

want of integrity is wildly called, accompanies the greatness of England; but it is illogical to suppose that for that reason it is an essential part of it. So far from being so, it would not stand for a moment unless it assumed the character, and received the credit, of honesty, thus trading on a lie in more senses than one.

'Well Mr Jones,' said the wife, looking very much pleased, 'now do tell us about the inquest.'

'All the rumors are confirmed, and more than confirmed; and by the man's own written confession of a guilt that makes one's brain reel. I foresee, however, that the moral gain will be measured by the pecuniary amount, and that the pressure of circumstances, which would extenuate the crimes of an ordinary malefactor, will have no effect in lessening the public abhorrence of the forger of a million. For my own part I do not see that the amount has much to do with the question, further than that the mind of the tempted is not so much startled at the idea of a small fraud as of a large one, and, therefore, not so apt to consider seriously the nature of the guilt.'

'That, I think, is very just; but tell us what was the course of the unhappy man, what was the circumstances which led him on to destruction. You must know my husband and I are personally interested in the question; for we saw him when alive, and had a great deal of conversation about him, and—'

'And I solemnly wished,' broke in the husband.

'Hush, John not a word! for I am anxious to hear Mr Jones.'

'I have little to tell. He was a provincial attorney in Ireland, in very moderate business; but being a man of talent and firmness of character, he was instrumental in establishing a bank in the county, and became a person of some consequence. He at length felt his field to be too small, and in an evil hour he came to London, where his connection with the bank introduced him at once to the speculators and capitalists of the city; and this led to large business as a parliamentary agent, and to his becoming chairman of the directors of a great joint-stock bank in London. The road of ambition was fairly opened. He got into parliament, made himself the leader in the Irish Brigade; then deserted his party, and became a Lord of the Treasury. In the meantime, he was very busy with the Encumbered Estates Bill; and having procured from the commissioners under it almost unlimited authority, he organized an association in England for purchasing, and afterwards selling to enormous advantage, properties sold in the encumbered Estates Court. He now became chairman of the Swedish Railway, arranged a new insurance company, established a newspaper of his own in Dublin, and plunged deep into English, Italian, Spanish, and American railways. This is the rough outline: but when and where the pressure first began; when this originally obscure and moneyless man found that he could not pursue such schemes without funds; and what were the precise circumstances that originated his crimes, and led him on, step by step, to perdition, is not yet known. It is known however, that he obtained money on the security of forged titles, as from the Encumbered Estates Court. He fabricated shares of the Swedish Railway to the amount of a quarter of a million; and besides the assignments of numerous deeds he held in trust, he forged on private individuals to the amount of at least £100,000.'

'What a gigantic criminal!' cried the young wife. 'Can it be that it is the same man we saw paying the coachman a shilling?'

'It appears that for some time he had contemplated his violent release from the fever of mind in which he had lived so long. But at length the occasion came; the forgery of one of the Encumbered Estates deeds was on the eve of discovery; and the wretched man went forth from his own house in the dead of night, with the instruments of death in his pocket. A pause here ensued, which was at length broken by the husband.

'All this is very dreadful, Jones,' said he, 'but the case is not different, except as regards magnitude, from numerous other cases of a similar kind. Why should it have greater effect than they?'

'On the same principle that a sleeper is awakened by the crash of thunder, who would not bear a knock at the street-door. This will have an effect which it is impossible to over-estimate, because the sleepers it will rouse must be counted by tens and hundreds of thousands—Many a restless night will this news give rise to throughout the length and breadth of the land—many a ghastly look, many a pale and haggard face. In many an imagination will the midnight course of the suicide be traced in his wanderings over that dark heath; and by many a bedside will stand the appearance of the lifeless form lying in the dead-house. To-night, I myself should have been visited by these fancies, if I had not taken means to enable me to set them at defiance. I am very, very thankful,' and the speaker's voice trembled. 'I trust that many thousand more will receive a lesson from the fate of John Sledge! But I must now go. Good-by—God bless you!'

Both of them following him to the door. 'I thank you Jones, for this visit,' said the husband—'I thank you sincerely.'

'And—I—too' said the wife. Her voice was broken, and tears were streaming down her cheeks; and when the door shut, the little woman threw herself into her husband's arms and sobbed outright.

STREET SCENERY OF NAPLES.

WE turned into the Largo del Castello, one of the largest squares in Naples, which leads down to the sea, and the same noise and the same crowd met us here. Around us we saw illuminated theatres, on the outside of which were bright pictures, which represented the principle scenes of the pieces which were being performed within. Aloft on a scaffold, stormed a Bojossa family. The wife cried out to the spectators the husband blew the trumpet, and the youngest son beat them both with a great riding-whip, whilst a little horse stood upon its hind legs in the lack scene and read out of an open book. A man stood, and fought, and sang, in the midst of a crowd of sailors, who sat in a corner; he was an improvisatore. An old fellow read aloud out of a book, Orlando Furioso, as I was told; his audience were applauding him just as we passed by. "Monte Vesuvio!" cried the signora; and I saw at the end of the street, where the lighthouse stood, Vesuvius, lifting itself high in the air, and the fire-red lava, like a stream of blood, rolling down from its side. Above the crater hung a cloud, shining red from the reflected glow of the lava; but I could only see the whole for a moment. The carriage rolled away with us across the square to the Hotel Cass Tederca. Close beside this stood a little puppet theatre, and a still smaller one was erected before it, where Punchinello made his merry leaps, peeped, twirled himself about, and made funny speeches. All around was laughter. Only very few paid attention to the monk who stood at the opposite corner, and preached from one of the projecting stone steps. An old broad-shouldered fellow, who looked like a sailor, held the cross, on which was the picture of the Redeemer. The monk cast flaming glances at the wooden theatre of the puppets which drew the attention of the people away from his speech. "Is this Lent?" I heard him say. Is the time consecrated to Heaven? the time in which we should, humbled in the flesh, wander in sackcloth and ashes? Carnival time is it? carnival always, night and day, year out and year in, till you post down into the depths of hell! There you can twirl, there you can grin, can dance, and keep festivo in the eternal pool and torments of hell!" His voice raised itself more and more; the soft Neapolitan dialect wrung in my ear like swaying verse, and the words melted melodiously one into another. But all the more his voice ascended, ascended also that of Punchinello, and he leaped all the more comically, and was all the more applauded by the people; then the monk in a holy rage, snatched the cross from the hand of the man who bore it, rushed forward with it, and exhibiting the crucifix, exclaimed, "See here is the true Punchinello! him shall you hear! for that you shall have eyes and ears! Kyrie eleison!" And, impressed by the holy sign, the whole crowd dropped upon their knees, and exclaimed with one voice, "Kyrie, eleison!" even the puppet player let fall his Punchinello. I stood beside our carriage, wonderfully struck by the scene.

GREEK PEASANTS.

THERE was in the foreground a young woman, tall and well made, and with a majestic appearance almost royal. Her blue eyes looked upon us with tranquil curiosity, like the vagueness of those large eyes of the statues, which for twenty centuries contemplate the tumultuous life of men. Her face, of a fine oval had the graceful paleness of marble; it was the Velleda of Maindron with still purer lines and calmness. Two long tresses, falling unartificially down her cheeks, lengthened her face still more and made it somewhat dreamy. Her waist unconstrained by stays, showed supple grace and fresh vigour. Her hands and naked feet had such delicate joints that any duchess might have envied them; her whole being was such a flower of beauty that she would have embellished the richest dress, without receiving from it any additional beauty. Her dress, wonderfully suited to her, showed a tasteful consciousness of what most adorned her. As many costumes as there are, women may be met with in these country districts—nothing varies more capriciously than the dress of these peasant women; they choose at will the pattern which most becomes the beauty of each—each one is an artist whose costume is a masterpiece. The young woman had thrown down over her head a large red and yellow handkerchief, the point of which hung down between her shoulders. The long cotton shift, which hung down to her feet, was ornamented with a small red and black pattern, embroidered round the neck and sleeves like the design on a Tuscan vase. A short garment, with narrow stripes, covered her breast without confining it, and fastened below the bosom; a black sash, thickly folded, was loosely wound round her waist; an apron and thick coat of woollen, sparingly embroidered with gaudy colours, completed her dress and adornment. Her hair, hands, and neck, were loaded with coins, rings, necklaces, and pieces of glass of all

kinds; and she wore below the bosom two large embossed plates of silver, like small shields—humble luxury, ornaments of bad silver, transmitted from mother to daughter, and which have a value only from the recollections attached to them, and the strange grace which they add to beauty. This woman, thus clothed, astonished the eyes by her singular splendour. Her husband might be about five years older, than herself, that is, about twenty-three or twenty-four. He was very tall, without seeming lanky, and slender, without being thin. His features, purely chiselled, had somewhat childlike, notwithstanding the presence of a growing moustache; and his long black hair, falling over his shoulders, especially gave him the shy physiognomy of a peasant of Brittany. He wore a jacket and fustanella; sandals, or rather mocassins without heels; woollen gaiters, which stand pretty well instead of stockings; a cotton scarf, embroidered by his wife, was wound like a turban round his head; his belt tightly wound round, was armed with a dagger with a horn hilt—an inoffensive weapon, and whose innocence I would warrant.

THE DEVIL'S TAIL.

IN the town of New England there lived a few years ago, a man named B——, who was more commonly known as Tonguey Jack, a designation which he owed to his 'gift of the gab,' and disposition to show off his wit at the expense of others. Tonguey Jack was among other things a rank infidel, and a great disputant upon religious subjects. He was especially fond of entrapping clergymen into discussion, in which by his coarse humour and ludicrous illustrations, he generally managed to get the laugh on his side. In this way he made himself quite a terror to all the preachers in the vicinity. A new minister had been lately called by a congregation in town. He was quite a young man, and just from the theological seminary. One day Jack while sitting with some of his cronies in front of the tavern, saw the minister coming down the street, and declared he would show them fun. As the minister approached, Jack came forward seriously, and said they had just been discussing a religious question, on which they would be glad to have some light from the minister. The latter declared his willingness to afford any information he could give.

'What I want to know,' said Jack, gravely, 'is this. Evil, it is well known, proceeds from the Devil, who everybody knows has got a tail. Now, as you are a minister and a college-learned man, Mr C——, I want to know if you can tell me the exact length of the devil's tail?'

'Certainly I can Mr B.,' replied the minister, without hesitation. 'It is exactly the length of your tongue, and it is an uncommonly long tail.'

There was a roar of laughter from the crowd, and the minister walked on, leaving Jack dumb-founded by the suddenness of the retort. He never heard the last of it; and though he retained his name and his character till his death he never afterwards ventured to molest the young minister.

ROTTERDAM HOUSEMAIDS.

THE maids themselves were as clean as the houses they tended; their close caps were white as the walls, while the ample apron, which they wore tied tight around their dress, was as spotless as a charity-girl's. How different from the slatterns who are generally seen at the same early hour, with their bits of dirty black net over their fuzzy hair, hearthstoning the door steps of London! We import a number of foreign commodities now-a-days to add to the comforts of the well-to-do among us; but assuredly, of all the articles of continental produce, none could be more advantageously shipped into our own country than a cargo of these same cleanly Dutch housemaids. That girl yonder scouring away at the brass knocker, said we to our companion, as we walked along to the hotel, is a prodigy of cleanliness, from the close white border of her cap down to her equally white wooden shoes. Just stop, for a minute, to look at the little box by her side, in which she keeps her rottenstone. See the wood of it is scrubbed as clean with sea-sand as her own sabots, and the little bits of brass at the corners are as bright as new sovereigns. We had scarcely finished admitting the neatness of this maid before we were forced by the fountain of water projected against the windows of one of the houses in our path to direct our attention to another girl who stood out in the road pumping the jet against the house. There never were such people! we exclaimed; why that maid looks as though she had just been sent home from the wash; her hair is as smooth and glossy as a coach panel; her cheeks are red and shiny as apples; and, though her skirt is of black stuff, you can discover, as she stoops, that her under linen is as white as driven snow! Look too, the long brass syring that she is working is polished like a piece of golden dinner-plate, and even the copper hoops of the pail in which it stands, are rubbed up as bright as if they had been burnished.

MEMORY OF ANIMALS.

Colonel Smith mentions an instance of a horse which had been two years his own, but which had been left with the army, and brought back and sold in London. At the expiration

of three years, he chanced to travel up to the metropolis; and, at a relay, getting out of the mail, the off-wheel horse attracted his attention; and upon going near to examine it with more care, the animal was observed to recognise its former master, and to make many expressive gestures and movements indicative of its satisfaction at the circumstance, till the coachman at length asked if the horse was not an acquaintance. A wolf was brought up as a young dog; he became familiar with every one he was in the habit of seeing, and, in particular, followed his master everywhere, evincing evident chagrin at his absence, obeying his voice, and deporting himself equal to a domesticated dog. The animal was presented to the Menagerie du Roi, where it continued a sconsolate, scarcely taking food. After a time his health returned and forgetting his former affection, and the object of it, he became reconciled to his keepers. In 18 months his former master returned, and without his uttering a word the wolf perceived him in the crowd, and at the recognition evinced the most lively joy, the caresses of the animal, on being set at liberty, being as affectionate as could have been those of an attached dog after a few days absence. A second separation was followed by similar demonstrations of regret, but which again yielded to time. Three years had passed, and the wolf was living with a dog, which had been placed with him as a companion when his master again returned. The long lost but still-remembered voice was instantly replied to by the most impatient cries, which were redoubled as soon as the animal regained his liberty: such, indeed, was the keenness of his affectionate feelings, that the keepers, who offered to remove him, and to whom just before he had shown every symptom of fondness, were subjected to menace and very significant marks of displeasure. A third separation proved nearly too much for this affectionate animal; it became gloomy and despondent, refusing his food rejecting the attentions of its keepers, and mabjecting towards strangers the original savageness of the species. It was only after a long interval that its health and spirits became in any degree restored. Commentary on this singular incident in the natural history of the wolf, which rests on the authority of Frederic Cuvier, and is quoted by Bell, would be quite superfluous.

CUSTOMS OF THE CHINESE.

THE head of the men is invariably shaven, except at the top, whence the tail depends, in conformity with the Tartar custom, the only change being in mourning, when the hair is allowed to grow. The Chinese having so little beard, the principal work for the razor is on the head, consequently, no person ever shaves himself. The great number of barbers is a striking feature in all towns, and sufficiently explained by the prevailing custom. They exercise the additional function of shampooing, which, with the antecedent shave, occupies altogether a considerable time. Every barber carries about with him, slung from a stick across his shoulder, all the instruments of his vocation, in a commodious form. On one side hung a stool, under which are drawers, containing his instruments; and this is counterpoised at the other end by a small charcoal furnace, under a vessel of water, which it serves to heat. Their razors are extremely clumsy in appearance, but very keen and efficient in use. It is not the custom for the men to wear moustachios before 40 years of age, nor beards before 60. These generally grow in thin tufts, and it is only in a few individuals that they assume the bushy appearance observable in other Asiatics. The women would frequently be very pretty were it not for the shocking custom of daubing their faces with white and red paint, to which may be added the deformity of cramped feet. In point of health, however, this is, in a great degree, made up by the total absence of tight lacing, and of all ligatures and confinements whatever about the vital parts.—The consequence is that their children are born very straight limbed, and births are scarcely attended with disaster. Their dress is extremely modest and becoming, and, in the higher classes, as splendid as the most exquisite silks and embroidery can make it. Unmarried women wear their hair hanging down in long tresses.—After a certain time of life the women wear a silk wrapper round the head, in lieu of any other dress. The eyebrows of the young women are fashioned until they represent a fine curved line, which is compared to the new moon when only a day or two old, or to the young leaflet of the willow.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

THE two most perverted and grossly abused words in the English language! Yet they are of good honest origin, and noble signification—Lady.—a thing of silks, satins, laces, and perfumes;—her mind filled with mawkish sentiments, and contemptible vanities; an opera, a play, or an equipage the height of her ambition; while her heart is eaten up with petty jealousies, and little envies. For a dress or a diamond she takes a husband, and to outshine her fellows in gewgaws she ruins him; she can neither spin, sew, nor make a pudding; and would consider the imputation of any such skill in housewifery a disgrace. Such is the meaning of the word lady, in the fashionable acceptance of the term.—Gentlemen,—the perfumed and mustached folk, who cheat his tailor, bilks his landlord, cuts his