

ФРЕДЕРИК МАРРИЕТ

OLLA PODRIDA

Фредерик Марриет

Olla Podrida

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Frederick Marryat

Olla Podrida

Chapter One

April 3, 1835.

Reader, did you ever feel in that peculiarly distressing state of mind in which one oppressing idea displaces or colours every other, absorbing, intermingling with, empoisoning, and, like the filth of the harpy, turning every thing into disgust—when a certain incubus rides upon the brain, as the Old Man of the Mountain did upon the shoulders of Sinbad, burdening, irritating, and rendering existence a misery—when, looking around, you see but one object perched everywhere and grinning at you—when even what you put into your mouth tastes of but that one something, and the fancied taste is so unpleasant as almost to prevent deglutition—when every sound which vibrates in your ear appears to strike the same discordant note, and all and every thing will remind you of the one only thing which you would fain forget;—have you ever felt any thing like this, reader? If you have not, then thank God, by way of grace, before you out with your knife and fork and begin to cut up the contents of these pages.

I have been and am now suffering under one of these varieties of “Phobias,” and my disease is a Politicophobia, I will describe the symptoms.

I am now in the metropolis of England, and when I walk out every common house appears to me to be the House of Commons—every lordly mansion the House of Lords—every man I meet, instead of being a member of society, is transferred by imagination into a member of the senate—every chimney-sweep into a bishop, and a Bavarian girl, with her “Py a proom,” into an ex-chancellor. If I return home, the ring at the bell reminds me of a Peel—as I mount the stairs I think of the “Lobby”—I throw myself on the sofa, and the cushion is transformed into a woollack—if a solitary visitor calls in, I imagine a public meeting, and call out chair! chair!—and I as often address my wife as Mr Speaker, as I do with the usual appellative of “my dear.”

This incubus, like the Catholic anathema, pursues me everywhere—at breakfast, the dry toast reminds me of the toasts at public dinners—tea, of the East India charter—sugar, of the West India question—the loaf, of agricultural distress—and, as every one knows that London eggs are a lottery, according as they prove bad or good, so am I reminded of a Whig or Tory measure. When the newspaper is brought in, I walk round and round it as a dog will do round the spot he is about to lie down upon. I would fain not touch it; but at last, like a fascinated bird who falls per force into the reptile’s mouth, so do I plunge into its columns, read it with desperation, and when the poison has circulated, throw it away in despair. If I am reminded to say grace at dinner, I commence “My Lords, and gentlemen;” and when I seek my bed, as I light my taper, I move “that the House do now adjourn.” The tradesmen’s bills are swelled by my disease into the budget, and the checks upon my banker into supplies. Even my children laugh and wonder at the answers which they receive. Yesterday one brought me her book of animals, and pointing to a boa constrictor, asked its name, and I told her it was an *O’Connell*. I am told that I mentioned the names of half the members of the Upper and Lower House, and at the time really believed that I was calling the beasts by their right names. Such are the effects of my unfortunate disease.

Abroad I feel it even worse than at home. Society is unhinged, and every one is afraid to offer an opinion. If I dine out, I find that no one will speak first—he knows not whether he accosts a friend or foe, or whether he may not be pledging his bitter enemy. Every man looks at his neighbour’s countenance to discover if he is Whig or Tory: they appear to be examining one another like the dogs who meet in the street, and it is impossible to conjecture whether the mutual scenting will be followed

up by a growl or a wag of the tail; however, one remark will soon discover the political sentiments of the whole party. Should they all agree, they are so busy in abuse that they rail at their adversaries with their mouths full—should they disagree, they dispute so vehemently that they forget that they were invited to dinner, and the dishes are removed untasted, and the duties of the Amphytryon become a sinecure. Go to an evening party or a ball and it is even worse, for young ladies talk politics, prefer discussion to flirtation, and will rather win a partner over to their political opinions than by their personal charms. If you, as a Tory, happen to stand up in a cotillion with a pretty Whig, she taps you with her fan that she may tap your politics; if you agree, it is “*En avant deux*,” if not, a “*chassez croisée*.” Every thing goes wrong—she may *set* to you indeed, but hers is the set of defiance, and she shakes her *wig* against your *Tory*. To *turn your partner* is impossible, and the only part of the figure which is executed *con amore* is *dos à dos*. The dance is over, and the lady’s looks at once tell you that you may save your “oaths,” while she “takes her seat.”

I have tried change of scene—posted to watering places; but the deep, deep sea will not drown politics. Even the ocean in its roaring and commotion reminded me of a political union.

I have buried myself in the country, but it has been all in vain. I cannot look at the cattle peacefully grazing without thinking of O’Connell’s tail, Stanley’s tail, and a short-docked pony reminded me of the boasted little tail of Colonel Peel. The farm-yard, with its noisy occupants, what was it but the reality so well imitated by the members of the Lower House, who would drown argument in discord? I thought I was in the lobby at the close of a long debate. Every tenth field, every tenth furrow, (and I could not help counting,) every tenth animal, and every tenth step, reminded me of the Irish tithes; and when I saw a hawk swoop over a chicken, I thought of the Appropriation Bill—so I left the country.

I have tried every thing—I have been every where, but in vain. In the country there was no relaxation—in society no pleasure—at home no relief. England was disjointed, never to be united until it was dismembered—and there was no repose. I had my choice, either to go abroad, or to go mad; and, upon mature deliberation, I decided upon the former, as the lesser evil of the two. So I gave—I sold—I discharged—I paid—I packed up, and I planned. The last was the only portion of my multifarious duties not satisfactorily arranged. I looked at the maps, plied my compasses that I might compass my wishes, measured distances that I might decide upon my measures—planned, looked over the maps—and planned again.

Chapter Two

Well, as I said in my last chapter, I planned—and planned—but I might as well conjugate it, as many others assisted—it was I planned, thou plannedst, he planned, we planned, ye planned, and they planned—and what annoyed me was, that I could not help considering that “the whole house was in a committee,” and without being able “to report progress.” At first it was *decided upon* that we should proceed up the Rhine, and not leave off paddling until we had arrived at Manheim, at which town I fancied that I should at least be out of political distance. We read all about Manheim, found out that it was a regular-built town, with a certain number of inhabitants—with promenades, gardens, and a fine view of the Rhine. “So you’re going abroad—where?” Manheim, was the reply, and all the world knew that we were bound to Manheim; and every one had something to say, or something that they had heard said, about Manheim. “Very nice place—Duchess Dowager Stephanie—very cheap—gay in winter—masters excellent”—were the variety of changes rung, and all was settled; but at last one unlucky observation raised a doubt—another increased—a third confirmed it. “A very dull place—German cookery bad for children—steam-boats from Rotterdam very bad, and often obliged to pass two nights on deck.” A very influential member of the committee took alarm about the children being two nights on deck, and it was at last decided that to go up to Manheim by steam-boat at 4 pounds, 9 shillings a-head, and children at half-price was not to be thought of.

“I wonder you don’t go to Bruges,” observed a committee man; “nice quiet place—excellent masters—every thing so cheap—I once bought eighty large peaches there for two francs.”

And all the children clapped their little hands, and cried out for Bruges and cheap peaches.

It was further submitted that it was convenient—you might go the whole of the way by water—and Bruges was immediately under consideration.

“If you go to Bruges, you will find it very dull,” observed another; “but you’ll meet Mrs Trollope there—now Brussels is very little farther, and is a delightful place;” and Brussels was also referred to the committee.

“You won’t like Brussels—there is such a mixture, and house-rent is dear. Now I should recommend Spa for the summer—it is a most beautiful spot—and excellent company.” And Spa was added to the list.

Then after a day or two came an Anti-Teutonic, who railed against Germany—and Germans—German towns, German travelling, and German *French*, which was detestable—German cookery, which was nothing but grease. “You may imagine,” said he, “and so have many more, that Germany is more pleasant and less expensive than France; but they have been disappointed, and so will you be. Now, for a quiet place, I should recommend Saint Omer—only thirty miles from Calais—so convenient—and very pretty.”

Saint Omer—humph—very quiet and retired—and no politics—and Saint Omer was occasionally canvassed.

“Saint Omer!” said another who called the next day, “you’ll die of ennui. Go to Boulogne—it is delightful—you may be there as retired or as gay as you please.”

Boulogne to be taken into consideration many inquiries made and all very satisfactory—good sands and excellent jackasses for the children.

“My dear friend, Boulogne is something like the King’s Bench—at least most of the people only go there in preference. Every body will suppose that you’ve *levanted*. Pray don’t go to Boulogne.”

“Why don’t you go by Southampton to Havre—there you’ll have quiet and amusement—beautiful country about Honfleur—scenery up the Seine splendid; and then you can go up to Rouen by water, if you intend to go on to Paris.”

Havre and Honfleur submitted to the committee.

But then came Dieppe, and Brest, and the environs of Paris, Versailles, Saint Germain, Passy, and other recommendations, in which every one particular place was proved incontestably to be more particularly suited to us than any other, and the committee sat for three weeks, at the end of which, upon examining the matured opinions of the last seven days, I found them to have fluctuated as follows:—

Monday morning, Manheim. Evening, Spa.

Tuesday morning, Bruges. Evening Brussels.

Wednesday morning, Saint Omer. Evening, Boulogne.

Thursday morning, Havre. Evening Honfleur.

Friday morning, Dieppe. Evening, Passy.

Saturday morning, Versailles. Evening, Saint Germain.

Sunday morning, Spa. Evening, Brussels.

The fact was, that there was a trifling difference of opinion in the committee—the great object appeared to be, and the great difficulty at the same time, to find a place which would suit all parties, that is to say, a place where there were no politics, plenty of gaiety, and cheap peaches.

Chapter Three

Paddle, paddle—splash, splash—bump, thump, bump. What a leveller is sea-sickness—almost as great a radical as death. All grades, all respect, all consideration are lost. The master may summon John to his assistance, but John will see his master hanged before he'll go to him; he has taken possession of his master's great coat, and he intends to keep *it*—*he* don't care for warning.

The nurses no longer look after the infant or the children, they may tumble overboard—even the fond yearnings of the mother at last yield to the overwhelming sensation, and it were not for the mercenary or kind-hearted assistance of those who have become habituated to the motion of a vessel, there is no saying how tragical might be the commencement of many a party of pleasure to the Continent.

“O lauk, Mary, do just hold this child,” says the upper nurse to her assistant; “I do feel such a *sinking* in my stomach.”

“Carn't indeed, nurse, I've such a *rising*.”

Away hurried both the women at once to the side of the vessel, leaning over and groaning heavily. As for the children, they would soon have been past caring for, had it not been for my protecting arms.

Decorum and modesty, next to maternal tenderness, the strongest feelings in woman, fall before the dire prostration of this malady. A young lady will recline unwittingly in the arms of a perfect stranger, and the bride of three months, deserted by her husband, will offer no resistance to the uncouth seaman, who, in his kindness, would loosen the laces that confine her heaving bosom.

As for politeness, even the *ancien régime* of the noblesse of France put it in their pockets as if there were a general chaos—self is the only feeling; not but that I have seen occasional traits of goodwill towards others. I once witnessed a young lady smelling to a bottle of Eau de Cologne, as if her existence depended upon it, who handed it over to another, whose state was even more pitiable, and I was reminded of Sir Philip Sidney and the cup of water, as he lay wounded on the field of battle, “Thy necessity is greater than mine.” And if I might have judged from her trembling lips and pallid countenance, it was almost an equal act of heroism. Paddle, paddle, splash, splash, bump, thump, bump—one would really imagine that the passengers were so many pumps, all worked at once with the vessel by the same hundred horse power, for there were an hundred of them about me, each as sick as a horse. “*Sic omnes*,” thought I.

I have long passed the ordeal, and even steam, and smoke, and washing basins, and all the various discordant and revolting noises *from those* who suffer, have no effect upon my nervous system—still was I doomed to torment, and was very sick indeed. For some time I had been watched by the evil eyes of one, whom the Yankees would designate, as *almighty ugly*. He was a thin, spare man, whose accost I could well have spared, for he had the look of a demon, and, as I soon found, was possessed with the demon of politics. Imagine what I must have suffered when I found out that he was a button-holder to boot. Observing that I was the only one who was in a state to listen, he seized upon me as his victim. I, who had fled from politics with as much horror as others have done from the cholera—I, who had encountered all the miseries of steam navigation, and all the steam and effluvia of close cabins, to find myself condemned with others “alike to groan—” what with King Leopold, and William of Nassau, and the Belgian share of the debt, and the French and Antwerp, and his pertinacious holding of my button. “Shall I knock him down,” thought I; “he insists upon laying his hands upon me, why should I not lay my hands upon him?” But on second consideration, that would not have been polite; so I made other attempts to get rid of him, but in vain; I turned the subject to far countries—the rascal had been everywhere; at one moment he would be at Vienna, and discuss the German confederation—at another in South America, canvassing the merits of Bolivar and Saint Martin. There was no stopping him; his tongue was like the paddle of a steam-boat, and almost threw

as much spray in my face. At last I threw off my coat, which he continued to hold in his hand by the third button, and threw myself into one of the cribs appropriated to passengers, wishing him a good night. He put my coat down in the crib beneath, and as he could no longer hold the button, he laid hold of the side of the crib, and continued his incessant clack. At last I turned my back to him, and made no answer, upon which he made a retreat, and when I awoke the next morning, I found that he was too ill to spout politics, although as he progressed, he spouted what was quite as bad.

Par parenthèse, he was a great liar, and as he drew a long bow when he was able to talk, so did he prove a long shot when he was sea-sick. Confound the fellow, I think I see him now—there he stood, a tall, gaunt misery, about the height of a workhouse pump, and the basin was on the floor of the cabin, nearly three feet from his two feet; without condescending to stoop, or to sit down, or to lift up the basin, so as to lessen the distance, he poured forth a parabola, “quod nunc describere” had just as well be omitted. I shall therefore dismiss this persecuting demon, by stating, that he called himself a baron, the truth of which I doubted much; that he was employed by crowned heads, which I doubted still more. On one point, however, I had little doubt, although he did not enter upon the subject, (and his tongue to a great degree confirmed it) that he was a *chevalier d’industrie*.

“I am rid of him, thank God,” exclaimed I, as I went on deck to breathe a little fresh air, having lighted my cigar in the steward’s berth as I ascended. The first objects which attracted my attention, were a young gentleman and lady, the former standing by the latter, who was sitting in a pensive position, with her elbow leaning on the gunnel. She was in deep mourning, and closely veiled.

“And how does the beautiful Maria find herself this morning?” said the young gentleman, leaning over her with his hand on the rail to support himself.

The beautiful Maria! How was it possible not to be attracted by such a distinguishing appellation? The beautiful Maria! I thought of Sterne’s Maria, and the little dog with a string, and I trimmed my ear like a windsail in the tropics to catch the soft responding, and most assuredly, to my expectant imagination, melodious vibration of the air which would succeed.

At last there was a reply. “Oh! *tol, lol!*” And that in anything but a melodious voice. “Oh! *tol, lol!*” What a bathos! The beautiful Maria, whom in my imagination I had clothed with all the attributes of sentiment and delicacy, whom I had conjured up as a beau idéal of perfection, replies in a hoarse voice with, “Oh! *tol, lol!*” Down she went, like the English funds in a panic—down she went to the zero of a Doll Tearsheet, and down I went again into the cabin. Surely this is a world of disappointment.

Perhaps I was wrong—she might have been very beautiful, with the voice of a peacock; she might also have the plumage—but no, that is impossible—she must, from her sex, have been a peahen. At all events, if not very beautiful, she was very sick. I left the beautiful Maria screeching over the gunnel. If the young gentleman were to repeat the same question now, thought I, the beautiful Maria will hardly answer, “Oh! *tol, lol!*”

It was very cold on deck, blowing fresh from the East. I never heard any one give a satisfactory reason why a west wind should be warm, and an east wind cold in latitude 50 degrees N. It is not so in the tropics when the east wind follows the rarefaction occasioned by the sun. Yet, does not Byron say:—

“’Tis the land of the east, ’tis the clime of the sun.”

Certainly our east winds are not at all poetical.

“Very cold, sir,” said I, addressing a round-faced gentleman in a white great coat, who rested his chin and his two hands upon a thick cane. “You are fortunate in not being sea-sick.”

“I beg your pardon, I am not fortunate. I am worse than sea-sick, for I want to be sea-sick and I can’t. I do believe that everything is changed now-a-days, since that confounded Reform Bill!”

Politics again, thought I; what the devil has sea-sickness to do with the Reform Bill? Mercy on me, when shall I be at peace? “There certainly has been some change,” observed I.

“Change, sir! yes, everything changed. England of 1835 is no more like merry England of olden time, than I am like Louis the Fourteenth—ruined, sir—every class suffering, sir—badly ruled, sir.”

“Things are much cheaper.”

“Much cheaper! Yes, sir; but what’s the good of things being cheap when nobody has any money to purchase with? They might just as well be dear. It’s a melancholy discovery, sir, this steam.”

“Melancholy just now to those who are on board, and suffering, I grant.”

“Pooh, nonsense! melancholy to those on shore, sir; the engines work while man looks on and starves. Country ruined, sir—people miserable—thrown out of employment, while foreigners reap the benefit; we sell them our manufactures at a cheaper rate; we clothe them well, sir, at the expense of our own suffering population. But is this all, sir? *Oh, no!*”

And here the gentleman dropped his chin again upon his hands, and looked very woeful indeed. After a few seconds, he resumed.

“We are dismembered, sir—ruined by faction. Society is disintegrated by political animosities; thousands have retreated from the scene of violence and excitement, to find peace and repose in a foreign land.”

I nodded an assent.

“Ay, sir, and thousands will follow, withdrawing from the country its resources, circulating millions which enrich other nations, and avoiding their own share of the national burdens, which fall still heavier upon those who remain. But is that all, sir? *Oh, no!*”

This second “oh, no!” was pronounced in a more lugubrious note: he shook his head, and after a pause, he recommenced. “England is no longer priest-ridden, sir; but she is worse, she is *law-ridden*. Litigation and law expenses have, like locusts, devoured up the produce of industry. No man is safe without a lawyer at his elbow, making over to him a part of his annual income to secure the remainder. And then there’s Brougham. But, sir, is that all? *Oh, no!*”

Another pause, and he continued. “I never grumble—I hate grumblers; I never talk of politics—I hate politics; but, sir, is it not the case, that madmen and fools have united to ruin the country? Is it not true, sir, that unable to rise by their talents, and urged by a wicked ambition, they have summoned main force, and the power of numbers to their assistance, and have raised a spirit which they cannot put down again? Is it not true, sir, that treason walks barefaced through the land, pointing to general destruction—to a violation of all rights, to anarchy, confusion, and the shedding of blood? Is not reason borne down by faction, sir? but, sir, is that all? *Oh, no!*”

This last “oh, no!” was more melancholy than the preceding, but I considered that my companion must have nearly exhausted his budget of miseries, and was curious to ascertain what would come next.

“What, is there more, sir?” inquired I, innocently.

“More, sir. Yes, sir, plenty more. I ask you whether even the seasons have not changed in our unhappy country; have we not summer with unusual, unexampled heat, and winters without cold; when shall we ever see the mercury down below sixty degrees again? never, sir. What is summer but a season of alarm and dread? Does not the cholera come in as regularly as green peas—terrifying us to death, whether we die of it or not? Of what advantage are the fruits of the earth so bountifully bestowed—have they not all been converted into poisons? Who dares to drink a light summer wine now? Are not all vegetables abjured, peaches thrown to the pigs, and strawberries ventured upon only by little boys who sweep the streets, with the broom in one hand and the pottle in the other? Are not melons rank poison, and cucumbers sudden death? And in the winter, sir, are we better off? Instead of the wholesome frosts of olden days, purifying the air and the soil, and bracing up our nerves, what have we but the influenza, which lasts us for four months, and the spasmodic cough which fills up the remainder of the year? I am no grumbler, sir, I hate and abhor anything like complaining, but

this I will say, that the world has been turned upside down—that everything has gone wrong—that peace has come to us unattended by plenty—that every body is miserable; and that vaccination and steam, which have been lauded as blessings, have proved the greatest of all possible curses, and that there is no chance of a return to our former prosperity, unless we can set fire to our coal mines, and re-introduce the small-pox. But, sir, the will of Heaven be done, I shall say no more; I don't wish to make other people unhappy; but pray don't think, sir, I've told you all. *Oh, no!*"

At this last "oh, no!" my companion laid his face down upon his knuckles, and was silent. I once more sought the deck, and preferred to encounter the east wind. "Blow, blow, thou wintry wind, thou art not so unkind," soliloquised I, as I looked over the bows, and perceived that we were close to the pile entrance of the harbour of Ostend. Ten minutes afterwards there was a cessation of paddle, paddle, thump, thump, the stern-fast was thrown on the quay, there was a rush on board of commissionnaires, with their reiterated cries accompanied with cards thrust into your hands, "Hôtel des Bains, Monsieur." "Hôtel Waterloo, Monsieur." "Hôtel Bellevue." "Hôtel Bedford, Monsieur." "Hôtel d'Angleterre," *ad infinitum*—and then there was the pouring out of the Noah's Ark, with their countenances wearing a most paradoxical appearance, for they evidently showed that they had had, quite enough of water, and, at the same time, that they required a great deal more. I looked at my children, as they were hoisted up from the ladies' cabin, one after another; and upon examination I decided that, with their smudged faces, the Hôtel des *Bains* would be the most appropriate to their condition; so there we went.

Chapter Four

Ostend, April 18, 1835.

I was confoundedly taken in by a rascal of a commissionnaire, and aware how the feelings of travellers are affected by the weather or the treatment they receive at any place they may pass through, I shall display the heroism of saying nothing about the place, except that I believe Ostend to be the most rascally hole in the world, and the sooner the traveller is out of it so much the better will it be for his purse and for his temper.

April 19.

It has been assumed as an axiom that every one in this world is fond of power. During our passage in the track-schuyt I had an evidence to the contrary, for as we glided noiselessly and almost imperceptibly along, a lady told me that she infinitely preferred the three-horse power of the schuyt to the hundred-horse power of the steam-packet. We arrived at Bruges, escaping all the horrors and difficulties of steam navigation.

House rent at Bruges is cheap, because one half of the houses are empty—at least that was the cause assigned to me, although I will not vouch for its being the true one. The reader may remember that this was the site of cheap peaches, but none met our sight, the trees not being yet in blossom. I ought to observe, for the satisfaction of the Foreign Bible Society, that at the hotel at Bruges I saw a book of their exportation lying on the chimney-piece in excellent preservation.

April 21.

As to what passed on our canal voyage to Ghent, I can only say that every thing passed us—for the roads were very heavy, the horses very lazy, and the boys still lazier—they rode their horses listlessly, sitting on them sideways, as I have seen lads in the country swinging on a gate—whereby the *gait* of the track-schuyt could not be styled a swinging pace. We did arrive at last, and thus ended our water carriage. At Ghent we went to the Hôtel Royal, from out of the windows of which I had a fine view of the belfry, surmounted by the Brazen Dragon brought from Constantinople; and as I conjured up times past, and I thought how the belfry was built and how the dragon got there, I found myself at last wandering in the Apocrypha of “Bel and the Dragon.”

We went to see the picture by Van Eck, in the cathedral of Saint Bovin. The reader will probably wish to know who was Saint Bovin—so did I—and I asked the question of the sacristan: the reader shall have the benefit of the answer, “Saint Bovin, monsieur, il était un *saint*.”

That picture of Van Eck’s is worth a van full of most of the pictures we see: it was Van Eck who invented, and was indeed the father of painting in oil. It is a wonderful production.

Mrs Trollope says that people run through Belgium as if it were a mere railroad to other countries. That is very true—we did the same—for who would stop at Ostend to be swindled, or at Bruges to look at empty houses, or at Ghent, which is nothing but a Flanders Birmingham, when Brussels and King Leopold, and the anticipation of something more agreeable, were only thirty miles off. Not one day was our departure postponed; with post-horses and postilions we posted post haste to Brussels.

Chapter Five

April 22.

The Queen of Belgium “a fait un enfant.” On the Continent it is always the wife who is considered as the *faiseuse*; the husband is supposed, and very often with justice to have had nothing to do in the matter—it certainly does appear to be optional on the part of the ladies, for they limit their family to their exact wishes or means of support. How different is it in England, where children will be born whether it is convenient or not! O Miss Martineau! you may talk about the “preventive check,” but where is it? In England it would be as valuable as the philosopher’s stone.

I think that the good people of Paris would do well, as they appear just now to have left religion in abeyance, to take up the manners and customs of the empire of the Nahirs, a Mahratta nation, which I once read about. In that country, as in heaven, there is no marrying, nor giving in marriage. All are free, and all inheritance is through the children of the sister; for although it is impossible to know who may be the father of any of the children, they are very certain that the sister’s children must have the blood on the maternal side. What a good arrangement this would be for the Parisians—how many *pêchés à mortels* would they get rid of—such as adultery, fornication, etcetera,—by passing one simple law of the land. By-the-by, what an admirable idea for reforming a nation—they say that laws, now-a-days, are made to prevent crime: but if laws were enacted by which crime should no longer be considered as crime, what a deal of trouble might be saved.

The theatre is closed owing to the want of funds; the want of funds is owing to the want of honesty on the part of the manager having run away with the strong box, which was decidedly the very best box in the theatre.

April 26.

I went to see a species of Franconi, or Astley’s: there is little variety in these performances, as there are only a certain quantity of feats, which can be performed either by the horses or the riders, nevertheless we had some novelty. We had the very best feminine rider I ever saw; she was a perfect female Centaur, looking part and parcel of the animal upon which she stood; and then we had a regularly Dutch-built lady, who amused us with a tumble off her horse, coming down on the loose saw-dust, in a sitting posture, and making a hole in it as large as if a covey of partridges had been husking in it for the whole day. An American black (there always is a black fellow in these companies, for, as Cooper says, they learn to ride well in America by stealing their masters’ horses) rode furiously well and sprained his ankle—the attempt of a man in extreme pain to smile is very horrible—yet he did grin as he bowed and limped away. After that we had a performer, who had little chance of spraining her ankle: it was a Miss Betsey, a female of good proportions, who was, however, not a little sulky that evening, and very often refused to perform her task, and as for forcing the combined will of a female and an elephant to boot, there was no man rash enough to attempt it, so she did as little as she pleased, and it pleased her to do very little; one feat, however, was novel, she took a musket in her mouth, and fired it off with her trunk.

When I was in India I was very partial to these animals; there was a most splendid elephant, which had been captured by the expedition sent to Martaban; he stood four or five feet higher than elephants usually do, and was a great favourite of his master, the rajah. When this animal was captured there was great difficulty in getting him on board of the transport. A raft was made, and he was very unwillingly persuaded to trust his huge carcass upon it; he was then towed off with about thirty of the natives on the raft, attending him; the largest purchases and blocks were procured to hoist him in, the mainyards doubly secured, and the fall brought to the capstern. The elephant had been properly slung, the capstern was manned, and his huge bulk was lifted in the air, but he had not risen a foot before the ropes gave way, and down he came again on the raft with a heavy surge, a novelty which he did not appear to approve of. A new fall was rove, and they again manned the capstern; this time the

tackle held, and up went the gentleman in the air; but he had not forgotten the previous accident, and upon what ground it is impossible to say, he ascribed his treatment to the natives, who were assisting him on the raft. As he slowly mounted in the air, he looked about him very wroth, his eyes and his trunk being the only portions of his frame at liberty. These he turned about in every direction as he ascended—at last, as he passed by the main channels, he perceived the half of a maintop-sail yard, which had been carried away in the slings, lying on the goose-necks; it was a weapon that suited him admirably; he seized hold of it, and whirling it once round with his trunk, directed the piece of wood with such good aim, that he swept about twenty of the natives off the raft, to take their chance with a strong tide and plenty of alligators. It was the self-possession of the animal which I admired so much, swinging in the air in so unusual a position for an elephant, he was as collected as if he had been roaming in his own wild forests. He arrived and was disembarked at Rangoon, and it was an amusement to me, whenever I could find time to watch this animal, and two others much smaller in size who were with him; but he was my particular pet. Perhaps the reader will like to have the diary of an elephant when not on active service. At what time animals get up who never lie down without being ordered, it is not very easy to say. The elephants are stalled at the foot of some large tree, which shelters them during the day from the extreme heat of the sun; they stand under this tree, to which they are chained by their hind legs. Early in the morning the keeper makes his appearance from his hovel, and throws the respective keys down to the elephants, who immediately unlock the padlocks of the chains, cast themselves loose, and in the politest manner return the keys to the keeper; they then march off with him to the nearest forest, and on their arrival commence breaking down the branches of the trees, selecting those which are most agreeable to their palates, and arranging them in two enormous faggots. When they have collected as much as they think they require, they make withies and bind up their two faggots, and then twist another to connect the two, so as to hang them over their backs down on each side, and having thus made their provision, they return home; the keeper may or may not be present during this performance. All depends upon whether the elephants are well trained, and have been long in servitude. Upon their return, the elephants pass the chains again round their legs, lock the padlock, and present the key as before; they then amuse themselves with their repast, eating all the leaves and tender shoots, and rejecting the others. Now when an elephant has had enough to eat, he generally selects a long bough, and pulling off all the lateral branches, leaves a bush at the end forming a sort of whisk to keep off the flies and mosquitoes; for although the hide of the elephant is very thick, still it is broken into crannies and cracks, into which the vermin insert themselves. Sometimes they have the following ingenious method of defending themselves against these tormentors—they put the end of their trunk down in the dust, draw up as large a quantity as they can, and turning their trunks over their heads, pour it out over their skin, powdering and filling up the interstices, after which they take the long branch I have before mentioned, and amuse themselves by flapping it right and left, and in all directions about their bodies, wherever the insects may settle.

And now for an instance of self-denial, which I have often witnessed on the part of my friend the large elephant. I have observed him very busy, flapping right and flapping left, evidently much annoyed by the persecution of the mosquitoes; by-the-by, no one can have an idea how hard the tiger-mosquito can bite. I will, however, give an instance of it, for the truth of which I cannot positively vouch; but I remember that once, when it rained torrents, and we were on a boating expedition, a marine who, to keep his charge dry, had his fore-finger inserted in the barrel of his musket, pulled it out in a great hurry, exclaiming to his comrade, “May I be shot, Bill, if one of them beggars ha’n’t bit me right through the barrel of my musket.” This *par parenthèse*, and now to proceed. As I said before, the elephant showed, by constant flagellation of his person, that he was much annoyed by his persecutors, and just at that time, the keeper brought a little naked black thing, as round as a ball, which in India I believe they call a child, laid it down before the animal with two words in Hindostanee —“*Watch it!*” and then walked away into the town. The elephant immediately broke off the larger part of the bough, so as to make a smaller and more convenient whisk, and directed his whole attention to

the child, gently fanning the little lump of Indian ink, and driving away every mosquito which came near it; this he continued for upwards of two hours regardless of himself, until the keeper returned. It was really a beautiful sight, and causing much reflection. Here was a monster, whose bulk exceeded that of the infant by at least two thousand times, acknowledging that the image of his Maker, even in its lowest degree of perfection, was divine; silently proving the truth of the sacred announcement, that God had “given to man dominion over the beasts of the field.” And here, too, was a brute animal setting an example of devotion and self-denial, which but few Christians, none indeed but a mother, could have practised. Would Fowell Buxton, surrounded by a host of mosquitoes, have done as much for a fellow-creature, white or black? not he; he would have flapped his own thighs, his own ears, his own face, and his own every thing, and have left his neighbours to take care of themselves; nor would I blame him.

As I am on the subject, I may as well inform my readers how and in which way this elephant and I parted company, for it was equally characteristic of the animal. The army was ordered to march, and the elephants were called into requisition to carry the tents. The quarter-master general, the man with four eyes, as the natives called him, because he wore spectacles, superintended the loading of the animals—tent upon tent was heaped upon my friend, who said nothing, till at last he found that they were overdoing the thing, and then he roared out his complaints, which the keeper explained; but there was still one more tent to be carried, and, therefore, as one more or less could make no difference, it was ordered to be put upon his back. The elephant said no more, but he turned sulky. Enough was as good as a feast with him, and he considered this treatment as no joke. Now it so happened that at the time the main street, and the only street of the town, which was at least half a mile long, was crowded to suffocation with tattoos, or little ponies, and small oxen, every one of them loaded with a couple of cases of claret, or brandy, or something else, slung on each side of them, attended by coolies, who, with their hooting, and pushing, and beating, and screaming, created a very bustling and lively scene. When the last tent was put on the elephant he was like a mountain with canvass on each side of him, bulging out to a width equal to his own; there was just room for him to pass through the two rows of houses on each side of the street, and not ten inches to spare; he was ordered by the keeper to go on—he obeyed the order certainly, but in what way—he threw his trunk up in the air, screamed a loud shriek of indignation, and set off at a trot, which was about equal in speed to a horse’s gallop, right down the street, mowing down before him every pony, bullock, and coolie that barred his passage; the confusion was indescribable, all the little animals were with their legs in the air, claret and brandy poured in rivulets down the streets, coolies screamed as they threw themselves into the doors and windows; and at one fell swoop the angry gentle man demolished the major part of the comforts of the officers, who were little aware how much they were to sacrifice for the sake of an extra tent. With my eyes I followed my friend in his reckless career, until he was enveloped and hid from my view in a cloud of dust, and that was my farewell of him. I turned round, and observed close to me the quarter-master general, looking with all his *four eyes* at the effects of his inhumanity. But I have wandered some twenty thousand miles from Brussels, and must return.

Chapter Six

Brussels, May 5.

His Belgian Majesty, the Belgian ministers, Belgian ambassadors, Belgian authorities, and all the Belgian nobility and gentry, all the English who reside in Brussels for economy and quiet, and all the exiles and propaganda who reside here to kick up a row, have all left Brussels by the Porte d'Anvers. And all the Belgians who live at Brussels have shut up their shops, and gone out by the Porte d'Anvers. And the whole populace, men, women, and children, have gone out of the Porte d'Anvers. And all the infants have also gone, because the mothers could not leave them at home. And the generals, and their staffs, and the officers, and all the troops, and all the artillery, have also left Brussels, and gone out at the Porte d'Anvers, to keep the said populace quiet and in good order. So that there is no one left at Brussels, and Brussels must for one day take care of itself.

And now you of course wish to know why they have all left Brussels, and further, why they have gone through the Porte d'Anvers.

Because there is this day the commemoration of the inauguration of the *Chemin de Fer*, which has just been completed from Brussels to Malines, and which is on this day to be opened, that is to say, that three steam tugs, whose names are the Stephenson, the Arrow, and the Elephant, are to drag to Malines and back again in the presence of his majesty, all his majesty's ministers, all the ambassadors who choose to go, all the heads of the departments, and every body else who can produce a satisfactory yellow ticket, which will warrant their getting into one of the thirty-three omnibuses, diligences, or cars, which are attached to the said three steam-tugs, the Arrow, the Stephenson, and the Elephant. I shall go and see it—I will not remain at Brussels by myself, the “last man.”

May 6.

It was a brilliant affair, and went off well, because the trains went on well. We were tugged through twelve miles of the most fertile pasture in the universe, the whole line of road so crowded with spectators, as to make evident the extreme populousness of the country. For the first mile it was one mass of people—and a Belgian crowd has a very agreeable effect, from the prevailing colours being blue and white, which are very refreshing, and contrast pleasantly with the green background. Every man had his blouse, and every woman her cap and straw bonnet; but if the Belgians look well *en masse*, I cannot say that they do so in detail: the men we do not expect much from, but the women are certainly the plainest race in the whole world—I will not except the Africans. In some of our men-of-war it was formerly the custom to have an old knife, which was passed from one to the other, as the men joined the ship, being handed to the ugliest man they could find; he held the knife until another came, more unfortunate in physiognomy than himself, when it was immediately made over to the last, who was obliged in his turn to retain it until he could discover some one even more unprepossessing. Following up this principle with the women of Belgium, and comparing them with other European states, they are most unequivocally entitled to hold the knife, and unless they improve by crossing the breed, I am afraid they will have it in their possession for centuries.

We arrived safe at Malines, and I was infinitely amused at the variety of astonishment in the five hundred thousand faces which we passed. In one rich meadow I beheld a crowd of Roman Catholic priests, who looked at the trains in such a manner as if they thought that they were “heretical and damnable,” and that the *Chemin de Fer* was nothing but the *Chemin d'Enfer*. At Malines we all got out, walked to a stone pillar, where a speech was made to the sound of martial music, and we all got in again. And then to show the power of his engines, Mr Stephenson attached all the cars, omnibuses, and diligences together, and directed the Elephant to take us back without assistance from the other two engines. So the Elephant took us all in tow, and away we went at a very fair pace. It must have been

a very beautiful sight to those who were looking on the whole train in one line, covered with red cloth and garlands of roses with white canopies over head, and decorated with about three hundred Belgian flags, of yellow, red, and black. However, the huge animal who dragged this weight of eighty tons became thirsty at Ville Vorde, and cast us off—it took him half an hour to drink—that is to say, to take in water, and then he set off again, and we arrived safely at Brussels, much to the delight of those who were in the cars and also of his majesty, and all his ministers, and all his authorities, and all the mercantile classes, who consider that the millennium is come, but very much to the disappointment of the lower classes, who have formed the idea that the *Chemin de Fer* will take away their bread, and who therefore longed for a blow-up. And Mr Stephenson having succeeded in bringing back in safety his decorated cars, has been *décoré* himself, and is now a Chevalier de l'Ordre Leopold. Would not the *Iron* order of the Belgian patriots have been more appropriate as a *Chemin de Fer* decoration?

It is impossible to contemplate any steam-engine, without feeling wonder and admiration at the ingenuity of man; but this feeling is raised to a degree of awe when you look at a locomotive engine—there is such enormous power compressed into so small a space—I never can divest myself of the idea that it is possessed of *vitality*—that it is a living as well as a moving being—and that idea, joined with its immense power, conjures up in my mind that it is some spitting, fizzing, terrific demon, who, if he could escape control, would be ready and happy to drag us by thousands to destruction.

And will this powerful invention prove to mankind a *blessing* or a *curse*?—like the fire which Prometheus stole from heaven to vivify his statue, may it not be followed by the evils of Pandora's fatal casket?

The lower classes of Belgium have formed an idea that the introduction of steam is to take away their bread. Let us examine whether there is not in this idea a degree of instinctive and prophetic truth.

The axiom of our political economists is, that the grand object to be sought and obtained is to produce the greatest possible results by the smallest possible means. The axiom, as an axiom by itself, is good; but the axiom to be opposed to it is, that the well-being and happiness of any state depends upon obtaining full employment for the whole industry of the people.

The population of Belgium is enormous. In England we calculate about eighteen hundred souls to the square league. In Belgium it amounts to three thousand eight hundred souls to the square league. Now it would be impossible for Belgium to support this population, were it not, in the first place, for her extensive manufactories, (for upon the cotton manufactories alone, in which steam is as yet but partially introduced, two hundred and fifty thousand souls depend for their existence,) and in the second place, from the subdivision of the land in small portions, arising from the laws of inheritance, which bar the right of primogeniture; the consequence of which is, that the major part of Belgium is cultivated by spade husbandry, and is in the very highest state of fertility. Nevertheless, the proportion of those who receive relief in Belgium from public institutions and private charities of all descriptions amounts even at present to *one in eight persons*. Now, allowing that the steam-engine should be generally introduced into this country, the consequence must be, that machinery will supply the place, and do the work of man. And what may be the result? that thousands will be thrown out of employment, and must be supported by the nation. When the population is so dense that there is not room for the labour of its present inhabitants, it is clear that the introduction of machinery can have but one effect—that of increasing pauperism. Are not, then, the Belgians right in thinking that it will deprive them of their bread?

That machinery has already had that effect to a certain degree in England cannot be denied; and not only our manufacturing, but our agricultural population, have been distressed from an adherence to the same principle, of obtaining the greatest possible results from the smallest possible means. The subdivision of land will do more to relieve the agricultural distress than anything else. At present large farms are preferred both by landlord and tenant, because a large farm can be cultivated with a fewer number of men and horses; but how does this act? It throws a certain quantity of labourers out of employ, who are supported in idleness. Is the sum gained by farmers by employing fewer men

on large farms more than their proportion of the poor's rates paid for unproductive industry? That it may be more to the farmers is possible, as they shift a great part of the onus upon others; but to the nation it certainly is not—for the man who does not work must still be fed. May we not then consider the following propositions as correct?

That, producing the greatest possible results from the least possible means, is an axiom which can only hold good when it does not interfere with the industry of the people. That, as long as the whole population are employed, such powers become a benefit, and a source of extra wealth. But that, in proportion as it throws the population out of employment, so much the more does it prove an injury, and must finally lead to a state of things which must end in riot, anarchy, and confusion. *Quod est demonstrandum*—I hope it will not be in our time.

Chapter Seven

Antwerp.

Every one has heard of the cathedral at Antwerp and the fine pictures by Rubens—every one has heard of the siege of Antwerp and General Chassé, and how the French marched an army of non-intervention down to the citadel, and took it from the Dutch—and every one has heard how Lord Palmerston protocol-ed while Marshal Gerard bombard-ed—and how it was all bombard and bombast. The name of Lord Palmerston reminds me that conversing after dinner with some Belgians, the topic introduced was the great dearth of diplomatic talent in a country like England, where talent was in every other department so extremely prominent. It was not the first time that this subject had been canvassed in my presence by foreigners. Naturally envious of our general superiority, it is with them a favourite point of attack; and they are right, as it certainly is our weakest point. They cannot disparage our army, or our navy, or our constitution; but they can our climate, which is not our fault, but our misfortune; and our diplomacy, which is our fault, and has too often proved our misfortune also.

It certainly is the fact, that our diplomatic corps are very inferior, and this can arise but from one cause; the emoluments which have been attached to it having rendered admission into it an advantage eagerly sought by the higher classes as a provision for the junior branches of their families. Of course, this provision has been granted to those to whom government have felt most indebted for support, without the least regard to the important point as to whether those who were admitted were qualified or not; so that the mere providing for a younger son of an adherent to the government may have proved in the end to have cost the country millions from the incompetence of the party when placed in a situation requiring tact and discrimination. This evil is increased by the system of filling up the vacant appointments according to seniority—the exploded and absurd custom of “each second being heir unto the first.” Should any man have proved, upon an emergency, that he was possessed of the highest talent for diplomacy, it will avail him nothing—he never, under the present system, will be employed—he cannot be admitted into the corps without having entered as a private secretary or attaché. It would be monstrous, unheard of; and the very idea would throw Lord Aberdeen on the one side, or Lord Palmerston on the other, into convulsions. Is it therefore to be wondered at our being so deficient in our diplomatic corps? Surely if any point more than another requires revision and reform, it is this; and the nation has a right to insist upon it.

It may be asked, what are the most peculiar qualities necessary in a diplomatist, taking it for granted that he has talents, education, and a thorough knowledge of the routine of business? The only term which we can give to this ‘desideratum’ is presence of mind—not the presence of mind required in danger, but that presence of *mind* which enables him, when a proposition is made, at once to seize all its bearings, the direction to which it tends, and the ultimate object (for that will always be concealed at first) which the proposer may have in view. Diplomats, when they enter the field, are much in the situation of two parties, one defending and the other attacking a stronghold. Admissions are highly dangerous, as they enable the adversary to throw up his first parallels; and too often, when you imagine that the enemy is not one jot advanced, you find that he has worked through a covered way, and, you are summoned to surrender. It is strange that, at the very time that they assert that it would be impossible to employ those as diplomats who have not been regularly trained to the service, officers in the army, and captains in the navy are continually so employed, and often under circumstances of vital importance. Now it would be supposed that the latter of all people they must be the most unfit; as, generally speaking, they are sent to sea, *as unfit for anything else*. But it appears that once commanding a frigate, they are supposed to be fit for everything. A vessel is ordered for “particular service,” why so called I know not, except that there may be an elision,

and it means “particularly *disagreeable* service.” The captain is directed by the Admiralty to consider himself under the orders of the Foreign Office, and he receives a huge pile of documents, numbered, scheduled, and red-taped (as Bulwer says in his pamphlet), the contents of which he is informed are to serve as a guide for his proceedings. He reads them over with all their verbiage and technicalities, sighs for Cobbett’s pure Saxon, and when he has finished, feels not a little puzzled. Document Number 4 contradicting document Number 12, and document Number 1 opposed to Number 66; that is, as *he* reads and understands English. Determined to understand them if possible, he takes a dose of protocol every morning, until he has nearly learnt them by heart, and then acts to the best of his knowledge and belief. And it is undeniable that, with very few exceptions, the navy have invariably given satisfaction to the Foreign Office when they have been so employed, and often under circumstances of peculiar difficulty. I have heard, from the best authority, that military men have also been equally successful, although they have not so often been called into “particular service.” By the bye, particular service is all done at the same price as general service in his Majesty’s navy, which is rather unfair, as we are obliged to find our own red tape, pens, ink, and stationery.

As I was walking on the glacis with a friend, he pointed out to me at a window an enormous fat man smoking his pipe, and told me that he had been in the Dutch service under William of Orange; but not being a very good hand at a forced march, he had been reduced with others to half-pay. He had not been many months in retirement when he went to the palace, and requested an audience of his Majesty, and, when admitted, stated that he had come to request that his Majesty would be pleased to put him again upon full pay. His Majesty raised many objections, and stated his inability to comply with his request; upon which the corpulent officer exclaimed, embracing with his arms as far as he could, his enormous paunch, “My God! your Majesty, how can you imagine that I can fill this big belly of mine with only my half-pay?” This *argumentum ad ventrem* so tickled King William, that he was put on *full pay unattached*, and has continued so ever since. The first instance I ever heard of a *man* successfully pleading as ladies do at the Old Bailey.

It is hard for a wanderer from childhood like me, to find out anything new or interesting. I have travelled too much and have seen too much—I seldom now admire. I draw comparisons, and the comparison drawn between the object before my eyes, and that in my mind’s eye, is unfortunately usually in favour of the latter. He who hath visited so many climes, mingled with so many nations, attempted so many languages, and who has hardly anything left but the North Pole or the crater of Vesuvius to choose between; if he still longs for something new, may well cavil at the pleasures of memory as a mere song. In proportion as the memory is retentive, so is decreased one of the greatest charms of existence—novelty. To him who hath seen much, there is little left but comparison, and are not comparisons universally odious? Not that I complain, for I have a resource—I can fly to imagination—quit this every-day world, and in the region of fiction create new scenes and changes, and people these with new beings.

Moreover, there is still endless variety, endless amusement, and food for study and contemplation, in our own species. In all countries still the same, yet ever varying:—

“The proper study of mankind is man.”

From which, I presume, we are to infer that it is time thrown away to study woman.

At the same party in which the conversation was raised relative to diplomacy, a person with whom I was, until that day, wholly unacquainted, was sitting by me, and as it happened, the name of one with whom I had long been on terms of intimacy was mentioned. “Do you know him?” said my neighbour, with a very peculiar expression. I replied that I had occasionally met him, for I thought there was something coming forward.

“Well, all I can say is, that he is rather a strange person.”

“Indeed!” replied I; “how do you mean?”

“Why, they say, that he is of a very uncertain temper.”

“Indeed!” continued I, with the same look of inquiry, as if demanding more information.

“Yes, yes, rather a dangerous man.”

“Do you know him?” inquired I, in return.

“Yes; that is to say—not very intimately—the fact is, that I have avoided it. I grant that he is a very clever man—but I hear that he quarrels with everybody.”

“Who told you so?” replied I.

Oh! he was not authorised to give the name of the person.

“Then,” replied I, “allow me to say that you have been misinformed. I have been on intimate terms with that person for nearly twenty years, during which he never quarrelled with me or any one that I know of; although, I grant, he is not over civil to those whom he may despise. The only part of your communication which is correct is, that he is a very clever man, and our government are of the same opinion.”

My neighbour was discomfited, and said no more, and I joined the general conversation. What may have been his cause of dislike I know not—but I have frequently remarked, that if a man has made himself enemies either from neglect of that sophistry and humbug, so necessary to enable him to roll down the stream of time with his fellows without attrition, if they can find no point in his character to assail, their last resort is, to assert that he is an uncertain tempered man, and not to be trusted.

This is the last, and although not the most empoisoned, still the surest shaft in the whole quiver of calumny. It does not exactly injure the character, but it induces others to avoid the acquaintance of the party so misrepresented.

It is rather singular, and perhaps I may have been fortunate, but in more than half-a-dozen instances I have found the very parties to whom this character has been given, although high-minded and high-spirited, the very antithesis to the character which has been assigned them. That some do deserve the character is undoubted—but there is no species of calumny to be received with such peculiar caution. It may be right to be on your guard, but it never should be the ground for a positive avoidance of the party accused. Indeed, in some degree, it argues in his favour, for it is clear that the whole charge they can bring against his character is an infirmity to which we are all more or less subjected; and he who looks for perfection in his acquaintance or his friends, will inevitably meet with disappointment.

Chapter Eight

Brussels.

I have lost all my memoranda! I cannot find them any where. Well—children are a great blessing when they are kept in the nursery—but they certainly do interfere a little with a papa who has the misfortune to be an author. I little thought, when my youngest girl brought me up a whole string of paper dolls, hanging together by the arms, that they had been cut off my memoranda. But so it was; and when I had satisfactorily established the fact, and insisted upon an inquisition to recover my invaluable, I found that they had had an auto-da-fé, and that the whole string of dolls, which contained on their petticoats my whole string of bewitching ideas, had been burnt like so many witches. But as the man said in the packet—“Is that all?” Oh, no!—they come rushing in like a torrent, bounding, skipping, laughing, and screaming, till I fancied myself like another Orpheus, about to be torn to pieces by Bacchanals (they are all girls), and I laid down my pen, for they drive all my ideas out of my head. May your shadows never grow less, mes enfans, but I wish you would not make such a cursed row.

The author and the author of existence do not amalgamate. That’s a fact.

Their joyous countenances are answered by a look of despair—their boiling-water heat drives my thermometer down to zero—their confounded merriment gives me a confounded headache—their animal spirits drive me to vegetable spirits—their cup of bliss running over makes me also require a bumper—brandy restores the equilibrium, and I contrive to get rid of them and my headache about one and the same time.

Talking about brandy—one morning at two o’clock, about the witching time that ghosts do glide about in churchyards, as I was thinking whether it would not be better to go to bed instead of writing nonsense, in which opinion most of my readers may coincide with me, in stalked three young men who were considerably the worse for potation. There is a great deal of character in inebriety—at the same time that no estimate of character can be made from its effects; for we often find the most quiet men when sober to be the most choleric in their cups—but still there is character, and much that is curious in witnessing its variety of effects. Now these young men were each drunk in a very different way—the first, in a way quite novel; for although he could preserve his equilibrium, and stare immensely, he had lost the power of speech; you saw his lips move, but no articulation or sound succeeded—the second was laughing drunk; everything that was said, either by himself or by any one else, was magnified into a pun or a *bon mot*—the third, with whom I had no previous acquaintance, was *politely* drunk. I presume the idea of intruding himself upon a stranger, at such an unseasonable hour, had produced that effect—but let me describe the scene.

“Ha, ha, ha! we come to you—ha, ha! capital. We want some brandy and water; and, ha, ha! we know you always keep a stock,” said the second, seating himself in an armchair.

The first also took a chair, moved his lips for a few seconds, and then sat bolt upright, staring at the two candles; how many he counted I cannot pretend to say.

“Really,” said Number Three, “we are—I’m afraid—taking a great liberty—a very great liberty; but—an apology is certainly due—if you will allow me to offer an apology for my two friends—will you allow me to introduce them?”

“Many thanks, but I have the pleasure of knowing *them* already.”

“I really beg your pardon—it was quite unintentional on my part. I trust you are not offended? Will you allow me to introduce myself? I am Captain C—, of the —. Will you permit me to present my card, and to say how happy I shall be to make your acquaintance?” So saying, the third gentleman presented me with his card, and returned the card-case into his pocket.

“Capital!” cried Number Two. “Ha, ha, ha! what an excellent joke, ha, ha, ha! Now for the brandy-and-water.”

This was soon produced, and although Number One had lost all articulation, he had still the power of deglutition; he filled his glass, sat up more erect, stared at the candles, and drank his grog; the other did the same, when Number Three again spoke.

“My dear Sir, I hope you will excuse the liberty, but my name is Captain C—, of the —. Will you allow me the honour of presenting my card, and of saying how proud I shall be to make your acquaintance?” So saying, he presented me another card, which I put aside with the first.

“Ha, ha, ha! what a good joke, to find you up. I said we should get brandy-and-water here; wasn’t that capital?—ha, ha, ha, ha!”

I could not exactly see the joke of being kept up for perhaps two more hours, but I begged they would refill their glasses, as the sitting would be sooner ended one way or the other—either by the bottle being empty, or their falling under the table—I did not care which—when I was again addressed by Number Three.

“I really beg your pardon, but—I’m afraid I have been very remiss—will you allow me to introduce myself? I am Captain C—, of the —. Here is my card, and I cannot say how happy I shall be if I may have the honour of your acquaintance.”

I bowed a third time, and received a third card.

“By heavens, I’ve finished my tumbler! Ain’t that capital? Ha, ha, ha! famous fun;—and so has Alfred.”

“Famous fun, indeed,” thought I, as the contents of the bottle disappeared.

“And Alfred is going to help himself again; well, that is capital, ha, ha, ha!—ha, ha, ha!—ha, ha, ha, ha!”

Alfred, who was Number One, moved his lips, but like the frozen horn of Munchausen, sounds would not come out; he did, however, follow up the joke, by refilling his tumbler for the third time.

“Upon my honour, I’ve been very rude, I ought to apologise,” said Number Three, again drawing out his card-case; “but will you allow me to offer my card? I am Captain C—, of the —, and I shall be most happy to make your acquaintance.”

I bowed again, and received the fourth card.

Thus were the changes rung by numbers, one, two, and three, until I was tired out, two bottles more drank out, and I had received fifteen cards from my very polite friend, whom I had never seen before.

At four o’clock they all rose to depart.

“Upon my soul, I do believe I’m drunk,” said Number Two; “capital joke—ha, ha, ha!”

Number One continued dumb, brandy had not thawed him; but he stared very hard at me, as much as to say, I would speak if I could.

Number Three put into my hand the sixteenth card, and made a rash attempt at a bow.

Having seen them fairly outside my door, I bolted it, saying with Shakespeare—

“O! that a man
Should put an enemy in his mouth
To steal away his brains!”

I have been this morning to visit an establishment founded by two brothers, of the name of Van der Maelen. It comprehends natural history, botany, geography, and statistics, and they have, moreover, a lithographic press for maps and plates. It is a very curious, and very spirited undertaking. As yet, the whole has been effected by their own means, which are extensive, and without any assistance from government. How few people in this world employ their money so usefully! This

establishment is but yet in its infancy, and the collections are not very valuable, although rapidly increasing, from the interest felt by every one in its welfare.

Of all collections of natural history, the fossil department is, to me, the most interesting; there is room for speculation and reflection, till the mind is lost in its own wanderings, which I consider one of the greatest delights of existence. We are indebted to the vast, comprehensive mind, and indefatigable labour of Cuvier, for the gleams of light which have lately burst upon us, and which have rendered what was before mere speculative supposition now a source of interesting and anxious investigation, attended with results that are as satisfactory as they are undeniable.

That there was a period when the surface of the earth was almost entirely covered with water—a state between chaos and order, when man was not yet created (for that then the world had not yet been rendered by the Almighty a fit receptacle for man), appears to be undoubted. Yet the principle of life had been thrown forth by the Almighty hand, and monsters had been endowed with vitality, and with attributes necessary for their existence upon an intermediate world.

These were the many varieties of the Ichthyosauri and the Plesiosauri, of whose remains we have now such abundant specimens—all animals of the lizard species; some supposed to have been supplied with wings, like the flying fish of the present day.

But imagine an animal of the lizard species, one hundred and twenty feet long—imagine such a monster—the existence of which is now proved beyond a cavil, by the remains, deeply imbedded in the hard blue lias rocks, and which remains are now in our possession. What a terrific monster it must have been! We look with horror at an alligator of twenty or thirty feet, but imagine an animal of that species extending his huge bulk to one hundred and twenty feet. Were they all destroyed when the waters were separated from the land, or did they gradually become extinct when the earth was no longer a suitable habitation for them, and no longer congenial to those properties with which they had been endowed when ordered into existence by the Almighty power? The description of the Behemoth, by Job, has long been a puzzle to the learned; we have no animal of the present time which will answer to it, but in many points, this description will answer to what may be supposed would be the appearance, the muscular power, and the habits of this huge denizen of a former world.

“His force is in the navel of his belly.
He moveth his tail like a cedar.
His bones are as strong pieces of brass.
His bones are like bars of iron.
He lieth under the shady trees in the covert of the reeds and fens.
The shady trees cover him with their shadow.
The willows of the brook compass him about.”

It may be a matter of deep surmise, whether all animals were created as we now find them, that is, whether the first creation was final—or how far the unerring hand has permitted a change to take place in the forms and properties of animals, so as to adapt them to their peculiar situations. I would say, whether the Almighty may not have allowed the principle of vitality and life to assume, at various epochs, the form and attributes most congenial to the situation, either by new formation or by change.

May not the monster of former worlds have dwindled down to the alligator of this—the leviathan to the whale? Let us examine whether we have any proofs in existing creation to support this supposition. We all know that the hair of the goat and sheep in the torrid zones will be changed into wool when they are taken to the colder climes, and that the reverse will also take place—we know that the hare and weazel tribes, whose security is increased from their colour so nearly approaching to that of the earth in temperate latitudes, have the same protection afforded to them when they are found in the regions of snow, by their changing to white—and we know that the *rete mucosum* of the African enables him to bear the exposure to a tropical sun, which would destroy an European. But

this is not sufficient, we must examine further. Sir Humphry Davy has given us a very interesting account of a small animal found in the pools of water in the caves in Carniola; this animal is called the *Proteus Anguinus* or Syren: it is a species of eel with two feet—a variety only to be found in these caves—it lives in darkness, and exposure to the light destroys it. Now, here is an animal which we must either suppose to have been created at the universal creation—and that is to suppose that these caves and pools of water have also existed from the time of the creation—or that the principle of vitality has been permitted, at a later date, to take that form and those attributes congenial to its situation: it is a curious problem. Again, it is well known that in the continent of New Holland there are animals who have a property peculiar to that continent alone—that of a pouch or false stomach, to contain their young after their birth; it has been surmised that at one time the major part of that continent was under water, and that this pouch was supplied to them for the safety of their young; nor is this conjecture without strong grounds; if only the kangaroo and opossum tribes, which are animals peculiarly indigenous to that continent, were supplied with this peculiar formation, the conjecture would fall to the ground, as it might fairly be said that this property was only another proof of the endless variety in creation; but the most remarkable fact is, that not only the kangaroo and opossum, animals indigenous and peculiar to that portion of the globe, but that very variety of squirrel, rat, and mouse, which in every other respect are of the same species as those found in the other continents, are all of them provided with this peculiar false pouch to contain their young. Why, therefore, should all these have been supplied with it, if not for a cause? And the question now arises, whether at the first creation they had that pouch, or were permitted so far to change their formation, when the pouch became necessary for the preservation and continuation of these species? That these changes are the changes of centuries, I grant, and therefore are not likely to be observed by man, whose records or whose knowledge are not permitted to be handed down beyond a certain extent. Knowledge is not happiness; and when the accumulation has arrived to that height so as to render it dangerous, it is swept away by the all-wise and benevolent Creator, and we are permitted to begin again *de novo*. After all, what we term posterity is but a drop of water in the ocean of Time.

Chapter Nine

Brussels.

There are few people in Brussels, indeed in Belgium, who do not complain of the revolution; all that goes wrong is at once ascribed to this cause—indeed I was rather staggered by one gentleman, at Ghent, telling me very gravely that they had had no fat oxen since the revolution; but this he explained by stating that the oxen were fattened from the refuse of several manufactories, all of which had been broken up, the proprietors having quitted for Holland. The revolution has certainly been, up to the present time, injurious to both countries, but it is easy to foretell that eventually Belgium will flourish, and Holland, in all probability, be the sufferer. The expenses of the latter even now are greater than her revenue, and when the railroads of Belgium have been completed, as proposed, to Vienna, the revenue of Holland will be proportionably decreased from her loss of the carrying trade. It may be urged that Holland can also have her railroads—but she cannot: so large a proportion of her population find their support at present on the canals, that a railroad would be productive of the most injurious effects. It is true that she can lower her rates of carriage, but the merchant will save ten days of transport by the railroads, and this rapidity of communication will always obtain the preference.

But whatever may be the future prospects of Belgium, it is certain that, from the heavy expenses attending the support of so large an army, the retirement into Holland of most of the influential and wealthy commercial men, and the defection of almost all the nobility, at present she is suffering. Brussels, her capital, has perhaps been most injured, and is no longer the gay and lively town which it was under the dynasty of King William of Nassau. When the two countries were united, it was the custom of the Dutch court to divide the year between Brussels and the Hague; and as there was not only the establishment of the King, but also those of Princes William and Frederick (in fact three courts), as well as all the nobility of Holland and Belgium, there was an overflow of wealth, of company, and of amusement, which rendered Brussels one of the most delightful winter residences on the Continent: but this has now all passed away. The court of Leopold, in consequence of the radical party having the entire sway, is but a shadow, as nearly all the Belgian nobility have retired from it. The few who reside in town will not visit at the palace, and live in seclusion, receiving no company, and spending no money; the majority, however, have either removed from Brussels to their country seats, or have left the kingdom to spend their revenue amongst foreigners.

At present there are but few English here, it being no longer the scene of gaiety, and there are other reasons which gradually decrease the number. The fact is, that Brussels is not a very cheap residence. The duties on every thing are now enormous, and the shop-keepers prey upon the English as much as they can, having avowedly two prices, one for them and the other for the Belgians. There are very few amusements, and the people, since the revolution, are rude and bearish, imagining that by incivility they prove their liberty and independence. The other towns of Belgium are very dull and very cheap—Brussels is very dull and very dear. In another point, Brussels presents a contradiction to all the other capitals of Europe, in which you generally find the most polished manners, and the greatest beauty in the female sex, concentrated. At Brussels it is directly the reverse—the men are uncivil and the women plain: whereas in the Belgian provinces you will meet with civility and respect, and at Antwerp, Ostend, and most other provincial towns, fall in with many fine countenances, reminding you of the Spanish blood which has been for centuries mingled with that of the Low Provinces.

Nevertheless there are many advantages in Brussels: the communication with England is so rapid, and its situation so central, that it may be considered as the point from which travellers diverge on their various routes.

About the end of May the arrivals and departures from Brussels are constant; this stream continues to pour through the city for three months, after which, as the Belgians do not mix with the

foreign residents, the latter are left entirely to their own resources for amusement. But the greatest objection to Brussels is, that the English have brought with them the *English feeling*. I hardly know how else to term it, but it certainly is a feeling peculiarly English, which has taken deep root within this last half century, and which has already produced much evil, and may eventually be productive of more serious results. I refer to the system of spending more money than you can afford, to enable you to hold a certain position in the scale of society.

For these last forty years, during which immense fortunes have been made in England, there has been a continued struggle of wealth against rank. *Parvenus*, as the aristocracy have been pleased to call them, have started up in every direction, vying with, and even eclipsing the nobility in lavish expenditure—in some instances, driving the aristocracy to spend more money than they could afford, and thereby impoverishing them; in others, forcing admittance into their circles. Wealth and public opinion have latterly gained the ascendancy, and the aristocracy are now more looked up to on account of their large possessions than of their high birth. Now this has been nothing more than a demand for greater liberty and more extended rights on the part of the commoners of England, in proportion as they found themselves a more important body in the state. It has not been a case of Magna Charta, but it is still analogous; for they have demanded that the barrier raised between them and the aristocracy should be thrown down, as soon as they possessed all the advantages, with the exception of that nominal rank, the title too often conferred without discrimination on the one hand or claims on the other. As soon as a partial breach had been made in this barrier,—every one rushed for admittance, displaying wealth as their ticket of admission, and the consequence has been, that wealth has now become the passport into society; but another consequence has also ensued, which is, that to obtain entrance, almost everybody has been living and keeping up an appearance which has not been warranted by their means. Many have exceeded their incomes, and then sunk down into poverty; others have, perhaps, only lived up to their incomes; but in so doing, have disappointed those who, induced by the appearance of so much wealth, have married into the family and discovered that they have obtained wives with expensive ideas, and no money. But there have been other reasons which have induced some to live beyond their means—they have done it in the pure spirit of gambling. In England, credit, next to money, is of most value, and according to their supposed wealth, so did the parties obtain credit; an expenditure beyond their means was, therefore, with commercial men, nothing more than a speculation, which very often succeeded, and eventually procured to the parties the means of expenditure. It is well known that the income tax, in many cases, was paid double; commercial men preferring to give in their income at twice its real value, and pay the tax to that amount, that they might be supposed to possess more than they really had; indeed, as it was imagined that a man would evade so heavy an impost as much as possible, he was generally considered to be worth even more than what he himself had stated. It is from these causes that has arisen what I have called the English feeling, for display beyond the means, and which has made our countrymen look down upon those who cannot compete with them in expense. Let a married couple be ever so well connected—let them have talent, and every other advantage, it will avail them nothing, if they have not money, sufficient at least to keep a carriage, and not shock the mistress of a house by the sound of the rattling steps of a hackney-coach at her door; besides which, in our commercial country, the principle of barter, of *quid pro quo*, is extended even to dinner and evening parties—and the reason is obvious—when people live to the full extent, or even beyond their incomes, a little management is required. A dinner-party is so arranged, that the dinners received from others are returned to them, and they cannot afford to ask a couple who cannot give them a dinner in return, as they would fill up the places of others to whom a dinner is due, and who, if not asked then, must be at another time; and an extra dinner is an extra expense to be avoided. The English therefore, who have only moderate incomes, have the choice, either to live beyond their means, and leave their children unprovided for, or of being shut out from that society, to which every other is but the adventitious claim of wealth, they are entitled. The consequence has been that since the peace thousands and thousands have settled

on the Continent, that they may make more display with a small income, and thousands more, with a much better feeling, to avoid expense, and lay by a provision for their children. Of course all these remarks are made with reservation, but with reservation, it may be said, that in England we have, or soon shall have, only two classes left, the extreme rich and the extreme poor, for the intermediate classes are gradually retiring to the continent, emigrating to Canada and America, or sinking down into the second class.

This is a most dangerous state of society, and, if carried to the extreme, has always proved ruinous to the state. Although the immense extent of the Roman empire may be asserted as the ultimate cause of its downfall, still that downfall was most certainly accelerated by the rottenness at the core, the system of patrons and clients having thrown all the wealth into the hands of a few. Are we not rapidly advancing to this state in England? The landholders are almost at the mercy of the fundholders, who, in fifty years' time, will probably have possession of the land as well as of the money. And should there be no check put to this disintegration of society, then must come what the radicals are now so anxious to obtain, the equitable adjustment—and in that case it is a problem how far that may not be really *equitable*; for society may, by degrees, arrive to a state so anomalous as to warrant that the few should be sacrificed for the benefit of the community at large.

Chapter Ten

Brussels, May 22.

Among the *lions* of Brussels, a dog was pointed out to me, as he lay on the pavement in front of the House of Assembly. It was a miserable looking cur; but he had a tale extra attached to him, which had magnified him into a lion. It was said that he belonged to a Dutch soldier, who was killed in the revolution, at the spot where the dog then lay, and that ever since (a period of four years) the animal had taken up his quarters there, and invariably lain upon that spot. Whether my informant lied, and the dog did not, I cannot pretend to say; but if the story be true, it was a most remarkable specimen of fidelity and ugliness. And he was a sensible dog, moreover; instead of dying of grief and hunger, as some foolish dogs have done, he has always dedicated an hour every evening to cater for his support, and then returns to pass the night on the spot. I went up to him, and when within two yards he thought proper to show his teeth, and snarl most dog-matically; I may therefore, in addition to his other qualities, state that he is an ill-natured dog. How far the report was correct, I cannot vouch; but I watched him three or four days, and always found him at his post; and after such strict investigation, had I asserted ten years instead of four, I have a prescriptive right, as a traveller, to be believed.

It is singular that it is only in England that you can find dogs, properly so called; abroad they have nothing but curs. I do not know anything more puzzling than the genealogy of the animals you meet with under the denomination of dogs in most of the capitals of Europe. It would appear as if the vice of promiscuous and unrestricted intercourse had been copied from their masters; and I have been almost tempted to take up the opinion, that you may judge of the morality of a capital from the degeneracy of the dogs. I have often, at Paris, attempted to make out a descent; but found it impossible. Even the late Sir G Naylor, with all the herald's office, stimulated by double fees, could not manage to decipher escutcheons obliterated by so many crosses.

I am very partial to dogs; and one of my amusements, when travelling, is to watch their meetings with each other; they appear to me to do everything but speak. Indeed, a constant observer will distinguish in dogs many of the passions, virtues, and vices of men; and it is generally the case, that those of the purest race have the nobler qualifications. You will find in them devotion, courage, generosity, good temper, sagacity, and forbearance; but these virtues, with little alloy, are only to be found in the pure breeds. A cur is quite a lottery: he is a most heterogeneous compound of virtue and vice; and sometimes the amalgamation is truly ludicrous. Notwithstanding which, a little scrutiny of his countenance and his peculiar movements will soon enable you to form a very fair estimate of his general character and disposition.

One of the most remarkable qualities in dogs is the fidelity of their attachments; and the more so, as their attachments are very often without any warrantable cause. For no reason that can be assigned, they will take a partiality to people or animals, which becomes a feeling so dominant, that their existence appears to depend upon its not being interfered with. I had an instance of this kind, and the *parties* are all living. I put up, for an hour or two, at a livery stables in town, a pair of young ponies. On my taking them out again, the phaeton was followed by a large coach-dog, about two years old, a fine grown animal, but not well marked, and in very poor condition. He followed us into the country; but having my establishment of dogs (taxes taken into consideration), I ordered him to be shut out. He would not leave the iron gates; and when they were opened, in he bolted, and hastening to the stables, found out the ponies, and was not to be dislodged from under the manger without a determined resistance. This alternate bolting in and bolting out continued for many days; finding that I could not get rid of him, I sent him away forty miles in the country; but he returned the next day, expressing the most extravagant joy at the sight of the ponies, who, strange to say, were equally pleased, allowing him to put his paws upon them, and bark in their faces. But although the ponies

were partial to the dog, I was not; and aware that a voyage is a great specific for curing improper attachments, I sent the dog down the river in a barge, requesting the men to land him where they were bound, on the other side of the Medway; but in three days the dog again made his appearance, the picture of famine and misery. Even the coachman's heart was melted, and the rights and privileges of his favourite snow-white terrier were forgotten. It was therefore agreed, in a cabinet council held in the harness room, that we must make the best of it; and, as the dog would not leave the ponies, the best thing we could do, was to put a little flesh on his bones, and make him look respectable. We therefore victualled him that day, and put him on our books with the purser's name of Pompey. Now this dog proved, that sudden as was his attachment to the ponies, it was of the strongest quality. He never would and never has since left these animals. If turned out in the fields, he remains out with them, night as well as day, taking up his station as near as possible half way between the two, and only coming home to get his dinner. No stranger can enter their stables with impunity; for he is very powerful, and on such occasions very savage. A year or two after his domiciliation, I sold the ponies, and the parties who purchased were equally anxious at first to get rid of the dog; but their attempts, like mine, were unavailing, and, like me, they at last became reconciled to him. On my return from abroad, I re-purchased them, and Pompey of course was included in the purchase.

We are none of us perfect—and Pompey had one vice; but the cause of the vice almost changed it into a virtue. He had not a correct feeling relative to *meum* and *tuum*, but still he did not altogether steal for himself, but for his friends as well. Many have witnessed the fact of the dog stealing a loaf, or part of one, taking it into the stables, and dividing it into three portions, one for each pony, and the other for himself. I recollect his once walking off with a round of beef, weighing seventeen or eighteen pounds, and taking it to the ponies in the field—they smelt at it, but declined joining him in his repast. By-the-bye, to prove that lost things will turn up some day or another, there was a silver skewer in the beef, which was not recovered until two years afterwards, when it was turned up by the second ploughing. One day, as the ponies were in the field where I was watching some men at work, I heard them narrating to a stranger the wonderful feats of this dog, for I have related but a small portion. The dog was lying by the ponies as usual, when the servants' dinner-bell rang, and off went Pompey immediately at a hard gallop to the house to get his food. "Well, dang it, but he is a queer dog," observed the man, "for now he's running as fast as he can, to *answer the bell*."

Chapter Eleven

May 23.

With all the faults of the Roman church, it certainly appears to me that its professors extend towards those who are in the bosom of their own church a greater share than most other sects, of the true spirit of every religion—charity. The people of the Low Countries are the most bigoted Catholics at present existing, and in no one country is there so much private as well as public charity. It is, however, to private charity that I refer. In England there is certainly much to be offered in extenuation, as charity is extorted by law to the utmost farthing. The baneful effects of the former poor laws have been to break the links which bound together the upper and lower classes, produced by protection and good will in the former, and in the latter, by respect and gratitude. Charity by act of parliament has dissolved the social compact—the rich man grumbles when he pays down the forced contribution—while the poor man walks into the vestry with an insolent demeanour, and claims relief, not as a favour, but as a right. The poor laws have in themselves the essence of revolution, for if you once establish the right of the poor man to any portion of the property of the rich, you admit a precedent so far dangerous, that the poor may eventually decide for themselves what portion it may be that they may be pleased to take; and this becomes the more dangerous, as it must be remembered, that the effect of the poor laws is *repulsion* between the two classes, from the one giving unwillingly, and the other receiving unthankfully. How the new Poor Law Bill will work remains to be proved; but this is certain, that much individual suffering must take place, before it works out the great end which it is intended to obtain.

That the Roman Catholic laity are more charitable is not a matter of surprise, as they are not subjected to forced contributions: but it appears to me that the Catholic clergy are much more careful and kind to their flocks than our own. Now, indeed, can it be otherwise, when even now, although so much reform in the Church has been effected, so many of our clergymen are pluralists and non-residents, expending the major part of the church revenue out of the parish, leaving to the curate, who performs the duty, a stipend which renders it impossible for him to exercise that part of his Christian duty to any extent?—for charity *begins* at home, and his means will not allow him to proceed much farther. That serious evils have arisen from the celibacy of the Roman clergy is true, for priests are but men, and are liable to temptation; but it is equally certain that when a Roman Catholic clergyman is a pure and pious man, he has nothing to distract his attention from the purposes of his high calling; and not only his whole attention is devoted to his flock, but his existence, if necessary, is voluntarily endangered. At the period of the cholera, there were many remarkable instances of this devotion to death on the part of the Roman priesthood, and as many, I am forced to say, of the Protestant clergy flying from the epidemic, and leaving their flocks without a shepherd. And why so? because the Protestant clergymen had wives and families depending upon them for support, and whose means of existence would terminate with their own lives. It was very natural that they should prefer the welfare of their own families to that of their parishioners. But in other cases not so extreme, the encumbrance of a family to a clergyman in England is very often in opposition to his duty. To eke out a scanty remuneration, he sets up a school or takes in pupils. Now if the duties of a clergyman consisted in merely reading the services on a Sunday, and christening, burying, and marrying, he might well do so; but the real duties of a clergyman are much more important. His duty is to watch over the lives and conduct of his parishioners, to exhort, persuade, and threaten, if necessary; to be ever among his flock, watching them as a shepherd does his sheep. And how can he possibly do this, if he takes charge of pupils?—he must either neglect his pupils or neglect his parish. He cannot do justice to both. As Saint Paul says to the bishops, “Although it is better to marry than burn, still it is better to

be even as I am,” unencumbered with wife and family, and with no ties to distract my attention from my sacred and important calling.

But the *public* charitable institutions abroad are much better conducted than those of England, where almost every thing of the kind is made a job, and a source of patronage for pretending pious people, who work their way into these establishments for their own advantage. It is incredible the number of poor people who are effectually relieved on the Continent in the course of the year, at an expense which would not meet the weekly disbursements of a large parish in England. But then, how much more judicious is the system! I know for a fact, that in the county where I reside, and in which the hard-working labourer, earning his twelve shillings a week, is quite satisfied if he can find sufficient *bread* for his family, (not tasting meat, perhaps, ten times during the whole year,) that those who were idlers, supported by charity, were supplied with meat three or four times a week; nay, even the felons and prisoners in the county gaol were better fed than was the industrious working man. And this is what in England is called charity. It is base injustice to the meritorious. But many of the charitable institutions in England, from mal-administration, and pseudo-philanthropy, have become very little better than establishments holding out premiums for idleness and hypocrisy.

Among the institutions founded by Roman Catholics and particularly deserving of imitation, that of the Soeurs de la Charité appears to be the most valuable. It is an institution which, like mercy, is twice blessed—it blesses those who give, and those who receive. Those who give, because many hundreds of females, who would otherwise be thrown upon the world, thus find an asylum, and become useful and valuable members to society. They take no vows—they only conform to the rules of the sisterhood during the time that they remain in it, and if they have an opportunity, by marriage or otherwise, of establishing themselves, they are at free liberty to depart. How many young women, now forced into a wretched, wicked life, would gladly incorporate themselves into such a society in England; how many, if such a society existed, would be prevented from falling into error!

It is well known, that to support a large community, the expenses are trifling compared to what they are when you have the same number of isolated individuals to provide for. A company of two or three hundred of these sisters living together, performing among themselves the various household duties, washing, etcetera, and merely requiring their food, would not incur the same expense in house rent, firing, and provisions, as thirty or forty isolated individuals. Soldiers in barracks are even well fed, housed, and clothed, at a much less expense than it costs the solitary labourer to eat his *dry bread* in his own cottage; and the expenses of such communities, if once established, would very soon be paid by their receipts.

It would be a double charity, charity to those who would willingly embrace the life, and charity to those who might require their assistance. It is well known how difficult it is to obtain a sick nurse in London. It is an avocation seldom embraced by people, until they are advanced in years, and all feeling has been dried up by suffering or disappointment. Those who undertake the task are only actuated by gain, and you can expect but eye-service. Not being very numerous, and constantly in demand, they are overworked, and require stimulants in their long watchings. In fact, they drink and dose—dose and drink again.

But how different would it be if the establishments, which I have referred to, were formed! those who are wealthy would send for one of the sisters when required, and if the illness were tedious, her services could be replaced by another, so that over-fatigue might not destroy watchfulness and attention to the patient. You would at once feel that you had those in your house in whom you could confide. If your means enabled you, you would send a sum to the funds of the charity in return for the service performed, and your liberality would enable them to succour those who could only repay by blessings. A very small subscription would set afloat such a charity, as the funds would so rapidly come in; and if under the surveillance of the medical men who attended the hospitals, it would soon become effective and valuable. I trust if this should meet the eye of any real philanthropist who has

time to give, which is more valuable than money, that he will turn it over in his mind:— the founder would be a benefactor to his country.

Chapter Twelve

May 25.

“A man cannot die more than once,” is an old apothegm, and it would appear bold to dispute it; but still there are lives within lives, such as political lives, literary lives, etcetera, and there is also such a thing as being dead in the eye of the law; so that it is evident that a man can die twice, that is, once professionally or legally, and once naturally.

I presume, like all other scribblers, I must meet my literary death, that is, when I have written myself down, or have written myself out. I have no objection, for I am very weary of my literary existence, although authors are not so in general; on the contrary, they can perceive in themselves no sign of decay when it is apparent to every body around them. Literary decay is analogous to the last stage of a consumption, in which you believe you are not going to die, and plan for the future as if you were in perfect health. And yet to this complexion must all authors come at last. There is not a more beautiful, or more true portrait of human nature, than the scene between the Archbishop of Grenada and Gil Blas, in the admirable novel of Le Sage. Often and often has it been brought to my recollection since I have taken up the pen, and often have I said to myself, “Is this homily as good as the last?” (perhaps homily is not exactly the right term my writings.) The great art in this world, not only in writing, but in everything else, is to know when to leave off. The mind as well as the body must wear out. At first it is a virgin soil, but we cannot renew its exhausted vigour after it has borne successive crops. We all know this, and yet we are all archbishops of Grenada. Even the immortal Walter Scott might have benefited by the honesty of Gil Blas, and have burnt his latter homilies; but had he had such an unsophisticated adviser, would he not, in all probability, have put him out by the shoulders, wishing him, like the venerable hierarch, “a little more taste and judgment.”

Since I have been this time abroad, I have made a discovery for which all prose writers ought to feel much indebted to me. Poets can invoke Apollo, the Muses, the seasons, and all sorts and varieties of gods and goddesses, naked or clothed, besides virtues and vices, and if none of them suit, they may make their own graven image, and fall down before it; but we prose writers have hitherto had no such advantage, no protecting deity to appeal to in our trouble, as we bite our pens, or to call upon to deliver us from a congestion of the brain. Now being aware that there were upwards of three hundred and fifty thousand canonised saints on the Roman calendar, I resolved to run through the catalogue, to ascertain—if there was one who took prose authors under his protection, and to my delight, I stumbled upon our man. By-the-bye, Tom Moore must have known this, and he has behaved very ill in keeping him all to himself. But I must introduce him. It is the most holy, and the most blessed, Saint Brandon. Holy Saint Brandon inspire me, and guide my pen while I record thy legend! In the first place, let me observe that our patron saint was an Irishman, and none the worse for that, as Ireland has had as good saints as any in the calendar. And it is now clear that he does protect us prosaic writers, by the number of reporters and gentlemen of the press which have been sent over from the sister kingdom. But to proceed.

Saint Brandon, it appears, was a reading man, and amused himself with voyages and travels; but Saint Brandon was an unbeliever, and thought that travellers told strange things. He took up the Zoology of Pliny, and pursued his accounts of “Antres vast, and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders.” He read until his patience was exhausted, and, in a fit of anger, he threw the manuscript into the flames. Now this was a heavy sin, for a man’s book is the bantling of his brain, and, to say the least, it was a literary-infanticide. That very night an angel appeared to him, and as a penance for his foul crime (in the enormity of which every author will agree with the angel), he was enjoined to *make the book over again*, no easy task in those days, when manuscripts were rare, and the art of book-making had not been invented. The sinner, in obedience to the heavenly mission, goes

to work; he charts a vessel, lays in provisions for a seven years' voyage, and with a crew of seven monks, he makes sail, and after going round the world seven times, during which the world went round the sun seven times, he completed his task in seven volumes folio, which he never published, but carried his manuscript away with him to prove that he had performed his penance. For this miraculous voyage—and certainly with such a ship's company, it was a miracle—he was canonised, and is now the patron saint of all prose authors, particularly those whose works are measured by the foot-rule.

And now that I have made known to my fraternity that we also have a saint, all they have to do is to call upon him six or seven times, when their brains are at sixes and sevens. I opine that holy Saint Brandon made a very *hazard-ous* voyage, for it is quite clear that, in the whole arrangement, it was—*seven's the main*.

Chapter Thirteen

En route, May 26.

Passed Waterloo—was informed that two days before the Marquis of Anglesey had arrived there, and stayed a short time to visit the cemetery of his leg; a regular family visit of course, as all the *members* were present.

May 27.

Slept at Namur. The French are certainly superior to us in the art of rendering things agreeable. Now, even in the furnishing of a common apartment, there is always something to relieve the eye, if not to interest you. I recollect when I was last in London, in furnished apartments, that as I lay awake in the morning, my eye caught the pattern of the paper. It was a shepherdess with her dog in repose, badly executed, and repeated without variation over the whole apartment. Of course I had nothing to do but to calculate how many shepherdesses and dogs there were in the room, which, by counting the numbers in length and breadth, squaring the results, and deducting for door and windows, was soon accomplished. But how different was the effect produced by the paper of the room in which I slept last night! It was the history of Dunois, the celebrated bastard of France, who prays in his youth that he may prove the bravest of the brave, and be rewarded with the fairest of the fair. This was not the true history, perhaps, of Dunois; but I am drawing the comparison between the associations and reminiscences conjured up by this decoration in opposition to the dull and tasteless recapitulation of the English manufacture. From the latter I could not extract a bare idea, except that shepherdesses are, as a race, extinct, and that Lord Althorp had taken the tax off shepherds' dogs, by way of a bonus, to relieve a distressed capital of some hundred millions, to which the agricultural interest had very properly replied, "Thank you for nothing, my Lord;" but from the sight of the French paper what a host of recollections started up at the moment! The mind flew back to history, and was revelling in all the romance of chivalry, from King Arthur and his Knights, to the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

"Yet, after all," thought I, at the end of a long reverie, "divest chivalry, so called, of its imposing effect, examine well into its nature and the manners of the times, and it must be acknowledged that the modern warfare has a much greater claim than the ancient to the title of chivalry. In former times men were cased in armour of proof, and, before the discovery of gunpowder, had little to fear in a *mêlée*, except from those who, like themselves, were equally well armed and equally protected, and even then only from flesh wounds, which were seldom mortal. The lower classes, who served as common soldiers, were at the mercy of the mounted spearmen, and could seldom make any impression upon their defences. In those days, as in the present, he who could command most gold carried the day, for the gold procured the steel harness, and a *plump* of spears brought into the field was more than equal to a thousand common men. He who had the best tempered armour was the most secure, and that was it be only procured by gold. He who could mount and case in iron the largest number of his followers was the most powerful, and, generally speaking, the most lawless. Divest chivalry of its splendour, which threw a halo round it, and it was brutal, and almost cowardly. Single combats did certainly prove courage; but even in them, skill, and more than skill, personal strength, or the best horse, decided the victory. In fact, although not the origin, it was the upholder of the feudal system, in which might was right; and we may add, that the invention of gunpowder, which placed every man upon a level, if not the cause of, certainly much assisted to break up the system. How much more of the true spirit of chivalry is required in the warfare of the present day, in which every man must stand for hours to be shot at like a target, witnessing the mowing down of his comrades, and silently filling up the intervals in the ranks made by their deaths, exposed to the same leaden messengers; a system of warfare in which every individual is a part of a grand *whole*, acting upon one concerted

and extended plan, and forced a hundred times to exhibit the passive and more perfect bravery of constancy, for once that he may forget his danger in the ardour of the charge! When shall we learn to call things by their right names?”

Liege, May 28.

Our landlord is a most loyal man, but there is a reason for it. Leopold took up his quarters at this hotel in his way to Spa. In every room we have upon every article of *fayence*—“Leopold, with the Genius of Belgium crowning him with laurels, while Truth is looking on.” Every plate, every dish, is impressed with this proof print of loyalty. But this is not all, as the man said in the packet, “Oh, no!” All the wash-hand basins, jugs, and every other article required in a bed-chamber, have the same loyal pattern at the bottom. Now it appeared to me, when I went to bed, that loyalty might be carried too far; and what may have been intended as respect, may be the cause of his Majesty being treated with the greatest disrespect; and not only his sacred Majesty, but the glorious Belgian constitution also. As for poor Truth, she is indeed said to sojourn at the bottom of a well; but in this instance, it would, perhaps, be as well that she should not be insulted—I am wrong, she always is, and always will be, insulted, when she appears in the purlieu of a court, or in the presence of a king.

After all, mine is a strange sort of Diary. It is not a diary of events, but of thoughts and reminiscences, which are thrown up and caught as they float to the surface in the whirlpool of my brain. No wonder!—events are but as gleanings compared to the harvest of many years, although so negligently gathered into store. I have been puzzling myself these last two hours to find out what a man’s brain is like. It is like a kaleidoscope, thought I; it contains various ideas of peculiar colours, and as you shift them round and past, you have a new pattern every moment. But no, it was not like a kaleidoscope, for the patterns of a kaleidoscope are regular, and there is very little regularity in my brain, at all events.

It is like a pawnbroker’s shop, thought I, full of heterogeneous pledges; and if you would take anything out, experience stands at the counter, and makes you pay her compound interest, while many articles of value are lost for ever, because memory cannot produce the duplicate.

And then I compared it to almost every thing, but none of my comparisons would hold good. After all, thought I, I have been only playing at “What are my thoughts like?” which is a childish game; and how can I possibly find out what my brain is like, when my brain don’t choose to tell? So I rose, and opening the window, lighted my cigar, and smoked myself into a reverie, as I watched the smoke ascending from the chimneys of the good town of Liege.

And this is the city which travellers pass through, describing it as a mere manufacturing town, thought I. A city which has, in its time, produced a greater moral influence upon society than any other in existence—a city that has led the van in the cause of religion and liberty. Liege presents a curious anomaly among the states of Europe. It is the only town and province, with the exception of Rome, which has been, for centuries, ruled by the clerical power. But be it recollected, that at the very period that Christianity was offering up her martyrs at the blood-stained arena of the Coliseum, it was from Liege (or rather Tongres, for Liege was not then built) that she was spreading wide her tenets, unpersecuted and unrestrained, for she was too far removed from idolatry and imposture to be regarded. The province of Liege was the cradle of the Christian faith. From the earliest records there were bishops at Tongres; and it was about five hundred years after Christ, that Saint Monulphe, the reigning bishop, founded the city of Liege. From that time until the French Revolution, this town and these fertile provinces had always remained under clerical authority.

Although these prince-bishops proved that, upon necessity, they could change the crosier for the coat of mail, still, as by endowments and benefactions they increased their revenues, so did they, by the mildness of their sway, induce thousands to settle in their territory; and to increase their population (which was to increase their wealth), they first granted to their citizens those privileges and liberties, which have, upon their precedent, been obtained by force or prayers by others. The very boast of the

English of the present day, that *every man's house is his castle*, was the sacred grant of one of the bishops to the citizens at Liege, long before the feudal system had been abolished in our island.

I may also observe, for it is to be gained from the chronicles of this province, that the time at which it may be said that the primitive Christian church first fell into error, appears to have been about one thousand years after the death of our Saviour. And as I thought of all this, and a great deal more, and smoked my cigar, I felt a great deal of respect for the good old city of Liege; and then I wandered back to the country I had passed through the day before, excelling in all lovely scenery. I had seen it before, but it was many years ago; and it may be seen many times without the least degree of satiety. I do not know any scenery which raises up such pleasurable sensations as that of the Valley of Meuse, taking it the whole way from Namur to Liege, and from Liege to Spa. It is not so magnificent as the Rhine, to which it bears a miniature resemblance. It is not of that description creating a strong excitement, almost invariably succeeded by depression; but it is of that unchanging and ever-pleasing, joyous description, that you are delighted without being fatigued, and have stimulus sufficient to keep you constantly in silent admiration without demanding so much from the senses as to weary them. If I could have divested myself from the knowledge that I was in motion, and have fancied that the scene was moving past, I could have imagined myself seated at one of our large theatres, watching one of Stanfield's splendid panoramas. But the lighted end of my cigar at last approximated so near to my nose, that I was burnt out of my reverie; I took the last save—all whiffs, tried to hit an old woman's cap with the end of it, as I tossed it into the street, and retreated to the diurnal labour of shaving—of all human miseries, certainly, the “unkindest cut of all”—especially when the maids have borrowed your razor, during your absence, to pare down the apex of their corns.

Chapter Fourteen

Liege.

I have been reading the “Salmonia” of Sir Humphry Davy: what a pity it is that he did not write more! there are so many curious points started in it. I like that description of book, which, after reading a while, you drop it on your knee, and are led into a train of thought which may last an hour, before you look for the page where you left off. There are two cases argued in this work, which led me into a meditation. The one is, a comparison between reason and instinct, and the other, as to the degree of pain inflicted upon fish by taking them with the hook. Now it appeared to me, in the first question, what has been advanced is by no means conclusive, and although it is the custom to offer a penny for your thoughts, I shall give mine for nothing, which is perhaps as much as they are worth, (I say that, to prevent others from making the sarcastic remark), and in the second question, I think I can assist the cause of the lovers of the *gentle* art of angling—why *gentle*, I know not, unless it be that anglers bait with *gentles*, and are mostly *gentle*-men.

But before I attempt to prove that angling is not a cruel sport, I must first get rid of “reason and instinct.” Of reason most undoubtedly a philanthropist would reply, “Be it so;” nevertheless, I will argue the point, and if I do not succeed, I have only to hedge back upon Solomon, and inquire, “If man was born to misery as the sparks fly upwards, why are not the inferior classes of creation to have their share of it?”

I do not think that any one can trace out the line of demarcation between reason and instinct. Instinct in many points is wonderful, especially among insects, but where it is wonderful, it is a blind obedience, and inherited from generation to generation. We observe, as in the case of the bees, that they obey the truest laws of mathematics, and from these laws they never have deviated from their creation, and that all animals, as far as their self-defence or their sustenance is concerned, show a wonderful blind obedience to an unerring power, and a sagacity almost superior to reason. But wonderful as this is, it is still but instinct, as the progenitors of the race were equally guided by it, and it is handed down without any improvement, or any decay in its power. Now if it could be asserted that the instinct of animals was only thus inherited from race to race, and could “go no farther,” the line of demarcation between reason and instinct would at once be manifest, as instinct would be blindly following certain fixed laws, while reason would ever be assisted by memory and invention. But we have not this boasted advantage on the side of reason, for animals have both memory and invention, and, moreover, if they have not speech, they have equal means of communicating their ideas. That this memory and invention cannot be so much exercised as our own, may be true, but it is exercised to an extent equal to their wants, and they look no further; that is to say, that if any want not prepared for, or anything should take place interfering with their habits and economy, instinct will enable them to meet the difficulty. There is nothing more wonderful than the application of mechanical power by ants. No engineer could calculate with greater nicety, and no set of men work together with such combination of force. After they have made ineffectual attempts to remove a heavy body, you will observe them to meet together, consult among themselves, and commence an entire new plan of operations. Bees, also, are always prepared to meet any new difficulty. If the *sphinx atropos*, or death’s head moth, forces its way into the hive, the bees are well known, after having killed it with their stings, to embalm the dead body with wax—their reason for this is, that the body was too large for them to remove through the passage by which it entered, and they would avoid the unpleasant smell of the carcass. It may be argued, that instinct had always imparted to them this knowledge; but if so, they must have had a fresh accession of instinct after they had been domiciled with men: for it is well known that the hole in the tree, in which the wild bees form their cells, is invariably too small

to admit any animal larger than themselves, and the bodies of such sized animals they could remove with as much ease as they do the bodies of their own dead.

I could cite a hundred instances, which would prove that animals have invention independent of the instinct handed down from generation to generation. I will, however, content myself with one instance of superior invention in the elephant, which occurred at Ceylon. Parties were employed felling timber in the forests of Candia, and this timber, after having been squared, was dragged to the depôt by a large party of elephants, who, with their keepers, were sent there for that purpose. This work was so tedious, that a large truck was made, capable of receiving a very heavy load of timber, which might be transported at once. This truck was dragged out by the elephants, and it was to be loaded. I should here observe, that when elephants work in a body, there is always one who, as if by common consent, takes the lead, and directs the others, who never refuse to obey him. The keepers of the elephants, and the natives, gave their orders, and the elephants obeyed; but the timber was so large, and the truck so high on its wheels, that the elephants could not put the timber in the truck according to the directions given by the men. After several attempts, the natives gave up the point, and retiring to the side of the road as usual, squatted down, and held a consultation. In the meantime, the elephant who took the lead summoned the others, made them drag two of the squared pieces to the side of the truck, laid them at right angles with it, lifting one end of each on the truck, and leaving the other on the ground, thus forming the inclined plane. The timber was then brought by the elephants, without any interference on the part of the keepers or natives, who remained looking on, was pushed by the elephants with their foreheads up the inclined plane, and the truck was loaded. Here then is an instance in which the inventive instinct of the animal—if that term may be used—was superior to the humbler reasoning powers of the men who had charge of them.

That animals have the powers of memory as well as man, admits of no dispute. In elephants, horses, and dogs, we have hourly instances of it: but it descends much lower down—the piping bullfinch, who has been taught to whistle two or three waltzes in perfect concord, must have a good memory, or he would soon forget his notes. To detail instances of memory would therefore be superfluous; but, as it does occur to me while I write, I must give an amusing instance how the memory of a good thrashing overcame the ruling passion of a monkey, which is gluttony, the first and only instance that I ever saw it conquered.

I had on board a ship which I commanded, a very large Cape baboon, who was a pet of mine, and also a little boy, who was a son of mine. When the baboon sat down on his hams, he was about as tall as the boy was when he walked. The boy having tolerable appetite, received about noon a considerable slice of bread and butter, to keep him quiet till dinner-time. I was on one of the carronades, busy with the sun's lower limb, bringing it in contact with the horizon, when the boy's lower limbs brought him in contact with the baboon, who having, as well as the boy, a strong predilection for bread and butter, and a stronger arm to take it withal, thought proper to help himself to that to which the boy had been already helped. In short, he snatched the bread and butter, and made short work of it, for it was in his pouch in a moment. Upon which the boy set up a yell, which attracted my notice to this violation of the articles of war, to which the baboon was equally amenable as any other person in the ship; for it is expressly stated in the preamble of every separate article, "All who are *in*, or *belonging* to." Whereupon I jumped off the carronade, and by way of assisting his digestion, I served out to the baboon monkey's allowance, which is, more kicks than halfpence. The master reported that the heavens intimated that it was twelve o'clock; and with all the humility of a captain of a man-of-war, I ordered him to "make it so;" whereupon it was made, and so passed that day. I do not remember how many days it was afterwards that I was on the carronade as usual, about the same time, and all parties were precisely in the same situations,—the master by my side, the baboon under the booms, and the boy walking out of the cabin with his bread and butter. As before, he again passed the baboon, who again snatched the bread and butter from the boy, who again set up a squall, which again attracted my attention. Looked round, and the baboon caught my eye, which told him plainly that he'd soon

catch what was not “at all *my eye*,” and he proved that he actually thought so, for he actually put the bread and butter back into the boy’s hands. It was the only instance of which I ever knew or heard of a monkey being capable of self-denial when his stomach was concerned, and I record it accordingly. (Par parenthèse:) it is well known that monkeys will take the small-pox, measles, and I believe the scarlet fever; but this poor fellow, when the ship’s company were dying of the cholera, took that disease, went through all its gradations, and died apparently in great agony.

As, then, invention and memory are both common to instinct as well as to reason, where is the line of demarcation to be drawn; especially as in the case of the elephants I have mentioned, superior instinct will invent when inferior reason is at fault? It would appear, if the two qualities must be associated, that, at all events, there are two varieties of instinct: blind instinct, which is superior to reason, so far that it never errs, as it is God who guides; and inventive instinct, which enables the superior animals to provide for unexpected difficulties, or to meet those which memory has impressed upon them. But if we examine ourselves, the difficulty becomes even greater—we have decidedly two separate qualities. We are instinctive as well as reasonable beings; and what is inventive instinct but a species of reason, if not reason itself?

But although I say that it is hardly possible to draw the line of demarcation, I do not mean to say that they are one and the same thing; for instinct and reason, if we are to judge by ourselves, are in direct opposition. Self-preservation is instinctive; all the pleasures of sense, all that people are too apt to consider as happiness in this world; I may say, all that we are told is wrong, all that our reason tells us we are not to indulge in, is *instinct*.

Such are the advantages of being reasonable beings in *this world*; undoubtedly, we have a right to claim for ourselves, and deny to the rest of the creation, the enjoyments of the next. Byron says:—

“Man being reasonable, must get drunk.”

That is to say, being reasonable, and finding his reason a reason for being unhappy, he gets rid of his reason whenever he can. So do the most intellectual animals. The elephant and the monkey enjoy their bottle as much as we do. I should have been more inclined to agree with Byron, if he had said:—

Man being reasonable, must *go to the devil*.

For what are poor reasonable creatures to do, when instinct leads them to the “old gentleman;” and reason, let her tug as hard as she pleases, is not sufficiently powerful to overcome the adverse force.

After all, I don’t think that I have come to a very satisfactory conclusion. Like a puppy running round after his own tail, I am just where I was when I set out; but, like the puppy, I have been amused for the time. I only hope the reader will have been so too.

And now, my brethren, I proceed to the second part of my discourse, which is, to defend anglers and fly-fishers from the charge of cruelty.

It is very true that Shakespeare says, “The poor beetle that we tread on, in mortal sufferance, feels a pang as great as when a giant dies;” and it is equally true that it is as false as it is poetical.

There is a scale throughout nature, and that scale has been divided by unerring justice. Man is at the summit of this scale, being more fearfully and wonderfully made, more perfect than any other of the creation, more perfect in his form, more perfect in his intellect; he is finer strung in his nerves, acuter in his sympathies; he has more susceptibility to pleasure, more susceptibility to pain. He has pleasures denied to, and he has pains not shared with him by, the rest of the creation. He enjoys most, and he suffers most. From man, the scale of creation descends, and in its descent, as animals are less and less perfect, so is meted out equal but smaller proportions of pleasure and pain, until we arrive to the Mollusca and Zoophyte, beings existing certainly, but existing without pleasure and without pain

—existing only to fill up the endless variety, and add the links to the chain of nature necessary to render it complete. The question which naturally will be put is, “how do you know this? it is assertion but not proof.” But arguments are always commenced in this way. The assertion is the *quid*, the *est demonstrandum* always comes afterwards. I handle my nose, flourish my handkerchief, and proceed.

Man is the most perfect of creation. What part of his body, if separated from the rest, can he renew? No part, except the hair and the nail. Reproduction can go no further. With the higher classes of animals, also, there is no reproduction: but even at this slight descent upon the scale, we may already point out a great difference. Although there is no reproduction, still there are decided proofs of inferiority; for instance, a hare or rabbit caught in a trap, will struggle till they escape, with the loss of a leg; a fox, which is carnivorous, will do more; he will *gnaw* off his own leg to escape. Do they die in consequence? no, they live and do well; but could a man live under such circumstances? impossible. If you don’t believe me, gnaw your own leg off and try. And yet the conformation of the Mammalia is not very dissimilar from our own; but man is the more perfect creature, and therefore has not the same resources.

I have hitherto referred only to the *limbs* of animals; I will now go further. I had a beautiful little monkey on board my ship. By accident it was crushed, and received such injury that the backbone was divided at the loins, and the vertebra of the upper part protruded an inch outside of its skin. Such an accident in a man would have produced immediate death; but the monkey did not die; its lower limbs were of course paralysed. The vertebra which protruded gradually rotted off, and in six weeks the animal was crawling about the decks with its fore feet. It was, however, such a pitiable object, that I ordered it to be drowned. Now, if we descend lower down in the scale until we come to the reptiles and insects, we shall find not only that the loss of limbs is not attended with death, but that the members are reproduced. Let any one take a spider by its legs, it will leave them in your hands that it may escape. Confine the animal under a glass, and in a few weeks it will have all its members perfect as before. Lizards are still more peculiar in their reproduction. I was at Madeira for many months, and often caught the lizards which played about the walls and roofs of the out-houses; and if ever I caught a lizard by the tail, he would make a spring, and leave his tail in my hand, which seemed to snap off as easily as would a small carrot. Now the tail of the lizard is longer than its body, and a continuation of the vertebrae of the back. I soon found out that lizards did not die from this extensive loss, but, on the contrary, that their tails grew again. Even the first week afterwards, a little end began to show itself, and in about two months the animal had reproduced the whole. What I am about to say now will probably be considered by some as incredible; they are, however, at full liberty to disbelieve it. One day I was looking out of the window with the late Tom Sheridan, who lived in the same house, and we observed on the roof of the out-house a lizard with two tails, but neither of them full grown; and we argued that, at the time the animal lost his tail, he must have suffered some division of the stump. Being at that time a naturalist, i.e. very cruel; I immediately caught a lizard, pulled off his tail, notched the vertebra, and turned him loose again. Our conjectures were right; the animal in two or three weeks had two tails growing out like the one we had seen. I repeated this experiment several times, and it always appeared to succeed; and all the two-tailed lizards were called mine.

Now this power of reproduction increases as you descend the scale; as an instance, take the polypus, which is as near as possible at the bottom of it. If you cut a polypus into twenty pieces, without any regard to division, in a short time you will have twenty perfect polypi.

Now the deductions I would draw from these remarks are—

That the most perfect animals are least capable of reproduction, and most sensible of pain.

That as the scale of nature descends, animals become less perfect, and more capable of reproduction.

Ergo—they cannot possibly feel the same pain as the more perfect.

Now with respect to fish, they are very inferior in the scale of creation, being, with the exception of the cetaceous tribe, which class with the Mammalia, all cold-blooded animals, and much less

perfect than reptiles or many insects. The nervous system is the real seat of all pain; and the more perfect the animal, the more complicated is that system: with cold-blooded animals, the nervous organisation is next to nothing. Most fish, if they disengage themselves from the hook, will take the bait again; and if they do not, it is not on account of the pain, but because their instinct tells them there is danger. Moreover, it is very true, as Sir H. Davy observes, that fish are not killed by the hook, but by the hooks closing their mouths and producing suffocation. How, indeed, would it otherwise be possible to land a salmon of thirty pounds weight, in all its strength and vigour, with a piece of gut not thicker than three or four hairs?

Upon the same grounds that I argue that fish feel very little comparative pain, so do I that the worm, which is so low in the scale of creation, does not suffer as supposed. Its writhings and twistings on the hook are efforts to escape natural to the form of the animal, and can be considered as little or nothing more. At the same time I acknowledge and, indeed, prove, by my own arguments, that it is very cruel to *bob for whale*.

To suppose there are no gradations of feeling as well as of perfection in the animal kingdom, would not only be arguing against all analogy, but against the justice and mercy of the Almighty, who does not allow a sparrow to fall to the earth without his knowledge. He gave all living things for our use and our sustenance; he gave us intellect to enable us to capture them: to suppose, therefore, at the same time, that he endowed them with so fine a nervous organisation as to make them undergo severe tortures previous to death, is supposing what is contrary to that goodness and mercy which, as shown towards us, we are ready to acknowledge and adore.

I cannot finish this subject without making a remark upon creation and its perfectibility. All *respectable* animals, from man down to a certain point in the scale, have their lice or parasites to feed upon them. Some wit, to exemplify this preying upon one another, wrote the following:—

“Great fleas have little fleas,
And less fleas to bite them,
These fleas have lesser fleas,
And so—*ad infinitum*.”

This, however, is not strictly true. Parasites attach themselves only to the great. Upon those they can fatten. Having your blood sucked, is therefore, a great proof of high heraldry and perfectibility in the scale of creation. If animals were endowed with speech and pride like man, we might imagine one creature boasting to another, as a proof of his importance.

“And I, too, also have my louse!”

Chapter Fifteen

Liege, May 30th.

What strange meetings take place sometimes! I recollect once, when I was sitting at a *table d'hôte*, at Zurich, being accosted by a lady next to me, and being accused of having forgotten her. I looked with all my eyes, but could not discover that I had ever seen her before. At last, after allowing me to puzzle for some time, she said: "Sir, you and I met at dinner four years ago, at Mr K—'s house in Demerara." It was very true; but who would have thought of running his memory over to South America, to a cursed alluvial deposite, hatching monthly broods of alligators, and surrounded by naked slaves, whilst out of the window before him his eye rested upon the snow-covered mountains of Switzerland, and he breathed the pure air of William Tell and liberty. This morning I fell in with an acquaintance whom I had not seen for years, and him also I did not recollect. I am very unfortunate in that respect, and I am afraid that I have very often given offence without intending it; but so imperfect is my memory of faces, that I have danced with a lady in the evening, and the next day have not known her, because she was in a bonnet and morning dress. Sometimes the shifts I am put to are quite ludicrous, asking all manner of questions, and answering those put to me at random, to find out some clue as to who my very intimate friend may be. They ought not to be angry at my forgetting their names, for sometimes, for a few minutes, I have actually forgotten my own. It does, however, only require one clue to be given me, and then all of a sudden I recollect every thing connected with the party. I remember one day as I was passing Whitehall, somebody came up, wrung my hand with apparent delight, and professed himself delighted to see me. I could do no other than say the same, but who he was, and where I had seen him before, was a mystery. "I am married since we parted," said he, "and have a fine little boy." I congratulated him with all my heart. "You must come and see me, and I will introduce you to Mary."

"Nothing would give me more pleasure;" but if he had only called his wife Mrs So-and-so, I should have a *clue*. "Let me see," said I, "where was it we parted?"

"Don't you recollect?" said he, "At the Cape of Good Hope."

But I was still mystified, and after putting several leading questions, I found myself quite as much in the dark as ever. At last I asked him for his card, that I might call upon him. He had not one in his pocket. I pulled out my tablets, and he took out the pencil, and wrote down his address; but that was of no use to me.

"Stop, my good fellow, I have so many addresses down there, that I shall be making some mistake; put your name down above it."

He did so, and when I saw the name every thing came fast like a torrent into my recollection; we *had been* very intimate, and he was fully justified in showing so much warmth. I could then talk to him about old scenes, and old acquaintances; so I took his arm, and went forthwith to be introduced to his Mary. The knowledge of this unfortunate failing makes me peculiarly careful not to avoid a person who appears to know me; and one day a very absurd scene took place. I was standing on some door steps close to the Admiralty, waiting for a friend, and there was another gentleman standing close to me, on the pavement. A third party came up, extending his hand, and I immediately took it, and shook it warmly,—although who my friend was, I was, as usual, very much puzzled to find out. Now it so happened that the hand which I had taken was extended to the gentleman standing by me, and not to me; and the party whose hand I was squeezing looked me in the face and laughed. I did the same, and he then gave his hand to the right party, and walked off. As, however, we had said, "How d'ye do?" we had the politeness to say, "Good-by;" both taking off our hats on the broad grin.

I was observing, that I here met with a person whom I could not recollect, and, as usual, I continued to talk with him, trusting to my good fortune for the clue. At last it was given me. "Do

you recollect the little doctor and his wife at Bangalore?” I did, and immediately recollected him. As the story of the doctor and his wife has often made me laugh, and as I consider it one of the best specimens of *tit for tat*, I will narrate it to my readers. I have since been told that it is not new—I must tell it nevertheless.

A certain little army surgeon, who was stationed at Bangalore, had selected a very pretty little girl out of an invoice of young ladies, who had been freighted-out on speculation. She was very fond of gaiety and amusement, and, after her marriage, appeared to be much fonder of passing away the night at a ball than in the arms of her little doctor. Nevertheless, although she kept late hours, in every respect she was very correct. The doctor, who was a quiet, sober man, and careful of his health, preferred going to bed early, and rising before the sun, to inhale the cool breeze of the morning. And as the lady seldom came home till past midnight, he was not very well pleased at being disturbed by her late hours. At last, his patience was wearied out, and he told her plainly, that if she staid out later than twelve o’clock, he was resolved not to give her admittance. At this, his young wife, who, like all pretty women, imagined that he never would presume to do any such thing, laughed heartily, and from the next ball to which she was invited, did not return till half-past two in the morning. As soon as she arrived, the palanquin-bearers knocked for admittance; but the doctor, true to his word, put his head out of the window, and very ungallantly told his wife she might remain all night. The lady coaxed, entreated, expostulated, and threatened; but it was all in vain. At last she screamed, and appeared to be frantic, declaring that if not immediately admitted, she would throw herself into the well, which was in the compound, not fifty yards from the bungalow. The doctor begged that she would do so, if that gave her any pleasure, and then retired from the window. His wife ordered the bearers to take her on her palanquin to the well; she got out, and gave her directions, and then slipped away up to the bungalow, and stationed herself close to the door, against the wall. The bearers, in obedience to her directions, commenced crying out, as if expostulating with their mistress, and then detaching a large and heavy stone, two of them plunged it into the water; after which, they all set up a howl of lamentation. Now the little doctor, notwithstanding all his firmness and *nonchalance*, was not quite at ease when he heard his wife express her determination. He knew her to be *very entêtée*, and he remained on the watch. He heard the heavy plunge, followed up by the shrieks of the palanquin-bearers. “Good God,” cried he, “is it possible?” and he darted out in his shirt to where they were all standing by the well. As soon as he had passed, his wife hastened in-doors, locked, and made all fast, and shortly afterwards appeared at the window from which her husband had addressed her. The doctor discovered the *ruse* when it was too late. It was now his turn to expostulate; but how could he “hope for mercy, rendering none?” The lady was laconic and decided. “At least, then, throw me my clothes,” said the doctor. “Not even your slippers, to protect you from the scorpions and centipedes,” replied the lady, shutting the “jalousie.” At day-light, when the officers were riding their Arabians, they discovered the poor little doctor pacing the verandah up and down in the chill of the morning, with nothing but his shirt to protect him. Thus were the tables turned, but whether this *ruse* of the well ended well,—whether the lady reformed, or the doctor conformed,—I have never since heard.

Chapter Sixteen

Liege, June 2.

The academy or college established at Liege in 1817 is very creditable to the Liegeois. Much has been done in fifteen years: the philosophical apparatus, collections of minerals and natural history, are all excellent for instruction, although the minerals are not very valuable. The fossils found in the Ardennes are very interesting, and ought to be a mine of wealth to the Liegeois, as by exchanging them they might soon have a valuable collection. It is a pity that the various museums of Europe do not print catalogues, not of their own collections only, but also of the duplicates which they can part with, so that they may be circulated, not only among the national collections, but also among private cabinets; by so doing they would all become more perfect. It is currently reported that more duplicates have been allowed to perish in the cellars of the British Museum than would have furnished all the cabinets in Europe. It may be replied, that other cabinets had nothing to offer in exchange; but that is only a surmise: and even if they had not, they should have been presented to other institutions abroad. Science ought not to be confined to country or people: it should be considered as universal.

To the college is annexed a botanical garden. There is nothing I dislike more than a botanical garden. I acknowledge the advantages, perhaps the necessity, of such institutions; but they always appear to me as if there was disarrangement instead of arrangement. What may be called order and classification seems to me to be disorder and confusion. It may be very well to class plants and trees for study, but certainly their families, although joined by man, were never intended to be united by God. Such a mixture in one partition, of trees, and shrubs, and creeping plants, all of which you are gravely told are of one family. I never will believe it: it is unnatural. I can see order and arrangement when I look at the majestic forest-trees throwing about their wild branches, and defying the winds of heaven, while they afford shelter to the shrubs beneath, which in their turn protect and shelter the violets that perfume all around. This is beautiful and natural—it is harmony; but in a botanical garden every thing is out of its place. The Scripture says, “Those whom God hath joined let no man put asunder;” may we not add, Those whom God hath sundered let no man presume to join. I felt as I looked at the botanical garden as if it were presumptuous and almost wicked, and as it was on the banks of the Meuse, I sat down on the wall and recovered myself by looking at the flowing river, and thinking about utility and futility, “and all that sort of thing and everything else in the world,” as poor Matthews used to say,—and there I sat for an hour, until my thoughts revolved on the propriety of going back and eating my dinner,—as Mrs Trollope used to do when she was in Belgium.

As I was walking about in the evening, I perceived a dirty little alley illuminated with chandeliers and wax candles. There must be a ball, thought I, or some gaiety going on: let us inquire. “No, sir,” replied a man to whom I put the question, “it’s not a ball,—it is a Monsieur who has presented to an image of the Virgin Mary which is up that court, a petticoat, which, they say, is worth one thousand five hundred francs, and this lighting-up is in honour of her putting it on.” The race of fools is not extinct, thought I. I wonder whether, like King Ferdinand, he worked it himself. Belgium is certainly at this present the stronghold of superstition.

Chapter Seventeen

June 3.

Went to Harquet's manufactory of arms, and was much amused. They export all over the world, and the varieties they make up for the different markets are astonishing. They were then very busy completing an order for several thousand muskets for the Belgian troops, which load at the breech and fire off without locks or priming. They showed me a fowling-piece on the same principle, which they fired off under water. But the low prices of the arms astonished me. There were a large quantity of very long fowling-pieces with the *maker's* name at *Constantinople*, for the Turkish gentlemen, at thirty francs each: a common musket was fourteen francs. I perceived in a corner a large number of muskets, of infamous workmanship, and with locks resembling those awkward attempts made two hundred years back. I asked what they were for. They were for the South American market, and made to order, for the people there would use no others: any improvement was eschewed by them. I presume they had borrowed one of the Spanish muskets brought over by Pizarro as a model, but, at all events, they were very cheap, only eight francs each. God help us, how cheaply men can be killed now-a-days!

It is very seldom that you now meet with a name beginning with an X, but one caught my eye as I was walking through the streets here. *Urban Xhenemont, négociant*. I perceive there are still some to be found in Greece; the only one I know of in England is that of Sir Morris Ximenes, who, I presume, claims descent from the celebrated cardinal. The mention of that name reminds me of the songs of the improvisatore, Theodore Hook, and his address in finding a rhyme for such an awkward name as Ximenes. Few possess the talent of improvising. In Italy it is more common, because the Italian language admits the rhyme with so much facility; but a good improvisatore is rare even in that country. There was a Dutchman who was a very good improvisatore, a poor fellow who went about to amuse companies with his singing and this peculiar talent. One day a gentleman dropped a gold Guillaume into a glass of Burgundy, and told him if he would make a good impromptu, he should have both the wine and the gold: without hesitation he took up the glass, and suiting the action to the word, sang as follows:—

“Twee Goden in een Glas,
Wat zal ik van maken?
K' steek Plutus in myn tas,
K slaak Bacchus in myn Kaken.”

Which may be rendered into French as follows:—

“Quoi! deux dieux dans un verre,
Eh bien! que vais-j'en faire?
J'empocherà Plutus,
J'avalera Bacchus.”

The gentleman, who gave me this translation, also furnished me with a copy of extempore French verses, given by a gentleman of Maestricht, who was celebrated as an improvisatore. They certainly are very superior. He was at a large party, and agreed to improvise upon any theme given him by five of those present in the way of *Souvenir*. The first person requested the souvenir of *early youth*.

“Vous souvient-il? Amis de ma jeunesse,

Des beaux momens de nos fougueux exploits?
Quand la raison sous le joug de l'ivresse,
Essaye en vain de soutenir ses droits.
Ce tems n'est plus, cet âge de folie,
Où tout en nous est pressé de jouir:
Mes bons amis, du printemps de la vie
Gardons toujours le joyeux *souvenir*."

The next party requested a souvenir of the conscription, many of them, as well as the poet, having been forced into the army of France.

"Vous souvient-il? que plus tard, sous les armes
Plusieurs donons, désignés par le sort,
Loin des parents; versant d'amères larmes,
Allaient trouver ou la gloire ou la mort.
Ces jours de deuil par milliers dans l'histoire
Ne viendront plus, sur nous s'appesantir
Amis, volons au temple de Mémoire
Effaçons-en le sanglant *souvenir*."

The third party requested a souvenir of his "first love."

"Vous sonvient-il? de cet enfant de Guide
Fripon rusé, volage et séducteur;
Qui par les yeux d'une beauté timide,
D'un trait de feu veut nous frapper au coeur.
Du sentimens que sa flèche fit naître,
Et que la mort peut seul anéantir,
Eternissons le ravissant bien-être,
En conservant un si beau *souvenir*."

The fourth proposed as a theme, the morning of his marriage.

"Vous souvient-il? du jour ou l'hyménée
Vint nous dicter ses éternelles loix,
En attachant à notre destinée
L'objet sacré de notre premier choix.
Solennité qui par des vœux nous lie,
De saints devoirs chargeant notre avenir,
Solennité que le vulgaire oublie
Nous te gardons en pieux *souvenir*."

The last party desired him to wind up with *friendship*.

"Quel souvenir puis-je chanter encore,
Après celui né dans la volupté?
Il en est un que le tems corrobore,
C'est le premier élan de l'amitié.
Eh! qui de nous n'a pas dans sa jeunesse,

Livré son coeur à ses charmes puissants,
Sainte Amitié, jusqu'à dans la vieillesse,
Console-nous des ravages du tems."

I should imagine that after the gentleman had finished all this, he must have been pretty well out of breath.

About four miles from Liege is the celebrated manufactory of Seraing, belonging to Messrs Cockerell. It is beautifully situated on the banks of the Meuse, and was formerly the summer palace of the Prince Archbishop. But it is not only here that you observe these symptoms of the times—all over France you will perceive the same, and the major portion of the manufactories have the arms of princes or nobles emblazoned over the façade, while the interiors, which once were the abode of refinement and luxury, are now tenanted by artisans and appropriated to utility. The utilitarian system was, however, more fully exemplified before the Belgian revolution, for William of Nassau was, in fact, a partner of Mr Cockerell. Mr Cockerell, the father, who is now dead, came over from England before the peace, bringing with him either the machinery for spinning cotton, or the knowledge necessary for its construction, so jealously guarded by our manufacturers. He established himself at Liege, and soon gained patrons. The firm has now three or four manufactories at Liege besides the one at Seraing. Large as was the bishop's palace, it has been increased to about three times its original size: it reminds me more of Portsmouth yard than any other place. The number of workmen employed in this manufactory alone is between fourteen and fifteen hundred. They make every variety of steam engines, and not only supply this country, but Prussia, Austria, France, and even Russia. People talk of Mr Cockerell having done much mischief to his country by furnishing foreigners with the machinery which enabled us to undersell them. I doubt it very much: I consider that the sooner other countries are enabled to compete with us to a certain extent, the better it will be for England. At present we are in an unhealthy state, and chiefly arising from the unlimited use of machinery. Let us lose that advantage, and, if not richer, at all events we shall be much happier. We are now suffering under a plethora of capital at the same time that we are oppressed with debt. As for Mr Cockerell, it may be very well to cry out about patriotism, but the question is, would not every other man have done the same? Had he not a right to bring his talents to the best market? and before he is accused of having had no regard for his country, it may first be fairly asked, what regard had his country shown for him?

Chapter Eighteen

Spa, June 10.

Here we are, and for a time at rest. Rest! no, the wheels of the carriage may rest, even the body for a time may rest, but the mind will not. We carry our restlessness with us wherever we go. Like a steam-engine, the mind works, and works, and works, sometimes, indeed, with less rapidity of motion; but still it goes on, goes on in its ever-continued labour; waking or sleeping, no repose; until the body, which is the mechanical part of the engine, is worn out by constant friction, or the steam of the mind is exhausted. And people tell you, and believe that there is rest in the grave. How can that be? The soul is immortal and cannot exist without consciousness. If not conscious, it does not exist; and if conscious, it must work on, even beyond the grave, and for ever. To assert that there is rest in the grave, is denying the immortality of the soul. And what a contemptible, base slave the body is to the soul! I was going to say that he could not call his soul his own; but that would be a Catachresis, and I hate and abominate every thing which begins with *cat*. It is singular that they are all unpleasant, or unlucky, or unsafe; for instance—

	remind you of
Cat-acombs	death, funerals, and mummies.
Cat-ologue	sale of effects, some poor devil done up.
Cat-aplasm	a boil poulticed.
Cat-aract	sore eyes, Sam Patch, and devastation.
Cat-arrh	head stuffed, running of the glands.
Cat-echism	equally unpleasant in youth and marriage.
Cat-egorical	argument, which is detestable.
Cat-erpillars	beasts who foul nature.
Cat-erwaul	horrid variety of love.
Cat-gut	street music, hurdy-gurdy.
Cat's-paw	a calm, with a prize in sight.

As for a cat itself, I cannot say too much against it; and it is singular, that the other meanings of the single word are equally disagreeable; as to *cat* the anchor, is a sign of *going to sea*, and the *cat* at the gangway is the worst of all.

Five o'clock in the morning,—the sun has not yet appeared above the hills, but the mist is rising gradually. The bell of the church in front of my window is tolling;—it ceases; and the pealing of the organ, with the chanting of the priests, comes distinct and clear upon my ear, as the notes of the bugle

over the still water, from some dashing frigate in the Sound, beating off at sunset. How solemn and how beautiful is this early prayer! The sun is rising, the mists of the night are rolling off, and the voices and music resound at the same time to heaven. The church is full, and many remain outside, uncovered, and kneeling in humility. But who comes here, thought I, as a man in a shabby coat walked to within a few yards of the church door, and laid down his burden, consisting of a drum, a fiddle, a roll of canvass, a chair, and a long pole. This is a curious stock in trade, methinks; how in the name of all the saints do you gain your livelihood? This was soon ascertained. A minute before the mass was over, he fixed his pole upright in the ground, hung his canvass on it, and unrolled it, displaying a picture divided in six compartments. He then hung his fiddle to his button, took his drum, and putting his chair close to his pole, stood upon it, giving a long, but not loud roll of his drum, which he repeated at intervals, to attract attention. He had taken his station with judgment; and as the people came out of church, he had soon a crowd about him, when he commenced with crossing himself, and then continued to explain the legend which was attached to his pictures on the canvass. I could not hear all, but still I could understand enough to fill up the rest. It was the wonderful cure performed by a certain saint; and as he told the story, he pointed to the different compartments with his fiddlestick, for he had laid aside his drum as soon as he had collected an audience. Now and then he crossed himself devoutly, and at last informed the crowd around him that he had the very prayer, and the very remedy which had been prescribed. He then played his fiddle, singing the prayer in a solemn chaunt; and then he pulled out of his pocket a packet of little books and little boxes. They are only one halfpenny each; and all that is necessary is, that they should touch the figure of the saint on the canvass, to be imbued with the necessary virtue. He sells them rapidly; each time that he puts them to the canvass crossing himself, and insisting that the party who purchases shall do the same. He takes his fiddle again, and sings the history of the saint, pointing with his fiddlestick to the compartments of the picture as he goes on; and now he pulls out more little books and more boxes; and how fast they purchase them! The stock in trade in his own possession is certainly of little value; but he possesses a fruitful mine in the superstition of others. Ah, well! Are not those inside the church setting him the example of mixing up religion with quackery?

Spa is beautifully situated, between abrupt hills covered with verdure; the walks cut in these hills are very beautiful, and much pains have been taken to render the place agreeable;—no wonder, when we recollect how many crowned heads have visited the place: but the sun of Spa has set, probably never to rise again; for whatever may be the property of its waters, to be frequented, a watering-place must be fashionable. There are many causes for its desertion. One is, the effects of the Belgian revolution. During the time that Belgium was attached to the Netherlands, the king, with the prince and princess of Orange, came here almost every year, bringing with them, of course, a great number of the nobility; but now the nobility have deserted the court; and when Leopold came here, no one followed. He was disgusted, and remained but a few days. The Prussians used also to resort very much to Spa; but the king of Prussia finding that so many young men were ruined at the gaming-tables, and so much distress occasioned by it, with a most fatherly despotism, has refused all the officers permission to visit Spa, and has forbidden the medical men to recommend the waters. The Russians also flocked in great numbers to Spa; but the emperor, although very indifferent about their losing their money, is very particular about his subjects gaining revolutionary opinions; and Spa being in a revolutionary country, has been condemned: they may just as well ask to go to Siberia, for that would probably be their route; and lastly, there is one more cause which, these two last seasons, has had a powerful effect, neither more nor less than a certain book, called the *“Bubbles of the Brunnen.”* I say for the last two seasons, for its influence will not extend to a third, as hundreds and hundreds who have gone to the Baths with the intention of passing this season, have already returned in disgust. A word upon this.

When Sir George Head published his “Bubbles,” he set people almost as mad as they were during the great “Bubble Mania;” and like all the mining and other associations, they have proved but

bubbles at last. It is said that one hundred and thirty-five thousand passports were taken out last year to go up the Rhine, by people who wished to see the pigs go through their daily manoeuvres, to an unearthly solo on the horn, and to witness the decapitation of the Seltzer-water bottles, which were condemned as traitors. Now, so large an influx of people to these German watering-places could have but one effect; that of a glorious harvest to the innkeepers, and those who had lodgings to let. The prices, at these places, have now become so enormous, that three florins have been asked for a single bed, and everything else has risen in the same proportion. The reaction has now begun to take place, and every day and every hour we have carriages returning through Liege, and other towns, from these watering-places, the occupants holding up their hands, quite forgetting the pigs and bottles, and only exclaiming against extortion, and everything German. They have paid too dear for their whistle, as Franklin used to say; the bubble has burst, and they look with regret at their empty purses. And yet, all that Head said in his amusing book was true. He rambled through a verdant and unfrequented lane, and described what he felt as he stopped to pick blackberries. An immense multitude have followed him, the green lane has been beaten down into a high road, and, as for blackberries, they are only to be procured at the price of peaches in May.

And now let us reflect whether the bubble will not also burst with the Germans. Formerly they were contented with moderate profits, and received their visitors with humility and thankfulness. Now, that they have suddenly made large profits, they have become independent and unceremonious; and, like most people, because they have reaped a golden harvest for two years, they anticipate that it will continue. The value of property at these places has risen, speculations have been entered into on a large scale, provisions and the necessities of life have become dear; new houses are building against time, and the proprietors smoke their pipes with becoming gravity, calculating upon their future gains. But the company will fall off more and more each succeeding year, although the speculations will continue; for people always find a good reason for a bad season, and anticipate a better one the next. At last, they will find that they are again deserted, and property will sink in value to nothing; the reaction will have fully taken place, prices will fall even lower than they were at first; honesty and civility will be reassumed, although, probably, the principal will have been lost. Thus will the bubble burst with them, as it has already with deserted Spa.

But when all idle people shall have visited all the bubbling fountains of Germany, where are they to go next? There are some very nice springs in Iceland not yet patronised; but although the springs there are hot, the Springs, vernally speaking, are cold. I can inform travellers where they will find out something new, and I advise them to proceed to the boiling springs at Saint Michael's, one of the Western isles, and which are better worth seeing than all the springs that Germany can produce. I will act as *guide de voyage*.

When you land at Saint Michael's, you will find yourself in one of the dirtiest towns in the world, and will put up at one of the worst hotels; however, you will have to pay just as dear as if lodged at the Clarendon, and fed at the *Rocher de Cancale*. The town contains many inhabitants, but more pigs. German pigs are not to be compared to them. You must then hire donkeys and ascend to the mountains, and after a hot ride, you will arrive at a small valley in the centre of the mountains, which was once the crater of a volcano, but is now used by nature as a kettle, in which she keeps hot water perpetually boiling for those who may require it. There you will behold the waters bubbling and boiling in all directions, throwing up huge white columns of smoke, brought out in strong relief by the darker sides of the mountains which rear their heads around you. The ground you tread upon trembles as you walk; you feel that it is only a thin crust, and that in a moment you may sink into the vast cauldron below, and have a hot bath without paying for it. Continue along the valley, and you will find lakes of still, deadly-cold water, with hot springs at their verge, throwing the smoke over their surface, while they pour in their boiling water as if they would fain raise the temperature; depositing sulphur in cakes and crystals in their course. And in another spot there is a dark, unfathomable hole, called the Devil's Mouth: you approach it, and you hear low moanings and rumblings, as if nature had

the stomach-ache; and then you will have a sudden explosion, and a noise like thunder, and a shower of mud will be thrown out to a distance of several yards. Wait again; you will again hear the moans and rumblings, and in about three minutes the explosion and the discharge will again take place; and thus has this eternal diarrhoea continued ever since the memory or tradition of man.

Yet, upon this apparently insecure and dangerous spot have been erected houses and baths, and it is resorted to by the fashionables of Saint Michael's, who wish, by its properties, to get rid of certain cutaneous disorders: for the whole air is loaded with sulphurous vapour, as the eternal pot keeps boiling.

Observe the advantages of this place:— you may have a bath as hot as you please, as cold as you please, or you may have a mud *douche*, if you have that buffalo propensity; and then you will have to rough it, which is so delightful; you will find little or nothing to eat, and plenty of bedfellows in all their varieties, a burning sun, and a dense atmosphere, and you will be very delighted to get back again, which, after all, is the *summum bonum* to be obtained by travel.

Not very far from this valley of hot water there is another valley, containing four small lakes, and in those lakes are found the most beautiful gold and silver fish, perhaps, in the world. How they came there, Heaven only knows; but I mention this because there is a curious coincidence. These lakes are known by the name of the Quadre Cidade, or four cities. Now, if my readers will recollect, in the “Arabian Nights,” there is a story of a valley with four lakes, which were once four cities, and that in these lakes were fish of various beautiful colours, who were once the inhabitants. If I recollect right, when the fish were caught and put into the frying-pan, they jumped up and made a speech; (so would fish now-a-days, if they were not mute;) and the story is told by a prince, whose lower extremities are turned into black marble, very convenient, certainly, if he dined out every day, as he had only his upper toilet to complete. This coincidence appeared to me to be very curious, and had I had time and opportunity I certainly should have fried four of these unfortunate fish, to ascertain whether they were of the real breed spoken of in the Arabian Tales, of the authenticity of which no one, I presume, will venture to doubt.

Chapter Nineteen

Spa, July 15.

What a curious history might be afforded by Spa and its gaming tables! When Spa was in its glory, when crowned heads met and dukes were forced to remain in their carriages for want of accommodation, when it was the focus of all that was *recherché* and brilliant, for Spa was so before the French revolution, the gaming tables were a source of immense profit; and to whom do you imagine that a great portion of the profits belonged?—to no less a person than the most sacred and puissant prince, the Bishop of Liege, who derived a great revenue from them. But it would appear as if there was a judgment upon this anomalous secular property, for these gaming-tables were the cause of the Prince Bishop losing all, and being driven out of his territories. There were two gaming establishments at Spa, the Redoubt in the town, and the Vauxhall about a quarter of a mile outside of it. The Redoubt is a fine building, with splendid ball-rooms and a theatre, but you must go *through the gaming-rooms* to enter either the ball-room or the theatre. The Vauxhall has no theatre, but the rooms are even more spacious; but when Spa was at its zenith, even these two immense edifices were barely sufficient for the company. Both these establishments were under the same proprietors, and it so happened that the English nobility, who were always a very strong party here, were displeased with the conduct of the lessees, and immediately raised funds for the building of a second Vauxhall. The bishop ordered the building to be discontinued, but, as by the privileges granted by former bishops, this was a violation of the rights of the Liegeois, his order was disregarded, and the Vauxhall now known by the name of *the Vauxhall*, was finished. When finished, the bishop would not permit it to be opened, but his commands being disregarded, he came down with two hundred soldiers and two pieces of cannon and took possession. This created a revolution, and the bishop was ultimately obliged to fly his territory and seek assistance. The Prussians marched an army into the city, and there was apparent submission, but as soon as they quitted, the insurrection again took place, and the bishop was forced again to solicit aid from the Austrians, for Prussia would no longer interfere. Metternich, who was so fond of legitimacy that he considered the gaming-tables a legitimate source of revenue to the apostle, marched in an Austrian army, and hundreds were slaughtered that the bishop might obtain his rights. Such was the state of affairs when the French revolution broke out and convulsed Europe, and the province of Liege was among the very first to receive with open arms the *bonnet rouge* and to join themselves with France, and thus did the bishop lose his beautiful province for ever. As far as Liege was concerned, the French revolution proved a blessing. It certainly was a disgraceful finale to an ecclesiastical power, which, as I have before mentioned, had formerly led the van in the march of Christianity and liberty.

But it appears that the clergy are fated to have an interest in these gaming-tables, the stipend of the English resident clergyman being, even now, paid out of their profits; for when Belgium was made over to the Netherlands, King William assumed his right to the bishop's former share of the profits of the tables, and of course brought as many people down here as he could to *lose their money*

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