

Literature, &c.

From the Dublin Univ. Magazine.
THE CHATEAU OF VANDYK.
BY THE AUTHOR OF 'CHARLES
O'MALLEY,' &c.

ON the eighth day after my arrival at Brussels, I told my wife to pack up; for as Mr Thysens, the lawyer, who promised to write before that time, had not done so, we had nothing to wait for. We had seen Waterloo, visited the Musee, skated about in Liston slippers through the Palais d'Orange, dined at Dubos's, eat ice at Velloni's, bought half the old lace in the Rue de la Madeleine, and almost caught an ague in the Allee Verte. This was, certainly, pleasure enough for one week; so I ordered my bill and prepared to evacuate Flanders. Lord help us, what beings we are! had I gone down the railroad by the Bouvelards, and not by the Montague de la Cour, what miseries might I not have been spared. Mr Thysen's clerk met me, just as I emerged from the Place Royale, with a letter in his hand.

'Ah, Monsieur, if you please; a letter for you.'

I took it—opened—and read:

'Sir—I have just completed the purchase of the beautiful Chateau of Vanderstradentendok, with all its gardens, orchards, pheasantries, piscines, prairies, and forest rights, which are now your property. Accept my most respectful congratulations upon your acquisition of this magnificent seat of ancient grandeur, rendered doubly precious by its having been once the favorite residence of the great Vandyk.'

Here follows a long encomium upon Rubens and his school, which I did not half relish, knowing it was charged to me in my account, the whole winding up with a pressing recommendation to hasten down at once to take possession, and enjoy the partridge-shooting, then in great abundance.

My wife was in ecstasy to be the frown Vanderstradentendok, with a fish pond before the door, and twelve goddesses and gods in lead around it. To have a brace of asthmatic peacocks on a terrace, and a dropsical swan on an island, were strong fascinations, not to speak of the straight avenues, leading nowhere, and the winds of heaven blowing everywhere. A house with a hundred and thirty windows, and half as many doors, none of which would shut close; a garden, with no fruit but crab apples; and a nursery, so called, because the play ground of all the brats for a league round us. No matter, I had resolved to live abroad for a year or two; one place would do just as well as another; at least I should have quietness; that was something; there was no neighbourhood, there was no town, no high road, no excuse for travelling acquaintances to drop in, or rambling tourists to bore one with letters of introduction. Thank God, there was neither a battle field, a cathedral, a picture, nor a living poet, for ten miles on every side.

Here, thought I, I shall have that peace Piccadilly cannot give. Cincinnatus like, I'll plant my cabbages, feed my turkeys, let my beard grow, and nurse my rental. Solitude never bored me, I could bear any thing but intrusive impertinence; and so far did I carry this feeling, that on reading Robinson Crusoe, I laid down the volume in disgust on the introduction of his man Friday.

It mattered little, therefore, that the picture the lawyer had drawn of the chateau had little existence out of his own florid imagination: the quaint old building, with its worn tapestries, and faded furniture, suited the habit of my soul, and I hugged myself often in the pleasant reflection that my London acquaintance would be puzzling their brains for my whereabouts, without the slightest clue to my detection. Now, had I settled in Florence, Frankfurt, or Geneva, what a life I must have led. There is always some dear Mrs Somebody going to live in your neighbourhood, who begs you'll look out for a house for her: something very eligible; eighteen rooms well furnished, a southern aspect, in the best quarter; a garden indispensable; and all for some forty pounds a year; or some other dear friend who desires you'll find a governess with more accomplishments than Milibran, with more learning than Porson, and with the temper of five angels, and a vow in heaven to have no more salary than a college bed maker. And then there are the Thomsons passing through, whom you have taken care never to know before, but who fall upon you now, as strangers in a foreign land, and take the benefit of the alien act in dinners at your house during their stay. A stop not to enumerate the crying wants of the more lately arrived resident, all of which are refreshed to your benefit; the

recommendation of butlers who don't cheat, to moral music masters, grave dancing masters, and doctors who never take fees, every infraction by each of those individuals in his peculiar calling being set down as a just cause of complaint against yourself, requiring an animated correspondence in writing, and concluding with an abject apology, and a promise to cut the delinquent that day, though we owe him half a year's bill.

These were all pleasant—not to speak of the curse of disjointed society, ill assorted, ill conceived, unreasonable pretension, vulgar impertinence, and fawning toadyism on every side, and not one man to be found to join you in laughing at the whole thing, which would amply repay one for any indurance.

'No, thought I, I've had enough of Florence, I'll try my bark in quieter waters, and though it's only a punt, yet I'll hold the sculls myself, and that's something.'

So much for the self-gratulation I indulged in, as the old post-chaise rattled over the heavy pavement, and drew short up at the portico of my future dwelling. My wife was charmed with the procession of villagers who awaited us on the steps, and, although an uglier population never trod their mother earth in wooden slippers, fancied she could detect several faces of great beauty and of much interest in the crowd. I saw nothing but an indiscriminate haze of cotton nightcaps, striped jackets, blouses, black petticoats and sabots: so, pushing my way through them, I left the Bassoon and Burgo-master, to the united delights of their music and eloquence, and, shut the hall door, and thanked heaven that my period of peace and tranquility was at length to begin.

Peace and tranquility! What airy visions! Had I selected the post of cad to an omnibus, or steward to a Greenwich steamer, were I a guide to the Monument or a waiter at Long's, my life had been one of dignified repose in comparison with my present existence.

I had not been a week in the chateau when a travelling Englishman sprained his ankle, within a short distance of the house. As a matter of course he was brought there, and taken every care of for the few days of his stay; he was fed, housed, leeches, and stuffed, and, when at length he proceeded on his journey, was profuse in his acknowledgements for the services rendered him: and yet, what was the base return of this ungrateful man? . . . I have scarcely temper to record it. During the very moment when we were most lavish in our attention to him, he was sapping the very peace of his benefactors. He learned from the Flemish servants of the house that it had formerly been the favourite residence of Vandyk; that the very furniture then there was unchanged since his time; the bed, the table, the chair he sat on were all preserved. The wretch!—am I not warranted in calling him so?—made notes of all this, and, before I had been three weeks in my abode out came a 'Walk in Flanders,' in two volumes, with a whole chapter about me, headed 'CHATEAU DE VANDYK.' . . .

There we were, myself and my wife, in every window of the Row—Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green had bought us at a price, and paid for us; there we were—we who courted solitude and retirement, to be read of by every puppy in the west end and every apprentice in Cheapside. Our hospitality was lauded as if I kept open house for all comers, with 'hot chops and brown gravy at a moment's notice.' The antiquary was bribed to visit me by the fascinations of the spot, sacred to the reveries of genius; the sportsman by the account of my preserves; the idler, to say he had been there; and the guide-book maker and historical biographer to vamp up details for a new edition of 'Belgium as it is, or Vandyk, and his Contemporaries.'

From the hour of the publication of that infernal book, I never enjoyed a moment's peace and ease. The whole tide of my travelling countrymen—and what a flood it is, came pouring into Ghent. Post-horses could not be found sufficient for half the demand; the hotels were crowded; respectable peasants gave up their daily employ, to become guides to the chateau; and little busts of Vandyk were hawked about the neighbourhood by little children of four years old. The great cathedral of Ghent—Van Schapms pictures—all the historic remains of that ancient city were at a discount; and those who formerly exhibited them as a livelihood, were now thrown out of bread. Like the dancing master who has not gone up to Paris for the last summer, or the physician who has not taken up the stethoscope, they were reputed old-fashioned, and passeé; and, if they

could not describe the chateau de Vandyk, were voted among the by-gones.

The impulse once given, there was no stopping; the current was irresistible; the double lock on the gate of the avenue, the bull dog at the hall door, the closed shutters, the cut away bell rope, an announced a firm resolution in the fortress not to surrender; but we were taken by assault, escalated and starved out by turns.

Scarcely was the tea urn on the breakfast table, when they began to pour in, old and young, the halt, the one eyed, the fat, the thin, the melancholy, the merry, the dissipated, the dyspeptic, the sentimental, the jocose, the blunt, the ceremonious, the courtly, the rude, the critical, the free and easy; one came forty miles out of his way, and pronounced the whole an imposition and myself a humbug, another insisted on my getting up at dinner, that he might sit down in my chair, characterised by the confounded guides, as 'la chaise de Vandyk,' a third went so far as to propose lying down in the great four post bed, just to say that he was there, though my wife was then in it. I speak not of the miserable practise of cutting slices off all the furniture as relics. John Murray took an inventory of the contents of the whole house for a new edition of his guide book and Holman the blind traveller felt me all over with his hand, as I sat at tea with my wife; and last of all, a respectable cheesemonger from the Strand, after inspecting the entire building from the attics to the cellar, pressed sixpence into my hand at parting, and said, 'Happy to see you, Mr Vandyk, if you come into the city.'

Then the advice and counsel I met with, oral and written, would fill a volume, and did; for I was compelled to keep an album in the hall for the writer's names.

One suggested that my desecration of the temple of genius would be less disgusting, if I dined in my kitchen, and left the ancient dining room as the great artist had left it.

Another hinted that my presence in my own house destroyed all the illusions of its historic associations.

A third, a young lady—to judge by the writing—proposed my wearing a point beard and lace ruffles, with trunk hose and a feather in my hat; probably to favor the illusion so urgently mentioned by the last writer, and perhaps to indulge visitors like my friend the cheesemonger.

Many pitied me—well might they!—as one insensible to the associations of the spot; while my very servants, regarding me only as a show part of the establishment, neglected their duties on every side, and betook themselves to cironship, each allocating his peculiar territory to himself; like the people who show the lions and the armor in the Tower.

No weather was either too hot or too cold, too sultry or too boisterous, no hour too late or too early, no day was sarced. If the family was at prayer, or at dinner, at breakfast or in bed, it mattered not; they had come many miles to see the chateau, and see it they would.

Alas! thought I, if, as some learned person suppose, individuals be recognisable in the next world, what a melancholy time of it will be yours, poor Vandyk! If they make all this hubbub about the house that you lived in, what will they do about your fleshy tabernacle?

As the season advanced, the crowds increased, and, as autumn began, the conflicting currents to and from the Rhine all meet in my bed-room. There took place all the rendezvous of Europe. Runaway daughters there first repented in papa's arms, and profligate sons promised amendment for the future. Myself and my wife were passed by unnoticed and disregarded amid this tumult of recognition and salutation. We were emaciated like skeletons: our meals we eat when we could, like soldiers on a retreat, and we slept in our clothes, not knowing at what moment the enemy might be upon us. Locks, bolts, and bars were ineffectual; our resistance only increased curiosity, our garrison was ever open to bribery.

It was to no purpose that I broke the windows, to let in the north wind and acute rheumatism, to little good did I try an alarm of fire every day about two, when the house was fullest; and I failed signally in terrifying my torturers when I painted the gardener's wife sky blue, and had her placed in the hall, with a large label over her bed, 'collapsed cholera.' Bless your heart, the tourist cares for none of these, and I often think it would have saved English powder and shot to have exported half a dozen of them to the East, for the siege of St Jean

d'Acre. Had they been told of an old picture, a tea-pot, a hearth brush—or a candlestick that once belonged to Godfrey de Bouillon or Peter the Hermit, they would have stormed it under all the fire of Egypt. Well it's all over at last, human patience could endure no longer, we escaped by night, got away by stealth to Ghent, took post horses in a feigned name, and fled from the Chateau de Vandyk as from the plague. Determined no longer to trust to chances, I have built a cottage myself, which has no historic associations further back than six weeks ago, and fearful even of being known as the ci-divant possessor of the chateau, never confess to have been in Ghent in my life, and if Vandyk be mentioned, ask if he is not the postmaster at Turvuren.

Here then I conclude my miseries. I cannot tell what may be the pleasure that awaits the live lion, but I envy no man the delights that fall to his lot, who inhabits the den of the dead one.

From the Knickerbocker.

CAROUSSIS-

AN AUTHENTIC SKETCH OF THE MASSACRE AT SCIO.

THE family of Caroussis, a Sciote was among the first that fled to the mountains, on the arrival at Scio of the Ottoman fleet, with the forces destined to massacre, burn and pillage all within their reach. Caroussis conducted his family and some of his relatives to a cave, which afterward received an accession of others, until the whole number of families amounted to more than a score. Here they lay concealed, in the greatest terror; neither daring to move or speak, for a long time, as they constantly heard the echo of the distant noise of destruction. In a few days, all their provisions were exhausted; yet the incessant roar of cannon and musketry told them that the work of death was still going onward. At night, some of them ventured to go abroad and collect grass and fruit, and even grain, from the neighbouring fields. Had their flight been in winter, they would soon have perished. From the mountains they beheld the smoke and flames of their dwellings; and they lost all hope of peaceful life, while the sons or Agar were allowed by the christian world to proceed in their unjust assaults upon their country. They could neither sleep by night nor by day. The sounds of lamentation and slaughter were ever in their ears, and their hearts were rent continually.

About twenty days passed in this manner, when at length the Moslems began to hunt the Christians who had taken refuge in the mountains. They employed blood-hounds for the purpose. The inmates of the cave where Caroussis had concealed his family, began to fear lest the Musselmen should discover them. One day they heard the discharge of fire-arms near at hand; and soon after some of their companions came rushing into the cave, reporting the advance of a gang of Osmanlies. The next moment a blood-hound entered and announced by his howls the presence of the refugees. Guns were fired through the shrubbery, in front of the cavern, until the wounded victims began to scream, and rush out. As they came forth, some of them could not see, having so long been deprived of the 'cheerful day.' The Turks killed the most of them as fast as they emerged to light; a few only were spared as slaves. Caroussis was shot immediately, but his children and his wife, together with her brother, who was retained for his great beauty, were led away captive. They fell to the lot of a Turk from Asia, who kept them on the Island of Scio.

In a few months, the terrible vengeance of Canaris, the Greek *brulottier*, was wreaked upon the Capitan Pacha, and three thousand of his murderous assistants, who all perished in the explosion of the flag-ship, and the confusion of the awful scene that ensued. Then indeed was the fury of the Turks vented in retaliation, without mercy, upon the remaining inhabitants within their reach! The brother of the wife of Caroussis was killed by his master, in revenge for his slaughtered countrymen. She, with her children, was sold for seven dollars, to a Turk from Crete, who removed them from Scio to Colophon, where he owned a magnificent seat. The mother was obliged to perform the most menial services, while the children were circumcised and educated in the Mohammedan religion. The mother, however, would not intermit her efforts in secret, to confirm her children in their attachment to the Christian faith; and in this way did all the Sciote matrons persevere in their endeavors to save their offspring from the pollution of Mohammedanism. They exhibited the noblest virtues in their deep distress, and so effectually educated their children in the