

## Literature, &amp;c.

## THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From the London Working Man's Friend.

## LEAVE OFF YOUR DRINK.

BY JOHN RICHARDSON.

LEAVE off your drink, you wretched man!  
 And buy your children food and clothing;  
 Nor hug the curse that drains your purse,  
 And fills your hearts with scorn and loathing;  
 In vain they cry aloud for bread,  
 Ye care not how their hearts are bleeding;  
 The wretches shiver in their bed,  
 While you carouse all night unheeding.  
 The drink that makes you curse and swear,  
 And scorn yourself and hate your neighbour;  
 Oh! shun the draught that sparkles fair,  
 And turn again to honest labour:  
 Redeem the hours you've spent in vain,  
 And warm the hearts your sins have sadden'd;  
 And brighten'd eyes shall speak again,  
 The joy of hearts that you have gladden'd.

Leave off your drink, you silly youth!  
 And put your money in your pocket;  
 Or throw it in some beggar's hat,  
 Or go and buy your love a locket:  
 But pay not for disease and pain,  
 Nor put your money down for sorrow;  
 For though to-night your hearts are light,  
 They will be heavy on the morrow:  
 What is the pleasure that ye find?  
 Why love ye this carousing nightly?  
 It hardens the heart and dulls the mind,  
 And dims the eyes that shine so brightly;  
 It robs the colour from the cheek;  
 It feeds the heart's unholy flame;  
 It brings despair and want and care,  
 And makes ye headless of your shame.

Leave off your drink, oh, young and old!  
 The brave, the lusty, and the hoary;  
 How often need ye to be told,  
 The young man's strength, it is his glory.  
 You're losing health, you're losing health,  
 You're wasting time and sowing sorrow  
 Hugging the Devil to your hearts,  
 And thinking little of the morrow.  
 It takes the vigour from the strong;  
 It takes the courage from the brave;  
 It makes the wise a drivelling fool;  
 It makes the free a wretched slave.  
 Leave off your drink, leave off your drink,  
 And crush the fiend that you're caressing!  
 For drunkenness is all a curse;  
 And temperance is all a blessing.

From Hogg's Edinburgh Instructor.

## THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM.

BY EDGAR A. POE.

I might have been half an hour, perhaps an hour (for I could take but imperfect note of time), before again cast my eyes upward. What I then saw, confounded and amazed me.

The sweep of the pendulum had increased in extent nearly a yard. As a natural consequence, its velocity was also much greater. But what mainly disturbed me, was the idea that it had perceptibly descended. I now observed—with what horror it is needless to say—that its nether extremity was formed of a crescent of glittering steel, about a foot in length from horn to horn; the horns upward, and the under edge evidently as keen as that of a razor. Like a razor also, it seemed massy and heavy, tapering from the edge into a solid and broad structure above. It was appended to a weighty rod of brass, and the whole hissed as it swung through the air.

I could no longer doubt the doom prepared for me by monkish ingenuity in torture. My cognizance of the pit, had become known to the inquisitorial agents—the pit, whose horrors had been destined for so bold a recusant as myself—the pit, typical of hell, and regarded by rumour as the Ultima Thule of all their punishments. The plunge into this pit I had avoided by the merest of accidents, and I knew that surprise, or entrapment into torture, formed an important portion of all the grotesquerie of these dungeon deaths. Having failed to fall, it was no part of the demon plan to hurl me into the abyss; and thus (there being no alternative) a different and a milder destruction awaited me. Milder! I have smiled in my agony as I thought of such application of such a term.

What boots it to tell of the long, long hours of horror more than mortal, during which I counted the rushing oscillations of the steel! Inch by inch—line by line—with a descent only appreciable at seemed ages—down and still down it came. Days passed—it might have been that many days past—ere it swept so closely over me as to fan me with its acrid breath. The odour of the sharp steel, forced itself into my nostrils. I prayed—I wearied Heaven with my prayer for its more speedy descent. I grew frantically mad, and struggled to force myself upwards against the sweep of the fearful scimitar. And then I fell suddenly calm, and lay smiling at the glittering death, as a child at some rare bauble.

There was another interval of utter insensibility; it was brief; for, upon lapsing into life, there had been no perceptible descent in the pendulum. But it might have been long; for I knew there were demons who took note of my swoon, and who could have arrested the vibration at pleasure. Upon my recovery, too, I felt very—oh, inexpressibly—sick and weak, as if through long inaction. Even amid the agonies of that period, the human nature craved food. With painful effort I outstretched my left arm as far as my bonds permitted, and took possession of the small remnant which had been spared me by the rats. As I put a portion of it to my lips, there rushed to my mind a half formed thought of joy—of hope. Yet what business had I with hope? It was, as I say, a half formed thought; man has many such, which are never completed. I felt that it was of a j-y—of hope; but I felt also that it had perished in its formation. In vain I struggled to perfect—to regain it. Long suffering had nearly annihilated all my ordinary powers of mind. I was an imbecile—an idiot.

The vibration of the pendulum was at right angles to my length. I saw that the crescent was

designed to cross the region of the heart. It would fray the serge of my robe; it would return and repeat its operations, again and again. Notwithstanding its terrifically wide sweep (some thirty feet or more), and the hissing vapour of its descent, sufficient to sunder these very walls of iron, still the fraying of my robe would be all that for several minutes, it would accomplish. And at this thought I paused. I dared not go farther than this reflection. I dwelt upon it with a pertinacity of attention, as if, in so dwelling, I could arrest here the descent of the steel. I feared myself to ponder upon the sound of the crescent as it should pass across the garment—upon the peculiar thrilling sensation which the friction of cloth produces on the nerves. I pondered upon all this frivolity until my teeth were on edge.

Down—steadily down it crept. I took a frenzied pleasure in contrasting it downward with its lateral velocity. To the right—to the left—far and wide—with the shriek of a damned spirit! to my heart, with the stealthy pace of the tiger! I alternately laughed and howled, as the one or the other idea grew predominant.

Down—certainly, relentlessly down! It vibrated within three inches of my bosom! I struggled violently, furiously—to free my left arm. This was free only from the elbow to the hand. I could reach the latter from the platter beside me, to my mouth with great effort, but no farther. Could I have broken the fastenings above the elbow, I would have seized and attempted to arrest the pendulum. I might as well have attempted to arrest an avalanche.

Down—still unceasingly—still inevitable down! I gasped and struggled at each vibration. I shrank convulsively at its very sweep. My eyes followed its outward or upward whirling with the eagerness of the most unmeaning despair; they closed themselves spasmodically at the descent, although death would have been a relief, oh, how unspeakable! Still I quivered in every nerve to think how slight a sinking of the machinery would precipitate that keen, glistening axe upon my bosom. It was hope that prompted the nerve to quiver, the frame to shrink. It was hope—the hope that triumphs on the rack—that whispers to the death-condemned even in the dungeon of the Inquisition.

I saw that some ten or twelve vibrations would bring the steel in actual contact with my robe, and with this observation there suddenly came over my spirit keen, collected calmness of despair. For the first time during many hours, or perhaps days, I thought. It now occurred to me that the bandage, or carengle, which enveloped me was unique. It was tied by no separate cord. The first stroke of the razor-like crescent at any point of the band would so detach it that it might be unwound from my person by means of my left arm. But how fearful, in that case, the proximity of the steel! The result of the slightest struggle, how deadly! Was it likely moreover, that the minions of the torturer had not foreseen and provided for this possibility? Was it probable that the bandage crossed my bosom in the track of the pendulum? Dreading to find my faint, and, as it seemed, my last hope frustrated, I so far elevated my head as to obtain a distinct view of my breast. The surcingle enveloped my limbs and body close in all directions—save in the path of the destroying crescent.

Scarcely had I dropped my head back into its original position, when there flashed upon my mind what I cannot better describe than as the unformed half of that idea of deliverance to which I have previously alluded, and of which a moiety only floated indistinctly through my brain when I raised food to my burning lips. The whole thought was now present—feeble, scarcely sane, scarcely definite—but still entire. I proceeded at once, with the nervous energy of despair, to attempt its execution.

For many hours the immediate vicinity of the low framework upon which I lay had been literally swarming with rats. They were wild, bold, and ravenous—their red eyes glaring upon me as if they waited but for motionless on my part to make me their prey. 'To what food,' I thought, 'have they been accustomed in the well?'

They had devoured, in spite of all my efforts to prevent them, all but a small remnant of the contents of the dish. I had fallen into a habitual see-saw, or wave of the hand about the platter; and, at length, the unconscious uniformity of the movement deprived it of effect. In their voracity, the vermin frequently fastened their sharp fangs in my fingers. With the particles of the oily and spicy viand which now remained, I thoroughly rubbed the bandage wherever I could reach it; then, raising my hand from the floor, I lay breathlessly still.

At first, the ravenous animals were startled and terrified at the change—at the cessation of movement. They shrank alarmedly back; many sought the wall. But this was only for a moment. I had not counted in vain upon their voracity. Observing that I remained without motion, one or two of the boldest leapt upon the framework, and smelt at the surcingle. This seemed the signal for a general rush. Forth from the well they hurried in fresh troops. They clung to the wood—they overran it, and leaped in hundreds upon my person. The measured movement of the pendulum disturbed them not at all. Avoiding its strokes, they busied themselves with the anointed bandage. They pressed; they swarmed upon me in ever accumulating heaps. They writhed upon my throat; their cold lips sought my own; I was half stifled by their thronging pressure; a disgust, for which the world has no name, swelled by bosom, and chilled, with a heavy clamminess, my heart. Yet one minute, and I felt that the struggle would be over. Plainly I perceived the loosening of the bandage. I knew that in more than one place it must be already severed. With a more than human resolution I lay still.

Nor had I erred in my calculations; nor had I endured in vain. At length felt that I was free. The surcingle hung in ribands from my body. But the stroke of the pendulum already pressed upon my bosom. It had divided the serge of the robe; it had cut through the linen beneath. Twice again it swung, and a sharp sense of pain shot through every nerve; but the moment of escape had arrived. At a wave of my hand my deliverers hurried tumultuously away. With a steady movement—cautious, sidelong, shrinking, and slow—I slid from the embrace of the bandage, and beyond the reach of the scimitar. For the moment, at least, I was free.

Free—and in the grasp of the Inquisition! I had scarcely stepped from my wooden bed of hor-

ror upon the stone floor of the prison, when the motion of the hellish machine ceased, and I beheld it drawn up by some invisible force through the ceiling. This was a lesson which I took desperately to heart. My every motion was undoubtedly watched. Free! I had but escaped death in one form of agony, to be delivered into worse than death in some other. With that thought I rolled my eyes nervously around on the barriers of iron that hemmed me in. Something unusual, some change, which at first I could not appreciate distinctly, it was obvious, had taken place in the apartment. For many minutes of a dreamy and trembling abstraction, I busied myself in vain, unconnected conjecture. During this period, I became aware, for the first time, of the origin of the sulphurous light which illuminated the cell. It proceeded from a fissure, about half an inch in width, extending entirely around the prison at the base of the walls, which thus appeared, and were completely separated from the floor. I endeavoured, but of course in vain, to look through the aperture.

As I arose from the attempt, the mystery of the alternation in the chamber broke at once upon my understanding. I have observed that, although the outlines of the figure upon the walls were sufficiently distinct, yet the colours seemed blurred and indefinite. These colours had now assumed, and were momentarily assuming, a startling and most intense brilliancy, that gave to the spectral and fiendish portraiture an aspect that might have thrilled even firmer nerves than my own. Demon eyes, of a wild and ghastly vivacity, glared upon me in a thousand directions, where none had been visible before, and gleamed with the lurid lustre of a fire that I could not force my imagination to regard as unreal.

Unreal!—Even while I breathed, there came to my nostrils the breath of the vapour of heated iron. A suffocating odour prevailed in the prison. A deeper glow settled each moment in the eyes that glared at any agonies. A richer tint of crimson diffused itself over the pictured horrors of blood. I gasped for breath! There could be no doubt of the design of my tormentors. Oh! most unrelenting; oh! most demonic of men! I shrank from the glowing metal to the centre of the cell. Amid the thought of the fiery destruction that impended the idea of the coolness of the well came over my soul like balm. I rushed to its deadly brink. I threw my straining vision below. The glare from the enkindled roof illumined its inmost recesses. Yet, for a wild moment, did my spirit refuse to comprehend the meaning of what I saw. At length it forced, it wrestled its way into my soul—it burned itself upon my shuddering realisation. Oh, for a voice to speak! Oh, horror! Oh, any horror but this! With a shriek I rushed from the margin, and buried my face in my hands, weeping bitterly.

The heat rapidly increased, and once again I looked up, shuddering as with a fit of the ague. There had been a second change in the cell; and now the change was obviously in the form. As before, it was in vain that I at first endeavoured to appreciate or understand what was taking place. But not long was I left in doubt. The inquisitorial vengeance had been hurried by my twofold escape, and there was to be no more dallying with the King of Terrors. The room had been square. I saw that two of its iron angles were now acute—two, consequently, obtuse. The fearful difference quickly increased with a low rumbling or moaning sound. In an instant the apartment had shifted its form into that of a lozenge. But the alteration stopped not here—I neither hoped nor desired it to stay. I could have clasped the red walls to my bosom as a garment of eternal peace. 'Death!' I said, 'any death but that of the pit!' Fool! I might not have known that into the pit it was the object of the burning iron to urge me? Could I resist its glow? or if even that, could I withstand its pressure? And now flatter and flatter grew the lozenge, with a rapidity that left me no time for contemplation. Its centre, and, of course, its greatest width, came just over the yawning gulf. I shrank back, but the closing walls passed me resistlessly onward. At length, for my seared and writhing body there was no longer an inch of foothold on the firm floor of the prison. I struggled no more, but the agony of my soul found vent in one loud, long, and final scream of despair. I felt that I tottered on the brink—I averted my eyes.

There was a discordant hum of human voices. There was a loud blast as of many trumpets. There was a harsh grating as of a thousand thunders. The fiery walls rushed back. An outstretched arm caught my own, as I fell, fainting, into the abyss. It was that of General Lasalle. The French army had entered Toledo. The Inquisition was in the hand of its enemies.

From Dickens's Household Words.

## WHAT SAND IS.

THE whole result is, that the heterogeneous materials of the cliff get sorted, according to their kind, like convict prisoners that have fallen into trouble. The German Ocean shuffles his cards most resolutely, but he manages to get the different suits together before the end of the game. And thus we have at certain points, such as Weybourne, Sheringham, and Southwold, whose terraces of pebbles that are raised upon the beach as regularly as if they had been piled there by the hands of men. But their state is not final: at first they were rough and irregular; flints from the chalk, granite boulders from the rock; now they are smoothed and rounded. For though the sea behaves to them in various style, sometimes only playing with them in gentle mood, scarcely making them send forth a pleasant rattle, and sometimes thrashing them with the flail of his angry billows, causing them to spring, and dash and shiver into pieces: he never leaves them quite in repose. Constant worry and want of rest are sure to tell in time; he grinds and frets their very hearts out; and the filings, the sawdust, the raspings of his lapidary work, are SAND; which thenceforth, as we have seen, has its own proper course and destiny to follow.

Sand, therefore, is rock and other hard substances reduced into powder of various degrees of coarseness. And there was, therefore, no sand in chaos. While the earth was still without form and void, the materials of which sand is composed had not assumed their present peculiar character. For sand is a highly manufactured article, and requires time for its production. A brand-new planet can no more have sands (unless ready-made) spread over it, than a new park can be sown with symmetrical avenues of old sta-headed oak trees. Allowing, then, for the

small proportion of sand which the winds, the rains, and the rivers have ground out for us what an old-established concern the oceanwave mill must be, to have pounded thus finely for us the immense quantity of sand which we have in world!

A small portion, then, of the sand of our beach may be the result of last week's stormy spring-tide; but they are not, like our coffee for breakfast, all fresh ground for the occasion. A much larger contribution may have been conveyed from the crag at Bramerton, or the cliff at Bacon, after having been treasured in those store-houses for thousands and thousands of years. Every handful of sand on the earth must have undergone this process. Sometimes a natural cement reunites these pounded morsels, and they become arenaceous rock, or sandstone. Old materials are thus used up again, and are once more serviceable to the world's masonry. Shell-sand is now and then hardened into marble; when the pearly lustre of the fragments is retained, the specimens are quite gemlike.

Our beach happens, at this moment, to be impressed by the ripple-mark of the waves, by the indentation of the rain-drops which fell in the last shower, and by the footsteps of birds which have been searching for their daily food. Just such portions of muddy beach, upon which sand has been drifted by the wind, are to be seen in our museums hardened into stone, and yet bearing fresh traces of waves, and rain-drops, and birds, that left fresh traces of their action, and evidence of their existence, ages upon ages—upon ages! ago.

The most southern point of the Norfolk Coast is a peninsula composed entirely of sea-sand, stretching four or five miles from north to south, between the German Ocean and the estuary of the three rivers, Bure, Yare, and Waveney, and being less than a mile in extreme breadth. In the midst stands the town of Great Yarmouth; the portions of sandy plain above and below which are called the North and South Denes. The excavations for draining the town, made in 1851, showed how deep and unimaged was the sandy stratum. The highest portion of the South Denes is a ridge running parallel with the shore, and raised not many feet above it, but still commanding a most pleasing panorama of sea and land, town and country. It is annually used as a race-course; and for a walk or a causer, there are not many more cheerful and healthy spots on the face of the earth. Only, if a squall comes on, there is no shelter to be had, unless one could, rabbit-like, scoop a cave in the earth. On this slight elevation stands the well-known pillar, called Nelson's monument. But the whole peninsula is a nearly level plain.

It is covered with herbage, so short and fine, that to turn sheep and cattle to feed there seems almost as cruel as driving them to graze upon a green Brussels carpet, which has undergone a dozen years of family service. It is marvellous that they do live and grow. Numbers of brood geese also find the materials whence to produce their eggs and young.

The main agent which now causes any change in level of the Denes is the wind, which not only deposits the drifting sand around every tuft of grass, but also opens a wider gap or any spot left bare of vegetation. I believe that were the Corporation of Great Yarmouth to shut up the Denes for a few years, instead of allowing them to be fed close, their level would rise rapidly accumulating deposit amongst the uncropped herbage. On the North Denes (where stand the mills immortalized in Robson Crusoe), every tuft of furze is the foundation of a hillock; just as the African sand-winds raise a small mound over the carcass of every camel left exposed on the surface of the desert. One of these pyramids has come to be privately designated by a knot of young men adventurers, 'The Peak of Tenerife'; another level and isolated elevation, 'The Table Mountain.' They are admirable hills, in small, for infatigable geographers to explore with a reckless determination of making grand discoveries.

Now, there have been many assemblages of the habitations of men, called towns and cities, which have been overwhelmed by some catastrophe, or whose very site and foundations have been swept away; but there are not many, whose terrestrial locality did not exist at a very late historic epoch. On the deltas at the mouth of great rivers, in recently settled countries, we may look for new cities to arise; the spongy island of the Parana, and the swamps of the Mississippi, may, centuries hence, become connected, firm, and sprinkled over with the congregated dwelling-places of unborn colonists. If we take Holland to be, in great part, the delta of the Rhine, we have an instance of an analogous process which has taken place in past ages; but the mouth of the estuary of the Yare offers a still more modern instance of human seizure of the stranded spoils of the waters.

The very recent changes that have occurred on this spot, are fully proved by Mr J. W. Roberts in this 'Scenery of the Rivers of Norfolk'; and he truly states that 'natural appearances indicate that the portion of the coast of Norfolk, said to have been distinguished by the invasion of Cerdic the Saxon, in the year 485, was not in existence at the remote era when that invasion was effected.' Swinden, too, long since observed, 'All the records of Yarmouth universally agree, that the place where Great Yarmouth now standeth, was originally a sand in the sea, and by degrees, *caput extulit undas*, appeared above water and became dry-land.'

Dry-land, or make-believe land, might appear, and yet no very tempting resort to. The temptation first offered here was that excellent fish the herring. Attractive as was the bait, the reader is requested to remember, in addition, that the new-made *terra firma*, on which the infant Yarmouth was planted, was not a mud-bank, but a sand-bank. Wide is the difference in point of health and comfort. Whether in the African desert, or in those northern latitudes, on such a subsoil the air above and the sand below are both perfectly dry, pure, and wholesome; no deadly dews and damps to scare the traveller, or torment the resident with the dreaming fancy or the waking truth racked bones and fevered blood. Vigour and longevity were thus the inheritance of Yarmouth.

And the country newspapers still constantly furnish us with instances of good folks, who cannot be induced to quit their vale of tears, till they approach or arrive at their hundredth year. If you bear a grudge against any particular Insurance Office, purchase from it a heavy life annuity, go and live at Great Yarmouth, and draw your dividends till they ask in despair whether your name is Old Parr, or Mathuselah.

(To be continued.)