

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

**DESCRIPTION OF ANTWERP**—Whoever is desirous of seeing human ingenuity and human industry most successfully and most extensively exerted, for the purpose of counteracting the injurious effect of one of the most powerful and destructive elements, and by means the most simple, must visit Holland, and more particularly Amsterdam. He will there see and admire the simple and effectual means that have been adopted for the security of the town, by bringing the waters under complete controul. The whole extent of the sea-front, with the quays, and the shipping, is protected from injury by a double stockade of strong square, wooden posts, known by the name of boomen or barriers, extending at a distance from the quay along the whole line of the city, from the northwest to the southeast corner, a distance of two miles and a half. These large beams of wood are firmly fixed in pairs, with openings between each tier, at certain distances, to allow ships to pass them to and from the quays. Of these openings or passages, there are twenty-one, all of which are closed by night; so that nothing can arrive at, or depart from, the quay, till they are set open. By means of these barriers, the injurious effects of the waves on the wharf wall, by being divided and dispersed, as well as of masses of ice driven down from the northward are completely obviated. All the quays, and indeed every house in Amsterdam, are built upon piles; and as each of these is a large tree or baulk of timber, of forty or fifty feet in length, some idea may be formed of the expense of building in Amsterdam, as well as of the immense quantity of timber that must have been brought thither for this purpose alone. It is recorded that the number of piles on which the old Town House, now the Royal Palace, is built, amounts to thirteen thousand. Indeed the industry of the Dutch is not to be surpassed; and it is exercised with great skill and ingenuity, but also with indefatigable perseverance: otherwise they never could have succeeded in accomplishing such great undertakings with such small means. On no occasion, perhaps, is the ingenuity and perseverance more displayed than in the means employed in conquering the waters of the ocean, and in bringing under subjection the rivers, lakes, and canals with which they are surrounded on either side, by means of sluices, drains, ditches, and windmills, of the last of which, for these and other purposes, such as sawing wood, grinding corn, and crushing seeds for oil; the number in the vicinity of all their towns and cities is perfectly astonishing. These windmills are remarkable objects on the Boulevards of Amsterdam. There are no less than thirty bastions in the line of fortification on the land side, and on each bastion is a windmill, or a description larger than common, for grinding corn, and other purposes. It is whimsical enough that, surrounded as they are with water on every side, there is not a watermill in the whole country. It suited their purpose better to raise a contention between the elements, by employing the wind to drive out the water. Necessity, indeed, taught the Hollander this, for if it were not for the complete subjection in which the waters are held by this and other means, the city of Amsterdam might at any one moment be submerged. The idea of such a calamity, happening to a city which is stated to contain near two hundred thousand inhabitants, calls for every precaution that can be put in practice to avert it. Of this number of inhabitants, consisting chiefly of Calvinists; Catholics, Lutherans, and Jews, by far the greater part are engaged in some kind of commerce or another; few of them in manufactures, except such as are in every-day use, and for home consumption. Many of the artisans and the poorer classes inhabit the cellars under the houses of the more opulent, and a great many reside constantly on the water, in comfortable apartments built on their trading vessels, more particularly those employed in the inland navigations. In this and many other respects, the Dutch bear a strong resemblance to the Chinese, like this industrious and economical race, they keep their hogs, their ducks, and their domestic animals constantly on board. Their apartments are kept in a state of great neatness; the women employ themselves in all the domestic offices, and are assiduous in embellishing their little sitting-rooms with the labours of the needle, and many of them have little gardens of tulips, hyacinths, anemones, and various other flowers. Some of these vessels are of great length but generally narrow, suitable to the canals and sluices of the towns. Each vessel is generally navigated by the members of one family, of which the female part is by no means the least useful, nothing being more common than to see the women steering, poling, hauling the ropes, or employed on some other duties of the craft.—Family Tour.

Extract from a Poem by Professor Wilson, entitled  
"A DREAM OF THE HIGHLANDS."

## IMAGINATION.

Along Imagination's air serene,  
And on her sea serene we fly or float,  
Like Birds of Calm that with the moonlight glide  
Sometimes upon the wing, sometimes with plumes  
Folded amid the murmur of the waves,  
Far up among the mountains to the head  
Of some great Glen, enamour'd of the green  
And flowry solitude of inland peace.  
Yet there the birds of calm soon find that mists,  
And clouds and storms, and hurricanes belong  
Not to the sea alone, as we have found  
That, in the quiet regions of the Soul,  
Removed, as we did dream, from sorrow far  
And sin, there yet are doleful visitings  
Of Sin and Sorrow both. But as the Birds,  
Returning to the Ocean, take with them  
All the sweet memories alone, and forget  
The blasts that to their native haunts again  
Bore them away reluctant, nor do fear  
Another time to let themselves be borne  
On the same waftings back to the same place  
Where they had wheel'd about so happily,  
Or on the greensward walk'd among the lambs;  
Even so do we on our return to Life  
Tumultuous even far more than is the Sea,  
Take with us all the sweetest memories  
Of that still place which we had visited  
In our calm-loving dreams, forgotten all  
Or but remember'd dimly the distress  
That even there did come to trouble us;  
Nor loath, but earnest, even most passionate  
To wind our way back to the solitude  
Once more, and there relapse into the bliss  
That once so softly breath'd o'er Innocence.

From a Poem by the Hon. Mrs. Norton, entitled  
"THE UNDYING ONE."

Description of an English Cottage on a Sabbath morning, while the inmates are at church:

"A lowly cot  
Stood near that calm and consecrated spot.  
I enter'd it:—the morning sunshine threw  
Its warm bright beams upon the flowers that grew  
Around it and within it—'twas a place  
So peaceful and so bright, that you might trace  
The tranquil feelings of the dwellers there;  
There was no taint of shame, or crime, or care.  
On a low humble couch was softly laid  
A little slumberer whose rosy head  
Was guarded by a watch-dog; while I stood  
In hesitating, half-repentant mood,  
My glance still met his large bright watchful eye  
Wandering from me to that sweet sleeper nigh.  
Yes, even to that dumb animal I seem'd  
A thing of crime; the murderous death-light gleam'd  
Beneath my brow; the noiseless step was mine;  
I moved with conscious guilt, and his low whine  
Responded to my sigh, whose echo fell  
Heavily—as 'twere loath within that cot to dwell."

**DESCRIPTION OF ROTTERDAM, WHICH IS A SPECIMEN OF DUTCH CITIES IN GENERAL**—It is not very difficult to give a general idea of Rotterdam; but the effect which is altogether produced on a stranger, who for the first time, has visited a Dutch city, is not so easily to be conveyed. The ground plan of the city is that of a triangle, the base being the quay we have mentioned, stretching along the river, in its whole length about a mile and a quarter, according to the plan, the central portion of which is the 'Boortjes,' occupying, as before said, about three quarters of a mile: and a perpendicular, drawn from it to the opposite extremity, may be somewhat less than a mile. Through the middle of most of the streets runs a straight canal, bordered by large, lofty, and healthy trees,—oaks, elms, and lime-trees, chiefly the latter; and all these canals are, or at least were, crowded with shipping of every conceivable size and form. They are crossed by numerous draw-bridges, which, mixed with the shipping, the trees and the houses, have a very picturesque effect. Between the trees and each of the canals is the quay, which is of a width sufficient for shipping, landing, and receiving all articles of merchandise; and within the row of trees is the paved street for carts, carriages, and horses; and between this again, and extending close to the fronts of the houses, is a paved footpath of bricks or clinkers, as they are called, set edgewise, which, like our trottoirs

are for the sole use of foot passengers, but, unlike ours, are not raised above the level of the street. It will readily be imagined, that in these canal-streets, with all the shipping, there will be an incessant bustle. The houses are generally on a large scale, and lofty, in many of the streets they are really elegant. But belonging, as they do, chiefly to merchants and tradesmen, their workhouses, or magazines are sometimes on the ground floor, and frequently extend far behind, while the family is contented to occupy the upper stories. With all this, however, nothing can exceed in cleanliness every part of the exterior of these houses. Here we observed, as in Antwerp that the women were constantly employed in washing the walls, the doors, the window-shutters, and windows, by means of small pump-engines, or with pails, mops, and scrubbing-brushes, and, when engaged in this operation, they are seldom deterred from pursuing their task of brushing, scrubbing, or dashing water, by the heaviest showers of rain that may happen to fall. In fact, a Dutchman's house externally is as neat as paint and water can make it; nor are they less neat and clean in the interior. The floors, in general, are so scrubbed and polished as scarcely to allow one to walk upon them with safety.—Family Tour.

**CHANGE.**—Constant change is the feature of society. The world is like a magic lantern, or the shifting scenes in a pantomime. *Ten years* convert the population of schools into men and women, the young into fathers and matrons, make and mar fortunes, and bury the last generation but one. *Twenty years* convert infants into lovers and fathers and mothers, render youth the operative generation, decide men's fortunes and distinctions, convert active men into crawling drifvellers, and bury all the preceding generation. *Thirty years* raise an active generation from nonentity, change fascinating beauties into bearable old women, convert lovers into grandfathers, and bury the active generation, or reduce them to decrepitude and imbecility. *Forty years*, alas! change the face of all society; infants are growing old; the bloom of youth and beauty has passed away; two active generations have been swept away from the stage of life, names so cherished are forgotten and unsuspected candidates for fame have started from the exhaustless womb of nature. *Fifty years!* why should any desire to retain affections from maturity for fifty years? It is to behold a world they do not know, and to which they are unknown; it is to live to weep for the generations passed away, for lovers, for parents for children, friends in the grave; it is to see every thing turned upside down by the fickle hand of fortune, and the absolute despotism of time; it is, in a word, to behold the vanity of human life in all the varieties of display.

## MAXIMS BY A MIDDLE AGED GENTLEMAN.

Never proffer your services to see a stranger home who is *Bacchi plenus*, for after pulling your shoulders from their sockets, in efforts to support him, or rolling you in the mud when he chooses to refresh therein himself, it is ten to one but he charges you with picking his pockets of something he never held in fee in his life; or else abuses you for refusing to see him to his door, though it is five miles further out of your way, and you have conveyed him six. Above all, if he looks married never see him quite home. I need not explain why.

In conversation, eschew that poor penny farthing pedantry of suggesting etymologies, and being curious about the origin of this or that expression. Words are the current coin of conversation; take them as they are told down to you, and pay them away as they are demanded. It would be as rational for a man to be curious to know through what hands every shilling in his purse had passed, as whence this word is derived, and whence the other.

Avoid quotations, unless you are well studied in their import, and feel their pertinence. My friend—the other day looking at the skeleton of an ass which had been dug out of a sandpit, and admiring and wondering at the structure even of that despised animal, made a very mal-adroit use of one. 'Ah!' said he with the deepest humility, and a simplicity worthy of La Fontaine. 'we are fearfully and wonderfully made.'

Do not allow your friend, because he cannot convince you, and you have convinced him against his will, to compress your nostrils, or kick you out of his chambers, for if you once allow such liberties, there is