

sucking tobacco and beer, and reeling home with a grisette from the chaumière, who is not convinced of the necessity of a new "Messianism," and will hiccup, to such as will listen, chapters of his own drunken Apocalypse. Surely, the negatives of the old days were far less dangerous than the assertions of the present; and you may fancy what a religion that must be, which has such high priests.

There is no reason to trouble the reader with details of the lives of many of these prophets and expounders of new revelations. Madame Sand, for instance, I do not know personally, and can only speak of her from report. True or false, the history, at any rate, is not very edifying; and so may be passed over; but, as a certain great philosopher told us, in very humble and simple words, that we are not to expect to gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles; we may, at least, demand, in all persons assuming the character of moralist or philosopher—order, soberness, and regularity of life; for we are apt to distrust the intellect that we fancy can be swayed by circumstance or passion; and we know how circumstance and passion *will* sway the intellect; how mortified vanity will form excuses for itself; and how temper turns angrily upon conscience, that reproves it. How often have we called our judge our enemy, because he has given sentence against us!—How often have we called the right wrong, because the right condemns us! And in the lives of many of the bitter foes of the Christian doctrine, can we find no personal reason for their hostility? The men in Athens said it was out of regard for religion that they murdered Socrates; but we have had time, since then, to reconsider the verdict; and Socrates' character is pretty pure now, in spite of the sentence and the jury of those days.

The Parisian philosophers will attempt to explain to

you the changes through which Madame Sand's mind has passed,—the initiatory trials, labours, and sufferings which she has had to go through,—before she reached her present happy state of mental illumination. She teaches her wisdom in parables, that are, mostly, a couple of volumes long; and began, first, by an eloquent attack on marriage, in the charming novel of "Indiana." "Pity," cried she, "for the poor woman who, united to a being whose brute force makes him her superior, should venture to break the bondage which is imposed on her, and allow her heart to be free."

In support of this claim of pity, she writes two volumes of the most exquisite prose. What a tender, suffering creature is Indiana; how little her husband appreciates that gentleness which he is crushing by his tyranny and brutal scorn; how natural it is that, in the absence of his sympathy, she, poor, clinging, confiding creature, should seek elsewhere for shelter; how cautious should we be, to call criminal—to visit with too heavy a censure—an act which is one of the natural impulses of a tender heart, that seeks but for a worthy object of love. But why attempt to tell the tale of beautiful Indiana? Madame Sand has written it so well, that not the hardest-hearted husband in Christendom can fail to be touched by her sorrows, though he may refuse to listen to her argument. Let us grant, for argument's sake, that the laws of marriage, especially the French laws of marriage, press very cruelly upon unfortunate women.

But if one wants to have a question of this, or any nature, honestly argued, it is better, surely, to apply to an indifferent person for an umpire. For instance, the stealing of pocket-handkerchiefs or snuff-boxes, may, or may not, be vicious; but if we, who have not the wit, or will not take the trouble to decide the question ourselves, want to hear the real rights of the matter, we should not,

surely, apply to a pickpocket to know what he thought on the point. It might naturally be presumed that he would be rather a prejudiced person—particularly as his reasoning, if successful, might get him *out of gaol*. This is a homely illustration, no doubt; all we would urge by it, is, that Madame Sand having, according to the French newspapers, had a stern husband; and also having, according to the newspapers, sought “sympathy” elsewhere, her arguments may be considered to be somewhat partial, and received with some little caution.

And tell us who have been the social reformers?—the haters, that is, of the present system, according to which we live, love, marry, have children, educate them, and endow them—*are they pure themselves?* I do believe not one; and directly a man begins to quarrel with the world and its ways, and to lift up, as he calls it, the voice of his despair, and preach passionately to mankind about this tyranny of faith, customs, laws; if we examine what the personal character of the preacher is, we begin pretty clearly to understand the value of the doctrine. Any one can see why Rousseau should be such a whimpering reformer, and Byron such a free and easy misanthropist, and why our accomplished Madame Sand, who has a genius and eloquence inferior to neither, should take the present condition of mankind (French-kind) so much to heart, and labour so hotly to set it right.

After “Indiana” (which, we presume, contains the lady’s notions upon wives and husbands) came “Valentine,” which may be said to exhibit her doctrine, in regard of young men and maidens, to whom the author would accord, as we fancy, the same tender licence. “Valentine” was followed by “Lelia,” a wonderful book indeed, gorgeous in eloquence, and rich in magni-

ficent poetry ; a regular topsyturvyfication of morality, a thieves' and prostitutes' apotheosis : this book has received some late enlargements and emendations by the writer ; it contains her notions on morals, and, as we have said, are so peculiar, that, alas ! they can only be mentioned here, not particularised ; but, of " Spiridion," we may write a few pages, as it is her religious manifesto.

In this work, the lady asserts her pantheistical doctrine, and openly attacks the received Christian creed. She declares it to be useless now, and unfitted to the exigencies and the degree of culture of the actual world ; and, though it would be hardly worth while to combat her opinions in due form, it is, at least, worth while to notice them, not merely from the extraordinary eloquence and genius of the woman herself, but because they express the opinions of a great number of people besides ; for she not only produces her own thoughts, but imitates those of others very eagerly : and one finds, in her writings, so much similarity with others ; or, in others, so much resemblance to her, that the book before us may pass for the expressions of the sentiments of a certain French party.

" Dieu est mort," says another writer of the same class, and of great genius too.—" Dieu est mort," writes Mr. Henry Heine, speaking of the Christian God ; and he adds, in a daring figure of speech,—"*N'entendez vous pas sonner la Clochette ?—on porte les sacremens à un Dieu qui se meurt !*" Another of the pantheist poetical philosophers, Mr. Edgar Quinet, has a poem, in which Christ and the Virgin Mary are made to die similarly, and the former is classed with Prometheus. This book of " Spiridion " is a continuation of the theme, and, perhaps, you will listen to some of the author's expositions of it.

It must be confessed that the controversialists of the

present day have an eminent advantage over their predecessors in the days of folios : it required some learning then, to write a book ; and some time, at least ;—for the very labour of writing out a thousand such vast pages would demand a considerable period. But now, in the age of duodecimos, the system is reformed altogether : a male or female controversialist draws upon his imagination, and not his learning ; makes a story instead of an argument, and, in the course of 150 pages (where the preacher has it all his own way) will prove or disprove you anything. And, to our shame be it said, we Protestants have set the example of this kind of proselytism—those detestable mixtures of truth, lies, false-sentiment, false-reasoning, bad grammar, correct and genuine philanthropy and piety—I mean our religious tracts, which any woman or man, be he ever so silly, can take upon himself to write, and sell for a penny, as if religious instruction were the easiest thing in the world. We, I say, have set the example in this kind of composition, and all the sects of the earth will, doubtless, speedily follow it. I can point you out blasphemies, in famous pious tracts, that are as dreadful as those above mentioned ; but this is no place for such discussions, and we had better return to Madame Sand. As Mrs. Sherwood expounds, by means of many touching histories and anecdotes of little boys and girls, her notions of church history, church catechism, church doctrine ;—as the author of “*Father Clement, a Roman Catholic Story,*” demolishes the stately structure of eighteen centuries, the mighty and beautiful Roman Catholic faith, in whose bosom repose so many saints and sages,—by the means of a three-and-sixpenny duodecimo volume, which tumbles over the vast fabric, as David’s pebble stone did Goliath ;—as, again, the Roman Catholic author of “*Geraldine,*” falls foul of Luther and Calvin, and drowns the awful echoes of their tremendous

protest by the sounds of her little half-crown trumpet ; in like manner, by means of pretty sentimental tales, and cheap apologues, Mrs. Sand proclaims *her* truth—that we need a new Messiah, and that the Christian religion is no more ! O awful, awful name of God ! Light unbearable ! Mystery unfathomable ! Vastness immeasurable ! Who are these who come forward to explain the mystery, and gaze unblinking into the depths of the light, and measure the immeasurable vastness to a hair ? O name, that God's people of old did fear to utter ! O light, that God's prophet would have perished had he seen ! Who are these that are now so familiar with it ?—Women, truly, for the most part, weak women—weak in intellect, weak, mayhap, in spelling and grammar, but marvellously strong in faith. Women, who step down to the people with stately step and voice of authority, and deliver their twopenny tablets, as if there were some Divine authority for the wretched nonsense recorded there !

With regard to the spelling and grammar, our Parisian Pythoness stands, in the goodly fellowship, remarkable. Her style is a noble, and, as far as a foreigner can judge, a strange tongue, beautifully rich and pure. She has a very exuberant imagination, and, with it, a very chaste style of expression. She never scarcely indulges in declamation, as other modern prophets do, and yet her sentences are exquisitely melodious and full. She seldom runs a thought to death (after the manner of some prophets, who, when they catch a little one, toy with it until they kill it), but she leaves you at the end of one of her brief, rich, melancholy sentences, with plenty of food for future cogitation. I can't express to you the charm of them ; they seem to me like the sound of country bells—provoking I don't know what vein of musing and meditation, and falling sweetly and sadly on the ear.

This wonderful power of language must have been felt by most people who read Madame Sand's first books, "Valentine" and "Indiana:" in "Spiridion," it is greater, I think, than ever; and for those who are not afraid of the matter of the novel, the manner will be found most delightful. The author's intention, I presume, is to describe, in a parable, her notions of the downfall of the Catholic Church; and, indeed, of the whole Christian scheme; and she places her hero in a monastery in Italy, where, among the characters about him, and the events which occur, the particular tenets of Madame Dadevant's doctrine are not inaptly laid down. Innocent, faithful, tender-hearted, a young monk, by name Angel, finds himself, when he has pronounced his vows, an object of aversion and hatred to the godly men whose lives he so much respects, and whose love he would make any sacrifice to win. After enduring much, he flings himself at the feet of his confessor, and begs for his sympathy and counsel; but the confessor spurns him away, and accuses him, fiercely, of some unknown and terrible crime—bids him never return to the confessional until contrition has touched his heart, and the stains which sully his spirit are, by sincere repentance, washed away.

"Thus speaking," says Angel, "Father Hegesippus tore away his robe, which I was holding in my supplicating hands. In a sort of wildness I still grasped it tighter: he pushed me fiercely from him, and I fell with my face towards the ground. He quitted me, closing violently after him the door of the sacristy, in which this scene had passed. I was left alone in the darkness. Either from the violence of my fall, or the excess of my grief, a vein had burst in my throat, and a hemorrhage ensued. I had not the force to rise; I felt my senses rapidly sinking, and, presently, I lay stretched on the pavement, unconscious, and bathed in my blood."

[Now the wonderful part of the story begins.]

I know not how much time I passed in this way. As I came to myself I felt an agreeable coolness. It seemed as if some harmonious air was playing round about me, stirring gently in my hair, and drying the drops of perspiration on my brow. It seemed to approach, and then again to withdraw, breathing now softly and sweetly in the distance, and now returning, as if to give me strength and courage to rise.

I would not, however, do so as yet; for I felt myself, as I lay, under the influence of a pleasure quite new to me; and listened, in a kind of peaceful aberration, to the gentle murmurs of the summer wind, as it breathed on me through the closed window-blinds above me. Then I fancied I heard a voice that spoke to me from the end of the sacristy: it whispered so low that I could not catch the words. I remained motionless, and gave it my whole attention. At last I heard, distinctly, the following sentence:—"Spirit of Truth, raise up these victims of ignorance and imposture." "Father Hegesippus," said I, in a weak voice, "is that you who are returning to me?" But no one answered. I lifted myself on my hands and knees, I listened again, but I heard nothing. I got up completely, and looked about me: I had fallen so near to the only door in this little room, that none, after the departure of the confessor, could have entered it without passing over me; besides, the door was shut, and only opened from the inside by a strong lock of the ancient shape. I touched it, and assured myself that it was closed. I was seized with terror, and, for some moments, did not dare to move. Leaning against the door, I looked round, and endeavoured to see into the gloom in which the angles of the room were enveloped. A pale light, which came from an upper window, half closed, was to be seen trembling in the midst of the apartment. The wind beat the shutter to and fro, and enlarged or diminished the space through which the light issued. The objects which were in this half-light—the praying-desk, surmounted by its skull—a few books lying on the benches—a surplice hanging against the wall—seemed to move with the shadow of the foliage that the air agitated behind the window. When I thought I was alone, I felt ashamed of my former timidity; I made the sign of the cross, and was about to move



forward in order to open the shutter altogether, but a deep sigh came from the praying-desk, and kept me nailed to my place. And yet I saw the desk distinctly enough to be sure that no person was near it. Then I had an idea which gave me courage. Some person, I thought, is behind the shutter, and has been saying his prayers outside without thinking of me. But who would be so bold as to express such wishes and utter such a prayer as I had just heard?

Curiosity, the only passion and amusement permitted in a cloister, now entirely possessed me, and I advanced towards the window. But I had not made a step when a black shadow, as it seemed to me, detaching itself from the praying-desk, traversed the room, directing itself towards the window, and passed swiftly by me. The movement was so rapid that I had not time to avoid what seemed a body advancing towards me, and my fright was so great, that I thought I should faint a second time. But I felt nothing, and, as if the shadow had passed through me, I saw it suddenly disappear to my left.

I rushed to the window, I pushed back the blind with precipitation, and looked round the sacristy: I was there, entirely alone. I looked into the garden—it was deserted, and the mid-day wind was wandering among the flowers. I took courage, I examined all the corners of the room; I looked behind the praying-desk, which was very large, and I shook all the sacerdotal vestments which were hanging on the walls; everything was in its natural condition, and could give me no explanation of what had just occurred. The sight of all the blood I had lost, led me to fancy that my brain had, probably, been weakened by the hemorrhage, and that I had been a prey to some delusion. I retired to my cell, and remained shut up there until the next day.

I don't know whether the reader has been as much struck with the above mysterious scene as the writer has; but the fancy of it strikes me as very fine; and the natural *supernaturalness* is kept up in the best style. The shutter swaying to and fro, the fitful *light appearing* over the furniture of the room, and giving it an air of strange motion—the awful shadow which passed through the

body of the timid young novice—are surely very finely painted. “I rushed to the shutter, and flung it back: there was no one in the sacristy. I looked into the garden; it was deserted, and the mid-day wind was roaming among the flowers.” The dreariness is wonderfully described: only the poor pale boy looking eagerly out from the window of the sacristy, and the hot mid-day wind walking in the solitary garden. How skilfully is each of these little strokes dashed in, and how well do all together combine to make a picture! But we must have a little more about Spiridion’s wonderful visitant.

As I entered into the garden, I stept a little on one side, to make way for a person whom I saw before me. He was a young man of surprising beauty, and attired in a foreign costume. Although dressed in the large black robe which the superiors of our order wear, he had, underneath, a short jacket of fine cloth, fastened round the waist by a leathern belt, and a buckle of silver, after the manner of the old German students. Like them, he wore, instead of the sandals of our monks, short tight boots: and over the collar of his shirt, which fell on his shoulders, and was as white as snow, hung, in rich golden curls, the most beautiful hair I ever saw. He was tall, and his elegant posture seemed to reveal to me that he was in the habit of commanding. With much respect, and yet uncertain, I half saluted him. He did not return my salute; but he smiled on me with so benevolent an air, and, at the same time, his eyes, severe and blue, looked towards me with an expression of such compassionate tenderness, that his features have never since then passed away from my recollection. I stopped, hoping he would speak to me, and persuading myself, from the majesty of his aspect, that he had the power to protect me; but the monk, who was walking behind me, and who did not seem to remark him in the least, forced him brutally to step aside from the walk, and pushed me so rudely as almost to cause me to fall. Not wishing to engage in a quarrel with this coarse monk, I moved away; but, after having taken a few steps in the garden, I looked back, and saw the unknown still gazing on

me with looks of the tenderest solicitude. The sun shone full upon him, and made his hair look radiant. He sighed, and lifted his fine eyes to heaven, as if to invoke its justice in my favour, and to call it to bear witness to my misery; he turned slowly towards the sanctuary, entered into the quire, and was lost, presently, in the shade. I longed to return, in spite of the monk, to follow this noble stranger, and to tell him my afflictions; but who was he, that I imagined he would listen to them, and cause them to cease? I felt, even while his softness drew me towards him, that he still inspired me with a kind of fear: for I saw in his physiognomy as much austerity as sweetness.

Who was he?—we shall see that. He was somebody very mysterious indeed; but our author has taken care, after the manner of her sex, to make a very pretty fellow of him, and to dress him in the most becoming costumes possible.

The individual in tight boots and a rolling collar, with the copious golden locks, and the solemn blue eyes, who had just gazed on Spiridion, and inspired him with such a feeling of tender awe, is a much more important personage than the reader might suppose at first sight. This beautiful, mysterious, dandy ghost, whose costume, with a true woman's coquetry, Madame Dudevant has so rejoiced to describe—is her religious type, a mystical representation of Faith struggling up towards Truth, through superstition, doubt, fear, reason,—in tight inexpressibles, with “a belt such as is worn by the old German students.” You will pardon me for treating such an awful person as this somewhat lightly; but there is always, I think, such a dash of the ridiculous in the French sublime, that the critic should try and do justice to both, or he may fail in giving a fair account of either. This character of Hebronius, the type of Mrs. Sand's

convictions—if convictions they may be called—or, at least, the allegory under which her doubts are represented, is, in parts, very finely drawn; contains many passages of truth, very deep and touching, by the side of others so entirely absurd and unreasonable, that the reader's feelings are continually swaying between admiration and something very like contempt—always in a kind of wonder at the strange mixture before him. But let us hear Madame Sand:—

“Peter Hebronus,” says our author, “was not originally so named. His real name was Samuel. He was a Jew, and born in a little village in the neighbourhood of Innsbruck. His family, which possessed a considerable fortune, left him, in his early youth, completely free to his own pursuits. From infancy he had shown that these were serious. He loved to be alone; and passed his days, and sometimes his nights, wandering among the mountains and valleys in the neighbourhood of his birthplace. He would often sit by the brink of torrents, listening to the voice of their waters, and endeavouring to penetrate the meaning which Nature had hidden in those sounds. As he advanced in years his inquiries became more curious and more grave. It was necessary that he should receive a solid education, and his parents sent him to study in the German universities. Luther had been dead only a century, and his words and his memory still lived in the enthusiasm of his disciples. The new faith was strengthening the conquests it had made; the Reformers were as ardent as in the first days, but their ardour was more enlightened and more measured. Proselytism was still carried on with zeal, and new converts were made every day. In listening to the morality and to the dogmas which Lutheranism had taken from Catholicism, Samuel was filled with admiration. His bold and sincere spirit instantly compared the doctrines which were now submitted to him, with those in the belief of which he had been bred; and, enlightened by the comparison, was not slow to acknowledge the inferiority of Judaism. He said to himself, that a religion made for a single people, to the exclusion of all others,—which only offered a barbarous justice for rule of conduct,—which

neither rendered the present intelligible or satisfactory, and left the future uncertain,—could not be that of noble souls and lofty intellects; and that he could not be the God of truth who had dictated, in the midst of thunder, his vacillating will, and had called to the performance of his narrow wishes the slaves of a vulgar terror. Always conversant with himself, Samuel, who had spoken what he thought, now performed what he had spoken; and, a year after his arrival in Germany, solemnly abjured Judaism, and entered into the bosom of the reformed Church. As he did not wish to do things by halves, and desired as much as was in him to put off the old man and lead a new life, he changed his name of Samuel to that of Peter. Some time passed, during which he strengthened and instructed himself in his new religion. Very soon he arrives at the point of searching for objections to refute, and adversaries to overthrow. Bold and enterprising, he went at once to the strongest, and Bossuet was the first Catholic author that he set himself to read. He commenced with a kind of disdain; believing that the faith which he had just embraced contained the pure truth, he despised all the attacks which could be made against it, and laughed already at the irresistible arguments which he was to find in the works of the Eagle of Meaux. But his mistrust and irony soon gave place to wonder first, and then to admiration: he thought that the cause pleaded by such an advocate must, at least, be respectable; and, by a natural transition, came to think that great geniuses would only devote themselves to that which was great. He then studied Catholicism with the same ardour and impartiality which he had bestowed on Lutheranism. He went into France to gain instruction from the professors of the Mother Church, as he had from the Doctors of the reformed creed in Germany. He saw Arnauld, Fenelon, that second Gregory of Nazianzen, and Bossuet himself. Guided by these masters, whose virtues made him appreciate their talents the more, he rapidly penetrated to the depth of the mysteries of the Catholic doctrine and morality. He found, in this religion, all that had for him constituted the grandeur and beauty of Protestantism,—the dogmas of the Unity and Eternity of God, which the two religions had borrowed from Judaism; and, what seemed the natural consequence of the last doctrine—a doctrine, however, to which the Jews had not

arrived—the doctrine of the immortality of the soul ; free will in this life ; in the next, recompense for the good, and punishment for the evil. He found, more pure, perhaps, and more elevated in Catholicism than in Protestantism, that sublime morality which preaches equality to man, fraternity, love, charity, renouncement of self, devotion to your neighbour : Catholicism, in a word, seemed to possess that vast formula, and that vigorous unity, which Lutheranism wanted. The latter had, indeed, in its favour, the liberty of inquiry, which is also a want of the human mind : and had proclaimed the authority of individual reason : but it had so lost that which is the necessary basis and vital condition of all revealed religion—the principle of infallibility ; because nothing can live except in virtue of the laws that presided at its birth ; and, in consequence, one revelation cannot be continued and confirmed without another. Now, infallibility is nothing but revelation continued by God, or the Word, in the person of his vicars. . . .

“At last, after much reflection, Hebrionus acknowledged himself entirely and sincerely convinced, and received baptism from the hands of Bossuet. He added the name of Spiridion to that of Peter, to signify that he had been twice enlightened by the Spirit. Resolved thenceforward to consecrate his life to the worship of the new God who had called him to Him, and to the study of His doctrines, he passed into Italy, and, with the aid of a large fortune, which one of his uncles, a Catholic like himself, had left to him, he built this convent, where we now are.”

A friend of mine, who has just come from Italy, says that he has there left Messrs. Sp—r P—l and W. Dr—d, who were the lights of the great church in Newman Street, who were themselves apostles, and declared and believed that every word of nonsense which fell from their lips was a direct spiritual intervention. These gentlemen have become Puseyites already, and are, my friend states, in the high way to Catholicism. Madame Sand herself was a Catholic sometime since ; having been converted to that faith along with M. N—, of the

Academy of Music; Mr. L——, the pianoforte player; and one or two other chosen individuals, by the famous Abbé de la M——. Abbé de la M—— (so told me, in the Diligence, a priest, who read his breviary and gossiped alternately very curiously and pleasantly) is himself an *ame perdue*: the man spoke of his brother clergyman with actual horror; and it certainly appears that the Abbé's works of conversion have not prospered; for Madame Sand having brought her hero (and herself, as we may presume) to the point of Catholicism, proceeds directly to dispose of that as she has done of Judaism and Protestantism, and will not leave, of the whole fabric of Christianity, a single stone standing.

I think the fate of our English Newman Street apostles, and of M. de la M——, the mad priest, and his congregation of mad converts, should be a warning to such of us as are inclined to dabble in religious speculations; for, in them, as in all others, our flighty brains soon lose themselves, and we find our reason speedily lying prostrate at the mercy of our passions; and I think that Madame Sand's novel of "Spiridion" may do a vast deal of good, and bears a good moral with it; though not such an one, perhaps, as our fair philosopher intended. For anything he learned, Samuel-Peter-Spiridion-Hebronijs might have remained a Jew from the beginning to the end. Wherefore be in such a hurry to set up new faiths? Wherefore, Madame Sand, try and be so preternaturally wise? Wherefore be so eager to jump out of one religion, for the purpose of jumping into another? See what good this philosophical friskness has done you, and on what sort of ground you are come at last. You are so wonderfully sagacious, that you flounder in mud at every step; so amazingly clear-sighted that your eyes cannot see an inch before you, having put out, with that extinguishing genius of yours, every one of the lights

that are sufficient for the conduct of common men. And for what? Let our friend Spiridion speak for himself. After setting up his convent, and filling it with monks, who entertain an immense respect for his wealth and genius, Father Hebronius, unanimously elected prior, gives himself up to farther studies, and leaves his monks to themselves. Industrious and sober as they were, originally, they grow quickly intemperate and idle; and Hebronius, who does not appear among his flock until he has freed himself of the Catholic religion, as he has of the Jewish and the Protestant, sees, with dismay, the evil condition of his disciples, and regrets, too late, the precipitancy by which he renounced, then and for ever, Christianity. "But, as he had no new religion to adopt in its place, and as, grown more prudent and calm, he did not wish to accuse himself unnecessarily, once more, of inconstancy and apostacy, he still maintained all the exterior forms of the worship which inwardly he had abjured. But it was not enough for him to have quitted error, it was necessary to discover truth. But Hebronius had well looked round to discover it; he could not find anything that resembled it. Then commenced for him a series of sufferings, unknown and terrible. Placed face to face with doubt, this sincere and religious spirit was frightened at its own solitude; and as it had no other desire nor aim on earth than truth, and nothing else here below interested it, he lived absorbed in his own sad contemplations, looking ceaselessly into the vague that surrounded him like an ocean without bounds, and seeing the horizon retreat and retreat as ever he wished to near it. Lost in this immense uncertainty, he felt as if attacked by vertigo, and his thoughts whirled within his brain. Then, fatigued with his vain toils and hopeless endeavours, he would sink down depressed, unmanned, life wearied, only living in the sensation of that silent grief which he felt and could not comprehend."



It is a pity that this hapless Spiridion, so eager in his passage from one creed to another, and so loud in his profession of the truth, wherever he fancied that he had found it, had not waited a little, before he avowed himself either Catholic or Protestant, and implicated others in errors and follies which might, at least, have been confined to his own bosom, and there have lain comparatively harmless. In what a pretty state, for instance, will Messrs. Dr—d and P—l have left their New-man Street congregation, who are still plunged in their old superstitions, from which their spiritual pastors and masters have been set free! In what a state, too, do Mrs. Sand and her brother and sister philosophers, Templars, Saint Simonians, Fournierites, Lerouxites, or whatever the sect may be, leave the unfortunate people who have listened to their doctrines, and who have not the opportunity, or the fiery versatility of belief, which carries their teachers from one creed to another, leaving only exploded lies and useless recantations behind them! I wish the State would make a law that one individual should not be allowed to preach more than one doctrine in his life; or, at any rate, should be soundly corrected for every change of creed. How many charlatans would have been silenced,—how much conceit would have been kept within bounds,—how many fools, who are dazzled by fine sentences, and made drunk by declamation, would have remained quiet and sober, in that quiet and sober way of faith which their fathers held before them. However, the reader will be glad to learn that, after all his doubts and sorrows, Spiridion does discover the truth (*the truth*, what a wise Spiridion!), and some discretion with it; for, having found among his monks, who are dissolute, superstitious—and all hate him—one only being, Fulgentius, who is loving, candid, and pious, he says to him—“If you were like myself, if the first want

of your nature were, like mine, to know, I would, without hesitation, lay bare to you my entire thoughts. I would make you drink the cup of truth, which I myself have filled with so many tears, at the risk of intoxicating you with the draught. But it is not so, alas! you are made to love rather than to know, and your heart is stronger than your intellect. You are attached to Catholicism,—I believe so, at least,—by bonds of sentiment which you could not break without pain, and which, if you were to break, the truth which I could lay bare to you in return, would not repay you for what you had sacrificed. Instead of exalting, it would crush you, very likely. It is a food too strong for ordinary men, and which, when it does not revivify, smothers. I will not, then, reveal to you this doctrine, which is the triumph of my life, and the consolation of my last days; because it might, perhaps, be for you only a cause of mourning and despair. . . . Of all the works which my long studies have produced, there is one alone which I have not given to the flames; for it alone is complete. In that you will find me entire, and there LIES THE TRUTH. And, as the sage has said you must not bury your treasures in a well, I will not confide mine to the brutal stupidity of these monks. But as this volume should only pass into hands worthy to touch it, and be laid open for eyes that are capable of comprehending its mysteries, I shall exact from the reader one condition, which, at the same time, shall be a proof; I shall carry it with me to the tomb, in order that he who one day shall read it, may have courage enough to brave the vain terrors of the grave, in searching for it amid the dust of my sepulchre. As soon as I am dead, therefore, place this writing on my breast. . . . Ah! when the time comes for reading it, I think my withered heart will spring up again, as the frozen grass at the return of the

sun, and that, from the midst of its infinite transformations, my spirit will enter into immediate communication with thine !”

Does not the reader long to be at this precious manuscript, which contains THE TRUTH; and ought he not to be very much obliged to Mrs. Sand, for being so good as to print it for him? We leave all the story aside:—how Fulgentius had not the spirit to read the manuscript, but left the secret to Alexis; how Alexis, a stern, old, philosophical, unbelieving monk, as ever was, tried in vain to lift the gravestone, but was taken with fever, and obliged to forego the discovery; and how, finally, Angel, his disciple, a youth amiable and innocent as his name, was the destined person who brought the long-buried treasure to light. Trembling and delighted, the pair read this tremendous MANUSCRIPT OF SPIRIDION.

Will it be believed, that of all the dull, vague, windy documents that mortal ever set eyes on, this is the dullest? If this be absolute truth, *à quoi bon* search for it, since we have long, long had the jewel in our possession, or since, at least, it has been held up as such by every sham philosopher who has had a mind to pass off his wares on the public? Hear Spiridion:—

“How much have I wept, how much have I suffered, how much have I prayed, how much have I laboured, before I understood the cause and the aim of my passage on this earth! After many incertitudes, after much remorse, after many scruples, *I have comprehended that I was a martyr!*—But why my martyrdom? said I; what crime did I commit before I was born, thus to be condemned to labour and groaning, from the hour when I first saw the day, up to that when I am about to enter into the night of the tomb?

“At last, by dint of imploring God—by dint of inquiry into the history of man, a ray of the truth has descended on my brow, and the shadows of the past have melted from before my

eyes. I have lifted a corner of the curtain : I have seen enough to know that my life, like that of the rest of the human race, has been a series of necessary errors, yet, to speak more correctly, of incomplete truths, conducting, more or less, slowly and directly, to absolute truth and ideal perfection. But when will they rise on the face of the earth—when will they issue from the bosom of the Divinity—those generations who shall salute the august countenance of truth, and proclaim the reign of the ideal on earth? I see well how humanity marches, but I neither can see its cradle nor its apotheosis. Man seems to me a transitory race, between the beast and the angel; but I know not how many centuries have been required, that he might pass from the *state of brute to the state of man*, and *I cannot tell how many ages are necessary that he may pass from the state of man to the state of angel!*

“Yet I hope, and I feel within me, at the approach of death, that which warns me that great destinies await humanity. In this life all is over for me. Much have I striven, to advance but little: I have laboured without ceasing, and have done almost nothing. Yet, after pains immeasurable, I die content, for I know that I have done all I could, and am sure that the little I have done will not be lost.

“What, then, have I done? this wilt thou demand of me, man of a future age, who will seek for truth in the testaments of the past. Thou who wilt be no more Catholic—no more Christian, thou wilt ask of the poor monk, lying in the dust, an account of his life and death. Thou wouldst know wherefore were his vows, why his austerities, his labours, his retreat, his prayers?

“You who turn back to me, in order that I may guide you on your road, and that you may arrive more quickly at the goal which it has not been my lot to attain, pause, yet, for a moment, and look upon the past history of humanity. You will see that its fate has been ever to choose between the least of two evils, and ever to commit great faults, in order to avoid others still greater. You will see . . . on one side, the heathen mythology, that debased the spirit, in its efforts to deify the flesh; the austere Christian principle, that debased the flesh too much, in order to raise the worship of the spirit. You will see, afterwards, how the religion of Christ embodies itself in a church,

and raises itself a generous democratic power against the tyranny of princes. Later still, you will see how that power has attained its end, and passed beyond it. You will see it, having chained and conquered princes, league itself with them, in order to oppress the people, and seize on temporal power. Schism, then, raises up against it the standard of revolt, and preaches the bold and legitimate principle of liberty of conscience: but, also, you will see how this liberty of conscience brings religious anarchy in its train; or, worse still, religious indifference and disgust. And if your soul, shattered in the tempestuous changes which you behold humanity undergoing, would strike out for itself a passage through the rocks, amidst which, like a frail bark, lies tossing trembling truth, you will be embarrassed to choose between the new philosophers—who, in preaching tolerance, destroy religious and social unity—and the last Christians, who, to preserve society, that is, religion and philosophy, are obliged to brave the principle of toleration. Man of truth! to whom I address, at once, my instruction and my justification, at the time when you shall live, the science of truth, no doubt, will have advanced a step. Think, then, of all your fathers have suffered, as, bending beneath the weight of their ignorance and uncertainty, they have traversed the desert across which, with so much pain, they have conducted thee! And if the pride of thy young learning shall make thee contemplate the petty strifes in which our life has been consumed, pause and tremble, as you think of that which is still unknown to yourself, and of the judgment that your descendants will pass on you. Think of this, and learn to respect all those who, seeking their way in all sincerity, have wandered from the path, frightened by the storm, and sorely tried by the severe hand of the All-Powerful. Think of this, and prostrate yourself; for all these, even the most mistaken among them, are saints and martyrs.

“Without their conquests and their defeats, thou wert in darkness still. Yes, their failures, their errors even, have a right to your respect; for man is weak. . . . Weep, then, for us obscure travellers—unknown victims, who, by our mortal sufferings and unheard-of labours, have prepared the way before you. Pity me, who, having passionately loved justice, and perseveringly sought for truth, only opened my eyes to shut them again for ever, and saw that I had been in vain endeavouring

to support a ruin, to take refuge in a vault of which the foundations were worn away." . . .

The rest of the book of Spiridion is made up of a history of the rise, progress, and (what our philosopher is pleased to call) decay of Christianity—of an assertion, that the "Doctrine of Christ is incomplete;" that "Christ may, nevertheless, take his place in the Pantheon of divine men!" and of a long, disgusting, absurd, and impious vision, in which the Saviour, Moses, David, and Elijah are represented, and in which Christ is made to say—"We are all Messiahs, when we wish to bring the reign of truth upon earth; we are all Christs, when we suffer for it!"

And this is the ultimatum, the supreme secret, the absolute truth, and it has been published by Mrs. Sand, for so many Napoleons per sheet, in the "Revue des Deux Mondes;" and the Deux Mondes are to abide by it for the future. After having attained it, are we a whit wiser? "Man is between an angel and a beast: I don't know how long it is since he was a brute—I can't say how long it will be before he is an angel." Think of people living by their wits, and living by such a wit as this! Think of the state of mental debauch and disease which must have been passed through, ere such words could be written, and could be popular!

When a man leaves our dismal, smoky, London atmosphere, and breathes, instead of coal-smoke and yellow fog, this bright, clear, French air, he is quite intoxicated by it at first, and feels a glow in his blood, and a joy in his spirits, which scarcely thrice in a year, and then only at a distance from London, he can attain in England. Is the intoxication, I wonder, permanent among the natives? and may we not account for the ten thousand frantic freaks of these people by the peculiar influence of French air and sun? The philosophers are

from night to morning drunk, the politicians are drunk, the literary men reel and stagger from one absurdity to another, and how shall we understand their vagaries? Let us suppose, charitably, that Madame Sand had inhaled a more than ordinary quantity of this laughing gas when she wrote for us this precious manuscript of "Spiridion." That great destinies are in prospect for the human race, we may fancy, without her ladyship's word for it: but, more liberal than she, and having a little retrospective charity, as well as that easy prospective benevolence which Mrs. Sand adopts, let us try and think there is some hope for our fathers (who were nearer brutality than ourselves, according to the Sandean creed), or else there is a very poor chance for us, who, great philosophers as we are, are yet, alas! far removed from that angelic consummation which all must wish for so devoutly. She cannot say—is it not extraordinary?—how many centuries have been necessary before man could pass from the brutal state to his present condition, or how many ages will be required ere we may pass from the state of man to the state of angel! What the deuce is the use of chronology or philosophy?—We were beasts, and we can't tell when our tails dropped off: we shall be angels; but when our wings are to begin to sprout, who knows? In the meantime, O man of genius, follow our counsel: lead an easy life, don't stick at trifles; never mind about *duty*, it is only made for slaves; if the world reproach you, reproach the world in return, you have a good loud tongue in your head; if your strait-laced morals injure your mental respiration, fling off the old-fashioned stays, and leave your free limbs to rise and fall as Nature pleases; and when you have grown pretty sick of your liberty, and yet unfit to return to restraint, curse the world, and scorn it, and be miserable, like my Lord Byron and other philosophers of his kidney; or

else mount a step higher, and, with conceit still more monstrous, and mental vision still more wretchedly debauched and weak, begin suddenly to find yourself afflicted with a maudlin compassion for the human race, and a desire to set them right after your own fashion. There is the quarrelsome stage of drunkenness, when a man can as yet walk and speak, when he can call names, and fling plates and wine-glasses at his neighbour's head with a pretty good aim; after this comes the pathetic stage, when the patient becomes wondrous philanthropic, and weeps wildly, as he lies in the gutter, and fancies he is at home in bed—where he ought to be: but this is an allegory.

I don't wish to carry this any farther, or to say a word in defence of the doctrine which Mrs. Dudevant has found "incomplete;"—here, at least, is not the place for discussing its merits, any more than Mrs. Sand's book was the place for exposing, forsooth, its errors: our business is only with the day and the new novels, and the clever or silly people who write them. Oh! if they but knew their places, and would keep to them, and drop their absurd philosophical jargon! Not all the big words in the world can make Mrs. Sand talk like a philosopher: when will she go back to her old trade, of which she was the very ablest practitioner in France?

I should have been glad to give some extracts from the dramatic and descriptive parts of the novel, that cannot, in point of style and beauty, be praised too highly. One must suffice,—it is the descent of Alexis to seek that unlucky manuscript, "Spiridion."

"It seemed to me," he begins, "that the descent was eternal; and that I was burying myself in the depths of Erebus: at last, I reached a level place,—and I heard a mournful voice deliver these words, as it were, to the secret centre of the earth—'*He will mount that ascent no more!*'—Immediately I heard arise



towards me, from the depth of invisible abysses, a myriad of formidable voices united in a strange chant—*'Let us destroy him! Let him be destroyed! What does he here among the dead? Let him be delivered back to torture! Let him be given again to life!'*

"Then a feeble light began to pierce the darkness, and I perceived that I stood on the lowest step of a staircase, vast as the foot of a mountain. Behind me were thousands of steps of lurid iron; before me, nothing but a void—an abyss, and ether; the blue gloom of midnight beneath my feet, as above my head. I became delirious, and quitting that staircase, which methought it was impossible for me to reascend, I sprung forth into the void with an execration. But, immediately, when I had uttered the curse, the void began to be filled with forms and colours, and I presently perceived that I was in a vast gallery, along which I advanced, trembling. There was still darkness round me; but the hollows of the vaults gleamed with a red light, and showed me the strange and hideous forms of their building. . . . I did not distinguish the nearest objects; but those towards which I advanced assumed an appearance more and more ominous, and my terror increased with every step I took. The enormous pillars which supported the vault, and the tracery thereof itself, were figures of men, of supernatural stature, delivered to tortures without a name. Some hung by their feet, and, locked in the coils of monstrous serpents, clenched their teeth in the marble of the pavement; others, fastened by their waists, were dragged upwards, these by their feet, those by their heads, towards capitals, while other figures stooped towards them, eager to torment them. Other pillars, again, represented a struggling mass of figures devouring one another; each of which only offered a trunk severed to the knees or to the shoulders, the fierce heads whereof retained life enough to seize and devour that which was near them. There were some who, half hanging down, agonised themselves by attempting, with their upper limbs, to flay the lower moiety of their bodies, which drooped from the columns, or were attached to the pedestals; and others, who, in their fight with each other, were dragged along by morsels of flesh,—grasping which, they clung to each other with a countenance of unspeakable hate and agony. Along, or rather in place of, the frieze, there were on

either side a range of unclean beings, wearing the human form, but of a loathsome ugliness, busied in tearing human corpses to pieces—in feasting upon their limbs and entrails. From the vault, instead of bosses and pendants, hung the crushed and wounded forms of children; as if to escape these eaters of man's flesh, they would throw themselves downwards, and be dashed to pieces on the pavement. . . . The silence and motionlessness of the whole added to its awfulness. I became so faint with terror, that I stopped, and would fain have returned. But at that moment I heard, from the depths of the gloom through which I had passed, confused noises, like those of a multitude on its march. And the sounds soon became more distinct, and the clamour fiercer, and the steps came hurrying on tumultuously—at every new burst nearer, more violent, more threatening. I thought that I was pursued by this disorderly crowd; and I strove to advance, hurrying into the midst of those dismal sculptures. Then it seemed as if those figures began to heave,—and to sweat blood,—and their beady eyes to move in their sockets. At once I beheld that they were all looking upon me, that they were all leaning towards me,—some with frightful derision, others with furious aversion. Every arm was raised against me, and they made as though they would crush me with the quivering limbs they had torn one from the other.” . . .

It is, indeed, a pity that the poor fellow gave himself the trouble to go down into damp, unwholesome graves, for the purpose of fetching up a few trumpery sheets of manuscript; and if the public has been rather tired with their contents, and is disposed to ask why Mrs. Sand's religious or irreligious notions are to be brought forward to people who are quite satisfied with their own, we can only say that this lady is the representative of a vast class of her countrymen, whom the wits and philosophers of the eighteenth century have brought to this condition. The leaves of the Diderot and Rousseau tree have produced this goodly fruit: here it is, ripe, bursting, and ready to fall;—and how to fall? Heaven send that it may drop easily, for all can see that the time is come.

## THE CASE OF PEYTEL.

IN A LETTER TO EDWARD BRIEFLESS, ESQUIRE, OF  
PUMP COURT, TEMPLE.

PARIS, *November 1839.*

MY DEAR BRIEFLESS,—Two months since, when the act of accusation first appeared, containing the sum of the charges against Sebastian Peytel, all Paris was in a fervour on the subject. The man's trial speedily followed, and kept for three days the public interest wound up to a painful point. He was found guilty of double murder at the beginning of September; and, since that time, what with Maroto's disaffection, and Turkish news, we have had leisure to forget Monsieur Peytel, and to occupy ourselves with *τι νεον*. Perhaps Monsieur de Balzac helped to smother what little sparks of interest might still have remained for the murderous notary. Balzac put forward a letter in his favour, so very long, so very dull, so very pompous, promising so much, and performing so little, that the Parisian public gave up Peytel and his case altogether; nor was it until to-day that some small feeling was raised concerning him, when the newspapers brought the account how Peytel's head had been cut off, at Bourg.

He had gone through the usual miserable ceremonies and delays which attend what is called, in this country, the march of justice. He had made his appeal to the Court of Cassation, which had taken time to consider the

verdict of the Provincial Court, and had confirmed it. He had made his appeal for mercy; his poor sister coming up all the way from Bourg (a sad journey, poor thing!) to have an interview with the King, who had refused to see her. Last Monday morning, at nine o'clock, an hour before Peytel's breakfast, the Greffier of Assize Court, in company with the Curé of Bourg, waited on him, and informed him that he had only three hours to live. At twelve o'clock, Peytel's head was off his body: an executioner from Lyons had come over the night before, to assist the professional throat-cutter of Bourg.

I am not going to entertain you with any sentimental lamentations for this scoundrel's fate, or to declare my belief in his innocence, as Monsieur de Balzac has done. As far as moral conviction can go, the man's guilt is pretty clearly brought home to him. But any man who has read the "Causes Célèbres," knows that men have been convicted and executed upon evidence ten times less powerful than that which was brought against Peytel. His own account of his horrible case may be true; there is nothing adduced in the evidence which is strong enough to overthrow it. It is a serious privilege, God knows, that society take upon itself, at any time, to deprive one of God's creatures of existence. But when the slightest doubt remains, what a tremendous risk does it incur! In England, thank Heaven, the law is more wise and more merciful: an English jury would never have taken a man's blood upon such testimony; an English judge and crown-advocate would never have acted as these Frenchmen have done; the latter inflaming the public mind by exaggerated appeals to their passions; the former seeking, in every way, to draw confessions from the prisoner, to perplex and confound him, to do away, by fierce cross-questioning and bitter remarks from the bench, with any effect that his testimony might have

on the jury. I don't mean to say that judges and lawyers have been more violent and inquisitorial against the unhappy Peytel than against any one else ; it is the fashion of the country : a man is guilty until he proves himself to be innocent ; and to batter down his defence, if he have any, there are the lawyers, with all their horrible ingenuity, and their captivating passionate eloquence. It is hard thus to set the skilful and tried champions of the law against men unused to this kind of combat ; nay, give a man all the legal aid that he can purchase or procure, still, by this plan, you take him at a cruel, unmanly disadvantage : he has to fight against the law, clogged with the dreadful weight of his presupposed guilt. Thank God that, in England, things are not managed so.

However, I am not about to entertain you with ignorant disquisitions about the law. Peytel's case may, nevertheless, interest you ; for the tale is a very stirring and mysterious one ; and you may see how easy a thing it is for a man's life to be talked away in France, if ever he should happen to fall under the suspicion of a crime. The French " acte d'accusation " begins in the following manner :—

"Of all the events which, in these latter times, have afflicted the department of the Ain, there is none which has caused a more profound and lively sensation than the tragical death of the lady, Felicité Alcazar, wife of Sebastian Benedict Peytel, notary, at Belley. At the end of October 1838, Madame Peytel quitted that town, with her husband, and their servant, Louis Rey, in order to pass a few days at Macon : at midnight, the inhabitants of Belley were suddenly awakened by the arrival of Monsieur Peytel, by his cries, and by the signs which he exhibited of the most lively agitation : he implored the succours of all the physicians in the town ; knocked violently at their doors ; rung at the bells of their houses with a sort of phrenzy, and announced that his wife, stretched out, and dying, in his

carriage, had just been shot, on the Lyons road, by his domestic, whose life Peytel himself had taken.

"At this recital a number of persons assembled, and what a spectacle was presented to their eyes.

"A young woman lay at the bottom of a carriage, deprived of life; her whole body was wet, and seemed as if it had just been plunged into the water. She appeared to be severely wounded in the face; and her garments, which were raised up in spite of the cold and rainy weather, left the upper part of her knees almost entirely exposed. At the sight of this half-naked and inanimate body, all the spectators were affected. People said that the first duty to pay to a dying woman was to preserve her from the cold, to cover her. A physician examined the body; he declared that all remedies were useless; that Madame Peytel was dead and cold.

"The entreaties of Peytel were redoubled; he demanded fresh succours, and, giving no heed to the fatal assurance which had just been given him, required that all the physicians in the place should be sent for. A scene so strange and so melancholy; the incoherent account given by Peytel of the murder of his wife; his extraordinary movements; and the avowal which he continued to make, that he had despatched the murderer, Rey, with strokes of his hammer, excited the attention of Lieutenant Wolf, commandant of gendarmes: that officer gave orders for the immediate arrest of Peytel; but the latter threw himself into the arms of a friend, who interceded for him, and begged the police not immediately to seize upon his person.

"The corpse of Madame Peytel was transported to her apartment; the bleeding body of the domestic was, likewise, brought from the road, where it lay; and Peytel, asked to explain the circumstance, did so." . . .

Now, as there is little reason to tell the reader, when an English counsel has to prosecute a prisoner, on the part of the Crown, for a capital offence, he produces the articles of his accusation in the most moderate terms, and especially warns the jury to give the accused person the benefit of every possible doubt that the evidence may

give, or may leave. See how these things are managed in France, and how differently the French counsel for the Crown sets about his work.

He first prepares his act of accusation, the opening of which we have just read ; it is published six days before the trial, so that an unimpassioned, unprejudiced jury has ample time to study it, and to form its opinions accordingly, and to go into court with a happy, just prepossession against the prisoner.

Read the first part of the Peytel act of accusation ; it is as turgid and declamatory as a bad romance ; and as inflated as a newspaper document, by an unlimited penny-a-liner :—"The department of the Ain is in a dreadful state of excitement ; the inhabitants of Belley come trooping from their beds,—and what a sight do they behold ;—a young woman at the bottom of a carriage, *toute ruisselante*, just out of a river ; her garments, in spite of the cold and rain, raised so as to leave the upper part of her knee entirely exposed, at which all the beholders were affected, and cried, that the *first duty* was to cover her from the cold." This settles the case at once ; the first duty of a man is to cover the legs of the sufferer ; the second to call for help. The eloquent Substitut du Procureur du Roi has prejudged the case, in the course of a few sentences. He is putting his readers, among whom his future jury is to be found, into a proper state of mind ; he works on them with pathetic description, just as a romance writer would ; the rain pours in torrents ; it is a dreary evening in November ; the young creature's situation is neatly described ; the distrust which entered into the breast of the keen old officer of gendarmes strongly painted, the suspicions which might, or might not, have been entertained by the inhabitants, eloquently argued. How did the advocate know that the people had such ? did all the by-standers

say aloud, "I suspect that this is a case of murder, by Monsieur Peytel, and that his story about the domestic is all deception?" or did they go off to the mayor, and register their suspicion? or was the advocate there to hear them? Not he; but he paints you the whole scene, as though it had existed, and gives full accounts of suspicions, as if they had been facts, positive, patent, staring, that everybody could see and swear to.

Having thus primed his audience, and prepared them for the testimony of the accused party, "Now," says he, with a fine show of justice, "let us hear Monsieur Peytel;" and that worthy's narrative is given as follows:—

"He said that he had left Macon on the 31st October, at eleven o'clock in the morning, in order to return to Belley, with his wife and servant. The latter drove, or led, an open car; he himself was driving his wife in a four-wheeled carriage, drawn by one horse; they reached Bourg at five o'clock in the evening; left it at seven, to sleep at Pont d'Ain, where they did not arrive before midnight. During the journey, Peytel thought he remarked that Rey had slackened his horse's pace. When they alighted at the inn, Peytel bade him deposit in his chamber 7500 francs, which he carried with him; but the domestic refused to do so, saying that the inn gates were secure, and there was no danger. Peytel was, therefore, obliged to carry his money upstairs himself. The next day, the 1st November, they set out on their journey again, at nine o'clock in the morning; Louis did not come, according to custom, to take his master's orders. They arrived at Tenay about three, stopped there a couple of hours to dine, and it was eight o'clock when they reached the bourg of Rossillon, where they waited half an hour to bait the horses.

"As they left Rossillon, the weather became bad, and the rain began to fall: Peytel told his domestic to get a covering for the articles in the open chariot; but Rey refused to do so, adding, in an ironical tone, that the weather was fine. For some days past, Peytel had remarked that his servant was gloomy, and scarcely spoke at all.



"After they had gone about 500 paces beyond the bridge of Andert, that crosses the river Furans, and ascended to the least steep part of the hill of Darde, Peytel cried out to his servant, who was seated in the car, to come down from it, and finish the ascent on foot.

"At this moment a violent wind was blowing from the south, and the rain was falling heavily: Peytel was seated back in the right corner of the carriage, and his wife, who was close to him, was asleep, with her head on his left shoulder. All of a sudden he heard the report of a fire-arm (he had seen the light of it at some paces' distance), and Madame Peytel cried out, 'My poor husband, take your pistols;' the horse was frightened, and began to trot. Peytel immediately drew a pistol, and fired, from the interior of the carriage, upon an individual whom he saw running by the side of the road.

"Not knowing, as yet, that his wife had been hit, he jumped out at one side of the carriage, while Madame Peytel descended from the other; and he fired a second pistol at his domestic, Louis Rey, whom he had just recognised. Redoubling his pace, he came up with Rey, and struck him, from behind, a blow with the hammer. Rey turned at this, and raised up his arm to strike his master with the pistol which he had just discharged at him; but Peytel, more quick than he, gave the domestic a blow with the hammer, which felled him to the ground (he fell his face forwards), and then Peytel, bestriding the body, despatched him, although the brigand asked for mercy.

"He now began to think of his wife; and ran back, calling out her name, repeatedly, and seeking for her, in vain, on both sides of the road. Arrived at the bridge of Andert, he recognised his wife, stretched in a field, covered with water, which bordered the Furans. This horrible discovery had so much the more astonished him, because he had no idea, until now, that his wife had been wounded: he endeavoured to draw her from the water; and it was only after considerable exertions that he was enabled to do so, and to place her, with her face towards the ground, on the side of the road. Supposing that, here, she would be sheltered from any farther danger, and believing, as yet, that she was only wounded, he determined to ask for help at a lone house, situated on the road towards Rossillon;

and at this instant he perceived, without at all being able to explain how, that his horse had followed him back to the spot, having turned back, of its own accord, from the road to Belley.

"The house at which he knocked was inhabited by two men, of the name of Thannet, father and son, who opened the door to him, and whom he entreated to come to his aid, saying that his wife had just been assassinated by his servant. The elder Thannet approached to, and examined the body, and told Peytel that it was quite dead; he and his son took up the corpse, and placed it in the bottom of the carriage, which they all mounted themselves, and pursued their route to Belley. In order to do so, they had to pass by Rey's body, on the road, which Peytel wished to crush under the wheels of his carriage. It was to rob him of 7500 francs, said Peytel, that the attack had been made."

Our friend, the Procureur's Substitut, has dropped, here, the eloquent and pathetic style altogether, and only gives the unlucky prisoner's narrative in the baldest and most unimaginative style. How is a jury to listen to such a fellow? they ought to condemn him, if but for making such an uninteresting statement. Why not have helped poor Peytel with some of those rhetorical graces which have been so plentifully bestowed in the opening part of the act of accusation. He might have said:—

"Monsieur Peytel is an eminent notary, at Belley; he is a man distinguished for his literary and scientific acquirements; he has lived long in the best society of the capital; he had been but a few months married to that young and unfortunate lady, whose loss has plunged her bereaved husband into despair—almost into madness. Some early differences had marked, it is true, the commencement of their union; but these,—which, as can be proved by evidence, were almost all the unhappy lady's fault,—had happily ceased, to give place to sentiments far more delightful and tender. Gentlemen, Madame Peytel bore, in her bosom, a sweet pledge of future concord between herself and her husband; in three brief months she was to become a mother.

"In the exercise of his honourable profession,—in which, to succeed, a man must not only have high talents, but undoubted probity,—and, gentlemen, Monsieur Peytel *did* succeed—*did*: inspire respect and confidence, as you, his neighbours, well know;—in the exercise, I say, of his high calling, Monsieur Peytel, towards the end of October last, had occasion to make a journey in the neighbourhood, and visit some of his many clients.

"He travelled in his own carriage; his young wife beside him: does this look like want of affection, gentlemen? or is it not a mark of love—of love and paternal care, on his part, towards the being with whom his lot in life was linked,—the mother of his coming child,—the young girl, who had everything to gain from the union with a man of his attainments of intellect, his kind temper, his great experience, and his high position? In this manner they travelled, side by side, lovingly together. Monsieur Peytel was not a lawyer merely; but a man of letters and varied learning; of the noble and sublime science of geology he was, especially, an ardent devotee."

(Suppose, here, a short panegyric upon geology. Allude to the creation of this mighty world, and then, naturally, to the Creator. Fancy, the conversations which Peytel, a religious man,\* might have with his young wife, upon the subject.)

"Monsieur Peytel had lately taken into his service a man named Louis Rey: Rey was a foundling; and had passed many years in a regiment,—a school, gentlemen, where much besides bravery, alas! is taught; nay, where the spirit which familiarises one with notions of battle and death, I fear, may familiarise one with ideas, too, of murder. Rey, a dashing reckless fellow, from the army, had lately entered Peytel's service; was treated by him with the most singular kindness; accompanied him (having charge of another vehicle) upon the journey before alluded to; and *knew* that *his master carried with him a considerable sum of money*: for a man like Rey, an enormous sum, 7500 francs. At midnight, on the 1st of

\* He always went to mass; it is in the evidence.

November, as Madame Peytel and her husband were returning home, an attack was made upon their carriage. Remember, gentlemen, the hour at which the attack was made; remember the sum of money that was in the carriage; and remember that the Savoy frontier *is within a league of the spot* where the desperate deed was done."

Now, my dear Briefless, ought not Monsieur Procureur, in common justice to Peytel, after he had so eloquently proclaimed, not the facts, but the suspicions, which weighed against that worthy, to have given a similar florid account of the prisoner's case? Instead of this, you will remark, that it is the advocate's endeavour to make Peytel's statements as uninteresting in style as possible; and then he demolishes them, in the following way:—

"Scarcely was Peytel's statement known, but the common sense of the public rose against it. Peytel had commenced his story upon the bridge of Andert, over the cold body of his wife. On the 2nd November he had developed it in detail, in the presence of the physicians, in the presence of the assembled neighbours—of the persons who, on the day previous only, were his friends. Finally, he had completed it in his interrogatories, his conversations, his writings, and letters to the magistrates; and, everywhere, these words, repeated so often, were only received with a painful incredulity. The fact was, that, besides the singular character which Peytel's appearance, attitude, and talk had worn, ever since the event, there was, in his narrative, an inexplicable enigma; its contradictions and impossibilities were such, that calm persons were revolted at it, and that even friendship itself refused to believe it."

Thus, Mr. Attorney speaks not for himself alone, but for the whole French public, whose opinions, of course, he knows. Peytel's statement is discredited *everywhere*; the statement which he had made over the cold body of his wife—the monster! It is not enough simply to prove that the man committed the murder, but to make the

jury violently angry against him, and cause them to shudder in the jury-box, as he exposes the horrid details of the crime.

"Justice," goes on Mr. Substitute (who answers for the feelings of everybody), "*disturbed by the pre-occupations of public opinion*, commenced, without delay, the most active researches. The bodies of the victims were submitted to the investigations of men of art; the wounds and projectiles were examined: the place, where the event took place, explored with care. The morality of the authors of this frightful scene became the object of rigorous examination; the *exigences* of the prisoner, the forms affected by him, his calculated silence, and his answers, coldly insulting, were feeble obstacles; and justice at length arrived, by its prudence, and by the discoveries it made, to the most cruel point of certainty."

You see that a man's demeanour is here made a crime against him; and that Mr. Substitute wishes to consider him guilty, because he has actually the audacity to hold his tongue. Now follows a touching description of the domestic, Louis Rey:—

"Louis Rey, a child of the Hospital at Lyons, was confided, at a very early age, to some honest country people, with whom he stayed until he entered the army. At their house, and during this long period of time, his conduct, his intelligence, and the sweetness of his manners, were such, that the family of his guardians became to him as an adopted family; and that his departure caused them the most sincere affliction. When Louis quitted the army, he returned to his benefactors, and was received as a son. They found him just as they had ever known him (I acknowledge that this pathos beats my humble defence of Rey entirely), except that he had learned to read and write; and the certificates of his commanders proved him to be a good and gallant soldier.

"The necessity of creating some resources for himself, obliged him to quit his friends, and to enter the service of Monsieur

de Montrichard, a lieutenant of gendarmerie, from whom he received fresh testimonials of regard. Louis, it is true, might have a fondness for wine, and a passion for women; but he had been a soldier, and these faults were, according to the witnesses, amply compensated for by his activity, his intelligence, and the agreeable manner in which he performed his service. In the month of July 1839, Rey quitted, voluntarily, the service of M. de Montrichard; and Peytel, about this period, meeting him at Lyons, did not hesitate to attach him to his service. Whatever may be the prisoner's present language, it is certain that, up to the day of Louis's death, he served Peytel with diligence and fidelity.

"More than once his master and mistress spoke well of him. *Everybody* who has worked, or been at the house of Madame Peytel, has spoken in praise of his character; and, indeed, it may be said, that these testimonials were general.

"On the very night of the 1st of November, and immediately after the catastrophe, we remark how Peytel begins to make insinuations against his servant; and how artfully, in order to render them more sure, he disseminates them through the different parts of his narrative. But, in the course of the proceeding, these charges have met with a most complete denial. Thus we find the disobedient servant, who, at Pont d'Ain, refused to carry the money-chest to his master's room, under the pretext that the gates of the inn were closed securely, occupied with tending the horses, after their long journey: meanwhile Peytel was standing by, and neither master nor servant exchanged a word; and the witnesses, who beheld them both, have borne testimony to the zeal and care of the domestic.

"In like manner, we find that the servant, who was so remiss, in the morning, as to neglect to go to his master for orders, was ready for departure before seven o'clock, and had eagerly informed himself whether Monsieur and Madame Peytel were awake; learning, from the maid of the inn, that they had ordered nothing for their breakfast. This man, who refused to carry with him a covering for the car, was, on the contrary, ready to take off his own cloak, and with it shelter articles of small value; this man, who had been, for many days, so silent and gloomy, gave, on the contrary, many proofs of his gaiety

—almost of his indiscretion, speaking, at all the inns, in terms of praise of his master and mistress. The waiter at the inn, at Dauphin, says he was a tall young fellow, mild and good-natured: we talked, for some time, about horses, and such things; he seemed to be perfectly natural, and not preoccupied at all. At Pont d'Ain, he talked of his being a foundling; of the place where he had been brought up, and where he had served; and, finally, at Rossillon, an hour before his death, he conversed familiarly with the master of the port, and spoke on indifferent subjects.

“All Peytel's insinuations against his servant had no other end than to show, in every point of Rey's conduct, the behaviour of a man who was premeditating attack. Of what, in fact, does he accuse him? Of wishing to rob him of 7500 francs, and of having had recourse to assassination, in order to effect the robbery. But for a premeditated crime, consider what singular providence the person showed who had determined on committing it; what folly and what weakness there is in the execution of it.

“How many insurmountable obstacles are there in the way of committing and profiting by crime! On leaving Belley, Louis Rey, according to Peytel's statement, knowing that his master would return with money, provided himself with a holster pistol, which Madame Peytel had once before perceived among his effects. In Peytel's cabinet there were some balls; four of these were found in Rey's trunk on the 6th of November. And, in order to commit the crime, this domestic had brought away with him a pistol, and no ammunition! for Peytel has informed us, that Rey, an hour before his departure from Macon, purchased six balls at a gunsmith's. To gain his point, the assassin must immolate his victims; for this, he has only one pistol, knowing, perfectly well, that Peytel, in all his travels, had two on his person; knowing that, at a late hour of the night, his shot might fail of effect; and that, in this case, he would be left to the mercy of his opponent.

“The execution of the crime is, according to Peytel's account, still more singular. Louis does not get off the carriage until Peytel tells him to descend. He does not think of taking his master's life until he is sure that the latter has his eyes open. It is dark, and the pair are covered in one cloak; and Rey only

fires at them at six paces distance : he fires at hazard, without disquieting himself as to the choice of his victim ; and the soldier, who was bold enough to undertake this double murder, has not force nor courage to consummate it. He flies, carrying in his hand a useless whip, with a heavy mantle on his shoulders, in spite of the detonation of two pistols at his ears, and the rapid steps of an angry master in pursuit, which ought to have set him upon some better means of escape. And we find this man, full of youth and vigour, lying with his face to the ground, in the midst of a public road, falling without a struggle, or resistance, under the blows of a hammer !

“ And suppose the murderer had succeeded in his criminal projects, what fruit could he have drawn from them?—Leaving, on the road, the two bleeding bodies ; obliged to lead two carriages at a time, for fear of discovery ; not able to return himself, after all the pains he had taken to speak, at every place at which they had stopped, of the money which his master was carrying with him ; too prudent to appear alone at Belley ; arrested at the frontier, by the excise officers, who would present an impassible barrier to him till morning,—what could he do, or hope to do? The examination of the car has shown that Rey, at the moment of the crime, had neither linen, nor clothes, nor effects of any kind. There was found in his pockets, when the body was examined, no passport, nor certificate ; one of his pockets contained a ball, of large calibre, which he had shown, in play, to a girl, at the inn at Macon, a little horn-handled knife, a snuff-box, a little packet of gunpowder, and a purse, containing only a halfpenny and some string. Here is all the baggage, with which, after the execution of his homicidal plan, Louis Rey intended to take refuge in a foreign country.\* Beside these absurd contradictions, there is another remarkable fact, which must not be passed over ; it is this :—the pistol, found by Rey, is of an antique form, and the original owner of it has been found. He is a curiosity merchant, at Lyons ; and, though he cannot affirm that Peytel was the person who bought this pistol of him, he perfectly recognises Peytel as having been a frequent customer at his shop !

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\* This sentence is taken from another part of the acte d'accusation.



"No, we may fearlessly affirm, that Louis Rey was not guilty of the crime which Peytel lays to his charge. If, to those who knew him, his mild and open disposition, his military career, modest and without a stain, the touching regrets of his employers, are sufficient proofs of his innocence,—the calm and candid observer, who considers how the crime was conceived, was executed, and what consequences would have resulted from it, will likewise acquit him, and free him of the odious imputation which Peytel endeavours to cast upon his memory.

"But justice has removed the veil, with which an impious hand endeavoured to cover itself. Already, on the night of the 1st of November, suspicion was awakened by the extraordinary agitation of Peytel: by those excessive attentions towards his wife, which came so late; by that excessive and noisy grief, and by those calculated bursts of sorrow, which are such as Nature does not exhibit. The criminal, whom the public conscience had fixed upon; the man whose frightful combinations have been laid bare, and whose falsehoods, step by step, have been exposed, during the proceedings previous to the trial; the murderer, at whose hands a heart-stricken family, and society at large, demands an account of the blood of a wife;—that murderer is Peytel!"

When, my dear Briefless, you are a judge (as I make no doubt you will be, when you have left off the club all night, cigar-smoking of mornings, and reading novels in bed), will you ever find it in your heart to order a fellow-sinner's head off, upon such evidence as this? Because a romantic Substitute du Procureur du Roi chooses to compose and recite a little drama, and draw tears from juries, let us hope that severe Rhadamanthine judges are not to be melted by such trumpery. One wants but the description of the characters, to render the piece complete, as thus:—

Personages.

Costumes.

Sébastien Peytel. Meurtrier.

Habillement complet de notaire perfide: figure, pâle, barbe noire, cheveux noirs.

Personages.		Costumes.
Louis Rey,	Soldat retiré, { bon, brave, franc, jovial, aimant le vin, les femmes, la gaieté, ses maîtres surtout; vrai Fran- çais, enfin.	Costume ordi- naire; il porte sur ses épaules une couverture de cheval.
Wo'ff,	Lieutenant de gendarmerie.	
Felicité d'Alcazar,	Femme et victime de Peytel.	
Médecins, Villageois, Filles d'Auberge, Garçons d'Ecurie, &c. &c.		

La scene se passe sur le pont d'Andert, entre Mâcon et Belley. Il est minuit. La pluie tombe : les tonnerres grondent. La ciel est convert de nuages, et silonné d'éclairs.

All these personages are brought into play in the Procureur's drama; the villagers come in with their chorus; the old lieutenant of gendarmes, with his suspicions; Rey's frankness and gaiety, the romantic circumstances of his birth, his gallantry and fidelity, are all introduced, in order to form a contrast with Peytel, and to call down the jury's indignation against the latter. But are these proofs? or anything like proofs? And the suspicions, that are to serve instead of proofs, what are they?

"My servant, Louis Rey, was very sombre and reserved," says Peytel; "he refused to call me in the morning, to carry my money-chest to my room, to cover the open car when it rained." The Prosecutor disproves these, by stating, that Rey talked with the inn maids and servants, asked if his master was up, and stood in the inn-yard, grooming the horses, with his master by his side, neither speaking to the other. Might he not have talked to the maids, and yet been sombre when speaking to his master? Might he not have neglected to call his master, and yet have asked whether he was awake? Might he not have said that the inn gates were

safe, out of hearing of the ostler witness? Mr. Substitute's answers to Peytel's statements are no answers at all. Every word Peytel said might be true, and yet Louis Rey might not have committed the murder; or every word might have been false, and yet Louis Rey might have committed the murder.

"Then," says Mr. Substitute, "how many obstacles are there to the commission of the crime? And these are—

"1. Rey provided himself with *one* holster pistol, to kill two people, knowing well that one of them had always a brace of pistols about him.

"2. He does not think of firing until his master's eyes are open: fires at six paces, not caring at whom he fires, and then runs away.

"3. He could not have intended to kill his master, because he had no passport in his pocket, and no clothes; and because he must have been detained at the frontier until morning; and because he would have had to drive two carriages, in order to avoid suspicion.

"4. And, a most singular circumstance, the very pistol, which was found by his side, had been bought at the shop of a man at Lyons, who perfectly recognised Peytel as one of his customers, though he could not say he had sold that particular weapon to Peytel."

Does it follow, from this, that Louis Rey is not the murderer; much more, that Peytel is? Look at argument No. 1. Rey had no need to kill two people: he wanted the money, and not the blood. Suppose he had killed Peytel, would he not have mastered Madame Peytel easily?—a weak woman, in an excessively delicate situation, incapable of much energy, at the best of times.

2. "He does not fire till he knows his master's eyes are open." Why, on a stormy night, does a man driving a carriage go to sleep? Was Rey to wait until his master snored? "He fires at six paces, not caring

whom he hits ;"—and might not this happen too ? The night is not so dark but that he can see his master, in *his usual place*, driving. He fires and hits—whom ? Madame Peytel, who had left her place, *and was wrapped up with Peytel in his cloak*. She screams out, "Husband, take your pistols." Rey knows that his master has a brace, thinks that he has hit the wrong person, and, as Peytel fires on him, runs away. Peytel follows, hammer in hand ; as he comes up with the fugitive, he deals him a blow on the back of the head, and Rey falls—his face to the ground. Is there anything unnatural in this story ?—anything so monstrously unnatural, that is, that it might not be true ?

3. These objections are absurd. Why need a man have change of linen ? If he had taken none for the journey, why should he want any for the escape ? Why need he drive two carriages ?—He might have driven both into the river, and Mrs. Peytel in one. Why is he to go to the douane, and thrust himself into the very jaws of danger ? Are there not a thousand ways for a man to pass a frontier ? Do smugglers, when they have to pass from one country to another, choose exactly those spots where a police is placed ?

And, finally, the gunsmith of Lyons, who knows Peytel quite well, cannot say that he sold the pistol to him ; that is, he did *not* sell the pistol to him ; for you have only one man's word, in this case (Peytel's), to the contrary ; and the testimony, as far as it goes, is in his favour. I say, my lud, and gentlemen of the jury, that these objections of my learned friend, who is engaged for the Crown, are absurd, frivolous, monstrous ; that to *suspect* away the life of a man upon such suppositions as these, is wicked, illegal, and inhuman ; and, what is more, that Louis Rey, if he wanted to commit the crime—if he wanted to possess himself of a large sum of

money, chose the best time and spot for so doing ; and, no doubt, would have succeeded, if Fate had not, in a wonderful manner, caused Madame Peytel to *take her husband's place*, and receive the ball intended for him in her own head.

But whether these suspicions are absurd or not, hit or miss, it is the advocate's duty, as it appears, to urge them. He wants to make as unfavourable an impression as possible with regard to Peytel's character ; he, therefore, must, for contrast's sake, give all sorts of praise to his victim, and awaken every sympathy in the poor fellow's favour. Having done this, as far as lies in his power, having exaggerated every circumstance that can be unfavourable to Peytel, and given his own tale in the baldest manner possible—having declared that Peytel is the murderer of his wife and servant, the Crown now proceeds to back this assertion, by showing what interested motives he had, and by relating, after its own fashion, the circumstances of his marriage.

They may be told briefly here. Peytel was of a good family, of Macon, and entitled, at his mother's death, to a considerable property. He had been educated as a notary, and had lately purchased a business, in that line, at Belley, for which he had paid a large sum of money ; part of the sum, 15,000 francs, for which he had given bills, was still due.

Near Belley, Peytel first met Felicité Alcazar, who was residing with her brother-in-law, Monsieur de Montrichard ; and, knowing that the young lady's fortune was considerable, he made an offer of marriage to the brother-in-law, who thought the match advantageous, and communicated on the subject with Felicité's mother, Madame Alcazar, at Paris. After a time, Peytel went to Paris, to press his suit, and was accepted. There seems to have been no affectation of love on his side ; and some little

repugnance on the part of the lady, who yielded, however, to the wishes of her parents, and was married. The parties began to quarrel on the very day of the marriage, and continued their disputes almost to the close of the unhappy connection. Felicité was half blind, passionate, sarcastic, clumsy in her person and manners, and ill-educated. Peytel, a man of considerable intellect and pretensions, who had lived for some time at Paris, where he had mingled with good literary society. The lady was, in fact, as disagreeable a person as could well be, and the evidence describes some scenes which took place between her and her husband, showing how deeply she must have mortified and enraged him.

A charge very clearly made out against Peytel, is that of dishonesty : he procured, from the notary of whom he bought his place, an acquittance in full, whereas, there were 15,000 francs owing, as we have seen. He also, in the contract of marriage, which was to have resembled, in all respects, that between Monsieur Broussais and another Demoiselle Alcazar, caused an alteration to be made in his favour, which gave him command over his wife's funded property, without furnishing the guarantees by which the other son-in-law was bound. And, almost immediately after his marriage, Peytel sold out of the funds a sum of 50,000 francs that belonged to his wife, and used it for his own purposes.

About two months after his marriage, *Peytel pressed his wife to make her will*. He had made his, he said, leaving everything to her, in case of his death : after some parley, the poor thing consented.\* This is a cruel sus-

\* "Peytel," says the act of accusation, "did not fail to see the danger which would menace him, if this will (which had escaped the magistrates in their search of Peytel's papers) was discovered. He, therefore, instructed his agent to take possession of it, which he did, and the fact was not mentioned for

picion against him ; and Mr. Substitute has no need to enlarge upon it. As for the previous fact, the dishonest statement about the 15,000 francs, there is nothing murderous in that—nothing which a man very eager to make a good marriage might not do. The same may be said of the suppression, in Peytel's marriage contract, of the clause to be found in Broussais', placing restrictions upon the use of the wife's money. Mademoiselle d'Alcazar's friends read the contract before they signed it, and might have refused it, had they so pleased.

After some disputes, which took place between Peytel and his wife (there were continual quarrels, and continual letters passing between them from room to room), the latter was induced to write him a couple of exaggerated letters, swearing "by the ashes of her father," that she would be an obedient wife to him, and entreating him to counsel and direct her. These letters were seen by members of the lady's family, who, in the quarrels between the couple, always took the husband's part. They were found in Peytel's cabinet, after he had been arrested for the murder, and after he had had full access to all his papers, of which he destroyed or left as many as he pleased. The accusation makes it a matter of

several months afterwards. Peytel and his agent were called upon to explain the circumstance, but refused, and their silence for a long time interrupted the 'instruction' (getting up of the evidence). All that could be obtained from them was an avowal, that such a will existed, constituting Peytel his wife's sole legatee ; and a promise, on their parts, to produce it before the Court gave its sentence." But why keep the will secret? The anxiety about it was surely absurd and unnecessary : the whole of Madame Peytel's family knew that such a will was made. She had consulted her sister concerning it, who said—"If there is no other way of satisfying him, make the will ;"—and the mother, when she heard of it, cried out—"Does he intend to poison her?"

suspicion against Peytel, that he should have left these letters of his wife's in a conspicuous situation.

"All these circumstances," says the accusation, "throw a frightful light upon Peytel's plans." The letters and will of Madame Peytel are in the hands of her husband. Three months pass away, and this poor woman is brought to her home, in the middle of the night, with two balls in her head, stretched at the bottom of her carriage, by the side of a peasant!

"What other than Sebastian Peytel could have committed this murder?—whom could it profit?—who, but himself, had an odious chain to break, and an inheritance to receive. Why speak of the servant's projected robbery? The pistols found by the side of Louis's body, the balls bought by him at Macon, and those discovered at Belley, among his effects, were only the result of a perfidious combination. The pistol, indeed, which was found on the hill of Darde, on the night of the 1st of November, could only have belonged to Peytel, and must have been thrown by him, near the body of his domestic, with the paper which had before enveloped it. Who had seen this pistol in the hands of Louis? Among all the gendarmes, workwomen, domestics, employed by Peytel and his brother-in-law, is there one single witness who had seen this weapon in Louis's possession? It is true that Madame Peytel did, on one occasion, speak to M. de Montrichard of a pistol; which had nothing to do, however, with that found near Louis Rey."

Is this justice, or good reason?—Just reverse the argument, and apply it to Rey. "Who but Rey could have committed this murder?—who but Rey had a large sum of money to seize upon?—a pistol is found by his side, balls and powder in his pocket, other balls in his trunks at home. The pistol found near his body could not, indeed, have belonged to Peytel: did any man ever see



it in his possession? The very gunsmith who sold it, and who knew Peytel, would he not have known that he had sold him this pistol? At his own house, Peytel has a collection of weapons of all kinds: everybody has seen them: a man who makes such collections is anxious to display them: did any one ever see this weapon?—Not one. And Madame Peytel did, in her lifetime, remark a pistol in the valet's possession. She was short-sighted, and could not particularise what kind of pistol it was; but she spoke of it to her husband and her brother-in-law." This is not satisfactory, if you please; but, at least, it is as satisfactory as the other set of suppositions. It is the very chain of argument which would have been brought against Louis Rey, by this very same compiler of the act of accusation, had Rey survived, instead of Peytel; and had he, as most undoubtedly would have been the case, been tried for the murder.

This argument was shortly put by Peytel's counsel:—  
"If Peytel had been killed by Rey, in the struggle, would you not have found Rey guilty of the murder of his master and mistress?" It is such a dreadful dilemma, that I wonder how judges and lawyers could have dared to persecute Peytel in the manner which they did.

After the act of accusation, which lays down all the suppositions against Peytel as facts, which will not admit the truth of one of the prisoner's allegations in his own defence, comes the trial. The judge is quite as impartial as the preparer of the indictment, as will be seen by the following specimens of his interrogatories:—

*Judge.* "The act of accusation finds, in your statement, contradictions, improbabilities, impossibilities. Thus your domestic, who had determined to assassinate you, in order to rob you, and who *must have calculated upon the consequence of a failure*, had neither passport nor money upon him. This is very unlikely; because he could not have gone far with only a single halfpenny, which was all he had."

*Prisoner.* "My servant was known, and often passed the frontier without a passport."

*Judge.* "Your domestic had to assassinate two persons, and had no weapon but a single pistol. He had no dagger; and the only thing found on him was a knife."

*Prisoner.* "In the car there were several turner's implements, which he might have used."

*Judge.* "But he had not those arms upon him, because you pursued him immediately. He had, according to you, only this old pistol."

*Prisoner.* "I have nothing to say."

*Judge.* "Your domestic, instead of flying into woods, which skirt the road, ran straight forward on the road itself: *this, again, is very unlikely.*"

*Prisoner.* "This is a conjecture, I could answer by another conjecture; I can only reason on the facts."

*Judge.* "How far did you pursue him?"

*Prisoner.* "I don't know exactly."

*Judge.* "You said, 'two hundred paces.'"

No answer from the prisoner.

*Judge.* "Your domestic was young, active, robust, and tall. He was ahead of you. You were in a carriage, from which you had to descend; you had to take your pistols from a cushion, and then your hammer;—how are we to believe that you could have caught him, if he ran? It is *impossible.*"

*Prisoner.* "I can't explain it; I think that Rey had some defect in one leg. I, for my part, ran tolerably fast."

*Judge.* "At what distance from him did you fire your first shot?"

*Prisoner.* "I can't tell."

*Judge.* "Perhaps he was not running when you fired."

*Prisoner.* "I saw him running."

*Judge.* "In what position was your wife?"

*Prisoner.* "She was leaning on my left arm, and the man was on the right side of the carriage."

*Judge.* "The shot must have been fired *à bout portant*, because it burned the eyebrows and lashes entirely. The assassin must have passed his pistol across your breast."

*Prisoner.* "The shot was not fired so close, I am convinced of it: professional gentlemen will prove it."

*Judge.* "That is what you pretend, because you understand perfectly the consequences of admitting the fact. Your wife was hit with two balls—one striking downwards, to the right, by the nose, the other going, horizontally, through the cheek, to the left."

*Prisoner.* "The contrary will be shown by the witnesses called for the purpose."

*Judge.* "It is a very unlucky combination for you, that these balls which went, you say, from the same pistol, should have taken two different directions."

*Prisoner.* "I can't dispute about the various combinations of firearms—professional persons will be heard."

*Judge.* "According to your statement, your wife said to you, 'My poor husband, take your pistols.'"

*Prisoner.* "She did."

*Judge.* "In a manner quite distinct?"

*Prisoner.* "Yes."

*Judge.* "So distinct that you did not fancy she was hit?"

*Prisoner.* "Yes; that is the fact."

*Judge.* "Here, again, is an impossibility; and nothing is more precise than the declaration of the medical men. They affirm that your wife could not have spoken—their report is unanimous."

*Prisoner.* "I can only oppose to it quite contrary opinions from professional men, likewise: you must hear them."

*Judge.* "What did your wife do next?"

*Judge.* "You deny the statements of the witnesses:" (they related to Peytel's demeanour and behaviour, which the judge wishes to show were very unusual;—and what, if they were?) "Here, however, are some mute witnesses, whose testimony you will not, perhaps, refuse. Near Louis Rey's body was found a horse-cloth, a pistol, and a whip. . . . Your domestic must have had this cloth upon him when he went to assassinate you: it was wet and heavy. An assassin disencumbers himself of anything that is likely to impede him, especially when he is going to struggle with a man as young as himself."

*Prisoner.* "My servant had, I believe, this covering on his body; it might be useful to him to keep the priming of his pistol dry."

The president caused the cloth to be opened, and showed that there was no hook, or tie, by which it could be held together; and that Rey must have held it with one hand, and, in the other, his whip, and the pistol with which he intended to commit the crime; which was impossible.

*Prisoner.* "These are only conjectures."

And what conjectures, my God! upon which to take away the life of a man. Jefferies, or Fouquier Tainville, could scarcely have dared to make such. Such prejudice, such bitter persecution, such priming of the jury, such monstrous assumptions and unreason—fancy them coming from an impartial judge! The man is worse than the public accuser.

"Rey," says the Judge, "could not have committed the murder; *because, he had no money in his pocket, to fly, in case of failure.*" And what is the precise sum that his lordship thinks necessary for a gentleman to have, before he makes such an attempt? Are the men who murder for money, usually in possession of a certain independence before they begin? How much money was Rey, a servant, who loved wine and women, had been stopping at a score of inns, on the road, and had, probably, an annual income of 400 francs,—how much money was Rey likely to have?

"*Your servant had to assassinate two persons.*" This I have mentioned before. Why had he to assassinate two persons,\* when one was enough? If he had killed Peytel, could he not have seized and gagged his wife immediately?

\* M. Balzac's theory of the case is, that Rey had intrigued with Madame Peytel; having known her previous to her marriage, when she was staying in the house of her brother-in-law, Monsieur de Montrichard; where Rey had been a servant.

"Your domestic ran straight forward, instead of taking to the woods, by the side of the road: this is very unlikely."

How does his worship know? Can any judge, however enlightened, tell the exact road that a man will take, who has just missed a coup of murder, and is pursued by a man, who is firing pistols at him? And has a judge a right to instruct a jury in this way, as to what they shall, or shall not believe?

"You have to run after an active man, who has the start of you; to jump out of a carriage; to take your pistols; and, then, your hammer. *This is impossible.*" By heavens! does it not make a man's blood boil, to read such blundering, blood-seeking sophistry? This man, when it suits him, shows that Rey would be slow in his motions; and, when it suits him, declares that Rey ought to be quick; declares, *ex cathedrâ*, what pace Rey should go, and what direction he should take; shows, in a breath, that he must have run faster than Peytel; and then, that he could not run fast, because the cloak clogged him; settles how he is to be dressed when he commits a murder, and what money he is to have in his pocket; gives these impossible suppositions to the jury, and tells them that the previous statements are impossible; and finally, informs them of the precise manner in which Rey must have stood, holding his horse-cloth in one hand, his whip and pistol in the other, when he made the supposed attempt at murder. Now, what is the size of a horse-cloth? Is it as big as a pocket-handkerchief? Is there no possibility that it might hang over one shoulder; that the whip should be held under that very arm? Did you never see a carter so carry it, his hands in his pockets all the while? Is it monstrous, abhorrent to nature, that a man should fire a pistol from under a cloak, on a rainy day?—that he should, after firing the shot, be frightened, and run; run

straight before him, with the cloak on his shoulders, and the weapon in his hand? Peytel's story is possible, and very possible; it is almost probable. Allow that Rey had the cloth on, and you allow that he must have been clogged in his motions; that Peytel may have come up with him—felled him with a blow of the hammer: the doctors say that he would have so fallen by one blow—he would have fallen on his face, as he was found: the paper might have been thrust into his breast, and tumbled out as he fell. Circumstances far more impossible have occurred ere this; and men have been hanged for them, who were as innocent of the crime laid to their charge, as the judge on the bench, who convicted them.

In like manner, Peytel may not have committed the crime charged to him; and Mr. Judge, with his arguments, as to possibilities and impossibilities,—Mr. Public Prosecutor, with his romantic narrative and inflammatory harangues to the jury,—may have used all these powers to bring to death an innocent man. From the animus with which the case has been conducted, from beginning to end, it was easy to see the result. Here it is, in the words of the provincial paper:—

“BOURG, 28th October 1839.

“The condemned Peytel has just undergone his punishment, which took place four days before the anniversary of his crime. The terrible drama of the bridge of Andert, which cost the life of two persons, has just terminated on the scaffold. Mid-day had just sounded on the clock of the Palais: the same clock tolled midnight, when, on the 30th of August, his sentence was pronounced.

“Since the rejection of his appeal in Cassation, on which his principal hopes were founded, Peytel spoke little of his petition to the King. The notion of transportation was that which he seemed to cherish most. However, he made several inquiries from the gaoler of the prison, when he saw him, at meal-time,

with regard to the place of execution, the usual hour, and other details on the subject. From that period, the words '*Champ de Foire*' (the fair-field, where the execution was to be held), were frequently used by him in conversation.

"Yesterday, the idea, that the time had arrived, seemed to be more strongly than ever impressed upon him, especially after the departure of the curé, who, latterly, has been with him every day. The documents connected with the trial, had arrived in the morning: he was ignorant of this circumstance, but sought to discover, from his guardians, what they tried to hide from him; and to find out whether his petition was rejected, and when he was to die.

"Yesterday, also, he had written, to demand the presence of his counsel, M. Margerand, in order that he might have some conversation with him, and regulate his affairs, before he —; he did not write down the word, but left in its place a few points of the pen.

"In the evening, whilst he was at supper, he begged earnestly to be allowed a little wax candle, to finish what he was writing; otherwise, he said, *Time might fail*. This was a new, indirect, manner of repeating his ordinary question. As light, up to that evening, had been refused him, it was thought best to deny him in this, as in former instances: otherwise his suspicions might have been confirmed. The keeper refused his demand.

"This morning, Monday, at nine o'clock, the Greffier of the Assize Court, in fulfilment of the painful duty which the law imposes upon him, came to the prison, in company with the curé of Bourg, and announced to the convict that his petition was rejected, and that he had only three hours to live. He received this fatal news with a great deal of calmness, and showed himself to be no more affected than he had been on the trial. 'I am ready; but I wish they had given me four-and-twenty hours' notice,'—were all the words he used.

"The Greffier now retired; leaving Peytel alone with the curé, who did not, thenceforth, quit him. Peytel breakfasted at ten o'clock.

"At eleven, a picquet of mounted gendarmerie and infantry took their station upon the place before the prison, where a great concourse of people had already assembled. An open car was

at the door. Before he went out, Peytel asked the gaoler for a looking-glass; and, having examined his face for a moment, said, 'At least, the inhabitants of Bourg will see that I have not grown thin.'

"As twelve o'clock sounded, the prison gates opened, an aide appeared, followed by Peytel leaning on the arm of the curate. Peytel's face was pale, he had a long black beard, a blue cap on his head, and his great coat flung over his shoulders, and buttoned at the neck.

"He looked about at the place and the crowd; he asked if the carriage would go at a trot; and on being told that that would be difficult, he said he would prefer walking, and asked what the road was. He immediately set out, walking at a firm and rapid pace. He was not bound at all.

"An immense crowd of people encumbered the two streets through which he had to pass to the place of execution. He cast his eyes, alternately, upon them, and upon the guillotine, which was before him.

"Arrived at the foot of the scaffold, Peytel embraced the curé, and bade him adieu. He then embraced him again; perhaps, for his mother and sister. He then mounted the steps rapidly, and gave himself into the hands of the executioner, who removed his coat and cap. He asked how he was to place himself, and, on a sign being made, he flung himself, briskly, on the plank, and stretched his neck. In another moment he was no more.

"The crowd, which had been quite silent, retired, profoundly moved by the sight it had witnessed. As at all executions, there was a very great number of women present.

"Under the scaffold there had been, ever since the morning, a coffin. The family had asked for his remains, and had them immediately buried, privately; and, thus, the unfortunate man's head escaped the modellers in wax, several of whom had arrived to take an impression of it."

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Down goes the axe; the poor wretch's head rolls gasping into the basket; the spectators go home pondering; and Mr. Executioner and his aids have, in half an hour, removed all traces of the august sacrifice, and of the altar on which it had been performed. Say, Mr.



Briefless, do you think that any single person, meditating murder, would be deterred therefrom by beholding this—nay, a thousand more executions? It is not for moral improvement, as I take it, nor for opportunity to make appropriate remarks upon the punishment of crime, that people make a holiday of a killing-day; and leave their homes and occupations, to flock and witness the cutting off of a head. Do we crowd to see Mr. Macready, in the new tragedy, or Mademoiselle Elssler in her last new ballet, and flesh-coloured stockinet pantaloons, out of a pure love of abstract poetry and beauty; or from a strong notion that we shall be excited in different ways, by the actor and the dancer? And so, as we go to have a meal of fictitious terror at the tragedy, of something more questionable in the ballet, we go for a glut of blood to the execution. The lust is in every man's nature, more or less: did you ever witness a wrestling or boxing match?—the first clatter of the kick on the shins, or the first drawing of blood, makes the stranger shudder a little; but, soon, the blood is his chief enjoyment, and he thirsts for it with a fierce delight. It is a fine grim pleasure that we have in seeing a man killed; and I make no doubt but the organs of destructiveness must begin to throb and swell, as we witness the delightful, savage spectacle.

Three or four years back, when Fieschi and Lacenaire were executed, I made attempts to see the execution of both, but was disappointed in both cases. In the first instance, the day for Fieschi's death was, purposely, kept secret; and he was, if I remember rightly, executed at some remote quarter of the town. But it would have done a philanthropist good, to witness the scene which we saw on the morning when his execution did *not* take place.

It was Carnival time, and the rumour had pretty

generally been carried abroad, that he was to die on that morning. A friend, who accompanied me, came many miles, through the mud and dark, in order to be in at the death. We set out before light, floundering through the muddy Champs Elysées, where, besides, were many other persons floundering, and all bent upon the same errand. We passed by the Concert of Musard, then held in the Rue St. Honoré; and round this, in the wet, a number of coaches were collected: the ball was just up; and a crowd of people, in hideous masquerade, drunk, tired, dirty, dressed in horrible old frippery, and daubed with filthy rouge, were trooping out of the place; tipsy women and men, shrieking, jabbering, gesticulating, as French will do; parties swaggering, staggering forwards, arm in arm, reeling to and fro across the street, and yelling songs in chorus; hundreds of these were bound for the show, and we thought ourselves lucky in finding a vehicle to the execution place, at the Barrière d'Enfer. As we crossed the river, and entered the Enfer Street, crowds of students, black workmen, and more drunken devils, from more carnival-balls, were filling it; and on the grand place there were thousands of these assembled, looking out for Fieschi and his cortège. We waited, and waited; but, alas! no fun for us that morning; no throat-cutting; no august spectacle of satisfied justice; and the eager spectators were obliged to return, disappointed of their expected breakfast of blood. It would have been a fine scene, that execution, could it but have taken place in the midst of the mad mountebanks, and tipsy strumpets, who had flocked so far to witness it, wishing to wind up the delights of their carnival by a *bonne-bouche* of a murder.

The other attempt was equally unfortunate. We arrived too late on the ground, to be present at the execution of Lacenaire and his co-mate in murder, Avril.

But as we came to the ground (a gloomy round space, within the barrier—three roads lead to it—and, outside, you see the wine-shops and restaurateurs of the barrier looking gay and inviting,)—as we came to the ground, we only found, in the midst of it, a little pool of ice, just partially tinged with red. Two or three idle street-boys were dancing and stamping about this pool; and when I asked one of them whether the execution had taken place, he began dancing more madly than ever, and shrieked out with a loud fantastical theatrical voice, "*Venez tous Messieurs et Dames, voyez ici le sang du monstre Lacenaire, et de son compagnon, le traître Avril;*" or words to that effect; and, straightway, all the other gamins screamed out the words in chorus, and took hands and danced round the little puddle.

O august Justice, your meal was followed by a pretty appropriate grace! Was any man, who saw the show, deterred, or frightened, or moralised in any way? He had gratified his appetite for blood, and this was all: there is something singularly pleasing, both in the amusement of execution-seeing, and in the results. You are not only delightfully excited at the time, but most pleasingly relaxed afterwards; the mind, which has been wound up, painfully, until now, becomes quite complacent and easy. There is something agreeable in the misfortunes of others, as the philosopher has told us: remark what a good breakfast you eat, after an execution; how pleasant it is to cut jokes after it, and upon it. This merry, pleasant mood, is brought on by the blood tonic.

But, for God's sake, if we are to enjoy this, let us do so in moderation; and let us, at least, be sure of a man's guilt, before we murder him. To kill him, even with the full assurance that he is guilty, is hazardous enough. Who gave you the right to do so?—you, who cry out.

against suicides, as impious and contrary to Christian law? What use is there in killing him? You deter no one else from committing the crime, by so doing; you give us, to be sure, half an hour's pleasant entertainment; but it is a great question whether we derive much moral profit from the sight. If you want to keep a murderer from farther inroads upon society, are there not plenty of hulks and prisons, God wot; tread-mills, galleys, and houses of correction? Above all, as in the case of Sebastian Peytel and his family; there have been two deaths already; was a third death absolutely necessary? and, taking the fallibility of judges and lawyers into his heart, and remembering the thousand instances of unmerited punishment that have been suffered upon similar and stronger evidence, before,—can any man declare, positively, and upon his oath, that Peytel was guilty,—and that this was not *the third murder in the family?*

CONSEJERIA DE CULTURA

JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA



## FOUR IMITATIONS OF BERANGER.

## LE ROI D'YVETOT.

IL était un roi d'Yvetot,  
 Peu connu dans l'histoire ;  
 Se levant tard, se couchant tôt,  
 Dormant fort bien sans gloire,  
 Et couronné par Jeanneton  
 D'un simple bonnet de coton,

Dit-on,

Oh! oh! oh! oh! ah! ah! ah! ah!

Quel bon petit roi c'était là!

La, la.

Il faisait ses quatre repas  
 Dans son palais de chaume,  
 Et sur un âne, pas à pas,  
 Parcourait son royaume.  
 Joyeux, simple et croyant le bien,  
 Pour toute garde il n'avait rien  
 Qu'un chien.

Oh! oh! oh! oh! ah! ah! ah! ah! &c.

La, la.

Il n'avait de goût onéreux  
 Qu'une soif un peu vive ;  
 Mais, en rendant son peuple heureux,  
 Il faut bien qu'un roi vive.

Lui-même à table, et sans suppôt,  
 Sur chaque muid levait un pot  
 D'impôt.

Oh! oh! oh! oh! ah! ah! ah! ah! &c.  
 La, la.

Aux filles de bonnes maisons  
 Comme il avait su plaire,  
 Ses sujets avaient cent raisons  
 De le nommer leur père :  
 D'ailleurs il ne levait de ban  
 Que pour tirer quatre fois l'an  
 Au blanc.

Oh! oh! oh! oh! ah! ah! ah! ah! &c.  
 La, la.

Il n'agrandit point ses états,  
 Fut un voisin commode,  
 Et, modèle des potentats,  
 Prit le plaisir pour code.  
 Ce n'est que lorsqu'il expira,  
 Que le peuple qui l'enterra  
 Pleura.

Oh! oh! oh! oh! ah! ah! ah! ah! &c.  
 La, la.

On conserve encor le portrait  
 De ce digne et bon prince ;  
 C'est l'enseigne d'un cabaret  
 Fameux dans la province.  
 Les jours de fête, bien souvent,  
 La foule s'écrie en buvant

Devant :  
 Oh! oh! oh! oh! ah! ah! ah! ah!  
 Quel bon petit roi c'était là!  
 La, la.



## THE KING OF YVETOT.

THERE was a king of Yvetot,  
 Of whom renown hath little said,  
 Who let all thoughts of glory go,  
 And dawdled half his days a-bed ;  
 And every night, as night came round,  
 By Jenny, with a nightcap crowned,  
 Slept very sound.  
 Sing, ho, ho, ho ! and he, he, he !  
 That's the kind of king for me.


And every day it came to pass,  
 That four lusty meals made he ;  
 And, step by step, upon an ass,  
 Rode abroad, his realms to see ;  
 And wherever he did stir,  
 What think you was his escort, sir ?  
 Why, an old cur.  
 Sing, ho, ho, ho ! &c.

If e'er he went into excess,  
 'Twas from a somewhat lively thirst ;  
 But he who would his subjects bless,  
 Odd's fish !—must wet his whistle first ;  
 And so from every cask they got,  
 Our king did to himself allot,  
 At least a pot,  
 Sing, ho, ho ! &c.

To all the ladies of the land,  
 A courteous king, and kind, was he ;  
 The reason why you'll understand,  
 They named him Pater Patriæ.

Each year he called his fighting men,  
And marched a league from home, and then  
    Marched back again.  
Sing, ho, ho! &c.

Neither by force nor false pretence,  
    He sought to make his kingdom great,  
And made (oh! princes, learn from hence)—  
    "Live and yet live," his rule of state.  
'Twas only when he came to die,  
That his people, who stood by,  
    Were known to cry.  
Sing, ho, ho! &c.



The portrait of this best of kings  
Is extant still, upon a sign  
That on a village tavern swings,  
    Famed in the country for good wine.  
The people, in their Sunday trim,  
Filling their glasses to the brim,  
    Look up to him.  
Singing, ha, ha, ha! and he, he, he!  
That's the sort of king for me.

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### THE KING OF BRENTFORD.

#### ANOTHER VERSION.

THERE was a king in Brentford,—of whom no legends  
tell,  
But who, without his glory,—could eat and sleep right  
well.  
His Polly's cotton nightcap,—it was his crown of state,  
He slept of evenings early,—and rose of mornings late.



All in a fine mud palace,—each day he took four meals,  
And for a guard of honour,—a dog ran at his heels.  
Sometimes, to view his kingdoms,—rode forth this  
monarch good,  
And then a prancing jackass—he royally bestrode.

There were no costly habits—with which this king was  
curst,  
Except (and where's the harm on't?)—a somewhat lively  
thirst;  
But people must pay taxes,—and kings must have their  
sport,  
So out of every gallon—His Grace he took à quart.

He pleased the ladies round him,—with manners soft and  
bland?

With reason good, they named him,—the father of his  
land.

Each year his mighty armies—marched forth in gallant  
show;

Their enemies were targets,—their bullets they were tow.

He vexed no quiet neighbour,—no useless conquest  
made,

But by the laws of pleasure,—his peaceful realm he  
swayed.

And in the years he reigned,—through all this country  
wide,

There was no cause for weeping,—save when the good  
man died.

The faithful men of Brentford,—do still their king deplore,

His portrait yet is swinging,—beside an alehouse door.

And toppers, tender-hearted,—regard his honest phiz,

And envy times departed,—that knew a reign like his.

## LE GRENIER.

JE viens revoir l'asile où ma jeunesse  
 De la misère a subi les leçons.  
 J'avais vingt ans, une folle maîtresse,  
 De francs amis et l'amour des chansons :  
 Bravant le monde et les sots et les sages,  
 Sans avenir, riche de mon printemps,  
 Leste et joyeux je montais six étages.  
 Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans !

C'est un grenier, point ne veux qu'on l'ignore.  
 Là fut mon lit, bien chétif et bien dur ;  
 Là fut ma table ; et je retrouve encore  
 Trois pieds d'un vers charbonnés sur le mur  
 Apparaissent, plaisirs de mon bel âge,  
 Que d'un coup d'aile a fustigés le temps.  
 Vingt fois pour vous j'ai mis ma montre en gage.  
 Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans !

Lisette ici doit surtout apparaître,  
 Vive, jolie, avec un frais chapeau :  
 Déjà sa main à l'étroite fenêtre  
 Suspend son schal, en guise de rideau.  
 Sa robe aussi va parer ma couchette ;  
 Respecte, Amour, ses plis longs et flottans.  
 J'ai su depuis qui payait sa toilette.  
 Dans un grenier, qu'on est bien à vingt ans !

A table un jour, jour de grande richesse,  
 De mes amis les voix brillaient en chœur,  
 Quand jusqu'ici monte un cri d'allégresse :  
 A Marengo, Bonaparte est vainqueur.  
 Le canon gronde ; un autre chant commence ;  
 Nous célébrons tant de faits éclatans.  
 Les rois jamais n'envahiront la France.  
 Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans !

Quittons ce toit où ma raison s'enivre.  
 Oh ! qu'ils sont loin ces jours si regrettés !  
 J'échangerais ce qu'il me reste à vivre  
 Contre un des mois qu'ici Dieu m'a comptés.  
 Pour rêver gloire, amour, plaisir, folie,  
 Pour dépenser sa vie en peu d'instans,  
 D'un long espoir pour la voir embellie,  
 Dans uns grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans !

## THE GARRET.

WITH pensive eyes the little room I view,  
 Where, in my youth, I weathered it so long :  
 With a wild mistress, a stanch friend or two,  
 And a light heart still breaking into song ;  
 Making a mock of life, and all its cares,  
 Rich in the glory of my rising sun,  
 Lightly I vaulted up four pair of stairs,  
 In the brave days when I was twenty-one.

Yes ; 'tis a garret—let him know't who will—  
 There was my bed—full hard it was, and small.  
 My table there—and I decipher still  
 Half a lame couplet charcoaled on the wall.  
 Ye joys, that Time hath swept with him away,  
 Come to mine eyes, ye dreams of love and fun ;  
 For you I pawned my watch how many a day,  
 In the brave days when I was twenty-one.

And see my little Jessy, first of all ;  
 She comes with pouting lips and sparkling eyes :  
 Behold, how roguishly she pins her shawl  
 Across the narrow casement, curtain-wise ;

Now by the bed her petticoat glides down,  
 And when did woman look the worse in none?  
 I have heard since who paid for many a gown,  
 In the brave days when I was twenty-one.

One jolly evening, when my friends and I  
 Made happy music with our songs and cheers,  
 A shout of triumph mounted up thus high,  
 And distant cannon opened on our ears:  
 We rise,—we join in the triumphant strain,—  
 Napoleon conquers—Austerlitz is won—  
 Tyrants shall never tread us down again,  
 In the brave days when I was twenty-one.

Let us be gone—the place is sad and strange—  
 How far, far off, these happy times appear;  
 All that I have to live I'd gladly change  
 For one such month as I have wasted here—  
 To draw long dreams of beauty, love, and power,  
 From founts of hope that never will outrun,  
 And drink all life's quintessence in an hour,  
 Give me the days when I was twenty-one.

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ROGER-BONTEMPS.

AUX gens atrabilaires  
 Pour exemple donné,  
 En un temps de misères  
 Roger-Bontemps est né.  
 Vivre obscur à sa guise,  
 Narguer les mécontents;  
 Eh gai ! c'est la devise  
 Du gros Roger-Bontemps.

Du chapeau de son père,  
 Coiffé dans les grands jours,  
 De roses ou de lierre  
 Le rajeunir toujours ;  
 Mettre un manteau de bure,  
 Vieil ami de vingt ans ;  
 Eh gai ! c'est la parure  
 Du gros Roger-Bontemps.

Posséder dans sa hutte  
 Une table, un vieux lit,  
 Des cartes, une flûte,  
 Un broc que Dieu remplit ;  
 Un portrait de maîtresse,  
 Un coffre et rien dedans ;  
 Eh gai ! c'est la richesse  
 Du gros Roger-Bontemps.

Aux enfans de la ville  
 Montrer de petits jeux ;  
 Etre feseur habile  
 De contes graveleux ;  
 Ne parler que de danse  
 Et d'almanachs chantans ;  
 Eh gai ! c'est la science  
 Du gros Roger-Bontemps.

Faute de vins d'élite,  
 Sabler ceux du canton :  
 Préférer Marguerite  
 Aux dames du grand ton :  
 De joie et de tendresse  
 Remplir tous ses instans :  
 Eh gai ! c'est la sagesse  
 Du gros Roger-Bontemps.

Dire au ciel : Je me fie,  
 Mon père, à ta bonté ;  
 De ma philosophie  
 Pardonne la gaité :  
 Que ma saison dernière  
 Soit encore un printemps ;  
 Eh gai ! c'est la prière  
 Du gros Roger-Bontemps.

Vous, pauvres pleins d'envie,  
 Vous, riches désireux,  
 Vous, dont le char dévie  
 Après un cours heureux ;  
 Vous, qui perdrez peut-être  
 Des titres éclatans,  
 Eh gai ! prenez pour maître  
 Le gros Roger-Bontemps.

Real Monasterio de la Alhambra y Generalife  
 CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

### JOLLY JACK.

WHEN fierce political debate  
 Throughout the isle was storming,  
 And Rads attacked the throne and state,  
 And Tories the reforming,  
 To calm the furious rage of each,  
 And right the land demented,  
 Heaven sent us Jolly Jack, to teach  
 The way to be contented.

Jack's bed was straw, 'twas warm and soft,  
 His chair, a three-legged stool ;  
 His broken jug was emptied oft,  
 Yet, somehow, always full.

His mistress' portrait decked the wall,  
 His mirror had a crack ;  
 Yet, gay and glad, though this was all  
 His wealth, 'lived Jolly Jack.

To give advice to avarice,  
 Teach pride its mean condition,  
 And preach good sense to dull pretence,  
 Was honest Jack's high mission.  
 Our simple statesman found his rule  
 Of moral in the flagon,  
 And held his philosophic school  
 Beneath the George and Dragon.

When village Solons cursed the Lords,  
 And called the malt-tax sinful,  
 Jack heeded not their angry words,  
 But smiled, and drunk his skin full.  
 And when men wasted health and life,  
 In search of rank and riches,  
 Jack marked, aloof, the paltry strife,  
 And wore his threadbare breeches.

"I enter not the Church," he said,  
 "But I'll not seek to rob it ;"  
 So worthy Jack Joe Miller read,  
 While others studied Cobbett.  
 His talk, it was of feast and fun ;  
 His guide the Almanack ;  
 From youth to age thus gaily run  
 The life of Jolly Jack.

And when Jack prayed, as oft he would,  
 He humbly thanked his Maker ;  
 "I am," said he, "O Father good !  
 Nor Catholic, nor Quaker :

Give each his creed, let each proclaim  
 His catalogue of curses ;  
 I trust in Thee, and not in them,  
 In Thee, and in Thy mercies !

“Forgive me if, 'midst all Thy works,  
 No hint I see of damning ;  
 And think there's faith among the Turks,  
 And hope for e'en the Brahmin.  
 Harmless my mind is, and my mirth,  
 And kindly is my laughter ;  
 I cannot see the smiling earth,  
 And think there's hell hereafter.”

Jack died ; he left no legacy,  
 Save that his story teaches :—  
 Content to peevish poverty ;  
 Humility to riches.  
 Ye scornful great, ye envious small  
 Come, follow in his track ;  
 We all were happier, if we all  
 Would copy JOLLY JACK.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

El Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife  
 CONSEJO DE CULTURA



## FRENCH DRAMAS AND MELODRAMAS.

THERE are three kinds of drama in France, which you may subdivide as much as you please.

There is the old classical drama, well-nigh dead, and full time too. Old tragedies, in which half a dozen characters appear, and spout sonorous Alexandrines for half a dozen hours: the fair Rachel has been trying to revive this *genre*, and to untomb Racine; but be not alarmed, Racine will never come to life again, and cause audiences to weep, as of yore. Madame Rachel can only galvanise the corpse, not revivify it. Ancient French tragedy, red-heeled, patched, and be-periwigged, lies in the grave; and it is only the ghost of it that we see, which the fair Jewess has raised. There are classical comedies in verse, too, wherein the knavish valets, rakish heroes, stolid old guardians, and smart, free-spoken serving-women, discourse in Alexandrines, as loud as the Horaces or the Cid. An Englishman will seldom reconcile himself to the *rouffement* of the verses, and the painful recurrence of the rhymes; for my part, I had rather go to Madame Saqui's, or see Deburan dancing on a rope; his lines are quite as natural and poetical.

Then there is the comedy of the day, of which Monsieur Scribe is the father. Good heavens! with what a number of gay colonels, smart widows, and silly husbands has that gentleman\* peopled the play-books. How that

unfortunate seventh commandment has been maltreated by him and his disciples. You will see four pieces, at the Gymnase, of a night ; and so sure as you see them, four husbands shall be wickedly used. When is this joke to cease? Mon Dieu ! Play-writers have handled it for about two thousand years, and the public, like a great baby, must have the tale repeated to it over and over again.

Finally, there is the Drama, that great monster which has sprung into life of late years ; and which is said, but I don't believe a word of it, to have Shakspeare for a father. If Mr. Scribe's plays may be said to be so many ingenious examples how to break one commandment, the *drame* is a grand and general chaos of them all ; nay, several crimes are added, not prohibited in the Decalogue, which was written before dramas were. Of the drama, Victor Hugo and Dumas are the well-known and respectable guardians. Every piece Victor Hugo has written, since "Hernani," has contained a monster—a delightful monster, saved by one virtue. There is Triboulet, a foolish monster ; Lucrece Borgia, a maternal monster ; Mary Tudor, a religious monster ; Monsieur Quasimodo, a hump-backed monster ; and others, that might be named, whose monstrosities we are induced to pardon—nay, admiringly to witness—because they are agreeably mingled with some exquisite display of affection. And, as the great Hugo has one monster to each play, the great Dumas has, ordinarily, half a dozen, to whom murder is nothing ; common intrigue, and simple break-age of the before-mentioned commandment, nothing ; but who live and move in a vast, delightful complication of crime, that cannot be easily conceived in England, much less described.

When I think over the number of crimes that I have seen Mademoiselle Georges, for instance, commit, I am

filled with wonder at her greatness, and the greatness of the poets who have conceived these charming horrors for her. I have seen her make love to, and murder, her sons, in the "Tour de Nesle." I have seen her poison a company of no less than nine gentlemen, at Ferrara, with an affectionate son in the number; I have seen her, as Madame de Brinvilliers, kill off numbers of respectable relations in the four first acts; and, at the last, be actually burnt at the stake, to which she comes shuddering, ghastly, barefooted, and in a white sheet. Sweet excitement of tender sympathies! Such tragedies are not so good as a real, downright execution; but, in point of interest, the next thing to it: with what a number of moral emotions do they fill the breast; with what a hatred for vice, and yet a true pity and respect for that grain of virtue that is to be found in us all; our bloody, daughter-loving Brinvilliers; our warm-hearted, poisonous Lucretia Borgia; above all, what a smart appetite for a cool supper afterwards, at the Café Anglais, when the horrors of the play act as a piquant sauce to the supper!

Or, to speak more seriously, and to come, at last, to the point. After having seen most of the grand dramas which have been produced at Paris, for the last half-dozen years, and thinking over all that one has seen,—the fictitious murders, rapes, adulteries, and other crimes, by which one has been interested and excited,—a man may take leave to be heartily ashamed of the manner in which he has spent his time; and of the hideous kind of mental intoxication in which he has permitted himself to indulge.

Nor are simple society outrages the only sort of crime in which the spectator of Paris plays has permitted himself to indulge; he has recreated himself with a deal of blasphemy besides, and has passed many pleasant evenings in beholding religion defiled and ridiculed.

Allusion has been made, in a former paper, to a fashion that lately obtained in France, and which went by the name of Catholic reaction; and as, in this happy country, fashion is everything, we have had not merely Catholic pictures and quasi religious books, but a number of Catholic plays have been produced, very edifying to the frequenters of the theatres or the Boulevards, who have learned more about religion from these performances than they have acquired, no doubt, in the whole of their lives before. In the course of a very few years we have seen — “The Wandering Jew;” “Belshazzar’s Feast;” “Nebuchadnezzar,” and the “Massacre of the Innocents;” “Joseph and his Brethren;” “The Passage of the Red Sea;” and “The Deluge.”

The great Dumas, like Madame Sand, before mentioned, has brought a vast quantity of religion before the foot-lights. There was his famous tragedy of “Caligula,” which, be it spoken to the shame of the Paris critics, was coldly received; nay, actually hissed by them. And why? Because, says Dumas, it contained a great deal too much piety for the rogues. The public, he says, was much more religious, and understood him at once.

“As for the critics,” says he, nobly, “let those who cry out against the immorality of Antony and Marguerite de Bourgogne, reproach me for the chastity of Messalina. (This dear creature is the heroine of the play of ‘Caligula.’) It matters little to me. These people have but seen the form of my work; they have walked round the tent, but have not seen the arch which it covered; they have examined the vases and candles of the altar, but have not opened the tabernacle!

“The public alone has, instinctively, comprehended that there was, beneath this outward sign, an inward and mysterious grace: it followed the action of the piece in all its serpentine windings; it listened for four hours,

with pious attention (*avec recueillement et religion*), to the sound of this rolling river of thoughts, which may have appeared to it new and bold, perhaps, but chaste and grave; and it retired, with its head on its breast, like a man who had just perceived, in a dream, the solution of a problem which he has long and vainly sought in his waking hours."

You see that not only Saint Sand is an apostle, in her way; but Saint Dumas is another. We have people in England who write for bread, like Dumas and Sand, and are paid so much for their line; but they don't set up for prophets. Mrs. Trollope has never declared that her novels are inspired by Heaven; Mr. Buckstone has written a great number of farces, and never talked about the altar and the tabernacle. Even Sir Edward Bulwer (who, on a similar occasion, when the critics found fault with a play of his, answered them by a pretty decent declaration of his own merits), never ventured to say that he had received a divine mission, and was uttering five-act revelations.

All things considered, the tragedy of "Caligula" is a decent tragedy; as decent as the decent characters of the hero and heroine can allow it to be; it may be almost said, provokingly decent: but this, it must be remembered, is the characteristic of the modern French school (nay, of the English school too); and if the writer take the character of a remarkable scoundrel, it is ten to one but he turns out an amiable fellow, in whom we have all the warmest sympathy. Caligula is killed at the end of the performance; Messalina is comparatively well-behaved; and the sacred part of the performance, the tabernacle-characters apart from the mere "vase" and "candlestick" personages, may be said to be depicted in the person of a Christian convert, Stella, who has had the good fortune to be converted by no less a person than

Mary Magdalene, when she, Stella, was staying on a visit to her aunt, near Narbonne.

*Stella (continuant.)* Voilà  
 Que je vois s'avancer, sans pilote et sans rame,  
 Une barque portant deux hommes et deux femmes,  
 Et, spectacle inoui qui me ravit encor,  
 Tous quatre avaient au front une auréole d'or  
 D'où partaient des rayons de si vive lumière  
 Que je fus obligée à baisser la paupière ;  
 Et, lorsque je rouvris les yeux avec effroi,  
 Les voyageurs divins étaient auprès de moi.  
 Un jour de chacun d'eux et dans toute sa gloire  
 Je te raconterai la merveilleuse histoire,  
 Et tu l'adoreras, j'espère ; en ce moment,  
 Ma mère, il te suffit de savoir seulement  
 Que tous quatre venaient du fond de la Syrie :  
 Une édit les avait bannis de leur patrie,  
 Et, se faisant bourreaux, des hommes irrités,  
 Sans avirons, sans eau, sans pain et garrottés,  
 Sur une frêle barque échouée au rivage,  
 Les avaient à la mer poussés dans un orage.  
 Mais à peine l'esquif eut-il touché les flots,  
 Qu'au cantique chanté par les saints matelots  
 L'ouragan replia ses ailes frémissantes ;  
 Que la mer aplanit ses vagues mugissantes,  
 Et qu'un soleil plus pur, reparaissant aux cieux,  
 Enveloppa l'esquif d'un cercle radieux ! . . .

*Junia.* Mais c'était un prodige.

*Stella.* Un miracle, ma mère.  
 Leurs fers tombèrent seuls, l'eau cessa d'être amère,  
 Et deux fois chaque jour le bateau fut couvert  
 D'une manne pareille à celle du désert :  
 C'est ainsi que, poussés par une main céleste,  
 Je les vis aborder.

*Junia.* Oh ! dis vite le reste !

*Stella.* A l'aube, trois d'entre eux quittèrent la maison :  
 Marthe prit le chemin qui mène à Tarascon,  
 Lazare et Maximin celui de Massilie,  
 Et celle qui resta . . . . c'était la plus jolie, (how truly  
 French !)

Nous faisant appeler vers le milieu du jour,  
 Demanda si les monts ou les bois d'alentour  
 Cachaient quelque retraite inconnue et profonde,  
 Qui la pût séparer à tout jamais du monde . . . .  
 Aquila se souvint qu'il avait pénétré  
 Dans un antre sauvage et de tous ignoré,

Grotte creusée aux flancs de ces Alpes sublimes,  
 Où l'aigle fait son aire au-dessus des abîmes.  
 Il offrit cet asile, et dès le lendemain  
 Tous deux, pour l'y guider, nous étions en chemin.  
 Le soir du second jour nous touchâmes sa base :  
 Là, tombant à genoux dans une sainte extase,  
 Elle pria long-temps, puis vers l'autre inconnu,  
 Dénouant sa chaussure, elle marcha pied nu.  
 Nos prières, nos cris restèrent sans réponses :  
 Au milieu des cailloux, des épines, des ronces,  
 Nous la vîmes monter, un bâton à la main,  
 Et ce n'est qu'arrivée au terme du chemin,  
 Qu'enfin elle tomba sans force et sans haleine. . . .

*Junia.* Comment la nommait-on, ma fille ?  
*Stella.* Madeleine.

Walking, says Stella, by the sea-shore, "A bark drew near, that had nor sail nor oar; two women and two men the vessel bore: each of that crew, 'twas wondrous to behold, wore round his head a ring of blazing gold; from which such radiance glittered all around, that I was fain to look towards the ground. And when once more I raised my frightened eyne, before me stood the travellers divine; their rank, the glorious lot that each befel, at better season, mother, will I tell. Of this anon, the time will come, when thou shalt learn to worship as I worship now. Suffice it, that from Syria's land they came; an edict from their country banished them. Fierce, angry men, 'had seized upon the four, and launched them in that vessel from the shore. They launched these victims on the waters rude; nor rudder gave to steer, nor bread for food. As the doomed vessel cleaves the stormy main, that pious crew uplifts a sacred strain; the angry waves are silent as it sings; the storm, awe-stricken, folds its quivering wings. A purer sun appears the heavens to light, and wraps the little bark in radiance bright.

*Junia.* Sure 'twas a prodigy.

*Stella.* A miracle. Spontaneous from their hands the fetters fell. The salt sea-wave grew fresh;

and, twice a day, manna (like that which on the desert lay) covered the bark, and fed them on their way. Thus, hither led, at Heaven's divine behest, I saw them land—

*Junia.* My daughter, tell the rest.

*Stella.* Three of the four, our mansion left at dawn. One, Martha, took the road to Tarascon; Lazarus and Maximin to Massily; but one remained (the fairest of the three), who asked us, if i' the woods or mountains near, there chanced to be some cavern lone and drear; where she might hide for ever from all men. It chanced, my cousin knew of such a den; deep hidden in a mountain's hoary breast, on which the eagle builds his airy nest. And thither offered he the saint to guide. Next day upon the journey forth we hied; and came, at the second eve, with weary pace, unto the lonely mountain's rugged base. Here the worn traveller, falling on her knee, did pray awhile in sacred ecstasy; and, drawing off her sandals from her feet, marched, naked, towards that desolate retreat. No answer made she to our cries or groans; but, walking midst the prickles and rude stones, a staff in hand, we saw her upwards toil; nor ever did she pause, nor rest the while, save at the entry of that savage den. Here, powerless and panting, fell she then.

*Junia.* What was her name, my daughter?

*Stella.* MAGDALEN."

Here the translator must pause—having no inclination to enter "the tabernacle," in company with such a spotless high-priest as Monsieur Dumas.

Something "tabernacular" may be found in Dumas's famous piece of "Don Juan de Marana." The poet has laid the scene of his play in a vast number of places: in heaven (where we have the Virgin Mary, and little angels, in blue, swinging censers before her!)—on earth, under the earth, and in a place still lower, but not mentionable to ears polite; and the plot, as it appears from a



dialogue between a good and a bad angel, with which the play commences, turns upon a contest between these two worthies for the possession of the soul of a member of the family of Marana.

Don Juan de Marana not only resembles his namesake, celebrated by Mozart and Molière, in his peculiar successes among the ladies, but possesses further qualities which render his character eminently fitting for stage representation; he unites the virtues of Lovelace and Lacenaire; he blasphemes upon all occasions; he murders at the slightest provocation, and without the most trifling remorse; he overcomes ladies of rigid virtue, ladies of easy virtue, and ladies of no virtue at all; and the poet, inspired by the contemplation of such a character, has depicted his hero's adventures and conversation with wonderful feeling and truth.

The first act of the play contains a half-dozen of murders and intrigues, which would have sufficed humbler genius than M. Dumas's, for the completion of, at least, half-a dozen tragedies. In the second act our hero flogs his elder brother, and runs away with his sister-in-law; in the third, he fights a duel with a rival, and kills him: whereupon the mistress of his victim takes poison, and dies, in great agonies, on the stage. In the fourth act, Don Juan having entered a church for the purpose of carrying off a nun, with whom he is in love, is seized by the statue of one of the ladies whom he has previously victimised, and made to behold the ghosts of all those unfortunate persons whose deaths he has caused.

This is a most edifying spectacle.—The ghosts rise solemnly, each in a white sheet, preceded by a wax candle; and, having declared their names and qualities, call, in chorus, for vengeance upon Don Juan, as thus:—

DON SANDOVAL, *loquitur*.

"I am Don Sandoval d'Ojedo. I played against Don Juan my fortune, the tomb of my fathers, and the heart

of my mistress;—I lost all: I played against him my life, and I lost it. Vengeance against the murderer! vengeance!"—(*The candle goes out.*)

*The candle goes out*, and an angel descends—a flaming sword in his hand—and asks: "Is there no voice in favour of Don Juan?" when, lo! Don Juan's father (like one of those ingenious toys, called "Jack-in-the-box,") jumps up from his coffin, and demands grace for his son.

When Martha, the nun, returns, having prepared all things for her elopement, she finds Don Juan fainting upon the ground.—"I am no longer your husband," says he, upon coming to himself; "I am no longer Don Juan; I am brother Juan, the Trappist. Sister Martha, recollect that you must die!"

This was the most cruel blow upon Sister Martha, who is no less a person than an angel, an angel in disguise—the good spirit of the house of Marana, who has gone to the length of losing her wings, and forfeiting her place in heaven, in order to keep company with Don Juan on earth, and, if possible, to convert him. Already, in her angelic character, she had exhorted him to repentance, but in vain; for, while she stood at one elbow, pouring not merely hints, but long sermons, into his ear, at the other elbow stood a bad spirit, grinning and sneering at all her pious counsels, and obtaining by far the greater share of the Don's attention.

In spite, however, of the utter contempt with which Don Juan treats her,—in spite of his dissolute courses, which must shock her virtue,—and his impolite neglect, which must wound her vanity, the poor creature (who, from having been accustomed to better company, might have been presumed to have had better taste), the unfortunate angel, feels a certain inclination for the Don, and actually flies up to heaven to ask permission to remain with him on earth.

And when the curtain draws up, to the sound of harps, and discovers white-robed angels walking in the clouds, we find the angel of Marana upon her knees, uttering the following address :—

## LE BON ANGE.

Vierge, à qui le calice à la liqueur amère  
Fut si souvent offert,  
Mère, que l'on nomma la douloureuse mère,  
Tant vous avez souffert !  
Vous, dont les yeux divins, sur la terre des hommes,  
Ont versé plus de pleurs  
Que vos pieds n'ont depuis, dans le ciel où nous sommes,  
Fait éclore de fleurs,  
Vase d'élection, étoile matinale,  
Miroir de pureté,  
Vous qui priez pour nous, d'une voix virginale,  
La suprême bonté ;  
A mon tour, aujourd'hui, bienheureuse Marie,  
Je tombe à vos genoux ;  
Daignez donc m'écouter, car c'est vous que je prie,  
Vous qui priez pour nous.

Which may be thus interpreted :—

O Virgin blest ! by whom the bitter draught  
So often has been quaffed,  
That, for thy sorrow, thou art named by us  
The Mother Dolorous !  
Thou, from whose eyes have fallen more tears of woe  
Upon the earth below,  
Than 'neath thy footsteps, in this heaven of ours,  
Have risen flowers !  
O beaming morning star ! O chosen vase !  
O mirror of all grace !  
Who, with thy virgin voice, dost ever pray  
Man's sins away ;  
Bend down thine ear, and list, O blessed saint !  
Unto my sad complaint ;  
Mother ! to thee I kneel, on thee I call,  
Who hearest all.

She proceeds to request that she may be allowed to return to earth, and follow the fortunes of Don Juan ;— and, as there is one difficulty, or, to use her own words,—

Mais, come vous savez qu'aux voütes éternelles,  
 Malgré moi, tend mon vol,  
*Soufflez sur mon étoile et détachez mes ailes,*  
*Pour m'enchaîner au sol ;*

her request is granted, her star is *blown out*, (O poetic allusion ! ) and she descends to earth to love, and to go mad, and to die for Don Juan !

The reader will require no further explanation, in order to be satisfied as to the moral of this play ; but is it not a very bitter satire upon the country, which calls itself the politest nation in the world, that the incidents, the indecency, the coarse blasphemy, and the vulgar wit of this piece, should find admirers among the public, and procure reputation for the author? Could not the Government, which has re-established, in a manner, the theatrical censorship, and forbids or alters plays which touch on politics, exert the same guardianship over public morals? The honest English reader, who has a faith in his clergyman, and is a regular attendant at Sunday worship, will not be a little surprised at the march of intellect among our neighbours across the Channel, and at the kind of consideration in which they hold their religion. Here is a man who seizes upon saints and angels, merely to put sentiments in their mouths, which might suit a nymph of Drury Lane. He shows heaven, in order that he may carry debauch into it ; and avails himself of the most sacred and sublime parts of our creed, as a vehicle for a scene-painter's skill, or an occasion for a handsome actress to wear a new dress.

M. Dumas's piece of " Kean " is not quite so sublime ; it was brought out by the author as a satire upon the French critics, who, to their credit be it spoken, had generally attacked him, and was intended by him, and received by the public, as a faithful portraiture of English manners. As such, it merits special observation and praise. In the first act you find a Countess and an Ambassadors, whose conversation relates purely to the

great actor. All the ladies in London are in love with him, especially the two present; as for the Ambassadors, she prefers him to her husband (a matter of course in all French plays), and to a more seducing person still—no less a person than the Prince of Wales! who presently waits on the ladies, and joins in their conversation concerning Kean. "This man," says His Royal Highness, "is the very pink of fashion. Brummell is nobody when compared to him; and I myself only an insignificant private gentleman: he has a reputation among ladies, for which I sigh in vain; and spends an income twice as great as mine." This admirable historic touch at once paints the actor and the Prince; the estimation in which the one was held, and the modest economy for which the other was so notorious.

Then we have Kean, at a place called the *Trou de Charbon*, the Coal-hole, where, to the edification of the public, he engages in a fisty combat with a notorious boxer; this scene was received, by the audience, with loud exclamations of delight, and commented on, by the journals, as a faultless picture of English manners. The Coal-hole being on the banks of the Thames, a nobleman—*Lord Melbourn!*—has chosen the tavern as a rendezvous for a gang of pirates, who are to have their ship in waiting, in order to carry off a young lady, with whom his lordship is enamoured; it need not be said that Kean arrives at the nick of time, saves the innocent *Meess Anna*, and exposes the infamy of the Peer:—a violent tirade against noblemen ensues, and Lord Melbourn slinks away, disappointed, to meditate revenge. Kean's triumphs continue through all the acts; the Ambassadors falls madly in love with him; the Prince becomes furious at his ill success, and the Ambassador dreadfully jealous. They pursue Kean to his dressing-room, at the theatre; where, unluckily, the Ambassadors herself has taken refuge. Dreadful quarrels ensue;

the tragedian grows suddenly mad upon the stage, and so cruelly insults the Prince of Wales, that His Royal Highness determines to send *him to Botany Bay*. His sentence, however, is commuted to banishment to New York; whither, of course, Miss Anna accompanies him, rewarding him, previously, with her hand, and twenty thousand a-year!

This wonderful performance was gravely received and admired by the people of Paris; the piece was considered to be decidedly moral, because the popular candidate was made to triumph throughout, and to triumph in the most virtuous manner; for, according to the French code of morals, success among women is, at once, the proof and the reward of virtue.

The sacred personage introduced in Dumas's play, behind a cloud, figures bodily in the piece of the "Massacre of the Innocents," represented at Paris last year. She appears under a different name, but the costume is exactly that of Carlo-Dolce's Madonna; and an ingenious fable is arranged, the interest of which hangs upon the grand Massacre of the Innocents, perpetrated in the fifth act. One of the chief characters is *Jean le Précurseur*, who threatens woe to Herod and his race, and is beheaded by the orders of that sovereign.

In the "Festin de Balthazar" we are similarly introduced to Daniel, and the first scene is laid by the waters of Babylon, where a certain number of captive Jews is seated in melancholy postures; a Babylonian officer enters, exclaiming—"Chantez nous quelques Chansons de Jerusalem," and the request is refused in the language of the Psalm. Belshazzar's Feast is given in a grand tableau, after Martin's picture. That painter, in like manner, furnished scenes for the "Deluge:" vast numbers of school-boys and children are brought to see these pieces: the lower classes delight in them. The famous "Juif Errant," at the theatre of the Porte St. Martin, was the

first of the kind, and its prodigious success, no doubt, occasioned the number of imitations, which the other theatres have produced.

The taste of such exhibitions, of course, every English person will question ; but we must remember the manners of the people among whom they are popular ; and, if I may be allowed to hazard such an opinion, there is, in every one of these Boulevard mysteries, a kind of rude moral. The Boulevard writers don't pretend to "tabernacles" and divine gifts, like Madame Sand and Dumas, before mentioned. If they take a story from the sacred books, they garble it without mercy, and take sad liberties with the text ; but they do not deal in descriptions of the agreeably wicked, or ask pity and admiration for tender-hearted criminals and philanthropic murderers, as their betters do. Vice is vice on the Boulevard ; and it is fine to hear the audience, as a tyrant king roars out cruel sentences of death, or a bereaved mother pleads for the life of her child, making their remarks on the circumstances of the scene. "Ah, le gredin !" growls an indignant countryman : "Quel monstre !" says a grisette, in a fury. You see very fat old men crying like babies ; and, like babies, sucking enormous sticks of barley-sugar. Actors and audience enter warmly into the illusion of the piece, and so especially are the former affected, that, at Franconi's, where the battles of the Empire are represented, there is as regular gradation in the ranks of the mimic army, as in the real imperial legions. After a man has served, with credit, for a certain number of years in the line, he is promoted to be an officer—an acting officer. If he conducts himself well, he may rise to be a Colonel, or a General of Division ; if ill, he is degraded to the ranks again ; or, worse degradation of all, drafted into a regiment of Cossacks, or Austrians. Cossacks is the lowest depth, however ; nay, it is said that the men who perform these Cossack parts receive

higher wages than the mimic grenadiers and old guard. They will not consent to be beaten every night, even in play ; to be pursued in hundreds, by a handful of French, to fight against their beloved Emperor. Surely there is fine hearty virtue in this, and pleasant child-like simplicity.

So that while the drama of Victor Hugo, Dumas, and the enlightened classes, is profoundly immoral and absurd, the *drama* of the common people is absurd, if you will, but good and right-hearted. I have made notes of one or two of these pieces, which all have good feeling and kindness in them, and which turn, as the reader will see, upon one or two favourite points of popular morality. A drama that obtained a vast success at the Porte Saint Martin, was "La Duchesse de la Vauballière." The Duchess is the daughter of a poor farmer, who was carried off in the first place, and then married by M. le Duc de la Vauballière, a terrible *roué*, the farmer's landlord, and the intimate friend of Philippe d'Orléans, the Regent of France.

Now, the Duke, in running away with the lady, intended to dispense altogether with ceremony, and make of Julie anything but his wife ; but Georges, her father, and one Morisseau, a notary, discovered him in his dastardly act, and pursued him to the very feet of the Regent, who compelled the pair to marry and make it up.

Julie complies, but though she becomes a Duchess, her heart remains faithful to her old flame, Adrian, the doctor ; and she declares that, beyond the ceremony, no sort of intimacy shall take place between her husband and herself.

Then the Duke begins to treat her in the most ungentlemanlike manner ; he abuses her in every possible way ; he introduces improper characters into her house ; and, finally, becomes so disgusted with her, that he determines to make away with her altogether.



For this purpose, he sends forth into the highways and seizes a doctor, bidding him, on pain of death, to write a poisonous prescription for Madame la Duchesse. She swallows the potion ; and, oh ! horror ! the doctor turns out to be Dr. Adrian, whose woe may be imagined, upon finding that he has been thus committing murder on his true love !

Let not the reader, however, be alarmed as to the fate of the heroine ; no heroine of a tragedy ever yet died in the third act ; and, accordingly, the Duchess gets up perfectly well again in the fourth, through the instrumentality of Morisseau, the good lawyer.

And now it is that vice begins to be really punished. The Duke, who, after killing his wife, thinks it necessary to retreat, and take refuge in Spain, is tracked to the borders of that country by the virtuous notary, and there receives such a lesson as he will never forget to his dying day.

Morisseau, in the first instance, produces a deed (signed by His Holiness the Pope), which annuls the marriage of the Duke de la Vauballière ; then another deed, by which it is proved that he was not the eldest son of old La Vauballière, the former duke ; then another deed, by which he shows that old La Vauballière (who seems to have been a disreputable old fellow) was a bigamist, and that, in consequence, the present man, styling himself Duke, is illegitimate ; and, finally, Morisseau brings forward another document, which proves that the *reg'lar* Duke is no other than Adrian, the doctor !

Thus it is that love, law, and physic combined, triumph over the horrid machinations of this star-and-gartered libertine.

"Hermann L'Ivrogne" is another piece of the same order ; and, though not very refined, yet possesses considerable merit. As in the case of the celebrated Captain Smith, of Halifax, who "took to drinking ratafia, and thought of poor Miss Bailey,"—a woman and the bottle

have been the cause of Hermann's ruin. Deserted by his mistress, who has been seduced from him by a base Italian Count, Hermann, a German artist, gives himself entirely up to liquor and revenge : but when he finds that force, and not infidelity, have been the cause of his mistress's ruin, the reader can fancy the indignant ferocity with which he pursues the *infâme ravisseur*. A scene, which is really full of spirit, and excellently well acted, here ensues : Hermann proposes to the Count, on the eve of their duel, that the survivor should bind himself to espouse the unhappy Marie ; but the Count declares himself to be already married, and the student, finding a duel impossible (for his object was to restore, at all events, the honour of Marie), now only thinks of his revenge, and murders the Count. Presently, two parties of men enter Hermann's apartment ; one is a company of students, who bring him the news that he has obtained the prize of painting ; the other, the policemen, who carry him to prison, to suffer the penalty of murder.

I could mention many more plays in which the popular morality is similarly expressed. The seducer, or rascal of the piece, is always an aristocrat,—a wicked Count, or licentious Marquis,—who is brought to condign punishment just before the fall of the curtain. And too good reason have the French people had to lay such crimes to the charge of the aristocracy, who are expiating now, on the stage, the wrongs which they did a hundred years since. The aristocracy is dead now ; but the theatre lives upon traditions ; and don't let us be too scornful at such simple legends that are handed down by the people, from race to race. Vulgar prejudice against the great it may be ; but prejudice against the great, is only a rude expression of sympathy with the poor : long, therefore, may fat *épiciers* blubber over mimic woes, and honest *proletaires* shake their fists, shouting—"Grédin, scélérat, monstre de Marquis !" and such republican cries.