

He picked up the gun, and found that, though very much torn, it could still be used. He now took his course, and started to foot it into the settlements. After a week of almost incredible suffering he got in safe, and saw nothing more of the wolves or his comrades, who were thought to have been carried off prisoners, and afterwards murdered by the Indians on their attempting to escape.

Dan was sick of a fever for several weeks at Corpus Christi, and raved incessantly about wolves.

A RECOLLECTION OF PAGANINI.

It is many years ago since I first saw Paganini; but the performance of his 'Carnival of Venice,' by Sivioli, at one of Julien's concerts, a few evenings since, forcibly revived my impressions of that emperor of fiddlers. Few who ever looked upon his gaunt form and spectral face can ever forget it; but, as there are hundreds who never had the opportunity of being startled by his wild appearance, I have ventured to include him in my sketch book, and shall take the opportunity of including in this semi-theatrical chapter a few other pen and ink portraits of noticeable people. Several pieces were to be performed before Paganini made his appearance, and these, like oysters and lemon juice before a Persian feast, served only as sharpeners of the appetite for what was to follow. The preliminary playing and singing was doubtless very fine, but it passed off heavily enough, and glad was I to discover, by the aid of the programme, that 'The Carnival of Venice,' by Paganini, was the next piece. An interval of a few minutes. The 'Gods' of the gallery have sobered down. Nuts are no longer cracked and the shells showered down on the heads of those in the pit. The popping of ginger beer corks has ceased, and the cry of apples and oranges is heard no more. The pit folks have squeezed themselves into as comfortable positions as possible, and along the boxes is seen a row of anxious faces, and a line of ready opera glasses. There is a dead silence in the house. The musicians in the orchestra are all on the *qui vive*; the first fiddler looks amazingly anxious as he knew that an extinguisher was about to be put on him; the flutes rest with their lips half-puckered up, and fingers resting lightly on their orifices; the clarionets stand with their reeds ready for vibration, and the drum sticks describe an angle of forty-five. There is a waving of the curtain, and a prolonged sh— goes round the house; a little bell rings once, and the musicians fix their eyes intently on their books, all but the flutes, who squint at the stage—another, and a louder ring, and up goes the green baize. Up—up—up—till the last fold of the curtain is invisible, and there is the broad open stage, with a grand piano in its midst. A gentleman dressed very neatly in black, with a music book in his primrose-gloved hand, enters, bows, and takes his seat at the instrument. He looks first at the audience with quite an air of unconcern, as if he had already seen and knew everything about the great man; he has all the calm consequence of a person who knows what others do not know about him. Now he hems, looks intently at the wing, and, as he gives a jerk on his chair and takes off his gloves, it is evident some one is coming. How breath-like is the silence! With a slow and steady step the tiger drawing near enough to its victim, in order to make the sure and fatal spring, noiselessly, and with a horribly sardonic smile on his countenance, glides sideways from behind the wing, a being who startles every one that beholds him. He is very tall, and so remarkably thin that his black clothes fall loosely about him, his trousers bagging as if they hung upon poles. These trousers were so large, that, at their termination, where they came in contact with his small lady-like shoe, the polished leather of which seemed just to cover the tip of his toes, they seemed of exactly the same width, united, as his shoulders. His hips did not in the least project, so that he appeared, from his arm pits downwards, to be of exactly the same breadth, there was no projecting point to disturb the straight line. His double-breasted coat had long skirts, and was buttoned up close to his chin, round which was a white cravat, and a turned down collar. But extraordinary as was his figure, his face and head were the great points of attraction and wonder; so much so were they that, when a first glimpse of the face especially was caught, people involuntarily drew back as if they had seen a spectre. He was ghastly pale. In the centre of his forehead, which had nothing very remarkable to its developments, that I could see, at least, his jet black hair was parted, and from thence it fell down in curly and waving masses over his shoulders. His eye-brows were dark, and where the outer parts terminated, there were deep fessæ in the temples. His nose was slightly beaked, and on either side of it were the most remarkable eyes that I believe mortal ever possessed. They were small, dark, and not sparkling, but of a lustre more resembling that of polished steel, when seen in a dimly lighted room, than anything else I can compare them to. Their expression, as he smiled horribly at the audience, in recognition of their plaudits, and as he bowed his long back, was absolutely snake-like. As I said, he came on the stage sideways gradually, as he bowed and smiled approaching to near the centre. His arms were so long, that as he bent, the fiddle and bow, which he held in one hand, would have touched the stage, but that he held them obliquely. At last he reached the front and almost the middle of the stage, near the foot lights, drew himself up to his full height, held out his violin at arm's length, surveyed it as if it were the

most beloved thing in the universe, and then slowly brought it to his shoulder with as much gravity as if it had been a deity, and he a devotee. With a firm and decided air the great Maestro, planted his right foot a little in advance of his left, which remained with his knee firmly fixed, threw back his head, then inclined his left ear towards his fiddle, smiling faintly, as if it were saying something to him and he was intently listening; and lastly, lifting his fiddle bow high in the air, stood, with flashing eyes and compressed lips, a few seconds, motionless, a perfect study.

At a nod from Paganini the orchestra struck up, and the pianist's fingers flew over the ivory keys; but still, like a sorcerer with his wand, stood the king of fiddlers with his up-lifted bow. At length a faint smile stole over his rigid and marble-like features, and every heart beat quickly as his long arm descended so gradually that you could scarcely see it move, bringing the lower end of the stick upon the strings of the instrument. To the disappointment of many, however, it rose again, and remained an inch or two from the bridge, whilst the exceeding long fingers of his left hand struck a few notes, which were heard sharply and distinctly above the warbling of the flutes and the grumbling of the trombones. Once more his arm ascended and now it comes down so delicately on the smallest string that something like the shadow of an exquisite sound is heard, 'so soft, so sweet, so delicately clear,' that it is heard as distinctly as a silver rivulet is seen winding its sinuous course through a vernal wood. It is unlike anything one ever before heard produced from the instrument, or rather as if the sense of hearing had been sharpened. And now succeeds a flash of delicious melody, which laps the audience in elysium. It is not, cannot be fiddling; and see, the leader of the band has forgotten himself, and sits in wide-mouthed wonder, listening to the astonishing effects of Paganini's genius. The Maestro, as his inspiration becomes more profound, partakes of the enthusiasm which he has created, and his snakey eyes flash almost supernatural fire. He smiles a ghastly smile as he

Pours forth the notes like enchanted wine. Loosens the chords in a silver shower.

By a change in the composition he now produces the most discordant notes, and then surprises all, by alternating them with snatches of almost celestial harmony. Now he moves to tears, and anon convulses with laughter. His violin for a few seconds nearly roars; and then, as he slowly draws the bow across the quivering strings, he elicits a sound—

so fine that nothing lives to twist it and silence.

At length the spell ceases; the finale is played, and with outspread arms, the bow in one hand and the fiddle in the other, he bows himself off the stage, smiling horribly as when he entered the wing. Not the least interesting portions of the proceedings were the astonished looks of the musicians, especially of the fiddlers; and when they commenced playing in the interval between the first and second appearance of Paganini, I could not help thinking of the couplet addressed by some one to a very different musician:

'When Orpheus played so well, he moved
Old Nick;

But thou mov'st nothing but the fiddle-stick.'

Not that the leader of that evening was a second-rate artist. By no means; he was one of the first in his line; what excellency could stand, when compared with Paganini? Like Cavendish, the celebrated racket player to whom Hazlitt refers in his Table Talk, the Italian had not only no equal, but no one stood second to him.

TEN YEARS AGO.

We are astonished when we contemplate the changes which have been effected in the course of ten years! How rapidly the sweeping tide of time rolls on! The morning of life passes off like a dream, and we look round in vain for the companions of our youthful days. Where are the gay, the beautiful, the happy, with whom we once sported in the sprightliness of youth, and buoyancy of enjoyment? They were here; we knew them; we loved them; we rejoiced with them down time's sunny stream with pleasure's fragile bark; but where are they now? Alas! they have gone before us; the whirlwind of death drove them rapidly onward, and they are sailing on eternity's wide, waveless sea. The scenes of our childhood, too, fade away, and soon not a vestige of them is left as a token that they have existed. Time's stupendous wheel is ever rolling on. Ten years more, and where shall we be? Our present friends, our present companions, will they still be here? No; they may be scattered far away, strangers, and in a strange land. Ten years, and the aspect of things to many, very many, will be changed. The pale emaciated miser, that now bends over his useless gold, the wreck of ruined families, and the last remains of forlorn wretchedness, where will he be? He and the beggar whom he drives from his door, will have gone to their long homes; his wealth will have passed into other hands. Ten years, and the student who is now poring over volumes, and seeking with such avidity for knowledge, will have acquired, and perhaps forgotten it. The lovely maiden, whose mind and person are just matured—she is beautiful—she is happy—pleasure beams in her countenance, and joy sparkles in her eye; with a light foot and lighter heart, she steps upon life's stage; but alas! ten years and this lovely being will be indeed changed; the bright fascinating

smile no longer plays upon her cheek; her once laughing eye speaks deeper of misery now than ever it did of pleasure. Ten years, and many that sport in the sunshine of prosperity, will be wrapped in misfortune's gloomiest shade. Ten years, and the man of business will have settled his 'final accounts,' the fool will have grown wise, and the wise will have discovered his ignorance. The atheist will have found out his mistake, and the Christian will have realised his hopes.

Sketches of Lectures.

From the New York Tribune.

THE AGE OF STEAM.

BY GEORGE WM. CURTIS, ESQ.

It is an old fable (said Mr C.) that the sea taunted the land for conquering only a third of the globe's surface, and the enraged land shook with earthquakes, and spouted forth fires in defiance from its volcanic mouths, and called upon its children to revenge the insult. They cut a tree from the hill side, and hollow it, spread upon it a sail woven from the produce of the fields, launched it upon the ocean, and sailed forth into every zone, defying the soft zephyrs of the tropics, and the maddest storms of the poles. Then the hollow tree returned safely to the shores from whence it started, and a chip—a chip with a thought in it had conquered the ocean. This is the oldest account of the origin of navigation. But the genius of a latter day has more scientifically revenged the land upon the sea, by taking from the water itself the secret of its own subjugation, as if the long hair of the captive should be twisted into tethers for his limbs. Man, the heir of the land, has made water his slave. On every hand you hear the shriek of its terror, or the hollow voiced bewailings of its despair. At man's command the great agent—the conqueror of the ocean—descends into the earth, as he once dived into the sea, returning to the surface laden with pearls gathered in Indian or Persian depths. So it returns to the earth's surface, with a freight of metals useful and rich, and capable of being fashioned into any form at the will of man.

The farmer's son may wonder as he plows with strong bulls beside his father, but the father turns pale when he thinks of the fearful power and energy of his master slave, running through hills and over the horizon upon his errands. No less the purveyor of pleasure than the tolling drudge, it smooths the hills and bridges the rivers that obstruct our path, and as it hurries onward makes the summer landscape appear as but a fleeting picture seen in the air. Onward the self-conquered slave speeds with an almost fabulous swiftness, but whether it carries us along slowly or rapidly, it is no more fatigued by its exertions than were the doves and peacocks that drew Juno through the heavens. The spirit of the age (observed the lecturer) partook largely of the characteristics of the great invention—Steam; and in calling attention to the age of steam, it was his object rather to describe than discuss.

This was a 'fast' age; the world went by steam and the word 'fast' had required now-a-days a significance it never had before. The great Babylons were all full of 'fast men' and the rummer mirage of 'fashion' that annually lifted along the land from Niagara to Newport displayed certain figures not enumerated in any natural history, enough to perplex any historian or philosopher, and now universally recognized as fast women. Equally significant was the application of the opposite word—slow. In fast all the traditions and institutions of past ages were now being called up for judgement, and the modern Rhadamantus with a steeple crowned beaver upon his head, and jack-knife in hand, was darning the philosophers and politicians of former times, and dared them to his favorite game of brag, a game in which when playing with any country or nation he generally held trumps in his hand. Men lived a tough-and-go life; every man got what he could, and kept as much as possible, without making the first enquiry as to how it came. 'You tickle me and I'll tickle you,' was the doctrine; but at all events, 'you tickle me.' [Laughter] The lecturer then humorously alluded to the extreme eagerness evinced by the young men of the country to enter upon the active duties of life at so early an age, in contradistinction to the caution and slowness with which Europeans undertook the responsibilities of business life. In relation to the peculiar progressiveness of the Yankee, Mr. C. remarked that if a fishing smack went across the ocean and glided over the water which once Jason plowed, we might follow its enterprising captain on his progress, seeing him sailing for any port where a good bargain would be made. If you saw him exhibit a bold self reliance in all circumstances, cool deliberation and fearlessness in danger, and a stern resignation in death; if we discovered him lounging with his hands in his pockets and a quid in his mouth, around the base of the Pyramids, in the shadow of the Parthenon, or in the twilight of the Indian Rock Temple, only stopping his quick whistling to calculate the dimensions of the work—if you found him sticking his great rude boot through the fashionable niches of conventionalism, hop-nobbing with the Grand Lama or taking snuff from the Pope's snuff-box, we would see in all these places and under all these circumstances the personification of the spirit of a steam age. The spirit was onward, its face was forward. Believing that this spirit did not come out of Sodom, it did not look back with a womanly tenderness but

its journey to the other cities of men, considering that there were as good flesh pots in Jerusalem as in Egypt. In fact, its secret was manifest destiny. The lecturer, then referred to the division of 'fast' and 'slow,' as applied to politics, especially dwelling and in every happy terms upon the now general application of the terms 'Old Fogey' and 'Fogeyism' to the 'Slow' party; and in this connection allusion was also made to the 'fast' spirit, as displayed in the projects entertained in regard to China, Japan, &c. He then drew attention to the peculiar aspect of age in a religious point of view, maintaining the Momonism, (rival of Mohamedanism in wonderful increase) was, as a religious system, operating by certain influences upon its professors, strongly marked with all the characteristics of the age in which the movement began. It was a strange eclecticism—a combination of mystic theology with the strong common sense of New England. Whatever peculiar whims or blasphemies might be in the creed, there was much contained in it that was not either whimsical or blasphemous. But the influence of the spirit of the age was also observed in the old forms of faith. It was to be seen in the spread of a more catholic feeling, tending to obliterate old sectarian lines. The lecturer then went into a glowing and eloquent description of the wondrous facilities which are now possessed for the acquisition of knowledge of passing events through the agency of the great power of the age, at the same time showing that by means of steam this people had not become only an omni-writer, but also an omni-printer. In support of this Mr. C. referred to the astonishing success that had attended the publication of the 'Harpers' Magazine, Uncle Tom's Cabin, &c. &c.; and in allusion to the literary aspect of the influence of the age of steam in this country, he referred to the fact that here was in that Thomas Carlyle and Alfred Tennyson were first hailed as children of genius. Here also were published the first complete editions of the works of Bolingbroke, Sydney Smith, Macaulay, Motherwell, the poet, &c. &c.

Leaving that branch of his discourse, Mr. C. proceeded to say that there were obviously dangerous tendencies inherent in the very nature of the age of steam. The steam spirit begat superficiality, and Jonathan could not deny that, for he went on the principle of knowing a little of everything, and consequently did not know a great deal of anything. Wisdom, care and heroism always avail, and in the journey we have undertaken they are essential; we shall not go further than the earth goes, nor arrive too soon at the great secret of nature. Our only hope ought to be to understand the scope and grandeur of our opportunity. We are in the cars and the train is off—let hope, faith, charity be our conductors, and we need not have any fear. The train is off, and all kinds of doubt and disappointment, owls and bats, in fine all obstacle must clear the track.

BENEFITS OF OPPOSITION.

A certain amount of opposition is a great help to a man. Kites rise against, not with the wind. Even a head wind is better than nothing. No man ever worked his voyage anywhere in a dead calm. The best wind for anything, in the long run, is a wide wind. If it blows aft, now is he to get back! Let no man wax pale, therefore, because of opposition. Opposition is what he wants, and must have, to be good for anything. Hardship is the native soil of manhood and self reliance. He that cannot abide the storm without flinching or quailing, strips himself in the sunshine, and lays down by the wayside, to be overlooked and forgotten. He who but braces himself up to the struggle, when the winds blow, gives up when they are done, and falls to sleep in the stillness that follows.

DECEIT.

It is a great calamity to the world, that deceit as much abounds; it is especially dishonourable to the church, that so many of her members act like hypocrites. Let us beware of a sin so dark in its character, and so dreadful in its results; a sin which most provokes the wrath of Heaven, and which even the Turks despise. A large body of infidels having on a certain occasion professed to Mahomet the Second their readiness to embrace his creed, he asked their motive, and obliging them to confess that it was to be rid of taxation, dismissed them unreceived, with the wise reply, 'that he preferred sterling metal in his coffers to false professors in his church.'

Prosy old gentlemen think that James Watt was a greater genius than Shakespeare, and that the only motive which should move society is locomotive. It was such a man who once said of Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' that it was a very good book, but it didn't prove anything.

Practical men are useful, but, like cook stoves and Bentham, they are shockingly utilitarian; and, like a tailor, see much more beauty in a lot of 'cabbage' than in all the rose bushes that ever grew.

Let every man, says Channing, if possible, gather some books under his roof, and obtain access for himself and family to some social library. Almost any luxury should be sacrificed to this.

A little wrong done to another is a great wrong done to ourselves.

It was a good reply of Plato, to one who murmured at his reproving him for a small matter: 'Custom,' said he, 'is no small matter. A custom, or habit of life does frequently alter the natural inclination, either to good or evil.'