

the greater the number of slight shocks, the less reason is there to apprehend a violent one.

A German was invited by an English family here to take *pot luck* for dinner. He would eat no roast beef, no turkey, all the dishes passed him untouched. "I do vait for dat excellent pote loock," said he. You are in great danger of meeting with pot-luck if you walk these streets by night. Danae was less alarmed than I am at the golden shower, when I

"Hear nightly dashed into the perilous street,

"The frequent urn."

This sound, even if you escape extreme unction, announces another danger. There are an astonishing number of dogs here who belong to nobody, and annoy every body: these animals fortunately devour great part of what is discharged from the windows, and no sooner do they hear the fall than they run towards it from all quarters, and will nearly throw down the person who is unluckily in their way. The rats, who live among the old ruins, come to partake the banquet, for these animals live together on the most friendly terms. Many of these dogs have their

ears erect, and some are without hair, perhaps of the Turkish breed.

The filth of this city is indeed astonishing; every thing is thrown into the street, and all the refuse of the kitchen, and dead animals are exposed to these scorching suns. I believe these Portuguese would throw one another out, and "leave the dead to bury the dead," if it were not the interest of the priests to prevent them.

In wet weather the streets of Lisbon are very agreeable: if you walk under the houses you are drenched by the water-spouts; if you attempt the middle, there is a torrent; would you go between the two, there is the dunghill. When it rains hard some of the streets are like rivers: I have seen the water rushing down the Rua San Bento more than three feet deep. While the stream does not yet fill up the way, some of the more considerate people make a kind of bridge over it, by placing a plank on two blocks or barrels; and at the most frequented crossings

the Gallegos or Galicians, who are the porters of the place, stand to carry people across; but sometimes this is impossible, the tide rushes with such force that no person can stem it. Carriages have been overturned by it in the Rua de San Bento, which collects the rain from several hills, and it is not long since a woman was drowned * there.

Monday, Feb. 1.

The meeting of the two Courts on the frontiers gives rise to a thousand conjectures. No one attributes it to any private wish the King of Spain might have to see his daughter, or the

* A similar accident happened at the "downgoing of the way from St. John's Church upon Walbrook, unto the river of Thames. Whereby the water in the channel there hath such a swift course, that in the year 1554, on the fourth of September, after a very strong shower of rain, a lad of the age of eighteen years, minding to have leapt over the channel, was taken by the feet, and born down by the violence of that narrow stream, and carried towards the Thames with such a violent swiftness, as no man could rescue or stay him, till he came against a cart-wheel that stood in the water gate, before which time he was drowned and stark dead.

Stow.

Prince of Brazil, her husband; for it is very rarely that friendship or affection will lead a Monarch so far from home. The general opinion suspects a design on the part of Spain, to engage this country in a league with France, and this is the most probable reason that can be assigned. The French Minister is at Badajos.

At Vendas Novas we heard of a singular case of injustice occasioned by the embargo. A Carrier was employed to convey the cloaths of the Spanish Ambassador to Elvas, and paid beforehand. On the road a Juiz* de Fora embargoed his mules, and the Ambassador on this grand occasion was without cloaths. He wrote to Lisbon to complain of the Carrier, and the poor fellow is now in prison.

A courier was drowned last week in one of the streams that cross the road by Villa Vizosa. The Prince of Brazil was about to pass the same water a few hours before the accident happened,

*The civil Magistrate of the place. The Justice of Peace.

but his coachman refused to venture. Had he, or any Fidalgo of his suite been drowned, a bridge would have been built. As it is only a courier, they will content themselves with placing a wooden cross as a monument of the past, instead of preventing the danger of the future.

LETTER XVI.

The sight of a Monastery or a Monk always fills me with mingled emotions of pity and disgust : foul and filthy men without accomplishments, or virtues, or affections, it is yet the system they are subject to that has made them what they are, and the more they are adapted to their circumstances, the more they are to be pitied, for the deeper is their degradation.

The monastic life is not however wholly without its allurements. The indolent who is content to vegetate through existence without experiencing more pleasure or more pain than vegetables probably feel, the bigot whose mind is rendered dark and sullen by the dread of a gloomy and severe God, and the man who is wearied and disgusted with mankind because he knows them, will alike love the tranquillity of

the Convent; for tranquillity is all they ask, and this the Convent can bestow. If there is nothing to rouse to rapture, there is nothing to excite anguish, and as man has made this world, they will probably be rendered happier by the negation of both.

I abhor the order, the vices they practise, and the evils they produce; yet if we coolly examine the history of the greater part of them, we should find them objects of compassion. Are they debauched? Alas! God wisely gave us passions, and it is Society that has made the indulgence of them vicious. Are their opinions different from what they so solemnly profess? are they heretics—infidels—frequently Atheists? Between perjury and martyrdom there is no medium here.

Our professions are usually chosen for us, and our educations regulated accordingly, at an age when it is not possible that we can decide wisely for ourselves: when that arrives, if our principles militate against the choice, what course

must we pursue? It is dangerous when we set out on the voyage of life in an ill-provisioned vessel, to reject the aid of the pilot, and seize the helm ourselves.

It is in vain to talk of what is right and just; the calls of hunger are more importunate than the remonstrances of Conscience: there is no fortress that Famine cannot overcome. It is in vain to talk of the evil produced by Hypocrisy; of its effects on the head and the heart of him who professes what he does not believe. The head and the heart! Alas! there is another part of civilized man to which he must attend, of which the respectable Savage, and the more respectable Oran-Outang are happily ignorant,—his pocket. Man must live, and that “not by bread alone.”

It is the interest only of their children that parents consult, by the fatal error that considers interest and happiness as the same. To this every thing is sacrificed, and the Roman Catholic destines his child to the Monastery, as the

Italian qualifies him for the opera, without compunction. At the age of fifteen the child is allowed to take those vows that seclude him forever from human duties and human virtues, not from the passions and frailties of humanity. In this situation all the energy of the mind is destroyed, or like a tree whose upward growth is obstructed, branches into deformity. The vow once taken, the interest of the order becomes that of the individual, and though he finds neither the virtue or the happiness in the Cloister, that he was taught to expect, with unceasing diligence he imposes on others by the same deceitful allurements, as one soldier is made the decoy bird to entrap another. The drowning man will drag down whatever he can grasp by a convulsive instinct; but how shall we account for that horrible desire in the miserable and the wicked to associate others in wretchedness and depravity?

The studious man, however, may become as useful to society in his cell as in the world; and, as is not unfrequently the case, he sacrifices

domestic comfort to his literary pursuits, he may as well be buried in the Monastery as sepulchre himself in his chamber. But what pretext on the side of reason can be assigned for condemning a female to this seclusion? There is not a part of the civilized world where the female mind is not murdered by the customs of society, and thus to immure them is to render them wretched as well as contemptible. Of the two animals woman is the best; her affections are more pure and more constant than the affections of man; and if the improvement of a rational education be added to this natural disposition, the character becomes little less than perfect. But when a woman possessed of these affections is sacrificed to family pride, without these improvements to console her, what life can be imagined more cheerless than that of the Nunnery?

I cannot express to you the anger I felt at hearing a circumstance which many of the English here remember. About twenty-five years ago a Nun made her escape from a convent of Car-

thusians at the Grillo, the most austere of all the Franciscan order. The convent is by the river, into which the common shore discharges itself. This miserable woman crawled through the common shore, and proceeded through the mud at low water, till by a boat moored near she got on board an English vessel, where she begged to be concealed. The English Captain voluntarily gave her up! though her place of retreat could not have been suspected, for the tide had obliterated all traces of her path. Her fate was never known, but it was reported that she was put to death.

Richardson has written on the propriety of establishing Protestant nunneries, and some such institutions are much wanted. I know no situation more melancholy than that of a well educated young woman left fortuneless in England, there is no occasion to add friendless, for the words are nearly synonymous. To become dependant is either to be dissatisfied and unhappy, or contented and contemptible; and those branches of trade in which they might acquire

independence have been seized by the other sex. I look upon a Man Milliner not only as one of the most despicable members of society, but as one of the most injurious. When I see one of these fellows, his neck pilloried in his neckcloth, moving his eyes instead of his head, lest he should derange the feathery friz of his hair, on which flour enough has been wasted for the poor man's meal, and hear him haranguing upon the merits of muslin, or the becoming colour of a ribbon, anger will mingle itself with the feeling of contempt, for the employment that degrades this animal might have preserved a woman from prostitution.

If government consulted the real welfare and morality of the people, it should prevent men from intruding into any business of this nature. If individuals would, as far as they can, supply the deficiencies of Government, they should never enter a shop where a man exercises the office which a woman might hold. But the example of the Slave Trade has shewn that little is to be expected from Government, and less from individuals.

Still it is the duty of an honest man to enter his solitary protest against the evil which he cannot prevent; the Physician should prescribe though the patient be too mad or too foolish to follow the prescription. Large buildings ought to be erected where women might at all times be employed in tasks fitting their sex, and thus earn a comfortable support, and the interpretation of that word *comfortable* must not be left to a Churchwarden. Such asylums should, like the nunneries of Roman Catholic countries, be held honourable, and sanctified by the public opinion.

If you will reflect upon some such plan by yourself, you will find nothing more easy: if you reflect upon the world we live in, you will find no event more improbable. Man will amuse himself with remedying the effects of evil, not in removing the causes. What! erect an institution to prevent guilt, when there is the prison and the gallows to punish it? An institution to prevent wretchedness and diseases, when there are workhouses enough for the poor, and

hospitals enough for the diseased, where the one is condemned to the care of a Parish Overseer, and the other to the knife of a hospital Surgeon.

When I reprobate monasteries, let me except La Trappe, the asylum of the wretched. What wisdom might not be collected from the histories of those men who have retired to dig their own graves, and labour in a silence not enforced by vows, yet rendered eternal by inclination; who can read the inscription over the portal, and enter:

C'est ici que la mort et que la verité
 Elevent leur flambeau terrible;
 C'est de cette demeure au monde inaccessible
 Que l'on passe à l'Eternité.

“It is here that Death and Truth lift up their dreadful torches; through this abode, inaccessible to the world, is the passage to eternity.”

* * * * *

I make no apology to the reader for enriching my volume with the following beautiful poem

on monastic life. It is by Francis Quarles, in his Hieroglyphicks of the Life of Man. The Emblem is a dark-lantern upon a coffin. The Motto, "Nec Virtus obscura petit." The text of Scripture, "Let your light so shine, that men seeing your good works may glorify your father who is in heaven.."

Was it for this, the breath of Heaven was blown
Into the nostrils of this heavenly creature ?

Was it for this that sacred Three in One
Conspir'd to make this quintessence of Nature ?

Did Heavenly Providence intend
So rare a fabric for so poor an end ?

Was Man, the highest master-piece of nature,
The curious abstract of the whole creation,
Whose soul was copied from his great Creator,
Made to give light, and set for observation.
Ordain'd for this ? to spend his light
In a dark-lantern cloistered up in night ?

Tell me, recluse Monastic, can it be

A disadvantage to thy beams to shine ?

A thousand tapers may gain light from thee ;
Is thy light less or worse for lighting mine ?

If, wanting light, I stumble, shall
Thy darkness not be guilty of my fall ?

Why shouldst thou lurk so close ? is it for fear
Some busy eye should pry into thy flame,
And spy a thief, or else some blemish there ?

Or being spy'd, shrink'st thou thy head for shame ?
 Come, come, fond taper ! shine but clear,
 Thou need'st not shrink for shame, nor shroud for fear.

Remember, O remember, thou wert set
 For men to see the great Creator by ;
 Thy flame is not thine own : it is a debt
 Thou ow'st thy Maker. And wilt thou deny
 To pay the interest of thy light ?
 And skulk in corners, and play least in sight !

Art thou afraid to trust thy easy flame
 To the injurious waste of Fortune's puff ?
 Ah ! Coward, rouse, and quit thyself for shame :
 Who dies in service, hath liv'd long enough !
 Who shines, and makes no eye partaker,
 Usurps himself, and closely robs his Maker.

Make not thyself a Prisoner, that art free :
 Why dost thou turn thy Palaece to a Jail ?
 Thou art an Eagle ; and befits it thee
 To live immured like a cloister'd snail ?
 Let toys seek corners : things of cost
 Gain worth by view ; hid jewels are but lost.

My God ! my light is dark enough at lightest :
 Increase her flame, and give her strength to shine :
 'Tis frail at best ; 'tis dim enough at brightest ;
 But 'tis her glory to be foil'd by thine.
 Let others lurk ; my light shall be
 Propos'd to all men, and by them to thee.

LETTER XVII.

Europe, says Antonio de Macedo, is the best of the four quarters of the globe : Spain is the best part of Europe : Portugal* is the best part of Spain. The tales of the Fortunate Islands and the Elysian Fields are not the mere fables of the poets ; they described places that really exist, and only indeed gave a faint description of Lisbon and the adjacent country. So much for the beauty and optimism of Portugal. Its great antiquity is as boldly asserted, and as clearly proved. The foundation of Lisbon by Ulysses was designed by Pope for an episode in his projected epic poem, and forms the subject of the Ulyssæa of Gabriel Pereira de Castro ; but this belongs to the Poets, and

* He wrote when Portugal was annexed to Spain. His book is in Spanish, and entitled, " Flores de España—Excelencias de Portugal."

tempting as is the etymology of Lisbon from Ulysses, the antiquarian rejects it. It was founded by Elisa the eldest son of Java, says Luis Marinho de Azevedo; he called it Eliseon, thence Elisbon—Lisbon. Nothing can be plainer.

If however, the honour of founding the metropolis of Portugal be contested between Elisa and Ulysses, there is no controversy concerning the establishment of Setuval by Tubal.

One of the many excellencies of Portugal is its great population. Do you question this? Macedo tells you that Tubal at his death left sixty-five thousand descendants. You object to this as too remote a fact. It contained five hundred and sixty-eight thousand inhabitants in the time of Augustus. But you want to know if it be populous at present. His proof is decisive. Blanca de Rocha, the wife of Rodrigo Monteiro, had fourteen children at a birth who were all baptized. Maria Marcella had seven at a birth, who all entered the church,

greatly to the benefit of population no doubt ! and Inez del Casal de Gueday was married seven times, and had an hundred and seven children.

Aristotle observes that the inhabitants of cold countries, and the Europeans, possess great courage, but little genius, and that the Asiatics have great genius, but little courage, the effect of climate ; but as the Greeks are situate between both, they partake the qualities of both, and are consequently more perfect than either. Experience proves this more clearly than any reasoning can do. It is manifest to every person that the Europeans are superior to the rest of the world, and that of them, they who inhabit the more temperate regions are the more perfect by nature, as we see the Spaniards and Italians ; and it is evident that as Lisbon is situate in the most temperate aspect, the influence of the Heavens must necessarily make its inhabitants most perfect of all, both in corporeal beauty and mental excellence. So says Luis Mendes de Vasconcellos.