

POETRY.

(From the Albany Argus.)

The "EPICUREAN," by the poet Moore, is a tale filled with descriptions of the old mythology and philosophy, and of the Egyptian religious mysteries. Alciphron, the youthful and accomplished president of the Epicurean philosophy at Athens, satiated by the unbounded gratification of human enjoyments, and dissatisfied with the doctrine of his sect which limits human existence to the present world, longs for the discovery of the Great Secret, which shall teach him the art of Eternal Life. He is the more incited to this by a strange vision in the gardens of Epicurus, under the influence of which he departs to Egypt, the land of ancient wonders, and after passing a round of ancient Alexandria, ascends the Nile to Memphis, in the hope that beneath its pyramids and amidst its mystic halls, he may pursue the investigation which was nearest his heart. He arrived at Memphis on the eve of a festival, and witnessed the proud spectacle with which the priests of Egypt dazzle the understanding of their superstitious followers: And here he falls into the toils of the priesthood, who attempt by means the most magical, to turn the famed Greek philosopher into a proselyte to their false religion. In the prosecution of this attempt, he is made to pass an initiation through fire, water, and air, and mighty wonders are exhibited for the purpose of overwhelming his reason. They are described in the tale with great grandeur and effect. The following is quoted as a single example:—

"I was now preparing to rise, when the priest again restrained me; and at the same moment, two boys, as beautiful as the young giant of the stars, entered the pavilion. They were habited in long garments of the purest white, and bore each a small golden chalice in his hand. Advancing towards me, they stopped on opposite sides of the couch, and one of them, presenting to me his chalice of gold, said in a tone between singing and speaking,—

Drink of this cup—Osiris sips
The same in halls below;
And the same he gives, to cool the lips
Of the dead who downwards go.

Drink of this cup—the water within
Is fresh from Lethe's stream;
'Twill make the past with all its sin,
And all its pain and sorrow seem
Like a long forgotten dream!

The pleasure, whose charms
Are steep'd in woe;
The knowledge that harms
The soul to know;

The hope, that, bright
As the lake of the waste,
Allures the sight,
But mocks the taste;

The love that bends
Its innocent wreath,
Where the serpent winds,
In venom, beneath!

All that, of evil or false, by thee
Hath ever been known or seen,
Shall melt away in this cup, and be
Forgot, as it never had been!

"Unwilling to throw a slight on this strange ceremony, I leaned forward with all due gravity, and tasted the cup; which I had no sooner done than the young cupbearer on the other side, invited my attention, and, in his turn, presented the chalice which he held, and sung with a voice still sweeter than that of his companion, the following strain:—

Drink of this cup—when Isis led
Her boy, a child, to the beaming sky,
She mingled a draught divine, and said—
'Drink of this cup, thou'lt never die!

This do I say and sing to thee,
Heir of that boundless heaven on high,
Though frail, and fall'n, and lost thou be
Drink of this cup, thou'lt never die!

And Memory, too, with her dreams shall
Dreams of a former, happier day, [come,
When heaven was still the spirit's home,
And her wings had not yet fallen away.

Glimpses of glory, ne'er forgot
That tell, like gleams on a sunset sea,
What once has been, what now is not,
But, oh, what again shall brightly be!

ON A YOUNG LADY WISHING TO ASCEND
IN A BALLOON.

Forbear, sweet girl, your scheme forego,
And thus our anxious troubles end;
Swiftly you'll mount, full well we know,
And greatly fear—you'll not descend.

When angels see a mortal rise,
So beautiful, divine, and fair,
They'll not release you from the skies,
But keep their sister-angel there.

From the Military Sketch Book.

ABSENT WITHOUT LEAVE;
OR, GONE TO SEA IN A COACH.

In many, if not in most, of the regiments of our army, there is to be found a sort of officer who is a privileged oddity,—who takes liberties with all his brethren of the mess with impunity, and who pockets every thing short of a blow with the best possible humour. In general, the individuals of this description are designated in the mess-room vocabulary, "Good tempered Old Stagers," and "Old Stickards," meaning thereby, that they can "go" at the bottle, and "stick at the table" till "all's blue."

One of these, a quartermaster of infantry, with a nose of the genuine Bardolph complexion, a rosy and eternal smile, a short figure, and a big head; having dined with a party of brother officers at the *Three Cups*, Harwich—the day on which his regiment marched into the barracks of that town—was in the best possible spirits, so much so, that he gave the bottle no rest until about eleven o'clock; and became "glorious," just as the company broke up—right or wrong he would go along with three of the youngest subalterns to ramble by the sea-side in the moon-shine, having been "so long in the sun." They permitted him reluctantly; perhaps, indeed, because they could not prevent him, but when the party got down to the place where passengers and goods are usually embarked, the Quartermaster became totally overpowered, and sunk senseless into a snore. The officers whom he accompanied could not think of carrying his *corpus* back to the inn; nor were there any persons near whom they could employ for the purpose: one of them, therefore, opened the door of a private carriage which stood near, "unshipped" from the wheels—ready for embarkation, and in a moment the sleeper was bundled into it, where he was left to his repose with the door fast shut upon him.

Next morning at day break about three o'clock, the coach, with its contents, was put on board the Hamburg packet, and stowed away at the very bottom of the hold; in half an hour after this the vessel put to sea. For the whole of the day the packet had a brisk breeze, and at midnight was a good hundred miles, away from Harwich: a dead calm set in. It was a beautiful night in July, and the passengers were not all gone to bed: some walked the deck, and others sat below at cards—every thing was silent, except the rattling of the ropes as the ship yielded to the smooth and gentle swell of the sleeping North Sea. About this time, the Quartermaster, it is supposed, awoke; at least he had not been heard before to utter his complaints, probably from the bustle consequent on the managing of the vessel in a stiff breeze. However, it was at this time that his cracked and buried voice first fell upon the ears of the crew; and for about twenty minutes the panic it created is indescribable. The whist company in the cabin, at first thought it was one of the sailors in a chest, and called the captain; who declared he had been that minute examining into the cause of the unearthly sounds, and had mustered his crew, all of whom were on deck, as much astonished as he was....nay, more so, for one of them, a Welshman, felt convinced that the voice proceeded from the speaking trumpet of the ghost of David Jones, his former shipmate, who had died "in ill will with him."

"Hallo.....o.....o.....o!" "Murder!" "Murder!" now rose upon all ears, as if the voice were at the bottom of the sea. The Welshman fell upon his knees, and begged forgiveness of his injured and departed friend David Jones: the rest of the crew caught a slight tinge of his fears, and paced about in couples to and fro; some declaring the voice

was below the rudder, and others that it was at the mast head. The passengers, one and all hurried on deck; in short, none on board, not even the Captain and the oldest seaman, were free from alarm; for they had searched every habitable place in the vessel without discovering the cause of their terrors, and the hold, it was evident, could not have contained an extra rat, it was so crammed with luggage, &c. "Let me out you d—d rascals! let me out....let me out, I say!" screamed the voice with increased vigour. These exclamations the Welshman declared were addressed to devils, that were tormenting his deceased enemy David; and he uttered a fervent prayer for the peace of the wandering and unhappy soul; but a different idea was awakened in the mind of the Captain by the words "Let me out." "There is somebody packed up in the hold," exclaimed he; and instantly ordering the men to follow him down, all began to remove the upper layer of articles; which being done, the voice became louder and more distinct.

"Where are you?" bawled the Captain. "I'm here in a coach, d—n you;" answers the Quartermaster.

The mystery was now solved, and the Welshman made easy; but no one could imagine how a human being could have got into the carriage. However, satisfaction on this point was not to be waited for; so the men fell to work, and after about half an hour's hard exertion, succeeded in disencumbering the vehicle. They then proceeded to unpack the Quartermaster, whose astonishment amounted almost to madness, when he found that he had not only been confined in a coach, but in a ship, and the said ship was then in the middle of the German Ocean!

It was impossible to put back to Harwich so no remedy was left the little fat gentleman but to proceed to the end of the voyage, and to take a passage back from Hamburg as soon as possible. This was bad enough; but his hopes of an early return were almost destroyed by the setting in of adverse winds, which kept the vessel beating about in a most bile-brewing & stomach-stirring ocean, for ten days and nights; during which time when not sea sick, the Quartermaster was employed in profoundly meditating how he could have got into the coach; and even after having taken the opinion of the captain, the crew, and all the passengers, upon the matter, he felt himself as much in the dark as ever. The last thing he could recollect of "the land he had left," was that he had dined and *wined* at the "Three Cups,"... what followed was chaos.

But the worst of the affair, decidedly, was that the day on which he had been put to sea was the 2d of the month, and as it was impossible for him to make his appearance with his regiment on the 24th, he knew he must, as a matter of course, be reported "Absent without leave" at the head quarters, and that he would most probably be superseded. This reflection was even worse than the weather to the Quartermaster, though the rough sea had already almost "brought his heart up." However he had great hopes of being able to join his regiment on the 10th of the following month....the next return day....and, by due application, he thought he might contrive to prevent supersession. Ten days of this time was, however, consumed before he set a foot on the German shore, and then only half of his excursion was over: all his hopes rested upon a quick passage back to Harwich. This, however, the Fates denied him; for having drawn on the agent...got the cash...engaged his passage to England...laid in a sea-stock, and all things necessary...the packet, just as she was leaving Hamburg, was run foul of by a five-hundred

ton ship, and so much injured that she was obliged to put back, and the unfortunate Quartermaster was thus compelled to wait a fortnight for another opportunity of returning to England. He not only was delayed beyond the 10th (return day) but beyond the following 24th, and when he did arrive, he found that he had not been only superseded by the Commander in Chief, but considered dead by all his friends and relations! However, on personally applying for reinstatement, he obtained it, and once more joined his old corps at Harwich, where he many a night amused the mess with the recital of his trip to sea in the coach which was always given with most effect when he was half-seasover.

A Caledonian Response.—The Rev. Ralph Erskine, one of the fathers of the secession from the kirk of Scotland, on a certain occasion paid a visit to his venerable brother Ebenezer, at Abernethy. "Oh! man," said the latter, "but ye come a gude time...I've a diet of examination to day, and ye maun tak it, as I have matters o' life and death to settle at Perth." "Wi' all my heart," quo' Ralph. "Noo, my Billy," says Ebenezer, "ye'll find a' my folk easy to examine but ane, and him I reckon ye had better no muddle wi! He has our auld, fashious, Scotch way of answering a question by putting anither; and may be he'll affront ye." "Affront me!" quoth the indignant theologian. "Do ye think he can foil me wi' my ain natural tools?" "Aweel," says the brother, "Ise gie ye fair warning, ye had better no ca' him up." The recusant was one Walter Simpson, the Vulcan of the parish. The gifted Ralph, indignant to the last degree at the bare idea of such an illiterate clown chopping divinity with him, determined to gravel him at once with a grand, leading unanswerable question. Accordingly, after putting a variety of simple preliminary interrogatories to the minor clodhoppers, he all at once, with a loud voice, cried out, "Walter Simpson!" "Here Sir, says Walter, are ye wanting me?" "Attention, Sir...now, Walter, can you tell me how long Adam stood in a state of innocence?" "Aye, till he got a wife," in an instant cried the anvil hammerer; "but can you tell me hoo lang he stood after?" "Sir doon, Walter," said the discomfited divine....*Literary Gazette.*

ST. PAUL'S CLOCK.—The following are the dimensions of the outside of Saint Paul's Clock:

	ft.	in.
Diameter of dial plate	18	10
Hour hand	5	8
Minute hand	9	8
Hour figures, each	1	0
Minute figures, each	2	2
Minute strokes	0	6
Rim to the Minutes	45	0

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