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MISCELLANEA NOVA;
CONTAINING,
AMIDST A VARIETY OF OTHER MATTERS
CURIOUS AND INTERESTING,
REMARKS ON BOSWELL'S JOHNSON;
WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS,
AND SOME NEW ANECDOTES OF THAT EXTRAORDINARY
CHARACTER:
A CRITIQUE ON BÜRGER'S LEONORA;
IN WHICH SHE IS CLEARLY PROVED OF ENGLISH
EXTRACTION;
AND AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY
ON THE
ART OF READING AND SPEAKING IN PUBLIC,
IN TWO PARTS.

A NEW EDITION.

BY S. WHYTE, AND HIS SON, E.-A. WHYTE.

D U B L I N:

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OF WHOM IT MAY BE HAD, AND OF THE BOOKSELLERS.

1800.

M/S/M

THE PARABLE OF THE
EREMITE AND THE ANGEL,

ACCORDING TO DR. HENRY MORE.

DIALOGUE II. CHAP. XXIV.

A CERTAIN *Eremite* having conceived great jealousies touching the due administration of Divine Providence in external occurrences in the world, in this anxiety of mind was resolved to leave his cell, and travel abroad, to see with his own eyes how things went abroad in the world. He had not gone half a day's journey, but a young man overtook him and joyn'd company with him, and insinuated himself so far into the *Eremite's* affection, that he thought himself very happy in that he had got so agreeable a companion. Wherefore resolving to take their fortunes together, they always lodged in the same house. Some few days travels had over-past before the *Eremite* took notice of any thing remarkable. But at last he observed that his Fellow-traveller, with whom he had contracted so intimate a friendship, in an house where they were extraordinary well treated, stole away a gilt cup from the gentleman of the house, and carried it away with him. The *Eremite* was very much astonished with what he saw done by so fair and agreeable a person as he conceived him to be, but thought not yet fit to speak to him or seem to take notice of it. And therefore they travel fairly on together as aforesaid, till night forced them to seek lodging. But they light upon such an house as had a very unhospitable owner, who shut them out into the outward court, and exposed them all night to the injury of the open weather, which chanced then to be very rainy; but the *Eremite's* fellow-traveller unexpectedly compensated his host's ill entertainment with no meaner a reward than the gilt cup he had carried away from the former place, thrusting

in qua in domo unius civis fatis honorificè fuerunt recepti et splendidè ministrati. Civis iste quendam aureum cyphum quem miro modo dilexit, habuit in quo ultra modum gloriabatur. Media nocte surrexit Angelus et furatus est cyphum illum. Heremita hoc videns intra se cogitabat; iste malus Angelus est ut credo. Iste civis nobis optime fecit et iste furatus est cyphum suum. tamen nihil ei loquebatur quia timuit eum. Mane vero surrexerunt et per viam ambulabant, donec ad quandam aquam pervenerunt ultra quam erat pons: pontem ascenderunt et quidam pauper iis obviabat. Ait Angelus, charissime! monstra nobis viam versus talem civitatem. Pauper vertit se et cum digito viam versus civitatem ostendit. Cum vero vertisset se Angelus subito per scapulas eum accepit et ultra pontem projecit, et submersus est pauper. Quod cum Heremita vidisset, ait in corde suo, scio jam quod iste diabolus est et non Angelus Dei bonus. Quid mali fecit pauper iste? et tamen eum occidit. Ab illo tempore cogitabat ab eo recedere; verum timens nihil loquebatur ei. Cum vero circa horam vespertinam ad civitatem pervenissent ad domum cuiusdam divitis accefferunt et hospitium pro Dei amore petebant; ille vero simpliciter eis negavit, ait Angelus Dei. Amore Dei saltem tectum domus nobis concedatis ne lupi aut malæ bestię hic nos devorent. Ille ait; Ecce domus ubi porci mei jacent; si placet vobis cum eis jacere potestis; sin autem recedatis quod alium locum vobis non dabo. Ait ei Angelus; si aliud non potest fieri, cum porcis vestris jacebimus et sic factum est. Mane vero surrexerunt, Angelus hospitem vocavit et ait, Charissime! do tibi cyphum istum, et dedit ei cyphum quem furatus fuerat ab illo cive. Heremita hoc videns, ait intra se. Jam sum expertus quod iste est diabolus. Bonus homo erat qui cum omni devotione nos recepit et furatus est ei cyphum et dedit isti pessimo qui negavit nobis hospitium. Ait Angelo. Nolo vobiscum amplius expectare ad Deum vos recomendo. Angelus dixit ei: Audite me et tunc recedito.

EXPOSITIO.

thrusting it in at the window when they departed. This the Eremite thought was very pretty, and that it was not covetousness, but humour, that made him take it away from its first owner. The next night, where they lodged, they were treated again with a deal of kindness and civility: but the Eremite observed with horror that his fellow-traveller for an ill requital strangled privately a young child of their so courteous host in the cradle. This perplexed the mind of the poor Eremite very much; but in sadness and patience forbearing to speak, he travelled another day's journey with the young man, and at evening took up in a place where they were more made of than any-where hitherto. And because the way they had to travel next morning was not so easy to find, the master of the house commanded one of the servants to go part of the way to direct them; whom, while they were passing over a stone-bridge, the Eremite's fellow-traveller caught suddenly betwixt the legs and pitched him head-long from off the bridge into the river, and drowned him. Here the Eremite could have no longer patience, but flew bitterly upon his fellow-traveller for those barbarous actions, and renounced all friendship with him, and would travel with him no longer nor keep him company. Whereupon the young man smiling at the honest zeal of the Eremite, and putting off his mortal disguise, appeared as he was, in the form and lustre of an angel of God, and told him he was sent to ease his mind of the great anxiety it was incumbered with touching the DIVINE PROVIDENCE. In which, said he, nothing can occur more perplexing and paradoxical than what you have been offended at since we two travelled together. But yet I will demonstrate to you, said he, that all that I have done is very just and right. For as for that first man from whom I took the gilded cup, it was a real compensation

EXPOSITIO.

Certissime quando eras in Heremitorio, dominus ovium pastorem injuste occidit. Scias quod pastor ille pro tunc mortem non meruit; sed alias commisit quare mori non deberet. tunc temporis inventus est sine peccato, Deus ergo permisit eum occidi ut pœnam post mortem evaderet, propter peccatum quod alias committeret pro quo nunquam penitentiæ fecerat. Latro vero quod evasit, cum omnibus ovibus pœnam eternam sustinet, et dominus ovium quod pastorem occidit vitam suam emendabit per largas eleemofynas et opera misericordiæ quam ignoranter fecit. Demum filius istius militis de nocte strangulavi quod nobis bonum hospitium dedit: Scias quod antequam puer ille natus erat miles optimus eleemofynarius erat, et multa opera misericordiæ fecit. Sed postquam natus est puer factus est parcus cupidus et omnia colligit ut puerum divitem faciat sic quod erit causa perditionis ejus et ideo puerum occidi, et jam sicut prius factus est bonus Christianus. Deinde Cyphum illius civis qui nos cum devotione recepit furatus fui. Scias tu quod antequam Cyphus ille erat fabricatus non erat sobrior eo in tota terra; sed tantum de Cypho gaudebat post fabricationem quod omni die tantum de eo bibebat quod bis aut ter omni die fuit inebriatus, et ideo cyphum abstuli et factus est sobrius sicut prius. Deinde pauperem in aquam projeci. Scias quod pauper iste bonus Xtianus fuit; sed si ad dimidium miliare ambulasset alium in peccato mortale occidisset: scias jam est salvatus et regnat in cœlesti gloria. Deinde cyphum illius civis dedi illi quod nobis bonum hospitium negavit. Scias quod nihil in terra sit sine causa. Ipse nobis concessit donum porcorum et ideo cyphum ei dedi et regnabit post vitam in inferno. Pone ergo omni modo custodiam ori tuo ut Deo non detrahas. Ipse enim omnia novit. Heremita hoc audiens cecidit ad pedes Angeli, et veniam petiit ad Heremitarium perrexit et factus est bonus Christianus.

penfation indeed of his hospitality; that cup being fo forcible an occafion of the good man's diftempering himfelf, and of hazarding his health and life, which would be a great lofs to his poor neighbours, he being of fo good and charitable a nature. But I put it into the window of that harfh and un-hofpitable man that ufed us fo ill, not as a booty to him, but as a plague and fcourge to him, and for an eafe to his oppreffed neighbours, that he may fall into intemperance, difeafes, and death itfelf. For I knew very well that there was that enchantment in this cup, that they that had it would be thus bewitched with it. And as for that civil perfon whose child I frangled in the cradle, it was in great mercy to him, and no real hurt to the child, who is now with God. But if that child had lived, whereas this gentleman had been piously, charitably and devoutly given, his mind, I faw, would have unavoidably funk into the love of the world, out of love to his child, he having had none before, and doing fo hugely on it; and therefore I took away this momentary life from the body of the child, that the foul of the father might live for ever. And for this laft fact, which you fo much abhor, it was the moft faithful piece of gratitude I could do to one that had ufed us fo humanely and kindly as that gentleman did. For this man, who by the appointment of his mafter was fo officious to us as to fhew us the way, intended this very night enfuing to let in a company of rogues into his mafter's houfe, to rob him of all that he had, if not to murder him and his family. And having faid thus, he vanifhed. But the poor Eremite, tranfported with joy and amazement, lift up his hands and eyes to heaven, and gave glory to God, who had thus unexpectedly delivered him from any farther anxiety touching the ways of his Providence; and thus returned with chearfulnefs to his forfaken cell, and fpent the refidue of his days there in piety and peace.

Notwithftanding

Notwithstanding the extreme scarcity of the *Gesta Romanorum*, this singular book has gone thro' various impressions.

Two copies of it were found in the numerous and splendid collection of the late Reverend and learned Thomas Crofts. See Bibliotheca Croftiana, London, 1783, pp. 67, 126.

1300 *Ex Gestis Romanor. bystorie notabiles, folio, nitidiss. in cor. turc.* EDIT. PRIMA. . . . *Sine Loco aut Nom. Impressoris.*

2487 *Ex Gestis Romanorum Hystorie notabiles collecte; de Viciis Virtutibusq. tractantes; cum Applicationibus moralifatis et mysticis. Literis Gothicis, 8vo. perg. Venet. per Alex de Bindonis mcccccx.*

We have also met with accounts of other Editions, viz. *Gesta Romanorum, &c. finis Anno nostre salutis mcccclxxxix.* Fo. *Gesta Romanorum, &c. Goud. per Gerardum Leeu mccccxc.* Fo.

Tyrwhitt in his account of "this strange book" makes mention of several editions; the first containing but 152 chapters, which were afterwards increased to 181, as in the Edition he had; printed at Rouen, 1521. It was among the earliest put to press; and, concluding from circumstances, he thinks "one of our countrymen was the Author." Chaucer owes many obligations to the *Gesta Romanorum*, and no less Gower, Lydgate, Occleve, and others, who manifestly borrowed many of their stories from it. There can be no doubt that it was of great use in compiling *the Floure of the Commaundements*; another book no less strange and uncommon. Dr. Farmer mentions also an old translation of the *Gesta Romanorum*, in English, printed by Wynkyn de Worde, where he found the story of the Caskets, &c. in the Merchant of Venice; a great variety of other incidents adopted by Shakspeare are likewise derived from the same source.

Dr. Henry More's Dialogues on the Attributes of God and his Providence, five in Number, from the 2d of which, the foregoing narrative of the Hermit in English is taken, were published under the name of Franciscus Palæopolitanus, An. 1668; an imperfect set of which is to be seen in Bishop Marth's Library, St. Patrick's, Dublin.

It

It requires no extraordinary share of black letter information to discover, that our elder bards of the reformed type are not altogether so much beholden to the Greeks and Romans as has been fondly imagined. However they may have formed their plans or improved their diction on the classic models, their pages are highly illuminated with the treasures of Gothic lore; and the romances and legendary narratives of the olden times, have proved to them plentiful sources of interesting and sublime conceptions.* Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy suggested to Milton the outline, and many of the most favourite images of his L'Allegro and Il Penseroso; even the particular turn and measure of the verse he adopted from Burton; as Wharton has also remarked in his valuable edition of that great poet's juvenile productions. The Anatomy of Melancholy, though so little known to the generality of readers, is still a copious store-house of useful discoveries, information, and amusement to modern wits; for proof we need go no farther than Sterne. There is another obsolete folio, to which we may trace many striking sublilities of Milton; to mention but one; the poetical depth and immensity of the Infernal Regions, which the critics will have, a flight of competitorship with Homer and Virgil. This book has for its title, The Polychronicon . . . It was the work of Ranulph Higden, Monk of Bury, translated at the request of Lord Barclay. The first edition imprinted by Wynkyn de Worde, mccccxiii: The second, by Peter Treveris, mccccxxv, and the third, (a fair copy of which is preserved in Marsh's Library, St. Patrick's, Dublin) by the same Peter Treveris, imprinted at Southwerke, in the year of

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* It may be proper to notice, though not strictly in its place, that, in the Catalogue of the College Library, the Book from which the HERMIT is taken, appears under the title of "Recollektorium ex Gestis Romanorum de Vitiis et Virtutibus, 8vo. Francof. 1508." . . . Ad ille, ad istam civitatem . . . in domo unus civis . . . quidam Pauper eis obvixbat, &c. are the original reading.

our Lord God MCCCC & XXVII, the xvi daye of Maye. Even Machiavel has been laid under contributions, and History degraded into a vehicle of fiction; which, favourably speaking, is but a pitiful application of talents, and a palpable encroachment on the province of poetry.

The learned and judicious Zimmerman, who was himself a native of Swisserland, gives up the story of WILLIAM TELL, of which in his excellent Essay on Solitude, we find the following relation:

“ WILLIAM TELL was one of the principal authors of the revolution in Swisserland in the year 1307. GRISLER, who governed that country under the Emperor Albert, obliged him, on pain of death, to shoot from a considerable distance, with an arrow at an apple which was placed on the head of his infant son, and, it is said, that he had the good fortune to carry away the apple without doing the smallest injury to the child. The governor, on approaching to congratulate him on his dexterous achievement, perceived another arrow concealed under the garments of the successful archer; and on inquiring of him for what use he intended it, “ I brought it,” replied TELL, “ for the purpose of revenge; its eager point should have drank the blood of thy heart, inhuman Tyrant, “ if I had the misfortune to kill my son.” The story of the apple, however, which had before been told of a Goth soldier named TOCHO, is justly suspected by the later historians. The Swiss were willing to adorn the birthday of their liberty by the fable of some surprising event. But it is certain that TELL, after having suffered a long and rigorous confinement, killed the governor with an arrow, and gave by that means a signal to the conspirators.

In one of our old English ballads, as before hinted, the same or a similar achievement, abstracted from political consequences, is attributed to WYLLYAM of CLOUDESLE, a celebrated

celebrated archer of our own country; a country then and at all times remarkable for superior skill and dexterity in the use of the bow, which even at this day is a favourite exercise. Our ancient minstrels abound with stories of such extraordinary feats; and whoever is acquainted with legendary writ will have no difficulty in believing, that the splitting of a hazel rod at four hundred yards distance, and striking an apple off a child's head at six score, are perfectly in the style and taste of the times, and were but two arrows from the same quiver.

The superb Edition of the Works of HORATIO WALPOLE, Earl of Orford, in Five Volumes Royal Quarto, by the ROBINSONS, &c. London, this present year, (1798,) does honour to the spirit and industry of the publishers. In the 1st vol. appears the Tragedy of the Mysterious Mother, the offspring of that nobleman's pen, though not before publicly avowed, succeeded by a Postscript of considerable length, from which the following story of the Tragedy is extracted and given in the Author's own words, pp. 125, 6, which, contrasted with the subsequent accounts, taken from publications of more rare and difficult access, will doubtless afford a gratification to curiosity, and proportionally contribute to the pleasure of the perusal:

“ I had heard, when very young, that a gentlewoman, under uncommon agonies of mind, had waited on Archbishop TILLOTSON, and besought his counsel. A damsel that had served her, had, many years before, acquainted her that she was importuned by the gentlewoman's son to grant him a private meeting. The Mother ordered the maiden to make the assignation, when she said she would discover herself, and reprimand him for his criminal passion; but, being hurried away by a much more criminal passion herself, she kept the assignation without discovering herself. The fruit of this
horrid

horrid artifice was a daughter, whom the gentlewoman caused to be educated very privately in the country; but proving very lovely, and being accidentally met by her Father-brother, who never had the slightest suspicion of the truth, he had fallen in love with, and actually married her. The wretched guilty Mother learning what had happened, and distracted with the consequence of her crime, had now resorted to the Archbishop to know in what manner she should act. The prelate charged her never to let her son and daughter know what had passed, as they were innocent of any criminal intention. For herself, he bade her almost despair!

“Sometime after I had finished the play on this groundwork, a gentleman to whom I had communicated it, accidentally discovered the origin of the tradition in the novels of the Queen of Navarre, Vol. II. Novel 30; and to my surprise I found a strange concurrence of circumstances between the story as there related, and as I had adapted it to my piece: for, though I believed it to have happened in the reign of King William, I had, for a purpose to be mentioned hereafter, thrown it back to the eve of the Reformation; and the Queen, it appears, dates the event in the reign of Louis XI. I had chosen Narbonne for the scene,—the Queen places it in Languedoc. The rencontres are of little importance, and, perhaps, curious to nobody but the author.

“In order to make use of a canvas so shocking, it was necessary as much as possible to palliate the crime, and raise the character of the criminal. To attain the former end, I imagined the moment in which she has lost a beloved husband, when grief and disappointment, and a conflict of passions might be supposed to have thrown her reason off its guard, and exposed her to the danger under which she fell. Strange as the moment may seem for vice to have seized

seized on her, still it makes her less hateful than if she had coolly meditated so foul a crime. I have also endeavoured to make her very fondness for her husband in some measure the cause of her guilt." . . . So far our Rt. Hon. Dramatist.

In the pamphlet published by GEORGE FAULKNER, which was reprinted from a London Edition of the same year, 1751, an account of which is given in the 5th volume of the Monthly Review, p. 317, it is said that the narrative was intended for publication in the year 1685, and thus the writer introduces his extraordinary Tale:

"The following little history of the transactions of a private family, I should not have undertaken to offer to the public, but from the surprisingness of the facts, and my intimacy in the family, by whom the most minute passages were, in confidence, entrusted to my secrecy, from the very beginning to the ensuing catastrophe; of which I was but too late a spectator; as also from a particular inclination I have, that mankind beholding the dreadful consequences of vice in others, may form the stronger guards against any submission to it in themselves: For the ensuing narration will, to demonstration, prove, that no one can possibly limit the process of an ill act once commenced; and that the only way to avoid bad consequences is, to afford no cause for them; for one enormity, though ever so privately committed, fails not, for the most part, to draw after it such a succession of evils as is very difficult to set bounds to." . . . The whole narrative runs to the length of forty-eight octavo pages.

The author gives the story under fictitious names, because, he says, several of the descendants of the parties are settled near the scene of action, innocent of the facts.

Eugenio, who is described in all respects a finished gentleman, endowed with every personal and mental accomplishment, he says, was the younger son of an illustrious family in
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the northern parts of SCOTLAND. He was very early initiated into the army, where, at the age of twenty-eight, he ranked as a Captain, and falling in love with a young heiress of superior beauty and fortune, he paid his addresses to her, and a marriage was in a short time concluded. But he had but just time to behold his own image in a son she brought him, when he was commanded off, and fell at the siege of the fort of St. Martin's, in the Isle of Rce. The beautiful and disconsolate widow, Eleanora, as she is called, discharged every duty of an excellent mother to her son, named Orestes, and having liberally bestowed on him every advantage of previous institution, at a proper age he was sent to the University of GLASGOW.

Towards the latter end of the first year, at a time of vacation, he returned home on a visit to his Mother, who in his absence had taken into her family a gentleman's daughter, called Arene, as her companion. The young collegian grew enamoured with her beauty, and left no means untried to seduce her, and one night found means of getting into her bed-chamber, but without effecting his purpose, as happily she had time to conceal herself. The young lady disclosed the affair to her patroness, who highly approved and commended her conduct; but supposing, for very obvious reasons, under such circumstances, her son would deny the charge, and if wholly unnoticed would probably repeat his attempt, she bethought herself of a stratagem, wholly devoid of any evil intention on her part, to detect the young spark, and cure him of his pranks. "I myself," says she, "will this night take up with your bed, while you lie secure in mine: I'll ring such a peal in the amorous spark's ears, when I have him there, as shall deter him from any similar attempt in any family, I'll warrant you."

The young gentleman taking silence for a sort of consent, was thus encouraged to pursue his design, and far from the sneaking

sneaking attack which he had made the night before, rushed, *sans ceremonie*, at once into her bed. It was a fatal moment. The Mother, confounded with the untowardness of her situation, had not power to remonstrate, and, overcome by the youthful ardour that embraced her, fell a victim to his desires.

The dreadful consequences need not be repeated, though detailed more circumstantially in the pamphlet before us, they are sufficiently made known in the preceding relation; but surely the noble author of the tragedy, had no occasion to resort to so "strange a moment," as he has chosen, contrary to the narrative, for the perpetration of the horrid act; when the other, equally as critical, would as well have served his purpose, and would have been, if we dare apply the phrase, more natural.

The beautiful daughter of this incestuous intercourse, who was afterwards married to her own Father, is in the history named Cornelia, by whom he had several children, and being a Colonel in the infantry, at the Restoration, once more encountered Arene, his Mother's former ward, at an election ball in Pontefract, by which unfortunate meeting the denouement was casually brought about, which terminated as might be expected, tragically enough.

For the reader's farther instruction and amusement we will now turn to another scarce volume,

DUCTOR DUBITANTIUM, or the Rule of Conscience, &c.

The second edition, by Jeremy Taylor, Chaplain in Ordinary to King Charles the First, and late Bishop of Down and Connor, London, printed by Roger Norton, for Richard Boylston, &c. 1671, with a Dedication to the King, and a Preface, dated "From my study in Portmore, Kilultagh, October 5th, 1659." In which an extraordinary case of human frailty we find stated as follows. The scene of action, as appears by the context, in VENICE.

" 3. If

“ 3. If the error be invincible, and the consequent of the Perswasion be considered with the State of Grace, the error must be opened or not opened according to prudent considerations relating to the person and his state of affairs. So that the error must rather be suffered than a grievous scandal, or an intolerable, or a very great inconvenience. To this purpose COMITOLUS says it was determined by a congregation of learned and prudent persons, in answering to a strange and a rare case happening in VENICE; a gentleman did ignorantly lie with his Mother; she knew it but intended it not, 'till for her curiosity and in her search whether her son intended it to her maid, she was surpris'd and gotten with child: She perceiving her shame and sorrow hasten, sent her son to travel for many years; and he returned not till his Mother's female birth was grown to be a handsome pretty maiden. At his return he espies a sweet fac'd girl in the house, likes her, loves her, and intends to marry her. His Mother conjured him by all that was sacred and prophane that he should not, saying, she was a beggar's child, whom for pitie's sake she rescued from the street, and beggary, and that he should not by dishonouring his family, make her die with sorrow. The gentleman's affections were strong, and not to be mastered, and he married his own sister and daughter. But now the bitings of his Mother's conscience were intolerable, and to her confessor she discovered the whole business within a year or two after this prodigious marriage, and asked whether she was bound to reveal the case to her son and daughter, who now lived in love and sweetness of society innocently, though with secret misfortune which they felt not. It was concluded negatively; she was not to reveal it, lest she bring an intolerable misery in the place of that which to them was no sin, or at least upon notice of the error they might be tempted by their mutual endearment
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and common children, to cohabit in despite of the case, and so change that into a known sin, which before was unknown calamity; and by this state of the answer they were permitted to their innocence, and the children to their inheritance, and all under the protection of a harmless, though erring and mistaken conscience.

Book I. chap. iii. sect. iii. p. 89.

Comitolus and the Queen of Navarre are not forth coming, so for the present the particulars of their testimony must be dispensed with, and the German author, who as well as the Englishman, wot ye, speaks from his own knowlege, though formerly of our company, has absconded. The only material difference between his and the preceding account is, that the German vouches for the authenticity of his relation as of a matter of public notoriety at PRAGUE, in a family of his own particular acquaintance there. . . . Powers of Veracity! how long, by ignorance, knavery and sheer conceit, is the fond suffering world to be trifled with and imposed upon? . . . But to the eternal disgrace of the Illuminati, Philosophers, Politicians, and Reformers of the Eighteenth Century, this monstrous fabrication has been made the ground work of an atrocious calumny, meanly and industriously circulated in the common news papers, to blacken the character of the unfortunate Maria Antonietta of France! . . . And to the scandal of common honesty and common sense, all party business out of the question, there are some flaming . . . Virtuous Souls no doubt! . . . who affect to credit the horrid aspersions.

On our peep into Germany, casting an eye towards Prague, the name of their Poet BURGER, and the tale of LEONORA occurred. It has been translated into English by four several hands. One of those writers, in the preface to his own version of that Popular Poem, expatiating on the peculiar

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character.

character and taste of the Germans, says, " their minds vigorously conceive, and their language nobly expresses, the terrible and majestic; and it must be allowed that in this species of writing they would force from us the palm of excellence, were it not secured by the impregnable towers of OTRANTO. Of all their productions of this kind, LEONORA is perhaps the most perfect. The story in a narrow compass unites tragic event, poetical surprise, and epic regularity. The admonitions of the Mother are just, although ill-timed; the despair of the Daughter at once natural and criminal; her punishment dreadful and equitable. Few objections can be made to a subject new, simple and striking; and none to a moral, which cannot be too frequently and awfully enforced."

This is the common language of translators, in humble imitation of their great predecessor Dryden, obliquely recommending their own performances; and yet, admitting the translator spoke his real sentiments, concerning that popular and celebrated Production, his decision appears liable to many cogent exceptions. Without reference to Religious principles, considered in a moral light it will appear defective; to a philosophic eye absurd. The scope and tendency of it are of a mischievous nature. It may make the hair of the weak and credulous stand on end; the Infidel, who with rapture contemplates the wanton extravagancies of Jupiter, attends ancient cut-throats to the regions of Tartarus, and listens with avidity to the Legend of Proserpine, of which LEONORA'S is a tolerable *Fac Simile*,* feels shocked at the gloomy reveries of the Cloisters, and in his fancied triumphs over ignorance and superstition,

* So Pluto seized of Proserpine, convey'd
To Hell's tremendous gloom the affrighted maid;
There grimly smil'd, pleas'd with his beauteous prize,
Nor envy'd Jove his sunshine and his skies.

Addison's *Cato*, Act III. Scene 7th.

Vide Ovid. *Metamorph.* lib. 5. v. 391. De Proserp.

fiction, with his usual airs of self-sufficiency, will be tempted to treat the machinery of our modern with a sneer. In truth, the fiction is too violent; it out-herods Herod, and seems merely calculated to keep alive and propagate the exploded notions of ghosts and hobgoblins to the great annoyance of poor children, whose ductile minds are liable to fearful impressions, which by the strongest exertions of reason and good sense are scarcely ever afterwards to be wholly obliterated.

The argument in favour of the poem from the lesson of patience it is said to contain is by no means conclusive; for being wholly founded in imposture it necessarily loses of its effect. There are also objections to it as a composition arising from the conduct of the machinery itself. The terrible graces, to which the poem of *LEONORA* owes so much of its popularity, though bodied forth by the exquisite designs of the lady *DIANA BEAUCLERC*, in our humble apprehension, are not supported with a due degree of consistency. It is not easy to determine the precise characteristics, and prescribe limits for the conduct of Beings, with which no mortal has ever yet been personally in habits of familiarity; but according to the received ritual of Apparitions, the Ghost in question, is not only forced ungraciously into the service, but is made to assume powers to which, as a Ghost, he was utterly incompetent. If this position be tenable, we must beg leave to dissent from the authority. . . . The poem is not perfect.

The initiated in the mysteries of "that undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns," of which Homer, Virgil and Shakspeare are the acknowledged Poetical High Priests, by no means admit such "fatal visions, sensible to feeling as to fight;" neither has the notion as yet prevailed among the superstitious and the vulgar. The author of *LEONORA*, by an inexcusable error, we may say, in the costume, has proceeded directly against the canon laws of their foundation,
for

for the sake, it should seem, of a moral not clearly deducible, and probably but a secondary consideration. Cause and effect should reciprocally correspond. Ghosts are serious subjects, and should not be roused from their everlasting mansions on trivial errands; to point out where a pot of money lies interred, or check the frenzy of a love-sick girl; but their imputed attributes are specifically essential and not to be dispensed with. Here the Ghost of a dead Warriour, armed cap-a-pee, in mail of the same temper, mounted on the Ghost of a dead Charger, makes a progress of five hundred German miles, and under the shape of an affianced lover, cajoles a fond credulous female, good and lawful flesh and blood, to quit her aged weeping mother and get up behind him: off he carries her, hurry-scurry, over hill, over dale, wood, waste, bog and briar, the same journey back again, all in the space of one short night, every now and then soothing and encouraging her to sit still, with an equivocal assurance, beneath the dignity of a Ghost, of accommodating her in his camp bed, six boards and a sheet, which in the upshot proves to be . . . his grave. And that is the poor creature's punishment for uttering a rash, a wicked expression if you will (exaggerated we may suppose) in the paroxysms of insanity, the effect of her fidelity and constancy; virtues which the men, though little they have to brag of, will seldom allow the sex, and surely this is a sad way of inculcating. Thus the order of nature is subverted; the secrets of the grave profaned, and a tremendous apparatus, as if the fate of nations depended on it, exhibited, for what? To frighten an innocent young maniac, and send her a little before her time to "Heaven:" But the pious and disconsolate Mother, without crime bereft of her child, the staff of her age, is the sufferer: and the Ghost not, as we are taught to believe, a mere visionary essence; but, contrary to all known principles of orthodoxy, a firm, corporeal, tangeable

tangible substance, vested with human powers, and retaining as in life the old spirit of gallantry with the usual accompaniments, prevarication and deceit.

The frigid criticism this may be deemed of a cold and phlegmatic heart. Not so; with deference to superiour understandings, it is the unbiassed opinion of an enemy to every species of affectation, and empty sentimentalism. It is the mature result of feeling and reflection, from an attentive consideration of the subject, and a thorough conviction of the bad effects such compositions are likely to produce. As a subject of poetical invention, it may be simple and striking; simplicity and force employed to a good purpose are capital recommendations, and the charm of novelty palliates many defects; but on looking attentively nearer home, strong proofs appear that, in this case at least, powerfully impugn the claims of the author of *LEONORA*, if not to the palm of excellence, indisputably to the honour of originality: and therefore more open to animadversion.

“Godfrey Augustus Burgher, [Bürger] was born An. 1748, at Ascherleben. In 1779, was made the first collection of his poems. They consist partly of songs, sonnets, elegies, fables, and other short pieces, comic and serious; and partly of ballads, many of which are translated with improvements from *English Originals*. Simplicity is the characteristic of his compositions; and of all literary beauties simplicity must be the most generally attractive. It is no common merit to excel in a style which all understand, many admire, and but few can attain. No writer perhaps has ever attained a more decided popularity.” The Poem of *LEONORA* is not given as a translation or an imitation; it is given peremptorily and without reserve as “an undoubted original, the most perfect in its kind.” The writer therefore hazards his own title to taste and discernment, who ventures to dispute it; and to contradict

contradict the assertion unauthorized and at random, would be an act of unpardonable presumption.

A Collection of Old Ballads, corrected from the best and most ancient copies extant, (the Third Edition) London, MDCCLXXVII, was published by J. Roberts, Warwick-lane, &c. which is quoted more than once by Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore, in his Reliques of Ancient English Poetry. The volume consists of 287 pages, containing forty-four favourite pieces; and if the reader's curiosity should prompt him to get the book, he will find our authority for the following Legend, [page 266] between which and LEONORA, there seems in many particulars so striking a resemblance, that considering the author's knowledge of English compositions, though in some circumstances the German may be perhaps an improvement, we can hardly suppose it to be an original.

XXXVIII. THE SUFFOLK MIRACLE: or, a Relation of a Young Man, who a month after his death appeared to his Sweetheart, and carry'd her on horseback behind him for forty miles in two hours, and was never seen after but in his grave.

A WONDER stranger ne'er was known
Than what I now shall treat upon.
In SUFFOLK there did lately dwell,
A farmer rich, and known full well:

He had a daughter fair and bright,
On whom he placed his whole delight;
Her beauty was beyond compare,
She was both virtuous and fair.

There was a young man living by,
Who was so charmed with her eye,
That he could never be at rest,
He was by love so much possess'd.

He

He made address to her, and she,
Did grant him love immediately ;
But when her father came to hear,
He parted her, and her poor dear.

Forty miles distant was she sent,
Unto his brother's, with intent
That she should there so long remain,
'Till she had changed her mind again.

Hereat this young man sadly griev'd,
But knew not how to be reliev'd ;
He sigh'd and sob'd continually,
That his true love he could not see.

She by no means could to him send,
Who was her heart's espoused friend ;
He sigh'd, he griev'd, but all in vain,
For she confin'd must still remain.

He mourn'd so much, that doctor's art,
Could give no ease unto his heart,
Who was so strangely terrify'd,
That in short time for love he dy'd.

She that from him was sent away,
Knew nothing of his dying-day,
But constant still she did remain,
And lov'd the dead, altho' in vain.

After he had in grave been laid
A month or more, unto this maid
He came in middle of the night,
Who joy'd to see her heart's delight.

Her

Her father's horse, which well she knew,
Her mother's hood and safe-guard too,
He brought with him to testify,
Her parent's order he come by.

Which when her uncle understood,
He hop'd it would be for her good,
And gave consent to her straightway,
That with him she should come away.

When she was got her love behind,
They pass'd as swift as any wind,
That within two hours, or little more,
He brought her to her father's door.

But as they did this great haste make,
He did complain his head did ache ;
Her handkerchief she then took out,
And ty'd the same his head about :

And unto him she thus did say,
Thou art as cold as any clay ;
When we come home a fire we'll have ;
But little dream'd he went to grave.

Soon were they at her father's door
And after she ne'er saw him more :
I'll fet the horse up, then he said,
And there he left this harmless maid.

She knock'd, and strait a man he cry'd
Who's there? 'Tis I, she then reply'd ;
Who wonder'd much her voice to hear,
And was possess'd with dread and fear.

Her

Her father he did tell, and then
He star'd like an affrighted man ;
Down stairs he ran, and when he see her,
Cry'd out, my child, how cam'st thou here ?

Pray, fir, did you not fend for me,
By fuch a meffenger, faid ſhe ;
Which made his hair stare on his head,
As knowing well that he was dead :

Where is he ? then to her he faid,
He's in the ſtable, quoth the maid ;
Go in, faid he, and go to bed,
I'll fee the horſe well littered.

He ſtar'd about, and there could he
No ſhape of any mankind ſee ;
But found his horſe all on a ſweat,
Which made him in a deadly fret.

His daughter he ſaid nothing to,
Nor none elſe, tho' full well they knew,
That he was dead a month before,
For fear of grieving her full fore.

Her father to the father went
Of the deceas'd, with full intent
To tell him what his daughter ſaid ;
So both came back unto the maid.

They ask'd her, and ſhe ſtill did ſay,
'Twas he that then brought her away ;
Which when they heard, they were amaz'd
And on each other ſtrangely gaz'd.

A handkerchief she said she ty'd
 About his head ; and that they try'd,
 The sexton they did speak unto,
 That he the grave would then undo :

Affrighted, then they did behold
 His body turning into mould,
 And though he had a month been dead,
 The handkerchief was about his head.

This thing unto her then they told,
 And the whole truth they did unfold ;
 She was thereat so terrified
 And grieved, that she quickly dyed.

Part not true love, you rich men then,
 But if they be right honest men
 Your daughters love, give them their way,
 For force oft breeds their lives' decay.

Notwithstanding all the high encomiums lavished on LEONORA, and the gorgeous attire in which she was presented to public notice, our SUFFOLK DAMSEL is not without her share of attractions. " Thoughtless of beauty, she is beauty's self." LEONORA, a beauty at second hand, and for the very graces in which she most excels, she is manifestly indebted to her rival; heightened with an additional tinge of rouge; in the opinion of those who have a true taste for the *simplex munditiis*, perhaps not to her advantage. In the article of diction there probably is no great disparity; the seeming negligence sometimes of the one, may arise from difference of time, and our familiarity with the language in which it is written; for the opposite reason, similar blemishes in the other cannot be equally apparent. The correspondence of sound and sense, for which the German has been distinguished,

guished, is, no doubt, a prime ornament of metre, and gives life and spirit to poetic expression; but carried to an extreme, however striking the resemblance, it is the resemblance in caricature, and ceases to be beautiful. The genuine unaffected simplicity of our old English Ballad, depending not on the play of words, but on the conception, would bear translation, and appear with advantage in any language, "where free to follow nature is the mode;" this is not the case with the German. The reiteration of *trap, trap, trap* for the sound of a horse's, or rather the ghost of a horse's feet, and of *cling, cling, cling* for that of a door-bell, in Burgher's Poem, is mere mimicry, adapted to the vulgar ear, which in an English version, the translator himself confesses, would appear ridiculous. Such mimic artifice, however the English Bard, introducing a real horse, more naturally might have indulged, and yet judiciously has avoided. In the moral too, if the interposition of preternatural agency can be at all admitted, he has a manifest superiority. The Suffolk Maiden, it is true, falls a sacrifice; but it is an unblemished, heroic sacrifice to virtuous constancy: and in her loss the parents receive the due punishment of their avarice and hard-heartedness, as a warning to parents in general, not to sacrifice their children's real happiness, as is but too often the case, to venal and selfish ends. . . . Burgher, indeed, has had ample justice done him by his own countrymen, and, singing to the tune of "Over the hills and far away," has among us the recommendation of a foreigner; that was enough to gain him the palm of excellence, now embalmed for the admiration of future ages in the broad foliage of a royal quarto, and it is but justice to add, the charming pencil of a fair and noble lady, the happiest efforts of the engraver's skill, combined with the exertions of the typographer, render it a curiosity of art, and enhance its merit in the eye of the connoisseur. Our old Suffolk Minstrel "warbling his native wood notes wild,"

wild," remains nameless and unnoticed. What an encouraging contrast! 'tis a true epitome of the History and Spirit of these wonderful times: and tho' his Ghost, after a requiem of near one hundred years, again revisits the glimpses of the moon, to assert his ravished honours, no man knows, or possibly cares, on whose temples to bind the palm of originality . . . "Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!" The same subject, diversified with occasional touches from Shakspeare, has contributed to enrich the canvas of some of our latter novelists.