CHARLES JAMES LEVER

NUTS AND NUTCRACKERS

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AN OPENING NUT.

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“An Opening Nut.”

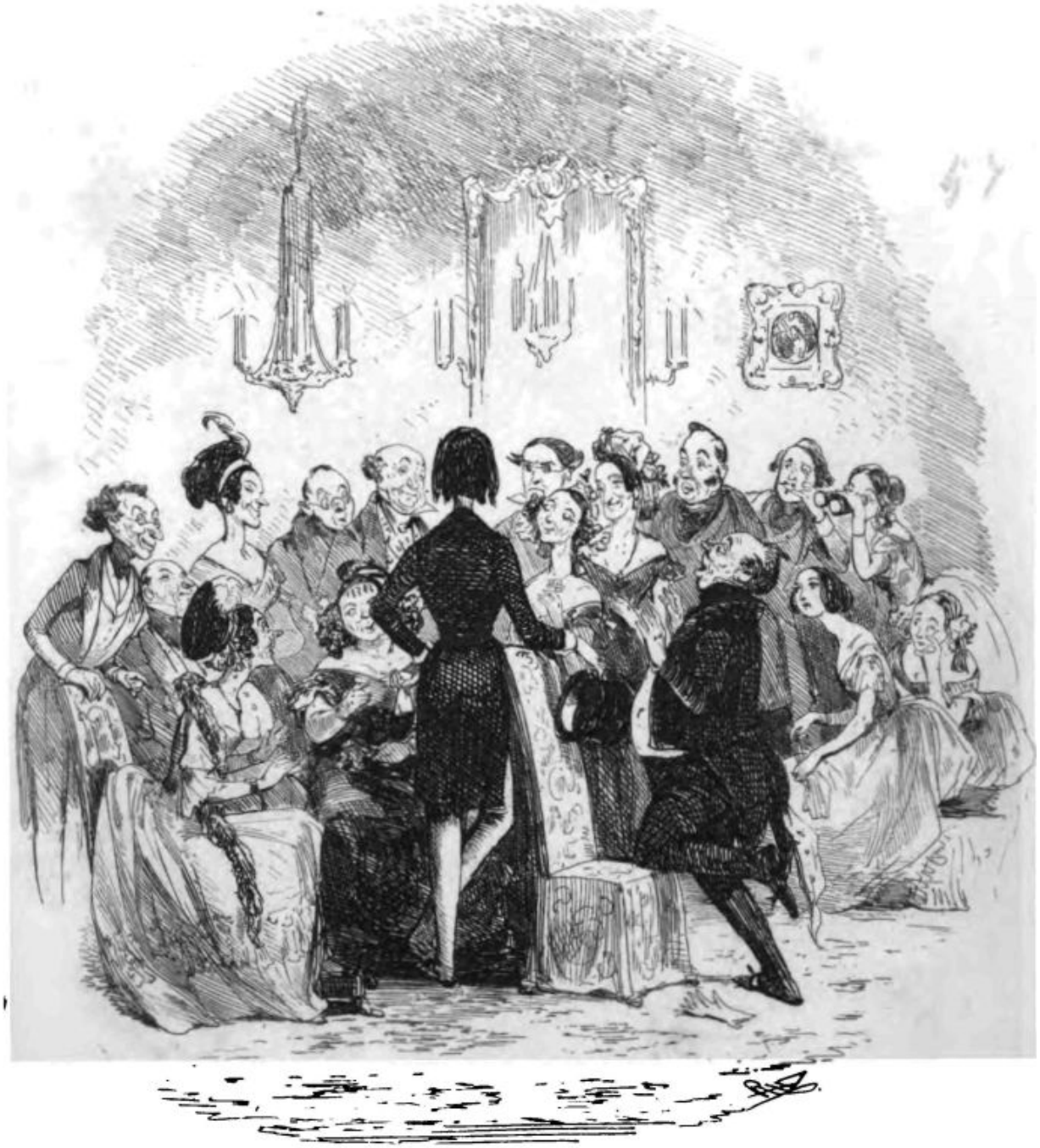
This is the age of popular delusions! Everybody endeavours to be somebody else, and everything is made to resemble something it is not. Every class and section of society seeks to mystify the other, and the whole world is masquerading it, very much it would seem to the whole world's delight. There are people who think the Tories consistent—the Whigs honest—and the Repealers respectable. Nothing too palpable in absurdity not to have its followers; nor does the ridicule cease with ourselves; but all who visit us catch the malady—witness the Indian Chiefs, who called on Ben. D'Israeli, to see the style of life and habits of the English Aristocracy.

These things after all are but poor delusions—little better than what the Wizard of the North calls “Parlour Magic,” and might be left to time, to be laughed at, just like the French war clamour—the O'Connell denunciation—or the Young England discovery of the “pure 'Cocktailian' race.” There are, however, other fallacies which from age and habit have gradually associated themselves with our social existence, and become, as it were, national. To disabuse the world of some of these, has been my object in the present little volume. To endeavour not only to show that we often

“Compound for sins we are inclined to,
By damning those we have no mind to;”

but also, that our laws and institutions—our manners and customs—are based less upon principles of justice, than mere convenience and social advantage.

That such an undertaking will be graciously received or kindly acknowledged, I have never been able to persuade myself; no more than I feel disposed to believe, that hunger can be fed by Acts of Parliament; or starvation alleviated by Cricket or Jack in the bowl; however, it is *my* way of regenerating the land, and why should n't I “roll my tub” as well as my neighbours. Why I have given the volume its present title, would be perhaps more difficult to account for, save, that I have remarked on so many classes and gradations of people; and that, “Knocks” at our neighbours are generally “Nuts” to ourselves.



The Man of Genius

A NUT FOR MEN OF GENIUS

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If Providence, instead of a vagabond, had made me a justice of the peace, there is no species of penalty I would not have enforced against a class of offenders, upon whom it is the perverted taste of the day to bestow wealth, praise, honour, and reputation; in a word, upon that portion of the writers for our periodical literature whose pastime it is by high-flown and exaggerated pictures of society, places, and amusements, to mislead the too credulous and believing world; who, in the search for information and instruction, are but reaping a barren harvest of deceit and illusion.

Every one is loud and energetic in his condemnation of a bubble speculation; every one is severe upon the dishonest features of bankruptcy, and the demerits of un-trusty guardianship; but while the law visits these with its pains and penalties, and while heavy inflictions follow on those breaches of trust, which affect our pocket, yet can he “walk scatheless,” with port erect and visage high who, for mere amusement—for the passing pleasure of the moment—or, baser still, for certain pounds per sheet, can, present us with the air-drawn daggers of a dyspeptic imagination for the real woes of life, or paint the most commonplace and tiresome subjects with colours so vivid and so glowing as to persuade the unwary reader that a paradise of pleasure and enjoyment, hitherto unknown, is open before him. The treadmill and the ducking-stool, “*me judice*” would no longer be tenanted by rambling gipsies or convivial rioters, but would display to the admiring gaze of an assembled multitude the aristocratic features of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, the dark whiskers of Disraeli, the long and graceful proportions of Hamilton Maxwell, or the portly paunch and

melodramatic frown of that right pleasant fellow, Henry Addison himself.

You cannot open a newspaper without meeting some narrative of what, in the phrase of the day, is denominated an “attempted imposition.” Count Skryznyzk, with black moustachoes and a beard to match, after being a lion of Lord Dudley Stuart's parties, and the delight of a certain set of people in the West-end—who, when they give a tea-party, call it a *soiree*, and deem it necessary to have either a Hindoo or a Hottentot, a Pole, or a Piano-player, to interest their guests—was lately brought up before Sir Peter Laurie, charged by 964 with obtaining money under false pretences, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment and hard labour at the treadmill.

The charge looks a grave one, good reader, and perhaps already some notion is trotting through your head about forgery or embezzlement; you think of widows rendered desolate, or orphans defrauded; you lament over the hard-earned pittance of persevering industry lost to its possessor; and, in your heart, you acknowledge that there may have been some cause for the partition of Poland, and that the Emperor of the Russias, like another monarch, may not be half so black as he is painted. But spare your honest indignation; our unpronounceable friend did none of these. No; the head and front of his offending was simply exciting the sympathies of a feeling world for his own deep wrongs; for the fate of his father, beheaded in the Grand Place at Warsaw; for his four brothers, doomed never to see the sun in the dark mines of Tobolsk; for his beautiful sister, reared in the lap of luxury and wealth, wandering houseless and an

outcast around the palaces of St. Petersburg, wearying heaven itself with cries for mercy on her banished brethren; and last of all, for himself—he, who at the battle of Pultowa led heaven-knows how many and how terrific charges cf cavalry,—whose breast was a galaxy of orders only out-numbered by his wounds—that he should be an exile, without friends, and without home! In a word, by a beautiful and highly-wrought narrative, that drew tears from the lady and ten shillings from the gentleman of the house, he became amenable to our law as a swindler and an impostor, simply because his narrative was a fiction.

In the name of all justice, in the name of truth, of honesty, and fair dealing, I ask you, is this right? or, if the treadmill be the fit reward for such powers as his, what shall we say, what shall we do, with all the popular writers of the day? How many of Bulwer's stories are facts? What truth is there in James? Is that beautiful creation of Dickens, “Poor Nell,” a real or a fictitious character? And is the offence, after all, merely in the manner, and not the matter, of the transgression? Is it that, instead of coming before the world printed, puffed, and hot-pressed by the gentlemen of the Row, he ventured to edite himself, and, instead of the trade, make his tongue the medium of publication? And yet, if speech be the crime, what say you to Macready, and with what punishment are you prepared to visit him who makes your heart-strings vibrate to the sorrows of *Virginius*, or thrills your very blood with the malignant vengeance of *Iago?* Is what is permissible in Covent Garden, criminal in the city? or, stranger still, is there a punishment at the one place, and praise at the other? Or is it the costume, the foot-

lights, the orange-peel, and the sawdust—are they the terms of the immunity? Alas, and alas! I believe they are.

Burke said, “The age of chivalry is o'er;” and I believe the age of poetry has gone with it; and if Homer himself were to chant an Iliad down Fleet Street, I 'd wager a crown that 964 would take him up for a ballad-singer.

But a late case occurs to me. A countryman of mine, one Bernard Cavanagh, doubtless, a gentleman of very good connections, announced some time ago that he had adopted a new system of diet, which was neither more nor less than going without any food. Now, Mr. Cavanagh was a stout gentleman, comely and plump to look at, who conversed pleasantly on the common topics of the day, and seemed, on the whole, to enjoy life pretty much like other people. He was to be seen for a shilling—children half-price; and although Englishmen have read of our starving countrymen for the last century and a-half, yet their curiosity to see one, to look at him, to prod him with their umbrellas, punch him with their knuckles, and otherwise test his vitality, was such, that they seemed just as much alive as though the phenomenon was new to them. The consequence was, Mr. Cavanagh, whose cook was on board wages, and whose establishment was of the least expensive character, began to wax rich. Several large towns and cities, in different parts of the empire, requested him to visit them; and Joe Hume suggested that the corporation of London should offer him ten thousand pounds for his secret, merely for the use of the livery. In fact, Cavanagh was now the cry, and as Barney appeared to grow fat on fasting, his popularity knew no bounds. Unfortunately, however,

ambition, the bane of so many other great men, numbered him also among its victims. Had he been content with London as the sphere of his triumphs and teetotalism, there is no saying how long he might have gone on starving with satisfaction. Whether it is that the people are less observant there, or more accustomed to see similar exhibitions, I cannot tell; but true it is they paid their shillings, felt his ribs, walked home, and pronounced Barney a most exemplary Irishman. But not content with the capital, he must make a tour in the provinces, and accordingly went starring it about through Leeds, Birmingham, Manchester, and all the other manufacturing towns, as if in mockery of the poor people who did not know the secret how to live without food.

Mr. Cavanagh was now living—if life it can be called—in one of the best hotels, when, actuated by that spirit of inquiry that characterises the age, a respectable lady,' who kept a boarding-house, paid him a visit, to ascertain, if possible, how far his system might be made applicable to her guests, who, whatever their afflictions, laboured under no such symptoms as his.

She was pleased with Barney,—she patted him with her hand; he was round, and plump, and fat, much more so, indeed, than many of her daily dinner-party; and had, withal, that kind of joyous, rollicking, devil-may-care look, that seems to bespeak good condition;—but this the poor lady, of course, did not know to be an inherent property in Pat, however poor his situation.

After an interview of an hour long she took her leave, not exhibiting the usual satisfaction of other visitors, but with a

dubious look and meditative expression, that betokened a mind not made up, and a heart not at ease; she was clearly not content, perhaps the abortive effort to extract a confession from Mr. Cavanagh might be the cause, or perhaps she felt like many respectable people whose curiosity is only the advanced guard to their repentance, and who never think that in any exhibition they get the worth of their money. This might be the case, for as fasting is a negative process, there is really little to see in the performer. Had it been the man that eats a sheep; "*à la bonne heure!*" you have something for your money there: and I can even sympathize with the French gentleman who follows Van Amburgh to this day, in the agreeable hope, to use his own words, of "assisting at the *soirée*, when the lions shall eat Mr. Van Amburgh." This, if not laudable is at least intelligible. But to return, the lady went her way, not indeed on hospitable thoughts intent, but turning over in her mind various theories about abstinence, and only wishing she had the whole of the Cavanagh family for boarders at a guinea a-week.

Late in the evening of the same day this estimable lady, whose inquiries into the properties of gastric juice, if not as scientific, were to the full as enthusiastic as those of Bostock or Tiedeman himself, was returning from an early tea, through an unfrequented suburb of Manchester, when suddenly her eye fell upon Bernard Cavanagh, seated in a little shop—a dish of sausages and a plate of ham before him, while a frothing cup of porter ornamented his right hand. It was true, he wore a patch above his eye, a large beard, and various other disguises, but they served him not:

she knew him at once. The result is soon told: the police were informed; Mr. Cavanagh was captured; the lady gave her testimony in a crowded court, and he who lately was rolling on the wheel of fortune, was now condemned to foot it on a very different wheel, and all for no other cause than that he could not live without food.

The magistrate, who was eloquent on the occasion, called him an impostor; designating by this odious epithet, a highly-wrought and well-conceived work of imagination. Unhappy Defoe, your Robinson Crusoe might have cost you a voyage across the seas; your man Friday might have been a black Monday to you had you lived in our days. 964 is a severer critic than *The Quarterly*, and his judgment more irrevocable.

We have never heard of any one who, discovering the fictitious character of a novel he had believed as a fact, waited on the publisher with a modest request that his money might be returned to him, being obtained under false pretences; much less of his applying to his worship for a warrant against G. P. R. James, Esq., or Harrison Ainsworth, for certain imaginary woes and unreal sorrows depicted in their writings: yet the conduct of the lady towards Mr. Cavanagh was exactly of this nature. How did his appetite do her any possible disservice? what sins against her soul were contained in his sausages? and yet she must appeal to the justice as an injured woman: Cavanagh had imposed upon her—she was wronged because he was hungry. All his narrative, beautifully constructed and artfully put together, went for nothing; his look, his manner, his entertaining anecdotes, his fascinating conversation, his time—from ten

in the morning till eight in the evening—went all for nothing: this really is too bad. Do we ask of every author to be the hero he describes? Is Bulwer, Pelham, and Paul Clifford, Eugene Aram, and the Lady of Lyons? Is James, Mary of Burgundy, Darnley, the Gipsy, and Corse de Leon? Is Dickens, Sara Weller, Quilp, and Barnaby Rudge?—to what absurdities will this lead us! and yet Bernard Cavanagh was no more guilty than any of these gentlemen. He was, if I may so express it, a pictorial—an ideal representation of a man that fasted: he narrated all the sensations want of food suggests; its dreamy debility, its languid stupor, its painful suffering, its stage of struggle and suspense, ending in a victory, where the mind, the conqueror over the baser nature, asserts its proud and glorious supremacy in the triumph of volition; and for this beautiful creation of his brain he is sent to the treadmill, as though, instead of a poet, he had been a pickpocket.

If Bulwer be a baronet; if Dickens' bed-room be papered with bank-debentures; then do I proclaim it loudly before the world, Bernard Cavanagh is an injured man: you are either absurd in one case, or unjust in the other; take your choice. Ship off Sir Edward to the colonies; send James to Swan River; let Lady Blessington card wool, or Mrs. Norton pound oyster-shells; or else we call upon you, give Mr. Cavanagh freedom of the guild; call him the author of “The Hungry One;” let him be courted and *fêted*,—you may ask him to dinner with an easy conscience, and invite him to tea without remorse. Let a Whig-radical borough solicit him to represent it; place him at the right hand of Lord John; let his picture be exhibited in the print-shops, and let the cut of his

coat and the tie of his cravat be so much in vogue, that bang-ups *à la* Barney shall be the only things seen in Bond-street: one course or the other you must take. If the mountain will not go to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain: or in other words, if Bulwer descend not to Barney, Barney must mount up to Bulwer. It is absurd, it is worse than absurd, to pretend that he who so thoroughly sympathises with his hero, as to embody him in his own thoughts and acts, his look, his dress, and his demeanour, that he, I say, who so penetrated with the impersonation of a part, finds the pen too weak, and the press too slow, to picture forth his vivid creations, should be less an object of praise, of honour, and distinction, than the indolent denizen of some drawing-room, who, in slippered ease, dictates his shadowy and imperfect conceptions—visions of what he never felt, dreamy representations of unreality.

"The poet," as the word implies, is the maker or the creator; and however little of the higher attributes of what the world esteems as poetry the character would seem to possess, he who invents a personage, the conformity of whose traits to the rule of life is acknowledged for its truth, he, I say, is a poet. Thus, there is poetry in Sancho Panza, Falstaff, Dugald Dalgetty, and a hundred other similar impersonations; and why not in Bernard Cavanagh?

Look for a moment at the effects of your system. The Caraccis, we are told, spent their boyish years drawing rude figures with chalk on the doors and even the walls of the palaces of Rome: here the first germs of their early talent displayed themselves; and in those bold conceptions of youthful genius were seen the first dawnings of a power that

gave glory to the age they lived in. Had Sir Peter Laurie been their cotemporary, had 964 been loose in those days, they would have been treated with a trip to the mill, and their taste for design cultivated by the low diet of a penitentiary. You know not what budding genius you have nipped with this abominable system: you think not of the early indications of mind and intellect you may be consigning to prison: or is it after all, that the matter-of-fact spirit of the age has sapped the very vital? of our law-code, and that in your utilitarian zeal you have doomed to death all that bears the stamp of imagination? if this be indeed your object, have a good heart, encourage 964, and you 'll not leave a novelist in the land.

Good reader, I ask your pardon for all this honest indignation; I know it is in vain: I cannot reform our jurisprudence; and our laws, like the Belgian revolution, must be regarded "*comme un fait accompli*;" in other words, what can't be cured must be endured. Let us leave then our friend the Pole to perform his penance; let us say adieu to Barney, who is at this moment occupying a suite of apartments in the Penitentiary, and let us turn to the reverse of the medal, I mean to those who would wile us away by false promises and flattering speeches to entertain such views of life as are not only impossible but inconsistent, thus rendering our path here devoid of interest and of pleasure, while compared with the extravagant creations of their own erring fancies. Yes, princes may be trusted, but put not your faith in periodicals. Let no pictorial representations of Alpine scenery, under the auspices of Colburn or Bentley, seduce you from the comforts of your

hearth and home: let no enthusiastic accounts of military greatness, no peninsular pleasures, no charms of campaigning life, induce you to change your garb of country gentleman for the livery of the Horse-Guards,—“making the green one red.”

Be not mystified by Maxwell, nor lured by Lorrequer; let no panegyrics of pipe-clay and the brevet seduce you from the peaceful path in life; let not Marryat mar your happiness by the glories of those who dwell in the deep waters; let not Wilson persuade you that the “Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life” have any reference to that romantic people, who betake themselves to their native mountains with a little oatmeal for food and a little sulphur for friction; do not believe one syllable about the girls of the west; trust not in the representations of their blue eyes, nor of their trim ankles peering beneath a jupe of scarlet—we can vouch it is true, for the red petticoat, but the rest is apocryphal. Fly, we warn you, from Summers in Germany, Evenings in Brittany, Weeks on the Rhine; away with tours, guide-books, and all the John Murrayisms of travels. A plague upon Egypt! travellers have a proverbial liberty of conscience, and the farther they go, the more does it seem to stretch; not that near home matters are much better, for our “Wild Sports” in Achill are as romantic as those in Africa, and the Complete Angler is a complete humbug.

There is no faith—no principle in any of these men. The grave writer, the stern moralist, the uncompromising advocate of the inflexible rule of right, is a dandy with essenced locks, loose trousers, and looser morals, who breakfasts at four in the afternoon, and spends his evenings

among the side scenes of the opera; the merry writer of whims and oddities, who shakes his puns about like pepper from a pepper-castor, is a misanthropic, melancholy gentleman, of mournful look and unhappy aspect: the advocate of field-sports, of all the joyous excitement of the hunting-field, and the bold dangers of the chase, is an asthmatic sexagenarian, with care in his heart and gout in his ankles; and lastly, he who lives but in the horrors of a charnel-house, whose gloomy mind finds no pleasure save in the dark and dismal pictures of crime and suffering, of lingering agony, or cruel death, is a fat, round, portly, comely gentleman, with a laugh like Falstaff, and a face whose every lineament and feature seems to exhale the merriment of a jocose and happy temperament. I speak not of the softer sex, many of whose productions would seem to have but little sympathy with themselves; but once for all, I would ask you what reliance, what faith can you place in any of them? Is it to the denizen of a coal mine you apply for information about the Nassau balloon? Do you refer a disputed point in dress to an Englishman, in climate to a Laplander, in politeness to a Frenchman, or in hospitality to a Belgian? or do you net rather feel that these are not exactly their attributes, and that you are moving the equity for a case at common law? exactly in the same way, and for the same reason, we repeat it, put not your faith in periodicals, nor in the writers thereof.

How ridiculous would it appear if the surgeon-general were to open a pleading, or charge a jury in the Queen's Bench, while the solicitor-general was engaged in taking up the femoral artery! What would you say if the Archbishop of

Canterbury were to preside over the artillery-practice at Woolwich, while the Commander of the Forces delivered a charge to the clergy of the diocese? How would you look if Justice Pennefather were to speak at a repeal meeting, and Daniel O'Connell to conduct himself like a loyal and discreet citizen? Would you not at once say the whole world is in masquerade? and would you not be justified in the remark? And yet this it is which is exactly taking place before your eyes in the wide world of letters. The illiterate and unreflecting man of underbred habits and degenerate tastes will write nothing but a philosophic novel; the denizen of the Fleet, or the Queen's Bench, publishes an ascent of Mont Blanc, with a glowing description of the delights of liberty; the nobleman writes slang; the starving author, with broken boots and patched continuations, will not indite a name undignified by a title; and after all this, will you venture to tell me that these men are not indictable by the statute for obtaining money under false pretences?

I have run myself out of breath; and now, if you will allow me a few moments, I will tell you what, perhaps, I ought to have done earlier in this article, namely, its object.

It is a remarkable feature in the complex and difficult machinery of our society, that while crime and the law code keep steadily on the increase, moving in parallel lines one beside the other, certain prejudices, popular fallacies—-nuts, as we have called them at the head of this paper—should still disgrace our social system; and that, however justice maybe administered in our courts of law, in the private judicature of our own dwellings we observe an especial system of jurisprudence, marked by injustice and

by wrong. To endeavour to depict some instances of this, I have set about my present undertaking. To disabuse the public mind as to the error, that what is punishable in one can be praiseworthy in another; and what is excellent in the court can be execrable in the city. Such is my object, such my hope. Under this title I shall endeavour to touch upon the undue estimation in which we hold certain people and places—the unfair depreciation of certain sects and callings. Not confining myself to home, I shall take the habits of my countrymen on the Continent, whether in their search for climate, economy, education, or enjoyment; and, as far as my ability lies, hold the mirror up to nature, while I extend the war-cry of my distinguished countrymen, not asking "justice for Ireland" alone, but "justice for the whole human race." For the gaoler as for the guardsman, for the steward of the Holyhead as for him of the household; from the Munster king-at-arms to the monarch of the Cannibal Island —"*nihil à me alienum puto*;" from the priest to the plenipotentiary; from Mr. Arkins to Abd-el-Kader: my sympathy extends to all.

A NUT FOR CORONERS.

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I had nearly attained to man's estate before I understood the nature of a coroner. I remember, when a child, to have seen a coloured print from a well-known picture of the day,

representing the night-mare. It was a horrible representation of a goblin shape of hideous aspect, that sat cowering upon the bosom of a sleeping figure, on whose white features a look of painful suffering was depicted, while the clenched hands and drawn-up feet seemed to struggle with convulsive agony. Heaven knows how or when the thought occurred to me, but I clearly recollect my impression that this goblin was a coroner. Some confused notion about sitting on a corpse as one of his attributes had, doubtless, suggested the idea; and certainly nothing contributed to increase the horror of suicide in my eyes so much as the reflection, that the grim demon already mentioned had some function to discharge on the occasion.

When, after the lapse of years, I heard that the eloquent and gifted member for Finsbury was a being of this order, although I knew by that time the injustice of my original prejudices, yet, I confess I could not look at him in the house, without a thought of my childish fancies, and an endeavour to trace in his comely features some faint resemblance to the figure of the night-mare.

This strange impression of my infancy recurred strongly to my mind a few days since, on reading a newspaper account of a sudden death.—The case was simply that of a gentleman who, in the bosom of his family, became suddenly seized with illness, and after a few hours expired. What was their surprise! what their horror! to find, that no sooner was the circumstance known, than the house was surrounded by a mob, policemen were stationed at the doors, and twelve of the great unwashed, with a coroner at their head, forced their entry into the house of mourning, to

deliberate on the cause of death. I can perfectly understand the value of this practice in cases where either suspicion has attached, or where the circumstances of the decease, as to time and place, would indicate a violent death; but where a person, surrounded by his children, living in all the quiet enjoyment of an easy and undisturbed existence, drops off by some one of the ills that flesh is heir to, only a little more rapidly than his neighbour at next door, why this should be a case for a coroner and his gang, I cannot, for the life of me, conceive. In the instance I allude to, the family offered the fullest information: they explained that the deceased had been liable for years to an infirmity likely to terminate in this way. The physician who attended him corroborated the statement; and, in fact, it was clear the case was one of those almost every-day occurrences where the thread of life is snapped, not unravelled. This, however, did not satisfy the coroner, who had, as he expressed it, a “duty to perform,” and, who, certainly had five guineas for his fee: he was a “medical coroner,” too, and therefore he would' examine for himself. Thus, in the midst of the affliction and bereavement of a desolate family, the frightful detail of an inquest, with all its attendant train of harrowing and heart-rending inquiries, is carried on, simply because it is permissible by the law, and the coroner may enter where the king cannot.

We are taught in the litany to pray against sudden death; but up to this moment I never knew it was illegal. Dreadful afflictions as apoplexy and aneurism are, it remained for our present civilisation to make them punishable by a statute. The march of intellect, not satisfied with directing us in life,

must go a step farther and teach us how to die. Fashionable diseases the world has been long acquainted with, but an “illegal inflammation,” and a “criminal hemorrhage” have been reserved for the enlightened age we live in.

Newspapers will no longer inform us, in the habitual phrase, that Mr. Simpkins died suddenly at his house at Hampstead; but, under the head of “Shocking outrage,” we shall read, “that after a long life of great respectability and the exhibition of many virtues, this unfortunate gentleman, it is hoped in a moment of mental alienation, 'went off with a disease of the heart. The affliction of his surviving relatives at this frightful act may be conceived, but cannot be described. His effects, according to the statute, have been confiscated to the crown, and a deodand of fifty shillings awarded on the apothecary who attended him. It is hoped, that the universal execration which attends cases of this nature may deter others from the same course; and, we confess, our observations are directed with a painful, but we trust, a powerful interest to certain elderly gentlemen in the neighbourhood of Islington.” *Verb. sat.*

Under these sad circumstances it behoves us to look a little about, and provide against such a contingency. It is then earnestly recommended to heads of families, that when registering the birth of a child, they should also include some probable or possible malady of which he may, could, would, should, or ought to die, in the course of time. This will show, by incontestable evidence, that the event was at least anticipated, and being done at the earliest period of life, no reproach can possibly lie for want of premeditation. The register might run thus:—

Giles Tims, son of Thomas and Mary Tims, born on the 9th of June, Kent street, Southwark—dropsy, typhus, or gout in the stomach.

It by no means follows, that he must wait for one or other of these maladies to carry him off. Not at all; he may range at will through the whole practice of physic, and adopt his choice. The registry only goes to show, that he does not mean to sneak out of the world in any under-bred way, nor bolt out of life with the abrupt precipitation of a Frenchman after a dinner party. I have merely thrown out this hint here as a warning to my many friends, and shall now proceed to other and more pleasing topics.

A NUT FOR “TOURISTS.”

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Among the many incongruities of that composite piece of architecture, called John Bull, there is nothing more striking than the contrast between his thorough nationality and his unbounded admiration for foreigners. Now, although we may not entirely sympathize with, we can understand and appreciate this feature of his character, and see how he gratifies his very pride itself, in the attentions and civilities he bestows upon strangers. The feeling is intelligible too, because Frenchmen, Germans, and even Italians, notwithstanding the many points of disparity between us, have always certain qualities well worthy of respect, if not of

imitation. France has a great literature, a name glorious in history, a people abounding in intelligence, skill, and invention; in fact, all the attributes that make up a great nation. Germany has many of these, and though she lack the brilliant fancy, the sparkling wit of her neighbour, has still a compensating fund in the rich resources of her judgment, and the profound depths of her scholarship. Indeed, every continental country has its lesson for our benefit, and we would do well to cultivate the acquaintance of strangers, not only to disseminate more just views of ourselves and our institutions, but also for the adoption of such customs as seem worthy of imitation, and such habits as may suit our condition in life; while such is the case as regards those countries high in the scale of civilisation, we would, by no means, extend the rule to others less happily constituted, less benignly gifted. The Carinthian boor with his garment of sheep-wool, or the Laplander with his snow shoes and his hood of deerskin, may be both very natural objects of curiosity, but by no means subjects of imitation. This point will doubtless be conceded at once; and now, will any one tell me for what cause, under what pretence, and with what pretext are we civil to the Yankees?—not for their politeness, not for their literature, not for any fascination of their manner, nor any charm of their address, not for any historic association, not for any halo that the glorious past has thrown around the commonplace monotony of the present, still less for any romantic curiosity as to their lives and habits—for in this respect all other savage nations far surpass them. What then is, or what can be the cause?

Of all the lions that caprice and the whimsical absurdity of a second-rate set in fashion ever courted and entertained, never had any one less pretensions to the civility he received than the author of 'Pencillings by the Way'—poor in thought, still poorer in expression, without a spark of wit, without a gleam of imagination—a fourth-rate looking man, and a fifth-rate talker, he continued to receive the homage we were wont to bestow upon a Scott, and even charily extended to a Dickens. His writings the very slip-slop of “commerage,” the tittle-tattle of a Sunday paper, dressed up in the cant of Kentucky; the very titles, the contemptible affectation of unredeemed twaddle, 'Pencillings by the Way!' 'Letters from under a Bridge!' Good lack! how the latter name is suggestive of eaves-dropping and listening; and how involuntarily we call to mind those chance expressions of his partners in the dance, or his companions at the table, faithfully recorded for the edification of the free-born Americans, who, while they ridicule our institutions, endeavour to pantomime our manners.

For many years past a number of persons have driven a thriving trade in a singular branch of commerce, no less than buying up cast court dresses and second-hand uniforms for exportation to the colonies. The negroes, it is said, are far prouder of figuring in the tattered and tarnished fragments of former greatness, than of wearing the less gaudy, but more useful garb, befitting their condition. So it would seem our trans-Atlantic friends prefer importing through their agents, for that purpose, the abandoned finery of courtly gossip, to the more useful but less pretentious apparel, of commonplace information. Mr. Willis was