

monotonous enough: I had plenty of neighbours to be sure, but, except a mutual interchange of the outward forms of politeness, such as bowing our heads to each other of a windy day, and so on, I cannot say much for the pleasure I derived from the society of my own species. The Birds who perched upon my branches, furnished me, however, with a fund of speculation and amusement. I have been often delighted with the manners and conversation of these little folks, and I can assure you that the frequent opportunities I had for observation made me intimately acquainted with a number of amusing characters.

Many a time have I chuckled over the pain of some member of the feathered tribe, which was evidently expressed by his fidgetting and spreading his wings for a fly, when he had inadvertently placed himself by the side of an Owl, of most imposing gravity of face, and found himself compelled by the dictates of politeness, to listen to some long story about nothing, told by that interminable proser; in vain would the poor Bird watch for an opportunity to throw out a contradiction in order to enliven the conversation by the subtlety of debate; but no chance was ever afforded him; the prepositions of the Owl were to self-evident and plain, that it would have been flying in the face of nature and reason, to have denied their correctness. Often have I heard him dilate for an hour upon the truth of the position, that two and two were four—or upon the equally undeniable facts that a tree was a tree, and that light was not darkness. And I have little doubt gentle reader, that in your wanderings about the world, and in your intercourse with mankind, you have occasionally met with those kind of characters, who ramble about, the perfect 'poppies of society,' and spoil the sale of laudanum, by administering a sleeping draught to every one who has the misfortune to meet them.

One year, about the end of April, just as the snow had nearly disappeared, and nature began to look smiling again: I as usual, assumed a fresher and greener aspect, and I again heard the glad notes of my little feathered acquaintance, the most of whom had deserted me during the severity of winter. It was a fine mild afternoon, when two little robins flew down, and lit upon one of my branches. I soon discovered that they were of opposite sexes; the little Hen at first manifested some degree of uneasiness at finding herself at tete a tete with her companion, and I began to have some scruples as to the impropriety of the situation but a single glance at the exterior of the Cock Robin, dispelled all my fears in an instant; instead of having anything of a forward air, or impudent look about him, he seemed all mildness and modesty itself. Narrowly as I watched him I could detect no 'roguish twinkle in his eye; indeed so amiable and respectful was his whole demeanour, that it would have been sinful even to suspect him; if his eyes did occasionally betray any symptoms of desire when they met those of his pretty little companion, it was that of chaste kind which looks only for the accomplishment of its wishes through the forms and ceremonies of matrimony. They chirped and prattled the matter for an hour or two, when she, expressing some fears that her Parents would be anxious at her long absence from the nest, bade adieu to the mild-looking Redbreast, promising to meet him beneath my shade on the following day.

They met in this way day after day, mutual intercourse gave rise to confidence on her part, and freedom on his; though they commenced with dry discussions of general topics, yet they soon began to converse of nothing but one another; and though at their first interview they kept at least half a foot apart, yet they drew closer and closer daily, till at last it was quite common for their little bills to come so near together, that a breath could scarce get between them, and if at any time she expressed a fear as to his truth, or the purity of his intentions, he would utter a string of sentiments which never failed to carry conviction to her heart, and then he would roll his eyes to Heaven, and sing to the tune of

'May I perish

'If ever I plant in that bosom a thorn.'

And what could the little Hen Robin do; why, truly, just what half the Hen Robins in the whole universe would have done, she believed him.

Matters went on thus, he looking grave, and spouting sentiment, and she getting less timid and more amorous every day, until one evening just as the sun was sinking, as if ashamed to witness such baseness, his last ray discovered, as it usually did, the lovers upon one of my branches, there they sat, 'looking into each others eyes,' till her head reclined upon his bosom, every feather upon which seemed thrilling with transport, and if she threw a doubting glance towards him, he quickly reassured her by an appeal to his honor, and who would doubt the honor of a Cock Robin. At length her senses began to swim, her eyes to close, her little bosom to heave, her breath to forsake her, and—and—the sun sank, and I could see no more; but I easily learned from the melancholy notes which composed her mourning song, that the false-hearted Redbreast had left her to weep over her folly, for having trusted a Cock Robin merely because he had a demure look and a

mouthful of sentiment; and, gentle reader, to speak truth, I have never liked your demure fellows since, and never see a sober serious looking countenance without suspecting there is some mischief under it.

I might relate many more anecdotes of these little gentry, but for fear I should tire the reader, I shall conclude this part of my history with a few remarks drawn from my general observations of their manners.

Self appeared to be the great consideration with them all; and if occasionally a good natured bird, with some patriotic feeling for his species in general, and some bowels of compassion for them in particular, should chance to be found, he was sure to be imposed upon, until plucked of every feather, he was left to repine at the little gratitude or honor there were to be found among Birds, and to wear out a wretched existence, rendered doubly irksome by the want of those necessities of which he deprived himself to administer to the necessities of his neighbours. The strong and powerful invariably oppressed the weak; and cool impudence, and a consequential air, never failed to do more for their possessors than the most extensive capacity, when attended by real modesty and worth, and the Bird that best understood how 'to feather his nest,' was generally preferred, to another who, however amiable he might be, was deficient in this necessary knowledge.

With regard to the 'feathered fair sex,' the more youthful were fond of adorning their persons and arranging their feathers to the best advantage, while those who had passed the meridian of life, seemed to take most delight in abusing their neighbours. Often have I listened to half a dozen over their evening meal, while for every grain of seed they swallowed they damned a reputation; and yet, if any of the traduced should happen to pop in at the time, you would have thought they would have killed them with kindness.

Truly you should rejoice, gentle reader, that none of these peculiarities which appear so disgusting in Birds, are to be met with among men, and infinitely happy ought you to be that the bosoms of the softer sex are incapable of harbouring any such paltry and scandalous propensities.

To be continued.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE sneers of Mr Baxter, the new member for Montrose, at his colleagues in the House of Commons, have been responded to by Mr Sergeant Shee, who has been addressing the inhabitants of Buckie, a thriving seaport and fishing town on the north-east coast, which rejoices in a new harbor just finished. He says—'When I came into the House of Commons I confess that my impression was very different from that which has been lately promulgated in Scotland, I found it composed of orators who would have held, if not the first rank, at least a place amongst the first in the earliest annals of our Parliamentary history—of statesmen not only familiar with the interests of their own country, but with the power and the resources of all the empires and countries of the world—of lawyers of the first eminence—of eminent merchants, manufacturers, and bankers, whose mere signatures would be the key to treasures of wealth in every city in the known world—of a landed aristocracy who would bear comparison in intelligence, patriotism, and independence with the aristocracy of any country on the face of the earth. My opinion of that house, I confess, was very different indeed from that which younger men have lately expressed of it. I found that every man who had anything to the purpose to say—every man who had taken the trouble to prepare himself, and exhibited that reasonable diffidence which all well-bred men will exhibit when they address an assembly when composed of persons of education—is sure of an attentive audience—that a fairer assembly does not exist in the known world than the House of Commons. For the presumptuous and self-sufficient, the loquacious without information—with nothing to attract attention about them but their presumption and their ignorance—there is no toleration, nor ought there to be; but to every man who has anything to say to the purpose, who knows what he is talking about, every encouragement is given by the House of Commons. I have observed that the oldest members and the most distinguished members of that house are those who would be least likely to find fault with the well meant industrious efforts of younger members to serve their constituents, and do good service to their country. They are not the men to sneer at persons—members who have hobbies to ride upon; they are not the men to talk of persons in terms of disrespect, who do their best for the service of their country.'

GROTESQUE FIGURES IN INDIA.

AMONG other sights at the Vishnu festival at Conjevram were two figures, a man and a woman, about twelve feet high, I should suppose perhaps the identical 'two hideous and lofty figures,' but certainly the same in design and construction, which Rhenius with horror saw here in 1817. The missionary's description, dictated by a gloomy temper, is exceedingly inapplicable to these grotesque figures, which

are moved by men inside, and are made to dance about at a great rate, producing roars of laughter amongst the spectators. 'In the midst of this crowd,' says Rhenius, 'two hideous and lofty figures arrested our attention; a man and woman made of paper, with ghastly faces, arms, and bodies, carried by persons concealed within them.' The hideousness and ghastliness I did not see. Both figures were fair, and of a ruddy complexion—a usual thing in Indian paintings of both human and divine character. The one figure was much like that world-favorite Master Punch, on a lofty scale. His partner was a rosy-cheeked smiling gentlewoman of some dozen feet in height, of a corpulent person and luxuriant bosom, her elbows planted in her sides, in the old-fashioned attitude of dancing amongst women in England. The dancing of these figures I was informed by a gentleman present, formed no part whatever of the religious festival, but is introduced for the amusement of the multitude; and the multitude, and particularly the women and children, did certainly scream and roar with delight at the entertainment.

A LAPLAND CHURCH.

THE building was large, and provided with galleries; nearly every seat was occupied. A motley assemblage was there. Norwegian bonders, in their grey wadmal suits, sat on the south side of the church; on the north their wives and daughters, with the never absent black silk cap 'lue,' fastened under the chin, woollen dresses, fitting closely up to the throat, and a kerchief of some bright silk passed twice round the neck, and tied in a large knot behind the ears. Such are the spring, summer, autumn, and winter fashions of the people. Lower down the aisle, and up in the galleries, were the diminutive Laps, dressed in their summer suit, a dingy flannel blouse, ornamented with edgings and shoulder-straps of red and yellow. From their leathern belts depended large knives. Fir women, too, were not wanting, conspicuous by their caps like truncated cones, adorned with gold and silver lace, and bright coloured ribands. These tiny people contrasted strangely with the bulkier Norwegians. Here were the blue eyes and fair hair of the descendants of the Vikings, with countenances solemn and sedate. There the gleaming, deep-set orbs, high cheek-bones, elf-locks, and scanty beards of the inferior race. Some of these intently watched the service with a look of mingled curiosity and fanaticism; while others stared around so wildly and fiercely, that one might fancy they would draw their long knives, and set up a wild war-whoop.

MALBROOK.

A trifling circumstance led to the popularity of the song in France. The ill-starred Marie Antoinette having obtained the service of a simple peasant woman as nurse to the Dauphin, was one day struck by the smartness of an air, which, says the relater of the anecdote, made the young prince open his eyes to the name of Marlborough! This gay queen's fancy was touched by the sprightly tune; even the king took up the refrain; and from the private apartments of Versailles to the stables the song made a furor in Paris, Beaumarchais even introducing it into his opera of 'Figaro.' The thing, in fact, took; a rage for the name was evinced in many ways; stuffs, silks, ragouts, carriages, furniture, received the stamp of fashion with the title of Malbrook; in short, 'nothing but the fall of the Bastille put a stop to the furor'; and it was revived again when Napoleon, albeit he had no taste for music, took to humming the air! 'Indeed,' concludes the antiquarian, who goes as seriously into the theme as though he were tracing the source of some heroic poem, 'we are inclined to think with Monsieur de Chateaubriand, that it is very probably the same air as that sung by Godfrey de Bouillon under the walls of Jerusalem! This flourish of trumpets wiced up with the brazen assurance that 'the Arabs chant it to this day.'

A FRIEND IN THE CITY.

HE is always at hand, ready with his name to endorse any bill, or statement, that is wanted. He is a kind of monetary masquerade, and as portable as a pocket-book; enabling the merchant to assume the imaginary costume of a Lombard-street banker one minute, or to pull on the top-boots of a Chancery-lane sheriff's officer the next, precisely as their respective services are wanted. The beauty is, too, that the merchant can improvise all the parts himself. He can be generous, forbearing, exacting, relentless or oppressive, as he pleases. He can allow time, or extort fifty per cent., according to his passing whim. He can extend more than the usual grace, or be as graceless as he chooses. The whole drama of commercial life may be read by the moonshine of his friend's ideal presence. And there is no occasion to run to the City to ask his advice. If you will give yourself the trouble to call here to-morrow, you shall have his answer; though, as far as that goes, they might as well give it you at once. But perhaps certain enquiries have to be made, or at all events certain forms have to be kept up, and so you will not know before to-morrow, whether you are to be allowed the three months' longer time, or payment failing to be Handsomed off to a lock up.—*Punch's Pocket Book.*

BOYHOOD OF GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS.

ONE of Sweden's most popular poets has eloquently described the natural tendency of its scenery and climate to develop a robust frame and a manly character. Gustavus was of a constitution and a disposition to experience the full force of such tendencies. He grew tall and strong under the pure cold of the atmosphere to which he was continually exposed.—Amid the starry nights and dark forests of his fatherland, he nursed the seriousness which was a part of his nature, and indulged such glorious dreams of ambition as are vouchsafed only to noble minds. His father soon learnt to regard him as the legitimate heir of his most cherished enterprises, and often referring to some favorite scheme still unaccomplished, and looking to him for its fulfilment, he would pat the boy's head and say to the bystanders, "He will do it." *Chapman's Life of Gustavus.*

SEA GRANDEURS.

THERE is a peculiar charm about the sea; it is always the same, yet never monotonous.—Mr Goose has well observed that you soon get tired of looking at the loveliest field, but never of the rolling waves. The secret, perhaps, is that the field does not seem alive; the sea is life abounding. Profoundly mysterious as the field is, with its countless forms of life, the aspect does not irresistibly and at once coerce the mind to think of subjects so mysterious and so awful as the aspect of the sea does; it carries with it no ineradicable associations of terror and awe, such as are borne in every murmur of old ocean, and thus is neither so terrible nor so suggestive. As we look from the cliffs, every wave has its history; every swell keeps up suspense; will it break now, or will it sink into that larger wave? And then the log which floats so aimlessly on its back, and now is carried under again, like a drowning wretch—is it the fragment of some ship which has struck miles and miles away, far from help and all pity unseen except from heaven, and no messenger of its agony to earth except this log, which floats so buoyantly on the tide? We may weave some tragic story, as we idly watch the fluctuating advance of the dark log; but whatever we weave, the story will not be wholly tragic, for the beauty and serenity of the scene are sure to exert their influence.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

COOKING THE KANGAROO.

ALTHOUGH it was far from a cleanly sight, I was amused to see the way in which these aborigines cooked a small species of kangaroo. Without cleaning it, inside or outside, they roasted it and then tore it to pieces with their teeth and hands. They expressed great delight in handing me a choice morsel, after making known to them my wishes through an interpreter. It was only for the sake of ascertaining the taste of this peculiar animal that I was tempted to take a small piece of the haunch. The primitive mode of dressing it did not recommend it to my squamish appetite; yet I am bound to state that the flesh is delicious, and, if properly cleaned, I, for one, could have made a hearty meal of it.—*The Draper in Australia.*

MANAGEMENT OF THE VOICE IN SINGING.

THE following are the most essential practical rules for taking breath during vocalisation; in taking full breath before a musical phrase, the time necessary for inhalation should be subtracted in the middle of a sentence, the time of inhalation should be taken from the note which follows respiration, unless the musical phrase require this note to retain its full value of duration. Breath must never be taken in the middle of a word, and, if possible, not until a poetical or musical phrase be terminated.—Full breath should be taken at the commencement of all passages; and a half breath (when necessary) to complete a passage, or whenever a melody is interrupted by rests. When breath is requisite in the middle of a passage, it should be taken before a word of small importance, such as the, of, to, and ye, because respiration shortens the note succeeding it, and, therefore, should not occur before words of much significance. Breath should never be taken so as to divide an article from its substantive, nor this latter from its adjective; neither may it be taken between a dissonant note and its resolution on the succeeding tone.—*Voice and Vocal Art.*

INDIANS IN KANSAS.

THE aboriginal Indians, with the exception of the Pawnees, are still in possession of the central and western districts of Kansas. The Pawnees once the most powerful of the prairie tribes have been reduced by war and disease to utter insignificance as to numbers, wealth and valour. Twenty-five years ago the small pox swept away one-half of their numbers; and since that time other tribes, once held in subjection, becoming relatively stronger, have been wiping out the remembrance of traditional wrongs. The Pawnees were located for a time north of the Nebraska River, and west of the Missouri. The feeble remnant of a nation that fifty years ago spread terror from the sources of the Missouri to the mountains of Mexico, but becoming disheartened under the attacks of the Blackfoot and Sioux, the Pawnees have again migrated south, and exist in a most wretched condition.