

## Literature, &amp;c.

THE BRITISH MAGAZINES.

From Hogg's Instructor.

## CLAUDE CAPPERRONNIER.

He's the laziest dog in Manin,' cried old Gaspard, taking his pipe from his mouth, and blowing the smoke towards a stucco image of Napoleon that stood upon his chimney-piece. 'He'll never make a skinner worth a screw.'

'Oh, I knew it,' cried old Marguerite, with a triumphant smile. 'I saw that the lad was full of nothing but stupidity. You see what it is now, however; Gaspard; you would not take my advice, and so you must have your pellets spoiled.'

'No, no, Marguerite,' said Gaspard, shaking his head, and placing his feet on the fender, while he balanced his chair on its two hind legs; 'the lad is not altogether stupid, but he has not brain enough to be a skinner. I wish you had not asked me to take him apprentice when his uncle brought him here.'

Marguerite suspended the scouring of a pewter platter for a moment, and looked hard at her husband as she listened to this home thrust, and then she commenced with redoubled energy, and chanted at the same time an old song.

'You see,' continued Gaspard, smoking and rocking, and chatting at his ease, 'he might have made a useful tax-collector or towncrier; but here he not only spoils pellets but he is himself spoiled.'

'Well, now, Gaspard Bouvais,' said Marguerite, in whose mind a sudden revolution had taken place, as she ceased her scrubbing, and placed one arm akimbo, while she leaned in an easy attitude upon the large platter with the other, 'you cannot say that Claude is troublesome, at any rate. He never returns one word to your reproaches, and he is content to sit alone in the pulling house even on those winter nights.'

'Troublesome,' shouted Gaspard, causing chair to spin suddenly round, and confronting his wife with a look of lively astonishment; 'why, my good woman, that word comprises all the faults that I have to him. Do you think it no trouble to me to see him mixing pickings, seconds and firsts altogether, while he is muttering away about declensions and conjugations, and running holes in my pellets—while he is rhyming outlandish nonsense about Qwee, who married Ross Solemn at Treeboothunter's—while mass cooled all Sunday? I tell you, Marguerite, cried Gaspard, wheeling round to his old position, and knocking the dottle from his pipe with great energy; 'I tell you the lad is not only troublesome, but I almost think he is profane.'

Gaspard Beauvais, take care what you say,' replied Marguerite, in a severe tone, while she drew herself up and primmed her mouth for a most potential discussion. 'You are too free with your tongue. I think, old man.'

She might have said the same of mad old Boreas, too, for at the moment she was about to break polemical ground, he interrupted her discourse with a wild protracted howl, that made the doors and windows tremble, and shook all the chimneys of Manin, as if it had had an umbrage at them for a year, and was now wreaking his vengeance on them.

'There it comes at last,' said Gaspard, listening to the wild howling of the wind, while awe was written in his embrowned and wrinkled face. 'My rheumatism foreboded this storm two days ago, and here it is.'

'Are all things secure and ready for it?' cried Marguerite, with a careful woman's promptitude. 'Are the bales in the shed and the skins covered with packsheet? Storms ought to be provided against as well as old age, you know; and Gaspard Beauvais is not the least prudent man in Manin,' she said with a smile.

'Hillo, you are right, old woman,' cried the skinner, springing to his feet, and buttoning up his coat with the greatest of despatch. 'Bring forth the lantern, while I call that pest of a boy to help me.'

Gaspard Beauvais was one of those very useful handicraftsmen who convert the skins of sheep and lambs into leather, and who combine with this profession the sorting of wool. He was a man of powerful frame and iron constitution, and it was well for him that he was so, for the life of a skinner is no joke and his work is no child's play. To-day he would be standing in the stream of Manin washing sheepskins, that the wool might be clean, and tossing the saturated masses, of perhaps a hundred weight each, to the banks, during twelve successive hours. To-morrow he would be stewed in a damp close pelletery, dressing skins with warm water; and the next day he would be smearing others with lime. Heat and cold had apparently only indurated his muscles and hardened his tendons, for he knocked about with all the agility of vigorous manhood, and sung in the midst of his hardest labors with all the spirit of youth. He was tall and spare, his face was brown and wrinkled, and his gray hair fell in long straight tresses down his cheeks; yet time seemed to poise himself lightly on his head, and the summer of youth appeared to have kept guard over his heart. He was a kind man and a brave one, too; but he was a great skinner, and being proud of this, made him severe to his delinquent apprentice. 'Hillo, Claude,' he shouted, as he stepped out into the night, or rather into his skinyard; 'hillo, Claude are you sleeping?'

Gaspard Beauvais's skinyard was a very excellent illustration, in its way, of Babel. It never was destined to be so, to be sure, but

simple people often do great things without design, and Gaspard had certainly filled the quarter of an acre of area which he called a yard, with superlative confusion. Gaspard's own snug little dwelling, with its great fir settle, and massive kitchen table, and well-plenished plate-rack, and spasmodic cuckoo-clock—with its great roaring fire, its chains of black and white puddings, and its half yards of bacon—with its three little gables and oriels, and thatched roof, and overhanging eaves—occupied one, the most elevated, extreme of his property, which declined gently towards the stream of Manin, which said stream was another of its boundaries. On the left hand of the square was a stable and bark mill, on both of which the dry rot and damp rot had tried their powers of decay with eminent success, for the fir deals of which they were constructed had very loose connection with their posts, and were much wasted, so that the wind, and rain and snow, and sleet, often danced round the rude machine that crushed the tan bark. A pile of black oak bark covered with straw, and battened to the ground by great boulders of whinstone, stood sentinel beside four tan-pits, whose odors sickened the very winds, and gave every herb that attempted to grow within fifty yards of their breath the fever. A drying house plentifully smeared with tar, grinned *vis-a-vis* at a little dilapidated beam house, which had been whitewashed with lime; and a ruined boiler, and decrepid work shop for wool sorters, leaned against each other in the sympathy of decay.

'Hillo, Claude,' shouted Gaspard, as he stumbled into the yard, followed by Marguerite, who carried a large tin lantern. 'Out upon you, boy; you are asleep.'

As he spoke, Gaspard Beauvais and his garrulous old wife drew near to a little shattered window, curtained with elegant festoons of spiders' webs, and with flakes of wool, and they peered into the little rickety edifice, which was designated, in technical phrase, the pulling house. On a rail which divided the floor of this humble workshop into two parallel loggams, hung a numerous fraternity of sheep-skins, while great piles of wool lay snugly sorted into boxes that ranged in front of a rude bench, where the workmen usually sat at work. A clock, whose motion was preserved by two or three rusty pound weights, in addition to its original gravity, clicked in an irregular intermittent fashion, as if it had a pain in its head, and wished from its heart to be at peace. In a rough homely grate blazed a hearty cheerful fire, whose flames flickered and danced up the chimney like faïres on a Christmas eve, and which laughed in the face of the old clock until it smiled and smiled again for sympathy.

But softly, good Gaspard; and softly, Marguerite, with thy wooden sabots, and thy cloak, and hood, and linsey-wolsey kirtle, that scarcely reaches to the ankle, of which thou art still so proud. Who is that lying stretched upon a sheep-skin, with his head so near the fire? A lad, apparently about sixteen, clad in a homely blouse that was soiled with lime, and wearing trowsers of moleskin, that looked brown in many places, and smelled sadly of tanner's bark, was stretched upon his breast, and, with eye, and lip, and mind concentrated on his grateful task, lay poring over a book. What, ho! ye doughty squires, with princely homes, and well-stored libraries, and costly tomes, done up in Morocco and gold. In a cheerless workshop into which the wintry wind came dancing like a fury, lay Claude Capperronnier, holding converse with a book. Do you think that he saw the grim, broken walls, where the beetles hummed their drowsy hum, or the black rafters from which the spiders suspended their webs? Do you think that he heard the squeaking of the rats, and the howling of the storm? Hillo! gay gentlemen! you hunt the fox upon the fell, and you follow the heath-fowl on the hill; and fresh are the airs you breathe, and fair the scenes you see, but little do some of you know of the magic influences of a book.

'Is the lazy rascal dreaming?' said Gaspard, turning to his wife, and then peering again at his studious young apprentice.

'Dreaming! Ay, Gaspard, he is dreaming. Fancy has shaded his torn with the leaves of the spreading oak; and as he looks on Virgil's page his eyes behold Arcadia. He does not hear the howl of the wind—not he. It is the oaken reed of Tityrus that is sounding in his ear. Band over thy book, brave Claude; learning is no illusion. Dream on in thy hard and thorny way to knowledge; thou art weaving a crown for thyself that few kings but the kings of toil have ever won.'

'Hillo there, Claude,' roared Gaspard. 'A pretty fellow you are, too,' added Marguerite, in a shrill treble tone; and as the youth sprung to his feet, in surprise, and shook himself in order to right his costume, any impartial judge would have declared Marguerite's eulogy to have been a just one.

There was an expression of intellectual beauty in the lad's eyes and mouth that great painters alone could have copied, and keen observers only could notice. People never expect to find the same high class of beauty associated with ragged blouses and hard and horny hands. It often is so, however; and if Jean Baptiste Greuse, instead of Gaspard Beauvais, had been looking through that little window, he would have observed the lineaments of a lovely mind in those of poor Claude Capperronnier.

'Hillo there, you lazy rascal,' roared Gaspard again through the window. 'Do you know that wind is blowing and rain is falling, and that there are some skins lying out here to be covered?'

Claude did not hesitate a moment after this salute, but tumbled into the skinyard in such a way as to belie the charge of laziness, so often proffered against him, and ran about his business with wonderful alacrity, although Marguerite was none of the cleverest lantern carriers in France.

The dark clouds were careering over the village of Manin, and scowling down on its straw-thatched cottages, as if they did not think they had any right to look so comfortable; and the wild wind was tormenting the waters of the swollen stream until they foamed and boiled with rage, as Gaspard and his apprentice moved about, looking after the security of the merchandise. Manin was one of those beautiful rural little villages that stud the side of the way that leads from Boulogne to Paris. About a mile to the west of the village rose a hill which pines and poplars garmented with green, and in the bosom of which stood the chateau de Manin, once the residence of a warlike race that had become defunct from degeneracy. The last lord had fallen from his horse, and been killed in a boar hunt, and such was the end of the family de Manin. In this hill rose the stream of Manin, which drove the mills that pressed the grapes of the vine-growers, and in which Gaspard washed his skins. It was a roaring blustering stream, which spluttered and groaned in winter like a drowning man, and which sobbed over its pebbly bed in summer like a dreaming infant. It was crossed by a narrow Gothic bridge, during high water, and a narrow ford; and sometimes travellers had been in imminent danger, from trusting to this ford, when the bridge was really the only safe means of crossing.

'It is a terrible night,' said Gaspard, as the wind shook the loose boards of his out-houses, and howled away over the plain, and through amongst the bare woods. 'Quick boy, quick, and let us within doors.'

'Do you hear nothing, master?' said Claude, suddenly stopping in his employment and bending his ear. 'I thought I heard a cry.'

'I hear the wind, and feel the rain; so get along, boy; bestir thyself, and look sharp.'

'I could pledge my word against a sheep-skin, that some one has taken the ford to-night, and is being borne down the stream; and quick as thought Claude Capperronnier was rushing towards the little river, followed by the stalwart, and kind-hearted, and equally alarmed Gaspard.

They reached the river where it flowed past the tanyard, and, looking up the stream towards the ford, they beheld lanterns dancing on the bank, and heard the shouts of the villagers as they ran hither and thither, anxious to save some one from the hungry, furious waters. Skinners are men of strength, and men of courage, too, and Gaspard Beauvais and his apprentice did not in these respects disgrace their profession. In a few seconds the lad's waist was encircled by a stout rope, which his athletic master held firmly in his hands, while Marguerite waved the lantern aloft, and encouraged brave Claude by every epithet in her vocabulary, to be steady. Down it came, battling bravely with the stream, and snorting and foaming, as if had been bearing Neptune to war. It was a gallant horse, and stoutly carried a strong man in a dark cloak, but it would not be able to do so long; it was evidently becoming exhausted.

'Why don't you turn his head up the stream, and work him to the bank?' roared Gaspard, as the stranger approached the spot opposite to where he stood. 'A strong arm and a cool head could easily take that horse out of the water.'

'Hurrah! Claude Capperronnier—bravely swam, my boy—one spring more—one other buffet with the white-lipped river—one more clutch at the loose reins—hurrah. Now Gaspard, pull—pull with all thy giant strength, old skinner and tanner of Manin.'

'Hark! Margaret is shouting and clapping her hands, and the villagers on the other side of the stream are cheering right lustily.—Come on, brave steed! Hold on, brave boy! The bank is won! The man is saved! Hurrah!'

Gaspard and Marguerite soon bore the traveller to their cheerful kitchen, and placed him beside the blazing fire, while Claude led his exhausted steed to the stable, and began to groom it with all his might. He was a richly garmented and thoughtful looking man, this stranger, and was so polite, and pleasant, and grateful, that he gained upon the heart of the old couple amazingly; and then, when he had said many kind and grateful things to them, he burst forth in praises of their gallant son.

'Oh, bless you sir, Claude Capperronnier is no son of ours,' said Marguerite with a sigh; 'and, poor boy, he is no great credit to his parents, after all, although he has a kind heart. He takes to reading outlandish books, and neglects his work, and spoils more pellets than my husband is willing to lose. He'll never be anything I fear, but the hanger-on about some auberge, where he will get his food by grooming horses.'

The stranger smiled with a strange meaning smile, as he listened to the garrulous old woman; and then he begged, as a favor, that Claude might be allowed to show him his favorite books. The young tanner trembled as he laid two or three well thumbed copies of the Greek and Latin classics before the courteous stranger; and then he stood with downcast eyes and trembling limbs as if he expected sentence of death to be passed on him for his idle propensities.

'Claude Capperronnier, do you know these authors?' said the stranger, in a voice which partook more of astonishment than anger; and then he suddenly added, as he looked

keenly at the embarrassed youth, 'Yes, I know you do.'

In two months after this time Claude Capperronnier took his place in the diligence, and drove on, with a palpitating heart, to Paris. 'No. 15 Rue Rivoli,' muttered he, as he alighted from his seat in the coach, in the great city at last. 'Well I shall carry my little trunk thither, and see how M. de Vallais looks since that night I pulled him from the Manin.'

'You are M. Claude Capperronnier?' said a footman, at that moment approaching the young tanner, and touching his hat.

'Claude Capperronnier at your service,' answered he, with a smile.

It did not take long for that smart young man, and that smart young horse, and that smart little carriage, to carry Claude Capperronnier and his little trunk to the Rue Rivoli, where he was received by M. de Vallais, and installed in his house.

Eight years after Claude Capperronnier's arrival in Paris, the university of Basle was in need of a professor of Greek, and of all the competitors for this honorable position, none was so competent as Gaspard Beauvais' cidevant useless apprentice.

In 1722, the chair of the Greek professor of the Royal College was vacant, and Claude Capperronnier was chosen to fill it. He had not brain enough to make a tanner, but he became the most distinguished Greek and Latin scholar of his age.

If you read the annals of distinguished Frenchmen, you will not find one more worthy of honorable distinction than Claude Capperronnier. In his manners he was gentle and simple, and a transparent piety characterized his whole life. His mind was clear and capacious, but not more ample and full of noble conceptions than was his heart of warm and kindly emotions. And did he forget old Gaspard and Marguerite in his prosperity? Ah! no; those robes of Parisian pattern and splendid texture that came to Marguerite annually, and the rolls of tobacco and files of fûlletons that reached Gaspard again and again, showed that the old lazy apprentice had neither remembered their scoldings nor forgotten themselves.

From the first moment of our birth the soul is capable of the most sublime operations.—We require the development of organs for the manifestations of these, and we require a condition in which these manifestations can become available. Claude Capperronnier, by the innate force of his will, became a scholar in spite of difficulties: and heaven at last gave him a sphere in which to exercise his self-developed abilities. Learning is the sunk capital of the mind, which man can draw upon through life for bread, and for a reputation after death, and which he will not leave behind him, even in his translation to immortality. Then never give up, ye Claude Capperronniers of humble life! Who knows what Heaven has in store for you.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

## TOPOGRAPHY OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM.

TEM.

DURING the last ten years so many discoveries in our solar system have been announced and questioned, have been put forward by one observer and laid claim to by another, that it may not be uninteresting to state briefly what the admitted planetary brotherhood really consists of. When the indefatigable Olbers discovered the fourth new planet Vesta, in 1807, making then the eleventh in our solar system, Bode exclaimed: 'Another year will make the dozen complete.' This prediction, however, was far from being verified; and a belief seemed to be springing up among astronomers that the planetary system, like that of Jupiter's moons, was already complete. After a lapse of thirty-eight years, however, the world was suddenly astonished to hear from a remote corner of Germany that a twelfth planet had actually been discovered. But this was not all: within a period of but little more than two years, no less than five others were incorporated in our solar system. Three circumstances seem more immediately to have led to this unlooked-for change: first the reduction of the older observations made at Greenwich—an undertaking due to the energy and insight of Airy; secondly, the publication, although but at intervals, of the celestial charts of the Berlin Academy, in which no star down to the seventh magnitude was left out; and lastly, the profound labours of Leverrier on the secular inequalities in the planetary orbits.

The first among the discoveries which have thus rendered the last decennium so remarkable in the annals of astronomy, was that of the planet Astrea, by Hencke, on the 8th of December, 1845. This new denizen of our planetary system was found to belong to the planetoids, or smaller planets—composed of Vesta, Juno, Ceres, and Pallas, and revolving between Mars and Jupiter. To this succeeded, on the 23d of September of the next year, the purely theoretical discovery of Leverrier. This profound analyst announced his conviction that the deviations in the orbit of Uranus arose from a planet beyond it, and he delivered to the French Academy the approximate elements of its path, theoretically determined. At Leverrier's request, his friend Galle, of Berlin, set about its search, and the very first evening found it at a distance of only four minutes of the time from the place Leverrier had assigned to it—the most brilliant triumph ever achieved by the law of gravitation. The name given to this second addition of the solar system—the most distant of all the known planets was—Neptune. It is nearly equal in size to Uranus, but denser.