

THE TOUR OF THE THAMES
or
SIGHTS AND SONGS
OF THE KING OF RIVERS
JOHN KENDRICK 1849

Thames, broad, bright, and beautiful!

Why, with twenty millions of worshippers, hast thou never had a poet, a painter, or an historian?

Thou who of all Earth's streams art the noblest!

If thou art not so long and lazy as the Rhine, or so rushing and rough as the Rhone, or so mysterious and maudlin as the Nile, or so classic and clay-coloured as the Tiber, or so sunny and slow as the Ganges, or so swift and savage as the Amazon, or so mighty and miry as the Mississippi - thou couldst buy them all On thy bosom fleets have rode, that could have battered down the Alps, and from thy bosom armies have gone forth, which have made India but a purse the pocket of England.

To cover thee with wealth, the Chinese shivers on the hills of Kang-Fu, and the Negro broils at the Line; the Russian Fur-hunter freezes within three degrees of the Pole; and the Californian digs, until he digs his grave.

Never was there such a summer on this side of the Tropics,

How is it possible to exist, with the thermometer up to boiling point!

London a vast cauldron - the few people left in its habitable parts strongly resembling stewed fish - the aristocratic portion of the world flying in all directions, though there are three horticultural fetes to come - the attachés of all the foreign embassies sending in their resignations, rather than be roasted alive - the ambassadors all on leave, in the direction of the North Pole - the new governor of Canada congratulated, for the first time in national history, on his banishment to a land where he has nine months of winter; - and a contract just entered into with the Wenham Lake Company for ten thousand tons of ice, to rescue the metropolis from a general conflagration.

Dined with the new East India Director, in his Putney paradise.

Sir Charles gives dinners worthy of the Mogul, and wants nothing of the pomps and pleasures of the East, but a Haram.

But, in the meantime, he gathers round him a sort of human menagerie; and every race of man, from the Hottentot to the Highlander, is to be found feeding in his Louis Quatorze saloons.

This certainly variegate the scene considerably, and relieves us of the intolerable topics of "Parliament, taxes, the last attempt on Louis Napoleon, the last adventure of Queen Christina, or the last good thing of the last great bore of Belgrave Square".

We had an Esquimaux chief, who, however, dwelt too long on the luxury of porpoise steaks; a little plump Mandarin, who indulged us with the tricks of the tea trade; the sheik Ben Hassan Ben Ali, who had narrowly escaped hanging by the hands of the French; and a New Zealand Chief, strongly suspected of habits inconsistent with the European cuisine, yet who restricted himself on this occasion to every thing on the table.

At length, in a pause of the conversation, somebody asked where somebody else was going, for the dog-days.

The question engaged us all.

But, on comparing notes, every Englishman of the party had been every where already - Cairo, Constantinople, Calcutta, Cape Horn, &c. &c.

There was not a corner of the world, where they had not drunk tea, smoked cigars, and anathematised the country, the climate, and the constitution.

Every thing was usé - every soul was blasé.

This "great globe itself" was a lump of ennui.

There was no hope of novelty, except in an Artesian perforation to the centre, or a voyage to the moon.

At last a curious old personage, with a nondescript visage, and who might, from the jargon of his tongue and the stiffness of his costume, have been a line descendant of Prester John, asked,

"Had any one at table seen the Thames?"

The question struck us all at once.

It was a grand discovery; a flash of light; the birth of a new idea; an influx of brilliant inquiry!

It was ascertained, that though we had all steamed up and down the Thames times without number, not one of us had seen the river.

Some had always steamed it in their sleep; some had plunged at once into the cabin to avoid the passengers on deck; some had escaped the vision by the clouds of a cigar; some by a French novel and an English dinner.

But, not one could recollect any thing more of it, than it flowed through banks more or less miry; that it was, to the best of their recollection, something larger than the Regent's Canal; and some thought that they had seen occasional masts and smoke flying by them.

My mind was made up on the spot.

Novelty is my original passion - the spring of all my virtues and vices - the stimulant of all my desires, disasters, and distinctions.

In short, I determined to see the Thames.

THE JOURNAL OF A DAY.

Rose at daybreak - the sky blue, the wind fragrant, Putney throwing up its first faint smokes; the villas all asleep.

Leaving a billet for Sir Charles, I ordered my cab, and set off for the Thames.

"How little", says Jonathan Swift, "does one half of the world know what the other is doing."

I had left Putney, the supreme abode of silence - a solitary policeman standing here and there, like the stork which our modern painters regularly put into the corner of their landscapes to express the sublime of solitude - a slipshod housemaid peeping from her window; - no sight or sound of life to be seen through the rows of the flower-pots, but a [pedlar], bag on back, speculating on the clothes of a sleeping beggar.

But, once in London, what a contrast!

From the foot of London bridge what a rush of life; what an incursion of cabs; what a rattle of wagons; what a surge of population; what a chaos of clamour; what volcanic volumes of everlasting smoke rolling up against the unhappy face of the Adelaide Hotel; what rushing of porters, and trundling of trunks; what cries of every species utterable by that extraordinary machine, the throat of man; what solicitations to trust myself for instant conveyance to the remotest shores of the terraqueous globe!

"For Calais, sir? Boat off in half-an-hour."

"For Constantinople? in a quarter."

"For Alexandria? in five minutes."

"For the Cape? bell just going to ring."

In this confusion of tongues it was a thousand to one that I had not jumped into the boat for the Niger, and before I recovered my senses, been far on my way to Timbuctoo.

In a feeling little short of desperation, or of that perplexity in which one labours to decipher the possible purport of a maiden speech from "a promising young member", I flung myself into the first steamer which I could reach, and, to my genuine self-congratulation, found that I was under no compulsion to be carried beyond the mouth of the Thames.

I had now leisure to look round me.

The bell had not yet chimed: passengers were dropping in.

Carriages were still rolling down to the landing-place, laden with mothers and daughters, lap-dogs and band-boxes innumerable.

The surrounding scenery came, as the describers say, "in all its power on my eyes".

The church of St. Magnus, built by Sir Christopher Wren, as dingy and massive as if it had been built by Roderic the Goth; St. Olave's, rising from its ruins, as fresh as a fairy palace of gingerbread; the Shades, where men drink wine, as Bacchus did, from the bung-hole; the Bridge of Bridges, clambered over and crowded with spectators, as thick as bees hiving!

But, prose was never made for such things.

I must be Pindaric.

LONDON BRIDGE.

Adieu, adieu, thou huge, high bridge,

A long and glad adieu!

I see above thy stony ridge

A most ill-favoured crew.

The earth displays no dingier sight;

I bid the whole – Good night, good night!

There, hang between me and the sky

She who doth oysters sell,

The youth who parboiled shrimps doth cry,

The shoeless beau and belle,

Blue-aproned butchers, bakers white,

Creation's lords! – Good night, good night!

Some climb along the slippery wall,

Through balustrades some stare,

One wonders what has perched them all

Five hundred feet in air.

The Thames below flows, ready quite

To break their fall. – Good-night, good-night!

What visions fill my parting eyes!

St. Magnus, thy grim tower,

Almost as black as London skies!

The Shades, which are no bower;

St. Olave's, on its new-built site,

In flaming brick. – Good-night, good-night!

The rope's thrown off, the paddles move,

We leave the bridge behind;

Beat tide below, and cloud above; –

Asylums for the blind,

Schools, store-houses, fly left and right;

Docks, locks, and blocks – Good-night, good-night!

In distance fifty steeples dance;

St. Catherine's dashes by,

The Custom-house scarce gets a glance,

The sounds of Bow-bell die.

With charger's speed, or arrow's flight,

We steam along. – Good-night, good-night!

*Where impious man makes Cheltenham salts,
We shave the sullen shore;
The Tower seems whirling in a waltz,
As on we rush and roar;
Putting the wherries all in fright,
Swamping a few. – Good-night, good-night!*

*We brave the perils of the Pool;
Pass colliers chained in rows;
See coalheavers, as black and cool
As negroes without clothes,
Each bounding like an opera sprite,
Stript to the skin. – Good-night, good-night!
And now I glance along the deck
Our own live-stock to view –
Some matrons, much in fear of wreck;
Some lovers, two by two;
Some sharpers, come the clowns to bite;
Some plump John Bulls. – Good-night, good-night!*

*A shoal of spinsters, booked for France,
(All talking of Cheapside);
An old she-scribbler of romance,
All authorship and pride;
A diner-out, (time-worn and trite),
A gobe-mouche group. – Good-night, good-night!*

*A strolling actor and his wife,
Both going to "make hay";
An Alderman, at fork and knife,
The wonder of his day;
Three Earls, without an appetite,
Gazing, in spleen. – Good-night, good-night!*

*Ye dear, delicious memories!
That to our midridds cling,
As children to their Christmas pies,
(So doth "Young England" sing,
In collars loose, and waiscoats white),
All, all farewell! – Good-night, good-night!*

The charming author of that most charming of all brochures, "Le Voyage au tour de ma Chambre", says, that "the less a man has to write about, the better he writes."

But this charming author was a Frenchman; he was born in the land where three dinners can be made of one potato, and where moonshine is a substantial part of every thing.

He performed his voyage, standing on a waxed floor, and making a circuit of his shelves; the titles of his books had been his facts, and the titillations of his snuff the food of his fancy.

But John Bull is of another style of thinking.

His appetite requires solid realities, and he takes docks, wharfs, steam-engines, and manufactures, for his natural mastication.

But, what scents are these rising with such potentiality upon the morning hreeze?

What sounds, "by distance made more sweet"?

What a multitude of black, brown, bustling beings are crushing up that narrow avenue, from those open boats, like a new invasion of the pirate squadrons from the North of old.

Oh, Billingsgate! - I scent thee -

*As when to them – who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mozambic, far at sea the north winds blow
Sabaeen odours from the spicy shore*

*Of Araby the Blest. With such delay
Well-pleased, they slack their course, and many a league,
Cheered with the grateful smell, old Ocean smiles.*

The effect was not equally rapturous on the Thames; but on we flew, passing groups of buildings which would have overtopped all the castles on the Rhine had they but been on fair ground; depots of wealth, which would have purchased half the provinces beyond the Black Forest; and huge steamers, which would have towed a captive Armada to the Tower.

The Tower!

What memories are called up by the name!

How frowning are those black battlements, how strong those rugged walls, how massive those iron-spiked gates!

Every stone has a story, and every era of its existence has been marked by changes of men, monarchs, and times; I see the fortress, the palace, and the prison of kings!

But, let me people those resounding arches, dim passages, and solemn subterraneans, with the past.

Here, two thousand years ago, Julius Cassar kept his military court.

On this bank of the stately river, on which no hovel had encroached, but which covered with its unpolluted stream half the landscape, and here formed the famous sheet of water, which once spread to the Surrey Hills, and which gave the name to the future Metropolis of mankind, Lundin, (the City of the Lake;) on this bank stood that hook-nosed and eagle-eyed individual who was destined to teach the rabble of Rome, that if he were "their man" he was also their master.

For that "great fact", I honour his memory.

What is it to me, if he beat Gauls by the million, or flogged Spaniards into feeling; if he hunted Germans like their own wolves, or "spoiled the Egyptians".

If I were to make a picture of him, as my hero, I should paint him casting his eager glance towards the Capitol, and with an involuntary grasp of his hilt, and an unconscious curl of his lip, asking himself, how long he was to tolerate the humbug of Roman patriotism?

how long he was to suffer the hides of the haranguers to escape; the legs of the pilferers to walk off with their booty; the whole moving living mass of the clamourers, the combiners, and the cheap-bread men of Rome, to gather like kites, and pounce down on the wing, to pick out the eyes, and make their meal of the carcass of the Great Empire!

Forgive this plunge into politics, my countrymen.

It was instant and incidental, but it was irresistible.

We live in a land of liberty.

Why should not I have my opinion, as well as my Lord Mayor!

I have now done with the subject. Yet, as I lay on the sofa of the steamer, while a dozen waiters were pouring out coffee, and piling the trays with cold chicken, I thought, why can we not fly from the bustle of this blacksmith world, from the jargon of public life, from the tiresomeness of toil, from the tribulations of taxes, and from the thousand ills that "flesh is heir to", into those majestic ages, when kings and courts did as they liked, when a nobleman was really a showy silk and gold affair; when "all the world was a stage", when nations were flung into the grave by one hero, and dug out of it by another; when all were fifth acts, and when the curtain never dropped but on the death of a dynasty!

Must I stoop from contemplations of this calibre, to tell the tourist, whom I lead along by the hand in these pages, that the huge, grim, graceless, granite pile before which we are now gliding, is the Tower of London!

The simple facts are these.

The Tower owes its origin to the only foreigner who ever trod the soil of England as the master of her bold Saxons.

It was a fortress built by William the Norman, to serve as a curb to the haughty lips of London.

It had the singular merit of being built from the plans of a Bishop, Gundulph of Rochester.

There was an anticipation of beleaguering in the very name, and as Woolwich and Chatham were in his diocese, he had the honour of being a sort of ecclesiastical master-general of the ordnance; his canons, it is to be presumed, were in excellent order for action, and in his canonicals he probably looked formidable enough.

From a fortress, it became a prison.

King after king added something to the height of its walls, the depth of its ditches, the extent of its dungeons, and the number of its decapitations.

It was evidently a favourite with them all, and owes equal gratitude to the Legitimates and Usurpers, to the Plantagenets and the Tudors.

But, since conspiracy has vanished before the conciliatory system of the civil list, and a placeman is become as safe a person as any man in society, the Tower has lost its terrors, supplies a parade for a company of the guards, a promenade for nursery maids, and limits its thunders to feux de joie; - but what sounds are these?

THE MELODISTS.

The steamer was now passing a line of low-built vessels, moored in the middle of the river.

I looked round, and here was my dream of the past realized; here was the past itself.

Here was man in his primitive state, just as he had issued from the forest, before an axe had ever touched its trunks.

Here was man, first-cousin to the bear, and who might have said to the ourang outang, "thou art my brother".

I saw five hundred of my fellow-beings, no more indebted to the frippery of civilization, than if they had been Hottentot ambassadors, or the body guard of the King of Ashantee.

Yet I cannot help admiring the superiority of our native produce.

Talk as they will of Italian bandit, Spanish smuggler, Turkish thief, or Greek pirate, I defy the world of "appropriation", (classic phrase), to show more redoubtable specimens of felony.

What keen eyes, daring brows, athletic shapes, all naked to the waist, and browned with the sun and wind!

They looked to me like a mob of living bronzes.

If they had been cast in metal, they would have made an incomparable gallery of gladiatorial statues.

As I gazed, a personage, of what the ladies call "an intellectual countenance", a sharp, hard visage, which vibrated between a scowl and a sneer, came up to me, and observed,

"Those sir, are the best friends to society."

I stared.

"Yes", said he. "They teach us morals by example.

Those are gentlemen, of various ranks, who, from a certain want of exactness in drawing the line between meum and tuum, have been sent to these vessels, to prevent their being spoiled by the temptations of Wapping, Rotherhithe, and the world in general.

Here they have adopted a regimen which would have won the heart of Father Mathew, though they have not taken the pledge, nor am I aware that they have purchased the medal, which perhaps would have been necessary to complete the reverend father's satisfaction."

"But, what are those Herculean looking fellows about, what are they delving for, with all this machinery?"

"The Thames, Sir", said my friend, "has too much to do with the corporation, to escape city habits.

It accordingly gorges itself from time to time, until its plethora becomes dangerous.

Those fellows then are its doctors, they relieve it of its accumulation, dig into its bowels, and make its digestion act according to the course of nature.

The river is Aldermanic in its universal appetite, and these machines and spades are its constitutional regimen."

We now shot round one of the Reaches, in which we lost sight of those operative patriots, but were followed by a roar.

It was neither the bellowing of a mob, nor the clamour of a hue-and-cry.

The captain rushed by me at the sound, clenching his strong fists, and declaring that it was enough to put his compasses out of order.

"What do you conceive this desperate noise to be?" I asked the Philosopher.

He scowled. I asked again,

"Is it the explosion of some steam-boiler on the banks, or a distant thunder-storm, a rebellion among the convicts, or the blowing up of the Tower?"

"At fault still.

This is a vesper hymn, sung by the gentlemen whom we have just passed.

They are taking their evening lesson."

"A vesper hymn to Mercury!" asked I.

"No, no, a genuine brawl of the Rhine.

Some of the best and most foolish men at this hour on the face of the earth, have determined to try whether larceny may not be extinguished by musical lectures; and, having employed a clever fellow to give them, you now have the fruits of their labours."

"But are not the English an un-musical people?"

"Thoroughly, sempiternally, constitutionally; all the fiddlers in Europe combined will not make John Bull fiddle or sing.

They have no objection to hear music and to pay for it; but they have other things to think of than blundering through Beethoven."

"Yet they pay more for music than all the continent put together."

"Yes, just as they drink wine, but never think of making it, or never make it drinkable.

They have ears, and feel no objection to have them tickled by foreign itinerants.
 But the whole thing is against their nature.
 The French mob sing when they are going to set their neighbour's house on fire.
 The German armies sing, when they are going to slaughter each other.
 Imagine Mr. Braidwood and his fire-engine battalion galloping through the streets, and shouting the Freyschutz chorus, or the Coldstream attempting Lord Mornington's glee, as they march through Pall Mall.
 By all the strings of Apollo, they would be followed with such bursts of laughter, that they would lay down their arms on the spot, or desert to a man.
 Imagine Wellington striking up 'Nancy Dawson' on the parade of the Horse Guards."
 "Yet, there are two sides to every question, and all the Continent is against you."
 "Undoubtedly, as in a wilderness of asses, there is no dissentient voice, all bray together.
 But if a man happens to come among them, where is the necessity of his braying too?
 that the experiment will be tried, I have the full proof;"
 and he drew from his pocket the following specimen of the results, by an illustrious bard, now removed beyond the clutch of criticism.

MELODY FOR THE MILLION.
Song, admit me of thy crew,
Minstrels, without shirt or shoe;
Geniuses, with naked throats,
Bare of pence, but full of notes;
Bards, before they've learned to write,
Issuing their notes at sight;
Notes, to scores on scores amounting,
Careless of the Bank's discounting.
Leaving all the world behind,
England, in thy march of mind.

Now the carter drives his cart,
Whistling as he goes, Mozart.
Now, a shilling to a guinea,
Dolly cook sol-fa's Rossini.
While the high-souled housemaid, Betty,
Twirls her mop to Donizetti.
Or the scullion scrubs her oven,
To thy wolf-dog hymns Beethoven.
All the servant's hall combined,
England, in thy march of mind.

Now may maidens of all ages,
Gaze at will on pretty pages;
Now may paupers raise the wind.
Innocent as Jenny Lind,
Now unblamed may tender pairs,
Give themselves the tenderest airs.
Now may half-pay Sons of Mars,
Look in freedom thro' their bars;
Even the Bar may grow refined,
England, through thy march of mind.

Soon we'll hear our "London Cries",
Dulcified to harmonies;
Mackerel sold in canzonets,
Milkmen "calling" in duets;
Postmen's bells no more shall bore us,
While their clappers ring in chorus;
Ears no more shall start at "Dust-ho",
When the thing is done with gusto.
Music, Leader of mankind,
England, in thy march of mind.

Song shall settle Church and State,

*Song shall supersede debate;
 Old Joe Hume no more shall screech,
 We shall make him sing his speech.
 Even the "iron Duke's" sic volo,
 Shall he softened to a solo.
 Parties shall feel no disgrace,
 Though their chiefs play thorough bass,
 All their pockets snugly lined,
 England, in thy march of mind.*

*Sailors under canvas stiff,
 Now no more shall dread a cliff;
 From Bombay to Coromandel,
 The Fakirs shall chorus Handel.
 Arab Scheik and Persian maiden,
 Simper serenades from Haydn.
 Crossing then the hemisphere,
 Jonathan shall chaunt Auber;
 All his love of pelf resigned,
 Music, to thy march of mind!*

THE TUNNEL.

"But what", asked I, "is that extraordinary specimen of ship-building moored in the midst of the river?"

It is evidently modelled on a tub, and seems to have been only intended for washing clothes on a large scale."

A plump little man, with a strong Northumbrian accent, and the peremptory tone of a lecturer, started up at the words, clasped a note book, in which I believe he had been gathering materials for his knowledge of mankind, from the chance conversation of the deck; and strutting up to me, gave that sort of challenge to controversy, which is understood by a knitted brow and a pursed-up lip.

I replied in the same silent but expressive style, and as he evidently now discovered "discretion to be the better part of valour," he adopted an elaborate smile, and said, "Pardon me, Sir, but that vessel which you regard as a tub, belongs to the greatest performance of the age.

We are now steaming over the Tunnel.

A thousand men, women, and children, have marched under the keel of that barge since morning; human beings are now chattering, where nothing but a fish ever breathed before; and check-takers are rattling pence, where the sound of coin was never heard in the millions of years since the world was created."

"Sir", was my answer, "I honour any work of genius; but I was not aware that the world had been created quite so long ago."

"Sir!"

The word was expressed in a tone, which was intended to strike me dead.

But I survived.

"Sir", said the little man of science, "the world is beginning to assert its rights to antiquity, and a million of years are nothing.

I can trace ten globes in the one on which I tread at this moment.

Sir, you see before you the author of the "Vestiges of Creation".

Sir, man is but a thing of yesterday; he has evidently been a fish; before that, he was a crab, and before that a worm.

Sir, philosophy is truth, and truth is philosophy.

In my lectures, I have always insisted on that noble sentiment, and have always been applauded for it.

But have you heard the name of the inventor of the Tunnel?"

"I presume, Brunel; a name honourably distinguished among the Brindleys, and Telfords."

"Pooh, pooh, - a clever fellow in his way; but wants originality.

Dexterous I admit, but the inventor is the man of genius.

The invention is mine, nipped in the bud by the detestable parsimony of this matter-of-fact and miserly nation.

He was a pupil of mine, and his Tunnel was borrowed from an illustrious project of my own."

He re-opened his note-book, and read this programme of his labours to come.

*Spirits of the Diving Bell,
 Whether in the waves ye dwell;
 Whether ye parboil in steam;*

*Whether shoot in lightnings' gleam;
Whether ride the smoky cloud,
Covering London like a shroud,
All your airy trumpets swell,
To the master of Brunel.*

*Phantoms of the fiery crown!
Plunged ten thousand fathoms down,
In the ocean's central cave,
Mankind's cradle, or its grave.
Where the infant earthquakes sleep,
Where the young tornadoes creep,
Swifter than your own black pinions,
I shall shoot through your dominions.*

*I shall run an iron girth
Round thy bowels, mother earth;
Sweeping on through shelf and crag,
Faster than a Gaul can brag.
All Newmarket's tiptop speed,
To my racers, broken-kneed,
Whirlwind spavined, lightning slow,
To my fiery rush below.*

*Ships no more shall trust to sails,
Boats no more be swamped by whales,
Sailors sink no more in barks,
(Built by contract with the sharks);
Though the tempest o'er us roar,
Flying through my Tunnel's bore,
I am master of the main,
What can stop the monster train?*

*There let Murchison and Lyall,
Of my Tunnel make the trial,
I shall sweep them o'er the Line,
Fifty miles below the brine;
Leaving Buckland to discuss,
Stones with Yankee or with Russ,
Or in Westminster's old Hall,
Fumigate Bar, Bench, and all.*

*What, if rushes the Great Western,
Rapid as a racer's pastern,
At each paddle's thundering stroke,
Blackening hemispheres with smoke;
Bouncing like a soda cork,
Raising Consols in New York;
Ere the lie has time to cool,
Forged in bustling Liverpool.*

*To the Steamer is the Tunnel,
Like a river to a runnel,
Screw and paddle both shall lag
To the Times in my mail bag;
While she puffs to make the land,
We shall have the stock in hand,
Smashing hill-hroker and banker,
Days before she drops her anchor.*

*Then, if England has a foe,
We shall rout him from below,
Through my Ocean-tunnel's arch,*

*Shall our bold battalions march;
Piled upon our flying wagons,
Spouting fire and smoke like dragons.
Guardsmen, rifles, and hussars,
Rushing on, like shooting stars.*

*I shall tunnelize the Poles,
Bringing down the cost of coals,
Making Yankees sell their ice,
At a Christian sort of price;
Making China's long-tailed Khan
Sell his Congo as he can,
In our world of fire and shade
Carrying on earth's "Grand Free-trade".*

*I shall bore the broad Atlantic,
Making every grampus frantic;
Killing Jonathan with spite,
As my Train starts up to light.
Mexico, her hands shall clap,
Tahiti throw up her cap.
California's sands of gold
Quickly shall be homeward rolled.*

*What, if Green's Nassau balloon,
Makes its voyage to the moon,
Straining London's million eyes,
As it climbs her foggy skies;
Dropping on the breezes bland,
(Good for gazers) bags of sand;
Green's a blacksmith to a belle,
To the master of Brunel.*

DOCKLAND.

Entered into a new region, immense piles of ten-storied buildings, immense crowds of masts locked up within immense gates, immense horses dragging immense wagons, immense men driving them - every thing immense. I looked round for information as to the part of the world into which we were entering.

My dark-browed friend was again beside me.

"These", said he, "are the Docks of London, inordinate evidences of the absurdity of man, - huge collections of those superfluities with which man could perfectly dispense, but which he wears out half his life in the labour to possess, when the other half has lost the power to enjoy."

I hinted, that Commerce, of which I conceived these Docks to be the depositories, produced very considerable comforts.

"Sir", was the indignant reply, "Man wants but little here below, Nor wants that little long."

"Neither rum nor sugar is necessary for his support.

Our forefathers beat the Danes, the Spaniards, the French, and circumnavigated the earth, before a spoonful of sugar flavoured an ounce of tea in any cup in the British Islands.

Sir, since those things have become necessities of life, we have become a degenerate nation.

Sir, we are now a nation of slaves."

The vociferation of my philosophic disposer of the good things of this world had now brought round us a crowd, from all corners of the deck, whose laughs were not quite in unison with his logic.

"Yes, for we are the slaves of appetite; we are thus the slaves of all mankind, of the merchant who sells to us, of the sailor who brings home the cargo, nay, of the very slave who slaves for us.

If the blacks of the Havannah should throw aside their hoes and determine to dig no longer, one half of this country would think life insupportable, and die in despair.

The loss of Cigars would make a blank in society, in which Trial by Jury, penitentiaries, workhouses, and Lords and Commons, would be sunk, and the glory of England be no more."

The affair grew threatening - for the circle, the principal part of whom had tumblers in their hands, began to look on the assault on rum as personal; when it was interrupted by a pale, thin-visaged young man, whom I had observed sitting in a corner, with a peculiarly pensive air, the hat drawn over the brows, the arms folded, and the

whole like the personification of the "Small School of Poetry".

"My purpose, gentlemen", said he, with a profound bow, and a gentle waving of the hand, "is not to interrupt so interesting a discussion, but to do a piece of justice.

You probably remember Tom Campbell's Hohenlinden?"

"Of course, one of our finest Lyrics", was my reply.

"Sir, - the original conception of that Lyric was mine.

Tom was clever, but a borrower.

I shall give you the proof; you probably remember the expedition of the British Legion to Spain : we are now opposite to the spot of the encampment.

I bore arms in that campaign, and was resolved that, if History failed of recording its triumphs, the scene of its encampment at least should not be without its honours.

You will recognize at once the source from which the Scot drew his force, his conception, and his style.

THE ISLE OF DOGS.

*Ten thousand years the Isle of Dogs,
Lay sunk in mire, and hid in fogs,
Rats, cats and bats, and crows and frogs—
The tenants of its scenery.*

*No pic-nic parties came from town,
To dance with nymphs, white, black or brown,
(They stopped at Greenwich, at the Crown),
Neglecting all its greenery.*

*But, Dog-land saw another sight,
When Serjeants cried, "Halt, dress, eyes right",
And jackets blue, and breeches white,
Were seen upon its tenantry.*

*Then, tents along the shore were seen,
Then, opened shop the gay Canteen,
And floated flags, inscribed,—"The Queen".
All bustle, show, and pennantry.*

*There strutted laughter-loving Pat,
John Bull (in spirits rather flat),
And Donald, restless as a rat,
Three nations in their rivalry.*

*There bugle rang, and rattled drum,
And sparkled in the glass the rum,
Each hero thinking of his plum,
The prize of Spanish chivalry.*

*At last, Blue-Peter mast-high shone,
The Isle of Dogs was left alone,
The bats and rats then claimed their own,
By process sure and summary.*

*The bold battalions sail'd for Spain,
Soon longing to get home again,
Finding their stomachs tried in vain
To live on Spanish flummery.*

"But, the name of the Isle, why the name?" enquired a dozen voices.

"The name, I allow, is not romantic," said the poet; "and yet there was a romance connected with its origin."

Several of the fair sex had now forsaken their workbaskets, and joined our circle, - the word has always a charm for their sensibilities.

The poet bowed and began : "A variety of causes have been assigned for the name of the Isle.

Some, that the Lord Mayor's pack of hounds were kept here when his Lordship and the Aldermen hunted once a week in Finsbury Square.

Others, that they hanged here all the dilinquents, who were too bad to be hanged in London.
 But the true origin is, in the fidelity of one of those noble animals known as the Irish wolf dog.
 "The Lady Blanch de Bouveraye was the belle of the Court, in the reign of William the Conqueror.
 She had a million of acres, a hundred thousand vassals, and ten thousand lovers.
 All the Princes of Europe came with proposals, but she would listen to none; the father, the Baron, remonstrated with her in vain.
 To all his remonstrances she answered, "What was the good of being rich, if it was not to let her do as she liked; that the delight of woman was, to have her will, and that she would have her will."
 But King William was a man of that temper, which would suffer no will but his own, and he ordered her to marry his prime minister.
 The prime minister was old, ugly, and desperately fond of money.
 The marriage of the handsomest and wealthiest woman in the Kingdom was perfectly to his taste, and he came to the Castle of de Bouveraye, with a princely attendance.
 The answer of Lady Blanch was short, but not sweet.
 "My Lord", said she, "you are old, but not old enough."
 "How old would you have me, charming Lady asked the lover?"
 "Within twelve hours of your grave.", was the answer.
 Another courtier was sent by the King.
 "My Lord", said the Lady Blanch to this one, who was a youth,
 "You are young, but not young enough.
 To love you, you should be in your cradle."

At length, to avoid all proposals, she disappeared; and was unheard of for some years.
 One evening, when the old Baron was still lamenting the loss of his daughter, two pilgrims came to the Castle-gate asking alms; one of them carried an Italian lute, and the other had a relique of St. Agnes, the patroness of the family.
 Along with them was a noble wolf-dog.
 They were brought before the Baron to cheer his solitude.
 But the lutanist had no sooner begun to sing one of the family legends, than the Baron recognized the voice of the Lady Blanch, and ordered the Castle bells to be rung for joy.
 All was now feasting and dancing.
 But, who was the Lady's companion? - her future husband.
 In the Crusade she had worn armour, and carried the banner of her family, to disguise herself.
 In one of the battles she had been thrown from her charger, and wounded; a young knight had rushed forward, raised her from the ground, and attended her till her recovery.
 But she had now seen enough of war, and longed to return home.
 She acknowledged her name to her preserver.
 And now, to give her father the joy of surprise, they had returned to him as pilgrims.
 All the vassals flocked to the Castle to rejoice in the joy of their master.
 The day was soon fixed for the nuptials.
 It came.
 All was magnificence.
 The bride looked the handsomest creature in the world.
 She was covered with jewels, wore three reliques; and had a coronet brought from Rome, and blessed by the Pontiff.
 The Primate came to solemnize the marriage; the King sent his son, William Rufus, to give the bride away; and the bridesmaids were French princesses of the Norman line.
 As the sun went down, the trumpets sounded for the bridal procession.
 But the bridegroom was missing!

He was sought everywhere, but sought in vain.
 The woods, the river-banks, the river were searched by thousands of the people, the knights, and the guests.
 All was despair! But, at midnight a loud howling was heard at the Castle gate.
 The wolf-dog was there, with an arrow in his side.
 The wardens rushed out.
 He led to a track of blood in the forest.
 The track led to a new-made grave.
 While all were in consternation, the wolf-dog began to bark furiously, and to tear up the ground.
 The body of the bridegroom was discovered.
 As the first act of the noble animal was one of fidelity, the next was one of justice; he sprang at the throat of one of the spectators, and tore him to the ground.

He was one of the Barons who had been rejected by the bride, and who had waylaid him in the forest.
 The arrow in the side of the wolf-dog had been discharged from his bow.
 On conveying the body to the castle, it was found still breathing.
 The bridegroom recovered : the archer was hanged; and on the spot where the grave had been found, a pillar was erected to the dog, and the spot was dedicated to his posterity ever after.
 Some of the ladies wept; others smiled; and all wished that the days of love and matrimony in the old fashion were come again into the world.
 "Bah!" exclaimed in my ear a tall, supercilious figure, whom by the easy style of his dress, and the still easier style of his self-importance, I conjectured to be a retired Treasury Official.
 "Bah", exclaimed he, "what is the use of romances?
 Give me gentlemanly existence.
 Now we are opposite Blackwall; there, thank the stars, London stops!
 Those intolerable brutalities of building, which they call Docks, but which they might with perfect propriety call gigantic Wigwams, are at an end; and we shall now begin to breathe freely.
 One of our First-Lords has thrown some of his recollections on paper.
 I give them to you, as a model of the way of doing things in general:

ODE TO BLACKWALL.

*Let me sing thy praise, Blackwall,
 Paradise of Court and City.
 Gathering in thy banquet-hall
 Lords and Cockneys, dull, and witty.
 Spot, where "Saviours of the State"
 Lay aside their humbug all.
 Water-soucy and Whitebait
 Tempting mankind to Blackwall.*

*Come, ye Muses, tuneful Nine!
 Whom no Civil List can bribe;
 Tell me, who come here to dine,
 All the great and little tribe,
 Who, as Summer takes its rounds,
 In Whitechapel, or Whitehall :
 From five shillings to five pounds,
 Club for feeding at Blackwall?*

*There the Ministerial Outs,
 There the Ministerial Ins,
 One an emblem of the pouts,
 T'other emblem of the grins.
 All beneath thy roof are gay,
 Each forgetting rise or fall,
 Come, to spend one honest day.
 All good fellows, at Blackwall.*

*There, I've seen, from year to year,
 All the "rulers of the roast",
 Tool and trimmer, placeman, peer,
 Never more to drink a toast.
 Time has emptied all their dishes,
 Never more to make a haul
 Of the Treasury loaves and fishes;
 No more bumpers at Blackwall,*

*There I've seen an old Premier,
 Very like a "Lord at nurse";
 Rather queer, rather near,
 Fondling a well-pensioned purse,
 Soon his sunny days went by,
 Soon he lost his "House of Call",
 Every day his fish and pie
 Gratis, not like thine, Blackwall.*

*There I've seen an Irish brow,
Bronzed with blarney, hot with wine –
Marked by nature for the plough;
Practising the superfine.
Mumbling o'er a Courtly speech,
Dreaming of a palace ball,
Things not quite within his reach,
Though quite asy, at Blackwall.*

*There, the prince of Exquisites,
O'er his claret looking sloppy,
(All the ladies know "he writes,"
Bringing down the price of poppy.
Spoiling reams of scented paper,
Making books for many a stall.)
Sat with languid smile, Lord Vapour,
Yawning through thy feast, Blackwall.*

*But, whence swells that storm of gabble,
Piercing window, wall, and door,
Beating all the tongues of Babel?
'Tis the "Diplomatic Corps".
Hating us with all their souls,
If the knaves have souls at all.
I'd soon teach them other roles,
Were I Monarch of Blackwall.*

*Spaniard stiff, grim Portuguese,
Smoke-dried German, sullen Turk,
Come, John Bull's dry purse to squeeze,
I'd soon find them other work.
Mankind's laughter, Europe's lees,
Let them beg, or let them bawl,
I'd soon bring them on their knees,
I'd soup maigre them, Blackwall.*

*But, what clamour splits my ears,
Are the "Zoologies come,
With a cargo from Algiers?"
Those, Sir, are The Deaf and Dumb!
"Next room are the Bulls and Bears,
Battling for 'another call', –
'Cooking up' their railway shares.
Capel Court is now Blackwall."*

*"Now you hear the Men of science, –
Very noisy gentlemen!
Known, Sir, as the 'Grand Alliance
Of the poker and the pen'.
Sages! made for breaking stones,
Fit for fiddlers at Vauxhall.
They should dine on Mammoth's bones,
Not on whitebait, at Blackwall.*

*But, I hear a roar uproarious,
There a "Corporation" dine,
Some are tipsy, some are "glorious",
Some are bellowing for wine.
Some, for all their sins are pouting,
Some beneath the table fall;
Some lie singing, some lie shouting,
Now, farewell to thee, Blackwall!*

But, as Sterne tells us, that

"the sentimental traveller always meets sources of sentiment", so it may be the fate of the Tourism-traveller always to meet adventure.

As we were sweeping on, with all the swiftness of a greyhound just let out of the leash; with the sky cloudless, the water waveless, and the wind vanished, all ears were startled by the cry of the steersman, echoed by the crew, and instantly taken up by the whole crowd on deck.

I sprang to the head of the vessel, and there saw, what I deemed our fate, in the shape of a huge Hamburgh trader, working up directly in our course, snorting like a whale, and flapping her paddles like a gigantic turtle.

If she struck us, our destiny was fixed.

The collision would have saved us from all the future troubles of life; we should that night have made our beds ten fathom deep among the oysters of the Thames.

All our outcries were in vain.

There never was so inexorable a monster, as she came roaring, puffing, and rushing, as I thought, with more malignant speed than ever.

In another moment, she must have swallowed us alive.

Luckily, at that moment the helm slipped out of the steersman's hand, for he was clearly resolved on John Bull's "right of way", and would have swamped us, "for the honour of the thing".

Our steamer plunged her sharp beak into the river's bank, and there fixed, high and dry.

All on board were in mutiny at the delay.

But, as I preferred life and limb, even with the loss of our honour, to being crushed by the most heroic of collisions, I got on shore, and awaited our extrication with the calmness of one still in possession of existence.

The spot where I scrambled on terra firma established my faith in the fortunes of a Tourist.

It was a quiet little slip of land, where once had stood one of those expressive warnings against Piracy, which were exhibited in the remnants of the performers.

But the refinement of our age had removed the sign, and replaced it by a monument to one of those singular characters which, in old times, used to rove the West Indian seas, half-trader, half-buccaneer, brave as their own cutlasses, lavish of their gold, lavish of their lives, revelling in all the luxuries of the French and Spanish Islands, and making a prodigious figure in all their taverns, until empty purses drove them out again to meet the Spanish Guarda Castas, to ride the hurricanes, to frighten the merchants, and to be the heroes of a hundred tales of terror, bravery, and profusion.

I took down the ancient epitaph, of Jack Bragwell, alias Firebrand, alias Galleon-catcher, alias, &c. &c.

*Full thirtie years I lived a smuggler bolde,
Dealing in goode Schiedamm and English golde.
My hande was open, and my hearte was lighte;
My owners knew my worde was honour brighte.*

*In the West Indies, then, for seven long yeares,
I stoutly foughte the Dons and the Mounseers.
I took three ships in Portohello Bay,
And to Port Royal carried them away.*

*With three boats' crews I plundered St. Lucie,
And hanged the governor upon a tree.
Commander of my tigte builte sloop, the Sharke,
Late as the owle, and earlie as the larke,*

*I roamed the sea, nor cared for tide or winde,
But left the Guarda Costas all behinde;
Until, betrayed by woman's flattering tongue,
In San Domingo my three mates were hung.*

*I shot the judge; forsooke the Spanish Maine,
And to olde Englande boldlie came again;
Was married, had three sons and daughters four,
And died an honest Briton at four score.*

Here my friend, the philosopher, came up once more.

"Do you observe that little stone pillar on the bank?" said he.

"It is on the exact model of Whittington's pillar at the foot of Highgate, where that most eminent personage in the city annals, turned back.

This pillar is alike the turning point of the Lord Mayors; it forms the boundary of their jurisdiction.

On this spot a Mayor of the olden time had been hanged for giving scanty dinners; and on this spot, the chaplain of his lordship, (he was not yet a lord), annually made this solemn admonition on the especial duties of the head of a city, which has the best fish, fowl, and claret, in the circumference of the globe.

The chaplain, year by year, thus addressed him on the deck of the grand city barge - the mayor and aldermen kneeling and uncovered."

THE WARNING.

*Misterre Mayor! Misterre Mayor!
Of a sinner's deathe beware.
Liveth virtue, liveth sinne,
Not withoute us, but withinne.
Man doth never thinke of ille,
When he feedeth at his wille.
None doth seeke his neighbour's coin,
While he helpeth the sirloin;
No man toucheth purse or life,
While he useth thus his knife.
Savoury pie and smoking haunche
Make the blackest traitor staunche;
Claret mulled and Malvoisie
From ill spirits set us free.
Better far than axe or sworde,
Is the Mansion's well-filled boarde.
Think of him once hanging there,
Misterre Mayor, Misterre Mayor!*

*Chorus of Common-councilmen:
Beware, beware, beware,
Lest that miser's fate you share;
Lest we pull you from the chair.
Citizens love dainty fare,
Misterre Mayor, Misterre Mayor!*

WOOLWICH.

The tide now helped us, and we moved again.

The thunder of a battery, and all eyes turned to the ascent of a huge shell making its curve a mile over our heads, reminded me, that we were passing the grand depot of an artillery that could lay all the fortresses in the world, in the Tartar phrase,

flat enough for a horse to gallop over them, without scraping his fetlock".

The consternation increased, on our observing this mighty messenger of death to be descending in the very line of the steamer, and growing blacker and bigger to the eye every minute.

If it should come on board, all that would have remained of us would have been a paragraph in a newspaper.

We should have for ever disappointed the activity of coroners' inquests, and the extortion of undertakers.

Our whole floating establishment would not have filled a bottle in the College of Surgeons.

We should have been blown into an impalpable powder.

Luckily the shell dropped into the water within a foot of us; we had only a dash of the surge for our share, and were "quittes pour l'apour".

I could not help admiring the ingenuity of the plan, by which the only practising ground of Artillery in England was planted on the very edge of its principal river, and thus had the fair chance of dropping its combustibles daily among about five hundred vessels loaded with the costliest cargoes in the world.

But, a little reflection reconciled me to the idea; the English are a warlike people, and if training is of service, what can be a more direct way of training our merchant sailors, to the future work of the line of battle, than by exposing them in every voyage, up or down the Thames, to the range of batteries in time of peace, probably more formidable than they will ever have to meet in time of war.

**If shot and shell drop on board of a few, they are never missed in the multitude; while their escape is probably worth more than their crews and cargoes, by the Naval evidence, that every shot does not tell in war, and that a bombardment may after all be escaped - with wind and tide in one's favour.
On this occasion, I could not resist letting fly, in return for the shell, a Parnassian bullet; -**

THE ARSENAL.

*Woolwich, Woolwich,
The Thames is thy ditch,
And stout hearts are thy fortification;
Let come, who come may,
All is open as day,
Thy gates are as free as thy nation.*

*Though you have no more walls
Than the French apple stalls,
You could hlow half mankind to old Harry;
For Russian or French,
You could soon make a trench,
Which would hury thy Grande Enceinte Paris.*

*Deep and dark on thy quay,
Like lions at bay,
Stand the guns that set earth at defiance;
With mountains of ball,
Which, wherever they fall,
With their message make speedy compliance.*

*Along thy Parade,
Lies the brisk Carronade,
With Wellington's toy, the twelve-pounder;
And the long Sixty-eight,
Made for matters of weight,
The world has no argument sounder.*

*There stands the slim rocket,
That shot from its socket,
Puts armies, pell mell, to the rout, Sir;
At Leipsic its tail
Made Napoleon turn pale,
And sent all his braves right about, Sir.*

*And there gapes the Mortar,
That never gives quarter,
When speaking to ship or to city;
For though deaf and dumb,
Its tongue is a bomb,
And so, there's an end to my ditty.*

Erith

On passing the little village of Erith, once one of the prettiest rustic spots in Kent, where the parson and the surgeon formed the heads of the community, ar its only intelligence of the living world depended on the casual arrival of a boat from the Margate Hoy in search of fresh eggs for the voyage; a small hou was pointed out to me, embosomed in a dell, which would have completely suited the solitary tastes of a poet weary of the world :

*Oh, for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war,
Might never reach me more!*

Fifty years ago, a weekly newspaper was the only remembrancer to either parson or doctor of the world which they had left, and that one only sent by the Member for the County, when he thought it desirable to awake the general gratitude on the approach of a general election.

The Thames certainly might remind the village population that there were merchants and mariners among mankind; but what were those passing phantoms to them?

John the son of Thomas lived and died, as Thomas the father of John had lived and died, from generation to generation.

The first news of the American war reached it in the firing of the Woolwich guns for peace; and the original tidings of the French Revolution, in similar rejoicings for the Battle of Waterloo.

*O happy ye, the happiest of your kind,
Who leave alike life's woes and joys behind!*

says the philosophic Cowley; and with Cowley I perfectly agree.

But Erith is this scene of philosophy no longer.

It has now shared the "march of mind;" it has become almost a watering-place; it has a library, a promenade, lodgings for gouty gentlemen, a conventicle, several vigorous politicians, three doctors, and, most fatal of all, four steam-boat arrivals a day.

Solitude is fled, and meditation is no more!

But, to my story.

In that lonely house, lived for several years a singular character, of whom nothing more was known, than that he had come from some distant place of abode; that he never received a letter; and that he never hunted, shot, or fished with the squiredom of the country.

He was of large form, loud voice, had a sullen look, and no trust in her Majesty's ministers for the time being.

At length, on some occasion of peculiar public excitement, the recluse had gone to Gravesend where, tempted by the impulse of the moment, he had broken through his reserve, dashed out into a diatribe of singular fierceness, accused England of all kinds of oppression to all kinds of countries, and finished his speech by a recapitulation of all the wishes, wants, woes, and wrongs, of Ireland,

First flower of the west, and first gem of the sea.

Within the next twelve hours, a pair of Bow Street officers were seen galloping into the village in a post-chaise and four.

They brought a warrant from the Secretary of State to arrest the Irish orator, as a leader of the late Rebellion.

He was captured, and conveyed to the Tower.

And this was the last intelligence of the patriot : except that he appealed to the government against an Australian voyage, and swore that he preferred the speedier performance of the law to all operations on the Coal-mine river.

A remarkable tempest, which broke all the windows, and threw down half the chimneys of the city, a few weeks after, was supposed by the imaginative to be connected with his disappearance!

At all events, he was heard of no more.

THE VISION.

*Thunder pealed and lightning quivered,
Gusts a prison's casements shivered.
From its dungeon rose a scream,
Where, awakened by the gleam,
From his pallet rose and ran,
Wild with fear, a stalwart man.
Saw he in his tortured sleep,
Things that make the heart-veins creep!
Swept he through the world of flame,
Chased by shapes that none may name?
Still, as bars and windows clanged,
Still he roared - "I will be hanged."*

Sleep had swept him o'er the seas,

*To the drear Antipodes;
 There he saw a felon band,
 Chains on neck, and spade in hand,
 Orators, all sworn to die
 In "Old Ireland's" cause – or fly!
 Now, divorced from pike and pen,
 Digging ditch, and draining fen,
 Sky their ceiling, sand their bed.
 Fed and flogged, and flogged and fed.
 "Operatives!" he harangued;
 "Ere I'm banished – I'll be hanged."*

*Now, he strove to strike a light,
 But a form of giant height
 Through the crashing casement sprang;
 Shattered stanchions round him rang,
 From his eyes a light within
 Showed the blackness of his skin;
 In his lips a huge cigar
 Smouldered, like a dying star;
 Holding to the culprit's eyes,
 Writ in flame, a scroll of lies,
 Champing jaws with iron fanged,
 "Friend", cried he, "you shall be hanged."*

*'Twixt the tempter and the rogue,
 Then began the dialogue :
 – "Master – shall I rob the state?"
 "Not, unless you'd dine off plate."
 – "Shall I try my hand at law?"
 "You'll be sure to make a flaw."
 – "Shall I job in Parliament?"
 "You'll be richer cent per cent."
 – "Shall I truckle, or talk big?"
 "You'll but get a judge's wig";
 Blockheads may be Conscience-panged,
 Knaves are pensioned, here, not hanged!"*

*– "Master, must I then escape?"
 "No", exclaimed the knowing shape,
 "I shall hang you by Lynch-Law."
 Through his skull he struck a claw,
 On the tempest burst a wail,
 Through the bars a serpent-tail,
 Flashing like a lightning spire,
 Seemed to set the cell on fire;
 Far and wide was heard the clang,
 Through the whirlwind as they sprang.
 Many a year the sulphurous fume
 Stung the nostril in that room.*

Purfleet

Passing Purfleet - a pretty promontory once surmounted with the ruins of a castle, on the battlements of which the most famous of women since the days of Semiramis, the glorious Elizabeth, planted her Red-cross banner.

Why, among the multitude of our monuments to the grand insignificants of this world, to the paltry, the pitiful and the pusillanimous, have we none to the noblest being that ever wore a stomacher, Elizabeth, the true heroine - who defied the whole world in arms; Elizabeth, the embodied principle of the true policy of England, "to have as little as possible to do with foreigners, and if they attempt to have anything to do with us, to beat them."

But Purfleet is the grand magazine of the globe, containing in its cellars ten million barrels of gunpowder, with all their mischiefs, sleeping as harmless as the House of Commons during the speech of the Rt. Hon. &c, or

Westminster Hall in the Long Vacation.

But, if a hobnail touched one of its stones, leaving it a matter of choice, whether it tore the Thames out of its bed for a thousand years to come, blew up, London, or tore down the Moon.

The heart of mortals palpitates, when the steamer brushes the very edge of this ultra volcano, and man is conscious that he moves within three feet of being shattered into fragments as fine as a Vauxhall slice of ham.

But we are now in sight of Gravesend, rising on the side of her amphitheatre of hills, the "Genoa la Superba" of the Thames.

Beside us flourish the Gardens of Rosherville; sweet, safe, shady, and salubrious.

The prettiest thing between the Thames and the Tiber.

In summer, an improvement on the Mahometan paradise, and well worthy of this famous panegyric of Hafiz Bey, the Egyptian Admiral.

ROSHERVILLE.

If in London's streets you grill,

All is cool in Rosherville.

If in London, Time stands still,

He wears wings in Rosherville.

If you hate a dinner pill,

You'll want none in Rosherville.

You need never make your Will,

All is life in Rosherville.

Only beauty's glances kill,

In the bowers of Rosherville.

If you love the tuneful quill,

All are bards at Rosherville.

By a river, or a rill,

You may dream at Rosherville.

Tower and temple, vale and hill,

All are found at Rosherville.

If at woman's voice you thrill,

All are belles at Rosherville.

Neater than a dandy's frill,

Is their dress at Rosherville.

Tongues of wives no more are shrill,

All are flutes at Rosherville.

Archery here shows your skill,

Cupid shoots at Rosherville.

Round-about no riders spill,

Swings are safe, at Rosherville.

If you're fond of a quadrille,

Nathan! reigns at Rosherville.

If with joy your cup you'd fill,

Bumpers are at Rosherville.

Friendship here is never chill,

All are friends at Rosherville.

Dulness here is sent to drill,

All are wits at Rosherville.

If you 'd vote your troubles nil,

Pass the vote at Rosherville.

Ev'n a donkey in a mill,

Would be gay, at Rosherville.

Here one never sees a bill,

Smiles are cash at Rosherville.

Life's moss-roses here distil,

All are sweets at Rosherville.

If you're well, or if you're ill,

Come, full speed, to Rosherville.

As is told of one of Homer's heroes who escaped from the captivations of the shore only by filling the ears of his oarsmen with wax, it would have taken a large application of that prudent material, to prevent my longing to get rid of the miscellaneous multitude on board, and enjoy the most delicious of all things, cool air and fresh shade, in

this prettiest of pretty places.

The philosopher was beside me once more, and was evidently of my opinion.

But the steamer was now bearing away at fifteen knots, or upwards, and the experiment of jumping overboard probably did not occur to him.

"There", said he, "is one of the proofs of what may be done by a clever fellow, with nobody to hinder him.

This whole scene was once as barren as the brain of a Lord of the Treasury.

It produced nothing but lime-stone, but the master-spirit of the quarry turned it into the philosopher's stone."

I remarked, "that such a man deserved well of his country, on the old principle, that he who makes two blades of grass grow where but one grew before, is a patriot."

"Sir", was the reply, "he made human beings happy, where human beings were baked, for centuries before; he substituted lovers for lime-burners; bowers for thistle beds; and singing and sentiment for the creaking of stone wagons, and the groans of the wretches who piled them.

I wish Crabbe had seen the spot, and told us what he thought about it, in his vigorous couplets."

"Crabbe," said I, "vigorous and original, certainly; but the last describer who, I think, would have enjoyed a bower of Armida.

Remember the famous lines of the 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers'.

*If you would dress the living world in drab,
Take for your master tailor, stiff-necked Crabbe.*

"Originality!" exclaimed a little waspish being, who had hitherto been utterly silent, but whose visage evidently took a part in the conversation, by a succession of sagacious winks, furious frowns, and all the writhings of a countenance furrowed, much in the style of an Irish "con-acre field".

"Originality, Sir, is not in existence; every thing in this world is borrowed.

There is not a living jest which has not been jested five hundred times before.

There is not a living author, whose notions you will not find in some one dead those fifty years.

There is not a story which is not as old as the Crusades, nor an adventure which, except that the Deluge may have washed out the manuscript, I dare swear might not be traced up to the days of Methuselah."

"But", I interposed, "Crabbe's pungency, and his strong conception of real existence, are as striking as his originality."

"Sir, I shall give you the very source from which they all have flowed.

In the corner of the old churchyard of that town from which we are now flying, in Gravesend, you will find an Epitaph, written on Sam Simpson, the waiter at the Swan, erected years ago.

That Epitaph is mine.

*Bacchus! thy wonders fill the wondering world!
Thrones in the dust have by thy cups been hurled.
Yet, still thou hast for mankind one surprise,
There was an honest Drawer – and here he lies.
Sam Simpson of the Swan, who, forced to wink
At drinking hard in others, did not drink.
A man, who living all his life by sots,
Yet fairly drew, and fairly charged his pots.
Through all life's gales his steady course held on,
Nor let his chalk score two, when called for one.
If man's best study is his fellow man,
Reader, revere this hero of the Can;
'Twere well for kings, if many a king had been,
Like him who sleeps beneath this Churchyard Green.*

The philosopher all but embraced the little man.

"Sir, you have stricken the last doubt from under the heels of Scepticism.

Sir, I now see where the poet of the Parish Register found all his qualities; his mingled pomp and particularity; his force and his farse; his picturesque and his pettiness.

Sir, the theory of transmigration must be true.

All of life that has departed from you, had been imparted to Crabbe : he had lived on your brains, and one half of your original substance has vanished with him from the eyes of mankind.

This accounts at once for the remnant to which you are reduced, and for his renown."

The voice was of that peculiar kind, which once belonged to the stage-coachman (a race now belonging alone to

history), strong without clearness; full without force; deep without profundity; and, as Sydney Smith says, " a great many other things without a great many other things;" or as Dr. Parr would tell mankind, - "the product of nights of driving and days of indulgence; of facing the wintry storm, and enjoying the genial cup; of the labours of the Jehu, and the luxuries of the Sybarite;"

it was to Moore's melody, -

*"My dream of life
From morn till night,
Was love, still, love."*

THE LAMENT OF THE MAIL-COACHMAN.

*Oh, the days were bright
When, young and light,
I drove my team,
My four-in-hand
Along the Strand,
Of bloods the cream.
But time flies fast -
Those days are past,
The ribbons are a dream :
Now, there's nothing half so quick in life
As steam, still, steam.*

*The Bristol Mail,
Is but a snail,
The York stands still,
The Liverpool
Is but a stool -
All gone down hill.
Your fire you poke,
Up springs your smoke,
On sweeps the fiery stream :
Now, there's nothing half so quick in life
As steam, still, steam.*

*Along the sky
The sparkles fly,
You fly below, -
You leave behind
Time, tide, and wind,
Hail, rain, and snow.
Through mountain bores
The engine snores,
The gas lamps palely gleam :
Oh, there's nothing half so quick in life
As steam, still, steam.*

*You see a hill
You see a mill,
A bit of sky;
You see a cow,
You see a plough,
All shooting by.
The cabins prance,
The hedgerows dance,
Like gnats in Evening's beam :
Oh, there's nothing half so quick in life
As steam, still, steam.*

*You hear a sound,
You feel a bound,
You all look blue.
You've split a horse,*

*A man's a corse,
All's one to you.
Upon the road
You meet a load,
In vain you wildly scream.
Oh, there's nothing half so quick in life
As steam, still, steam.*

*You come full front
Upon a hunt,
You hear a yell;
You dash along,
You crush the throng,
Dogs, squires, pell-mell.
You see a van;
The signal man :
Is snugly in a dream.
Oh, there's nothing half so quick in life
As steam, still, steam.*

*You see a flash,
You feel a crash,
From toe to chin.
You touch a bank,
You top a tank,
You all plump in.
You next engage
The three-mile stage,
And long for my old team :
Your trials o'er, you trust no more,
To steam, steam, steam.*

THE CHALLENGE.

The Minstrel ceased to sing; the clash of knives and forks died away; and the crowd returned to the deck to gaze on the flats of the Essex Marshes!

But, my love of the picturesque having subsided for the time, I remained, unaccompanied but by a bottle of Lafitte, and in that tranquil state of mind in which a man almost forgets the existence of taxes, and cares no more for Majorities or Minorities, than for the lost nose of the Sphinx, or the broken necks of the Kings of Nineveh.

But all was not quite so tranquil, even in that deserted saloon.

Two personages had remained in an obscure corner, engaged in high debate.

Their subject was Parliamentary, and they squabbled as bitterly as if they were on a Railway Committee.

They however came finally to what is called "an understanding", and the world escaped the calamity of losing either or both.

Their dialogue came to my ears in the following form.

One of them had a newspaper spread out on the table before him, which he perused from time to time with a face of fiery agitation.

- A. - Am I the scoundrel here described, Sir?
B. - I simply state, that you were bribed, Sir.
A. - How many shares d'ye say I've plundered?
B. - All you could get - a cool five hundred
A. - If you say that, I'll cut your throat.
B. - If facts are facts, you sold your vote.
A. - Sir, I'll indict you for detraction.
B. - Sir, I shall give you satisfaction.
A. - Sir, look upon yourself as shot.
B. - Sir, think you're dead upon the spot.
A. - In half an hour we'll reach the Nore.
B. - The boat will put us both on shore.
A. - Yet - Sir - I think you used an If.
B. - Sir - I was never thought too stiff.
A. - Well, what's the use of calling names?
B. - For things, too, that no mortal blames.
A. - A gift, no man of sense despises.
B. - When all are deep in compromises.

A. - Let gossips mind their own affairs.
 B. - The world all cheats in Railway shares.
 A. - A carriage, wife, and opera box,
 B. - Make one look sharply to his stocks.
 A. - Suppose we rub off the old score,
 B. - And, bless me - we have passed the Nore.
 A. - We'll settle matters at Southend,
 B. - The hour's too late to find a friend.
 A. - My scheme's too good to go to wreck.
 B. - I think, I'd like to halve your Spec'.
 A. - No scribbling more, 'twixt you and me.
 B. - A thousand pounds, and I agree.
 A. - The straitlaced world will call us tools.
 B. - Your cheque will shew that we're no fools.
 A. - Where shall I next play "Ancient Pistol?"
 B. - At Dublin, Liverpool, Bath, Bristol.
 A. - At all, I fear, my chance is undone.
 B. - Then, mystify the fools of London!

THE AUTHORESS.

Among our fellow voyagers, of course, was a handsome proportion of the fair sex; fo rwhere are they not?
 And how gloomy would the world be without them.

In the changes of place, the shifting of chairs, and the escape from sunshine to shade, I, the most modest of passengers became, by degrees, in juxta-position with everybody, and in the general chance I happened to take my seat beside a tall, stern-visaged woman, of that "uncertain age" which is the most certain of all things; and with contempt for all the living world palpable, in the curl of a lip, as thin and hard as sheet iron.

I had no sooner discovered my perilous vicinage, than I attempted to move.

But I was already in the jaws of the tiger; she fastened on me at once. -

She had seen me in a hundred places (where I had never been); she had found my pen in a hundred works, (of which I was as innocent as the babe unborn); she was charmed to find an old acquaintance (who had never heard her name,) in the midst of this horde of Tartars.

She then communicated all her purposes to my submissive ear. -

She was on her way to the Continent.

She made an expedition every year, and every year she published a book.

It was not of the slightest concern to her where she went - the public curiosity must be fed; nor what she wrote - there must be a certain quantity of printing to keep the word alive.

Her plan was perfect.

Whatever place excited any kind of public interest in the first three months of the year, whether by an earthquake or an epidemic, by a conflagration or a civil war, there she directed her steps for the next three months.

In three months more, out came her book.

The place, the purpose, the persons, the people, never gave her a moment's trouble in deciding on her plan of operations.

The Esquimaux or Etruria; New York or Novorogod; Columbia or Constantinople; the Highlands or Hungary; all were alike to her : she simply told how and where she ate, drank and slept, the names of the hotels, and the fares of the steam boats; gave the dimensions of the principal churches, and finished with a description of the public gaming houses, and a list of the royal birthdays.

Thus, her performance was complete, and thus she accomplished her admission into the foreign conversaciones, as the representative of the literature of England; and at home was a lioness for the remaining three months of the year.

I bowed at intervals of the communication; it was imposble to do more, for her tongue had the rush of an American rapid.

She now became confidential.

In short, she was charmed with me; it was her peculiarity to see into character at once.

She always told her mind.

She saw that I was, at once, a person of brilliant imagination and of profound philosophy.

I could only repeat my bow, which was rewarded by her assuring me, that, "though habitually cautious of expressing an opinion, she should hereafter long congratulate herself on having made the acquaintance of one of the most eloquent and animated conversationists of the age".

I could only repeat my bow, which was rewarded by her assuring me, that, "though habitually cautious of expressing an opinion, she should hereafter long congratulate herself on having made the acquaintance of one of the most eloquent and animated conversationists of the age."

Nearly overwhelmed with panegyric, I found it necessary to sustain my conversational character, by saying a word or two; and alluded to the agremens of foreign life.

She stopped me in my first sentence.

"I know it all. I have been feted at every court in Europe.

I have been galoped round ballrooms as large as barracks, by every sovereign in existence, except the Emperor of China, and corresponded with all their queens.

As for the minor tribes, the Serenities, Highnesses, Dukes, and so forth, I had them at my tea-parties like valets; and if I had taken the trouble, might have brought them over by the dozen to England, to sit for Madame Tussaud."

"An enchanted circle", was my slight remark.

"I assure you, quite the contrary.

Not three ideas among them, except of Ecarte, or the opera salon.

Every soul of them, from the throne to the table d'hote, as common-place as their own countenances, and as tiresome as the eternal smell of their own tobacco.

As to my introductions, I took none; the affair was the simplest thing imaginable.

On arriving in a capital, I sent out the Suisse of my hotel, with my cards for every one of the Court.

My name was already European.

The ministers trooped round me at once.

If any of them hung fire, I knew how to deal with them too.

I sent a billet to inform them in the gentlest manner, that I was writing a book.

I found that hint always irresistible.

The women were sometimes sullen.

For that, too, I had my panacea.

In the most innocent way, I sent a sketch of some of their particular friends, whom I had torn to fragments for similar impertinence in Sweden, or Naples, or Paris, or St. James's.

That never failed. I had them on their knees at once.

I was free of their parties, their opera-boxes, and their souls, from that hour."

"Then, your's was the reign of Terror." I whispered.

"Yes, with the women", said she, turning on me two immense and awful eyes, "with the Metternichs, Stahrembergs, and that set, smiles did the business."

In some alarm at the extent of this fascination, I rose to take a seat as far as possible from this new De Staël.

But the attempt was not to be made with impunity; she had an Album!

What an awful significancy is in the word!

I felt like one preparing for the gush of a shower bath, and would have fled.

But she had all the implements of authorship ready, put a pen into my reluctant hand, and compelled me, with a smile which might have daunted a life-guardsmen, to inscribe my name.

In recompense, she "permitted me as a mark of her most profound confidence", to see one of those sketches of public character, with which she had pioneered her way through the stiffness of the German creme de la creme!

THE POET'S AUCTION.

*As I passed Piccadilly, I heard a voice cry,
The Auction's beginning; "come buy, ma'am, come buy";
On the door was a crape, on the walls a placard,
Announcing, that Earth had just lost its last Bard.
In I rambled, and, climbing a dark pair of stairs,
Found all the blue-stockings, all giggling in pairs;
The crooked of tongue, and the crooked of spine,
All ugly as Hecate, and old as the Nine.*

*There were A, B, C, D, 's – all your "ladies of letters",
Well known for a trick of abusing their betters :
With beaus, the old snuffling and spectacled throng,
Who haunt their "soirees" for liqueurs and souchong;
There was "dear Mrs. Blunder", who scribbles Astronomy –
Miss Babble, who "owns" the "sweet" Tales on Gastronomy;
Miss Claptrap, who writes the "Tractarian Apologies",
With a host of old virgins, all stiff in the ologies.*

*There grim as a ghoul, sat sublime Mrs. Tomb,
With rouged Lady Romp, like a corpse in full bloom;
And the hackney-coach tourist, old Mrs. Lazare,
Who lauds every ass with a ribbon and star;
Describes every tumble-down Schloss, brick by brick,*

*And quotes her flirtations with "dear Metternich";
With those frolicsome ladies, who visit harims,
And swallow (like old Lady Mary) their qualms.*

*There was, dress'd à la Chickasaw, Miss Chesapeake,
Who makes novels, as naked as "nymphs from the Greek";
Mrs. Myth, with a chin like a Jew's upon Hermon;
Mrs. Puff, who reviewed the archbishop's last sermon;
Miss Scamper, who runs up the Rhine twice a-year,
To tell us how Germans smoke pipes and swill beer.
All the breakfasting set; for the bard, "drew a line",
And asked the Magnificoes only, to dine.*

*There stood old Viscount Bungalow, hiding the fire,
As blind as a beetle, the great picture-buyer;
With Earl Dilettante, stone-deaf in both ears,
An opera-fixture these last fifty years;
Little Dr. de Roguemont, the famous Mesmeric,
Who cures all the girls by a touch of hysteric;
And Dean Dismal, court chaplain, whose pathos and prose
Would beat Mesmer himself at producing a doze.*

*And there, with their eyes starting out of their sockets,
A tribe, whose light fingers I keep from my pockets,
Messieurs les Attaches, all grin and moustache,
With their souls in full scent for our heiresses' cash.
Ex-chancellors four, all with first-rate intentions
Of living the rest of their lives on their pensions,
With six heads of colleges, hurried to town,
To know if Sir Bob, or Lord John, tumbled down.*

*"Here's a volume of verse", was the auctioneer's cry.
"What! Nobody bids! – Tom, throw that book by.
Though it cost the great author one half of his life,
Unplagued (I beg pardon) with children or wife.
Here's an Epic in embryo, still out of joint.
Here's a bushel of Epigrams, wanting the point,
With a lot of Impromptus, all finished to fit
A dull diner-out with extempore wit.*

*"Here's a sonnet, inscribed 'To the Shade of a Sigh'.
A 'Lament' on 'The Death of a Favourite Fly';
And well worth a shilling, that sweetest of lays –
To the 'Riband that tied up the Duchess's stays'.
Here's a note from a Young-England Club, for a loan;
Lord Brougham's famous speech on 'The Sex of Pope Joan',
With the bard's private budget of Holland-House stories.
As silly as Whigs, and as tiresome as Tories.*

*"What! Nobody bids! Must I shut up the sale?
Well; take all the verses, at so much per bale!
I come to the autographs : – One, from the Duke,
Assigning the cause for cashiering his cook;
A missive from Byron – a furious epistle, –
Which proves that our bard could pay 'dear for his whistle';
With letters from geniuses, sunk in despair
By the doctrine, that 'Poets should live upon air'.*

*"A scrap from Bob Burns, to curse the Excise,
Where they sent him to perish, – (a word to the wise);
A line from Sir Walter, in anguish and debt,
To thank his good king for – what never came yet;
A song from the minstrel of minstrels, Tom Moore,*

*To laud his 'dear country', for keeping him poor;
With a prayer from Bob Southey, in hope that his bones
Might escape all the humbug of 'National stones!'*

*Here's a note to Tom Campbell, (indorsed, 'From a Peer'),
To mulct Income-tax from his hundred a-year;
Pinned up with a line from his Chef to his Grace,
That he 'must have five hundred, or throw up his place!'
Here's an epitaph written by Haydon's last pen
Poh! Genius may die in a ditch or a den!
The country wants none of it, female or male,
So, as no one bids sixpence, I'll shut up the sale."*

TILBURY.

The sun grew hot.

If Homer had leave to nod, so had I.

I leaned my head on the gunwale.

But my dreams were like Homer's - poetic.

I saw the builder of the Fort, Harry the Eighth, bluff and bold as ever, drop from the clouds, or emerge from the river, I scarcely knew which.

He was standing on a battlement, with a battalion of beef-eaters in front; Anne Boleyn by his side; and a mob of courtiers, all silk and plumage, in the rear.

He was laughing in his usual broad-mouthed style, and pointing out to his handsome and laughing queen, the wrecks of a whole Spanish flotilla of gun boats rolling down the stream, which had stolen out from Ferrol; and run up the river in the night, to carry off the Tower of London!

But, having been met by the Thames watermen, one half were captured, and the other half swamped, and were now making their way, piecemeal, back to Spain again, as best they could.

I was roused from my vision by a scream of agony.

I had given a tremendous kick to a little foreigner, (unintentionally, of course, for our two countries are now at peace), and had knocked the telescope out of his hand, with which he was surveying the defences of Tilbury, and examining how he could capture it, on his next visit, on board of the Boulogne steamer.

However, we made up the affair, by my complimenting him on the pencil sketch, in which he "demonstrated", that it would only take twenty-four hours of darkness and perfect sleep on the part of John Bull, to slip ten thousand wherries out of Boulogne, to be towed by the steam-boat, to slip them up the Thames, to "burn, sink, and destroy", and slip them back again, sound wind and limb, to La France, without any human being on earth knowing any thing of the matter.

The French are a "people of talents", and nothing makes them so good-humoured, as giving them the opportunity of showing their talents; so, to win the little man's heart, and apply a salve to his injured limb and honour, I asked him for a song.

Due notice was given to our fellow-passengers, and my new friend proceeded in the following "grand style", with his warlike history : -

THE HERO.

*My name is Auguste-Charlemagne Sabretache;
No man like the Frenchman is made for a dash :
He comes, sees, and conquers, by land and by main;
You fight, and he comes, and he conquers again;
His voice is a tempest, his glance is a flash,
There is nothing on earth like Monsieur Sabretache.*

*When he brushes his whiskers, and takes to the field,
The world can have nothing to do but to yield.
Your Kutusoff, Blucher, and Due Valainton,
Russ, Prussian, and English, to him are all one;
He finishes all their affairs with a crash,
Only proud to be flogged by Monsieur Sabretache.*

*What cares he for cavalry, bayonets, or guns,
When he gets on his charger the enemy runs;
In the field, when the top of his shako appears,*

*He has only to meet them, horse, foot, grenadiers.
He captures their camp, and rides off with their cash :
All they ask is their lives, of Monsieur Sabretache!*

*When he marched to old Moscow, pray who was to blame,
If a glance from his eye set it all in a flame!
But he settled it all with a word and a blow,
And he danced all his way back to France through the snow.
Some might say, that a march at that season was rash,
But no man has the brains of Monsieur Sabretache.*

*When the Bourbons came in, and as soon were kicked out,
'Twas I that sent all the priest-clique right about.
'Twas I who at Waterloo beat Valainton,
A fact to all Frenchmen sufficiently known.
There never was army that got such a smash,
As the English that day from Monsieur Sabretache.*

*As I wanted a job, said Le grande petit Thiers,
'You shall swallow the Turk, as we've swallowed Algiers;
You shall go off to Acre, as chief of the staff',
So I took up the turban, and dined on Pilaff,
Rode an Arab, and mounted a diamond panache, -
No Turk ever lived like Monsieur Sabretache.*

*But, John Bull then, by accident, happening to wake,
Swore, the sea, while he lived, should not be a French lake;
So he came match in hand - at the very first fire
He made cinders of Sidon, made tinder of Tyre;
Nay, threatened to hang the pasha in his sash, -
Not forgetting a rope for Monsieur Sabretache!*

*'Twas November the third, - the hour was just noon,
(There are facts that one cannot forget very soon),
Down came the three-deckers and took up their line,
So near, that I thought they'd have asked me to dine;
But, out roared their broadside - by Jove, what a clash!
I thought 'twas all done with Monsieur Sabretache.*

*The sky was a furnace, the balls were red hot, -
A hero's worth nothing, who waits to be shot;
So I took to my heels, and wished I turned quaker,
Before I had meddled with Ali or Acre.
The balls flew like nutshells, the walls were a hash,
So, 'Bonjour, mi Lor Bull!' says Monsieur Sabretache.*

What a delicious breeze!

A scent of groves and gardens; the breath of fruit-blossoms and flowers by millions comes gliding along the water. Ah, those are the plantations of Cobham, rich, deep, and bowery, a ten miles' circle of bowers - the seat of the Darnley family - a spot which reconciles one to the cares of noble life, and the difficulties of fifty thousand sterling per annum.

But, as Napoleon wrote to the general whom he sent to command in Flushing, in answer to his complaining of the mortality of the marshes, "Mon general, on meurt partout".

This place is now without a master.

Its last lord was destroyed a few years ago by an accident in the prime of life.

His father, once a favourite companion of the gayest of princes, George of Wales, and a man of wit and popularity, died of the wear and tear of a life of senates and society.

A mausoleum under the thick and lovely shades, planted by their own hands, now holds the line of fortunate, and fashionable, and honourable men; and if the tomb does not utter a voice, like the slave behind the triumphal chariot of the Roman, its mute eloquence is not the less expressive - Requiescant in felicitate.

But no more of this, "Horatio".

This is not a day for sadness, when the glorious river is glittering as far as eye can reach, with these small, curling,

light-tinted, sunshiny waves, - too large for ripples, too small for surges - which give such such actual life to extended waters.

*Away with melancholy!
When the air is soft as spring,
When the sun is on the wave,
And the bird is on the wing.*

The day, the scene, and the sensation, would have been invaluable to an artist.

"Nature, nature!" I involuntarily exclaimed, "thou art the greatest of all artists, and the man who would soar to the summit of art, must follow thy steps with the homage of a worshipper, the fervency of a lover, and the submission of a slave."

I went on.

"I pledge all my future honours on the point of Parnassus, that the man who paints in his closet, with his apparatus of palettes and brushes, and the mere instrumentality of his profession, ranged round him, and expects to realize the physiognomy of Nature in its pomps and powers, behind his casements and curtains, will miss the reality, give us shadow for substance, and instead of living, loving, and glowing nature, embrace a cloud."

My artistic lucubrations were brought to a speedy end by a rough, bold voice near me, singing the fragment of an old sea song,

*I'd not give a bilberry
For all the guns of Tilbury.*

This intolerable attack on our national fortress, rendered classic too, by the loves of Whiskerandos and Tilburina, had nearly involved me in an altercation, like a true-born Briton, about a matter in which I had not the slightest concern.

I rose to defend the honours of the Thames Gibraltar!

But, I found my hand grasped, with the pressure of a giant, by the libeller, a herculean figure in a naval undress.

I in vain tried to trace, as the Persian would say, the "lines of memory through the ploughed field of his countenance".

But Time had probably passed more lightly over mine, for he recognized me at once, and insisted on my listening to a history of adventures, escapes, mortifications, injuries, &c, which seemed to combine Sindbad the Sailor, with an ex-Premier.

And all this, since we had parted as schoolfellows some ten years before.

He was the fac-simile of a British mariner, that "braved the battle and the breeze" - the model of a generation of men as characteristic as their cloudy and stormy, yet hardy and healthful climate.

Transfer this from the landscape to the human being, and you have the men.

They have their faults; but may we never disgust or degrade this noblest part of a noble people.

The Captain however was in high glee, full of stories, which he poured out on me, somewhat in the style of canister shot, and with somewhat of its effects, in stunning.

His last work was the conveyance of the deputation to bring back the Pope to the Quirinal - "a long yarn", but of which he would not have abated the whole Privy Council a syllable.

*THE VOYAGE.
When the Frenchmen took Rome,
To bring the Pope home,
(To play in his palace the dreamer);
Though all Rome cried "Cui bono",
"We've cut Pio Nono",
Off a Cardinal went in my steamer.*

*As she steered down the Tiber
It shook every fibre,
Of his reverence from forehead to femur;
But, 'twas when in her glee
She got sight of the sea,
That she showed him the tricks of a steamer.*

*At Civita Vecchia,
O, mie orecchie,
What howls called the Saints, to redeem her,
But she darted along,
Like a stone from a thong,
In the style of a true British steamer.*

*We had three Lords in waiting,
Their grievances stating,
While each tried his lungs as a screamer,
So we tossed them o'erboard,
Each towed by a cord,
For a bath at the tail of the steamer.*

*On a roll of the cable,
Right under the table,
With the glass at 100 of Reaumur,
Busy, making his soul,
As he felt every roll,
Lay his Highness, on board of the steamer.*

*Around him ten chaplains,
And none of them saplings,
Lay, pale as a quarantine steamer;
With some dozens of monks,
As helpless as trunks,
All rolling about in the steamer.*

*If those rogues the Chinese,
Looked as green as their teas,
When battered by bold Sir G. Bremer;
John Chinaman's slaughter
Was all milk-and-water,
To the havoc on board of the steamer.*

*She now ruled the roast,
As she sprang from the coast,
Through such surges no buckets could teem her;
The Lipari Isles,
Got but very few smiles,
From the brethren on board of the steamer.*

*"As sure as we're born
We'll ne'er see Leghorn."
"Peccavi," cried out every schemer.
The whole of the friars,
In that court were "criers",
While thundered the wheels of the steamer.*

*I'd not stand in their shoes,
As they neared Syracuse,
Where the Buffalo lay, Captain Seymour;
Sitting up all their throats,
For a pull in his boats,
But, teeth to the wind, went the steamer.*

*As they swept by Messina,
Thy birth-place, Christina,
Old Etna was scarce such a beamer.
In vain they cried "stop,"
With a blaze at her top,
Like a pillar of flame, rushed the steamer.*

*She bounced by Charybdis,
With limestone which ribbed is,
A touch from a pebble might seam her.
Made a curtsey to Scylla;
As the Turks, say, "Bismillah",
'Twas a very close shave for the steamer.*

*But the surges grew brown,
And a storm rattled down,
And they saw in each flash a death-gleamer.
While the peals from the clouds,
And the gale in the shrouds,
Made them all very sick of the steamer.*

*When they made Capri's lights,
It redoubled their frights,
And the friars all bellowed – Habemur;
One and all made confessions,
(E'en Popes have transgressions),
There was some heavy work in the steamer.*

*But they soon smelt the apples
And fishstalls of Naples,
And the cargo got over their tremor.
"No witch in a sieve,
They could ever believe,
Had sailed half so fast as the steamer."*

*Could I pencil a sketch,
Of each woe-begone wretch,
Like Gilray, H.B., or old Darner;
You should have the whole group
That lay stretched on the poop,
As to Gaeta dashed up the steamer.*

*Were I Guizot, or Florian,
Or "Oxford Historian",
Or "orator", like Dr. Cremer;
In my grand paragraphs,
You should have all the laughs,
Of the mob as they rushed from the steamer.*

Though no inhabitant of this best of possible worlds abhors what that world calls Politics, more than I do; though no man swallows whole with more complete conviction the maxim of Swift, that "party is the madness of many for the gain of a few"; though from the bottom of my soul I shrink from the "excellent intentions" of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, laying an income tax on my pony, my pantaloons, and my pen; though nothing in the madness of Bedlam has ever seemed to me, comparable to the madness of going to war, for anything under the moon, when war did not come to us; yet I could not help wishing, that I had in my hand some huge extinguisher which would have put out all the combustibles in mortars and red hot shot piled together in the terrestrial Globe!

"Why am I not the Dictator of Italy?" said I, "for a week; I should begin, by the erection of Rome into what Rome ought to be; no longer a lumber-room for worn-out antiquities-no longer a lodging house for fat old men in cowls, tired of their lives, and dying for want of something to do-no longer a scene of stupid festas and solemn fooleries; but the centre of Italian genius, the great receptacle of all the living arts of Europe.

- Rome, the reviver of the buried talents of the most glittering people of the earth.

-Rome the grand Republic, and the only Republic which I would tolerate; and the only spot in which the tricks, and the politics of a Republic would be tolerable.

It should have the Consul, the Censor, and the Tribune.

It should have the pomp and pageantry of two thousand years ago.

"Then", said my laughing auditor, "you must exterminate Monkism and Macaroni, for while Italy has either the one or the other, it will be fit for nothing, but to carry the Pope on its shoulders, and have his petticoats dropped over its eyes."

We had now passed Sheerness; and were opening that fine Estuary, which first gives us the idea of the sea. Before us all was broad and blue.

By what strange association is it, that the sea always gives us the idea of manliness and adventure.

The swell of the uncontrollable surge, the boundless extent, the brightness and perpetual animation of an element, against whose power all the strength of mankind would be weakness, and in whose bosom, or in one of its ten thousand bosoms, all the armies of mankind might be plunged, never to return; give an impression of more than magnitude, of boldness, almost of mental elevation, superior, I think, to all the impressions of the land, whether mountain or forest, whether of rugged grandeur, or primeval vegetation, or immensity of desert.

I have plunged into every ravine of the Alps, and traversed every track of the Andes; I have been benighted in the interminable forests of Brazil, and have rode full gallop for a month across the Pampas.

Yet with all my feelings in full stretch, I have never experienced so full a sense of the majesty of Nature, or found it acting with so creative a power on my mind, as when, standing on some wild headland, I had a calm and lonely view of the ocean.

"There", I involuntarily exclaimed, "is the element of grandeur; there is the place of power; there is the inspirer of character.

The nation which commands thee, must command the world."

But, what is the philosophy of the surge, or of the sky, or of any thing else philosophic, on a deck thronged by three hundred human beings of every kind, pursuit and profession, generated by that mighty "mother of men", the monster Metropolis?

I was checked by an uproar in which every sound of earth seemed to mingle, but in which laughter predominated. Whether it was a riot or a revel, I was unable to discover, until I penetrated a thick circle on the fore-castle; in the centre of which stood an Irish pauper, with his wife and ten children, "who had come down from Lundun, your honour", to glean the superfluities of human charity at Margate.

Pat is proverbially a humorist, and this fellow's countenance would have identified him with the produce of the Emerald Isle, in the Palace of Pekin, or within the slave-market of Timbuctoo.

It was a compound of fun and ferocity, and when he laughed, it gave irresistibly the conception of a tiger at play. Even the hand held out for the contributions of the company, had the look of a thing equally familiar with the potato and the pike, and which would dig a furrow or put a landlord "out of his troubles" with equal dexterity.

But the natural and unrivalled talent of Pat is humbug.

If the Englishman is the drudge, and the Frenchman the dancing master, Pat is the humbug, of the globe.

He was now giving a specimen of his talents, in one of those performances in which the patriots of his country have exhibited their faculty of mystifying the simplicity of the whole succession of Irish-English functionaries, since the reign of Henry II.

The performer gave it in the shape of a song, in which one half was for the English ear, and the other, an aside for the Irish.

As the deck was crowded with his compatriots, the performance was perfectly comprehended, and the singer was hailed with unanimous applause. -

THE PAUPER AND THE PATRIOT.

*Pity, kind gentlemen! give me some charity,
Pity poor Paddy, so naked and old :
Whisky no longer can give him hilarity,
Shirtless and shoeless, and hungry and cold.*

*Curses consume you all, death to the Saxon,
Soon we shall pay our six hundred years' chains;
Our meal, or our malt, or our turf lay a tax on,
All you shall get is a pike for your pains.*

*Pity, kind gentlemen, think of the hovels
Where we lie through the year without food, clothes or fire;
Remember, tis Pat's gentle spirit that grovels
With his bed-fellow swine in the straw and the mire.*

*"Hurrah for Repeal", when the priest calls for money,
Our thousands are ready, hard cash on demand;
If we've stings for our foes, for our friends we have honey,
So here's to Rebellion, great, glorious and grand.*

*Pity, your honours! but open your pockets,
Noble Old England won't grudge us a meal;*

*We are going, like candles sunk down in their socket,
If we eat, we must only beg, borrow or steal.*

*Down with the Sassenach, young Erin's fingers
Shall give him the wages he earned from the old;
To death with the coward in battle who lingers,
Gold, glory, and vengeance are all for the hold.*

*May his Holiness give all your Honours his blessing,
May Saint Dominic dance every night round your bed;
May the Virgin your babes to her bosom be pressing,
May you laugh, though a landlord, at powder and lead.*

*Hurrah for the musket, the pistol and pike,
For the red bridge of Wexford and black Scullabogue;
The warriors of Erin the death-blow will strike,
So, glory to Rome and the Land of the Brogue.*

*Pity, kind gentlemen! don't be afraid of us;
So may Saint Patrick our consciences thrive;
Our flesh and blood's vanished; there's scarcely a shade of us,
We shall be thankful the last hour we live.*

*Hurrah for Rebellion! if Sassenachs frown,
Our warriors shall charge them in flank, front and rear;
Our women shall crush them, our babes keep them down,
Till Ireland's our own from Clontarf to Cape Clear.*

Our voyage now approached its close.

We had passed the double towers of the Reculvers, to which is appended as strange a legend as any among the Appennines.

The story is, of a man of singular appearance, who was wrecked one night upon the coast of Kent, the only survivor of the crew, but, whether a foreigner or a native was never known.

He suddenly became possessed of great wealth, purchased extensively in the neighbourhood, and eventually became the greatest landholder in the county.

This was about a century ago, and before the old superstitions of the time of James and his witch-book had wholly died away.

Of course this sudden purchaser was suspected of unhallowed dealings, and his seclusion, not less than his unaccountable opulence, was attributed to agencies darker than the dexterities of man.

At length, as if for the purpose of putting an end to all those surmises, he invited a large number of the principal gentry to his mansion, which was near the church of the Reculvers, was embosomed in woods, and exhibited a model of foreign magnificence.

They came, some attracted by curiosity, and others by the spirit of neighbourhood.

They found a mansion furnished with all that wealth could give, the entertainment superb, and the host singularly animated, captivating and brilliant.

He spoke of every country of Europe, and seemed to have visited in some high rank every nation of the globe.

The dinner was prolonged till midnight, with increasing enjoyment.

As the mansion clock struck the hour, a stranger was announced - a slight meagre-looking person, evidently in extreme years, and of so humble an appearance, that the general source of surprise was, his admission.

But the master of the mansion was observed to grow pale at the moment of his entrance, and offered the stranger a seat beside him.

This he took; they conversed together for a few moments, during which the stranger's countenance grew singularly dark, and some even imagined that they saw sparks of fire shoot from his eyes.

There was evidently some angry feeling, but their language was in whispers, until the master of the mansion begged permission of his guests to retire for a moment with "his friend".

They left the hall together, and in a moment after was heard a tremendous shriek, followed by a peal of laughter, more startling than the shriek itself.

All now rushed out.

Some said that they saw a cloud above the mansion, with struggling figures in it, as it rolled away; some that they saw a blaze shooting up to the sky; some that they felt the ground shaking under their feet.

But the entertainer was no where to be found.

The night suddenly became tempestuous, and all the guests hastened to their homes.

The storm increased in violence, and the whole country was covered with sheets of lightning; groves were torn up, churches were blown down, and the harvest was in many places swept away.

The storm was unexampled in extent and fury.

In the course of the next day inquiries were made for the fate of the Lord of the Reculvers; but the ground was swept by ruin, - all vestiges of the stately mansion were gone, the groves and gardens were rent away, the waves had carried off everything, sand alone covered the scene of so much beauty, and the two towers of the Reculvers, the relique of the little church alone remained amid the wreck of nature.

The owner of the mansion was heard of no more.

MARGATE

We were now within a few miles of Margate, but this was to be a day of sights.

Just as we were rounding the little bay, a heavy gun, followed by the roll of drums, and the echo of martial harmonies, attracted our eyes to the sea.

Before us was the noblest display that the globe can offer - the Channel fleet under the command, of Sir Charles Napier, under weigh up the Channel.

Tears of exultation sprang to my eyes.

Every one on board felt the impulse like electricity.

We gave three cheers, and sang -

*Rule, Britannia! Britannia, rule the waves,
For Britons never will be slaves.*

The passengers gathered round me, and I recounted to them what I had seen of the deeds of the gallant fellow, under whose command the floating fortress of our glorious country were then moving in magnificent pageant before our eyes.

I told the story in what way I might, and thanked my stars that I had been born a Briton.

THE COMMODORE.

*I sing you a new song,
Of a gallant deed of late;
By a true-blue British Commodore,
Like his own ship, first-rate.
Who bore the flag of England,
In all its ancient state;
And rewarded England's enemies,
With a knock upon the pate.
Like a true-blue British Commodore,
All of the olden time.*

*This gallant British sailor,
When work was to be done,
Cared not for calm or tempest,
For frost or tropic sun.
Up went his saucy pennant,
And thundered out his gun;
And he blazed away through night and day,
Until the fight was won.
Like a true-blue British Commodore,
All of the olden time.*

*When Jonathan would play his tricks,
"Oh, ho", says the Commodore,
"Up anchor, lads, we must run down,
By Massachusetts shore."
Our shot and shell, so thickly fell,
The Yankees soon gave o'er;
With British shears, he trimm'd their ears,
'Till they growled and snapped no more.
Like a true-blue British Commodore,
All of the olden time.*

*When Jean Francois would shew his claw,
And hook the East to France,
"Twould grieve me", said our Commodore,
"To give those rogues a chance.
"Bout ship, hollo; blue jackets, row,
And hold marines, advance."
By Sidon's wall, our grape and ball
Soon taught them a new dance.
Like a true blue British Commodore,
All of the olden time.*

*For Acre then, our gallant Chief
Commanded us to steer,
"We'll fire a feu de joie" said he,
"That all the world shall hear;
What care we for their batteries,
We cannot lie too near."
In three short hours, the fort was ours,
Huzza, for Charles Napier!
Like a true blue British Commodore,
All of the olden time.*

*Let poets prate of Greece and Troy,
Of Jupiter and Mars;
We'll show them better fighters,
In our brave British tars.
Our cannon are our thunder,
Our bombs our falling stars;
One rattling British broadside
Would settle all their jars,
With our true blue British Commodore,
All of the olden time.*

*We've had our hosts of warriors,
Our Nelson of the Nile;
The hero of a hundred fights,
The meteor of our Isle!
Beneath the deep, some nobly sleep,
Some rest in Paul's proud pile.
May it be long, before we throng
In grief its stately aisle,
For our true blue British Commodore,
All of the olden time.*

*Old England has her merry men,
Who live at home at ease;
Old England has her merry men,
For battle and the breeze.
What cares she for the world in arms,
With such bold boys as these;
And still her name, the world shall tame,
"Britannia, rule the seas."
So, a health to our true blue Commodore,
Like one of the olden time.*

**But the bells are ringing along the shore in joyous peals; how richly their sound floats along the waves.
It is the Eighteenth of June, - Waterloo!**

**What man with a heart awake to the sense of England's glory, to the fall of tyranny, and to the freedom of mankind, but would give it a cheer!
I called on the whole body of our voyagers round me, and we chorused a chaunt to this noblest of Anniversaries.**

*WATERLOO.
'Tis the day of all days,
England's day of renown.
The last of her toils,*

*Of her triumphs, the crown!
When years were concentrated,
In one glorious hour;
And Earth's rainbow arose
From her battle's red shower.
And from Nation to Nation
The proud tidings flew,
That freedom was throned
On thy field, Waterloo.*

*We had seen the wild years
When Regicide France
Crushed hosts with its heel;
Withered kings with its glance.
When the land smoked with burning
And blood as it trod;
And the chain was the sceptre,
The axe was the God!
And Tyranny trampled
The brave and the true,
And the world longed in vain,
For thy sword, Waterloo.*

*We had seen the wild years,
When its Jacobin King,
Like his emblem, the Dragon,
Shot up on the wing;
Mysterious and mighty,
With France for his slave :
Till man saw before him,
No rest but the grave;
And night on the nations
In misery drew,
But the morn was to break
On thy field, Waterloo.*

*We had seen the wild years,
When man's blood poured like rain :
And Austria but echoed
The anguish of Spain;
When valour was fruitless,
And freedom a shade;
And the patriot but fought,
In the tomb to be laid.
But, one beacon, 'twas England's,
Still blazed on his view,
And it blazed, till the dawn
Of thy day, Waterloo.*

*But, the hour came at last, –
England rose in her might;
We heard the proud charge,
When Earth hung on the fight.
Twas the combat of giants,
But, 'ere sank the sun,
Earth's freedom was gained –
Earth's tyrant undone.
And the trump, which that eve
For the victory blew,
Shall ring through all ages :
Sublime Waterloo.*

THE END.