Notches on The Stick

The Shepherd of the Noctes. Hogg! a pair shepherd on the hills Wha could no read, felt fittu' trills O music in his soul .- Thomas C. Latto.

There is the Ettrick Shepherd of fact, and the Ettrick Shepherd of fancy; i. e., of "The Noctes Ambrosiana." The one is the other, bedizened, tricked and fantastically adorned. The fantasias of one mind are put into the lips of a man who could not, like Coleridge so squander a merchantable product. In the riant exuberance of these papers he appears with exaggerated floridness of diction, and apcovphal eloquence, as well as grotesquely exaggerated toibles. Wilson's dashing spirit would not pause at the point of prudence; but he had nothing to fear, knowing well his game. Well he knew the shepherd would set the things that tickled over against the things that galled; and that to be playfully represented as a guzzler, a zany, a buffoon, was the sort of offence his vanity would overlook. Wilson meant no harm; he used his too willing friend to raise a popular ha! ha! and set the tables in a roar; for every well-furnished play must have its wearer of the cap-and-bells, in whose pied noddle wit and wisdom do most reside. We cannot imagine Wordsworth, or Southey, much less Tennyson, tamely submitting to such dramatic presentations of themselves, however adapted to their proper styles; but though Hogg affected displeasure, and so netimes, doubtless, felt it, it does not sppear that he deeply resented anything that did not aim at detraction from his poetic or literary merit, or withhold from him the applause, or more tangible reward, he desired. He was exceedingly je lous of his popularity and as tolerant of anything that could extend it; and the fact is, the "Noctes" gave his name such amazing currency as greatly to heighten his reputation, and to increase the market value of his productions.

As a specimen of how high Wilson could get the shepherd set up, on williewaughts out of of the cuggie, take this: "Curse the Radicals, who would be destroying the old aristocracy of the land ! (Sings the second Epithalium, -Wat o' Buccleuch.) There's a song for you, Timothy. My blude's up. I bless heaven I am a borderer. Here's the Duke's health-here's the King's health-here's North's health-here's my ain health -here's your health -here's Ebony's health -here's Ambrose's health-the health o' a' the contributors and a' the subscribers. TOf Blackwoods Magazine, in which the "Noctes" appeared as a serial.] That was a willy-waught! I haena left a dripble in the jug.' If so much liquor did not fly to his head, one would think so much nonsense would make a serious draught on his patience. And as for a specimen of the imputed style, take the following, no whit finer than many we could select. Read a page or two of the Shepherd's prose, and then suppose him to utter by the yard these unpremeditated felicities! 'I was once lyin' half asleep in a sea-shore cave o' the Isle o' Sky wearied out by the verra beauty o' the moon licht that had been keepit lyin' for hours in lang line o' harmless fire, stretchin leagues an leagues to the rim o' the ocean. Nae sound, but a faint, dim plash-plash plash o' the tide-whether ebbin' or flowin' I ken not-no against, but upon the weedy sides o' the cave - I could na thole to leeve on the sea-shore. That everlastin thunner sae disturbs my imagination, that my soul has nae rest in its ain solitude, but becomes transfused as it were into the michty ocean, a' its thochts as wild as the waves that keep foamin' awa into naething, and teen breakin' back again into transitory life-for ever and ever and ever-as if neither in sunshine nor moonlight, that multitudinous tumultuousness, frae the creation of the world, had ever ance been stilled in the blessedness o' perfect sleep. Only new poets spurtin' up, sir, amang us, like fresh daisies amang them that's withered!' This is Wilson, when he

Hogg claims in his "Autobiography," to have advanced the hint that led to the establishment of Blackwood's Magazine, and to have been offered the editorship of it, which he refused, on account of living in the country; but upon comparison of his account with those of Lockhart and Pringle, it must be suspected that these statements were the offspring of "that inherent vanity" which he confesses. "It is notorious and true, however, that he became and room of the splendid meteor, we all went ian work without reference to denomination

has had some time to think about it, in-

stead of the shepherd when he has not;

they may be dashed from the pen of one,

but they do not flow from the tongue of the

other; and yet there is a spice of the shep-

Is especially true of Hood's Pills, for no medicine ever contained so great curative power in so small space. They are a whole medicine

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contributors." He at length, disagreeing with Blackwood, and resenttul against him, rather than against Wilson,-discontinued his contributions. Referring to the Professor, whose generosity and nobleness of heart he confesses, he says: "My friends in general have been of opinion that he has amused himself and the public to often at my expense; but except in one instance, which terminated very ill for me, and in which I had no more concern than the man in the moon, I never discerned any evil design on his part, and thought it excellent sport. At the same time, I must acknowledge that it was using too much freedom with an author to print his name in full to poems, letters and essays, which he himself never taw. I do not tay that he has done this; but either he or some one else has done it many a time," who this "some one else" may, we can infer from his remarks concerning Blackwood: "That magazine of his, which owes its rise principally to myself, has often put words and sentiments into my mouth of which I have been greatly ashamed, and which have give much pain to my family and relations; and many of these after a solemn written promise that such freedoms should never be repeated. I have been urged to restrain and humble him by legal measures, as an incorrigible offender deserves. I know I have it in my power, and if he dares me to the task, I want but a hair to make a tether

Howitt observes, referring to this abuse of the Shepherd, -"It must be confessed that no justification can be offered for such treatment. Such was my own opinion, derived from this source, of Hogg, and from prints of him, with wide open mouth and huge straggling teeth, in full roars of drunken laughter, that, on meeting him in London, I was quite amazed to find him so smooth, well-looking, and gentlemanly a sort of person." .

As a consequence of this fondness for popularity peculiar to Hogg, and his desire to be petted by the leaders of the time, he had some disagreeable experiences. A certain childish ill-humor seized him, upon disappointment. He was at first ireful, and atterwards sullen, with Scott, who refused a contribution to a volume of poems, which he had solicited from the chief poets of his time, and which he designed to issue for his personal benefit. To this mendicancy Scott refused to accede; and this, perhaps, influenced the decision of others. To Sir Walter, Hogg attributed the failure of his project, however; and the abortive plan was succeeded by "The Poetic Mir. ror,"-a volume of imitative poems in the manner of Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, and others, as superficially successful as such things can be expected to be." Scutt was however, all sunshine under this displeasure, and the cloud presently melted from the brow of the shepherd. But the deepest resentment of which he was capable he felt when any slur was cast on his poetical pretension, or when his right to be considered as a poet at all was challenged. This is shown clearly by an incident that occurred during a visit to the Lakes.

"I dined with Wordsworth, and called on himself several times afterwards, and certainly never met with anything but the most genuine kindness; therefore people have wondered why I should have indulged in caricaturing his style (?) in the 'Poet Mirror.' I have often regretted that myself; but it was merely a piece of illnature at an affront which I conceived had been put upon me. It was the triumphal arch scene. This anecdote has been told and told again, but never truly; and was Ambrosiara,' as a joke; but it was no joke; and the plain, simple truth of the matter was this :-

The following "scene" was at Rydal; and

of it let James give his own account:

"It chanced one night, when I was there. that there was a resplendent arch across the zenith, from the one horizon to the other, or something like the Aurora Boreis well remembered, for it struck the country with admiration, as such a phenomenon had never before been witnessed in such perfection; and as far as I can learn, it had been more brilliant over the mountains and pure waters of Westmoreland than anywhere else. When word came into the continued for some years, one of its chief out to view it; and on the beautiful plat-

form at Mount Rydal, we were walking in twos and threes, arm-in-arm, talking of the phenomenon, and admiring it. Now, be it remembered, that there were presen', Wordsworth, Professor Wilson, Lloyd, DeQuincy, and myself, besides several other literary gentlemen, whose names I am not certain that I remember aright. Miss Wordsworth's arm was in mine, and she was expressing some fears that the splendid st anger might prove ominous, when I, by ill luck, blundered out the following remark, thinking that I was saying a good thing:-'Hout me'em! it is neither maie nor less than joost a triumphal airch, raised in honor of the meeting of the poets." That's not armies. eh? eh. "That's very good," said the Professor, laughing. But Wordsworth, who had De Qnincy's arm, gave a grunt, turned on his heel, and leading the little opium chewer aside, he addressed him in these disdainful and venomous words :- 'Poets! Poets? What does the fellow mean?-Where are they?'

"Who could forgive this? For my part, I never can, and never will! I admire Wordworth, as who does not, whatever they may pretend? But for that short sentence I have a lingering ill-will at him which I cannot get rid of. It is surely presumption in any man to circumscribe all human excellence within the narrow sphere of his own capacity. The 'Where are they?' was too bad. I have always some hopes that De Quincy was leeing, for I did not myself hear Wordsworth utter the

Perhaps a higher wisdom would have counselled silence on such a theme. Indeed, such injudicious confidences have, in the minds of many brought odium on the Shepherd. We have noted a somewhat supercilious tone in some very recent papers concerning him. But, surely it is a very cool propriety which is offended so. Every man has his faults; and it may be that his peccadillos, like gnats and mosquitoes, may be offensive out of a'l proportion to the real harm they can accomplish. So we must regard the virtues of the Shepherd. He was honest, and exceedingly frank; he was warm hearted, and generous, to a fault, and liberal to the needy, in excess of his means. He was an ardent aspirant after literary excellence, -and as ardently desired recognition of his accomplishments; while behind that burly self exultation, and rudeness of demeanor, there dwelt a soul rich in love and beauty. He does not in his writings, seek so much to retard the credit of his literary brotherhood as to advance it, When Scott and Wilson offended him, like an enraged boy, he was unmeasured in his vituperation; but, in the end, his regard was not lessened; and he gratefully records their unfailing and cordial kindness, and their refusal to be offended with him. 'Of Southey, Lockhart, Sym, [the Timothy Tickler of Blackwood] Galt, etc. his reminiscenses are full of lite and interest. Of Wordsworth's poetry he entertained the high notion that a true poet must "do;" and to have been approved by Wordsworth as a poet would have been to him one of the deepest satisfactions of his life. Wordsworth did, indeed, write an elegy on him when he was dead, and in his grave; but one word in a living ear is worth for joy and encouragement, ten thousand, spoken over the tomb.

PASTOR FELIX.

CRUEL SCIATICA.

Incessant Pain-Tormented-Racked-Life Despaired of.

John Marshall, Varney, P. O., of Grey, writes these strong words: "For two years I was completely laid up with sciatica. doctored without any permanent relief. I had given up hope. A friend saw the notice of a cure of what seemed a parallel case to mine, by South American Rheumatic Cure, and knowing my little faith in the efficacy of any remedy, he procured a bottle himself and brought it to me. I took it, and, to make a long story short, it eaved my lite. In a day or so I was out of bed, and in three days I was able to walk to Durham, a distance of four miles, to purchase another bottle. I am now entirely

A Practical Scheme.

The pastor of a prominent church in Chicago is about to establish what he calls a 'University of Applied Christianity.' It is proposed to construct a large building, likewise brought forward in the 'Noctes to be fitted up with class rooms, study rooms, reading rooms, club rooms, lecture rooms, and every spartment necessary to the work contemplated, as well as in immense auditorium. Concerts and lectures will be given in imitation of London music hall methods, the prices being within the reach of all, and the production of a standard which will reflect the better taste of alis, but much lighter. It was a scene that | the auditors. There will be workingmen's clubs for the help of the workers, such as there are at Toynbee Hall in London. In the basement will be a gymnasium and bathroom, and in the club rooms there will billiards and other attractions, so that the attendant may enjoy everything except liquor, to which membership in a club might entitle him. There is to be no theology, no doctrine, no dogma, but practical Christor creed.



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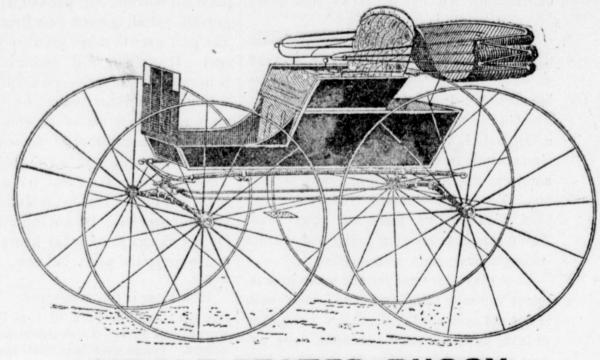
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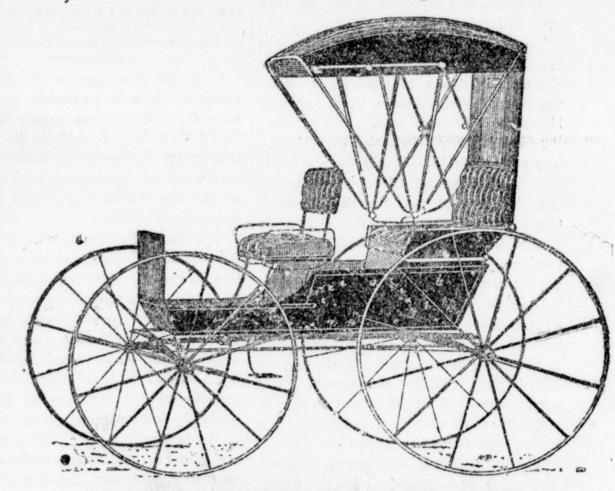
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A CONFUSION OF DATES.

Some Well Known Events That Tell of Such Confusion

The fact that down to 1752 the historical year in England commenced on January 1, while the civil, ecclesiastical, and legal year began on the 25th of March, led to much confusion in dates, as the legis. lature, the church, and civilians referred | year, every event which took place between January 1 and March 25 to a different year from the historians. Remarkable examples of such contusion are afforded by two well-known events in English history: Charles I. is said by most authorities to have been beheaded January 30, 1648. while others with equal correctness say it was January 30, 1649; and so the revolution which drove James II. from the throne is said by some to have taken place in February, 1688, and by others in February, 1689. Now these discrepancies arise from some using the the civil and legal, and others the histor-

to the same years—viz, 1649 and 1689. To avoid as far as possible mistakes from these two modes of reckoning it was usual, as often seen in old books or manuscripts, to add the historical to the legal date, when speaking of any day between January 1 and March 25. thus:

8 (i. e. 1649, the civil and legal year, 9 (i. e. 1649, the historical

or thus, January 30, 1648 9. This practice, common as it has long been, is nevertheless, often misunderstood, and even intelligent persons are sometimes perplexed by dates so written. The explanation, however, is very simple, for the lower or last figure always indicates the

Natural Bistory.

year according to our present calculation.

'Mammy,' said Pickaninny Jim, 'what makes de folks say dat er mule is de mos' sure-footed animal dat grows?'

'Don' you know dat?' 'I sho'ly doesn'.'

'Well, when yoh gits a chance yoh wanter watch a mule kick an' see how he nebber misses 's aim. Den voh'll know ical year, though both would have assigned I why dev calls 'im sure-footed.'-Washingany event occuring after the 25th of March ton Star.