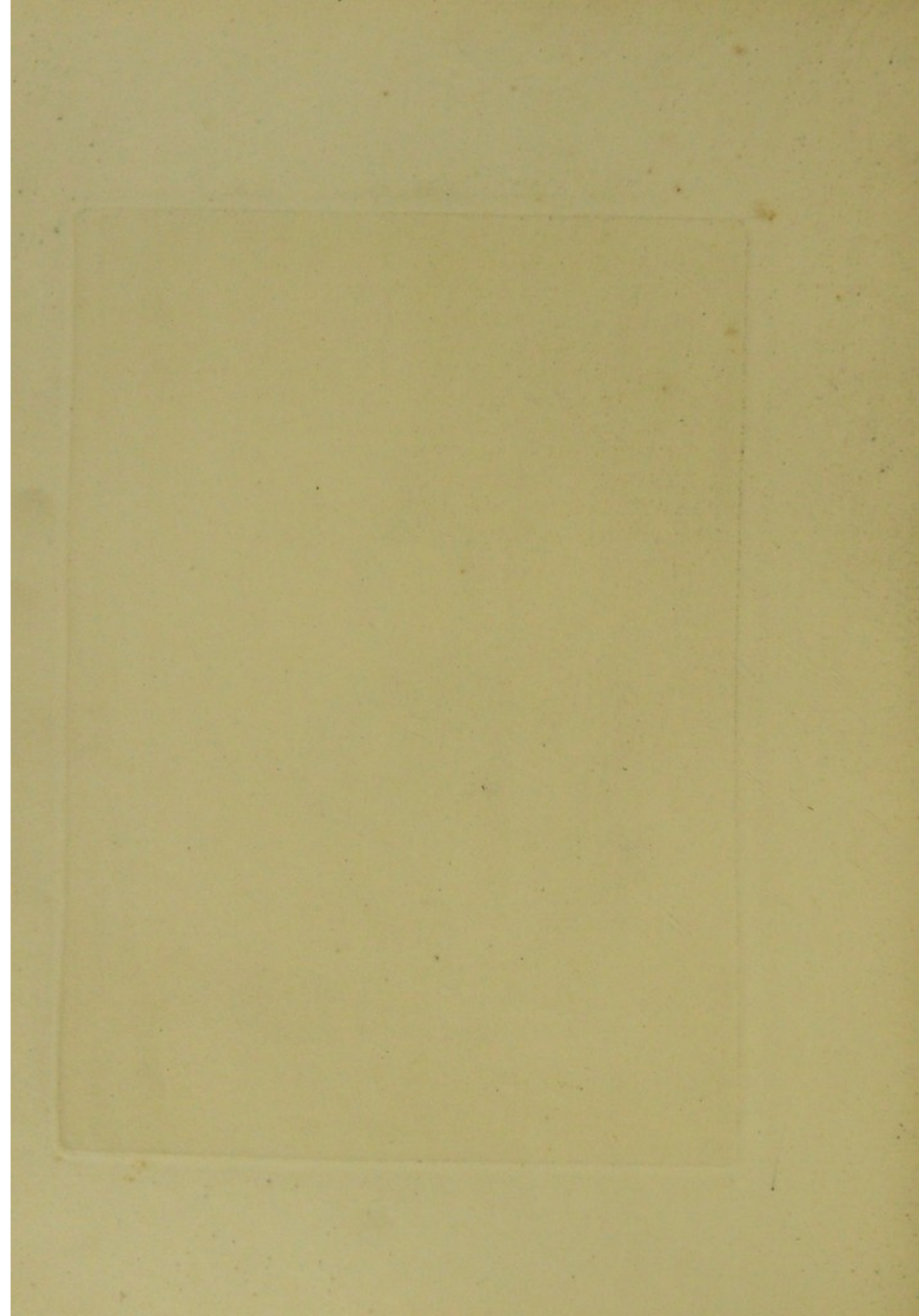
Although we have here and there a taciturn hairdresser, I never heard of a hermit belonging to the trade, excepting one mentioned by Michael Kelly, in his "Dramatic Reminiscences." This solitary spirit was a Frenchman, at one time practising as a hairdresser in London. Becoming weary of the world, with its many vicissitudes, he retired from its turmoil to the heights of Mount Vesuvius. He must surely have been as fond of fire as of solitude.

As a fitting companion to Baron Tenterden, I have the pleasure of introducing Lord St. Leonards. It is





*H. Leonards*





well to keep the bench and the woolsack in close proximity. The son of a haircutter practising in a homely shop near Lincoln's Inn, Lord St. Leonards has carved his own way to distinction, and justly prides himself on the manly achievement. It is no mean gratification to compare the unpromising blossoms of his youth with the rich fruitage of his mature years. An excellent anecdote is recorded of this nobleman, which must be transplanted to its natural soil in these pages. When in his mid-career, and known as Sir Edward Sugden, he was a candidate for the representation of Cambridge, in opposition to Mr. Spring Rice. While in the fervour of his nomination speech someone in the crowd sought to disconcert him by enquiring the price of "soap," the composition of "lather," and the general nature of "suds." Sir Edward, making a momentary pause, pointed to the interrupter, saying, "I am particularly obliged to that gentleman for reminding me of my lowly origin. It is true that I am a barber's son, and was once a barber myself. If the gentleman who so politely reminds me of these facts had once been a barber he would have continued one to the end of his life." The happy retort was received, as it deserved, with general applause. Lord St. Leonards, at the age of ninety, continued to make his voice heard with effect in the House of Peers. He was the only person who has been Chancellor both in England and in Ireland. His favourite country residence was Boyle Farm, at Thames Ditton, Surrey.

In his ninety-first year his lordship was desired to explain the secret of his longevity, to which he replied

that his only secret was moderation ; he avoided luxurious eating and excess of wine, went early to bed, and, after enjoying a good night's sleep, arose early to breakfast. Thus the father of the bar and of the House of Peers retained his health, and was enabled to enjoy life in his studious retirement. His lordship survived the date of this explanation three or four years ; and then, calmly expiring, was buried in the family vault at Thames Ditton churchyard, in a quiet corner, by the side of his wife, who died thirteen years previously. The coffin plate bore the simple inscription, " Lord St. Leonards, died January 29, 1875, aged 94." This nobleman's last will and testament—mysteriously lost—has since his decease been the subject of some curious revelations in the courts of law.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE SHAVER.

"Maclather, the Radical barber of Perth,  
Was the saddest of all politicians on earth ;  
But his business increas'd while his thoughts darker grew,  
For his shop was a news-shop and barber's shop too."

*Ebenezer Elliott.*



"The Blunt Razor."

DAVID DODD (as unlike as might be to my Lord St. Leonards) was a somewhat dissatisfied anomaly as

regarded politics—that phase of his character and business enabling him, at times, to sympathise with Glo'ster, touching his “winter of discontent.” Most men have a party, some have a public, but he had neither in the political arena. Though naturally preferring the w(h)igs, yet each party with which he became acquainted, while pleasing him in some respects disappointed him in others. There was none that he could adopt with confidence, or to whose fortunes he could cling with entire satisfaction. He found—as he averred—each trusted leader, in turn, yielding principle to expediency, for the purpose of outbidding his political rivals. While reading of those tergiversations David's looks were sad enough for Psyche when lamenting her lost love; or for Morven when musing over the fallen star; until, laying down the newspaper and his pipe, he would console himself by whistling, low and significantly, the opening lines of Sinclair's once popular ballad—

And has she then failed in her truth,  
The beautiful maid I adore?

He might have consoled himself by remembering that the moderns were merely carrying into practice the advice of ancient Horace—

Get power and place; if possibles with grace;  
If not, by any means get power and place.

Such misgivings prevented David, on some occasions, from rushing to the poll so merrily as might be; yet was he sufficiently earnest and independent to vote for the candidates he preferred, without surrendering his



individuality at the bidding of others. In religion, as in politics, he wished simply to speak and act as conscience dictated, whilst yielding to all persons the same natural freedom which he claimed for himself. In other respects David's life experience, the reverse of assuring, had rendered him somewhat cynical. When told that his views were Utopian, he would quietly rejoin, "It was a pity that Utopia was so far away from England."

David displayed a happy tact in giving familiar versions, or rather burlesques, of leading events and characters. This tact he was enabled to indulge with impunity, for whomsoever ventured to check the barber in his tale was liable, in accordance with our ancient rule of forfeits, to pay for every such interruption one pot of ale. If David, in his efforts to amuse his hearers, did not always confine his tongue within the bounds of probability, but chose occasionally to colour his truisms with fiction, he was yet far from being so lax in this respect as the worldly-wise beard-trimmer of Berlin, who uttered truths merely to make his falsehoods pass current, as coiners silver their leaden counterfeits. By this Prussian shaver it was held as a rule, that if you give the people a foundation of truth, you may build thereon a tissue of falsehoods to suit your convenience; the baseness will seldom be suspected until too late. "Happy the candidate," he would sometimes assert, "who promises peace and plenty to confiding voters, together with bountiful harvests and wages galore, for he shall assuredly head the poll."



David, in his endeavours to please everybody in a reasonable way, was more successful than the celebrated trio of *Æsop* ; but he was materially aided by soap, so freely used by barbers in general : that unctuous substance frequently rose from his brush to his tongue, thence descending as salve for passing foibles. Possibly, being an admirer of *Yorick*, he had borrowed a leaf out of the "*Sentimental Journey*." Commend us to soap, when daintily compounded and judiciously applied ! This allusion to soap will scarcely apply to *Khiva*, where, as *Major Burnaby* informs us, the shaving operation is preceded by a simple wash of warm water, no soap being used.

A strange miscellany of droll and humorous sayings connect themselves with my recollections of David, for wit never appealed to his ear without receiving its due acknowledgment. It was something to his credit that his fun was usually free from vulgarity ; for how often do we find the evil mixed with the good, as inseparably as the rosebud and its thorn. But there are many witticisms which cannot be repeated to advantage, and David's were of this class. Their chief attraction lay in the quaintness of his delivery, joined to the aptness of the occasion ; so, although I feel inclined to snatch a few specimens from oblivion, the indulgence must be disallowed. Such samples would resemble stray flowers plucked from a nosegay, and could not please a stranger's fancy as they pleased mine. But even the adoption of this wise course might be construed into a dereliction of duty ; for "what on earth is the use," said the late Pro-



fessor Wilson, "of a man having dependants and children, if they will not record his good things?" In deference, therefore, to the Professor's opinion, I will write down one example. Although a political jest might be here anticipated, a definition of imagination is given, because the shaft of scorn and ridicule aimed at the politicians of those far away days are now pointless, and the allusions to public events then relished would be little understood and less prized by my readers.

"What is imagination?" enquired an illiterate individual one night, when David had been conversing on poetry and poets: "Gazing steadfastly," replied the rhyming shaver, "at a naked wall, and viewing Paradise!"

I suppose this may be accepted as an authorised definition, for the definer—although he did not exactly comb hair in iambics—had written various original verses, and possessed something of the poetic element, until strong liquor quenched it. To a certainty, David was more of a poet than Mr. Jasper Dactyle, of Tatler notoriety, who in his youth wrote a song and a half, and in his mature years was found to be a week gone in a new ballad. Yet David took little pride in his poetry; there was no inducement, he said, in that direction. The world seldom gave a rose to a poet without adding a couple of thorns to embitter its sweetness,—rarely extolled one of his virtues without embalming two of his failings. Finding the Muses withheld their sweetest favours, David wisely retired from the vain pursuit, while thus covering his retreat with a jest. As the Muses never



marry—not one of the Nine,—it were bootless, he averred, to continue the courtship.

Talk of imagination and fancy! The priceless treasures are ancient heritages of the shop; in proof whereof receive a curious anecdote. Long years ago, as the “Connoisseur” affirms, a friseur felt seriously indisposed. Growing daily worse, medical aid seemed advisable. So he ordered four of his best stands to be arranged at his bed-side; crowned the blocks with four of his most professional wigs; and then, fancying the sedate assemblage to be physicians, he desired them to hold a consultation on his case. Thinking, after much silent deliberation, that their decision looked favourable, and that they recommended more (h)air and exercise, he straightway fancied himself better, arose, arranged his toilette, and resumed his business as blythely as heretofore!

Few haircutters have won the smiles and good-will of their customers more freely than David won them: he could truly call them his own, for they would have followed him, if possible, to the land's end. During many years his habits were of a sober, business character, his shop assuming a flourishing aspect, and its owner, as a matter of course, becoming esteemed. But when his wife rather suddenly died, and his home virtually died with her, he gradually yielded to tavern allurements: doubtless he found himself lonely and the shop dull. At first he tried to time those tavern visits so that no shaving customer might be disappointed, but all such efforts proved labour in vain, for the customers seemed to play at hide-and-seek with him; though he waited an hour





The Friseur's Four Physicians.

for them, they came not ; yet the moment he stepped out of the shop they would assuredly step in. Ere long the trade declined : no more could he complain, with Monsieur Morbleu, of being fatigued by his great business, nor boast of cutting short the objections of the multitude while cutting short their hair. Rather had he fallen into the path of a Manchester wig-maker of the last century, who narrates in his very original diary that he was two days without cutting hair or shaving in his public shop in Market-stead-lane. Eventually David's place of business retained but few attractions ;

the otto of roses lost its perfume,—the honey soap its charm. In more than one sense David became a “rum” shaver. Intemperance was his Old Man of the Sea, an evil spirit clinging to him with fatal tenacity. As the versatile artist-author, Alfred Crowquill, has figuratively expressed it, “he had many a bout with Bacchus, and although he always manfully tapped his claret, and stood up to him until his legs became groggy, the wine-god succeeded in flooring him at last.” His closing scene was a sudden yielding to Death, ere Life had wearied upon her journey. In the silence of night, without a parting word, he took his final leave of the shop and its associations, the clouds of his existence having far outnumbered the sunbeams. Albeit his grave, as previously stated, was stoneless, his original unchiselled epitaph is here preserved :—

Great Lord of ocean, earth, and air,  
How strangely do Thy children fare ;  
How much they differ in degree,  
Though emanating all from Thee !  
How many skim life's sun-lit wave,  
Through flowers careering to the grave ;  
How many breathe distress'd, forlorn,  
And die—lamenting they were born !



## CHAPTER IX.

### AN ANGELIC NEIGHBOURHOOD.

“What’s in a name? That which we call a rose,  
By any other name would smell as sweet.”—*Roméo and Juliet.*

DURING my novitiate David’s shop was situated in Angel Meadow—a sweet name, very ; but the angels had long ago vanished, even to the last flutter of a wing ; and the only remaining semblance to a meadow was a neighbouring churchyard. Scarcely a particle of green, natural or mental, could be found thereabouts. Although its Eden was thus undoubtedly past, and the bitter fruit of the tree of knowledge was painfully evident, there were yet fallen angels in plenty, whose lewd ditties, glees, and choruses, not unfrequently serenaded us to bed, or broke the connecting incidents of our midnight dreams. Of sprigs of shillelah there was a complete forest, the sons of St. Patrick abounding more in that neighbourhood than in any other, not excepting Little Ireland. Many an attack have I witnessed with those same shillelahs.

Of those affrays the most remarkable took place at Newtown, near Angel Meadow. A very large party of Catholics attacked with shillelahs, and other weapons, the house of an Orangeman named White, dwelling at the front of Irish Row, which Row became one of the

streets of Manchester in the year 1804. The assault was exceedingly violent, assuming so dangerous a character that the besieged, driven to extremities, resorted to fire-arms, shooting repeatedly from the upper windows at their assailants. This had the effect of keeping the mob at bay until the arrival of a number of runners and constables, who succeeded in dispersing the fiery assemblage.

One of the constables most active in quelling the said disturbances was a tall, energetic customer of David's, named William Taggart. Little cared he for official repose. Day or night, if seeing occasion for his services, he was apt to forget that he was off duty. Stick in hand, he would rush into the midst of a crowd of pitchers and tossers, dispersing them so suddenly that the heads and tails left spinning in the air fell as spoils to the conqueror. Some of those tossers seemed to possess a mint of their own, their coins were so peculiar—many of the bright halfpennies having two heads, while others had twin tails, a fact that partly disproved the axiom as to honour among thieves. Mr. Taggart, a native of the north of Ireland, was full of incidents touching the rebellion he had witnessed in his boyhood. The scene most vivid in his memory, and most frequently upon his tongue, was the massacre in the barn at Scullabogue, and he warned his hearers to be unceasingly on their guard, lest such evil days should again befall. I have known many active officers, but none so fond of duty, for duty's sake, as the late William Taggart.

It was at this same Newtown that an official, sent to execute a warrant, was compelled to swallow the



obnoxious document.\* It was in our immediate neighbourhood, likewise, that a bailiff, overtaken with a bed which he had just distrained for rent, was rolled without ceremony over Zion's Hill—another divine abode—quite as high and as steep as the bailiff would desire.

Newtown had one other peculiarity. It contained a favoured quarter, the inhabitants of which lived in a state of primitive happiness worthy of the good old times. They lived rent free, and knew nothing of the dunning Monday morning calls of a landlord, calls that must be very annoying to tenants, especially to those who are unable or unwilling to pay. The property in question had once an indubitable owner, but he mysteriously and finally disappeared. Many were the reasons put forth to account for his absence from Newtown. Some averred that his kind relations had thrown him into Chancery, and that he had been gradually eaten up by the legal cormorants who there abound. Others asserted that he went out on a voyage to some Eastern land, for the purpose of marrying, like Aladdin, a princess of surpassing beauty and untold wealth, but was unhappily wrecked within sight of the princess, as she stood on the shore to receive him. People of more matter-of-fact tendencies maintained that, while sailing out to sea, he deliberately indented a wave, and so freed himself from his tenants. Ultimately, each man kept his tenement by right of possession, and when he wished

\* "1796—A constable being sent to serve a warrant in the neighbourhood of Newtown, was compelled by the people to eat the offensive document, and was then sent about his business."—*Manchester Recorder*.



to quit the premises, sold his privilege to the highest bidder. Even this blissful state of things had serious drawbacks. Every now and then came claims peculiar to property ownership, backed, too, with such force that immediate payment, in money or goods, was imperative. It was at such times that the landlord, who had kept such claims entirely to himself, was missed and lamented.\*

Half a century ago such residence in a mead sanctified by angels, with a retreat for contemplation upon the hill of Zion, would have formed a profitable lure for the late George Robins, the far-famed auctioneer, especially so, if dusted with his peculiar "soft sawder," and addressed

\* Recent corroborative testimony is thus rendered by a writer in the *Evening News*:—"There are eleven houses—from No. 2 to 22—situated in Bilberry-street, Newtown, Manchester, occupied by working men of the better class, for which they have not paid one farthing of rent for the last twenty-seven years, there having been no owner during the whole of that time to receive it. The last man who drew rents for this property was a joiner and builder named George Tomlinson, the last of his line, who died sometime in 1852. Ever since this man's death no one has called for rent or made any claim on the property. One man, a lurryman, has built behind his house three stables for which, with the house, he has been offered and refused £200. The houses are all well and substantially built, with good backyards. They have been kept in good repair, and are such as generally realise 5s. or 6s. per week. The occupiers are charged with the paving, sewerage, and other expenses incidental to property ownership. The tenants say that they 'know that twenty years' possession gives them a good title to what they hold,' and they have no apprehensions of being disturbed, but should any claim be set up they will unite to resist it. The site upon which the buildings are erected occupies a space of about a thousand square yards of land and is free from all chief or ground rent, and is about one of the healthiest neighbourhoods in Manchester. The street is well-paved and sewered, and altogether the property would prove, as the auctioneers say, a most 'eligible investment,'—if the tenants would sell." Further evidence showed that the strayed property had belonged to Mr. Tinker's family, of the adjacent Vauxhall Gardens, but the ownership became confused in consequence of mortgages.

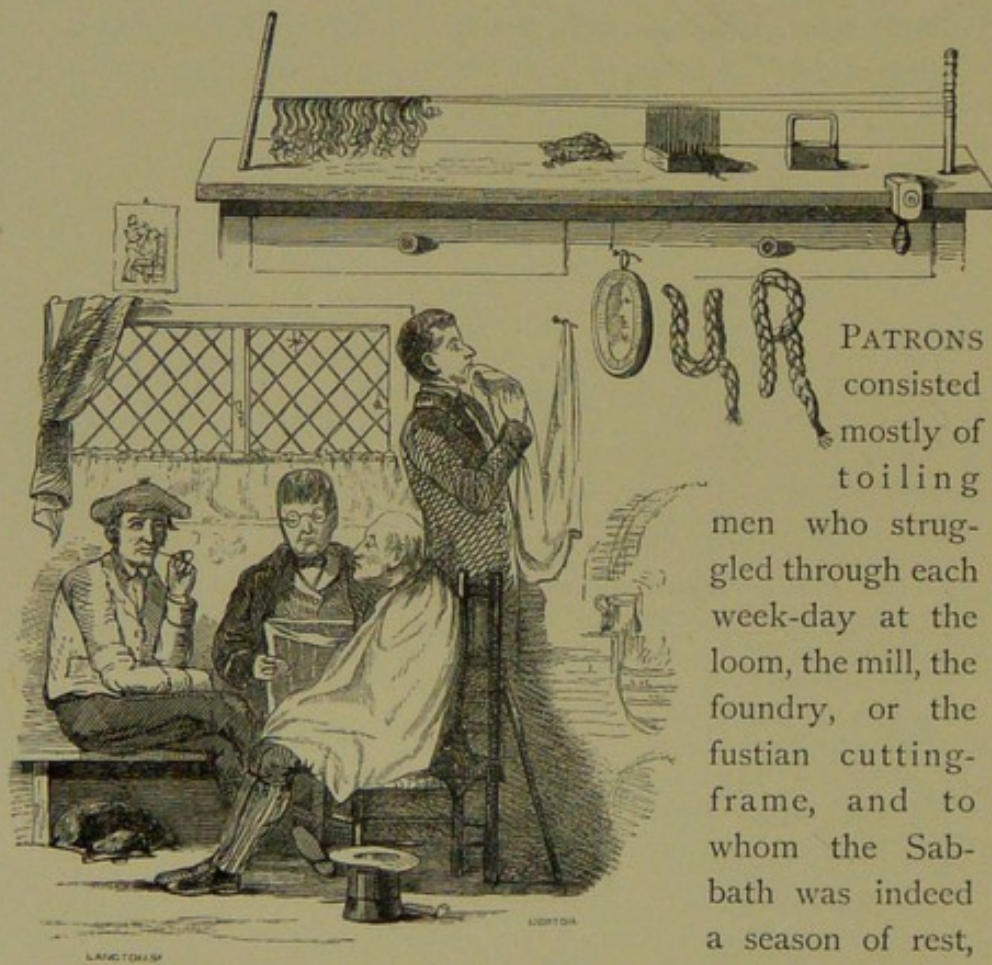


to the mute inglorious Miltons. But the practice would soon have belied the precept, the reality have marred the romance of any embryo poet. Our seraphs, blending truth with his fiction, would have kept his hand and purse "open as dâÿ for melting charity," or have opened his eyes until he learned how to guard his pocket.

The presence of extensive gas-works and branching railway lines, gradually progressing during fifty years, have now revolutionised much of the neighbourhood described.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY.



Members of the People's Assembly.

PATRONS consisted mostly of toiling men who struggled through each week-day at the loom, the mill, the foundry, or the fustian cutting-frame, and to whom the Sabbath was indeed a season of rest, and our shaving



shop a welcome haven. There, for a time, they forgot their individual cares in the manifold and all-engrossing troubles of the State, and animation gave lustre to faded eyes that were soulless during six days out of every seven. Many of those newsmongers resided at a distance of from one to two miles, yet they seldom failed to make their appearance duly as Sunday morning came. So early did they rattle at our door, in summer, that David frequently thought it useless to go to bed, and passed the interval between closing and opening in setting his razors, smoking his pipe, and conning the newspaper. For such lack of sleep he found consolation in Poor Richard's adage, "There will be sleeping enough in the grave,"—often repeated to me in drowsy moments. David was as fond as Sancho Panza of repeating proverbs. The affairs of the political world the veterans would listen to, and shrewdly comment upon until noon, for it was ever a morning sitting, though many of the members remained upstanding. As in an assembly more august and national, the infusion of private grievances sometimes checked the stream of public debate, and the speaker (the shaver) being lenient, strict order was seldom enforced. The experience of the past was rich in illustrations of the then present crisis, and these they would introduce by way of clinchers to their arguments. But besides its tangible advantages, the "sunset of life" must, I presume, have given to them its "mystical lore," for the tact and readiness with which they drew aside the inconvenient curtain of futurity, and brought forth events unborn of Time, have often filled me with amazement.



If I be not familiar with public occurrences, it were indeed strange. Times almost innumerable have our naval and military combats, our victories and reverses, our Trafalgars, our Waterloos, our Corunnas, been described and re-contested in my presence ; by men, too, who had shared in the actual glory or defeat of the battles they discussed. Our favourite martial hero was *the* Napoleon. We loved the romance of the little Corporal's life, and its lesson seldom troubled us. His attack upon the Bridge of Lodi, his march across the Alps, his retreat from Moscow, his banishment to Elba, his flight at Waterloo (ascribed to the treachery of Grouchy), his exile and death at St. Helena, were subjects of untiring interest. These and similar scenes floated before my eyes, like day-dreams, whilst yet a child, and the historical pictures have long been fixed in my recollection. If they were sunbeams, and the years were all summers, they could scarcely be more frequently before me.

In those days societies of Conservative working men being unknown, our customers were mainly Radical Reformers and independent thinkers, as the reader will glean from their comments. They considered the government, whether Whig or Tory, more as an exacting enemy than as a protecting friend. The army, also, they bitterly disliked, for standing, as they said, between working men and their natural rights—rights originating with Adam and Eve, in whose primeval epoch there were no gentlemen.

We may here venture to question the wisdom of one class (whether lofty or lowly, whether Whig, Tory, or



Radical) systematically slighting and opposing another class ; and we may cling to the belief that when men, or women, conscientiously do their duty—according to their lights—in the sphere of life assigned to them, they are entitled to the civility of their fellow-beings.

But I am digressing too far. The earnest politicians were left upon their feet, and although they never wearied in the "good cause" (ever our own cause), still I must hasten to relieve them, and bring the debate to a legitimate conclusion. This is a matter of little difficulty, inasmuch as the concluding remarks may be thus generally rendered. Of course a lather boy, being merely a listener, is in no way responsible for the multifarious opinions or cynical comments of his master's customers.

"Everything," chimed in a British workman, as he laid down the newspaper, "everything is given to party—nothing to patriotism. Parties are ever outbidding each other for places, to the detriment of the general welfare. A patriot, if poor, needs a place ; if rich, a title ; so each, in turn, becomes obedient to the power that can grant the coveted reward."

"What can be fairer," laughingly retorted another, while using the long towel at the glass, "than such natural exchanges? When leading politicians, out of office, have harangued long and loudly for the good of their country, may they not labour as earnestly for the good of themselves, as soon as the possession of power enables them so to do? What can be fairer?"

"I think," added a third, "we had better do as Sir Walter Scott has done—give over reading newspapers.



It seems merely a waste of time and temper to read of wrongs we cannot make right."

"Aw'm not much of a politician," said a ruddy, village-born customer, "but aw know that in some things eaw'r grondfeythers were better off than us. They had free exercise on the healthful moorlands, and were not shut up for life in unwholesome factories. Th' new system maks lots o' brass, but it taks th' pith out o' men, and England may need that pith some day."

"Just so," assented an elder, whose long silvery locks made poverty look pictorial, "and in another point the present age loses in comparison with the past. The veneration due to silvery hairs is oftener ignored by the young. The natural, pleasurable yielding to parental wishes is seldomer seen ; and thus more homes are now divested of homely charms."

"Aye, aye," bluntly exclaimed the closing debater, after thoughtfully smoking his pipe, "things are not as they ought to be. Day by day they are growing worse, as in the reigns of Charles the First and James the Second. Folks who are strong enough to inflict injury can obtain justice—but how few besides. They preach to us of the power of gentleness ; but the lamb was gentle in its dealings with the wolf, yet how did it fare ? Things were much the same with the French before the Revolution in which Louis the Sixteenth and his Queen lost their heads ; and, mark my words, the day is not far distant—whoever lives to see it—when tyrants will again suffer for their arrogance, and working men obtain a comfortable livelihood by the sweat of their brows !"



This decisive burst of enthusiasm was always hailed with delight, and warmly supported by both sides of the house; after which some member of the People's Assembly moved an adjournment to the Sunday morning next following. As the debaters had talked themselves hungry, and as their dinners were known to be waiting, the motion for adjournment was invariably carried, *nem. con.* as the Latin says. With buoyant steps, and with hearts lightened by consoling hope, the prophetic toilers then hastened to their several homes.

Thus early was I imbued with the notion that the world had somehow gone sadly wrong, and that our orators would assuredly set it right—so soon as they obtained Radical Reform.

Poor old men! The time for the fulfilment of their prophecy has arrived, and departed; but over themselves, rather than over the State, has the great change passed. Dispersed are the golden visions, the castles in the air, which formed their only heritage. The earth-mould has sounded with thrilling awe upon their coffins; whilst another generation of harmless speculators has succeeded them, and another class of regenerative bubbles glitter in the sunshine.

Contentment in our station is doubtless a "wise saw," and, perhaps, the ancient workmen erred in disregarding its advice; yet, like the generality of time-honoured rules, this one is liable to exception; for certainly it is not good to continue satisfied with a mean and inglorious situation, when by honourable exertion we may improve our position in life; better to show some trace

of the aspiring Phoenix. A couplet by Metastasis bears well upon this matter of contentment, and conveys with singular felicity one of the finest morals :—

If every man's internal care  
Were written on his brow,  
How many would our pity share  
Who raise our envy now.

In the troubled times of the lowly politicians here incidentally named, the "foul fiend" that haunted so mercilessly the imagination of Shakespeare's Mad Tom, and which usually lies dormant in some men, was roused to active and pernicious life, more especially during their long-winded election contests. We of the present generation are a little more refined than our fathers in the expression of our political animosities, though there is room for further improvement. It is still a difficult matter to give a vote without giving offence at the same time ; and no easy thing to speak that which is right without inflicting on one's self a wrong. At such excitable seasons it was wisely done to banish the military certain miles from the polling booths, for there was then warfare enough without soldiers. Perhaps, indeed, it may be a bitter jest, a stroke of keen irony, thus to remove from contested elections all outward and visible signs of war, and so reveal to us what peaceful Arcadians we are at heart,—what a floating pleasant gossamer divided the nineteenth century from the Golden Age !

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## CHAPTER XI.

### SKETCHES OF CUSTOMERS.

"Some of my heroes are low."—*English Glee.*

IN reverting to the buried and forgotten originals who frequented our shop, a few characteristic traits may be more just than any meagre descriptions ; and may serve also to place the figures in a stronger light upon the canvas. Here, as elsewhere throughout this book, are given real in preference to fictitious names ; because the names, with few exceptions, are without living owners, and the dead feel no punctilios. Further, believing with Leigh Hunt, that the penalties of life are sufficiently numerous, without anyone causelessly inflicting pain, a guard has been kept over every personal allusion.

One of those originals, a cannie Scot, kept a number of looms, and boarded the weavers in his house. He was so penurious that he would not allow a candle to be burning during supper, but made shift by the light of the fire. On a certain night when the party were eating, almost in the dark, their usual dish of meal porridge, a waggish workman who was seated next to the good man of the establishment, took up a large spoonful of the hot porridge, and while the spoon was on its way to his

mouth the man suddenly, as if the spirit of mischief had given him a prompting, altered its course, and the food alighted upon the cheek of the careful governor. "Oot, mon!" exclaimed he, fuming with pain and vexation, "what the deil are ye about?" "Fegs, sir," rejoined the practical humourist, "it's sae verra dark, that it's impossible to fin' the way to ane's ain mooth!"

Possibly, the governor had heard of his countryman, Jamie Bowie, who would not allow his friends to light a candle at his bedside to see him die, saying it was a needless extravagance.

Our frugal guardian was a dear lover of truth, and in order to shield his conscience from the sin of direct falsehood in the matter of small loans, he christened his purse "The World," keeping it always empty in his pocket. A little box upstairs, in which he stored his savings, he marked "My Friend." When a borrower came whom he did not fancy, he referred to his purse, and finding he had not a penny in the world, the business was settled; but, if he wished to oblige, he would add, "I will see what my friend can do," and slowly brought down the required amount.

It is more than probable the shrewd man had read and profited by eight homely lines, commencing "I once had money and a friend;"—lines which might be safely commended to all persons who cannot say "No" with a good grace, and who are predisposed to be generous to others rather than just to themselves. The careful weaver did well to adhere to small in preference to larger loans, his friends being thus kept grateful and



honourable. Had he placed upon their shoulders a load of obligation they could not conveniently cast off, they would naturally have writhed under the burden, like Atlas when bearing the globe. Besides, he would have committed a second fundamental error in lending at once all that he had to lend : something should always be kept in reserve. Ask any youth who understands the nature of oranges how much he prizes a genuine St. Michael's when he has extracted all the juice it can yield ?

Still pursuing his save-all theory of a pin a day is a groat a year, the Caledonian once saw a nice new brick lying on the path before him. Thinking it were a pity that so useful an article should be wasted, he stooped to pick it up. No sooner up than down again : the brick was red-hot. A malicious burst of laughter emanating from a bakehouse close by, told him he had been deliberately ensnared,—that he and his prize had both been “done brown” in the oven. Taking no notice, he went quietly home, whence he speedily returned with a pair of tongs. By the aid of these he secured the coveted *fire-brick*, and flinging a bantering query to the bakers—“Who has the laugh now ?”—bore off his trophy with the air of a conqueror.

The next who claims a reminiscence was long known to us by the familiar name of Pendleton Peter. He was a deaf old country weaver, and usually took out materials for the construction of silk handkerchiefs from a manufacturer's warehouse in town. The manufacturer's father had, many years previous to the date of this anecdote,



made a voyage across the "herring pond," at the earnest solicitation of the civil authorities, who, in consideration of his ready compliance with their request, generously defrayed the expenses of his outfit. Beyond the seas he still remained ; and his involuntary exile had been long forgotten, except by a few of the oldest inhabitants. Pendleton Peter was at best but an indifferent master of his art ; and having on one particular occasion exceeded his native awkwardness, the condition of the piece when finished may be well conceived. Our deaf friend was, however, a shrewd fellow, and his lack of skill he resolved to balance by cunning. Accordingly, nothing daunted, he trudged away to town, with his wallet slung across his shoulder, and arrived in due time at his destination. He elbowed his way through the crowd of impatient workpeople who obstructed the passage, and with an air of triumph placed his work upon the counter. The manufacturer, on making a scrutiny, soon discovered palpable failings. "Why, Peter," said he, "you have completely ruined this piece ; it is not worth a shilling." "So it is, measter ; aw never loike praisin' mehsel, but aw sed to eawr Mally, as aw wur lappin' it up, that yo'd be pleeus'd." "It's not worth a single shilling, I tell you," stormed the man of silks. "That's just what aw thowt," rejoined Peter, with provoking coolness, "aw sed to mehsel as aw wur cummin along, that yo'd gie me summat extry. Why if aw didno wark weel for yo, aw should wark weel for nobody ; for yo know aw wove for your feyther, *afore he went abroad!*" Here the master stopped him short, by placing in his hand



the full amount of his earnings, exclaiming, "Away with you home, you silly fellow, there is no driving sense into you." And Peter marched off, well pleased with the success of his adventure; pocketing, at the same time, the reward of a convenient deafness.

I shall take my leave of those heroes of the shuttle (who liked to cluster around our public chair), after preserving a fireside anecdote of John Sands, perhaps the most simple and inoffensive character of the unique assembly. John Sands was a concocter of smallwares; in plainer terms, he was a weaver by the swivel. A weaver's recompense in those days was something better than the pittance doled out to him at present. Yet even in those "happy times"—a phrase wedded by instinct to the Past, and linked by Charles Mackay to the Future—the weaver had little to spare from the amount of his earnings, especially when, as in the case of Sands, he had four or five children, and a termagant wife, to keep him on the path of rectitude. Unfortunately, John had contracted an illicit passion for the Split Crow, and the Sot's Hole, two notable taverns in Manchester. Here he lingered over the latest parliamentary intelligence, or feasted on the new number of Cobbett's *Political Register*, with all the voraciousness of Liverseege's familiar cobbler. When these had exhausted their pleasures, Sands was seduced by the charms of a bagatelle-table. At this agreeable game he prided himself on his proficiency; and its merry rattle possessed all the witchery of a syren's song. It was no unusual thing to see his hands guiding the cue and cushioning the ivory balls



for hours together, whilst his thoughts, and his most excellent intentions, were industrious at the loom. Ultimately he found himself at home, with his pockets much better furnished with checks upon the landlord's tap, than with pence for the baker's loaf. Thus, with little variation, was his time employed during many of his working days. The week was frequently wound up by a domestic dramatic incident, somewhat after the following fashion. *Scene*, a tiny flagged yard, with three houses on each side, and one ditto at the top, exactly opposite the entrance. *Time*, four o'clock on a Saturday evening in winter. The house opposite the prompter (for so the entrance may be justly called) is occupied by our luckless hero. His wife being upon the look-out, has caught a glimpse of John, as he rounds the corner, and she calls, loud enough for his hearing, "Run, childer, and meet your feyther (giving to each a box on the ear, as a quickener), can you show no love for him?" The youngsters, thus admonished, dutifully rush forth in a group, surround the happy sire, and escort him into his dwelling triumphantly, but they crowd to the fire before him. The good dame, noticing this dereliction of respect, seizes the poker: "Get away from the fire, do, childer, and let your feyther come; have you no feeling for him, after he's been out all day?"

The bairns having fallen into the rear, the couple become snugly seated; the kettle sings her pleasant tune upon the bars; the tea equipage is duly placed upon the table.

"Wilto—have thy tea?" (meekly).



"Ay ; aw dunno care if aw do."

"Hasto got—any money?" (very languidly).

"Ay ; a trifle" (places his wages upon her lap).

"Is this all?" (dejectedly).

"Ay ; thou knows aw wusno so weel at th' beginnin' o'th week ; and thou knows aw borrowed a shillin' for thee, that aw've had to pay back ; and there wur three-pence to David Dodd, for shaving me and powin' my yure ; and——"

"Arto sure this is all?" (interrupting him, rather tartly).

"Ay ; aw——"

The injured woman, without listening to further explanation, brandishes the poker against the legs of Sands, exclaiming terrifically, "Shift thy lazy shanks, thou unfeelin' brute, and let th' childer come and warm theirsels !"

Is there no moral conveyed in this ludicrous scene—no comfort for the weaker vessels? When the poker strikes the limbs of the defeated Sands, does it not also strike a practical lesson into the minds of my female readers?—a lesson that might be applied with timely aptitude by the two hundred ladies who recently memorialised our Queen for some safeguard against husbands.

From married life in its deteriorated state it is, however, time to part. When "love, honour, and obey" have become hollow sounds, why linger with the broken hopes of the marriage ceremony? When marriage becomes little more than a matter of wages and con-

venience—of selfishness that chills the kindly heart—it is pleasant to revert to those early years when John Sands and his wife were playmates; when he deserted his butterflies and she her skipping-rope, to share each other's company on the log near her father's cottage. One sunny day, as they were seated on that fallen tree, exchanging strange glances, the tiny god measured his distance, and took his unerring aim. He opened a glowing prospect to their germinating thoughts and feelings, for Cupid is a marvellous castle builder—the chief of the great Excelsior house of LOVE, HOPE, AND FANCY.



It e'er the breast reels purely bless'd,  
And life appears divine,  
And laughing hours are wreathed with flowers,  
The charm, young Love, is thine. P.



Well might Douglas Jerrold exclaim in effect, "What Rachael's do men woo, and what Leahs sometimes do they find they have married." Even Mistress Sands—the matchless virago—was amiable in her spring-time. So neat and winning was she in her manners, so domestic in the minor household arrangements which fell to her share, that she became the pride of her parents' home. When John, in his musing moments, remembers those opening charms,—those morning lights,—and compares them ruefully with the poker scenes of his evening hours, he feels the full force of the popular truism, that comparisons are odious. As his thoughts gradually resolve themselves into language he thus soliloquises:—"It's a weary world for poor wayvers. Hard to live in, hard to die in. Aw'm awlus willin' to follow good advice, and th' Bible Praycher advises us to 'eat, drink, and be merry;' yet if aw ventur' to make merry, just on Saint Monday, aw'm punished for it a' the rest o' th' week, specially on pay-day. Aw'm one o' th' unluckiest fellows alive. If it were not for seein', now and then, some poor mortal more miserable even than mysel', aw shouldn't be able to bear up. That's th' only bit o' consolation aw have left."

I had the pleasure of operating, at that early part of my career, on the chin of a singular and romantic customer. His eccentricities, though sufficiently comical in their character, sprang from the most tragical of causes,—occasional derangement of the intellect. During his lucid intervals, he always maintained a respectable appearance, whilst his manner was staid and unexcep-



tionable. But his approaches to insanity were marked by some of the strangest freaks imaginable. He would quit home dressed in his best clothes, for the purpose—in reality though not avowedly—of taking possession of his imaginary property. When advanced a few miles into the country, he would suddenly pause before some gentleman's seat and pleasure-grounds, place his hat upon a conspicuous part thereof, and exclaim, majestically, "I take possession of this domain, thus!" Leaving his beaver as an evidence of ownership, he would continue his ramble until some other attractive object—the garden of a florist, perhaps—won his fancy, when, untying the kerchief from his neck, he would spread it carefully upon the quickset hedge, slowly pronouncing the injunction, "Thou art mine from this day forth." In that way he proceeded until every article of his clothing, save shirt and trousers, was similarly disposed of. Towards evening he would return to his disconcerted relatives, being escorted to the door by a crowd of tormenting youngsters. The ultimatum of those freaks was a temporary residence in the Lunatic Asylum. The last time I saw him he formed one of a party of recovering patients, who were employed in guarding the grounds of the asylum from trespass, during the ascent from that neighbourhood of Mr. Green, the aeronaut. He was leaning upon his long protection pole, intently watching the progress of the balloon. A fitting occupation, I thought, for a poor dreamer, whose existence had been swallowed up by bubbles, mere bubbles!



A customer of a very different stamp was Willie Walton, as doggedly matter-of-fact in his ways and words as the other was mysterious and flighty. He was one of those sturdy old fellows, with burly calves, who, knowing they can stand to advantage, are rarely found seated. Ever professing to be in a hurry when coming to be shaved, and frequently begging a turn, he would yet deliberately rise when the operation was finished, and spell the newspaper during an hour or more. To a first request to exchange papers he paid no attention ; to a second appeal came a gruff denial, or a sarcasm of John Edwin's—"Hurry no man's cattle, you may keep an ass of your own." He was as slow to exchange opinions as papers ; and seemingly so much absorbed in sullen self-gratification as to be almost oblivious of everything around.

Another of our visitors was one of Nelson's Agamemmons, who had lost, like his admiral, an arm, in some desperate conflict at sea. He was a keen newsmonger, yet unable to read. With him I entered into a pleasant engagement, more agreeable, as may be inferred, than his previous engagements had proved. Often, upon the Sunday afternoon, I carried the newspaper to his house, and read every article presented to my view, until nearly bed-time. He plied me liberally with fruit, sweetmeats, and tea, placing a penny in my hand when he bade me good night. This contract lasted a long while, and I felt regret when it was cancelled by the sailor's death. He was one of the earliest of the cholera victims.



Soon after the sudden demise of John, the sailor, a report reached our shop to the effect that a mob had broken into the Cholera Hospital, adjoining the Rising Sun Tavern.\* This was on the afternoon of Sunday, September 2, 1832. When I arrived on the spot the gates were battered down, while the cholera van was in flames at the end of Swan-street. A party of excited men surrounded the fire, until the offending vehicle was consumed, when they rushed into the hospital, like maniacs, two medical officers of the ward narrowly escaping. After two or three unsuccessful sallies, the police took to the adjacent lock-up several of the disturbers. Bearing the dead body of a child, the rioters formed a procession, and marched along Swan-street to the Infirmary, thence down Portland-street, and other thoroughfares of the town, until seized by the police in Oldham-street. Ultimately Mr. Braidley, the borough-reeve, with other authorities, appeared upon the scene, when Mr. Greaves read the Riot Act, and the soldiers dispersed the crowd. After watching the strange exhibition until I became wearied, I returned home. Some of

\* This tavern was kept, a little earlier, by the plump and popular Dolly Rexford, and her husband, Job Haigh, erst of Ambler Thorn, near Halifax. They were married in 1815, and conducted the Grapes Tavern, Deansgate, about half-a-dozen years. Thence they occupied the Rising Sun, where they remained until their retirement from business, prior to 1832. Their country retreat was Altrincham, at which place, in 1853, Dolly died, in her 56th year. She was buried in the grave of her parents, at St. John's, Deansgate. Her husband survived her but a few months, as shown by a brief inscription in St. George's Churchyard, Altrincham:—

In Memory of Job Haigh, of Mill House. Altrincham,  
Died March 21, 1854, aged 67 years.



those disturbers were subsequently committed to the sessions. The riot occurred in consequence of the discovery that the head of a dead child had been removed by an assistant, apparently because the coffin was too small. The Asiatic cholera had committed dreadful ravages in Manchester. Night and day the van was kept in motion, until it became almost as ominous as a hearse ; and well might the van be so considered, as its stricken inmates seldom returned. The time was a trying one, also, to the hospital surgeons ; for in addition to incessant labour and imminent danger from contagion, they were exposed to the galling insinuations of the thoughtless, and the dangerous threats of the ignorant. Shortly after this singular and unexpected disturbance the pestilence departed, and friends and neighbours mingled once more without fear and without suspicion.

In the next chapter I will endeavour to render a fair account of two mechanical worthies whose adventures, forming an interesting episode, come just within the range of these sketches of customers and notable practitioners.

## CHAPTER XII.

### HAYES AND ARKWRIGHT.

"At an early hour, we were awoke from our slumber by the loud clanging of a factory bell and the noisy clatter of the operatives proceeding to their daily labour,—sounds that savoured too much of our own city of Cottonopolis to accord with the poetic features of the surrounding scenery."

*James Croston.*

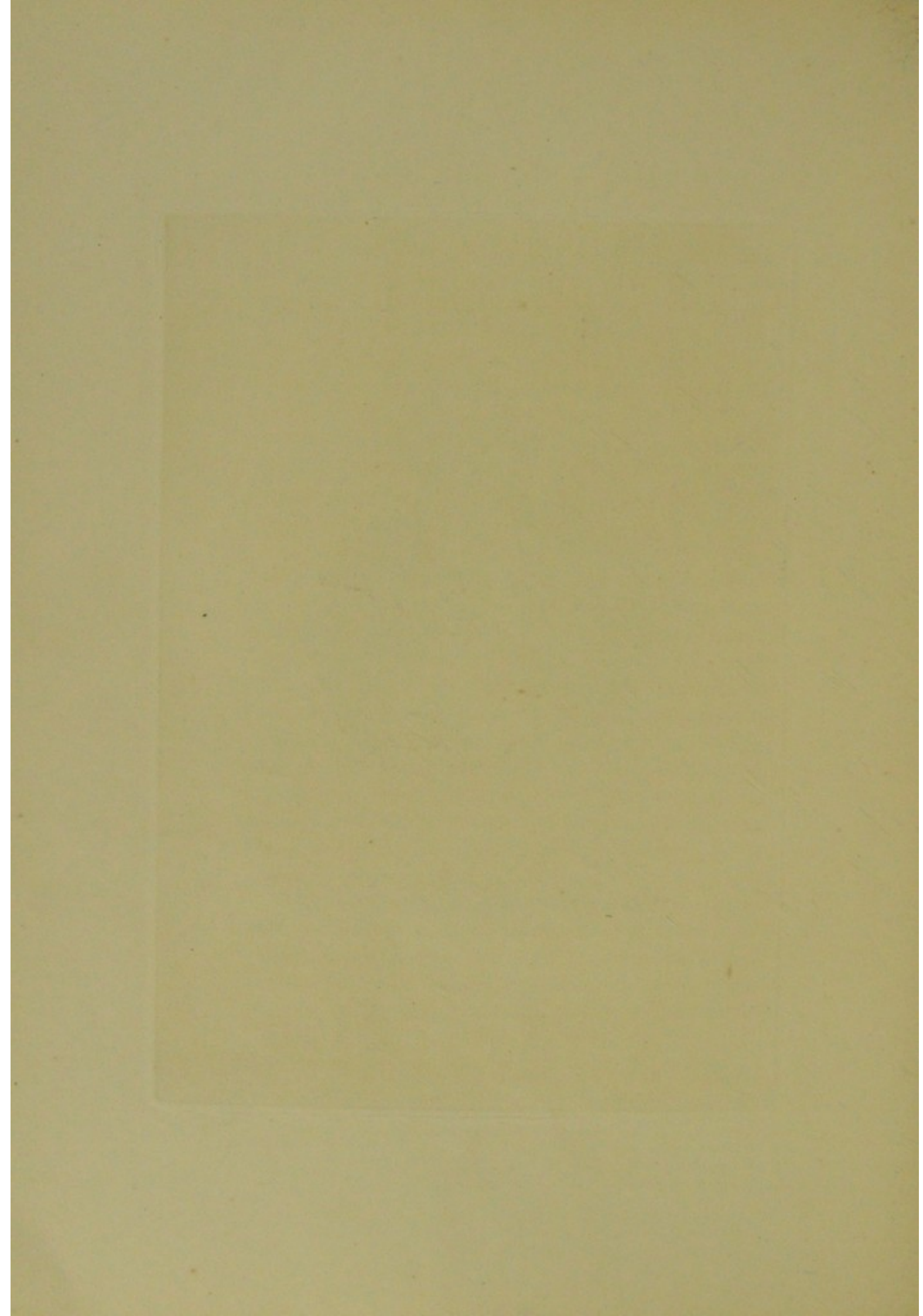
So writeth the author of "On Foot through the Peak," while sojourning in the romantic neighbourhood of Willersley Castle, the magnificent seat raised at the cost of Sir Richard Arkwright, but never enjoyed by that enterprising founder of his House. Mr. Croston apparently feels little affection for mercantile music—neither do we love it over much; yet we must frankly recognise the magical effects of the "clanging" sounds emanating from cotton mills. "Those *factory* bells, those *factory* bells, how many a tale their music tells;"—but as we dislike parodies, we will not further mutilate the sweet evening chimes of Thomas Moore.

As more than one hundred years have elapsed since the invention of the spinning-jenny and the water-frame (better known as the "throstle"), and as all the chief actors in those inventions and their manifold improvements have long ago departed, it may be deemed rather





Rich. Arkwright





late in the day to make an addition to the numerous volumes, treatises and plays, already written on the subject. But it is never too late, we assume, to add a fact to history, or to bring back a truth diverted from its course.

It is believed by many, but doubted or denied by others, that Sir Richard Arkwright was a great inventor. To say he was a great improver—an energetic, practical arranger, an untiring, far-seeing worker,—would be nearer the fact. The balance of original, and of later reliable evidence, leads us to such conclusion. Amongst our earliest trade connections were numbered the son and grandson of Thomas Hayes, the inventive reed maker of Leigh, in Lancashire ; and by them, and others, we have frequently heard this question of invention canvassed and described. The son, who during the better portion of his life was a soldier upon foreign service, has been many years buried ; but with the grandson we still maintain a pleasurable acquaintance. Feeling that this source of information, although genuine and original, might be tinged with a little of natural partiality, we have endeavoured to ensure candour by collating sundry dates, inscriptions, and curious details touching that distant and interesting period, which seem to have escaped the notice of previous writers on the subject.

Thomas Hayes, notwithstanding his priority to Sir Richard Arkwright, was not the first in the spinning field. Upon a machine for spinning by rollers Lewis Paul had previously expended much time, ingenuity, and



money, to little purpose. His deserts and disappointments, described at length by Mr. Robert Cole, and inserted by the late Mr. Gilbert French in his "Life of Samuel Crompton," may be summed-up in few words. By documents there furnished, it is sufficiently clear that Lewis Paul, in 1738, obtained a patent for the first spinning machine, and subsequently sold many sets of spindles to adventurous persons who hopefully experimented with them. But so decisive was the failure, that upon the expiry of the patent, in 1752, the machines fell into disuse. After making considerable improvements, Mr. Paul took out a second patent, in 1758, but did not long survive the grant thereof. He died at Brook Green, Kensington, and was buried at Paddington, on the 30th of April, 1759. So trifling was the value set upon his unfortunate machines, that many of them were sold as "gim-cracks" and waste material.

From this point, the simple history of the cotton spinning machines, and of the ingenious contrivers connected with them, may be thus continued. Thomas Hayes, the next in order of time, was a reed maker and weaver. Possessing a passion for mechanics that would not be denied, his thoughts and time became engrossed to such an extent, that the homely manufactures of the reed and the loom were neglected. The sleep of many nights was broken, the income of many days curtailed, by the indulgence of his intellectual hobby. Mistress Hayes did not admire his studying for the million: she feared, as well she might, the million would prove a bad paymaster,—owing much, but discharging little. The



world is ever a gainer by such studious men, though the gain is rarely reciprocated. The phantom honours and visionary rewards of futurity possessed no charms in the eyes of Mistress Hayes ; remembering the fable of the bird-in-hand, she preferred the commonplace and serviceable. Husband and wife often argued this question of fact *versus* fancy with varying resolutions, but with one unvarying result. Nature was too powerful for Hayes, who could not refrain from study and invention. He first, in 1764, brought to light a rude spinning machine which he christened after his eldest daughter, Jenny, who was a favourite child, and noted within her rustic circle as a superior singer. This contrivance he soon abandoned and made public. It was thereupon taken in hand, freely and fairly, by James Hargreaves, who retained the name given to it by Hayes, and re-introduced it, with important improvements in 1767. The machine could not have been christened in compliment to Mrs. Hargreaves, whose name was Elizabeth, not Jane, as erroneously printed in a recent local novel professing to be founded upon facts.

Hargreaves obtained a patent for his Jenny, still further improved, in 1770 ; at which date he had matured Hayes's suggestive idea into a thoroughly practical machine. The fate of this ingenious struggler was scarcely one to be coveted. A man of undoubted mechanical ability, whose labours have proved serviceable through a long series of years, and of blameless character withal, he found his prospects blighted for a time by frequent evasions of his patent, and by the riotous destruction of his machinery. This machine-breaking



episode in the life of Hargreaves has been represented in a recent drama as occurring to Arkwright. The latter, however, escaped the fury of the mob by a timely retreat to the sequestered hills and dales of Derbyshire. Hargreaves, after retrieving his affairs, died at Nottingham, in 1778. Being a stranger to that town, we cannot say whether his grave is, or is not, suitably inscribed ; but apparently it is unmarked, as a correspondent there residing has recently sought it in vain. So, presumably, the stoneless mould defies recognition. Else, this page might have preserved the epitaph of James Hargreaves, as a fitting companion to the rescued inscription to his widow inserted on a subsequent leaf.

There is a popular, and, to the down-trodden, soothing fallacy, to the effect that Death levels all distinctions. Wait, we are told, until the great Democrat appears, when all inequalities will be equalised. But is it so in fact? Numerous statues and nameless mounds, contrasting strongly, point to a very different conclusion. Compare the Arkwright monuments, costly and beautiful, in Cromford Church, with the unguerdoned grave of James Hargreaves, in the burial-ground at Nottingham, or with the last resting-place of Thomas Hayes in Salford,—and if they denote equality, pray correct and enlighten us. Rightly or wrongly, the line of demarcation is as tightly drawn in the cemetery as in the moving world. Admitting that all decorated sleepers are unconscious of their finery, what then? They are still the “cynosure of neighbouring eyes,” and what did they value more whilst living?



Truly, the pilgrim in search of equality must pass, ere he find it, through the mysterious gate once closed against the Peri.

\* \* \* \* \*

"There was much similarity in manners, habits, and religious opinions, between Samuel Crompton and Highs (Hayes) of Leigh, who all but succeeded with the parallel invention snatched from his hands by Arkwright. Both were followers of Swedenborg." — *Life of Samuel Crompton*, by Gilbert J. French.

Further particulars concerning the origin of the throstle may be gleaned from Guest's "History of the Cotton Manufacture." Mr. Guest was a native of Leigh, and his father, Dr. Guest, was well acquainted with Hayes. This personal knowledge of the facts made the historian earnest in his advocacy of the real inventor. A presentation copy of his book, now before us, bears this inscription on its title-page:—"To James Highs, grandson of Thomas Highs, this book is given with feelings of great respect for the memory of his grandfather, by Richard Guest."

Hayes, on resigning the primitive jenny, dedicated his energies to the construction of the water-frame or throstle; and after much labour and anxiety, his efforts proved successful in the beginning of the year 1767. At this juncture Arkwright appeared upon the scene. John Kay, a clock maker, who had made wheels, models, and other requisites for Hayes, was induced to make similar things for Arkwright, with whom he entered into a business arrangement. Arkwright was of a more adventurous, energetic nature than Hayes, and soon left the quiet originator in the rear.



At the date when Hayes contrived his first throstle, the ingenious but unprofitable spinning machines invented and patented by Lewis Paul had been forsaken as failures ; the inventor had also passed away ; so the course seemed clear for any new aspirant. It has been reasonably suggested that Hayes might have gained some knowledge of rollers from his immediate predecessor. But there exists no evidence in support of the suggestion ; the family and the familiar acquaintances of Hayes certainly believed to the contrary. Paul's machines were never seen within many miles of Leigh ; and Hayes, a "home-faring" man, had not the means, even had he possessed the inclination, to travel far in quest of them. Beside, the two machines differed widely in construction, as explained and pictured in Guest's history. Leaving this point as it stands, we arrive at a fact which is reasonably clear. It was not from Lewis Paul that Arkwright derived the plan of spinning by rollers ; but from Thomas Hayes, through the medium of John Kay.

The later years and events of these noteworthy men—Hayes and Arkwright—belong to the history of their country ; and in Lancashire, especially, will remain sources of interest and of meditation.

Dating from the year 1767 the career of Arkwright was somewhat brief, but marvellously brilliant. He had found the true philosopher's stone, and wheresoever he put it to the test, all was converted to gold. Accompanied by Hayes's early neighbour and assistant, John Kay, he proceeded, in 1768, to Nottingham,—finally turning his



back upon all the long hair and the hair dyes, the hirsute chins and the wig-blocks, with which he was familiar on the northern circuit. He boldly entered upon a strange path in the vicinity of "Merrie Sherwood." By displaying a model of the new throstle he promptly secured moneyed partners, and in the following year took out a patent as the inventor, under this singular description, "Richard Arkwright, of Nottingham, clock maker." A mill at Nottingham being filled with the novel frames, horse-power was there employed ; but in 1771 Arkwright and his partners erected a larger mill at Cromford, in Derbyshire, the machinery in which was set in motion by a water-wheel. A few years later, when Arkwright had procured his second patent, they built another mill at the same sequestered village ; which was followed, in 1783, by another, still larger, situated between Cromford and Matlock Bath. From this focus they shot forth their rays to Manchester and elsewhere. The first mill built for them in this town was in Factory-yard, Miller-street ; which concern was subsequently sold to the managers, Messrs. Barton and Simpson, both of whom realised fortunes. A tablet in St. Mark's Church, Cheetham Hill village, shews that John Barton, cotton spinner, of Manchester, died in 1802, aged fifty years. So lately as September, 1870, "Steeple Jack" flew his kite over the chimney in Factory-yard, with the view of taking it down, but the idea was abandoned. The chimney, wearing a somewhat peculiar aspect, is still strong and useful, though well-nigh a centenarian\*.

\* Since taken down.



Evidently, no grass was allowed to grow beneath the active feet of Richard Arkwright. Although surrounded by inviting scenery he gave no time to listless dreaming, but turned aside from the richest melodies of nature to listen to the music of his own "throstles." About the date in question a determined opposition was formed against his patents ; petitions for their repeal were placed for signature in the shops of Manchester ; and in the winter of 1782, a threatening letter was sent to him, containing this pertinent query :—"Do you think the town must be ruled by such a barber as you?" The enriched and enraged shaver offered one hundred pounds reward for the discovery of the writer of the anonymous libel. In July, 1783, a newspaper paragraph informed the world that Mr. Arkwright had generously given twenty-seven fine milch cows to twenty-seven of his principal workmen, for the service of their respective families ; and in May, 1785, just one month prior to the decisive trial, the same editor quaintly tells us that forty or fifty North Britons, with bagpipes and other music playing, had just arrived at Cromford from Perth. They had left Scotland, it seemed, on account of the scarcity of work, and were immediately taken into the service of Mr. Arkwright, in his cotton mills. The adventurous Caledonians enjoyed a dance in the evening,—a merry Highland fling upon the moonlit bank of the Derwent,—to congratulate each other on the happy termination of their long journey. Yet in the midst of that roystering group there was one repining spirit—one sorrowing Sandy,—who, when summoned for a song, instead of



gaily chaunting "Jockey and Jenny," or "Woo'd, and Married, and a'," as his countrymen anticipated, carolled forth an exile's lament, as plaintive as "Lochaber No More."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Manchester has been the nursery of all those wonderful mechanists whose discoveries gave birth to modern commerce, and are now enriching the world."—*James Wheeler*.

At the period now reached, events of interest or importance were constantly crowding upon the time and attention of Arkwright. In 1786, as is well known, he was appointed High Sheriff of Derbyshire; and in that capacity received the honour of knighthood at the hands of King George the Third—one honour thus leading to another, upon the same principle that, in a reverse ratio, misfortunes seldom come single. Being now one of the titled gentry,—one of "Peg Nicholson's Knights," created upon the escape of the king from assassination,—he applied for his coat-of-arms, and received the grant in 1787. The most conspicuous emblem on his shield is a cotton tree in full bearing; and for his crest, an eagle soaring; but not an indication of a pole, a razor, or a lather-brush.

By right of purchase, in 1789, Sir Richard became Lord of the Manor of Cromford, having, in the previous year, witnessed the rearing of his magnificent mansion, Willersley Castle. Before the building was inhabited it was set on fire by an over-heated stove, and everything combustible consumed. This accident, occurring in August, 1791, deprived Sir Richard of the high gratification of dwelling beneath its stately roof, as he died on



the third day of the following August, at the Rock House, Cromford, in the sixtieth year of his age. He was interred in Matlock Church, upwards of two thousand persons being present at his funeral. By his will he desired his son to complete in a proper manner the mansion and the church which he had begun, and to settle fifty pounds a year on the minister for life: both of which requests were duly obeyed by the fortunate heir-at-law.

In July, 1792 (one month preceding Sir Richard's decease), the *Mercury* announced that a statue of the knight would be erected in the centre of "a spacious square lately laid out in Manchester, called Grosvenor Square," but the monumental design was never executed.

Cromford Church, upon its completion, became the chosen place of sepulture for the members of the Arkwright family; and the remains of Sir Richard were removed, in the silence of night, from Matlock, and deposited in a vault within the new structure. The monumental inscriptions of the Arkwrights, in the chancel of Cromford Church, are engraved on marble slabs within carved and pedimented niches. The tributary words placed on the tomb of an historical character are entitled to a wider circulation than a village church can yield. In the pages of this book they will possibly find a more extended circle of readers.

[ARMS.]

In Memory of Sir Richard Arkwright, Knight, founder of this Church. He was born at Preston, in the County of Lancaster, 23rd December, 1732; and died at Cromford, 3rd August, 1792.



In Memory of Richard Arkwright, Esqre., of Willersley, only son of Sir Richard Arkwright, Knight. Born 19 December, 1755. Died 23rd April, 1843. And of Mary his Wife, daughter of Adam Simpson, Esq., of Bonsall, in the County of Derby. Born 6th August, 1755. Died 24th February, 1827. Also of their daughters, Mary, who died 9th June, 1803, aged 15 years; Harriet, who died 7th November, 1815, aged 17 years; and Frances, born 23rd August, 1796. Died 4th November, 1863.

The next inscription appears on a marble monument, sculptured by Chantrey :—

Sacred to the Memory of Martha Maria, the beloved and affectionate Wife of Richard Arkwright, Junr., Esqre., and daughter of the Rev. William Beresford, of Ashbourne, who died on the 12th of March, 1820, aged 40 years. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Also in Memory of their children, Richard Arkwright, who died November 19th, 1810, aged 5 weeks; Richard Arkwright, who died February 18, 1813, aged 6 weeks; and Agnes Maria Arkwright, who died March 16, 1813, aged 4 years.

Upon a square slab, underneath the monument, are added the following lines :—

Richard Arkwright, Junr., Esqre., of Normanton, of Turville, in the County of Leicester, eldest son of Richard Arkwright, Esqre., of Willersley. Born 30th September, 1781.  
Died 28th March, 1832.

The second niche contains the record subjoined :—

In Memory of Peter Arkwright, Esqre., of Willersley, third son of Richard Arkwright, Esqre. Born April 17, 1784. Died September 19, 1866. And of Mary Anne, his wife, daughter of Charles Hurt, Esqre., of Wirksworth. Born March 17, 1786. Died September 6, 1872.

The closing inscription thus reads :—

Charles Arkwright, Esquire, of Dunstall, in the County of Stafford, fifth son of Richard Arkwright, Esqre., of Willersley. Born 22 November, 1786. Died 28 December, 1856. Also

Mary, his Wife, daughter of Edward Sacheverel Wilmot Sitwell, Esquire, of Stainsby House, in this county. Born 6 December, 1788. Died 29th November, 1858.

Their remains are deposited in the vault beneath. In affectionate and grateful remembrance this Monument is erected by their Nephews and Nieces.

Sir Richard was twice married, but in neither instance to a daughter of Thomas Hayes, such fanciful union, as depicted in a modern drama, being merely a playwright's privilege.

Very recently Sir Richard's primitive factory at Cromford has been united by the will and testament of Mr. Peter Arkwright to his castellated seat at Willersley and the pair must henceforth descend as heirlooms in the Arkwright family so long as the law of entail can prevent their separation. This alliance must have been conceived in a spirit similar to that which influenced Shakespeare when writing, "Look upon this picture, and on this:" or as if, for the sake of contrast, we were to bind the acorn and the oak together.

Quitting the sunny for the shady side, the reader's attention may now revert to Thomas Hayes, who never relinquished his water-frame. From the year 1767 he continued to make frames to order for the use of manufacturers, being assisted in their construction by a few workmen of his own. In 1771 he and his inventions were recognised in a very prominent manner, as the annexed quotation from Harrop's *Mercury* will shew:—  
"Manchester, July 2.—Mr. Hayes's newly-invented Machine for Spinning Cotton, which is purchased for the benefit of the public, is now fixed up in the Exchange,



where all persons concerned in the manufacture of cotton will have an opportunity of viewing it." The machine was duly exhibited in the place named, Hayes being present to superintend his handiwork. For that service he was liberally rewarded, returning home (says his grandson) with more gold coins in his possession than he could hold in his outstretched hands. The exact sum, according to Mr. Guest, was two hundred guineas. These facts may serve to shew how groundless was the fear expressed by a former writer, that the valuable discovery might have perished in the hands of Hayes, had not Arkwright taken possession and forced it upon the world. Delay was likely enough to ensue, but not decadency. Hayes did not enter into the new manufacture of cotton, because he had a large family at that time, and was unable to pursue it without the aid of a moneyed friend. Nevertheless, he meant to preserve the benefit of his invention, and was not willing that anybody should take it from him. Such is the substance of Hayes's evidence given at the trial in 1785.

\* \* \* \* \*

"To the reed-maker of Leigh therefore, may be mainly ascribed the manufacturing eminence now possessed by the county of Lancaster."—*Pigot's Lancashire Directories*.

One day during the Whitsuntide of 1772, the rivals had an interview at Manchester. "I happened to be there at that time," states Hayes, "and on meeting an intimate acquaintance, was thus accosted: 'Would you like to see Mr. Arkwright? he is in town.' 'With all my heart,'" said Hayes, who was thereupon conducted into



the bar-parlour of Mrs. Jackson, situated in the immediate vicinity of Deansgate. Soon afterwards, Arkwright was introduced by the mutual friend, who invited them to have a glass together. On this occasion they did not meet as strangers, having had some intercourse at Leigh, at the period of Arkwright's marriage there, in 1761. "We fell into some conversation about engines," continues Hayes, in his evidence; "at that time I was making another engine for a gentleman in Manchester, which they gave me a premium for. I began to tell Mr. Arkwright he had got my invention, but that I should go on, if I would. He said very little about it. When I told him he never would have known the rollers but for me, he never said a word. When I repeated it was my invention, 'Suppose it was,' he says, 'if any man has found out a thing, and begun it, and does not go forward, he lays it aside, and any other man has a right in so many weeks or months (I forget now) to take it up, and get a patent for it.' 'I cannot tell how that is,' says I, 'for I never was much concerned in law.' " Here ended the interview between those mechanical rivals. When the history of Manchester is presented in a panoramic form by a series of paintings, the meeting of Hayes and Arkwright may prove one of the attractive scenes. To our merchant princes this source of their own wealth would be more pleasing than the source of the Nile or the Niger, and to the public in general there is ever a charm in the meetings of noteworthy characters: people discover in them a touch of romance, which, like the famous touch of nature, makes the whole world kin.



Hayes kept his word with Arkwright, continuing to do as he pleased with his own invention, notwithstanding the patents. At the time of the first trial touching Arkwright's claims, Hayes was engaged in superintending the erection of machinery for Baron Hamilton, at Balbriggan, near Dublin ; and when he was subpoenaed as a witness, and money forwarded to defray his travelling expenses, the baron judiciously advised him not to attend unless rewarded with a liberal annuity. But Hayes preferred relying upon the generosity of the Lancashire mill owners, and the result is soon told. Immediately after the second trial, a public subscription was opened for him in Manchester, "as some recompence for the benefits received from his ingenuity."\* Amongst his annual subscribers were Mr. Peter Drinkwater, of Irwell House (thirteen guineas), Mr. Douglas, of Douglas Green, (seven guineas), Mr. Peel, afterward the first Sir Robert Peel (one guinea), and other commercial gentlemen of less note. At the beginning these subscriptions amounted to about fifty guineas a year, but they gradually dwindled to a mere trifle ; for Hayes outlived some of his patrons, and the gratitude of others died early. In his old age, when disabled by a stroke of palsy, he was assisted by a few tried friends who knew his merits, and, what was better to his purpose, knew how to reward them. The descendants of the struggling genius remain, like himself, toiling artisans ; while to the heirs of his successful rival have descended honours and almost fabulous wealth.

It is far from my wish to write a single unfavourable

\* *Manchester Mercury*, July 12, 1785.



word respecting one of the brotherhood of shavers—one who had been

A village barber born and bred,  
Who trimm'd folk in a minute ;  
Made something of outside the head,  
Though there was nothing in it.

Much rather would I exalt Sir Richard as a magnate of the hairdresser's shop ; but as he enjoyed all the advantages during life, surely his less fortunate rival ought to have a true word spoken in justice to his memory. "Truth," observed Lord Byron, in a genial mood, "belongs to the dead, and to the unfortunate." Arkwright's practical ingenuity and persevering industry are so generally recognised that he can well spare to Thomas Hayes the portion of credit which his more original talent deserves. Apart from Sir Richard's claim to invention in the matter of jennies and throstles, he was an excellent architect—one of the best, according to *Punch*, and in the opinion of the world—for he was the architect of his own good fortune.

During the latter portion of his existence Thomas Hayes (not Highs, as sometimes written) fixed his abode in Camp Street, Manchester. He died on the tenth of December, 1803, at the patriarchal age of eighty-four years, and was buried near the tomb of his friend, Mr. Cowherd, in Christ Church yard, King-street, Salford. Although Hayes was undoubtedly interred as thus described, it were bootless labour for any amiable follower in the footsteps of Robert Paterson, the Cameronian, to visit the spot with the intention of restoring the



inventor's epitaph ; an earnest search was made several years ago, but no certain trace of his grave was discernible. Neither is there a portrait of Hayes extant. But we can well-nigh realise him, in form and features, even as we write, having known three generations of his race. The family likeness has been retained and transmitted with singular fidelity. Not tall in stature, but moderately stout ; with broad features, good singing voices, and with eyes that could illuminate whenever they chose.

By a curious and interesting coincidence the widow of James Hargreaves lies interred in the same out-of-the-way and almost forgotten grave-yard that contains the ashes of Hayes. Here is a copy of the inscription on her stone :—

In memory of Elizabeth, widow of the late James Hargreaves,  
the inventor of the Spinning Jenny, who died February 12th,  
1802, aged 85 years.

By the close proximity of their graves, it would seem that Hayes and Mrs. Hargreaves were neighbours and fellow worshippers, departing to their final rest well nigh together, their ages being similarly venerable. That resting place of the Swedenborgians has been sadly desecrated of late, hewed out to serve the convenience of trade. A public investigation was demanded and obtained, but we have not heard that the wrong has been righted.

After duly weighing all the evidence bearing upon the case in point, the impartial juror will, we think, concur in the verdict pronounced by Richard Guest, historian of the cotton manufacture :—"Hayes invented, Ark-



wright arranged, and Crompton combined." This view of the matter is supported by Mr. Clarke, in his "New Lancashire Gazetteer." While writing of Manchester, that author observes—"The Town Hall, situated in King-street, is a structure of the Ionic order, with a dome; on each side of the portico, in separate niches, are placed the statues of Solon and Alfred, with no peculiar propriety; those of Thomas Highs and Samuel Crompton, whose surprising inventions have so much contributed to make Manchester what it is, would have been more inspiring examples." In adopting this conclusion, we need not forget James Hargreaves, nor overlook the labours of the earlier pioneer, Lewis Paul. Although Paul's primitive machines were lost and abandoned, the knowledge that they had existed probably acted as a spur to the inventive genius of Thomas Hayes. The record of the decisive trial in June, 1785, may be safely taken as a just criterion. The inventors and improvers immediately interested were then living. Their personal knowledge was brought to bear, supported by the best witnesses that could be produced. So, if a careful perusal be given to that evidence, and the judge's emphatic summing-up be fairly weighed, enquirers will be enabled to form their own conclusions.

The various mechanical inventions and improvements of Kay, Crompton, Watt, and Cartwright do not come within the range of this narrative: further, they have been efficiently treated elsewhere. But with respect to the introducer of a useful spinning machine called the "Billy," first used in 1786, some minor errors



have been disseminated in print, and these it may be advisable to rectify by inserting a few lines of reliable information contributed by a practical spinner, James Hayes, grandson of the Leigh inventor. "The Billy," says Mr. Hayes, "was contrived and introduced by John Stopford, of Ashton-under-Lyne, who was a jenny master, spinning very fine counts for that period. He failed in trade, and removed to Manchester, where he opened a public house, known as the White Hart, in Great Ancoats Street. Here he shortly afterwards died, leaving a widow and several sons and daughters, who continued to conduct the business of the tavern. Our family and the Stopfords were intimately acquainted. In the course of time, four of the sons became managers of spinning concerns. As piecer and spinner, I have known the Billy seventy years. I began working in the factory when eight years old; and was fifteen at the death of my grandfather, of whom I retain a distinct and pleasing remembrance."

Time, the proverbial worker of marvels, has now, so far as concerns James Hayes, converted the present into the past. His death occurred, after long-continued affliction, on the tenth of August, 1866, in his seventy-eighth year. Worthy and old-fashioned in his views, he would not recognise the changes which Time is always making. Like Charles Lamb, he never conformed to the march of progress, but was dragged along in the procession. At the date of our first acquaintance, in 1826, he had accumulated some property, which he lost by generous though misplaced confidence in friends. Ven-

turing to America in the hope of recovering his position, he there, as afterward in England, missed many advantages in business, because he declined to adopt the trickster's aids to success. Venerating the memory of his ingenious grandfather, he felt through life a sense of grievous wrong in connection with his inventions.

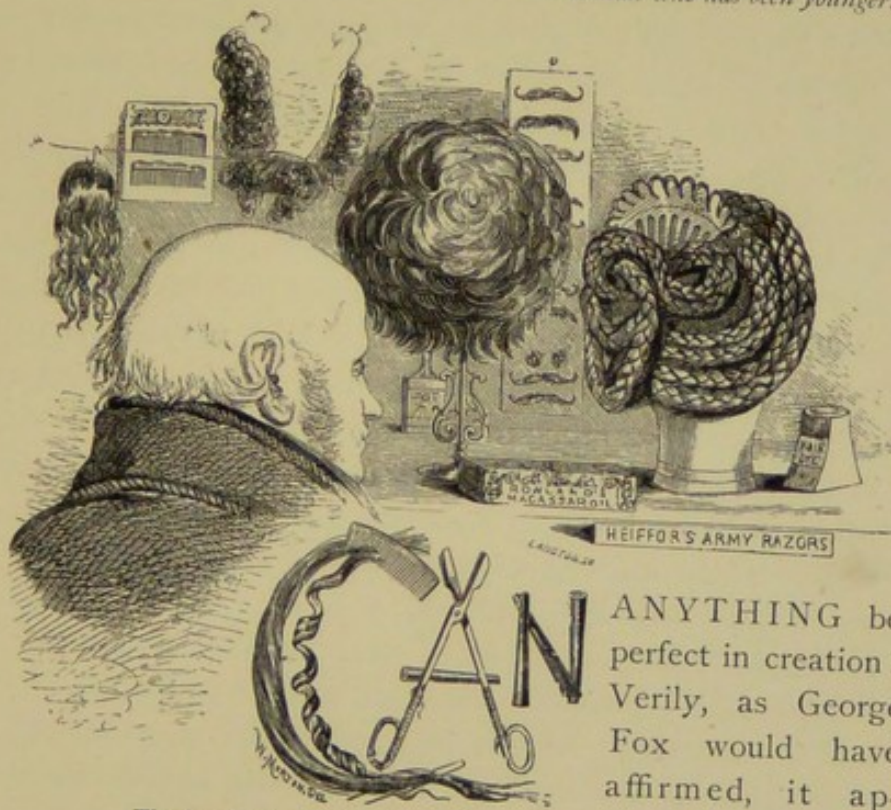


## CHAPTER XIII.

CHEQUERS THE SUNSHINE WITH A FEW SHADOWS

"His hair will never know a fall !  
 'Tis ever dark and curly ;  
 Be wise if you wear wigs at all,  
 Like him adopt one early."

*The man who has been younger.*



The head appealing to the wig.

ANYTHING be  
 perfect in creation ?  
 Verily, as George  
 Fox would have  
 affirmed, it ap-  
 peareth not. The

hairdresser's window points to the same conclusion. The bare head comes appealing to the wig, the grey whiskers to the hair-dye ; and they suggest, as plainly as ever bachelor hinted to maiden, the mutual advantages to be derived from an union. Many persons receive benefit from a judicious change of (h)air, as any physician or wig maker can certify. Bare cheeks find here the bushy appendages they require ; while the tuft, the imperial, the moustache, are at the service of the vain. Vanity and necessity are alike patrons of the hairdresser's shop : the poor come to us with their wants, the rich with their fantasies. So beneficial has been the barber's art in all ages, that the Romans erected a statue to the memory of the man who introduced it into their city. Yet even this elysium of a business, this merry-go-round of trade, has its peculiar annoyances. Occasionally a strange customer takes possession of the chair, presenting a beard we would not choose to shave for a shilling,—a kind of Creole beard, a half-caste between the crop a barber meets every day, and the flowing Crimean harvest brought home by the British hero ;—just such a one as Beatrice must have had in her fancy when she exclaimed to Leonato, "Lord ! I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face ; I had rather lie in the woollen." But there is no escape for us, although we may be master of the place, the customer is master of the position ; we must needs "do the deed," and for a penny. Almost invariably these rare visitors drop in upon our meals, or interrupt our conversation with some particular friend. Often have we admired the



system of Tilly Wardenberg, and longed to imitate his example. That one time Burgomaster of Berlin kept two trumpeters to blow at his door whenever he was dining, or privately engaged. The people, thus timely warned, patiently stood aloof with their affairs until the due season came, when they were attended to with pleasure. Such was the mode in the fifteenth century ; business in the nineteenth century is conducted on a different principle. Sometimes our unwelcome visitor is an elder with silvered hairs, so bent with years and their attendant sorrows, that our back is wearied by stooping to his chin. Seeing his forlorn condition, pity forbids us to be harsh or inattentive ; but pity cannot remove the three weeks' produce bristling beneath our hand. To Jeames de la Pluche and the patricians he represents it will, doubtless, be inconceivable that any plebian member of society can become, while pining in his cellar, too poor to engage a shaver, or too ill to care for either barber or barb. Yet such is too often the fate of some lowly neighbour.

Sometimes a coarse clown, full of drink and insolence, will reel into the shop. With two ruffians of this latter class David had once an unpleasant encounter. They staggered into his establishment a little after twelve o'clock on the Saturday night. He had just closed his business, and drawn his chair to the supper-table. Without ceremony the intruders made themselves free of the ale jug, hoping, ironically, they did not spoil the sport. Presuming on David's silence, they shortly afterwards made free remarks to the mistress. David's



passion had been rapidly rising, though philosophically concealed, and at this stroke of arch-insolence his rage became ungovernable. Grasping the knife that he was using at supper, he sprang to his feet, and made a wild plunge at the nearest of the insulters. They fled in consternation, but he pursued, and again struck fiercely at them as they passed from the door. They succeeded in gaining the street in safety; one of them, however, had reason to be thankful for his narrow escape, his coat-lap being nailed by the knife deeply into the door frame.

It is something difficult to conceive how rough diamonds like these can be kept within bounds by female shavers, a few of whom hang loosely on the skirts of the trade. The dexterous women do not now, be it understood, take customers by the nose with a piece of paper, brown or otherwise, as the Preston girl once took the nose of Grimaldi, the prince of English clowns. In the universal fitness of things, these feminine operators should be attached to the suit and service of the bearded ladies who, in sundry eras and in various parts of the globe, have diversified the commonplace routine of nature. The most illustrious example of women shavers known to history was the mother of the Duchess of Albemarle, wife of General Monk.

Of the manner in which the heroines of the lather brush figure in France, a pleasant glimpse is afforded by Barnes, the pantaloon, in his wayside journal,—as thus. While crossing the market-place at Beauvais, he saw a perruquier's shop, and passing his hand over his chin, said to himself, "James Barnes, you ought to be shaved."



So he determined to go in. Finding the chair engaged, he was in the act of retiring, when the barber's wife took him by the arm, seated him a chair, napkined him almost before he was aware, and lathered him well. "Good heavens!" thought Barnes, "what is going to happen?" But he was obliged to sit still; and of all the queer sensations he ever felt in his queer life, that of being shaved by a woman was, he avers, the queerest. It appeared to him unnatural, though not unpleasant. Her finishing touches were redolent of eau de Cologne. James Barnes might have calmed his trepidation by remembering the plight of Don Quixote in the ducal castle, when surrounded by four mischief-loving maidens, and lathered up to the forehead in the bewildered presence of Sancho Panza.

Much more harmless in their nature than the free-and-easy roysterers who provoked the wrath of David, were a few minor teasers attending the shop. For a time they were somewhat amusing, and merely inflicted weariness, not pain. They were loquacious gossips, who rattled by the hour upon everything, or upon nothing; tuneless Paganinis, who played upon their one string, the tongue, until that string failed, and utter silence ensued. Such talking was, of course, worthless, as they who are incessantly speaking can give little time to thought, and without thought where is the value of language? I remember listening, soon after my initiation, to a tough yarn which was spun, without the aid of salt water, by those over-communicative landsmen. The tale was repeated at short intervals during many years; it has



continued to haunt me, like a ghost that would not be laid ; and even now, the blessed old evergreen salutes my ears, as fresh and original as at first. It is an heir-loom of the hair-weaver's shop, and I will bequeath it to posterity—if posterity choose to accept the legacy. Here it stands : There once went to be shaved an officer (sometimes it proves to be a gentleman's servant, or, maybe, the gentleman himself, for the story has many variations, which may account in some degree for its popularity) ; the officer's face was richly carbuncled with the rubies of ruby wine ; so drawing his sword (occasionally it is cocking his pistol), he placed the weapon upon the table, saying to the operator, in a menacing manner, "Examine my features, sir ; if you shave me without bleeding, there is a guinea for your expertness ; but, mind the alternative, if one drop of blood be drawn, I will run you through the body !" (or shoot you dead ! as the case may be.) Tonsor, timid soul, is afraid to accept the generous proposal, but the apprentice boy (perchance, the assistant) is more valiant, and succeeds in winning the prize. "Here is your guinea, my brave fellow," cries the officer, "but first tell me how you dared to risk your life when your master would not venture?" "Oh ! no risk at all," says the cunning apprentice, "because"—and here comes the favourite point, the genuine off with his head flourish—"if blood had been drawn I should have seen it first, and " (the deliberate assassin !) "I would have cut your throat !" Of course, the officer, being so cleverly outwitted, departs in peace, and never again acts a part so foolish, but wisely resolves, with Sancho Panza,



to keep a barber of his own, or possibly shave himself, as did the continent Joseph, when summoned to the presence of King Pharaoh. The chief beauty of this rigmarole lies in the fact that although, even taking the legend for granted, the marvel occurred only once, yet every individual who retails it claims to have been present at the enactment.

Shaving festered and broken heads, and operating at the homes of the fever-stricken and the deceased, formed unpleasant branches of our calling, which could not in all cases be safely followed. The relatives of the afflicted, aware of our scruples, sometimes concealed the real nature of the disease, substituting a trivial complaint. I shall not readily forget being awoke at four o'clock one morning in winter, during a sweet dream, to shave a neighbour who had just died. He possessed a strong black beard, difficult to manage, even while its owner was living. As he was stretched upon the bricks of a damp cellar, it became necessary to bend over him almost to the earth. The customary cordial was not given on that occasion, and the task became thoroughly displeasing, although the matter would doubtless be treated as nothing in the experience of a medical man. Had this hirsute customer adopted the same course as Mr. Carrington, the astronomer, and ordered by will that his chin should not be shaven after his decease, how much better for the shaver. The custom of shaving the dead is of great antiquity, as evidenced by the fact that all male mummies are found shaven. Female mummies have almost invariably long and beautiful hair.



On various occasions David bordered upon adventure in this department of his trade. One night in particular found him called upon to shave a dead stranger, distant about half-a-mile. On entering the house to which he had been directed, he perceived six or seven aged crones smoking and chatting around the fire. When he named his business, they handed to him a light, telling him to ascend three heights of stairs until he reached the garret, where he would find the object of his search. There he found it, sure enough. A poor suicide, by hanging,—a forlorn mortal, who had died, mentally exclaiming, with Lear and with Haydon, "stretch me no longer upon the rack of this tough world,"—lay in a corner of the room. The noose mark showed plainly upon his neck, the livid and distorted features being painfully impressive. Shaving under such circumstances would manifestly be a delightful operation to the operator! Even the much-vaunted diamond dust would fail to make the razor move sweetly along.

In many of his professional visits, David found the death-bed attended by a masculine elderly woman, named Towers. She was a coffin maker's widow, and carried on his business most efficiently. She not merely measured the deceased, but also hastened the application of her fatal rule. If she chanced to hear of any person being dangerously ill, she visited the afflicted relatives and, compassionating their misfortune, volunteered her service to relieve their vigils. As she kept her ears constantly on the stretch, she was rarely without an engagement. Here is her cardinal maxim, the prime mover



and controller of all her actions touching trade : " A few hours can make little or no difference to the dying ; whilst to me, in want of cash, time is important ; consequently, I shall injure no one, and decidedly benefit myself, by hastening a sufferer from pain into glory." She carried her very original theory into every-day practice, with considerable success, although in one instance her laudable efforts signally failed. The subject in hand was Charles Jackson, sometime attached to our establishment. He and his bed had been inseparables during several months. Mistress Towers had dropped in at the climax, as she thought, of his disorder. More than a week, however, had she closely watched, and still, unfortunately, Charles lived. Although the taper glimmered and flickered in the most dubious manner, the spark did not go out. He daily became more visibly and suitably enfeebled ; but from some unaccountable stubbornness, he would not die. During the whole course of her experience the sturdy matron had never known the like. David would not venture to shave him, lest he should, in nautical phrase, slip his cable, during the operation. They who have endured the feverishness of suspense may feel for Mistress Towers. Losing all patience, she snatched away the pillow from beneath the head of Jackson, exclaiming, " He cannot die on this bed, let us shift him to another." " Who wants him to die?" quietly but pointedly asked David, removing at the same time her rude hand from the shoulder of the sufferer. The upshot of the affair was that Charles, after baffling all professional skill to cure,

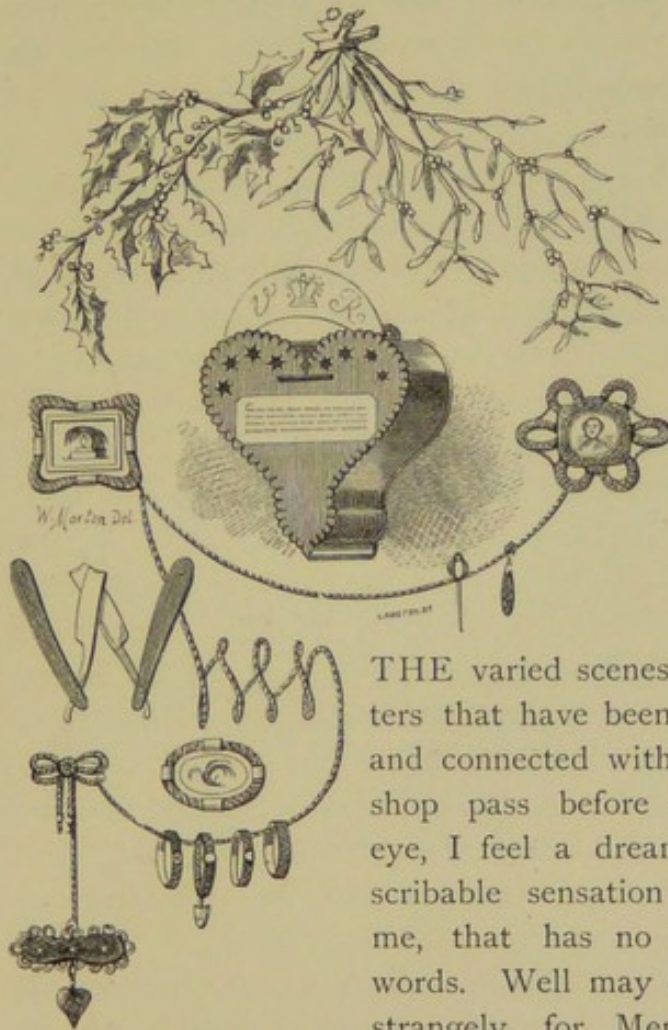
effectually defeated every attempt to kill. The gaunt archer was merely playing with his darts. Nature proved superior to nurse and doctor, and by one of her mysterious freaks placed Jackson again upon his legs. As soon as he found sufficient strength in his right foot for the purpose, he dedicated it to the use and service of Mistress Towers, that good lady making a safe but somewhat precipitate flight, over seven steps, into the king's highway.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### DISSOLVING VIEWS.

"Come like shadows, so depart."—*Macbeth*.



Mementoes in Hair.

THE varied scenes and characters that have been enacted in and connected with our homely shop pass before my mind's eye, I feel a dream-like, indescribable sensation steal over me, that has no affinity with words. Well may one feel thus strangely, for Memory is the magic lantern of the mind, and

wonderful are her revelations when she chooses to reflect them. Time is then busy restoring the faded scenery of the past, and Death labours to replace, during a brief period, the phantom favourites which he beckoned, so long ago, from the stage of life. At such moments things that are trifles in themselves, unworthy, perhaps, of separate notice, maintain an individual interest, and cling with hallowed power to our remembrance.

Memory has few better assistants than hairdressers, for we frank her appeals to the living in behalf of the dead. We take a portion of the hair from the cold temples of father or son, wreath it into a tasteful frame to enclose the miniature, and the memento is preserved ; we clip the long tresses from the blanched cheek of mother or maiden, or sever the golden locks from the early-bowed head of the household darling, and work them into a bracelet, a chain, a pin, an ear-drop, or a mourning ring. How shall we combat further with Decay ?

A curl is the true connecting link of severed hearts. A portrait, however much resembling its original, is at the best merely a shadow ; but the hair is a real presence, a substantial and imperishable part of the lost one we deplore. The saddening thought,—the acute feeling,—awakened by these remembrancers, find touching expression in the lonely Voices of the Night.

Without the slightest wish to appear theatrical, I must here present, in something of a showman's guise, a few fragmentary shadows,—a few panoramic views,—as



they float through the brain. Charles Lamb, the gentle Elia, mused with "Dream Children;" why should not others muse with them likewise? His phantoms were teemings of Imagination that *were not*; mine will mainly be creations of Memory, that *are not*; where lies the difference between them? Are we not dream-children, all?

The first, ladies and gentlemen, that glides into notice is Herb John, whose honest brown face the sun had tanned, and the breeze had winnowed, from boyhood to old age. His occupation, which was half-poetic, half-vagrant, linked him with woods, brooks, and meadows, when those primitive attributes of Nature were in their



Wild Leaves and Flowers.

prime. Possessing a cheerful temper (more precious than Sindbad's diamonds), the simple purity of his calling was impressed upon his manners and features; and to know him was to prize him, indeed. An original



being, charming and inoffensive, his presence infused happiness ; until, departing at length, he left a pleasant memory behind. Never since have I seen his marrow : "he belonged to a lost tribe." His name was Ritson ; and he sometimes remarked that his elder brother had once been a man of note in London.

Contemporary with Herb John, but sooner lost to us, was a small man, aged and thin, whose name and trade (if ever known to me) have long been forgotten. He is almost a myth, so dim and shadowy are my recollections of him. His leading passion was evinced for church architecture. There were few sacred edifices of note in England that had not feasted his gaze, or echoed the sound of his feet. His Sabbath pilgrimages to those shrines were regular, and often extended to working days. He wandered not with mallet and chisel, in the path of the romantic Cameronian, nor did he interfere with the epitaphs upon tombs, monuments, or grave-stones ; but gave his undivided attention to grand imposing structures. The peculiar knowledge gathered during his long life would have been valuable to an author, or to an artist, but in his case it was garnered in the grave ; for he was merely a silent observer, and died, making no sign.

This discursiveness touching Cathedrals is not so irrelevant as it may appear, for the trade has connecting-links even with the Church. Whosoever might wander, a few years ago, to Keswick—Southey's Keswick—and there attend the Sunday service, would find the barber of the village officiating as parish clerk. A more efficient



man in his office,—a voice more apt in the responses,—you might travel far to hear.

Having no further business in Keswick, I must promptly return with my subject to Manchester. Fairy favours and the Electric Telegraph are marvellous things in their way, but an author's pen surpasses them for expediency of transit.

The next customer presented to view is a veteran pensioner, a native of Haverfordwest, who toiled hardily and paid dearly for singularity. He would do nothing in the common way of common people; and invariably marched along the centre of the pavement, in contradistinction to the crowd who followed the footpath. Long after the introduction of lucifer matches he adhered to the primitive flint, steel, and tinder-box; being an early riser, he might be heard laboriously striking a light in the dark, and growling bitterly when the flint chanced to strike his knuckles instead of hitting the steel. Because umbrellas were in general request, he forbore their use during wet weather, and walked at a snail's gallop (as he termed it) during a heavy rainfall, because everyone else hastened from its fury. When remonstrated with, he would exclaim, "What's the use of running, when you must be wet through before reaching home? Better to take your leisure, as I do, and be soaked comfortably." One Sunday, at noon, he returned from worship in a new cloth suit saturated with rain. The subject of conversation when he joined our circle was military flogging, with which he was most familiar. He entered into the discussion with spirit, and as he



always illustrated his arguments, he formed a halberd, stretched himself upon it, as if in the act of receiving punishment, and after writhing awhile in artificial agony, he purposely fell with the halberd on the thickly sanded floor, rolling over and over so effectually that the bonnie blue suit was never more fit for Sunday wear. Scarcely was it safe to approach him in conversation, for he was an inveterate button holder. Immediately after seizing his man by one button, he would secure him by two, and the listener was fortunate who escaped a rough handling in the fervour of debate. They who were familiar with the Ancient Mariner of the long grey beard, and sympathised with the wedding guest, smiled to see Coleridge's mystical characters realized. In trying the temper of his hearers, he much resembled his great countryman Glendower—if we are to place reliance in the railing words of Hotspur. The pensioned warrior, accustomed to camp life and self-reliance, was purveyor in ordinary of his own victuals—generally a strange mixture of oddments—which he cooked in his unique fashion, without the slightest reference to Mistress Raffald or Alexis Soyer. A pie he once made deserved to have its portrait perpetuated in oil. In various ways he excited the wonder of his audience. Feeling tired of the monotony of pacing the streets in idleness, he paid a small premium for the privilege of working. A heavy hand swivel loom being on hire, he engaged it at a weekly rental ; also a girl to wind his bobbins. Beginning in earnest on the Monday morning, and labouring like a steam tug until Saturday evening, he was just the price



of his candles out of pocket. This was worse than the wages of Sancho, as the promised island of the Quixotic squire, though ending in nothing, at least took nothing away. When laughed at for his seeming folly, the veteran retorted that he saved the difference in doctor's stuff: that the profuse sweat purified his system in a natural way from gross humours; and that as it pleased the fancy of others to work for pay, he, on the contrary, would pay for work, so long as it suited his whim. "Nature," says Salanio, "hath framed strange fellows in her time;" and, assuredly, this Waterloo pensioner was one of the strangest.

Now appears the nephew of that quaint old soldier. Like his uncle, he belonged to the army. This youth was a thorough-going scapegrace; a wily and systematic deserter, chiefly by overstaying his furloughs. He kept our neighbourhood in a ferment for years. "Jack has deserted again;" "Jack has been captured once more;" were common cries. He invariably returned, like a hunted hare, to his home quarters. He sang well; had a touch of romance in his character; with a spice of the rover in his spirit; and was a general favourite, as ne'er-do-wells too frequently are. In short, favour had been his ruin. Had his earliest evil propensities been checked, instead of being overlooked, he might have regarded lawless mischief more in the light of a disgrace than a glory. He was concealed everywhere, by everybody: chimneys and house-tops were his familiars. Still, he was always detected, and as often forgiven, or punished but slightly. In such characters there are usually found



generous impulses which win us in spite of ourselves ; for they contrast favourably with the hard, dry, calculating natures by which we are often surrounded. Our shop was his chief resort ; and he fixed himself securely in my recollection by warbling songs and opening my Christmas-box. By the way, I had forgotten to notice this peculiar feature of a shaving place. At Christmas time every apprentice or junior assistant nails beneath the mirror a box, to which is appended a gentle hint, in doggrel verse. Those verses vary, but mine ran thus :—

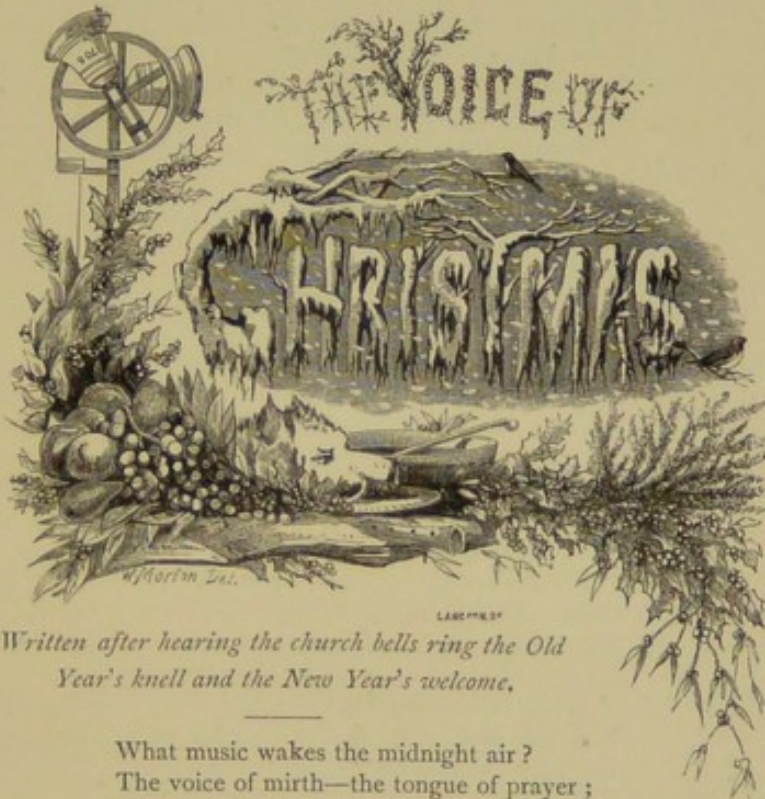
My Christmas-Box, kind gentlemen,  
I hope you will remember ;  
And I will shave and lather well  
Until the next December.

The whole being wreathed with mistletoe, holly, and red berries, formed quite a picture during two or three weeks of the merry season. The senses became quickened at that interested period. With my back to a man approaching the towel, a side glance showed if he meant to be generous ; while the amount of each contribution told upon my ear by the sound. In this way I precalculated the contents of the box, but always discovered upon examination that I had reckoned, like the barber's brother in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, more chickens than were in reality hatched. Many years have elapsed since I saw a lather boy's appeal, but from my knowledge of the pleasure and gratitude generated by such Christmas presents, and of the extra attention paid to those who "remember" over and above those who forget, I would advise each owner



of a beard to grant the prayer of these lowly petitioners, whenever it may come in his path.

And here, in the midst of Christmas memories, let me dedicate an original poem and a characteristic picture to that suggestive season.



*Written after hearing the church bells ring the Old  
Year's knell and the New Year's welcome.*

What music wakes the midnight air ?  
The voice of mirth—the tongue of prayer ;  
What mean those sounds so blithely given ?  
They speak of earth, remind of heaven.  
They breathe the warning breathed of old  
To thoughtless hearts now wrapp'd in mould ;  
The truth, forgot as soon as told,  
That time with life resistless flies—  
Earth's meteor shooting to the skies !  
They tell the tale that daunts the brave—  
Another year salutes the grave ;

And youth and age, and hope and fear,  
Are crush'd, for death has triumph'd here.  
Yet Joy laughs loudly o'er the bier,  
And mocks the mourner and the tear :  
" Why do ye droop, by grief dismay'd ?  
Come forth, the sun shall gild the shade ;  
And hope reveal her beauteous form,  
Bless'd rainbow of the mental storm,—  
Bright gleamer where earth darkest lies,  
Upward pointing to clearer skies ;  
Why do ye weep for pleasures flown ?  
Lo ! here I reign and Joy's your own ;  
Let music thrill through festive hall,  
And fairy feet like whispers fall."  
And why, in truth, should bright eyes weep  
For treasures buried in the deep ?  
Or why those earth-ties fruitless mourn  
That never can to earth return ?  
Thus reason's philosophic power  
Would pluck the sting from sorrow's hour ;  
Would banish with convincing tone,  
The sigh that springs unheard, unknown ;  
But reason yields to nature's aim,  
And thought to feeling's stronger claim.  
Thus fitful, like some wandering bird,  
Or whispering leaf, by soft winds stirr'd,  
The Voice of Christmas will be heard.  
Hail, mistletoe ! bless'd emblem fair,  
Thy presence seals the death of care ;  
How sweet thy fate, to charm the young,  
And bloom an evergreen in song.  
For, time long past, the Druid bard  
High held thee in his soul's regard ;  
Still in our own more polish'd day,  
Thou minglest with the poet's lay ;  
And ages hence the minstrel choir  
Shall laud thee with celestial fire,  
Pure touchstone of the heart and lyre !  
Yes, whilst the mind can deeply feel,  
Thus will the harp deep thoughts reveal ;  
Despite the change of scene or clime,  
Despite thy envious touch, old Time.  
Ye fairy elves with gladsome brow,



Who trip it 'neath the sacred bough ;  
 Ye amorous youths, with graceful mien,  
 Who mingle in the sylph-like scene ;  
 May thus your hours, ye fair, ye brave,  
 Flow changeless as the ocean wave,  
 Nor catch one shadow from the grave !  
 What to you are death's awful throes,  
 When all around high rapture glows,—  
 What to you is the flight of time,—  
 Life's under-current of grief and crime,—  
 When nought lurks near to gender fear,  
 And Love is the guardian genii here ?  
 But *should* you mark the *vacant* chair,  
 And memory, battling with decay,  
 Triumphant over death's stern sway,  
 Bring back some once-loved image there.—  
 Let not your bliss be dash'd with pain,  
 Nor dim your eyes with tear-drops vain ;  
 The dead beneath the crumbling mould,  
 Are stored like unforgotten gold ;  
 They wear, 'tis hoped, their heavenly gem,  
 And Christmas fondly speaks of them.  
 Whene'er my towering soul, at last,  
 From this frail tenement hath pass'd,  
 From time into eternity,  
 Say, Christmas, wilt thou speak of me ?

A truce to mistletoe musings : let the story of the shop  
 be resumed. Perceiving that desertion, even for him,  
 might prove a dangerous game to play any longer,  
 Jack resolved to supersede it by an artful trick. During  
 three days he rendered himself seriously ill in the  
 attempt to disable his limbs from service. He punctured  
 his skin in various parts, applying tobacco juice, and  
 other poisonous ingredients, in order to cause inflamma-  
 tion. When he thought himself sufficiently prepared for  
 the ordeal, he delivered up his body to the military  
 guard, in the full assurance of being discharged as in-

curably diseased, or of being drummed out of the regiment as incurably roguish. But the course of knavery, like that of true love, does not always run smooth. Despite his hospital groans, and other indications of deep suffering, Sham-Abraham was drafted almost immediately for foreign service. The salubrious island of Malta was, in the first instance, honoured with his presence. From that knightly retirement was dictated his first epistle—long and Dismal-Jemmy-ish—to his friends at home. What may have been his further progress ; whether martial glory has upraised him from the ranks ; or whether the muffled drum has sounded his requiem ; this deponent knoweth not.

The song which Jack, the deserter, liked most to quaver was Alice Gray, being drawn thereto by an unconscious sympathy with its author. How many years can it be since I last heard this once-popular ditty warbled or whistled in our thoroughfares ?

She's all my fancy painted her,  
She's lovely, she's divine ;  
But her heart it is another's,  
She never can be mine.

Mr. William Mee, author of this love-lorn ballad, began the world with fair prospects, but with a fatal facility for sinking. Resembling Jack, the deserter, he was one of those never-do-wells who lean persistently upon others ; and if the supporting shoulder be withdrawn, even for a rest, down goes the leaner, as a matter of course. No wonder the heart of Alice Gray wandered to another, for her lover was continually falling, without a spark of the



Phoenix in his nature to enable him to rise again. There he would lie, waiting for some one to pick him up. While more matter-of-fact men were plodding on their business way, Mr. Mee sat dreaming in listless, delicious reverie, at the Traveller's Rest by the wayside. At length Hercules, growing tired of assisting the waggoner, handed him over to the parish beadle. The author of *Alice Gray*, leaning to the last upon eleemosynary aid, died in Shardlow Union-house, Nottinghamshire, in the year 1862, his years numbering seventy-four. The punning epitaph, "Weep not for Mee," which he suggested for himself, shews that he possessed humour. Indeed, the genuine ne'er-do-well is always humorous, witty, or quaint—ever turning aside our anger with a mort of winning ways.

Next our shop is revealed in the full flow of its business, at eleven o'clock on a particular Sabbath morning. It was the first Sunday after the news had reached England of the battle of Navarino (October, 1827). The press contained a full and especial account of every round, decisive blow, and scientific manœuvre, together with a fine flourish at the glorious (?) result. James Clarke was reading the news aloud. He was a quick and distinct reader, yet the task, with occasional questions and many episodical remarks, had occupied him three mortal hours, until he grew hoarse and husky. Still he persevered, and the shaven or shorn customer, instead of departing to make room for the next, lingered over the narrative. The place was crowded, of course. David and I continued to mow and to listen, without



the least thought of danger, or of service-time, for we did not allow the tongue to check the hand, nor imitate the example of Razor, the political barber of the farce, who left his customer half shaven, while he ran with some urgent news to Quidnunc. Suddenly the door-way became darkened by churchwardens, beadles, and other officials. During a few moments all was surprise, trepidation, silence, "Hollo! what is this?" exclaimed the first officer, boasting the largest silver-headed staff; "one, two, three, four-r-r: no less than eighteen people, upon my conscience!" "Why," returned David, innocently, "what o'clock is it, sir? I'm sure I was not aware that it was so late." "How could you fail to be aware, when the church is not twelve paces from your door, and the bell has been ringing half-an-hour, loud enough to deafen you? Besides, you continue shaving, even before our face. We must make an example of you, sir. Beadle, take down the name." They departed, and we culprits breathed more freely. One who had had just time to conceal himself, then crept out of the pantry, with the striped cloth around his neck, and with the lather mildewed upon his chin: reminding one of a similar scene in "Mansie Wauch." In a little while the sea fight was won, and the group of sinners took the steps together; being duly edified by the account of three strong boys chivalrously thrashing a weak one in Navarino Bay. The religiously-disposed were at the same moment coming out of church. We had a friend in the chief warden, notwithstanding his assumed severity, and we escaped the rigour of the law.



In addition to the local wardens, who confined their surveys to our own district, we had to maintain a weekly guard against the more dreaded visits of the procession from the Collegiate Church, promenading the town at will during service-time. Gradually, year by year, those visitations became less frequent, until at length they ceased to tease us. The scene now belongs so entirely to the past, that probably no youthful shaver hereabouts has witnessed the imposing display of clerical and civic authority of which we treat, although the Sabbath procession is still maintained in the neighbouring villages.

It was well we did not transact our business in the mode occasionally adopted in America, by giving a glass of spirits to each Sabbath attender who required it, and charging the price upon the beard. In that case the storm had not passed over our heads so speedily. The chief warden lived within a few doors of our establishment, and was an occasional Sunday morning visitor. It was no unusual thing with him to smile a warning on rising from the public chair, hasten to church, and recross, in the stateliest manner, at the head of his official train. Perhaps the warden had seen a remark in Pepys's Diary—"The barber having done with me, I went to church." The coincidence is striking. Poor Farmer! He was an easy, confiding man, and the world dealt with him unfairly. He seized not those small advantages of trade that many seize with undue avidity, and which frequently make the sum-total of difference between riches and poverty. The ready way to success is a slimy way, which Farmer would not tread. Was there ever



a character of this description—simple and trusting—who found not some viper, some harpy, male or female, to sting and prey upon him? From the position of a wealthy grazier he descended in the scale of fortune until he became a butcher's assistant. Still he was more to be admired than pitied. He thought lightly of the change, but felt it, he owned, rather severely at first, mostly in the altered manner of his friends. On greeting them as usual, he made an unexpected discovery: their memories were quite gone, and their sight had become dim enough for spectacles. They did not know him; could not see him. But Farmer merely smiled at the silent insults, while vowing to himself that if ever he recovered his riches, and could make no better use of them, he would found an asylum for the wilfully deaf, and the purposely blind. His feeling on the subject has since been revealed to the letter in four pertinent lines from the pen of Robert Barnabas Brough:—

Of all the lunacies earth can boast,  
The one that must please the fiend the most,  
Is pride reduced to the whimsical terms  
Of causing the slugs to despise the worms.

To the author of this verse we reverse our plume in passing. Pleasantly known to us in youth, memory will sometimes revert to his premature grave in the cemetery at Mode Wheel. *Vale.*

Mr. Farmer possessed, as he said, a cheerful temperament that was averse to repining,—received with a tolerable welcome the small mercies of Fortune,—and not being afraid of work, could yet earn sufficient for his



actual wants. Although he had certainly been richer, he doubted if he had ever been easier in his life. I was impressed with the superiority of his well-tried practical philosophy over a sensitive, sorrow-brooding spirit, and felt its fitness for the rough variegated usage of the world we live in. I have lately learned that Richard Farmer emigrated to Australia, became a shepherd on the slopes above Melbourne, and eventually died in that distant colony, whence so many blighted yet hoping exiles have passed from earth before him.



The Sheep—but not the Shepherd.

Now steals upon the scene a pawnbroker, a neighbour and visitor of ours. He was a kindly-disposed person, but exceedingly vain. Had he lived in the time of the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*, he would have combed his large Duvellier periwig with all the conspicuous dexterity of Wycherley, or Marlborough, or Will Shoestring. In the potency of broadcloth he believed as firmly as did



the Scottish poet, Fergusson, and knew how much a tailor may exalt a man. Almost every Sunday brought its new coat; and his envious neighbours, at first insinuating, at length openly declared that it was even more than "two to one" in favour of the pawnbroker, or he could not live in such splendour. Yet would the more liberal-minded attribute his prosperity to sobriety and constant attention to business, supporting their argument with one of Poor Richard's aphorisms, "Mind your shop, and your shop will mind you." The little aristocracy of the neighbourhood (for what neighbourhood is without its aristocracy?) courted his acquaintance, returning his nod or his smile with good-humoured affability. Such was our pawnbroker, when, one Sunday, as he was marching up the street, dressed in a coat especially fine and blue, with shining buttons to match, the lynx-eye of Envy, ever on the watch to detect our frailties, rested a moment on something attached to the said coat. Triumphant she pointed out the important discovery to her sister gossips. The gossips tittered, then laughed outright, their eyes and gestures giving evident expression to a line of Shakespere's, "There's a hole made in your best coat, Master Ford." Eventually they saluted his ears with malicious and unwonted sounds, sarcastic allusions to his coat, admiration of its strange ornament, and the like. At length the pawnbroker began to scrutinize his apparel, and on turning over the laps of his coat he discovered to his consternation the unconscious cause of all their merriment. Well might they be merry and he feel dismayed, for to the



fashionable dress-coat of Mr. Balls was appended a duplicate. He had borrowed the pledged garment of a customer, while forgetting to remove the ticket.

The varying shades of character, the points of individuality here presented, may serve to corroborate the Shakesperian truism, that "the web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together."

## CHAPTER XV.

SHAVING AND COURTSHIP.—SUNDAY TRADING.



WE have here another view of the bijouterie displayed in the hair dresser's showroom, which is prolific in pleasing utilities. The lady and the bear are seen in as close proximity as if we were illustrating the fairy legend of Beauty and the Beast, even the magic rose being reduced to otto, and placed in fancy bottles, with dainty labels to match. Our artist has, however, no design on the



realm of Queen Mab, but wishes to show in a matter-of-fact way that Bruin bestows grace upon Venus, though it must be confessed that a triad of bears would constitute a group of Graces differing widely from Canova's.

Incidentally of the Graces, it may not be known to the multitude that their peerless charms were crowned by auburn locks, or tresses of deep golden hue, yet such appears to be the fact, as put forth by a learned contributor to *Notes and Queries*, in a metrical witticism, entitled—

CARROTS CLASSICALLY CONSIDERED.

Oh ! why do you laugh at red hair ?  
'Tis really a great want of charity ;  
'Mongst the Greeks, we are free to declare,  
Two at least of the Graces were *χάριτε*.

Golden hair, the favourite colour of the ancients, is again in the ascendant, and it has been facetiously observed that the fair daughters of England will secure the fashionable hue, or *dye* in the attempt. In this matter of dyeing, the greatest caution is requisite. The shade of colour sought is not always found. Only the other day, a perfumer of Marseilles was sued for damages to the amount of four hundred francs, because he unfortunately dyed a lady's hair violet instead of red. And not long ago, I observed an elderly, unsuspecting gentleman, whose hair was glittering in the bright sunlight—an unmistakable green. More serious was the case of a lady who lately died at Springfield, Ohio. Symptoms of some mysterious ailment in the head had long been manifested, and vainly treated. A *post mortem* examina-



tion showed that death had resulted through the constant use of hair dye, a coating formed over the brain causing something like paralysis of that organ. The inventor of the dyeing of hair, says Clement, was Medea, a Colchian.

In the matter of head-dresses, either in colour or formation, the advice of Carlo Goldoni, termed the Italian Moliere, is worthy of general attention:—“Women are wrong, in my opinion,” wrote Goldoni, “in following any general mode of dressing their heads; every one ought to consult her glass, to examine her features, and adapt the arrangement of her hair to the style of her countenance, and make her hairdressers follow her orders.” Verily, this would be an important advance towards the higher and truer education of women.

While rivalries are increasing, and terms lowering, even in our cutting and curling saloons, the taste and emulation shown by our leading professors are more conspicuous than heretofore, greater efforts being now made to captivate the copper than were formerly evinced to win the silver coinage. One advertises real heads of hair—not wigs!—which defy detection or successful competition, for thirty shillings. People may shortly be expected to get their heads shaven, in order that they may make experiments of the promised felicity offered at so cheap a rate. Such experiments may be tried with safety, for if they fail, applications have only to be made to a neighbouring genius of our trade, who will restore the natural crops within the space of a few hours. It is worth while to listen to the latter gentleman as he speaks



of himself and his marvels, which roundly controvert the assertion of Master Dromio, of Syracuse, to wit, that "there is no time for a man to recover his hair, who grows bald by nature." This tonsor's witty rhyming advertisement,—his wonderful Tale of a Tub,—is here unavoidably omitted, because I have received no commission to insert it in these pages. It cannot, of course, be introduced for nothing, even for a fellow-tradesman, when any manager of a theatre would charge ten guineas for allowing it to be laughed at in his pantomime. Upon the bare lid of the aforesaid tub, or rather box, a pot of Crème de la Crème was one night accidentally shed, and in the morning the lid was found covered with luxuriant hair! The wood which once converted to sweetness the bitter waters of Marah was scarcely more wonderful. Where is the gentleman, at once wise in his generation and bare at his crown, who could resist the temptation of purchasing such productive Crème? By its aid the plainest person might assume a pleasing aspect, and those blessed with beauty become irresistible.

In direct opposition to all these arts of the artificers, a paradox has been published, proving by reason and example that baldness is preferable to bushy hair, the intellect being thereby kept desirably cool, and a perpetual polish secured: to say nothing of the saving of time, trouble, and money.

Notwithstanding the efforts of our native perfumers, they are left in the rear by Transatlantic brethren, who go a-head in hairdressing as in some other matters. It appears—on the authority of Mr. Ferguson—that at a



first-rate saloon in the States, twenty persons can be accommodated at once, and that the charge for a single operation is half a dollar. In return for this sum the visitor may revel in luxury. The room is fitted up in the most gorgeous style, the floor is a mosaic of black and white marble, the walls being lined with mirrors. The apparatus is of silver. The chairs are most luxurious—great arm-chairs, with a rest for the head and another for the feet, the ease of which is perfect. Placed in one of these chairs, the visitor goes through the operation of hair-cutting, and is then transferred to a seat opposite a fountain edged round with porcelain basins. Afterwards the operator pours upon the head a cooling liquid. This he works into a lather, and there falls upon the foam a jet first of hot water and next of cold. The hair is then dried with numerous towels, the visitor is returned to his first seat, and finished with grease, scent, and pale rum. The American hair trimmer must surely have pondered admiringly over Beckford's magnificent romance, and envied Vathek of his Palace of Perfumes.

At plainer shops in the States, where less ceremony is used, the present charges are one shilling for hair-cutting, and five pence for shaving, English money. So states Mr. John Peacock, writing from Rhode Island. At Chicago the charge for hair-brushing is about six pence.

The right of precedence between English and American tonsors may, after all, be a moot point, for some of our metropolitan perfumers, in speaking of their



interior embellishments, tell us that the effect upon the customer is of so bewildering a nature as to cause a doubt of his presence in London, and rather incline him to the belief that he is wandering among the glories of ancient Rome. Wandering in the head, or among the Groves of Blarney, might be suggested, with a smile, by any disciple of Diogenes.

Returning somewhat abruptly to the classics, it may be remembered by the general reader that Ovid, in his "*Art of Love*," has given some curious instructions to lovers. Those instructions are, however, of no service to haircutters, because opportunity and uninterrupted leisure—luxuries unknown to the barber's shop—are enjoined as being essential to success. In public trade Ovid's directions cannot be followed; in retirement his assistance will seldom be needed. He who fails to win a maiden's love and fascinate her soul, in the "*countrie green*," would scarcely deserve the prize—always supposing the couple to have a touch of poetry in their composition for Nature to influence. During the retired evening walk in summer, the wooer finds many auxiliaries. The sleeping flowers make the air balmy; the stream murmurs suggestively; the shadowy trees render the scene mysterious; all gradually paving his way to victory. A little further and a little later, the stars come forth as special pleaders, and the moon (who knows not her influence upon the love-stricken?) smiles on the compact; whilst the old abbey, in its ruin, shows the ravages of time, and tells of the dangers that wait upon delay. Although the nightingale sings not here the



birth of the rose, as he sang on the mountain above Samarah, yet in the deep recesses, Sylvan, the forest deity, pipes unseen to his attendant nymphs and fairies ; those fanciful creatures dancing, meanwhile, within their



Dreamland and the Fairies—Tintern  
Abbey by moonlight.



magic circles on the margin of the river, or wreathing gracefully through the broken arch of the deserted fane. The dreamy silence invites the whisper,—the first whisper of Love,—and the lassie seems to invite the vow. Then is the yielding hand taken, and the heaving bosom pressed wildly to the heart of its conqueror. To such fortunate lovers the garden of Eden still exists, and will ever continue in its entirety, even to the Temptation that too often leads to the Fall. A slight stretch of imagination will enable us to hear their wedding bells peal forth on the happy day, and to see wild flowers strewed along their pathway to the village church. A fitting consummation to the early love that should never be wantonly thwarted, for it lies deeply hidden in the human heart, like Truth in her fabled well.

A very different affair is courtship in a barber's shop. With gas-lights in the place of stars, and with the force of his feelings to serve in lieu of eloquent scenery, the shaver is thrown upon his own resources. He is behind instead of being before the curtain, and they who are familiar with the stage will understand the contrast between the two positions: on the one side is sweet romance, on the other, stern reality. Perhaps his sweetheart,—his Fair one with the Golden Locks,—steps in to exchange a kind word, but finding him shaving, she steps out again. His task completed, he is left alone. He peeps from the door, but the maid is invisible,—vanished as completely as if she were the Maiden of the Mist. If he venture from his doorstep, some sharper creeps to his



counter, and darts off at full speed with one of his glass cases; in which event pursuit is hopeless, Sharpheels having got a long start; if "stop thief" be cried after him, he pays no heed to the request; neither do the neighbours, who are unwilling to become embroiled with the adjacent gang, or to be fettered as witnesses at the sessions. Too much company, or too little, seems the haircutter's fate. "All by plunges;" as Edmund Harrold wrote, "I had four customers at once to-day, and three went away." The girl and the customers appear to have entered into a conspiracy, to come together, or stay away together. For him there is no universal fitness of things: quite the contrary. It is said that business and pleasure make an admirable mixture: if so, the mixture must be taken alternately not conjointly. Shaving and courtship should never be amalgamated. In the midst of a love passage the best of patrons will be voted ungenial; he interrupts a story that cannot be resumed where it was broken off, for the interest evaporates—the passion cools. Finding himself unable to pursue, leisurely and formally, the progressive steps of the hymeneal ladder, he ultimately pops the question by assault. Adopting the language of the turf, he must win in a canter, or lose without gaining a place. Losing must be out of the question, if the *Spectator* be right in his friendly query: for where, asks that sage British moralist, with a significant smile, "where should the needle turn but to the pole?"

If the bride-seeker belong to an establishment where the Sabbath is kept holy, in accordance with the scriptural injunction, and if he be enabled thereby to dedicate a



clear day to his chosen one, he is more fortunate than the majority of his peers, who wield the razor and the scissors until noon; some few persevering even until night-fall: these last consisting chiefly of poor cellar holders, who cannot afford to say nay to the tardiest penny that presents itself. If a due observance of the Sabbath be essential to the attainment of heaven, alas! for barbers and their clerks; but if Sunday trading be abolished, as heretofore, by Act of Parliament, they will have the strongest claims to compensation: so good and evil are blended in this, as in other things. With the majority of sinners, they may take to themselves the credit of good intentions. More than a hundred years ago, a chirurgion put forth a book of advice and warning to Sunday shavers, and in the year 1810, the master "hairdressers and barbers" of Manchester and Salford, at the request of the magistrates, gave public notice that Sunday trading would be discontinued forthwith. More recently, I remember the trade making several earnest attempts to get the seventh day for rest or recreation. We held a public meeting on this long-agitated subject, at which we unanimously agreed to obey the fourth commandment, and labour six days only. Our leading reformers were very zealous. Every Sunday morning they formed themselves into pickets, visiting all the hair-cutting concerns in town. They encouraged the wavering, and threatened the backsliders with legal penalties. Their vigorous efforts would have proved successful, but just as we were quietly conforming to the new rules, it transpired that some of our active officers



possessed convenient back doors to their premises. A single case, as it appeared in evidence, will explain the whole. One member of a picket, having finished his observations, returned home about noon. He found his place in the possession of his regular supporters privileged to make thus free, who had availed themselves of the private entrance, and who refused to depart unshaven. They promised secrecy and gratitude. He was anxious to oblige, and felt secure from detection. The temptation was most pressing, and we all know that temptation too often leads to sin. Indeed, sin and shaving are more intimately allied than many people imagine. Martin Luther has quaintly compared them. The great reformer maintained that original sin was ingrained in man like his beard; that neither could be eradicated; that both must be resisted, and unceasingly cut down.

Shaving has been further compared with child-bearing. A lady once complained to Dr. Abernethy of the peculiar pains which Nature had inflicted upon women. "Do not complain without reason," urged the eccentric surgeon, "you suffer much less than men. Not one of you has to endure the torture of being shaven three times a week."

Very shortly after the adventure of our committee-man's back door, the Sunday-Shaving-Abolition-Society came to an end.

Many pages might be filled with the freaks of Sabbath shaving, and the curious Acts of Parliament bearing thereon, but enough has been here written to illustrate the subject, which may be aptly concluded with a verse of Lord Byron's:—



By whose decrees, our sinful souls to save,  
No Sunday tankards foam, no barbers shave ;  
And beer undrawn, and beards unmown, display  
Your holy reverence for the Sabbath-day.

Such are a few incidents, scenes, and vagaries connected with a haircutter's shop: a place where persons of every denomination,—whig, tory, and radical,—speak out freely. It is a public, and therefore an innocent, confessional; where men heated by a little discussion unburden themselves of thoughts that have swelled at their bosoms, nursing their wrath, or tickling their fancy, during many previous days.

If motley be your wear, as Jacques advises, the barber's shop is your place for seeing life; the shop and the shaver that are free and easy, the one wearing its genial look, the other yielding to his natural impulses; not allowing pride to freeze the oil of their humour, nor fashion to mar them with its mildew.

Our customers, like our combs, were in great variety, as I have endeavoured to show. Combs we possessed of tortoise-shell, ivory, horn, bone, metal, in plain and fanciful devices; but none made of Euxine box-wood, erst patronised by the Greeks and Romans; none formed of gold or other precious metals, as those worn by Egyptian ladies, "in Thebes' streets three thousand years ago;" no elaborate wig combs, or black-lead combs for staining the hair; none, either, of those india-rubber contrivances which have latterly come so much into vogue.

Writing of Thebes and its remote period reminds me that among the curiosities shown at Alnwick Castle, is a



vase taken from an Egyptian catacomb. The said vase contains an everlasting perfume—one of the lost secrets of the old world. It is full of a mixture of gum, resins, and the like, which give forth an agreeable odour to the present day. Another curious relic—the earliest specimen of a lady's head-dress, ingeniously contrived—is treasured in the British Museum.

With all our diversity of combs and customers we could not boast, as did another Manchester hairdresser, a few years ago, of five ancient cronies meeting under our roof, all residents of the town, whose united ages amounted to four hundred and twelve years. Lightness and darkness, Arcadia and St. Giles, mingled their opposites to form a strange medley, more picturesque than beautiful to critical eyes, and too highly seasoned to agree with delicate palates, but nevertheless, in its way, a tasty rare-bit. In addition to every shade of colour, from the fair Circassian to the sable Hottentot, we possessed every diversity of character, from the poor dyspeptic afraid of a meal, to Whistling Steelo, a hungry sandman, who could eat more than he could earn on the best rag and bone day he ever saw. Once, for a wager, a small leg of mutton, with the usual accessories to make it agreeable, vanished before the alimentive prowess of that worthy. Such worship of the stomach, far beyond his means, did not end well for the whistler. After many years' absence in distant shires, he called unexpectedly upon me, when I soon gathered by his remarks that, in his helpless age, the wanderer had no home, the stranger had no friends. Having thus nothing



left worth living for, he was merely waiting for death. Unable to sustain himself by labour, he entered the poorhouse, where he soon died. Why should poor people wish to linger unto old age? Where is the inducement? "Life is sweet," suggests the proverb. "True," rejoins experience, "but only while life is young."

Notwithstanding the medley advantages pertaining to our shop, I could not but envy a competitor in trade, who had the privilege of shaving the philosophical magnate, Dr. Dalton, during the long period of seventeen years. The doctor, it seems, was thoughtfully silent, seldom exchanging a word with his chin operator. Nevertheless, the shaver remembers the connection with pride, and upon entering his establishment, the first object that meets the eye is an excellent cast of the philosopher's features, placed above the towel roller. Willingly, too, would I have exchanged a customer with William Taylor, hairdresser to Thomson, the poet of the Seasons. Often, when visiting that dreamy wight in his Castle of Indolence, he found him listening by the hour to the song of the nightingale, or lying upon the summer grass, talking to himself, as if three or four persons were in company with him. Still more to be envied was the village tonsor of Montbard, in Burgundy, who boasted to the end of his days that, on one memorable morning, he shaved before breakfast the chins of "three men capable of ruling a world"—Buffon, Rousseau, and Voltaire!

If the walls of a barber's shop received impressions; if they had eyes to see, ears to hear, and could be



circulated in periodical parts, Lord ! what a miscellany the reading world would possess, to be sure. Phiz, Gilbert, and Company would be ruined at one fell swoop ; they might snap their crayons, giving the fragments to tiny school-boys, while passing their studios of a morning. No illustrations, not even a vignette, could ever be required. Such breathing pictures, teeming with life, character, truth, as would there be displayed, must speak vividly for themselves. And as for circulation ! talk not of *Punch*, even in his prosperous youth, nor of the *London Journal* in its heyday ; they are as mere parodies on success. Every eye would ache for a glance, every ear be strained to listen to the contents, of the Barber's Wall ! whilst the lucky publisher would possibly be driving his carriage as a FINIS to the first volume !

Be it remembered I write not from the first-class emporium, where English and French assistants are kept in attendance, and where the apprentices are required to be well up in their classics ! Neither do I date from the second class saloon, the shutters of which are taken down late and put up comparatively early. To do justice to those elevated sections of the trade, rising in their importance, like "alp on alp," until they culminate in the perfumer to the court, would require more genius than the chronicler of the barber's shop can with delicacy claim. Doubtless they have within their scented circle a versatile pen adapted to the task, and also the right man to wield it,—one whose natural taste and feeling for elegance will be amply revealed in "The Perfumer's Repertory," whensoever that dainty Ariel of



publications may chance to appear. Such will be the book for lily hands and kid gloves, the more so if it be printed on tinted paper, and characteristically perfumed. For me, my experience has been limited to Nature, "when unadorned ;" seldom have I formed acquaintance with the beneficent dame when "adorned the most." Therefore I sketch mainly the lowlier place that is opened in the morning simultaneously with the opening of its owner's eyes, and is closed at night on almost the same principle ; where self-dependent power is the order of every day ; where journeymen are never hired except in cases of sickness or accident ; and then, like policemen, they are seldom to be found when wanted.

Other branches of our business, widely removed from the perfumer's repertory, spring forth for notice, but as they are foreign to my experience they must needs be passed by, to the evident detriment of the book. It were easy to see that, with more extended practice, chapter after chapter might have been filled with strongly-marked phases of character, though deeply tainted with crime, from the prison and the penal ground ; or with lessons of life, painfully suggestive, from the workhouse or the lunatic asylum. As a military barber, I might have recounted the amusing follies, the touching traits, which alternate in the soldier's career ; dating from the hour when he leaves his girl and his ploughshare to the funeral march in a distant land, honoured by the muffled drum and the parting volley. If operating beneath the union-jack upon the high seas, the toughest yarns of the mid-watch would have become familiar to my ears,

enabling me to tell the world officially how rudely King Neptune lathers his subjects, and how daintily the mermaid dresses her hair.



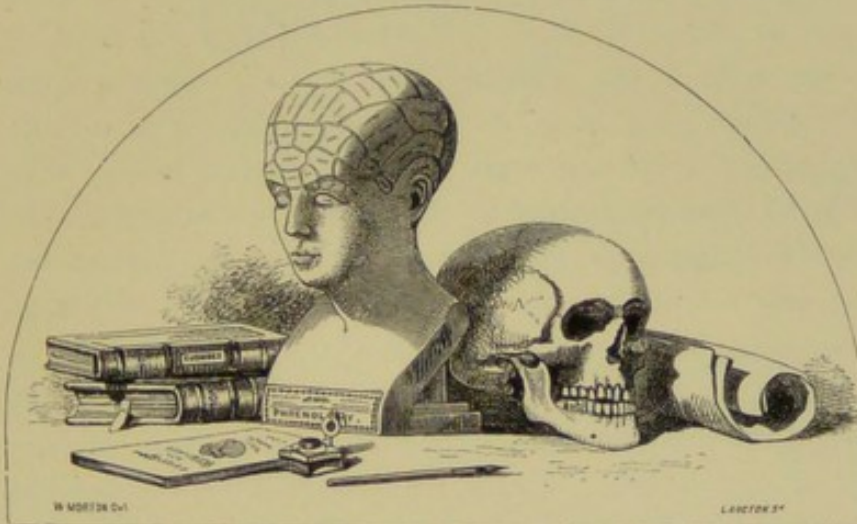
## CHAPTER XVI.

### PHRENOLOGY IN THE SHOP.

"We give harmless Lectures on the Head."—*Pilon.*

"Folk's cleverness—at least I should think so—lies in their paws."

*Mansie Wauch.*

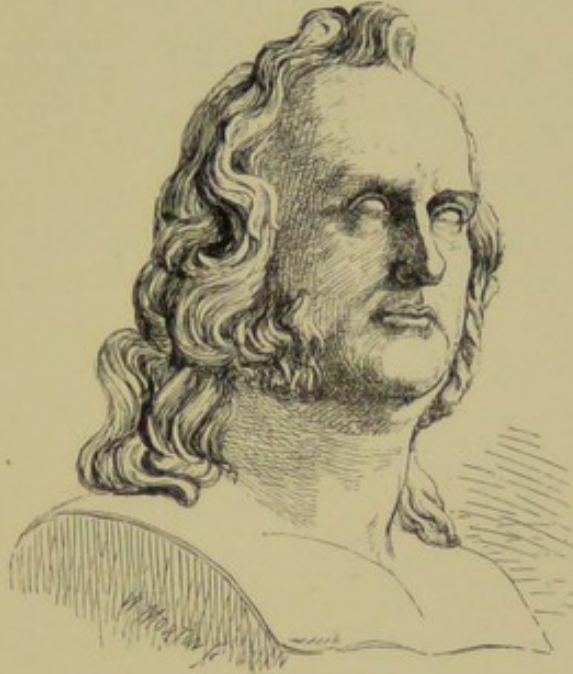


AN Author's easy leap over a little space and a few unimportant incidents brings me, in the present chapter, to a new theme,—one, indeed, that has no connection with hairdressers' shops in general, though thus linked with our own in particular. I will therefore skim, swallow-like, over the surface of the subject, without

diving for a moment into the depths of a complicated science ; and the familiar objects delineated above shall be restored in due time to their places in the studio, the dissecting room, and the charnel house. Give me, in preference, the heads I have so long handled, coated with healthy skins, and crowned with hair of many colours, both cropped and in ringlets.

Yet, upon second thoughts (which are proverbially the best), no apology is needed for the introduction of phrenology to the haircutter's shop. Logically considered, the alien subject becomes naturalised ; for what can be closer in affinity than the hair and the head, or who more fitting than the hairdresser to lecture upon either, or upon both, if he so pleaseth ? The various branches of science must needs be familiar to him who has so often penetrated to the roots of his subjects. He could dilate to advantage on the theory of sleek-down, or new science of curls ; and show you that the porous covering, deriving, with other particles of our system, its vitality from the blood, is indicative of character ; that when the intellect and constitution are vigorous, the hair is strong, or curly ; and the reverse when the foundations are feeble. View, he might say, the moping idiot, met aimlessly wandering in almost every town and village ; you will find the weak head covered with weak hair, lank and hopelessly subdued. View, for contrast, the lion-like bust of the late Professor Wilson, where the brave hair, matching the brave intellect, appears wavy as a rippling sea, and flowing as the mane of a forest king. These are extreme cases ; so taking a middle course, the





The Head ennobled by the Hair.—Bust of Professor Wilson.  
(1788—1854.)

tonsor might tell you that when you perceive the hair of the adult strong yet curless (being thus far untrue to its nature, as thorns divested of their roses), you may feel assured that Sorrow, the pioneer of Time, has been busy there clipping curls, making easier work for the Mower, when he comes to sweep away the roots. David used to marvel where ill-favoured people came from, seeing that nearly all children are winsome; others might marvel where all the sleek hair comes from, when so many youngsters have curly locks. Were this new theory as rich in facts as in fancies, the world might at length put its trust in ornament without being deceived. No more

feeling for concealed bumps ; the eye (the interpreter of all languages) would be your only organ. Each lock of hair, as a wit has suggested, might be viewed as an Essay on the Human Understanding.

As a proof that hair may be regarded in the light of a truthful indicator, an anecdote is given on the authority of Dr. Wardrop, who states that an experiment was made on the bravery of an officer in the Duke of Alva's camp. At midnight he was aroused from his sleep by the provost-marshal, accompanied by his guard, and ordered to prepare for immediate execution. He said he was ready to meet death, but asserted his innocence. The provost, bursting into a fit of laughter, stated they were merely trying his courage. Placing his hand upon his breast, the officer ordered the provost out of his tent, observing that he had done him an evil turn. The next morning the hair of his head appeared perfectly white, instead of being of a deep black colour as heretofore. Another illustration—occurring nearer home, and approximating to our own time—of the remarkable effect of sudden fear upon the hair is furnished by a contributor to *Notes and Queries*. One William Probert, who had been connected with the murder of Mr. Weare (for which crime John Thurtell was hanged, in 1824), was indicted at the Old Bailey for horse stealing, and being found guilty, was there executed on the 20th of June, 1825. The Rev. Dr. Andrews was desired to visit Probert, and found him in a state of stupor ; but on the morning of execution his mind brightened, and he seemed anxious to join in the prayers. On leaving his cell to be



pinioned, he became excited, and the instant the executioner bound his hands, his long weak hair arose gradually until it stood upright ; so it remained a short time, and then as gradually fell. This statement may appear incredible to the reader ; but he may find a much older example in the Book of Job, where Eliphaz the Temanite says these words :—" A spirit passed before my face ; the hair of my flesh stood up." Evidently, the common expression, " making the hair stand on end," is more than a mere figure of speech.

Hearing much of phrenology and its advantages, I and a few companions once formed ourselves into a society, for the study of charts and temperaments. This was during the life of David, who allowed the shop to be closed early on one night in each week ; our place of business thus becoming converted, for the time being, into a scientific lecture room. Our money contributions were expended in the purchase of the Constitution of Man, Macnish's Handbook, busts, casts, and the like. Ultimately we secured the chief object of our ambition, Combe's complete System of Phrenology, a large expensive work in two volumes. In addition to these, we boasted a real skull, presented to the society by a friend. Upon being questioned as to the peculiarities of his present, our friend stated that, judging by the size and development of the skull, its owner had certainly possessed mental power ; and as the emblem of mortality had come from the country, it had probably belonged to some rustic leader, perhaps some " village Hampden." He regretted however, his inability to substantiate his

theory, as the village and the Hampden were alike unknown. Acting on the advice of experienced individuals who showed an interest in our progress, we wrote essays on the nature of each organ, read the productions at the weekly meetings, and discussed their merits and deficiencies to the best of our ability. We became especially observant, drawing comparisons, odious or otherwise, between the actions of our acquaintances and their phrenological indications. Young anglers for



"A barber's chair, that fits all."—*All's Well that Ends Well.*



truth, we spared no pains in exploring the deep well of the mind ; but few were the prizes, in the shape of new facts, we succeeded in drawing to the surface. During that epoch of vague experimental philosophy, what a study for me was the BARBER'S CHAIR !

How rare and diversified were the subjects it presented to view ! So unconscious withal of the service rendered.

Although that verdant enthusiasm has subsided, and the youths are no longer disciples of Gall and Spurzheim, their favourite science still appears to have truth for its foundation, whatever may be said against the superstructure raised thereon. Who that has an ample brow to mark him as one of nature's men of thought would wholly reject the flattering creed ? More people have faith in phrenology than choose to make the avowal, for we readily believe that which we wish to be true. Nor is the idea of phrenology, or the belief in its manifestations, so novel as many persons suppose ; they were current ages ago, as evidenced by an expression occurring in *Troilus and Cressida* :—" By my troth," quoth Helen, when feeding the vanity of Pandarus, " sweet lord, thou hast a fine forehead."

Eventually, two or three of the youths became affected by the mania for emigration ; their hopes, like the sun, were ever turning to the west, and to that distant point they sailed to improve their slender fortunes. To them, however, " Westward Ho !" proved but a delusive cry, the main results of their enterprise being disappointment and hard labour : in one instance only was the day-dream realised. The society was dissolved, and its effects



distributed amongst the members by mock auction. The principal article falling to my share was the skull, a property more genuine than gratifying. Though possessing a strong liking for decay in its more picturesque features, I never could fancy that grim memorial, being too closely allied to a corse, which is usually avoided. A coffin and a newly-made grave likewise raise my antipathies. But Time proverbially works wonders. When the corse becomes shrouded in the coffin,—the coffin concealed within the grave,—the grave surmounted by the headstone,—the headstone garlanded with ivy and gray lichen,—what a change comes over the predilections! I love to seek out and to linger in a scene like this; where the presence of death is insinuated rather than enforced, his terrors being softened and subdued by the presence of beauty.

Notwithstanding the antipathies, the skull was preserved. It lay concealed in a retired corner where light seldom penetrated. But it appeared to dislike concealment, and would have suited Mr. Wilkins Micawber to admiration, for it was continually "turning up." When, imitating Figaro, I married, the natural scarecrow confronted my young wife, and in her alarm she pleaded for its expulsion. To that plea no objection was urged, but the expulsion seemed a difficult matter. Gladly would I have re-presented it to some young phrenological society, but saw no opportunity; nor could it be sent with other bones to the marine store. Neither did I fancy converting the skull into a shaving-box, as did the chin-reaper of Ripon; nor into a drinking-cup, after the



weird fashion of Lord Byron ; nor preserving it beneath a glass shade, as the Morley family preserved the skull of Dick Turpin. In such dilemma I resolved to drown the ghastly remnant, and for that purpose proceeded, in the dark, to the parapet of a neighbouring bridge. I threw it gently over, and when the sound occasioned by its fall reached my ears, retreated homeward, feeling anxious during several following days, lest the village Hampden should turn up once more, and a reward be offered for his supposed murderer.

The students of phrenology were not always inclined to seriousness ; but, being youths of humour and sobriety (as *Le Sage* would have styled them), they sometimes blended fun with science. One of their harmless practical jokes may bear narrating, and possibly corroborate the observations of *Plutarch* and *Steele*, that minor circumstances reveal people in a truer light than matters of graver import. In the next dwelling to ours lived a translator, or converter of old shoes into new ones. He had resided there some time without taking or attracting much notice. One night the students, on retiring from the lecture table, had encompassed the fire-grate in a half circle, like a crescent moon, when a light was espied, gleaming faintly through a chink in the partition wall. Here was a windfall that must not be wasted ; so they arose to make the most of it. *Seek and thou shalt find*, saith the pious proverb ; accordingly they peered through the crevice, and plainly discovered the son of *St. Crispin* drawing out his waxen bands, and plying his awl assiduously. Worthy man ! what must be done to ensure



the greatest amount of innocent merriment at his expense? His quiet industry would have been shielded from molestation by the slightest visitation of Conscience, but they did not entertain such a troublesome guest; who would entertain him that could possibly show him to the door? Conscience is the scourge of a few for the benefit of many. People who are callous to its promptings make the blithest though the worst members of society; no remorse embitters their pleasure. "They are the lads who are free and easy, wheresoe'er they chance to be." I have known a few of those merry-go-round individuals, and if selfish enjoyments be the aim and end of existence, they are the true philosophers. But a truce to moralizing, which might mar the mirth. They called for a pipe, as did old King Cole, of roystering memory, and upon measuring the orifice, found the pipe fitted admirably. Then placing the thin end in the fire, and allowing it to remain until red-hot, they next filled the bowl with cold water, and applied the simple machine to the hole in the wall. The party then divided, one half staying to superintend operations, the other moiety departing to peep by stealth through the victim's shutter, in order to watch the effect, and enjoy the fun. Phiz-z-z went the steaming water, alighting on the shoeman's forehead. He looked up amazed (being seated several feet below), and the liquid popped into his eyes. He glanced confusedly at the ceiling, the window, the door, the machine all the while besprinkling him with warm dew. At last he sprang from his seat, unable to endure the teasing any longer. The pipe was withdrawn, the outsiders returned,



and the first act of the comedy came to a close. After an interval of half-an-hour the sport was resumed, the conspirators changing places. Success again attended the mischief, and they parted highly pleased with the stratagem. This jest ended, like many others, in detection and regret. On the third evening of the diversion the pipe broke in the wall, and the red-hot portion rattled on the shoemaker's floor. They saw him pick up the clayey fragments, examine them curiously in his leathern apron, and nimbly quit the room. The coming event cast its shadow unmistakably before them. They could tell, without the divining wisdom of Merlin to guide them, that a storm was brewing. If ever the enraged tiger was personified by mortal, the translator was such personification when he rushed into their agitated presence, and vowed that he would bring a hundred fighting boys to batter down the house.

The shoemaker did not keep his vow ; but in a lawless neighbourhood there was some danger in the threat. Only a few months previously, David's nephew had run into our place for shelter, declaring that a party of "roughs" were chasing him. He was almost breathless, so I locked the door, thinking he would then be safe, but soon found myself mistaken. The gang immediately assailed the door, some pressing against it with their shoulders, others with their feet, until the lock and its fastenings were forced from their hold. The poor fellow was abused in a manner that I could not then look upon, and need not now describe. When the lawless gang had glutted their vengeance they walked leisurely



away, and never were apprehended. In Manchester, at mid-day, I fancied such a scene could not be witnessed; but from the date of that occurrence I have been a disbeliever of the proud boast that an Englishman's cot is his castle.

The students in phrenology displayed qualities more worthy of record and imitation than their heedless jocularity. A cluster of hopeful enthusiasts, the poetry of their nature had not been chilled by experience. In one of the popular periodicals of that day—*Cleave's Gazette*—appeared an appeal to the public in behalf of Allen Davenport, a metropolitan rhymmer, who had fallen, like many other minstrels, into debt and difficulty. Having read several of his fugitive pieces that pleased us, we subscribed twenty sixpences, and sent to the needy bard half a sovereign by post. The receipt thereof was acknowledged in a grateful letter still in my possession.

By the aid of remembrance I have thus summoned together the early friends who cheered a portion of my progress (often a Pilgrim's progress) through life, and who will never again meet in reality. Some are struggling in America; some in Australia; others are resting in the grave; the remainder are still located in England. On the diverging pathways of life they have been widely separated, and only the finger of Death can direct them to ultimate unity.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### CHEAP, ITINERANT, AND NOTABLE OPERATORS.

"To make up for the perplexing idiosyncrasies which dwell in the best of steel, there lurks a good, shabby, hard-working Cinderella of a blade, which nothing appears to put out of temper. I know one of this class, and what it has gone through there is no telling."—*An Old Shaver.*



A scene from Hudibras.

RETURNING to the business of the shop, it seems right to explain that, although different localities have different prices, from the halfpenny scrape to the silver polish, with peculiarities of mode and custom, I shall not define

their statistics with dry minuteness, but will confine my observations chiefly to my own district, that district being a pretty extensive one—a metropolis in its way.

In the last paragraph the word *chiefly* is used advisedly ; it leaves a convenient latitude, of which I must now and then avail myself. When, for instance, the artist takes a distant flight with his pencil, I must needs accompany him with my pen, even unto a street in China, a café in Turkey, a saloon in America, or to any other scene or incident where his wayward and pictorial fancy may lead him.

Having casually alluded to halfpenny scrapes, and as some persons may feel disposed to doubt the existence of such low-priced operations, I will support my text with two or three modern instances, because such instances are simple proofs distinguishing the veritable narrator from the romancist. While passing, a few years ago, along a public thoroughfare, my eyes were attracted by a newly-painted sign, bearing a novel inscription—"Board of Health Shaving Shop. Haircutting, one penny ; shaving, one halfpenny." This was a new scene to me, and likewise to Manchester, although a haircutter in Glasgow practised the half-price system so far back as the year 1770. Even at that low rate the North Briton gathered gear and built houses. It would seem that bawbees went further in the market than they will go now. When this original cheap John died, his son continued the business in good style, though still at reduced charges, to the great vexation of the penny tonsors of the place. His shop was furnished with



antique chairs, pictures, a musical clock, and a small library. He died in 1817. While in the act of shaving a customer he calmly closed his razor and his life together.

A hairdresser still richer than those Caledonians (probably the most wealthy tonsor ever known, always excepting Sir Richard Arkwright, the millionaire), was Mr. Charles Day, the eminent blacking manufacturer. His father was a perfumer in Covent Garden, and brought up his son to the same business. Mr. Martin became their assistant, and so remained until the discovery of the lucky blacking receipt, which soon superseded the shaving. That discovery has been variously related in print, but certainly the receipt was procured accidentally and cheaply. The new "Black Diamond" was brought into notice by men dressed in old liveries, who were sent to the shops in and around London to enquire for and extol Day and Martin's blacking. Mr. Day acquired a fortune amounting to nearly half a million of money; but he lost his sight by the process of making the shining liquid, and continued blind to the time of his death, which occurred in 1836. Another wealthy shaver was Mr. John Courtois, who during many years conducted a shop in London, and there died at the close of 1818, leaving a fortune of two hundred thousand pounds. It is needless to say such tempting hoards of gold were not composed of halfpenny shavings. Mr. Courtois enriched himself by speculation and usury.

Return we now to the "Board of Health," whence we have slightly wandered. Upon drawing near to inspect the local curiosity it was found rather difficult of



access ; the steps, ten or twelve in number, descended along the cellar wall. Such unfavourable position seemed a sufficient apology for reduced terms ; but it afterwards transpired that the proprietor of the singular establishment had opened various branch concerns, where journeymen were hired to operate. I can sympathise with the assistants at half-price shaving shops, knowing that comparatively few masters can now, even at the usual trade charges, prosper by the profits of the business alone. Many have been compelled to adopt auxiliary aids. They may be found striving as news-vendors, stationers, toy sellers, theatrical agents, cigar dealers, and chapmen in general. With Sancho Panza, they are prepared for all, and have a smattering of everything. One of the most versatile of the order was recently addressed by letter—though jocularly—as hair-cutter, librarian, bookseller, umbrella maker, perfumer, and poet ! In such versatility he followed in the footsteps of his well known prototype, Allan Ramsay, who successfully applied himself to all these callings (excepting the umbrellas), in the early portion of the last century. Indeed, a part of the quaint epitaph which Tim Bobbin, the Lancashire rhymer, wrote for himself (although not found upon his gravestone in Rochdale Churchyard), might be applied to a large division of our craftsmen ; and with a due allowance for the diffidence which is so apt to depreciate its own worth, might be generally adopted as the chin-reaper's epitaph.

Allan Ramsay, to whom incidental allusion has just been made, was born in the village of Leadhills, Lanark-



shire. Bound apprentice, in 1701, to a periwig maker, in Edinburgh, he followed that occupation until 1716, when he adopted the business of a bookseller, adding the then novel feature of a circulating library. There exists a pleasing picture representing one of the friendly visits of Gay to Ramsbury, about the period in question—the



Marble Statue of ALLAN RAMSAY, in Princess Street, Edinburgh,

poetical twain being surrounded by wigs and blocks, combs and curling-irons. Allan's monument, erected in the Greyfriars Churchyard (near the tomb of Dr. Blair), is thus inscribed :—

In this Cemetery was interred the mortal part of an immortal poet, Allan Ramsay, author of the *Gentle Shepherd*, and other admirable poems in the Scottish dialect. He was born in 1686, and died in 1758.

[AUTOGRAPH.]

“ No sculptured marble here, no pompous lay,  
 No storied urn, no animated bust ;  
 This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way,  
 To pour her sorrows o'er her poet's dust.  
 Tho' here you're buried, worthy Allan,  
 We'll ne'er forget you, canty callan :  
 For while your soul lives in the sky,  
 Your Gentle Shepherd ne'er can die.”

A few years ago a marble statue of Allan Ramsay (executed by John Steell, R.S.A.,) was erected in the capital of his native country.

The customers of the old-fashioned barber's shop are now found in three divisions, like a general's army. The right wing has sheered off to get its hair cut for a penny ; the centre has marched into the threepenny saloons, to be clipped and curled ; the *left* wing being all that remains to the original twopenny hair cutter. Smart, cheery places, brilliant with gas, and redolent of rich perfume, are the modern shampooing saloons, where the services for which sixpence was charged in former days are now pleasantly rendered for half that sum ; and where hair is cut not only well, but wisely, so that it will



need cutting again in a fortnight. Success to the trade ! This is the way to make it flourish.

Since wigs have been discarded by all who can do without them ; since powder has been banished, except from the stage ; and since even ladies' fillets have ceased to be the mode ;—Othello, comparatively speaking, has had little legitimate occupation for his nimble fingers ; more especially since valets and ladies' maids have usurped the office of the hairdresser. That these parties have usurped the hairdresser's office to a considerable extent may be readily perceived by reference to the advertising columns of the *Times*. But the preference may be explained if other ladies' maids be near so dexterous as one of Mary Stuart's. Sir Francis Knollys, in a letter to Secretary Cecil, dated "Carlyll, 28 June, 1568, at midnight," in reference to the servants in waiting on the Scottish Queen, thus wrote :—"Nowe, here are six waiting women, althoe none of reputacion but Mystress Marye Ceaton, whoe is praysed by this Queen to be the fynest busker, that is to say, the fynest dresser of a woman's heade and heare that is to be seen in any countrie, whereof we have seen divers experiences since her comyng hether, and among other pretie devyce, yesterday, and this day, she did sett sitche a curled heare upon the Queen, that was said to be a perewyke that shoed very delycately, and every other day hightherto she hath a new devyce of heade dressing without any coste, and yett setteth forthe a woman gaylie well." \*

\* Chalmers' "Life of Mary, Queen of Scots."



To Miss Seaton was bequeathed the Queen's Memento-Mori watch. It further appears, on the authority of Sir Francis, that although Queen Mary's natural hair was black, she was in the habit of wearing artificial locks of sundry colours.

Within my remembrance a good shop would contain a hundred fillets, or fronts, to be dressed for Whitsuntide or Christmas : but now you may enter any homely concern you please, at festive seasons, without finding a moiety of that number.

The present cost, when new, of such feminine adornments as fillets, and modern hair devices, can easily be ascertained by enquiry at any perfumer's saloon ; so the reader may rest contented with a revival, by way of contrast, of the prices charged in the middle of the last century. In 1754 Mr. James Kent, hairdresser, at the "Locks of Hair, against Bolt and Tunn Inn, in Fleet-street, London," made a head-dress for Mrs. Curtis (afterwards the wife of General Washington), and a copy of his bill is subjoined :—

To one best curld cutt Wigg . . . . .	£3	3	0
To a Sett of Curlls . . . . .	0	12	0
	<hr/>		
	£3	15	0

The silver polish, casually mentioned upon an earlier page, bears reference to the more dignified emporiums which form the direct opposites of the Boards of Health. At these select places, if you put down silver after a flourish of the razor, or a clip of the scissors, you are politely thanked, but no change is offered. If you ask



for your copper, of course you can be considered no gentleman.

Since writing the foregone remarks, I have been summoned to a meeting of the legitimate hair abbreviators, called in opposition to the revolutionists who had resolved to do what they liked with their own razors ; thereby lessening our incomes, without increasing their individual receipts. The object of that meeting extraordinary was, according to circular, to take into consideration what was to be done with the halfpenny shavers. Evidently the great battle of Protection *versus* Free Trade had to be re-fought on a smaller stage ; and had I been a pugilist—mental or physical—I would certainly have entered the lists. It was also the struggle of right against wrong, of wisdom against folly ; and, as a friend to justice and progress, I ought to have attended that gathering ; but, being otherwise engaged, proved an absentee. Had I been at liberty to attend my sense of duty would have suggested a maiden oration ; and a few hours' study would have prepared it for effective delivery, in matter and manner somewhat as follows. Of course, the modulated voice—the facial expression—the eye beaming with mute eloquence—are lost to the reader !—

Brother Barbers : On rising to deliver my maiden speech I feel harassed by twin fears. In the first place, I have qualms that, like bad blacking, I shall not sufficiently shine ; and, secondly, that my sympathy may not prove solemn enough for the occasion. It has been proposed that friends of ours be placed in juxtaposition



with our enemies ; that we fight them with their own weapons ; and that, as they have reduced themselves to half price, we shall further reduce them to half custom. Not a bad idea, gentlemen, but too serious. I perceive much food for mirth in this mischief, and a good joke should cure the evil. Permit me to suggest an amendment. Let us choose their customers. The patronage of our rivals is now promiscuous and doubtful, good or bad, as the case may be ; a copper earned in one minute to-day, and a "sair-won fee" to-morrow. Let us make their visitors select and certain. Though they have taken some of our chins, let us present to them a few more, of a choice assortment. In so doing, we shall be acting like wise christians, by returning apparent good for real evil. The poor mortals we are met to annihilate are ill prepared with the sinews of war ; a long siege would be cruelty ; let us therefore kill them with kindness and swiftness. The proposition of my learned brother opposite (learned, I mean, in his business,) would subject us to a charge of spitefulness and pettifogging. Adopt my amendment, and you shall win, at little cost, a character with the public for being vastly generous. Gentlemen, we all have one or more patrons peculiarly fitted for this service : friends who ought to bring three-pence instead of a penny for each shave. Surely, these will make beautiful halfpennyworths ! We must prevail with them, as a special mark of favour, to transfer their kindness just for the occasion. Labourers with a week's growth of bristle, improved by stone-clippings, brick-parings, and mortar-dust ; chimney-sweepers, unwashed ;



stooping old men, who require much time and caution to do justice to their deep wrinkles : these are elements of success ready to our hands ; why should we not use them, and conquer pleasantly ? But as even the best remedy is occasionally found defective in obstinate cases, I will strengthen, like Dr. Buchan, my first receipt with additional doses. We must send also a few of our better-class customers ; those who require a fresh cloth spread over their apparel, in addition to soap and water, a spotless towel, comb, hair brush, clothes brush, shoe brush, a little oil or pomatum, and other attentions which need not be enumerated. Persuade these fastidious gentlemen to favour our rivals with a call, and when all their requirements are satisfied, let them ask, as is usual with them "What is to pay ?" Tonsor will leave the recompense to their generosity : they will not approve of generosity, but prefer exact dealing, and will again enquire, "What *is* the charge ?" Of course the charge is one halfpenny, as specified in the window, and the crest-fallen shaver will duly receive it. Further, we can personally visit the shops where we are unknown, and shrink from every razor placed upon our faces, denouncing them as akin to the razors of Tim Nolan, which would cut the thickest butter in Belfast, if ye did but give them the least taste of the fire. We can compare the establishment to Neptune's easy shaving shop kept on the Line, where unwilling customers are lathered with tar, and shaven with a notched hoop. We may request our victims to draw the saw over the thumb-nail, or improve the edge on the strop ; and even promise to wait while it



is sharpened upon the hone. Altering our tactics we may complain of the water being too hot, or too cold ; either scalding or freezing will suit us, according to the weather ; and we might make an excellent wind-up by placing a sovereign upon the counter, and desiring the halfpenny to be taken out of that. The poor Pilgarlicks must then rush out for change, and we could stand smiling on the door-step while they raced the street from end to end, perhaps, in search of silver for gold. If the renegades stood their ground one week under this battery of comicalities, call me no Solomon. They would assuredly fly by night to California, or elsewhere, for a quiet existence, and morning would show us no trace of the fugitives.

My comic scheme was not adopted by the assembled hairdressers, possibly because it was only conceived—never brought forth. The meeting entertained the more serious proposition actually mooted—practically endorsed it, and signally failed. The legal shops started in opposition could not be maintained. The “knobstick” journeymen who were bribed to leave the town, returned in a few days to pursue their mischievous courses. The half-price concerns increased in number, rather than decreased ; and the evil appeared to be established.

The passing mention, in my embryo speech, of hot and cold water, as used in the process of shaving, may serve to bring to the mind of the historical reader a royal illustration. When King Edward the Second was on a journey, after his fall, Maltravers, one of his keepers, ordered him to be shaved with cold water from a ditch ;



on hearing the order the captive king exclaimed, bursting into tears, "Here is at least warm water on my cheeks, whether you will or not!" This anecdote of Mr. Fairholt's corroborated the testimony of John Philip Kemble, who once seriously declared to Thomas Dibdin, that true independence consisted in being able to shave with cold water. Similar averment has been made by William Cobbett and James Montgomery. The latter, once passing through Conway, wished to be shaved, but the only shaver of the place being away from home, Montgomery's beard had to grow twelve miles longer, until it reached Abergele, where an operator was found.

Formerly, the only under-price workers we knew were a few insolvents, who, having nothing left but a razor and a shaving can, went the round of the public-houses, shaving the tipplers for a halfpenny, or a draught of liquor. One of these forlorn beings frequently called at David's shop for the purpose of sharpening his solitary tool upon the hone. Before coming to us, an ill-natured joke was played upon him by a roguish hairdresser, who had promised to set (or sharpen) this itinerant razor if left with him some evening. It was left accordingly. When called for in the morning it was found "set" in soil, being snugly ensconced at the root of a geranium in a flower-pot. The wanderer was deserving of a better reception at the hands of his legitimate brother, for he was a merry wag when invited to be merry, and would warble cheerily for his share of the barley-bree. At such mirthful seasons he took pleasure in reviving a characteristic ditty that had once been a rattling favourite

on the stage, but which is now to be met with only in the Vocal Apollos and New Syrens of a past generation ; or in the chronicle of the barber's shop now under perusal. No doubt the melody was agreeable to the itinerant, because it brought back something of the warmth belonging to the sunny days when he travelled from hamlet to village (after the manner of Arkwright, and of Maitland, the historian of London and Edinburgh), clipping long hair for the trade to manufacture, or for his own nimble fingers to prepare for promiscuous sale.

## THE PERFUMER.

(Suggested by the Song of Autolycus, in the "Winter's Tale.")

Come hither, fair maidens, I've articles rare,  
 For your cheeks I have roses, and scents for your hair ;  
 I've trudged thro' the world to get fashions for you,  
 From London's gay shops to the mines of Peru ;  
 From the head to the foot, my sweet maidens, I'll fit ye,  
 From the latchets for shoes, to a curl'd wig so pretty.  
 From Venice, from Athens, so attic my trade is,  
     My models,  
     From noddles,  
     Of Tituses,  
     Venuses,  
 Gods, goddesses,—Greeks conjured up from old Hades.

Here's my store of Brutus' crops,  
 Curl'd so fierce for damsels' tops ;  
 No Athenian of old  
 Such neat wigs ever sold ;  
 For in Art's ample store-house I march'd thro' the crannies ;  
     Here's my blacks, auburns, browns,  
     A—la—Socrates' crowns,  
 To thatch our wise old grannies.



For the wife so demure and so tender,  
 Who can scold in a voice soft and slender,  
     Here's my wig, la — Medusa,  
     Where each snake turns seducer,  
 And you'll swear, while her eyes seem the fount of caresses,  
 The serpents are hissing, and hung in her tresses.

Here, rogues so sly,  
 Come buy, come buy,  
 Circassian bloom,  
 That mocks the tomb !  
 Olympian dew,  
 Morocco shoes,  
 Celestial paste,  
 Clasps for waist,  
 Scents so sweet,  
 Garters neat,  
 Come buy, come buy.

I'm so loved by the lasses,  
 None my basket e'er passes ;  
 They're tittering with pleasure,  
 As I'm taking their measure ;  
 And when the wig's tried,  
     With a sweet vacant stare,  
 They cry, charming wig-man !  
     It fits to a hair !

While the echoes of the old-time ballad are floating away, we may return to the cheap new-system men, who were spirited advertisers, professing to suit the times, and to sympathise with bad trade. They also indulged in sarcasm, disclaiming any connection with the adjoining butchers and turf cutters of the association, and promised to shave people asleep, if preferred, after the manner of the Chinese. No doubt they will adopt, ere long, the brilliant idea of a modern Parisian friseur, dress themselves in the costume of Figaro as he appears upon the

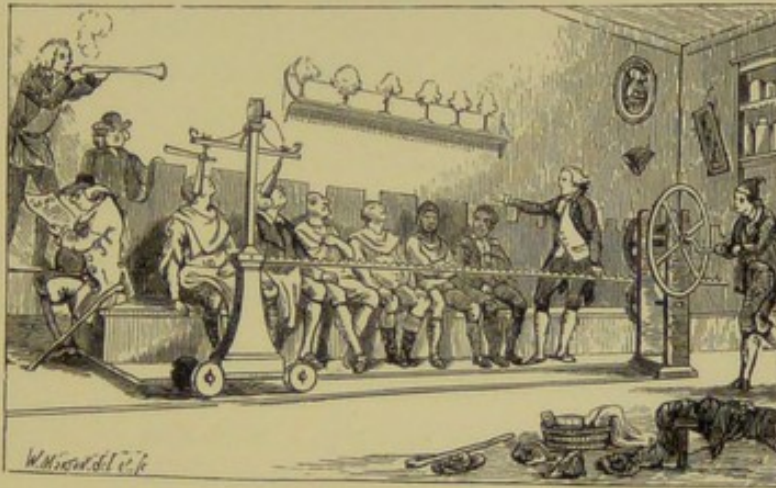
stage, and in that theatrical guise operate on all comers. Their novel expedients to create custom will be better understood after reading the following copy of a placard posted on the walls of the city :—"To be given away, a New Hat—or the value in money—every week, to the customers frequenting A. B.'s original city halfpenny shaving shop. (Here follows the address, which I prudently omit, lest my own patrons should be tempted to go thither.) A. B., prize hair-cutter from Wigtown, begs leave to announce to his friends and the public in general, that every person calling at his establishment may have a superior shave for one halfpenny, or their hair cut, in first-rate style, for one penny, and a chance for the New Hat free of expense."

Sometimes the inducement was varied to a leg of mutton, or a small round of beef. Should I ever follow the example of the elder D'Israeli, and write a book on the Curiosities of (not Literature, but) Shaving, I shall be inclined to place this modest prize barber, with his halfpenny hat, upon the first page.

In the event of my becoming reduced to the extremity of halfpenny shaving, I may improve upon the present practice by introducing the Shaving Machine, suggested many years ago. In this wholesale manner I might make the half-price system remunerative, unless the machine should unfortunately cut the customers, in which case the customers would possibly retaliate by cutting me. The machine might confer a further service by setting at rest the disputed point of operating against time. Various expert wielders of the razor have pro-



fessed to clear, when duly lathered, a chin in a minute, sundry wagers being won or lost thereon. But the machine would eclipse all human efforts. On careful computation it would shave a company of soldiers in a few seconds. At the word of command, "Right, face," it would sweep along the jaws indicated; and at the next order, "Left, face," the remaining military cheeks would be swiftly cleared.



The Shaving Machine and Wig-Powdering Gun.  
From a rare caricature, published in Birmingham towards the close  
of the last century.

An advance upon our usual rates is scarcely less objectionable than a reduction. In London, some years ago, a rise in the barbers' tariff was followed by an effusion of innocent blood, as many customers, through motives of economy, attempted to shave themselves. Others, with marvellous perseverance, tore out the beard with razors hopelessly blunt, and as painful in their

operation as the shaving tools of Khiva, which are merely strips of sharpened steel, used without handles. So states Captain Burnaby.

To check the inroads on our established rules, the innovators were ultimately met upon their own public ground, but with more polished weapons. The fine arts and the fourth estate were called into requisition. Take a peep, for example, at a pictorial card which was issued to the world, and is preserved on an earlier page of this volume, for the use and benefit of the trade.

A fitting companion for the artistic business card took the form of a Promissory Note, issued at Stockport, as subjoined :—

No. 1122.	BANK IN PETTY-CARR.	Id.
At my Shop I promise to shave		
Mr. James Hulme, fiddler, or Bearer,		
on demand, One Time.		
One Penny	JOHN POOL.	



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### BEARDED WOMEN.

*Rosalind*: Indeed, there is fortune too hard for nature.

*Touchstone*: Stand you both forth now; stroke your chins, and swear by your beards.

*Celia*: By our beards, if we had them,

*As You Like It.*

PEG WOFFINGTON, the witty, pretty actress of the Garrick era, was wont to indulge in this Shakesperian fashion of swearing by her beard; albeit the only long hairs shown in her portrait are the curls adorning her winsome head, and drooping beneath her flat "Woffington hat." An established favourite of the stage, she was of course in constant communication with Touchstone, the prince of Motleys, and it tickled her fancy to carry out to the letter his comical advice.

Josephine Boisdechene, the worthy woman whose picture, so remarkably impressive and unique, gives interest and character to the present chapter, could stroke her chin much more effectually than either Rosalind or Celia or Peggy; and could swear by her beard, literally and truly, as Touchstone desired. But if the gentle wearer of this masculine ornament were dressed in male attire and went forth to give battle, she might march side by side with the disguised Imogen:

the beard would tremble on the chin of the one, as the sword shook in the hand of the other.

This hairy singularity was born in March, 1831, about five miles from Geneva, in the mountainous region of Switzerland. Her parents, simple every-day people, had several other children, none of whom were in any way noticeable from the Alpine villagers who surrounded



them. So the beard of Josephine Boischechene was a freak of nature, apart from hereditary bias. It was not entirely an aftergrowth, as with men, but was sufficiently evident at her birth. Thenceforward it gradually grew with her growth. In her eighth year it measured two inches, being of a light shade ; at fourteen, a length of



five inches was attained, when the colour began to change, and at the present time she is in possession of a full grown harvest of dark brown hair, as shown in our engraving. In 1849, accompanied by her father, she left the land of William Tell, and took to travelling. Visiting the principal towns of France, she arrived at Paris, where she was introduced to the Prince President, at the palace of the Tuilleries. At Troyes she married a young artist, a countryman of her own. Crossing the straits, she came in due course to London, attracted by the Great Exhibition of 1851. There she stayed two years, displaying her hirsute ornament, chiefly at the Linwood Gallery, to wondering thousands. Before venturing on foot into the crowded thoroughfares of the great city, Madame Josephine made a point of concealing her chin beneath the foldings of a dainty kerchief. This precaution was adopted in order that the police might not arrest her as a man in disguise. Further, the said kerchief acted as a safeguard against the witty yet impertinent "Cries of London;" more especially against any affectionate enquiries as to the well-being of her beard.

During her residence in London she gave birth to a girl, who lived about twelve months, but showed no indication of being blessed with a beard. A boy, born with whiskers, was her next issue. After divers provincial excursions in England, the Bearded Lady sailed, in 1853, to America, where she soon became the "lion" of Barnum's Museum. Quitting the chief of showmen at the close of a nine or ten months' engagement, she next directed her steps to other important cities of the



Union. It was during this American tour that she was encountered by the late Mr. Thackeray, as we are told in one of the most genial of the "Roundabout Papers." She chanced to be a fellow passenger with the English author in the steamboat from Memphis to Cairo. In that voyage up the Mississippi the whiskered matron was accompanied by her bearded little boy and the Vermont Giant—a truly interesting party for an observant traveller to meet and to mingle withal. The Vermont Giant did not, as appears, reach the high standard erected for great men ; but the B. L. (as Mr. T. abbreviatingly styles her) was genuine enough. The upper portion of her beard, he states, was "black, rich, and curly." Of the lower part (though evidently full and flowing), the deponent could not speak with precision, as it was cautiously enveloped in a kerchief, after the manner previously mentioned, and was never seen except when professionally exhibited to the inquisitive in such matters at certain times and charges.

Her husband dying in the United States, the B. L. re-married, after a widowhood of three years, with an exhibitor known as the Original Swiss Warbler. Resuming her travels, she soon, like other leading itinerants, "exhausted worlds, and then imagined new." California, the West Indies, and Australia being successively laid under tribute, she returned to England, and anon to Manchester, where, accompanied by her whiskered boy, she exhibited during the Easter Fair of 1866. Knowing how readily a flowing beard or full grown whiskers can be attached to the smoothest chin, I was half prepared



for deception when visiting her at Knot Mill, especially as she had been under the experienced management of Mr. Barnum, whose book of confessions is sufficient to make one doubt the veracity of all show-folk. Nevertheless, the beard proved thoroughly genuine. "There was no fear," she said to her crowded company, "of pulling it off. It was a freak of Nature. No barber had ever interfered with her chin, although the upper part of her cheeks was shaven three times a week." Her son was styled Esau; not that he was so christened, but because of his resemblance to the hairy offspring of Isaac. I found the Bearded Lady very good tempered and complaisant, as indeed she had need to be with some over-inquisitive people; chatty and communicative she was, and much stouter than she appeared when her portrait was engraved for the adornment and elucidation of this narrative.

In point of fact, as in point of grammar, this singular being is not singular. A native of Augsburg, in Germany, named Augustina Barbara, whose face was covered with soft curled hair, of a yellow colour, was publicly exhibited in the year 1655. The beard was thick, and of such extreme length that it reached to her girdle. At the distant date named Barbara was in her twenty-second year, and had been married about twelve months to a man of the name of Vanbeck. It was insinuated (unjustly, let us hope), that Vanbeck married Barbara merely to make a profitable show of her;—in short, married her long beard. They travelled through several European countries, visiting England in their



tour. She was twice seen by John Evelyn, who agreeably comments thereon in his famous diary. He states that she "plaied well on ye harpsichord," and told him she had one child, which was not hairy. Several portraits of Barbara were published in England, and also in Germany.

As this series of eccentrics is somewhat defiant of chronological sequence, the next instance given will be of comparatively recent date. In 1857 a remarkable young woman, named Julia Pastrana, was exhibited in London as a nondescript. She was described as possessing a form of perfect symmetry ; could dance with the agility of Fanny Elslar, or the sprightly columbine, and in singing, could almost rival the warbling of a nightingale, or match the notes of its Swedish namesake, Jenny Lind. But these charms and accomplishments were crowned by a head that defied all power of description, and resembled nothing human. Sufficiently defined, however, were her whiskers, her moustache, her imperial, and sufficiently plentiful were they to place her amongst the heroines of the hairdresser's shop. On quitting the British metropolis she travelled due north, and died in Russia in 1859. Being embalmed, she was again exhibited at London in the spring of the year 1862. Mexico is stated to be the country in which she was born. A wild improbable account is given of her origin among savage hordes, and of her discovery in some secret cave ; but the story is much too fabulous to be soberly repeated in these veracious pages.

Amongst the most active grenadiers in the numerous wars of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, was a bearded



amazon, who fought with the utmost valour until taken prisoner on the battle-field of Pultowa.

At the carnival of Venice, in 1726, appeared a bearded female rope-dancer, proving an attractive novelty at the boisterous merry-making.

A Spanish woman, named Brizida de Penheranda, had a beard from her youth, which she allowed to grow, so that in her old age it reached down to her waist.

Mademoiselle Lefort, a bearded phenomenon from France, was exhibited in Spring Gardens, London, at half-a-crown each visitor, in 1818-19. A view of her masculine head, surmounted by a plume of feathers, may be seen by the curious searcher in the pages of Kirby's Wonderful Museum.

So lately as the year last departed two of these eccentricities of humanity visited Constantinople, and were ushered into the presence of the Sultan, who had expressed a wish to see them. They came to the Turkish capital with their father and brother from their birthplace, Bassorah, on the Persian Gulf, with a petition to his Majesty, craving that some provision might be made for them. Although in other countries they might exhibit their faces for money, such freedom could not be exercised by them in the land of Mahomet, where the veil is so generally worn. The young Bassorah women are sisters, bearing the sweet Eastern names of Leila and Nahara, the elder being twenty-four and the younger twenty years of age. Each has been strangely provided by nature with a full silky beard of considerable length. They are short in stature, with swarthy com-

plexions ("the shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,")  
small hands and feet, and are unmarried. This matrimonial hint may prove useful to some speculative bachelor willing to imitate Vanbeck, by marrying a profitable exhibition in the form of a bearded bride. These sisters of Bassorah were temporarily lodged in Stamboul, at the expense of the Turkish Government.

Many more instances, ancient or modern, might be adduced for the reader's edification or amusement ; but here are sufficient to prove that bearded women, though admitted novelties, are not rarities of the first degree. From the remote time of Hippocrates they have displayed their extraneous hairs at uncertain intervals ; whilst their eccentric visitations have been noted with interest and curiosity ; in much the same manner as we mark the fitfulness of comets in their mysterious courses.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### STORIES OF STRANGE SHAVERS.

"When Hopkins, tired of cutting hair,  
Resolv'd to cut the whole affair,  
And spend a month or so elsewhere,  
Away from house and home, O ;  
He shook his 'prentice by the hand,  
He left his scissors in the Strand,  
He took a brush through Switzerland,  
And then he went to Com(b)o."

*R. E. Egerton Warburton.*



POSSIBLY, with so many strange customers brought under his notice, the reader may mentally enquire—"Are there not many strange wielders of the razor?" Plenty, no doubt. A few may be mentioned, beginning with Sweeney Todd, the sanguinary and mystical practitioner of Fleet Street, who stands forth prominently. Although a discredit to the trade, he is none the less a pet hero of romance, as many public librarians can affirm. It appears by his curious and delectable history that he was in the habit of cutting the throats of his wealthy supporters with a quiet flourish of his razor,

afterwards rifling his victims at his leisure, and burying them at pleasure in subterranean passages that wound conveniently underneath his shop. He was a novel and most expert craftsman. What a pity he did not live in the days of the barber-surgeons, when he might have practised blood-letting as a legal branch of his business!

A kindred spirit to Sweeney Todd was the assassin-peruquier of Paris. The quality of the Frenchman's genius was a degree finer than the English tonsor's. After despatching his men—chiefly well-dressed strangers—he disposed of the bodies to a pastry-cook, his next-door neighbour, whose shop in the Rue de la Harpe became famous for its savoury patties. The conspiracy was discovered through the agency of a faithful dog, that refused to quit the street without its slain master. After the trial and execution of the two confederates, their shops were razed, a memorial pillar erected upon the site, and a decree issued that bearded men are never more to be there shaven, nor are savoury patties to be again compounded upon that spot. Admiring and confiding epicures were doomed to seek elsewhere for their gastric dainties.

Still in Paris, a young man named Joseph Orcher, an assistant friseur, is residing in the Faubourg St. Antoine. One of his duties is to wait upon the Marquis de Courzi at his residence, for the purpose of shaving him. On a certain day he makes his usual call just as a tenant farmer is quitting the Marquis, after paying his yearly rent. A thousand louis d'ors are lying upon the table. With many a wistful glance at the glittering treasure,



Orcher proceeds with his operation, until, the temptation proving too great for his avariciousness, he swiftly deprives the nobleman of life by a single stroke of the razor. Hastily sweeping the coveted gold into his pockets, the friseur hies to Calais. Here he assumes the name of Lestange, and sets sail immediately in a vessel bound for Martinique. Arriving at that distant colony, he enters into commercial speculations which prove exceedingly fortunate. Ten years elapsed, he finds himself wealthy and important, and, moreover, the husband of a titled heiress. Time continues to increase the riches and influence of Lestange, until the end of twenty-nine years from the date of de Courzi's death, when a strange longing comes over him to revisit his native land. Why should he not? Everyone who knew him is probably dead, or if living, could not possibly recognise the poor friseur in the magnificent Lestange, with his gorgeous dame and equipage. So reasoning, he quits Martinique, returns in due course to Paris, and attends worship in the Church of St. Roche in the Rue St. Honoré. He is here ushered to a seat with much ceremony, thus attracting the notice of the congregation. Among the worshippers is an invalided officer of town police, who fancies he has seen the stranger's face before, but cannot feel certain on that point. Sunday after Sunday the old officer returns to the Church of St. Roche to search into the features that trouble his memory. At home, he looks up his police records, and finds a description which he thinks tallies with the grand stranger. Taking the description with him to service on the



ensuing Sabbath, he compares it, feature by feature, until he becomes satisfied the long-wanted friseur is before him. He goes instantly to the general police office, returns with a party of officers, and just as Lestange is entering his carriage he is arrested for the murder committed in his youth. The customary trial ensues, and, six weeks after his arrest, his startling career is ended by the guillotine. Had he stayed eight months longer in Martinique, thirty years would have been passed, and prescription have rendered him safe from indictment. How fitting is it that in our prayers, uttered daily, should be perpetuated the warning appeal—*Lead us not into temptation.*

More minute particulars touching Joseph Orcher, *alias* Lestange, may be read in the fifth volume—original series—of *Chamber's Edinburgh Journal*.

Still in *la belle* France, where, at Falaise, the hair-cutter finds a queer customer in Moustache, the regimental dog, attached to Napoleon's grand army. Moustache possessed rare qualities, distinguishing him from the puppy race; he was never known to assume impertinent airs which ill became him, nor make the "judicious grieve" by exhibitions of selfish arrogance. Was he not a model puppy? According to an authentic chronicle—though not the parish register—Moustache was born about the close of the last century; but his brothers and sisters being numerous, he was during a short time lost in the crowd, and no record of his early months is preserved. Displaying an independent spirit, he soon emerged (as Independence will) from his



obscurity. At Caen—the birthplace of William the Conqueror—he singly pushed his fortune, and became located, as watch-dog, in the shop of a grocer. One day, while taking his rambles about that ancient town, he saw the parade of a company of soldiers who had received their route for Italy. Suddenly inspired with a love of military life, especially with the musical department thereof, he volunteered on the spot, and left, without notice or reason, the civil service of Mr. Hyson Figs. Marching away to the sound of the merry fife and the reverberating drum, the canine recruit crossed the Alps, bearing the fatigues of that arduous march with as good a grace as any veteran in the grand army, not omitting the guiding spirit, wrapped in the immortal gray capote. Here he soon distinguished himself. His regiment being encamped on the heights, a detachment of Austrians marched against them in the darkness of night, to effect a surprise. The weather was stormy ; human suspicion was asleep ; but Moustache scented the enemy's approach, barked a timely warning, and caused the Austrians to retrace their steps. Next morning it was agreed, without a dissentient voice, that Moustache had deserved well of his country. The colonel put his name on the roll ; it was published in a regimental order that he should henceforth receive the daily ration of a grenadier. At this juncture it was that he formed an eccentric connection with the barber's shop, so causing his memory to become embalmed in these unfading leaves ! A collar bearing the name of the regiment, was hung around his neck ; he was cropped in military fashion, and the barber



received orders to comb and clip him once a week. In a skirmish that shortly afterwards occurred, Moustache was pierced by a bayonet in his left shoulder; the regimental surgeon dressed the wound, prescribing rest in the hospital—the same being patiently endured by the patient. He was scarcely recovered when the battle of Marengo was fought, in which conflict he lost an ear. At Austerlitz he was deprived of a paw in the heat of the action, but contrived to rescue the silken banner from the grasp of the officer who had fallen in its defence, and bore it, limping and bleeding, to the camp. Such an act merited honour, nor was it charily bestowed. Marshal Lannes ordered the old collar to be replaced by a red ribbon, with a little medal attached, on which his deeds were inscribed. Alas! the proudest victor must eventually suffer defeat; the noblest dog has but his short-lived day of triumph. Moustache was killed by a cannon ball, on the 11th of March, 1811, at the capture of Badajoz by the French. "He was buried," writes his admiring native historian, "on the scene of his last glory; collar, medal, and all." A plain stone served him for a monument, and the inscription was simply—*Here lies the brave Moustache*. The French biographer of Moustache adds that the Spaniards afterwards broke the stone, and that the bones of the canine hero were burned by order of the Inquisition.\*

Again and again might exciting episodes be culled from the historical and legendary lore of France. The gay clime of Henri Quatre and the Fair Gabrielle,—of the

\* Founded on *Anecdotes du dix neuvieme Siecle*. Paris, 1819.



knightly Bayard and the little Corporal is rich in romantic incidents, of which the hairdresser's shop claims its full share. But for the present an English scene may serve.

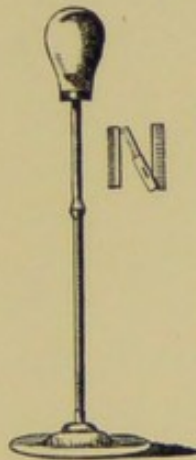
Two of a trade can never agree, says a proverb old as Methuselah. The imputation applies even to barbers. At the opposite end of the town (far enough from David's shop), dwelt a restless shaver, curious through his earnest love of curiosity. Anxious and assiduous in his own affairs, he yet watched the affairs of his neighbours with infinitely more zest. It has been written—author unknown—that any man who will make the accumulation of money the one sole object of his life,—neither loitering upon his way to the neglect of an opportunity, nor turning aside to indulge a desire,—may assuredly die rich. Tonsor seemed wishful to prove the truthfulness of such assertion, for he knew what useful eloquence lies on the silent tongue of money. The world had taught him that gold is as potent now in England as at Athens in the remote era of Timon; that Stentor could never speak so loudly, nor Demosthenes so well. The summer sun kissed with its earliest beam his opened window, and in winter, when sight might fail to penetrate the darkness that enveloped his shop, he stood on the doorstep, whistling loudly. His application was the theme of many tongues. He was a treasure to the thirsty sons of labour who drank deeply every Saturday night, and tiddled during the Sunday, to the total neglect of their beards. On the Monday morning they would inevitably have suffered a fine from their fellow-workmen, had not he been exercising his calling while drowsier shavers



were dreaming of success. In such thrifty manner he proceeded some years, adding much to his coffers, when one morning he found himself unexpectedly opposed by a new comer, fixed within thirty paces of his door, immediately round the corner. What was to be done? He fermented, like a baker's sponge. So anxious about customers who might drop in upon his rival, that he could scarcely attend to those under his own hand. By extra diligence he resolved to over-match his opponent, hoping to anticipate his measures. "If," soliloquised he, "my rival lies late in bed of a morning, he can be ousted without trouble. I must see to this at sunrise. Let us hope for the best." Earlier even than usual his windows was unshuttered, and reconnoitring commenced. As he projected his face round the corner he encountered another visage, and lo! Glo'ster met Richmond in the field. The sharp practitioners were both playing at the game of catch-as-catch-can; and the contest, as a bystander declared, appeared to be even. According to the laws of rivalry, they could neither nod, smile, nor speak, so they passed on with the easiest nonchalance they could assume, and shortly afterwards regained their respective concerns, a trifle disconcerted. Rumours became rife of a duel having been fought with open razors, vindictively ground and set for the purpose; but as no authentic account of such engagement has reached me, doubts of its actual occurrence may be entertained until the appearance of the next *Gazette* extraordinary. If such wild freak transpired, the combatants must have gleaned the idea from Roderick Random.



All this striving met some reward, enabling the striver to partly accomplish his object, and he would have been happy but for the prosperity of others. Fortunate himself, he yet thought he had gained nothing if his opponent were fortunate likewise. That impression preyed upon his mind—the mind is notorious for avenging its injuries upon the body—and, poor sensitive soul, he fell a victim, if not a martyr, to his feelings, and has been long forgotten by all save his faithful biographer. The tombstone, however, yields ample consolation to the injured dead ; at least it would do so, if they could read its inscriptions and see its ornaments. Here is the lost one's original epitaph (with the wig-stand and block to match), although not yet chiselled by the stone-cutter upon the broken column surmounting his grave in the ancient churchyard :—



Wig-Stand and  
Block.

THE BARBER'S EPITAPH.

PEACE, at length, released from care,  
Lies one whose sorrows sprang from hair ;  
How soothing is a sculptured grave !  
He sighs no more whilst others shave ;  
No more his tears in secret roll,  
While patrons rush from pole to pole ;  
Nor would it rouse his hush'd regard,  
Though all went bearded, " like the pard."

Tenant at will, in this calm spot,  
He's happier with his joyless lot,  
Than when a master's envied name  
Brought wealth, and consequence, and fame ;  
For rivals shared his earthly throne,  
But here he reigns, through death, alone ;  
From trade and all its troubles free,  
Till barbs and barbers cease to be,

'Tis something in this world of care,  
 Where blanks are common, prizes rare,  
 A champion's laurel wreath to wear,—  
 To be the first on high command,—  
*The* poet of our native land,—  
 To revel in a loved one's love,  
 Changless and pure, while myriads rove ;  
 But mightier far this barber's pride,  
 Had his great aim ne'er been denied,  
 To mould the craft in one huge elf,  
 And shave the world's vast beard himself !

Another strange shaver, though a non-professional, may be noted in the person of James Irving Johnston, who, though born armless, was in the habit of shaving himself and dressing his hair by the aid of his dexterous toes. Johnston's tonsorial movements would be highly suggestive of the toilet of the domestic pet, Grimalkin. This remarkable character officiated during several years as the schoolmaster of his native village, Annan, in Scotland, where he died, in 1848, at the early age of twenty-six.

The strangest of all strange shavers—the Emperor Commodus—is also the oldest included in this chapter, his rule in Rome extending from A.D. 180 to 192. He is likewise the most remarkable half-price operator known to the trade, lowering the tariff in order to ensnare his victims. To him might be applied Dean Swift's familiar distich :—

“What do you think ?  
 I'll shave you for nothing, and give you some drink.”

More than once he assumed the tonsorial dress and office in the shops of his capital. When surfeited with the



sanguinary combats of the arena, he would sally forth in disguise, attended by two courtiers, likewise disguised, to seek a change of diversion in the bye-ways of the city. Selecting a hairdresser's saloon suitable to his purpose, he purchased the use of it during one hour, prepared himself, and placed his "hooker-in" at the door. When a promising subject was introduced and duly lathered, Commodus embellished his performance by some pleasantry, politely pressed the customer's nose, "the natural handle of the barber," and, in the midst of a rollicking jest, slashed off the nasal ornament! The bewildered victim was hurried by the confederates to the rear of the premises, and effectually silenced by threats and bribes, leaving the emperor at liberty to accommodate his next patron. Of a verity, there was a laughing demon in the practical joking of this amateur barber-surgeon, who occasionally exchanged the embroidered toga for the white apron. My authority for these regal exploits is Mr. Noel Humphreys, who, in his book, entitled "*Stories by an Archæologist and his Friends*," cites various Roman historians in proof.

Four historical wig-dressers of ancient Manchester—the Syddalls, father and son; Edmund Harrold; and Thomas Podmore—are well deserving the tribute of a passing mention in these characteristic pages; but as they have been fairly described by Mr. Harland, Mr. Ainsworth, and other literary hands, the interesting incidents of their lives need not be repeated here.

As the main portion of this chapter has been somewhat sanguinary, the subject matter may be brightened

by the introduction of Jacques Jasmin, a happy French friseur, whose mature years were unusually prosperous and serene, notwithstanding that his youth was strangely forlorn.



## CHAPTER XX.

### THE TONSOR-TROUBADOUR OF GASCONY.

"Think of me when you're curling your hair."—*The Dancing Barber.*

JACQUES JASMIN, who died in the autumn of 1864, at the age of sixty-six, was considered the last of the troubadours, being a singer as well as a spontaneous composer of verses. Allowing for the difference of nationality, he was the Allan Ramsay of France—barber and bard. So highly was he esteemed by his countrymen at the time of his decease, that his remains were followed to the grave by the entire population of his native village, Agen, in Gascony, and a marble column is the purposed tribute to his memory.

Though all must needs be well that thus ends well, we yet choose to take a backward leap, and linger with the opening and less-known years of the famous rhyming shaver—the years in which he first became "a constant reader" of newspapers and magazines, and listened to the pertinent remarks and discussions upon every topic, with which a hairdresser's shop is so well supplied, thereby learning early, and almost unconsciously, something of the nature of men and things. From reading, a short stage led him to rhyming, as we shall glean in due course.



Jacques Jasmin, Author of "Curl-Papers."

Jasmin was born in 1798, in the midst of the noise and frolic of a carnival season, and grew up in extreme poverty. But while the realities of life were thus gloomy, the visitations of fancy became frequent; for fancy—resembling hope—is an especial friend of the unfortunate, and mostly showers her blessings where most they are needed. In this chequered way, during his early years, Jasmin's twin lives—the real and the ideal, the visible and the invisible—flowed onward together, resembling a sluggish stream with few flowers upon its margin, yet showing, here and there, the emerald tracing of a fairy ring.



It has been asserted with the utmost confidence that a poet must be born a poet ; but Jasmin did not lisp in numbers while rocked in his cradle, nor commit his verses to paper so precociously as did our own Alexander Pope. On the other hand, he was far from being so tardy as our sedate Cowper in showing his devotion to the Muses. It was on a certain day in his early teens that he made a slight promiscuous discovery, by finding himself in possession (like countless moderns), of that ancient honour, the rhyming faculty. Alone, and ruminating over his barren prospects at the wig-maker's bench, he was surprised to perceive his thoughts wandering from their accustomed track, and finally assuming a jingling utterance as new as it was unaccountable. Here was the birth of a fresh feeling,—the first whispering of Queen Mab, the good fairy who predicts future fame and brighter days. There had evidently been a sweet though unconscious slumber on the sunny slope of Parnassus ; and thus, if the bright fable of the ancients may be accredited, had the change been wrought. A poet's fancy (which often comes apart from a poet's power of expression,) was then germinating in the intellect of the Gascon stripling. He soon became a citizen in the world of imagination,—a wanderer in that dreamy land of which no chart has yet been constructed, and of which William Blake was the king. Although there have been, both in Jasmin's country and in our own, many first-rate day dreamers—Bunyan, De Quincey Keats, and the Coleridges, father and son, being among the foremost—yet Blake alone (with the mournful exception, perhaps, of



Richard Dadd, the fairies' special artist,) believed his shadows to be substances,—treated the sketches of fancy as the realities of nature,—and received as his daily visitors and friends those mystical creations which no other eyes could penetrate, no other senses comprehend. 'Last night,' said Blake, the visionary, the poet, the painter, the engraver, "I was walking alone in my garden, and there was great stilness among the branches and flowers, and more than common sweetness in the air. I heard a low and pleasant sound, and knew not whence it came. At last I saw the broad leaf of a flower move, and underneath I saw a procession of creatures, of the size and colour of green and grey grasshoppers, bearing a body laid out on a rose-leaf, which they buried with songs, and then disappeared. It was a fairy funeral." Who, after such weird interview, will dispute Blake's title to an insubstantial throne,—to a crown of thorns and moonbeams?

It never was Jasmin's good fortune thus to witness a fairy funeral, possibly because he had never a garden, or drooping flowers, or twilight stilness wherewith to allure the dainty Ariels. Yet he had many occasional glimpses into Fairy-land: glimpses that cheered the dulness he sometimes encountered in his barber's shop, between the exit of one customer and the tardy entrance of another. When the newspaper was read, his few books exhausted, and his village companions gone to their occupations, or when passing events chafed and annoyed him, it was convenient to forget everything real, and by a freak of fancy make the world more to his liking. Jasmin had



no occasion for the wishing-cap of Fortunatus ; all that he lacked in reality came to him in day-dreams, even while the water in his shaving-can simmered idly upon the hob. The Genius of Fairy-land is an accommodating spirit, as Jacques soon discovered : with her the difficulties of time and circumstance appear as nought, and all things blend with perfect harmony. What a pleasant contrast to our every-day occurrences, in which our inclinations are so frequently fettered by our duties, and in which we must preserve the commonplace unities of society, or suffer the penalties in default.



Wig-Dressing in Cloud-land.  
 "Soar Fancy's flights beyond the Pole."—Burns.

Jasmin was a companionable shaver, with no lack of friendly recognition. Still, his predilection for rhyming,—his wig-dressing in cloudland,—engendered, as may be inferred, some unreasonable anticipations ; for never yet did young poet meddle with verse without feeling the

laurel wreath binding his unsettled brain. Visions of immortality became Jasmin's daily solace, soaring high above the spiral curls and hirsute chins: visions as bright as the bubbles which childhood blows in the sunlight, but just as insubstantial. Yet, with all its drawbacks, he felt grateful for the Promethean spark which gave power to interpret the motions of the heart, the whispering of leaves, and the language of flowers—bright leaves that are seldom mute, sweet flowers that have ever a meaning.

In the course of years, the troubadour found many substantial reasons for feeling gratified with the enviable position he ultimately won. His family and neighbours idolized him on account of his genius, whilst a laurel crown of gold from Toulouse, a gold cup from the citizens of Auch, and numerous other choice offerings rewarded his spontaneous outpourings to enraptured listeners, or gave lustre to his published *Papillōtos*, or Curl-Papers. In further recognition of his peculiar merits, literary wanderers would sometimes turn aside from the beaten path to make a friendly call at his shop; not in idle curiosity, but appreciatingly, and with a sympathetic feeling. In 1846 the honours of the village tonsor culminated at Paris. At that date Louis Phillippe gave him a private reception in the palace, and decorated his breast with the cross of the Legion of Honour.

Notwithstanding that Jacques Jasmin possessed a matchless power of attracting and charming the multitude, he persistently refused all money payments for his public addresses, whether delivered in the open air or



within the walls of an institute, wisely preferring to live by his razor, rather than by his muse. In 1870—six years after his decease—a statue of Jasmin was erected in his native place.

Another barber-poet, an Italian, Dominico Burchiello, left his foot-print upon the distant era in which he flourished, and the impression was deep enough to secure a niche for his name in the *Biographie Universelle*. With a shaver for his father, and the classical city of Florence for his birthplace, he in due time qualified himself for business, and opened a manufacturing concern of his own—weaving hair and spinning verses in eccentric profusion. His shop near the old Market-place became so celebrated as the resort of the brightest wits of the age, that it received the honour of being painted in one of the arches of the Medician Gallery. The picture is divided into two compartments : in one division shaving is going on ; in the other, verse making and music playing ; the portrait of Dominico being painted above the shop. Burchiello died at Rome in 1448. The number of his years is not recorded in print ; but that he has enjoyed a fair share of posthumous longevity is evidenced by the fact that we are thinking and writing of him now, after the lapse of four centuries. Where is the living wight who may count upon a longer lease of remembrance ?

## CHAPTER XXI.

### HIRSUTE FACTS AND AIRY FANCIES.

“Upon looking back from the end of the last chapter, and surveying the texture of what has been wrote, it is necessary that upon this page and the few following, a good quantity of heterogeneous matter be inserted, to keep up that just balance between wisdom and folly, without which a book would not hold together a single year.”—*Tristram Shandy*.



“Practice makes Perfect.”



THE shaving of the sheep's head, by way of innocent practice for our "prentice hands," is a popular fallacy that clings as tenaciously to the barber's shop as the initiative red-hot poker clings to the Odd Fellows' Lodge. And yet, although the popular idea be thus fallacious in point of fact, some sinister double meaning may lurk beneath it, to the effect, perhaps, that those heads must be essentially sheepish which permit themselves to be roughly operated on by such verdant practitioners. The painter, Mr. Goode, has illustrated the subject in a forcible manner. The boy is evidently a new one,—not yet promoted to the dignity of a white apron,—and the new broom, as usual, sweeps clean. So eager is he to become perfect in his art, that he vigorously charges the strop—as our warriors charged the enemy on the battle field,—in shirt sleeves.

Our pictorial illustration has not the remotest connection with those superlative tonsors who never take apprentices under their care, nor engage young men from the country ; who disdain to keep a school for learners or improvers ; and entertain only those assistants who are perfect in their handicraft, and familiar with all the mysteries of puff and perfume aiming to exalt art above nature.

Venturing into a wider field of observation, I will merge the provincial citizen in the citizen of the world. Nor will the reader object to such necessary expansion of the subject, for he is, generally speaking, a reasonable being, and will allow his author latitude and self-indulgence, providing always the author encroach not



over much, nor float away on a gossamer, as it were, too often and too widely from his text.

Had I chosen to dive like Rollin into ancient history, and so trace my subject to its source, even into Paradise, I might have commanded a range long enough to raise the envy of Captain Warner, were that unfortunate experimentalist still in the land of the living. From now to Adam! what a vista of beards—broad, pointed, and stubbled—for the mental eye to scan, backward, backward, through dim ages, until the prospect closes in (h)'airy nothing.' From now to Eve! how many fillets, braids, ringlets, plaits, folds, borders, tresses, and elaborate head-dresses, graceful or grotesque, would have passed in review before me, even until a glimpse would be afforded of Godiva's veil of rippling curls, and of our beautiful mother in Eden (before the Tempter triumphed), wreathing her long hair in the sunshine, as a mermaid is pictured in the sea. But I might as soon undertake to reckon the number of all the stars, when brightly shining in the firmament, as enter into a detail of all the beards and head-gear men and women have contrived to bring into the world. Such hopeless task must therefore be avoided.

Who that has read the *Mort d'Arthur* can forget King Ryons' rich scarlet mantle, embroidered with royal beards? That monarch of many Isles had overcome eleven kings, who had given him their beards, "cleane flayed off," as tokens of submission. Being one short to make up the dozen, and also to cover a bare place on the mantle, he saucily sent for the crop growing upon the chin of King Arthur; but that chivalrous ruler excused



himself on the plea that his beard was too young to make the required trimming, so the messenger of King Ryons returned as he came. Akin to that unique mantle is a shield of human hair in the museum of the United Service Club. It came, as we learn from Mrs. Stone's "*Art of Needlework*," from Borneo Island, and is formed of locks of hair from the scalps of slaughtered foes. Spenser, in his *Fairy Queen*, tells a similar story of a proud lady who exacted the locks of all dames who passed her castle, to line the mantle of her beloved lord, who would marry her on no other condition.

My chief business, as already expressed, lies with the moderns; yet it tickles my fancy to think of all the antique flowing beards, "under tents and turbans," that have flourished in the sunny East. We are assured by the ancient rhymers that the first acknowledged barber was Mercury, who, in some celestial arbour, operated on his royal parent Jupiter, inventing for the purpose razor, washball, and powder. The operation finished, Mercury led his sire to admire his handiwork in the first looking-glass, a clear stream—the identical mirror which proved so fatal, sometime afterward, to the vain Narcissus.

I will now leave the old-time visions to day dreamers, and will bequeath to antiquaries such obsolete implements of our trade as the wooden candlestick, the basin, the chafer, the chafing dish, and the crisping irons. All these belonged to the era of the flying barbers, when shops were few, and gentlefolk were trimmed at home. We still have flying practioners, but they fly for wagers over the measured turf; fancy barbers, too, we possess,



but they eschew the realm of taste for laurels reaped in the prize ring. Indeed in the P. R.—as it is technically termed—the haircutter is no stranger; long ago the shop gave at least one champion to England. This pugilistic hero was George Taylor, surnamed “Barber George,” who conquered Slack in 1750, as recorded in Boxiana, and other sporting chronicles.

The hand basin and the soap ball were in use in this country to the end of Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate; but shortly after the Restoration they were thrust aside by the shaving-box and brush, which, together with periwigs, were introduced to us from France. Of those periwigs a buck of the period—one Will Atkins—was so much enamoured that he declined to wear a hat, and walked about London in his well-combed wig, frizzed and three tailed, the identical wig in which he had once won a lady's heart. About the same time the ancient lute ceased to be kept as a diversion for waiting customers. Its place is now supplied in some shops by the violin, in others by the draughts-board, and in all by the newspaper or magazine. The opening question is not now, “What is the news?” but “What do you think of the news?” for nearly every visitor has his pictorial miscellany or his cheap broadsheet to feast upon at home, and is consequently almost as familiar as ourselves with current topics. When newspapers, without supplements, were published at sevenpence each, and a Perryan steel pen cost ninepence, the case was somewhat different.

France still further aided the hairdresser's shop. The practice of powdering the hair is said to have had its



origin rather strangely in the year 1614, when some ballad singers, at the fair of Saint-Germain, covered their heads with a white powder in order to attract notice by the novelty. In one of the private apartments of Kew Palace there is a powder closet still existing. The perfumer's art had previously been enriched by Italy. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the Earl of Oxford brought from that sunny clime the whole mystery and craft of perfumery and costly washes. These elegant materials enabled the most talented and aspiring members of our trade to become essentially artists, and latterly self-styled professors, who deliver occasional lectures upon hair-dressing, viewed as one of the fine arts; and upon shaving, considered (ironically we may assume), as a surgical operation. They have not, so far as my knowledge extends, erected a professor's chair in a college or hall of their own, but they may yet do so. Already they possess their "Hairdressers' Chronicle," and hold periodical soirees for the display of their business accomplishment.\* These are our rich relations; the butterflies, as it were, of our catterpillar family. Of course we are very proud of them, though they are far from being proud of us. The chief perfumers have long ago discarded the barber's homely pole, his name, and (I fear) himself, as being too common and unfashionable. Yet, why blame them for so doing? Each to his

\* The first exposition of the kind ever seen near Manchester was held in Hulme Town Hall, on Saturday evening, December 5th, 1874, when the most elegant and unique modes of dressing ladies' hair were shown before a numerous and admiring audience. Twelve expert hairdressers were engaged in the novel performance,



element. The exclusiveness affects the shaver less than it affects the pole, which seem to be in a transitional state at present, and some future Gibbon may chronicle its decline and fall, while some future Old Jacob shall store it in his curiosity shop, along with the telescopes, Cremonas, masks, swords, wigs, and other relics of a then bygone age and fashion. This prophecy will not, however, be fulfilled in my day. Notwithstanding the pride and innovation which threaten its extinction, the party-coloured pole will erect its head, singly and in pairs, much longer than I shall erect my own cranium. In Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other parts of Scotland, the haircutter suspends from his pole a model of the ancient brass shaving basin, though it is too shallow to allow any modern Don Quixote to wear it as a helmet. "I have contrived," writes a contributor to Hone's Year Book, "to secure one of these obsolete basons, as the memorial of a worthy barber, whom I used to see every morning in my childhood, passing to his last surviving bason customer—a venerable barrister—who, scorning the new French fashion of the shaving box and brush, stuck inflexibly to the old English hand and soap-ball that frothed in the bason."

During the greater part of the reign of Charles the Second the hair of ladies was dressed and arranged with the nicest art, and the effect was frequently enhanced by artificial ringlets, called "heart-breakers," and "love-locks:" not inappropriate names, as many a beau found to his cost in Ranelagh, or Vauxhall, or the Mall, when the gay belles were promenading with those graceful





John Knubley, Mambrino's last helmet bearer.

Johannes Knubleius, Depilator, and Factotum Celerrimus Celeberrimusque. John Knubley, of Masham, Yorkshire, the famous Barber of the old School, and Mambrino's last surviving helmet bearer. Sketched from nature, in 1802, by Julius Caesar Ibbetson, the Yorkshire Morland.

appendages drooping over their blooming cheeks. With such charms and charmers my pen would be fain to linger, and my fancy dwell for a time ; but they must hasten onward, merely addressing to the " heart-breaker,"

in passing, the words which Moore addressed to the last rose of summer :—

“ Since the lovely are sleeping,  
Go sleep thou with them.”

The gentlemen of those mirthful times did not as would seem, keep pace with the ladies in their luxuriant display of hair about the face, for the beard dwindled gradually under the two Charleses, till it was reduced into whiskers, and became extinct in the reign of the second James. That which was lost to the chin, however, was gained to the head ; as the beard declined the wig increased in size, until it became an expensive load in the reign of Queen Anne, the price of a first-rate article being forty or fifty guineas. The full-bottomed wigs worn in the latter reign by Steele, Addison, Defoe, and other celebrities, whose portraits are preserved in the gallery of British Worthies, were first contrived by a French friseur named Duviller, to pleasure the Duke of Burgundy. Wig-boxes became nearly as common as hat-hoxes, and as an inducement to travellers, such boxes, when not exceeding three feet in length, were carried gratuitously by certain stage-coaches plying in our metropolis. Steevens informs us that wigs were not commonly used in England until the reign of the merry monarch, though previously worn on the stage.

Had those huge wigs been worn in the days of Absalom, the favourite son of the Psalmist would never have been suspended from the bough of the oak tree, in the wood of Ephraim. One of those hairy shields might



also have prolonged the life of Æschylus, the creator of Greek tragedy ; of whom it is related that he strolled forth one day from the city which he inhabited in Sicily, and became seated in the sunshine. An eagle, bearing a tortoise in its talons, chanced to pass above him, and, deceived by the polish of his bald head, which it mistook for a stone, let fall the tortoise in order to break it and devour the flesh. Under that blow perished the poet, for it literally, in vulgar parlance "cracked his nut."

At the period of Henry the Eighth the method of cutting hair among the lower classes was very primitive ; a basin was placed on the head, and the hair rounded to it. Surely these were the originals of the sturdy Round-heads who, five reigns later, became so numerous and influential ; when not peasants alone, but yeomen also, had the hair cut close, and shook their cropped heads in the faces of the dainty Cavaliers, as saucily and as fatally as the Capulets bit their thumbs at the Montagues.

Transiently quitting the past for the present era, and the hair of the head for the hirsute ornament of the lip, we may glance at the political parties of France, who are now, it appears, converting the moustache into a sign of partisanship : the Legitimists of the elder branch having adopted a square cut, in contradistinction to the Imperial pattern, which is stiff and pointed and suggestive of daggers drawn. The French appear to have long had a fancy for hairy ensigns. During the revolution at the close of the last century the Republicans wore their hair cropped short behind, in the fashion then styled *à la*



*Brutus*; leaving the queues to be worn by ancient people with antiquated opinions.

Although hair, as a subject of writing or controversy, is of the lightest, and should invariably be lightly and pleasantly treated, it has sometimes given birth to bitter thoughts leading to fatal consequences. In the *Anecdotes of Fashion* it is recorded that when Louis the Seventh, in obedience to the injunctions of his bishop, cropped his hair and shaved his beard, Eleanor, his consort, found him, with this unusual appearance, very disagreeable. She revenged herself as she thought proper, and the shaven King obtained a divorce. She then married the Count of Anjou, afterwards our Henry the Second. She had for her marriage dower the rich provinces of Poitou, and Guienne; and this was the origin of those wars which cost the French three millions of men, and ravaged their country during three hundred years. All which, probably, had never occurred had Louis not been so rash as to crop his head and shave his beard, by which he became so distasteful in the fancy of the spirited and vindictive Queen Eleanor. Assuredly, the Association for the Protection of Woman's Rights and the extension of her privileges ought to rear a statue in honour of this royal heroine, who could so well exact, in love and in war—with Louis and with Fair Rosamond—the full, fatal measure of her dues. Monumental effigies of Henry the Second and Queen Eleanor, in addition to those of Richard the First, and Isabel D'Angouleme, widow of King John, have long graced the Abbey of Fontevrault, in the province of Anjou. During the year



1867, the Emperor Napoleon made a free-will offering of these effigies to Queen Victoria, as a national compliment ; but the people of Anjou being very unwilling to part with their monumental treasures the Emperor was released from his promise, and the figures will remain in their original sanctuary.

Another instance of hair—human hair, that is sometimes as light as the zephyr, yet as undying as the fabled Wandering Jew—becoming closely linked with war and politics occurred in 1799, when the French Republican army was expelled from Naples. The lazzaroni and the brigands, who mainly effected that counter revolution, took terrible vengeance on all persons suspected of republicanism. It was a minor massacre of the St. Bartholomew type, and was headed by a cardinal. Curious and simple was the method adopted by those violent spirits of distinguishing between friends and enemies. They made a particular search for pigtails, which were worn generally in Naples before the coming of the French. If the individual seized chanced to wear a pigtail, he escaped ; but if that ensign of loyalty were wanting, all explanation proved fruitless, and death was the certain result. Shortly after the restoration of the ancient dynasty the pigtail declined in favour, until it went out of fashion, even with the Neapolitans. Yet a few shrewd men, grown wise in their generation, instead of leaving their queues at the hairdresser's shop, retained them secretly beneath their collars. There was no telling, they said, what would happen in the future. The world was full of changes, and some sad day the brigand-



lazzaroni might again perambulate the city, vociferating their serio-comic watchword, "Your pigtail or your life"

Although it be not well to jest with sharpened tools, some men of mark have indulged their love of playful humour even within the fatal gleam of the headsman's axe. The day before the execution of Simon Lord Lovat, on Tower-hill, that wily chieftain bade the operator who shaved him be cautious not to cut his throat, as such an accident would cause disappointment to the gaping crowd on the morrow. An English worthy, Sir Thomas More, showed equal self-possession at the trying moment. After prayers, he placed his head upon the block, but told the executioner to withhold the stroke until he arranged his white flowing beard, saying with a smile, "My beard has never committed treason."

In the year of grace 1461-2 the City barbers must have been approaching their heyday, for at that date Edward the Fourth incorporated them, giving them the superintendence of all persons practising surgery in London. The king and his brother, Richard Duke of Glo'ster, became founders of the said worshipful company. The first assembling of that "Mysterie" took place shortly afterwards, "Since the which time," writes Stow, "they builded their hall in Monkwell-street." At a still earlier date one William de Lyons was hermit there; and mention is incidentally made of a "fatal vesper, or dismal evensong." Hermits and solitude contrast strangely with the bustle and noise of the General Post Office, which now enliven that scene.



It appears by an historical paper read in the Hall of the Company, by Mr. Pettigrew, that a manuscript volume on vellum, containing the original statutes, is still in the Company's possession. Therein the arms are emblazoned, and underneath is written, "The yere of oure Lord MCCCCLXXXII. at the goyng ovyr the see of oure Sovryn Lord King Henry the VII. in to Fraunsse. Thes armys were geven on to the Crafte of Surgeons of London the vij. yere of his reyng. In the time of Hewe Clapton, mayr."



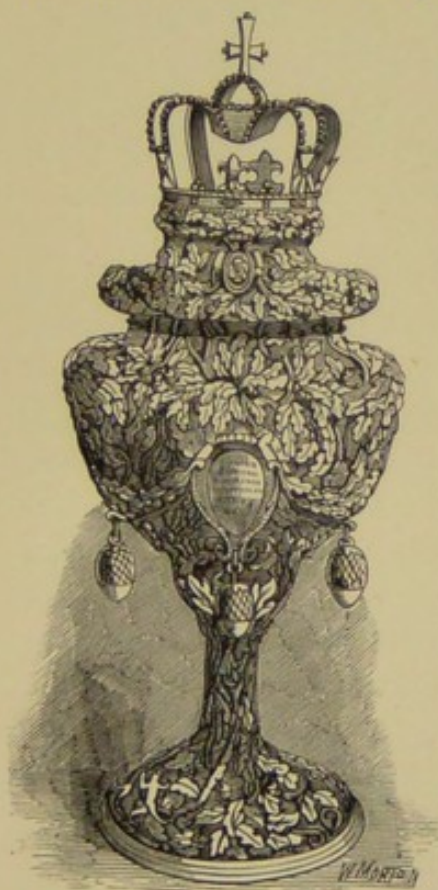
Henry VIII.'s Grace Cup.

In 1541 the barbers and surgeons had grown nearer to an equality, and the two companies were united by a charter of Henry the Eighth, an event celebrated by Hans Holbein in a splendid painting, which to the present day has remained the pride of the Barbers' Hall. An engraving of that picture was in 1734 agreed to be executed by Mr. B. Barton for one hundred and fifty guineas, two-thirds of the amount to be paid in money, and one-third in one hundred impressions of the plate. After the union, diplomas for surgery were issued in the joint names of the barber-surgeons, the tonsors still retaining the precedence. The master was chosen one year from the barbers, and the following year from the surgeons. The bluff King Hal, in token of his goodwill and favour, presented to the company a silver-gilt grace cup, ornamented with the Tudor rose, fleur de lis, and elegant scrolls. Of that cup Master Samuel Pepys makes brief mention in his quaint diary: "At Surgeon's Hall, where, among other observables, we drank the king's health out of a gilt cup given by King Henry the Eighth to the company, with little bells hanging to it, which every man is to ring, after he has drunk the whole cup."

The union of the barber-surgeons was confirmed by Queen Elizabeth, with the additional grant of crest and supporters, on the second of June, 1569. Inside the Hall, and over its porch, those arms are beautifully conspicuous; the principal objects on the shield being three razors, repeated, of a very novel and impracticable design. Within the scroll runs a Latin legend, the application of which



to the trade is not very clear. Much more appropriate would be the parting request of Fitz-Frizzle, the dancing barber familiar to the stage—"Think of me when you're curling your hair!" More distinctly tonsorial, also, are the arms of the Bessborough family, as engraven in Debrett's Illustrated Peerage. Three fine-tooth combs are there displayed in token and remembrance of the founder of that noble house, who was the honoured friseur to William the Conqueror.



Charles the Second's Royal Oak Cup.

James the First and the two Charleses added to the importance of the Brotherhood; the latest of those monarchs giving substantial proof of his regard in the form of a Loving Cup, or Royal Oak Cup, richly enchased with acorns, leaves, and boughs, emblematical of the donor's refuge in the friendly oak tree, near Boscobel.

The two interesting cups here described and pictured were publicly shown, though not very advantageously, at the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition, during the summer and autumn of



the year 1857; and few visitors to that fairy palace examined them more minutely than did the writer of the present volume.

The latest royal benefactor to the Company was Queen Anne, her present being a jovial one—a large punch bowl, with flowered edge. The bowl vanished mysteriously from the Hall many years ago, but is now restored to its original owners: so, at least, writes Aleph, in “London Scenes and London People.” Its jovial proportions would be perpetuated on this page by our willing artist, had one or two visits to Monkwell Street proved more propitious. There is also an oblong dish, with a well centre. Some have supposed this treasure to be a lather bowl, formerly placed beneath the chins of gentlefolks.

After a marriage of more than two hundred years, the united fraternities were divorced during the reign of the second George, in 1745. In their zenith the members of our craft were exempt from ward and parish offices, and from military service. But now we are summoned with other tradesmen to serve as jurors for the day at the Coroner’s Inquest, or for a week at the Petty Sessions, or to marshal our staves—not our poles—in support of the police and soldiery, in times of civil commotion.

As we have thus fallen upon evil days in England, the wisdom that lingers in our wigs would suggest an emigration to Persia (the land of the primeval Eden, and still the Eden of our profession), where the beard trimmer is ever a man of mark, duly honoured in his calling. Very recently, in consequence of an accident, the beard has been



banished by the Shah from the Persian Artillery. While in the act of firing, a powder-horn exploded in the hand of a gunner, whose long beard was blown away from his chin.

Another retreat for the trade is suggested by Kotzebue in his *Travels in Italy*. He assures us that Augsburg is the genuine resort for perruque makers of the old school. There reverend sirs wear monstrous curled wigs. "And more than this," writes Kotzebue, "the friseur, who in his native place served only mortals, may here aspire to the glory of exercising his art upon deities." No peruque maker will ever enter a church at Augsburg without shedding tears of joy.

Though long extinct in the British dominions, the barber-surgeons yet flourish in other countries. In Spain, for instance, every village is obliged, if its resources will admit, to have a surgeon, who is paid either in corn or in money. One of his duties is to shave, in person or by proxy, all the ratepayers once a week, the day chosen being Sunday. The official journal lately contained an advertisement of the Alcalde of Riesa, to the effect that the locality was in want of a barber-surgeon, whose yearly salary was fixed at five thousand rials (or fivepences). The chief magistrate of Riesa evidently coincides in opinion with quaint John Byrom, who thus pointedly expresses himself:

"Why to doctors do we urge on  
The business of a barber-surgeon?  
Your barber-surgeon is the man."

Spain be it remembered, has linked the tonsor undyingly with romance, and with the stage. Here lies

the scene of the chivalric adventure with Mambrino's helmet, and of Figaro's witty intrigues. In the last sentence, *here lies* is written in preference to *here lay*, because the notabilities in question yet exist in fac-simile.

The summer tourist of our own day, while traversing Spain in search of health and material for his coming fiction, or while flinging his experience into rhyming couplets, for the benefit of his friends at home, may tread in the footsteps of Don Quixote with little difficulty; for windmills yet abound, and the brass basin hangs jauntily—instead of the pole—at every shaver's door. If the Rambler seek communion with Figaro himself, he has merely to accept the invitation implied by the glittering basin, to find all his dreams of that tonsorial favourite realized. Quitting the shops for the sunny roads, the itinerant shaver in Spain carries his razors very conveniently in a leathern girdle beneath his picturesque jacket, and wanders cheerily with a guitar slung around his neck. Further, the Figaros are well-nigh the only troubadours, or moonlight serenaders, remaining in Spain or throughout Italy.



## CHAPTER XXII.

### REMARKABLE BEARDS. ANTIQUITY OF SHAVING.

"For my part," says Sir Roger de Coverley, "when I am walking in my gallery in the country, and see my ancestors, who many of them died before they were of my age, I cannot forbear regarding them as so many old patriarchs, and at the same time looking upon myself as an idle smock-faced young fellow. I love to see your Abrahams, your Isaacs, and your Jacobs, as we have them in old pieces of tapestry, with beards below their girdles."—*The Spectator*.



HE beard has always been represented, both in sculpture and in painting, as an emblem of wisdom ; while Fashion has at fitful intervals claimed it as her own. In all ages and countries philosophers and beaux have striven their utmost to keep the hairy ornament in general favour : the Raleghs and the Sucklings displaying it daintily trimmed and perfumed ; while the stern reformers—the Wickliffes and the Knoxes—have worn the patriarchal beard, long, flowing, and picturesque.



The Patriarchal Beard.—Portrait of John Knox.

Amongst the ancients *Æsculapius* was famous for his fine beard ; and the golden beard of his statue became still more renowned, especially after it was purloined. In Eastern lands especially, where (as poets romantically aver) the people talk in flowers, the beard has been regarded with the purest and longest devotion. Nothing can be a greater proof of this than the veneration paid in Asia to a single hair of the beard of Mahomet. This curiosity is enshrined in a monument erected for its reception in 1135, five hundred years after the prophet's death. Where the precious relic had reposed during the long interval does not appear upon record : possibly, it had been preserved by a convenient miracle. The sacred repository is a large building, square at the top, and having a handsome porch and minarets. The blessed



hair is kept in a box of gold and crystal, in which small holes have been drilled for the purpose of admitting water to float the hair, which is done once a year, on the occasion of a festival, to which pilgrims hasten from all parts. At those times the porch is illuminated with two thousand one hundred and thirty-eight lights. The priests of the temple say it was the custom of the prophet, when he conversed familiarly, to pass his fingers through his beard, causing now and then the removal of certain hairs, which his disciples solicited, and preserved as aforesaid. This heirloom is called the Aussaree Shareef, or sacred relic; and the cost of its preservation and exhibition is derived from a fund left by a pious nabob. The fund is apportioned monthly by the government among certain hereditary families, who have recently appealed to the law to settle their rival claims.

Veneration for a single hair is not confined to a single instance. The custom is thus alluded to by Marc Antony, in his famous oration over the mutilated body of Julius Cæsar :—

“Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,  
And, dying, mention it within their wills,  
Bequeathing it, as a rich legacy,  
Unto their issue.”

In the second canto of the Rape of the Lock occurs a couplet that will happily conclude this unit-hair-ian branch of the subject :—

“Fair tresses man’s imperial race ensnare,  
And beauty draws us with a single hair.”

A single sunny curl was the first token that passed between Cupid and Psyche. And were not King Nisus

and his country sacrificed by the clipping of one lock of purple hair?

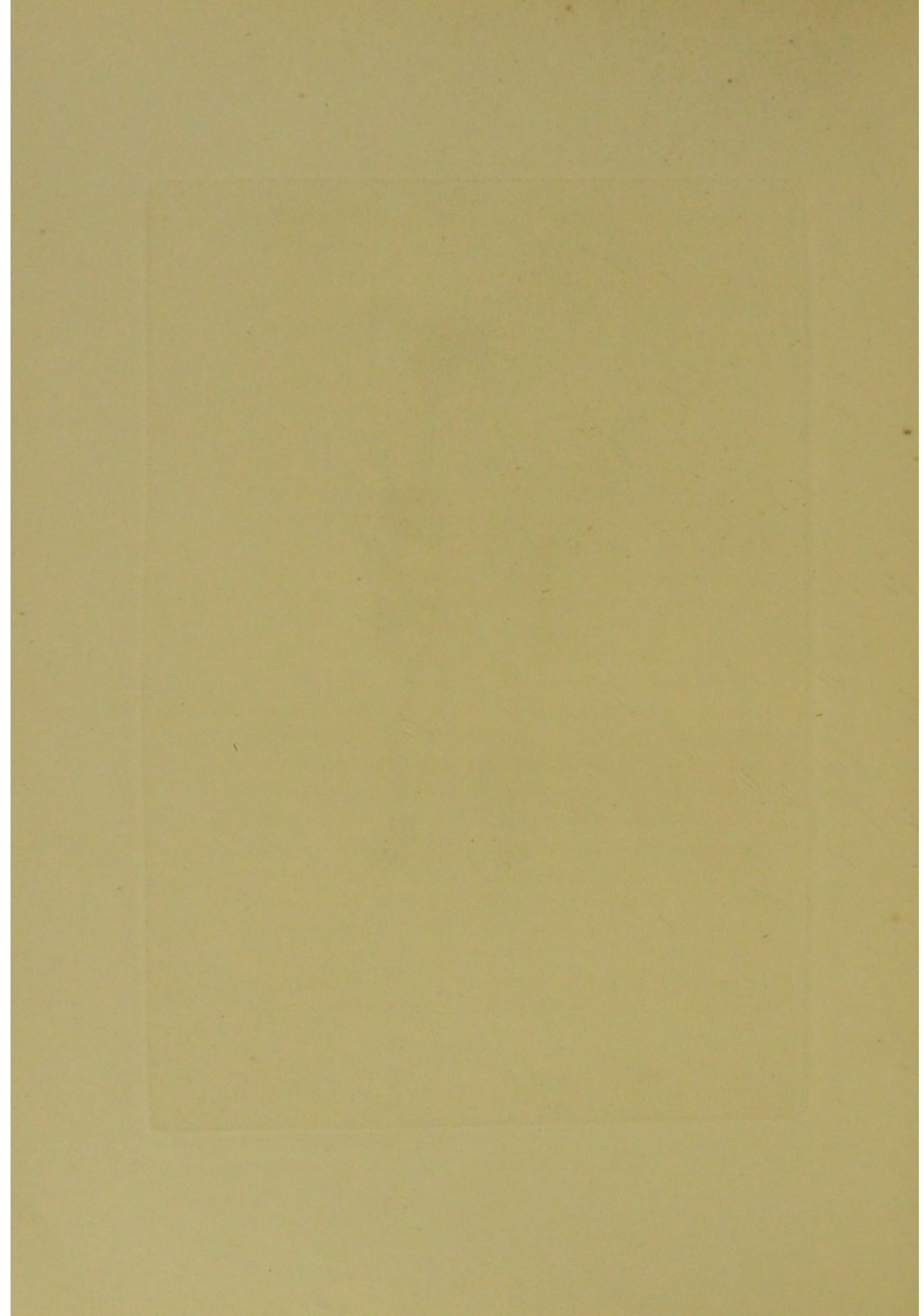
The length of the beard has been regulated at various periods by some curious enactments. In 1541 the governors of Lincoln's-Inn imposed a penalty on any fellow who wore his beard. In Queen Mary's reign no one in commons was to wear a beard of above three weeks' growth under a penalty of forty shillings, which was to be doubled after monition. Similar regulations were continued down to the first year of Elizabeth; but in the following year all orders relating to the length of beards were repealed. These legal statistics have been brought to light by the researches of Mr. Pennant.

One of the most profitable beards on record, at home or abroad, was the patriarchal ornament attached to the chin of Tam Raeburn, the Ayrshire hermit. It attracted to his Ark so many contributors that he long enjoyed an ample revenue, and bequeathed a fortune of two or three thousand pounds to his heirs.

Perhaps the longest beard of which an account has been preserved was worn by a carpenter of Eidam: it measured nine feet. When working he was obliged to keep it, like his sawdust, in a bag! The second place of prominence will belong, I fancy, to the Burgomaster Hans Steininger, who having on one occasion forgotten to fold up his beard, trod upon it as he ascended the staircase leading to the council chamber of Brunn, or Braunau, and was thrown down and killed. The date was September, 1567.









Shaving, no less than the beard, has had its manifold admirers. Shaving was commanded by Alexander the Great to his army, as a safeguard against the enemy ; by Francis the First to his clergy, as a cleansing grace ; by Peter the Czar of Russia to his people, as a step in the march of civilization.

Touching the antiquity of shaving, an intelligent chin-reaper has recently issued a rhyming dissertation, in which we read that Moses enjoined his followers to wear the beard, and so displaced the razors of Egypt. Our rhyming shaver is strictly correct in linking his art to hoary antiquity, and not far astray in his biblical allusions. Nowhere within the five books of Moses does the great law giver—or rather law receiver—promulgate a direct injunction against the razors of Egypt ; but there is one verse bearing such construction, in which he enjoins his brethren to wear the beard long, to-wit, the twenty-seventh verse of the nineteenth chapter of Leviticus, in which occurs the first notice of attention being paid to the hair :—"Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard." In the sacred statutes shaving is frequently commanded and encouraged ; though mostly, it must be admitted, as a purifier and punisher. It was, for example, as a punishment that Hanun the Ammonite took the servants of King David, and shaved off the one half of their beards, sending them back to the Psalmist in such a pitiful plight that he commanded them to tarry at Jericho until their beards were grown. The antiquity of shaving is so clearly established that barbers may almost

take rank with gardeners, who trace their pedigrees to Adam, the cultivator of Eden. An antiquarian writer has discovered that the practice of shaving the beard was introduced by Peter Lombard, in 1160 ; another authority attributes the introduction of shaving to the Macedonians, about the era of King Philip, and consequently three or four hundred years previous to the birth of Christ. Those, however, were merely revivals of the custom, and cannot be viewed in the light of discoveries or inventions ; for very early in the world's history—Genesis,



Shaving the Head.

chapter forty-one ; likewise, Leviticus, chapters thirteen and fourteen—shaving is alluded to ; not merely the shaving of the beard, but the head and eyebrows also. It was upon one of those shaven heads, according to Herodotus, a military message was written, and dispatched by a Persian general to the commander of the Ionians. In the fifth verse of the sixth chapter of



Numbers occurs the first mention of the word razor, as thus: "All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in 'the' which he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the hair of his head grow." Sufficiently explicit, likewise, is the first verse of the fifth chapter of Ezekiel, where the word barber occurs:—"And thou, son of man, take thee a barber's razor, and cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard." The most notable instance of ancient head shaving was afforded, though involuntarily, by the over-confiding Samson, when ensnared in the lap of the treacherous Delilah. The refinement of daily shaving of the beard was first put in practice, says Pliny, by Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Hannibal. The chin of this Scipio was dressed three times daily by his Pelusian tonsor.

Among a crowd of lesser lights who have panegyrised shaving, we find Cervantes advising the use of the razor every other day to Sancho, if he wished to secure a comely and gentlemanly presence. Laurence Sterne, too, has distinguished himself in one of the fantastic episodes of *Tristram Shandy*. He maintains that the conceits and fancies of a rough-bearded man are vastly improved by a single operation, and hints that perpetual shaving is akin to sublimity. "How Homer," concludes Sterne, "could write with so long a beard, I don't know."

Further or higher than Homer we cannot safely adventure. With that sightless immortal the range of fact and the region of fancy become so dimly blended that here the chapter must of necessity terminate.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### ENTERING THE HAVEN.

"EASE HER! STOP HER!"

*Steam Packet Call.*



NOWING when to stop in an important point in writing as well as in speaking. In either case enough is better than a feast. As regards the barber's shop, its owner, its clerk, or its customers, I have little more to say, at present; and may ease or stop the story as soon as I choose. The sooner, because there is no hero to punish or reward, no heroine to poison or marry, by way of



pointing a moral. I remember also that a visit, either in print or in person, should never be prolonged until the visitor becomes tedious. So short and sweet is my maxim.

The exterior view selected to adorn the present chapter gives a fair notion of our modern versatility. The sign is happily suggestive, and its clear inference may be thus rendered. So truly do our operators keep pace with progress, that even the railway cannot leave them behind. The umbrella denotes that we are prepared for rainy days, and the Virginian for seasons that are smoking hot. The various playboards nailed against the wall indicate us to be supporters of the drama ; indeed no body of men attend the theatre so well as hair-dressers—on the free order nights. On these special occasions the pit and upper circle are studded with attentive members of the fraternity. Yet even here we are not allowed to leave the shop entirely behind us. No sooner does the drop-scene attract our eyes, and the Fisherman's Chorus ravish our ears, than a wit in the gallery derisively offers five shillings—all he can afford—for a shaver. Having enjoyed his laugh at the pit, the ironical rogue shoots at higher game in the boxes. With a ginger beer bottle projecting from each eye, he apes the glittering opera glasses in their fashionable crusade against good manners, by staring out of countenance all modest and retiring people. The honey soap may be regarded as the poetry of suds, bringing (in thought) bees, and flowers, and forest trees, to charm our smoke-dried interiors. Such commingling of the real and the



ideal in our every-day transactions may serve in some measure to solve the Tatler's problem, thus quaintly given : " Why must a barber be for ever a politician, a musician, a poet, and a physician ?" and may be at once the cause and justification of Don Quixote's eulogy when speaking in reference to his favourite barber-surgeon, Master Nicholas,—“ People of his profession,” said the Don, “ are famous for making ballads and playing on the guitar.” Was not the renowned ballad, “ Malbrough,” written by a village wig-dresser in Germany? The two poles, so plainly discernible, tell what everybody knows, to wit, that formerly we were licensed to bleed the lieges freely ; but that privilege having been transferred to the surgeons, we cannot now practice the art, even on a pimple, without being punished by the loss of patronage. I have a distinct recollection of a small exterior view with only one pole projecting ; that was David's, and a mort of annoyance it caused us. A standing jest with the drunken rovers of our neighbourhood was for one of their number to run away with the pole, and for another to bring it back, claiming a glass of ale for his honesty and trouble. The destiny of that luckless protruder—which closely resembled the poles used in the days of Hogarth—was a little curious. Coming to me in the course of events, I retained its services during several years, until, notwithstanding my attachment to the hairdresser's calling, I was gradually lured from it by books. Finding no further use for the silent indicator, and feeling the aptitude of the late Gilbert à Beckett's line, “ You'll know



my shop again, though I've no pole." I sold the weather beaten emblem to an insolvent shaver who was too poor to pay for it, and who, through lack of penny customers, has now, I fear, adopted the halfpenny system. When I think of the pole in such position, it somewhat troubles my conscience.

Although we had no connection with phlebotomy, our pole was wreathed with the red and white filleting which indicated, at the origin of the pole, the tape and the bleeding process. Most of the projecting emblems of the trade are still wreathed in this manner, though some are painted of one hue only, surmounted by the customary gilded knob. A few isolated poles, instead of being turned, are formed of many angles, in the American style. These latter—placed upright, as door guardians—may be seen gaudily coloured in checks like a draughtboard, or in diamonds resembling the dress of a harlequin. But, howsoever diversified in appearance, they present the same mute appeal to the bearded passer-by, "Come in, and be shaved,"

A fuller explanation of the history of these ancient trade symbols is afforded by Gerald Griffin (an unfortunate son of genius, though not in the hairdressing line), who describes the barber of Bantry as taking final leave of his only son in a brief characteristic oration "This pole, Godfrey, has stood at my door, winter and summer, during five and forty years. I never possessed a halfpenny but what it brought me, and I never wished for an estate beyond it. If you are satisfied with it, you are as rich as an emperor ; if not, the riches of an emperor



would not make you so. Keep it, then, and be contented, and you will be happy." One item of experience,—one piece of sage advice not to be found in Chesterfield,—may be added to these paternal injunctions. Godfrey, or any other shaver, must needs be as sharp as his razor, in order to cut his way successfully through the sharper and ever-changing world.

On commencing this dove-tailed story of the barber's shop—varied with original anecdotes, and made stable with historic gleanings,—I fancied there was something to say worth the saying,—something within which could best reveal itself in print; and have now briefly spoken, or rather written, confining my observations within the compass of a single volume small enough for the redoubt-knight of Malta, who thanked God he had never, in all his life, read a book that was thicker than his thumb.\* I was egotistical in so fancying, and unwise in thus writing, but even if it be so adjudged, most men are egotists in some respects, and foolish in others. We differ from our kind in degree only. They who feel the correctness of these assertions will doubtless exercise good-natured forbearance, and will scarcely "kill for faults of their own liking," without paying due regard to consistency. Possibly I ought to have cautioned them against anticipating too much, by placing a warning motto upon my title page, in this wise, "Happy are they who expect little, for they will seldom be disappointed." Readers may bear in mind to our mutual advantage that

\* A "miller's thumb" might be suggested for the present extended edition.



gems of thought are ornaments not always to be found in a barber's wig, and that grace of composition has small affinity with grease of the bear. To the charm of novelty, however, I may lay claim with all the airs and importance pertaining to the official character.

As already shewn, abundance of burlesques, and articles of a staid nature, have been written concerning us by people foreign to the trade ; but as none can know the secrets of the spider's web so well as the fly that is meshed in it, so no one can know the characteristics of



Joseph Mallard William Turner. (1775—1851.)

the shop so well as he who has shaved therein. Plenty of cuts, too, we have been favoured with, by clever artists (headed, in the historical department), by the *Illustrated London News*, and in the comic line by *Punch*, the glorious King Comus), many of whom in relief to their loftier efforts, have delineated scissors and combs in various impossible positions, and have drawn razors

upside down, placing them in the fingers of left-handed tonsors, for the purpose of creating a laugh, or of giving effect to their sketches. But no shaver has hitherto doffed his apron to illustrate his experience in his own way, nor taken up the pen in lieu of the lather-brush to answer the oft-repeated question, "How are you off for soap?"—albeit Turner, the inimitable painter, changed the lather-brush for the pencil,—the shaving-box for the palette,—to noble purposes, mounting from his father's evanescent suds, to sunbeams and rainbows in perpetuity.

In short, the book of the barber's shop has never been written. Why should it remain unwritten? Here is a new field, untrodden, except by friendly trespassers; and a new field is valuable in an age of threadbare subjects. Yet it is not through any lack of famous penmen in the trade that we have hitherto lacked a special representative in literature; for lofty minds have issued, ere now, from the lowly threshold of the shop; not amphibious writers who die in poetry and cannot live in prose, but authors of wit and permanence, whose names ring in our ears, at intervals, like fairy bells. This assertion it were an easy matter to verify. Why, for instance, did not Allan Ramsay write the book, when in business as a wig maker, librarian, and bookseller in Edinburgh, and when time was so much more plentiful on his hands than customers or money? Simply because he preferred to compose the *Gentle Shepherd*, and so become—like the misletoe—an evergreen in song. Had the task been undertaken by Dominico, the friseur-poet of Florence, or by Jasmin, the popular tonsor and troubadour of Gascony,



we might have secured, at the least, an authorised translation. Bnt the first of these joyous worthies occupied his leisure in the construction of eccentric poems; while the latter recited original verses with so much effect that he won a laurel crown for his living brow, and a statue to perpetuate his memory. Jeremy Taylor,



Jeremy Taylor, Bishop of Down and Connor. (1613—1667.)

dating from his father's shaving saloon in Cambridge, might have dictated the tonsorial chronicle with due solemnity and in picturesque terms, had he not chosen to become the Shakspeare of the pulpit,—the glory of the English Church. Another of our pulpit friends, the Rev.

John Macgowan, surnamed the Shaver, was pre-occupied in writing his familiar, plain-speaking volume, the *Dialogues of Devils*. To William Winstanley (one of the first who wrote *Lives of the English Poets*), and Dr. John Kitto (the remarkable biblical explorer), a passing allusion may suffice. Readily might this list be lengthened by the addition of sundry names of mark or likelihood, but I will close the summary with that of William Falconer, whose singularly interesting career—beginning at Edinburgh in 1730—ended (after two previous wrecks), with the loss of the *Aurora* frigate, in his fortieth year. If Falconer entertained any design of distinguishing his father's handicraft, by dedicating his pen to the elucidation of its annals, that design was prematurely lost, with its projector, "far, far at sea."



The Fate of Falconer. (After Fuseli's *Lycidas*).

"as sweet, and musical,  
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair."

*Love's Labour's Lost.*



Thus it has happened that the agreeable duty has been left to one without name or influence to give character to the work, or become its Open Sesame to the good graces of the world. Although I and my artistic friend can scarcely hope to produce the identical volume which has waited so long to be written, we have done our best to supply the place of abler hands. During many years we have roamed at will over this fresh region,—this envied Passage of the Pole,—so frequently invaded by adventurous spirits, yet never efficiently explored. With hopeful enthusiasm we have pursued our voluntary task as our hobby, though frankly admitting we have sometimes felt a little chafed and disheartened with the length of our ride. In search of rarities, we have visited our known and unknown brethren of the business ; sitting down (as a ready excuse for exploring their premises) to be shaved when we had no beard, or to get our hair shortened when it was too short.\* On the wildest day, perhaps, ever seen in England, we ascended the tower of our ancient Cathedral, to make a sketch of the bells while in motion, and to watch them—snow-capped and dreary looking—ring out their tumultuous voices “to the wild sky.” It was the day of snow drifts *par excellence* (January 4, 1854)—the high festival of

A friend of ours was a still more tantalising visitor. Although he had lost his natural crop, and was in the habit of wearing a wig, it was a favourite joke of his to seat himself demurely in the public chair of strange shops, with a request that his hair might be cut in the newest fashion. The unsuspecting tonsor, on hastily inserting his comb and scissors, would, of course, draw off the counterfeit head gear, to the uproarious delight of Mr. Wigsby. But after the official warning here given, the trade will, no doubt, be on its guard against the heartless deceiver.



the Storm King,—that stopped all traffic, both land and water, including the railways and the post, thus bringing the world of commerce to a sudden stand. With all our love of morality, we have begged, borrowed, and stolen, without scruple, or remorse : begged permission to make sketches on the spot,—borrowed articles to picture at leisure,—stolen resemblances from windows innumerable. By these friendly and legitimate means we have gathered together a museum of characteristic emblems, old fashioned and new. Further, we are indebted to various reliable authorities for occasional facts and hints, which have been fairly used and frankly acknowledged. Yet we have not named all our sources of information ; as reasonably might the Bee (if gifted with language), attempt to name the multiplicity of flowers whence it has extracted honey. Give and take is the standing order of the day ; so, at least, says Boxiana, while illustrating the rule with various striking examples. Having reaped from a harvest so plentiful, we now bring our samples to market ;—only our samples ; the store itself seems inexhaustible. It may be that, like the street conjurers, we are reserving our best feats until more “encouragement” is thrown for tricks already performed. At all events, we have planted the acorn whence the oak may spring, and have indicated the spot where the wheat-ears lie.

Should any critical individual find fault, as he may easily do, with this production, and consider himself capable of adding wings to the fancy,—depth to the thoughts,—strength to the expressions,—connection to the incidents,—and purity to the style, let him come to



my study, and try his hand. As an inducement for him to come early, he shall have a perpetual concert to aid his meditative powers. As one juvenile performer ceases to laugh, or cry, another shall begin to shout or sing. Not for him will be the treasures that lie deep in the mine of thought, and reward the efforts of continuous study, for although inclination may press him to make attempts at excellence, interruption will be constantly dispersing his ideas. Remembering Zimmerman's injunction that an author, when he feels the secret call within his bosom, should rush to the manuscript, like a soldier to the charge, he shall set himself to obey the delicious summons. When he has advanced a few paces into cloud land, and his eye assumes the fine frenzy immortalized by Shakespeare, he shall suddenly be called into the shop to give two halfpennies for a penny, or to solve a problem in the railway guide. Should he feel a little chafed at these interruptions, and resolve upon taking a higher flight in composition than he has yet attained, he shall remove his writing materials upstairs. Being now clear of the melody within, he shall be amused by the pressure of sound from without. All the boys in the neighbourhood shall congregate in the adjoining backyard, and play their most hilarious games for his entertainment. Peace and good-will towards men may be practicable enough, but peace toward urchins such as these is a moral impossibility. If the critical individual possess the spirit and strength of Samson (before his seven locks were severed through the treachery of Delilah), he will smite the young Philistines with a jaw-



bone or some other instrument of vengeance, and thus give vent to the bottled frenzy which should have produced an ode immortal as Alexander's Feast.

If, on the contrary, I possessed the luxuries of study, the aids to successful composition, which have blessed the efforts of some literary notabilities, then the cynically inclined,—they who resemble Iago in being nothing if not critical,—would be welcome to all the shortcomings of the book; they might lash its sins of omission or commission; I would never cry them mercy. Study would be its own reward if, like Campbell, I might compose myself and my productions in a double-walled room, where no listening ear could catch my expressions when communing aloud; nor even a kitten mew to annoy me. Or if, after the manner of Moore, I might dream of heavenly Peris in an earthly paradise. Or, better still if, like Southey, I might muse in my library with the mighty minds of old, while through my open window I gazed on nature ever new. Better than all if, studying as Wordsworth studied, among lakes and fells, with lonely tarns and falls, my fancy might wander, like his happy river, at its own sweet will. But leaving great blessings duly to the great, simpler sources of inspiration might suffice—fairy rings by day, glow-worm lamps by night; retaining, too, a rich harvest of elfin lore,—wild legends that would cherish the organ of wonder, and so keep in healthful exercise the imaginative faculty.

Having thus wound-up the somewhat complicated affairs of the Barber's Shop, I will now part from the reader, who will, doubtless, think I have dwelled



over long upon trifles,—upon lore which “wig-crowned History” might deem light and informal. Although an undue interest in little things proverbially denotes a little mind, there is some consolation in the fact that a greater man than I, in my modesty, may ever hope to become, has also made MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING !



TIME, THE UNIVERSAL SHAVER.

**The End.**







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