

LITERATURE, &c.

AMERICAN MANNERS AND INNS.—By this time I have seen something more of the routine of affairs at inns, &c. than at the close of my first day's stage travelling, which has but tended to confirm the observations I was then about to have made. They are not the comfortable, do-as-you-like public or private sort of places which the English hotels are; and though the fare may be quite as good, oftentimes in greater profusion, few Englishmen, with the system pursued, would relish it half so well. Suppose a roomy bar, as heretofore described, full of strangers and residents of the town, who half live at the hotels, standing about, ten minutes before dinner, as impatient as a throng at a theatre, until the ringing of a bell announces the repast ready to be pounced upon. Forthwith, one simultaneous rush takes place to the dining, or general, or only eating-room; and each seating himself in the vicinity of his favourite dish, the dire attack commences. A novice would be apt to conclude that all had a heavy bet depending upon the quantity devoured in a given space of time; 'tis an affair in which each one is concerned exclusively for himself, carving, or cutting, and cramming down whatever he pleases, leaving his neighbour at liberty to do the same, or to do nothing at all,—alike to him,—except, as I am pleased to do the Americans the justice to say upon these, as all other occasions, the utmost deference and most respectful attention is ever paid to the ladies. But few words, perhaps, is spoken by the whole company; as each individual clears, or rather dismisses his plate, for it is rarely half cleared, 'another, and another, and another' succeeds, until he has gone the whole round of soup, fish, flesh, pudding, pastry, and dessert,—all frequently on the table together,—and brought the performance to a close; which is no sooner effected than up he starts, as if some contagion was spreading round the table, or there were a greater merit in bolting than in properly masticating a meal, in devouring with precipitancy, than in eating with decent deliberation; and, hurrying off to the bar, addresses himself to smoking, chewing, &c.—spitting every where, of course, with most perfect freedom: who would suffer restraint in a land of liberty! In the intervals, between meals, there is usually as much taken in the way of drams tossed down with equal expedition, as would serve an Englishman, at his meals, twice over. The difference is, that the one enjoys it, relishes it: the other takes it because it is habitual to him, and, without a moment's reflection in any way about it, is satisfied for the time, if the act be only performed. I do not give this merely as a specimen of coach travelling: there haste and helter skelter are often unavoidable; but I consider it a fair outline of these proceedings at hotels, in any part of the country where I have been, as much upon one occasion as another. At private houses, and in good society, there is no want of courtesy, and the most genuine good breeding and hospitality; but even here I think I have noticed a system of despatch neither necessary nor quite agreeable; a confusing and intermixing of courses, &c.; for instance, even understanding that it is heresy itself not to vanish with the cloth, and what in an Englishman would very much give the idea of hurrying over a meal to start a journey.

What is done with the parlours, I know not. At every good inn there are mostly several, and those on the first floor are to be seen carpeted, about half furnished, the door standing wide open, and no one in them. The drawing-rooms above are often elegant, and these I have occasionally seen occupied, but more commonly empty. As to lodging, when not intruded upon by company of one sort or other, it is all that can be wished;—you are generally waited upon by black servants, who are civil and attentive, and expect not money but fair words:—This is at Buffalo, twenty one miles from Niagara.—*Fowler's Journal of a Tour in the State of New York.*

A posthumous work by Thomas Hope, author of the celebrated romance of Anastasius, has lately been printed in London. It is entitled an Essay on the Origin and Prospects of Man, and the Literary Gazette pronounces it altogether one of the most extraordinary productions of the age in which we live.

THE SEA.

THE Sea, the sea, the open sea,
The blue, the fresh, the ever free,
Without a mark, without a bound,
It runneth the earth's wide regions round:
It plays with the clouds, it mocks the skies,
Or like a cradled creature lies.
I'm on the sea! I'm on the sea!
I am where I would ever be,
With the blue above, and the blue below,
And silence whereso'er I go:
If a storm should come, and awake the deep,
What matter? I shall ride and sleep.

I love, O how I love to ride
On the fierce, foaming, bursting tide,
When ev'ry mad wave drowns the moon,
Or whistles aloft his tempest tune,
And tells how goeth the world below,
And why the southwest blast doth blow?
I never was on the dull tame shore,
But I lov'd the great sea more and more,
And backwards flew to her billowy breast,
Like a bird that seeketh its mother's nest,
And a mother she was, and is to me,
For I was born on the open sea.

The waves were white, and red the morn,
In the noisy hour when I was born:
And the whale it whistled, the porpoise roll'd,
And the dolphins bared their backs of gold,
And never was heard such an outcry wild
As welcom'd to life the ocean child.
I have lived since then in calm and strife
Full fifty summers a rover's life,
With wealth to spend, and a power to range,
But never have sought or sighed for change;
And Death, whenever he comes to me,
Shall come on the wild, unbounded sea.

BARRY CORNWALL.

THE CAMP HILL, NEAR HASTINGS.

In the deep blue of eve,
Ere the twinkling stars had begun,
Or the lark took his leave
Of the skies and the sweet setting sun,

I climb'd to yon heights,
Where the Norman encamp'd him of old,*
With his bowmen and knights,
And his banner all burnished with gold,

At the conqueror's side
There his minstrel sat harp in hand;
In pavilion wide,
And they chanted the deeds of Roland.

Still the ramparted ground
With a vision my fancy inspires,
And I hear the tramp sound,
As it marshalled our chivalry's sires.

On each turf of that mead
Stood the capor of England's domains,
That enobled her breed,
And high-mettled the blood of her veins.

Over hauberk and helm
As the sun's setting splendour was thrown,
Thence they looked o'er a realm,
And to-morrow beheld it their own.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

* What is called the East Hill, at Hastings, is crowned with the works of an ancient camp; and it is more than probable it was the spot which William I. occupied between his landing and the battle which gave him England's crown. It is a strong position the works are easily traced.

PUNCTUATION.—Authors often send their manuscripts to the press without comma or semicolon, leaving those little matters to the judgment of the compositor. Yet the misplacing of a single comma is often fatal to the intended meaning of the sentence: and if it is not nonsense already, it has every chance of becoming so. The late Mr Sharpe committed a strange blunder of this kind, when he wrote the following under the likeness of his patron saint:—'Believing Richard Brothers to be a prophet sent, by God I have engraved his portrait.' Had he removed the comma two words forward, the assertion would have been very different.—From a valuable little work by Mr Booth, author of the Analytical Dictionary entitled 'Principles of English Composition.'

DIFFERENCE OF TASTE.—A traveller in the last century remarked to certain Arabs, that he wondered at their eating insects so disgusting: to which they replied with some show of reason, that it savoured of affectation in a person who could

swallow an oyster, to be startled by any thing in the way of eating.—N. Am. Review.

MEALS OF THE ROMANS.—The breakfast was light consisting of fruit and wine. Near noon they took what is sometimes improperly called a dinner; it was a luncheon, eaten without the form of collecting round the table. At supper, the main business of eating for the day was done. The master of the house and the older part of the family reclined; but the girls and boys, who were not then regarded as so important members of society as at present, sat at the foot of the table. Before the meal began, water and towels were handed to each, for the purpose of washing their hands, which there is reason to believe, was not a needless form. The guests brought each a napkin from home to use during dinner, and if any thing particular struck their fancy, they used, by permission of the host, to wrap it in their napkin, and send it home. Carving was an art regularly taught in schools established for the purpose; institutions that might be revived with advantage. North American Review.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON.—The habits of deep meditation which Sir Isaac Newton had acquired, though they did not show themselves in his intercourse with society, exercised their full influence over his mind when in the midst of his own family. Absorbed in thought, he would often sit down on his bedside after he rose, and remain there for hours without dressing himself, occupied with some interesting investigation which had fixed his attention. Owing to the same absence of mind, he neglected to take the requisite quantity of nourishment, and it was, therefore, often necessary to remind him of his meals. In his personal appearance Sir Isaac Newton was not above the middle size, and, in the latter part of his life, was inclined to be corpulent. According to Mr. Conduitt, "he had a very lively and piercing eye, a comely and gracious aspect, with a fine head of hair as white as silver, without any baldness; and, when his peruke was off, was a venerable sight." Bishop Atterbury asserts, on the other hand, that the lively and piercing eye did not belong to Sir Isaac during the last twenty years of his life. "Indeed," says he, "in the whole air of his face and make there was nothing of that penetrating sagacity which appears in his compositions. He had something rather languid in his look and manner which did not raise any great expectation in those who did not know him." This opinion of Bishop Atterbury is confirmed by an observation of Mr. Thomas Hearne, who says, "that Sir Isaac Newton was a man of no very promising aspect. He was a short well set man. He was full of thought, and spoke very little in company, so that his conversation was not agreeable. When he rode in his coach, one arm would be out of his coach on one side, and the other on the other." Sir Isaac never wore spectacles, and never "lost more than one tooth to the day of his death."—Dr. Brewster's Life of Newton: Family Library.

SNUFF.—A woman asked a doctor whether taking snuff was hurtful to the brain? "No," said the doctor, "for he that has any brains will not take snuff."

NEW STEAM CARRIAGES.—Among the more interesting occurrences of the last month, may be mentioned the rapid, and we may add, perfectly unexpected success, which has attended the exhibition of some new locomotive steam-carriage in the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. The power of the engines first used on this splendid line of rail-road being deemed quite inadequate to the conveyance of heavy goods, Messrs. Stephenson and Co., the engineers to the railway, constructed a steam tug-carriage, with a cylinder of fourteen inches, and combining certain other improvements, which has imparted to the machine a degree of power far exceeding the estimate of the engineers. This beautiful engine, which has been very properly named the Samson, from the following statement of its gigantic powers, was first tried on the rail-road, by way of experiment, on the 25th ult. In that experiment no less than one hundred and fifty-one tons, including thirty waggons, with merchandise, passengers, &c., were drawn on the railway at a rate, during some parts of the journey, of nearly twenty miles per hour.