

LITERATURE, &c.

The British Magazines.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

THE PEASANTS' PRINCE.

LET us transport ourselves for a moment into the imperial palace at Vienna, and become invisible spectators of a very animated scene that took place within its walls about thirty years ago. It was in the Emperor's cabinet. Francis of Austria was there, surrounded by his Ministers. Every eye was fixed upon two men, who were engaged in an earnest, and almost angry discussion. From the purport of their conversation, it might easily be gathered that they were keenly opposed to each other in the great questions of the day, and that each of them contended for pre-eminence in the Council and in the political guidance of Austrian affairs. One of them was already advanced in years; his courtly dress could not impart grace to his spare and shrivelled form; and whilst engaged in an obstinate defence of absolute monarchical authority, the icy and impassable expression of his features remained unchanged. The only symptom of emotion he betrayed was a frequent and almost involuntary application of his fingers to a costly gold snuff box, while he was expressing sternly his resolution to destroy, everywhere within the limits of Austrian dominion, those seeds of liberty which had been scattered by the arms of France, upon German soil. The other, young, ardent, generous—representing by his energy, his instincts, his affections, and his principles, as well as by the frank and manly expression of his countenance, and the mingled cordiality and independence of his manners, the newly awakened aspirations after liberty of the Austrian youth—earnestly strove to win over the Gothic court into the path of constitutional freedom. The first was the prince de Metternich; the other was a member of the imperial family whom we shall name by and by, and who at that time filled the office of Director General of the Fortifications.

Metternich carried his point, and the prince immediately quitted Vienna. A few days afterwards were assembled upon one of the Tyrolean mountains, a large body of huntsmen, who were exercising themselves with the cross-bow and the carbine. Damasquined guns, leathern game pouches, sheep decked out with foliage, flowers and ribbons—such were the prizes prepared for the most skillful bowmen. Many an aged *chasseur* encouraged the younger ones by reciting their own early exploits. The women and maidens of the district, incited their husbands, their lovers, their brothers, by earnest smiles and hearty clapping of their hands.

A stranger advances into the arena; his bearing is graceful and noble; he wears the popular costume, and carries a crossbow and a gun. With a sure eye and a steady hand he takes his aim, and carries off most of the prizes. Guns, pouches, sheep, nosebags, ribbons—all fall to his lot. He distributes the former among the poorest of the huntsmen, and divides the gayer parts of the spoil among the maidens who were present; after which he is borne along as victor by the peasants, and required to tell his name. This name is repeated by the crowd with such joyous and clamorous acclamations, that they re-echo far and wide through the lofty fastnesses of the Tyrol. It was the German prince, the proscribed rival of Metternich.

His popularity became so great that the court grew alarmed at it, and banished him to a more distant place of exile. The prince took refuge in Upper Styria, where for many long years he pursued the same rude and primitive course of life as the mountaineers. He ate and drank with them, spoke their language, sang their songs, killed the chamois at their head, listened to their complaints, and relieved their misery. He taught them to manure their fields, to double their harvests, to improve their flocks, and to sell them at the best markets. He revealed to them the value of many plants and shrubs, which hitherto they had left unnoticed in their woods and meadows. For their sakes he made himself practically acquainted with all that concerns a country life, so that he became one of the first botanists and agriculturists in Europe. His scientific discoveries were spoken of in the academies of Vienna, Berlin, Paris, and London; while his unflinching skill as a marksman brought down the chamois at a distance of two hundred feet in the deepest gorges of the Alps. For above and beyond all other attainments, he gloried in being a huntsman; and he slept upon the snow, wrapped up in his cloak, as soundly as if he were lying beneath a coverlet of down, overhung by the damask draperies of a royal couch. His popularity became still greater in Styria than it had been in the Tyrol; and at least he was regarded as the idol of the whole people throughout Germany. Fortunately for Metternich and the emperor, he had renounced politics; for if he had not respected the throne, he might easily have overwhelmed both him and his minister at the head of a million peasants, who would readily have placed themselves under his command, and obeyed his orders, whatever they might have been.

An adventure of a singular kind, which occurred about this time, contributed to make this remarkable man a still fonder object of idolatry to the Styrian race. It was a bright warm morning in the month of August. At the open window of a country posthouse, situated near the base of the mountains, there sat an

old man and a young girl, who were talking quietly together. The maiden was a comely daughter of the Alpine valleys, with long brown hair tinged with a golden hue; her large eyes gentle, yet animated in their expression; her countenance beaming with health and cheerfulness; her tall full form set off by a close black spencer. Her companion was the master of the establishment. In other days he had been a bold and skilful horseman, but was now confined by old age and the gout to the corner of the stove, and was at this moment warming his white hairs in the sunshine, while he watched his grand daughter's hands as they stitched a postilion's jacket, which she seemed in haste to finish. They were alone in the house, and there was but a single stable boy left to take care of the horses. Every other creature belonging to the household—husband and wife, brothers, servants—all were at work some way off, cutting the ripe corn and gathering it into sheaves. Suddenly a caleche approaches, and draws up in front of the posthouse.

'The Prince!' cries out the old man, who has quickly recognised the illustrious exile. 'The Prince! and there is not a single postillion at home! In the name of all the saints what shall I do?'

Meanwhile the traveller, expressing his desire to proceed as quickly as possible, calls for four horses and a guide.

'The horses are here,' muttered the old man; 'but as for the guide, that is another thing. That stupid lout Michael knows no more how to manage four horses than to command a regiment of hussars!'

The young girl on seeing her grandfather's perplexity, seemed to reflect for a moment, coloured up, and then darted out of the room.

The royal huntsman becomes impatient; and the old man curses his gout and his advanced age, which fasten him to his chair, when he would fain fly in the service of so noble and beloved a prince.

At length a postilion appears, whip in hand, booted and spurred, and looking quite dapper in a new scarlet uniform. The horses are quickly harnessed; the postilion leaps into the saddle, and instantly sets off at full gallop.

The prince is pleased at the rapid pace of the horses and the skill of the young postilion. At the end of the stage he desires the youth to come and speak to him—is struck by his gentle manners, his charming countenance, his sweet voice—observes him blushing—and recognises in him a woman.

'Who art thou, then?' inquired he with a surprise mingled with deep interest.

'I am the daughter of the master of the posthouse,' replied the young girl, quite disconcerted at being thus discovered. 'Your royal highness could not wait; so,' continued she, her colour heightening as she spoke—'so I dressed myself like a postboy, and have done my best.'

'Thou has done very well indeed, my child,' rejoined the prince, in that tone of kindly benevolence which endeared him so much to the people—'thou hast done very well; and I thank thee for thy gracious mode of serving me. Thou must accept this,' added he, while holding out a small purse with some gold pieces in it, 'as a proof of my gratitude.'

The maiden looked irresolute for a moment; then opening the purse, she withdrew a small gold coin, and kissing it fervently, placed the remainder in the prince's hand, saying, 'This piece shall always be precious to me; but your royal highness must not be displeased at my refusing to take any more. I have served you with the dutiful love which every Styrian woman bears to you, but not for the sake of a reward.'

The prince looked surprised at this courage and noble minded young girl, and each moment her fine intelligent countenance grew more attractive in his eyes. He detained her some minutes in conversation; and just as she was about to lead away the horses, he said to her with an air of gallantry, 'Come, my child it would be pity for us to part so soon. I will return back; but some one else shall guide the horses, and you shall bear me company in my carriage.'

The young girl blushed far deeper than before; but this time it was with an air of offended dignity, and she replied in a resolute tone, 'Each one in his own place, may it please your highness; thus it is that kings and shepherdesses preserve their honor.'

On hearing these words, the passing fancy of the traveller changed into a passion full of respect and esteem.

'Your fair fame is as dear to me as my own,' said he; 'and it depends on you alone whether they shall forever be united in one. You made yourself a man to serve me, and I will make you my wife to love you. Say, shall it not be so?'

The astonishment of the young girl may readily be conceived; but she did not appear disconcerted, and after a moment's consideration, replied with perfect simplicity, 'If you can obtain the emperor's consent, and my father's, you shall have mine also, sir.'

An hour afterwards, the prince and his postilion entered the wayside inn, and formally demanded of the postmaster his daughter's hand. There was very little difficulty in obtaining his consent. With the emperor it was quite another matter.

It was affirmed at the court of Vienna that the august *chasseur* was mad, and that he ought to be treated as such. His highway romance became the theme of mockery and ridicule; but he took care to prove that he was perfectly in his senses. And lest he should prove the strength and the power of his will also, the emperor of Austria most reluctantly subscribed

to the union of his race with that of a Styrian peasant.

And so the marriage was celebrated, to the great scandal of the court, and the unbounded joy of the people of the mountains. From that day forward the Prince was worshipped by the nation, and scoffed at by the imperial family.

A celebrated painter having taken his likeness in the costume of a Styrian hunter, and had it engraved, the sale of these portraits was prohibited under rigorous penalties; and yet every honest mountaineer contrived to have a copy of it, which was invariably placed between his gun and his cross-bow, as being two of his choicest household treasures. Even in the public places of Vienna, and on the very boards of the theatre, the dress and the habits of the royal adventurer were represented for the amusement of the courtiers.

All this went on until the revolutionary outburst of last year. Most fearful was the upheaving of the political earthquake in Austria. The old empire tottered to its base; Metternich fell and fled; the emperor quitted Vienna; Italy revolted; the provinces detached themselves from the capital. Germany seemed threatened with a total dismemberment. It was then that a federal Diet formed itself at Frankfort, with the view of uniting Germany under one directing central Government. This Diet created a Vicar General of the empire, to whom it confided the supreme and central power in the name of the confederation; and it chose for this sovereign office the most popular prince of Germany—he who had been proscribed by Metternich and the emperor; the huntsman of Tyrolean and Styrian Mountains; the husband of the postmaster's daughter; in a word, the Archduke John; he who, at the age of 27, had been the conqueror of Napoleon and the deliverer of Tyrol; who, as a German, at the Grand Cologne festival in 1842, had given this memorable toast, '*No more Prussia! no more Austria! but a strong and united Germany!*' The Archduke John did not shrink from the arduous office assigned to him. He quitted his country dwelling, and laid aside his hunter's garb, his cross-bow and his gun. He raised the tricoloured standard of Germanic unity, and entered Frankfort in triumph, with his beloved companion, the daughter of the mountains, at his side—she who had known so well how to preserve the true dignity of a woman in her humble life, and who consequently was not dazzled by the almost imperial splendor of her present position. It lies not within our scope to discuss the political wisdom of the mission with which the archduke was charged by his countrymen: ours is a humbler task—that of portraying the romance of domestic life in one of the proudest and most ancient families in Europe. This being accomplished, we have done.

From the London People's Journal.

MANHOOD.

A grand principle this, which is rapidly being developed and taking form. When its sacredness becomes recognised and felt, a genial influence will be diffused through all classes of society. All ranks and conditions will participate in the benefit. A wiser spirit will animate all. Those noble faculties of will and reason, which makes the man, and give to him all his worth and pre-eminence will receive their due veneration. The rights of humanity will be married to its duties, in an union to be preserved, inviolate and unbroken.

The legislation of government, the transactions of commerce, the intercourse and amenities of social life, will be ennobled and made better by this sublime idea. Nevertheless, although pregnant with power and meaning vast—comprehending truth, rights, and duties, as a principle, as a living reality—it has been hitherto almost lost to the world.

At this present, however there are a few earnest spirits, who are putting it forth in worthy utterance, proclaiming it in words burning with their own inspiration; and when those words have sunk deep into the people's heart; taken firm hold of their understanding, and ripened into deliberate, intelligent, irrevocable, purpose; when with the people those words shall have concentrated themselves into a passion; then the rights of conscience and free inquiry—the capacity of man to form his own faith and write his own creed, to shape his own religious relationships and associations—will be secured. The anomalies, political, social and ecclesiastical, which disfigure the age and contradict the genius of freedom, which are antagonistic to the intentions of reason, and the constitution of the human mind, will be swept away. Opinion will be respected, not coerced; differences will be tolerated, not violently crushed; preference, pay and penalty will be succeeded by a wiser policy. Men will cease to be estimated by what they have, and will take their stand, according to what they are.

Mind will assume the place of possession, as the source of power. The distinctions existing amongst men will be revised according to a wise, method and a sounder principle. They will be, as now, based upon circumstances purely adventitious; but upon the various degrees of intellectual and moral development to which they may have attained.

The reception of the great principle we would enforce, will provide for this and secure it; and this only will. It will accomplish a redemption for man, both political and religious. It will lay the basis for a wider and more comprehensive suffrage, that will be a political boon. It will destroy the disastrous connexion existing between creed and caste—that will be a religious boon. It will sternly

check the ravages of intolerance; heal the mutual animosities of party, dispose man to regard his brother with fraternal kindness, albeit there be between them a wide diversity of opinion. Separation of creed will no longer occasion separation of heart and common aim—a consummation devoutly to be wished.

Indeed, seeing the mischief which all creeds have, more or less, created amongst men, at the risk of bringing ourselves under the charge of fearful heterodoxy, we would vote creeds out of the world. We would have them dead and buried never to experience resurrection ever more. They have fulfilled their mission, and we have, perhaps, no more need of them. The creed which professes to embody truth, too often gives birth to feelings which manifestly embody error. Yet see what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself, unless he speak the phraseology of I know not what, David, or Jeremiah, or Paul. We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts, on a few lines. We are like children who repeat by rote the sentences of grand-father and tutors; and, as they grow older, of the men of talents and character they chance to see, painfully recollecting the exact words they spoke; afterwards when they come into the point of view with those who uttered these sayings, they understand them, and are willing to let the words go, for at any time they can use words as good, when occasion comes.

So was it with us, so will it be if we proceed. If we live truly, we shall see truly. It is as easy for the strong man to be strong, as it is for the weak to be weak. When we have new perceptions we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish. When a man lives with God his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

Indeed when man shall be measured by that which constitutes the grandeur of his veritable manhood, and not by that which is too often as so much rubbish to bury it, he will be found growing out of the garments creeds and forms have made for him. No longer being suitable clothing they must be cast aside. Having life and strength within himself, he needs not to lean on props so weak and incapable. Let but this doctrine of manhood be grasped, respected, believed; let man but speak and act to the full measure of his conviction, and great deliverance will be worked out for him right early, from the oppressions which crush his energies and put his thought in chains.

The same 'manhood' is the salvation word for poor Ireland. Let them be indoctrinated with the virtue of self-dependence: let them be taught firstly and chiefly to rely upon their own hard thought and work, upon their own origination and doings, whilst justice gives out to them equal laws, and their long deferred millennium will be at hand.

From Chateaubriand's Autobiography.

THE SAILOR AND THE SHIP.

There is in the perilous life of the sailor a feeling of independence which arises from the absence of land. He leaves behind on the shore the passions of man, and in the interval between the land he has left and that whose shores he is seeking, he has, in place of love and native country, only the element on which he is borne along. No duties to fulfil, no visits to pay; no newspapers, no politics. The very language of sailors is not the ordinary language of men. It is one which is spoken by the ocean and the sky, the calm and the tempest. The voyager inhabits a universe of water, amidst creatures whose garments, whose tastes, whose manners, whose countenances, have no resemblance to aboriginal nations. They have the rudeness of the sea-wolf and the levity of the bird; on their foreheads I never saw the traces of the cares of society. The wrinkles which furrow them resemble the folds of the furled sails, and, like the waves, are hallowed there less by age than the breeze. The skin of these creatures, impregnated with salt, is red and harsh, like the surface of a rock lashed by the surf.

Sailors feel a passionate attachment to their ship. They weep with sorrow when leaving her, and with delight when once more returning to her deck. They cannot remain in their families: after having sworn a hundred times that they would never more expose themselves to the dangers of the sea, they find it impossible to live without it, although so stormy and so faithless a mistress. In the docks of London and Plymouth, it is not unusual to find sailors who have been born on shipboard. From their infancy to their old age they have seldom put their foot on shore. They have scarcely ever seen the land but from the deck of their floating cradle—spectators of that world which they have so rarely entered. In this life, reduced to so narrow a space, canopied with clouds, and suspended over abysses, everything has interest for a sailor: an anchor, a sail, a mast, a cannon, are living creatures for whom he has an affection, and who have each their several histories. Such a sail was split upon the shores of Labrador; the master sail-maker inserted the piece which you see there. This anchor saved the vessel when it dragged the other anchors, in the midst of the coral reefs of the Sandwich Islands. That mast, snapped in a squall at the Cape of Good Hope; it was only a single spar then; it is now much stronger since it has been spliced. That cannon is the only one which was not dismounted in the engagement with the Chesapeake. The news current on board is often most interesting: The log has been heaved; the vessel is going ten knots. The sky is clear to the southward. We have taken the sun's altitude; we are in such a latitude; the reckoning is