

LITERATURE, &c.

ON THE LANGUAGE OF ANIMALS.

That animals have each a language of their own to one another, there can be no doubt. I know a good deal of their language myself. I know by the voice of the raven when he has discovered one of my flock dead—I know also his prelude to the storm and to fine weather. The moorlows can call one another from hill to hill. I learned to imitate their language so closely that I could have brought scores of them within the range of my shot of a morning. The black cock has a call, too, which brings all his motley mates around him, but the females have no call. They are a set of subordinate beings, like the wives of a nabob. They dare not even incubate upon the same hill with their haughty lords. But the partridge, and every mountain-bird, have a language to each other, and though rather circumscribed, it is perfectly understood, and, as Wordsworth says, "not to me unknown." Even the stupid and silly barn-door hen, when the falcon appears, can, by one single alarm-note, make all her chickens hide in a moment. Every hen tells you when she has laid her egg; and, lest it should not be well enough heard or understood, the cock exerts the whole power of his lungs in divulging the important secret. The black-faced ewe, on the approach of a fox or a dog, utters a whistle through her nostrils which alarms all her comrades, and immediately puts them on the look-out. Not one of them will take another bite until they discover whence the danger is approaching. If the dog be with a man, sundry of them utter a certain bleat, which I know well but cannot describe, and begin feeding again. If the dog is by himself, they are more afraid of him than any other animal, and you will then hear the whistle repeated through the whole glen. But the acuteness of the sheep's ear surpasses all things in nature that I know of. A ewe will distinguish her own lamb's bleat among a thousand all braying at the same time, and making a noise a thousand times louder than the singing of psalms at a Cameronian Sacrament in the fields, where thousands are congregated—and that is no joke nei her. Besides the distinguishment of voice is perfectly reciprocal between the ewe and lamb, who, amid the deafening sound, run to meet one another. There are few things that have ever amused me more than a sheep-shearing, and then the sport continues a whole day. We put the flock into a fold, set out all the lambs to the hill, and then set out the ewes to them as they are shorn. The moment that a lamb hears its dam's voice, it rushes from the crowd to meet her, but instead of finding the rough, well-clad, comfortable mamma, which it left an hour, or a few hours ago, it meets a poor naked shriveling—a most deplorable-looking creature. It wheels about, and uttering a loud tremulous bleat of perfect despair, flies from the frightful vision. The mother's voice arrests its flight—it returns—flies, and returns again, generally for ten or a dozen times before the reconciliation is fairly made up.—*The Ettrick Shepherd's Lay Sermons.*

HINTS FOR CONVERSATION.

I remember when I was a young man, I was told by a minister of the gospel, a grave and venerable man, who had preached long, both in England and Scotland, that to please my companions and associates, I had nothing more to do than to desire and wish to do it. This is a just maxim in itself, but one which I did not then understand; for I found, that though I had the desire, I could not discover that my attempts were at all successful. Instead of that, my desire of pleasing was so ardent, that it often excited a smile at my absurdity and simplicity. Sir Walter Scott was accustomed very often to check my loquacity, and call for a song instead; and I have frequently done the same with young men; for it was not age that I wanted but experience. He had the true art of conversation. He was always amusing and instructive; and he never put any one out of countenance, but was sure to bring a modest man forward. Professor Wilson's conversation is richer and more brilliant; but then he takes sulky fits. If there be any body in the company whom he does not like, the party will not get much out of him for that night; his eyes gleam like those of a dragon; and a poet says of it, (Wordsworth, I think,) 'he utters a short hem! at every pause; but further ventures not.' The truth is, that the vivacity of youth must be tempered, the character must be established, and the means of pleasing understood, before the desire to please becomes an infallible rule in conversation. Every person soon feels disgusted with one whose whole aim is to make him laugh. * * * I found the society of London quite different; and how it should have happened with me, I know not; for I mixed freely with all sorts of respectable society; but I never met with an overweening character, either from the clergy or laity. Croly is, perhaps, a little too apt to take the lead in conversation, but then he is so exceedingly in-

telligent that one is always both pleased and edified. Hood, from whom I expected a continued volley of wit, is a modest, retiring character. Reynolds more brilliant. Hook altogether inimitable, either for fun or drinking. Martin as simple in his manners as a shepherd's boy. Cruikshank stately and solemn. But I could go over a thousand in the same way, in most of whom I was disappointed, though often most agreeably. Among the nobility and gentry I found myself most at home, and most at my ease of all. There was no straining of superiority there. Every gentleman and lady came apparently to be pleased, and they were pleased with every thing, whether said or sung. The impression left on my mind, by mingling with the first society of London, is that of perfection, and what I would just wish society to be.

I must always regard the society of London as the pink of what I have seen in the world. I met with most of the literary ladies, and confess that I liked them better than the blue-stockings of Edinburgh. Their general information is not superior to that of their northern sisters, perhaps it may be said that it is less determined; but then they never assume so much. The society of London that I mixed with is, as I have said before, just such a model as I would always desire to see. There was no wrangling; none whatever; not even on political creeds. They intermixed all in the most perfect harmony; and if such a thing as the different sides chanced to be mentioned, it was by way of joke. Mr Holmes was, however, a very arbitrary gentleman among them, but a fellow of infinite good humour.—*Rookwood; a Romance.*

W O M A N.

A GODDESS! but a goddess who descends
To make her human mate immortal with her love!
Oh! fair in that bright hour, when Fortune smiles,
And the fond world is kind, and all is gay,
And she the gayest, fondest of the throng;
Playful and wild, voluptuous, delicate!
In the world's sunny garden of all joyance
A dazzling butterfly—an airy fawn!
A thing to be indulged, and lightly chased;
Caught, but not captured; ransomed with a kiss!
Her word, her glance, a law; and her caprice
Reason complete; but fairer, fairer still,
When the dark clouds spread o'er our shining life,
In sickness, and in sorrow, and in toil—
When by the suffering couch she sweetly tends
With step that yields no sound, and eye that calms no
sleep,
Deeming devotion duty. Beauteous duty!
Who shares our grief, and, sharing, soothes the pang:
For then man feels, amid all his misery,
Bliss still remains with such a ministrant;
And labor, with no guerdon but her love,
Is not inglorious; but in that fell hour,—
Too oft the dooming of the child of song,
And those quick spirits, whose creative train
Raise up the demon they can not controul,—
In that fell hour of agony and hate,
When men are wolves, and the wild earth a waste,
And our names Execution, and our forms
The scath of blinded zealots, then most fair!
Most beautiful! For, when all desert us,
Art thou most faithful; and calumnious tongues
But make thine own sweet lips more firm and fond!

DISRAELI THE YOUNGER.

FORCE OF HABIT.

LET me put before you a law and condition of your characters. Impressions independent of the will, whether produced directly through the senses, or by trains of association within the mind, gradually lose their power by repetition; but habits, whether of mind or body, depending on a previous determination of the will, gain strength by their very exercise, so as at length to become a part of ourselves and an element of our happiness. It is to the operation of this law that we must refer some of the strangest contradictions in human nature. What a melancholy contrast we too often find between the generous temper of youth and the cold calculating spirit of a later period! between the actions of a man at one time of his life and those of another! I believe there is not one whom I am now addressing, who, if he reflect at all will not acknowledge how much the cold hand of time has already chilled some of his better feelings. Now it is absolutely certain, that sensuality and other sins to which by nature man is prone, will do their work in marring the image of God; and, unless opposed by some counter-vailing principle, will end in habits making a wreck both of soul and body. In such a state of things man becomes utterly spell-bound—he is in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity, and has no power to help himself; and the hand of God alone can help him. I am not now contending for the doctrine of moral necessity; but I do affirm that the moral government of God is by general laws; and that it is our bounden duty to study those laws, and, as far as we can to turn them to our account. As far, at least, as this world is con-

cerned, the feelings on which we act in early life may and do diminish in their intensity, and yet we may go on in a course, honorable to ourselves and useful to our country, mainly by what is called the force of habit. Of what vast importance is it, then, to those I am now addressing, many of whom have barely reached the dawn of manhood, to lay a good foundation against the coming time, by fostering habits of practical kindness and self control—by mental discipline and study—by cultivating all those qualities which give elevation to the moral and intellectual character—in one word, by not wavering between right and wrong, but by learning the great lesson of acting strenuously and unhesitatingly on the light of conscience.—*Sedgwick on the Studies of Cambridge.*

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

Admitting that religion should be a subject of the established scheme of national instruction,—but whose religion? And who will contend that religion now accomplishes all the important and conclusive objects of moral instruction? or if it does to the sect of the established church, how fares it with all other contributors to the fund of instruction? The religion of the church and the religion of the sects, alike fail in the highest object of religion, the creation of a moral force; because from the natural tendency of peculiar and sanctioned classes to confine themselves to mere technical and professional views, they have separated religion from its subject matter,—man, as a being of this world, whose salvation must be wrought out by working with such machinery as is given to him, and according to his opportunities and position. They are ignorant of the value of man's condition as a whole;—they concern themselves with only the seventh portion of his existence, and his character as a devotee of one sect. They employ the same general and shadowy instructions which preachers employed in darker times, being unable to supply illustrations of the practical application of the truths they preach, from a knowledge of the ways of the world and the course of human action. The multitude unapt to connect generalities with particular cases, apply the doctrine to all others than themselves,—admit its truth but perceive that he knows not what he says, because he is ignorant of the real predicaments of men in life. This is the general character of the castes; and shall the nation pay its treasure for such teaching? It would not be among the least of the benefits of a national system of education, that the general diffusion would compel the preachers of religion to show God by his works, and by forcing religion upon the minds of the people through the medium of objects which surround them make it the guide and companion of actions.—*Westminster Review.*

HINT TO WRANGLERS.

Every kind of wrangling from the intercourse of friends, the entertainer or president of the company ought to check it, at whatever expense or chagrin to the aggressors. The best rebuke that I ever heard of this sort, or even shall hear again, was given by the late Dr. Barclay, of Edinburgh. He was a gentleman of great gravity and mildness of disposition, and hated all kind of wrangling. So there was one day he had four other professors, five college students of the first rate talents, and myself, to dine with him. After the doctor's wine began to operate a little, the young men contradicted their preceptors in almost every thing, always provoking a dispute. The seniors smiled at the young men's absurdity, and dropped the subjects. But at length two of them fastened on each other, an Englishman and an Irishman, and disputed so violently that all social conversation was completely obstructed. It was about some point of moral philosophy, the decision of which did not signify a small pin; so their several arguments were utter nonsense. But at length, one of them, after uttering a most obstreperous sentence, gave a blow on the table with his fist; on which Dr. Barclay's little terrier, that lay below it, got up, with a great bow-wow-wow! bow-wow-wow! bow-wow-wow! The Doctor gave it a gentle spurn, and, with a face of the utmost good-nature, said, "Haud your tongue, ye little stupid beast; I'm sure ye ken as little about it as any o' them." The reproof was successful; the gentlemen's faces both grew red, but one of them joined in the laugh till the tears ran down his cheeks. There was no more disputing that night.—*The Ettrick Shepherd's Lay Sermons.*

CURIOUS ATMOSPHERIC EFFECT.

My own beard, which in Europe was soft, silky, and almost straight, began, immediately on my arrival at Alexandria, to curl, to grow crisp, strong, and coarse, and before I had reached Es-Souen resembled horse-hair to the touch, and was all disposed in ringlets about the chin. This is, no doubt, to be accounted for by the extreme dryness of the air, which, operating through several thousand years, has, in the interior,