

these matters engaged almost all the attention which Walpole could spare from matters more important still, for bidding for Ziackes and Petitts, from cheapening fragments of tapestry, and handles of old lances, from joining bits of painted glass, and from setting up memorials of departed cats and dogs. While he was fetching and carrying the gossip of Kensington Palace and Carlton House, he fancied he was engaged in politics; and when he recorded that gossip, he fancied he was writing history. He was, as he has himself told us, fond of faction as an amusement. He loved mischief; but he loved quiet; and he was constantly on the watch for opportunities for gratifying his tastes at once. He sometimes contrived, without seeing himself, to disturb the course of Ministerial negotiations, and to spread confusion through the political circles. He does not himself pretend that, on these occasions, he was actuated by public spirit; nor does he appear to have had any private advantage in view. He thought it a good practical joke to set public men together by the ears; and he enjoyed their perplexities, their accusations and their recriminations, as a malicious boy enjoys the embarrassment of a misdirected traveller.

## FROM THE MIRROR OF THE MONTHS.

## APRIL,

WHOSE name is derived from a Latin word, signifying to open, is celebrated by writers as one of the most delightful months in the year. April is spring, the only spring month that we possess, the most juvenile of the months, and the most feminine, the sweetest month of all the year; partly because it ushers in the May, and partly for its own sake, so far as any thing can be valuable without reference to any thing else. It is to May and June what 'sweet fifteen,' in the age of woman, is to passion-stricken eighteen, and perfect two-and-twenty. It is worth two Mays, because it tells tales of May in every sigh that it breathes, and every ear that it lets fall. It is the harbinger, the herald, the promise, the prophecy, the foretaste of all the beauties that are to follow it, of all, and more, of all the delights of summer, and all the 'pride, pomp, and circumstance' of glorious autumn. It is fraught with beauties that no other month can bring before us, and

"It bears a glass which shows us many more."

Its life is one sweet alteration of smiles and sighs and tears, and tears and sighs and smiles, till it is consummated at last in the open laughter of May."

By the same writer we are directed to observe, "what a sweet flush of new green has started up to the face of this meadow! and the new-born daisies that stud it here and there, give it the look of an emerald sky, powdered with snowy stars. In making our way to yonder hedgerow, which divides the meadow from the little copse that lines one side of it, let us not take the shortest way, but keep religiously to the little foot-path, for the young grass is as yet too tender to bear being trod upon; and the young lambs themselves, while they go cropping its crisp points, let the sweet daisies alone, as if they loved to look upon a sight as pretty and as innocent as themselves." It is further remarked that "the great charm of this month, both in the open country and the garden, is undoubtedly the infinite green which pervades it every where, and which we had best gaze our fill at while we may, as it lasts but a little while—changing in a few weeks into an endless variety of shades and tints, that are equivalent to as many different colours. It is this, and the budding forth of every living member of the vegetable world, after its long winter death, that, in fact, constitutes the spring; and the sight of which affects us in the manner it does, from various causes—chiefly moral and associated ones; but one of which is unquestionably physical: I mean the sight of so much tender green after the eye has been condemned to look for months and months on the mere negation of all colour, which prevails in winter in our climate. The eye feels cheered, cherished, and regaled by this colour, as the tongue does by a quick and pleasant taste, after having long palated nothing but tasteless and insipid things. This is the principal charm of spring, no doubt. But another, and one that is scarcely second to this, is the bright flush of blossoms that prevails over, and almost hides, every thing else in the fruit-garden and orchard. What exquisite differences and distinctions and resemblances there are between all the various blossoms of the fruit trees; and no less in their general effect than in their separate details. The almond-blossom, which comes first of all and while the tree is quite bare of leaves, is of a bright blush-rose colour; and when they are full blown, the tree, if it has been kept to a compact head instead of being permitted to straggle, looks like one huge rose, magnified by some fairy magic to deck the bosom of some fair giantess. The various kinds of plum follow, the blossoms of which are snow-white, and as full and clustering as those of the almond. The peach and nectarine, which are now full blown, are unlike either of the above; and their sweet effect, as if growing out of the hard bare wall, or the rough wooden pailing, is peculiarly pretty. They are of a deep blush colour, and of the delicate bell shape; the lips, however, are divided, and turning backward, to expose the interior to the cherishing sun. But perhaps the bloom that is richest and most promising in its general appearance, is that of the cherry, clasping its white honours all round the long straight branches, from heel to point, and not letting a leaf or a bit of stem be seen, except the three or four leaves that come as a green finish at the extremity of each branch. The other blossoms of the pears and (loveliest of all) the apples do not come in perfection till next month."

THE EFFECT OF WOMAN'S EYE UPON AN EXECUTION.—Anne Boleyn, being on the scaffold, would not consent to have her eyes covered with a bandage, saying that she had no fear of death. All that the divine who assisted at the exe-

cutio could obtain from her was, that she would shut her eyes; but as she was opening them at every moment, the executioner could not bear their mild and tender glances; fearful of missing his aim, he was obliged to invent an expedient to behead the queen. He drew off his shoes, and approached her silently; while he was at her left hand, another person advanced at her right, who made a great noise in walking, so that this circumstance drawing the attention of Anne, she turned her face from the executioner, who was enabled to strike the fatal blow, without being disarmed by that spirit of affecting resignation which shone in the eyes of the lovely Anne Boleyn.—*D'Israeli's Curiosities of Literature.*

## FROM THE COURT MAGAZINE.

## SUMMER SONGS. O! YE HOURS.

O ye hours, ye sunny hours!  
Floating lightly by,  
Are ye come with birds and flowers,  
Odours and blue sky?

Yes, we come, again we come,  
Through the wood-paths, free;  
Bringing many a wanderer home,  
With the bird and bee.

O ye hours, ye sunny hours!  
Are ye wafting song?  
Doth mild music stream in showers  
All the groves among?

Yes, the nightingale is there,  
While the starlight reigns,  
Making young leaves and sweet air  
Tremble with her strains.

O ye hours, ye sunny hours!  
In your silent flow  
Ye are mighty, mighty powers!  
Bring ye bliss or wo?

Ask not this—oh! seek not this!  
Yield your hearts awhile  
To the soft wind's balmy kiss,  
And the heaven's bright smile.

Throw not shades of anxious thought  
O'er the glowing flowers!  
We are come with sunshine fraught,  
Question not the hours!

MRS. HEMANS.

## FROM CAPTAIN CROW'S MEMOIRS.

## A PERILOUS SITUATION.

ONE afternoon, when we were ten to twelve hundred miles from any land, and were sailing at the rate of seven or eight knots, the alarm was given that the ship was on fire in the after hold. I was in the cabin at the time, and springing upon deck, the first persons I saw were two young men with their flannel shirts blazing on their backs; at the same time I perceived a dense cloud of smoke issuing from below, and looking round me, I found the people in the act of cutting away the stern and quarter boats, that they might abandon the vessel. At this critical juncture I had the presence of mind to exclaim, in an animated tone, 'Is it possible, my lads, that you can desert me at a moment when it is your bounden duty, as men, to assist me?' And observing them hesitate, I added, 'Follow me, my brave fellows! and we shall soon save the ship.' These few words had the desired effect, for they immediately rallied, and came forward to assist me. To show them a proper example, I was the first man to venture below, for I thought of the poor blacks entrusted to my care, and who could not be saved in the boats, and I was determined, rather than desert them, to extinguish the fire, or to perish in the attempt. When we got below, we found the fire blazing with great fury on the starboard side, and as it was known to the crew that there were forty-five barrels of gunpowder in the magazine, within about three feet only of the fire, it required every possible encouragement on my part to lead them on to extinguish the rapidly increasing flames. When I first saw the extent of the conflagration, and thought of its proximity to the powder, a thrill of despair ran through my whole frame; but by a strong mental effort I suppressed my disheartening feelings, and only thought of active exertion, unconnected with the thought of imminent danger. We paused for a moment, struggling, as it were, to determine how to proceed. Very fortunately for us our spare sails were stowed close at hand. These were dragged out, and, by extraordinary activity, we succeeded in throwing them over the flames, which they so far checked, that we gained time to obtain a good supply of water down the hatchway, and in the course of ten or fifteen minutes, we extinguished the flames. Had I hesitated only a few minutes on deck, or had I not spoken encouragingly to the people, no exertions whatever could have saved the ship from being blown up, and as the catastrophe would most probably have taken place before the hands could have left the side in the boats, perhaps not a soul would have survived to tell the tale. I hope, therefore,

I shall be excused in assuming to myself more credit (if indeed credit be due) for the presence of mind by which I was actuated on this occasion, than, for any thing I ever did in the course of my life. The accident was occasioned by the ignorance and carelessness of the two young men whose clothes I had seen burning on their backs; through the want of regular officers they had been entrusted to draw off some rum from a store cask, and who, not knowing the danger, to which they exposed themselves and the ship, had taken down a lighted candle, a spark from which had ignited the spirit.

GREECE.—From the dawn of intellect and freedom, has Greece been a watch-word in the earth. There rose the social spirit to soften and refine her chosen race, and shelter, as in a nest, her gentleness from the rushing storm of barbarism—there liberty first built her mountain throne, first called the waves her own, and shouted across them a proud defiance to despotism's branded myriads: there the arts and graces danced around humanity, and stored man's home with comforts, and strewed his path with roses, and bound his brows with myrtle, and fashioned for him the breathing statue and summoned him to temples of snowy marble, and charmed his senses with all forms of elegance, and threw over his final sleep their veil of loveliness: there sprung poetry, like their own fabled goddess, mature at once, from the teeming intellect, girt with the arms and armour that defy the assaults of time, and subdue the heart of man: there matchless orators gave the world a model of perfect eloquence, the soul the instrument on which they played, and every passion of our nature but a tone which the master's touch called forth at pleasure: there lived and taught the philosophers of bower and porch, of pride and pleasure, of deep speculation and of useful action, who developed all the acuteness and refinement, and excursive energy, and energy of mind, and were the glory of their country, when their country was the glory of the earth.—*Fox's Christian Morality.*

DUTIFUL WIDOW.—The clerk of a large parish not five miles from Bridgenorth, Salop, perceiving a female crossing the churchyard in a widow's garb, with a watering-can and bundle, had the curiosity to follow her, and he discovered her to be Mrs —, whose husband had not long been interred. The following conversation took place:—'Ab! Mrs. —, what are you going to do with your watering-can?' 'Why, Mr P —, I have begged a few hay seeds, which I have in my bundle, and am going to sow them on my poor husband's grave, and have brought a little water with me to make them spring.' The clerk replied, 'You have no occasion to do that, as the grass will soon grow upon it.' 'Ah! Mr P —, that may be; but do you know my poor husband, who now lies here, made me promise him, on his death bed, I would never marry again, until the grass had grown over his grave; and having a good offer made me, I dunna wish to break my word, or be kept as I am.'

BUFFON'S LITERARY HABITS.—Notwithstanding the high reputation of his works, and the very large proportion of time which was devoted to study, Buffon appeared to little advantage in company. His conversation did not reach beyond mediocrity, and the time at table was spent in light talk, exceeding even the licensed freedoms of the French. The power of communicating information was either wanting, or reserved for his particular friends in private, and he considered that a discussion upon the sciences should be confined to books alone. These opinions may have influenced his wish for comparatively privacy, and it is certain that he did not mingle with his contemporaries in literary and scientific fame. Vanity has been generally allowed to be the greatest failing in the mind of Buffon, and the pains which he took to work up his writings, and his severe study, have perhaps been too often invidiously referred "to the consideration of what after generations would think regarding him." He delighted in reading aloud his own works to his visitors, and chiefly those which he considered his finest pieces. Parts of the Natural History of Man, the description of the Deserts of Arabia in the History of the Camel, that of the Swan, &c., were his favourites. It is but justice to say, however, that a more laudible inducement to recite them, than the mere love of hearing them praised, has been assigned by some of his biographers. "They were read with the view of hearing opinions and receiving corrections; he willingly received any hint of improprieties of style, and was open to imperfections when pointed out to him. It is not so certain that an opinion of pieces recited in this way was always given with that candour which would allow correction. He delighted also in what was luxurious or magnificent, and was devoted to his dress almost to the extreme of foppery. He spent much time at his toilet, and even in his latest years had his hair powdered twice, or three times