VARIOUS

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Содержание

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MR COBDEN ON THE NATIONAL DEFENCES

It is popularly averred by our Southern neighbours that the house of every Englishman is his castle. No doubt to a certain extent this may be true. In the modern mansion, as in the ancient fortalice, the victualing department is always a matter of prime importance, and Chubb's patent safety lock may be accepted as a convenient substitute for the portcullis. Yet, after all, we suspect that the resemblance, if the matter be closely investigated, will turn out to be rather imaginary than real. A castle, according to the ideas which we have imbibed from an early course of miscellaneous and feudal reading, must have been a sort of earthly paradise, and the possessors of it wholly exempt from that never-ending series of daily persecution to which we, unhappy moderns, are subjected. With a good eight-foot thick wall of solid masonry around, a moat broad enough to baffle

the leap of Flying Childers, and deep enough to have drenched the scalping-lock of Goliath of Gath, and a few falconets and patereroes symmetrically arranged along the parapets, a man might afford to enjoy a quiet night's rest without dread of duns, or any fear of the visits of that most malignant of unexecuted ruffians, the tax-gatherer. He might give a jocular rejoinder to the summons of the pursuivant who appeared before his gates with the intelligence of a further railway call; and dismay any invading snip by the apparition of a scarecrow dangling from a gallows on the summit of the donjon-keep. Nay, if currency were absolutely indispensable for the purpose of paying the garrison, Castle Dangerous would be more effective than the bank parlour has shown itself in late times under the operation of Sir Robert Peel's Act for the perpetuation of national bankruptcy. A simple announcement in the neighbouring town of a large assortment of cast-off uniforms and rusty armour for sale, would infallibly attract to the stronghold a collection of Caucasians who adhere to the Jewish persuasion. Once within the guard-room, we should deal summarily, and after the manner of Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, with these infidels. The forceps should be produced, and no ether or chloroform, upon any pretext whatever, allowed. We should negotiate with Moses or Mephibosheth at the rate of units for a stump, tens for a decayed, and hundreds for an unimpeachable grinder; and may we never shake shekel again if we do not think we could extract a reasonable amount of ransom from the jaws of the Princes of the Captivity! As to

the advent of many enemies, we should be utterly and entirely fearless. Cohorn and Vauban might come with their lines, and mines, and battering-trains without disturbing our equanimity, or causing the slightest tremor in our hand as we filled out our post-prandial bumpers of Bordeaux. So long as powder lasted and shot was plentiful, we should reciprocate the hostile compliments by all manner of shell and canister; and, if the metal of the rogues proved, in the long run, too heavy for us, they should have our full permission to pound away until they were tired; and, on entering the citadel, they would find us smoking our pipe in the cartridge-room, as cool as a cucumber, or as Marius at Carthage, or General Chassé at Antwerp, or any other warrior and hero of antiquity whomsoever.

Now take that picture – compare it with the state of your present domicile – and tell us whether, in effect, the fortalice is not an Eden? What kind of existence do you lead in that Heriot Row house, for which, last year, when shares were up, you were ass enough to pay some two or three thousand pounds? You cannot go into your room after breakfast to write an article for Blackwood, or to draw a condescendence, without hearing every five minutes the dissonance of that ceaseless bell. Not unearned are poor Grizzy's eleemosynary Christmas shoes, for fully one-half of the day is that most weary wight occupied in flitting from the regions beneath to answer the summons which *may* bring an invitation or a fee, but which, in nine cases out of ten, is the announcement of a gaping creditor.

First, in comes a document wafered, according to that beastly practice, which, for the credit of Tyre and Sidon, we hope is a modern invention. *That*, of course, goes into the waste basket without more remark than a passing objurgation. Then follow the prospectuses of three insurance companies, you being nearly ruined already with the amount which you are compelled to pay annually, in virtue of your marriage contract, to the Scottish Widows' Fund. Next appears a long slip, purporting to be the intimation of a police assessment. You swear savagely, having ascertained the fact, by dint of a spirited correspondence in the newspapers, that the available force of that esteemed body in the metropolis of Scotland is not much over a dozen, and having accurate personal corroboration of the statistics by walking the other day into an unmolested bicker, from which you emerged with a broken hat, and a head phrenologised by a blacking bottle. Before you have recovered from this, you receive another missive with a charge for cleaning the streets – an operation which you know, to your cost, has been performed throughout the last thaw exclusively by the petticoats of the females; and upon the back of this appear mulctures touching gas and water. A huge oblong missive, the envelope whereof bears on a corner the letters O. H. M. S., and which is sealed with a most imposing and royal escutcheon, deludes you for a moment into the belief that Lord John Russell has at last exhibited a gleam of common-sense, and has recommended you to her Majesty either for a commissionership or for a reasonable place on the pension list,

in consequence of your balaamite contributions to the unsaleable Edinburgh Review. You open it, and behold, it contains nothing but a warning that you have not paid the last quarter of your compounded and thrice confounded income-tax! A gentleman next requests the honour of a moment's interview. In the hope that he may prove a Writer to the Signet, you weakly yield; and incontinently an individual with a strong Israelitish countenance, a fetid breath, and an odour of stale tobacco floating around his person, solicits the honour of your custom for a packet of sealing-wax, a gross of steel pens, or a new edition of the Pentateuch. You eject him in a tornado of wrath; but the cup of your misery is not full. Aaron is succeeded by Mendizabel – an expatriated Spanish grandee, who bears a strong recommendation from an individual whose handwriting seems to be attached to every begging petition in the country. This fellow won't choose to understand you, however frantic you may appear; so that, for the sake of peace, you violate your conscience and get rid of him at the expenditure of a shilling. Grizzy is called up, and severely reprimanded for her want of discrimination in admitting the illustrious stranger; and the consequence is that, on the very next summons, she peremptorily denies you to a Glasgow agent who has come through by special train for a consultation on a case of emergency. Last of all, just as you are settling steadily to your work, and turning over the third sheet of foolscap, in walks your friend the Haveril, on no earthly errand whatever, except to inquire how you are getting on. Of all social pests,

this kind of animal is undoubtedly the worst. In intellect he is singularly weak: in disposition curious and prying. He hops about your study like a magpie, eying every letter, as though he longed to make himself master of its contents; and, notwithstanding that you believe the creature to be strictly honest, you would on no account leave him for a couple of minutes in undisturbed possession of the sanctum. He peeps into every book, indulges you with a quantity of small literary swipes, and finally fastening upon a volume of prints, entreats you to go on with your occupation, as he, the Haveril, is perfectly competent to the task of entertaining himself. Culpable homicide, say our law-books, ranges from a crime of great enormity to the smallest possible fraction of imputed guilt; and if, under such aggravating circumstances, you were to toss your acquaintance out of the window, it is not likely that your subsequent sentence would be severe. But you have at the bottom of your heart a sort of attachment to the nincompoop, whom you know to be utterly harmless, and who, moreover, to do him justice, invariably stands up for you, whenever you are assailed in your absence. Therefore you abstain from violence, and the penance which you heroically undergo is but one degree short of martyrdom. Under the visitation of these Egyptian plagues, the morning wears insensibly away; and the imp of darkness, when he calls for copy about dinner-time, is summarily exorcised, and dispatched, empty-handed, to the solitudes of his awful den! Is there, then, any feasible case of resemblance between the fortress and the

modern mansion?

We have been led into this train of thought by a perusal of the speeches lately delivered at Manchester on the subject of our national defences. The question is one of undoubted interest to us all, and it is well that it should be brought forward and thoroughly discussed in time. If there is danger, either immediate or impending, let us know it, and then, to a certain extent, we shall be forwarned if not forearmed. The Duke of Wellington – a tolerable military authority, as times go – has already given us his opinion on the point, and that opinion has been immediately met and contradicted by the sapient Mr Richard Cobden. We have yet to learn the exact amount of Mr Cobden's attainments in the arts of strategy and fortification; but as he is undoubtedly a "myriad-minded" gentleman, of fair average conceit, and more than average effrontery, and as we have hitherto abstained from making special mention of him in our columns, it may, perhaps, be worth while to see how he has acquitted himself in the lists against the veteran conqueror of Napoleon. Our old friend Tomkins – he of the Ten Tumblers – used to be, if we recollect aright, rather eloquent upon this weighty topic. Tomkins, in early life, had sustained an amatory disappointment, in competition with a thwacking drum-major; and therefore always looked upon the army with somewhat of a jaundiced eye. The sound of the fife, clarion, and trumpet was ever after distasteful to his ear; and he never trotted his mare past a marching regiment of these scarlet locusts, without a spasm of

righteous indignation. "They eat our bread, sir!" he would say, "and drink of our cup, and do absolutely nothing in return. The sooner we get rid of them the better. An Englishman, sir, needs no hired supernumeraries to protect his home. When was our soil ever invaded? Let the French come, and we will give them graves!" And having delivered himself of this sublime sentiment, Tomkins would incontinently ring for another tumbler. It always struck us, however, as a singular proof of the eccentricities or rather inconsistencies of genius, that our distinguished friend, when in his cups, and towards the close of the evening, invariably began to glorify himself upon his length of lineage and descent. In support of these heraldic claims, he was wont to cite the case of his great progenitor, "the founder of the family," who just about a century ago had the condescension to hold the stirrup of Lord George Murray, as he alighted from his horse when the clans marched into Derby. Tomkins, on the strength of this anecdote, had rather a kindly feeling towards the Jacobites, and would never allow that the enterprise had at any time the character of an invasion. "We were ready, sir," he would exclaim, "to have marched up, in the Reform year, from Birmingham to London; and who can doubt that, had we done so, we should have driven the household troops before us as the chaff flies out from the fanners?"

We have often deeply regretted that Tomkins did not survive to witness the consummation of the triumphs of free-trade – a cause which he contributed materially by his efforts and his

writings to advance. The leading feature of his character was the total absence of every kind of prejudice or bigotry. He held it to be a fundamental principle, as old as Magna Charta, that England was to be governed mainly through the influence of cotton: that all other interests were immeasurably inferior to this, and that the settlement and maintenance of our colonies was a gross instance of reckless and frantic extravagance. "Let us thrive," he would say, "through the arts of universal peace. Let us set a bright example to the world by opening our ports to the free admission of all foreign produce, without any kind of reciprocity whatever. If our artisans and workmen cannot maintain their ground, let them go to the comfortable Unions we have provided, and pick oakum in return for their rations of wholesome bone-soup! Let us hear no more nonsense about humanity or short-time! Cram the children into the factories so soon as they can walk. Early habits are the surest means of promoting and fostering industry. Let us look to our imports, and the exports will look after themselves. Disband the army. Reduce the navy. Do away with Church establishments. Contract the currency. Flabbergast the colonies; and Great Britain must go ahead!" Such were the expressed opinions of that great and good man, who now sleeps in a premature sepulchre at Staley Bridge: and we need hardly add, that in matters of revenue, he was an uncompromising advocate of the sponge. Had his valuable existence been prolonged for a few years, he would doubtless have been at the head of the onward movement, and might have shared in the rewards which

are gratefully accorded to the patriots of this latter age. Andrew Marvell, sitting incorruptible in his garret with a shoulder-blade of mutton, has ceased to be a favourite example with the new democratic school. They affect ovations and banquets, perform continental reforming tours, and demean themselves after the manner of our able correspondent, Mr Dunshunner, who, we are glad to observe, has been lately invited to a free-trade demonstration on the banks of the Bosphorus, by several of the leading Muftis of Constantinople. Dunshunner writes in great spirits, and has promised us an early paper, on the advantage of our establishing free-trade relations with the domestic Circassian market.

Failing Tomkins, we have every reason to be proud of his disciple and successor, Mr Cobden. In fact, the mantle of our lamented friend has fallen most gracefully upon his shoulders; and in nothing is the genuine likeness more displayed, than in the contempt which both of them have exhibited for the standing army of Great Britain. Yet, perhaps, in this we may be doing Mr Cobden some little wrong. Tomkins, we know, had just and natural reason for abhorring the sight of a red-coat; Cobden, so far as we are aware, has no such motive for dislike. Of the two, he is the calmer and the cooler man, and very naturally looks sedulously about him for the means of substantiating his theories. After all the fine words which Sir Robert Peel bestowed upon him, to no visible improvement of his parsnips, Mr Cobden very naturally felt a little uneasy at the non-fulfilment of several of his

prophecies. It is a pity that a man cannot vaticinate in this country without undergoing a certain risk of subsequent stultification; and yet, if he does not affect the gift of prophecy, your patriot is usually at a discount. Our memory is not a very good one, and yet we have hardly forgotten certain flourishes by Mr Cobden, regarding the immense amount of employment which was to accrue to this country, immediately after the passing of his favourite measures. Bread was to be as cheap as dirt, common luxuries within the reach of every one, and the whole British nation, through its length and breadth, was to hold a perpetual jubilee and jollification, to the music of the engine and the shuttle.

> "Wild dreams! but such
> As Plato loved; such as, with holy zeal,
> Our Milton worship'd. Blessed hopes! awhile
> From man withheld, even to the latter days!"

and, were we to add, in the words of Mr Canning's imitation of the above passage, the concluding line,

> "Till France shall come, and all laws be repeal'd,"

it would not, we apprehend, be entirely foreign to the subject. The result, however, so far as we have yet seen, has by no means justified the experiment. Trade, instead of improving under the stimulus of free-trade, has fallen off, and a year of commercial

panic and misery has been the result of the liberal nostrum. This, no doubt, is very galling to our friends of the billy-roller. Old stagers like us, who are sometimes represented as prosy, because we reverence time-honoured principles, love the constitution of our country, and defend the memory of those who were the true founders of its greatness, are supposed to feel some triumph at the aspect of the present depression, and to exult over the slough of despond in which the Whigs are left to flounder. If there be any who, judging from their own mean nature, so think of us, it is hardly worth our while to undeceive them. Bitterly indeed have we mourned over the spectacle of fraud and imbecility which the last two years have disclosed in the higher places of the land, and most earnestly do we hope that, ere long, the true-hearted people of this country will awake to a full sense of their present perilous and by no means creditable position. All the difficulties which are just now pressing upon ministers, and which, for a longer period than we can venture to calculate, must continue to environ them, are of their own creating, and are the natural effects of that unconstitutional policy which would sacrifice every thing for the mere possession of power. Do we speak truth or not? Let the Chancellor of the Exchequer answer us. What but free-trade and its concomitant schemes has lessened the revenue and increased the pauperism of the country? What but the vicious and yet invincible desire of change, consequent on a contest for popularity, has struck a blow at the prosperity, and even the existence, of our colonies, which has already reacted with fearful

effect within the centre of the mother-country?

Mr Cobden, on being twitted with the failure, or, at all events, the non-realisation of his unqualified prophecies, very naturally, but not very wisely, flies into a passion. He fixes, of course, upon the failure of the harvest of 1846 as the prime element of justification. Can I control the elements? – says he – can I regulate the seasons? Certainly not, Mr Cobden. We presume that no one, not even the stupidest operative that used to bellow in your congregation, and who believed every one of the golden promises which you were hardy enough to enunciate, ever dreamed that you were in possession of that power. Several of us, moreover, are of opinion that, upon the whole, you have been rather overrated as a conjurer, and that, having failed in your endeavours to get into an empty quart bottle, you are not a whit more likely to succeed when you come to experiment upon a pint. But let us whisper in your ear that this excuse will hardly serve your turn, and that it is wholly irreconcilable with the arguments which you used to advance. A copious supply of foreign grain was the very thing for which you and your associates primarily clamoured. You wanted an import to a prodigious extent, and you flattered yourselves that, for each quarter of American wheat, you would be able to send in exchange so many yards of that calico which you fondly maintain to be the principal fabric of the world. You were content, and you have said it over and over again, to take your chance of the home market, provided the other ones were opened to you. Now that you have them open,

and now that wheat has come in such abundance as even your most sanguine anticipations could not have conceived, you have the coolness and effrontery to turn round and throw the blame upon Providence, for having speedily brought about the very thing which every charlatan in Great Britain has been shouting for since the anti-corn-law league began! Do you really think that this will go down with any portion of the community? that such deplorable wriggling will not insure you, throughout the country, the contempt of every man of average and common understanding? or that the labourer on short time, and the artisan whom you have deprived of his employment, will put up with such miserable excuses? The plain state of the fact is, – and you know it, – that your theories are crumbling beneath your feet. You cannot expect that your gross and egregious error will escape a speedy detection. You, without any previous qualification for the task, save your natural talent, which is not much, have thrust yourself forward to a prominence which you never were entitled to occupy. You may fancy yourself, if you choose, the people's man; but so were Jack Cade, and Wat Tyler, and several others, who, mistaking energy for knowledge, and ill-regulated enthusiasm for calm deliberate judgment, took upon themselves the task of misleading the English people, and either perished amidst the ruin they had caused, or sank back into their pristine obscurity. There is a favourite cant phrase very current just now, to the effect that "we are living in new times." The same thing might have been said by our common progenitor Adam, the day

after his expulsion from Paradise. It is the most trite truth of the world. Every new day brings its change, but every new day does not obliterate the memory of those which have gone before. All the "new times" which this universe has seen, have not sufficed to alter in the slightest iota the original character of mankind. Human nature still remains the same; and the man who does not acknowledge and adopt this as a principle, is a crazed and dangerous visionary. Never, under any circumstances, ought such a one to gain ascendancy in the state, or to be allowed to reduce his unsound theories to practice. If he does so, woe be to the country which countenances him in the rash attempt!

History and its philosophy are the true studies for a statesman in every age. In that educational point of view, we strongly suspect that the present ministerial cabinet is sorely deficient. The Whigs, as a body, are conversant with a very small space of history indeed. They are constantly jabbering about the fundamental principles of the constitution, which they date back no further than the advent of William of Orange. Their pet historian, and the ablest man among them, cannot make a single speech without dragging in, neck and heels, some vapidity about the Revolution Settlement of 1688; and they try to be profound in their criticisms upon the policy of Walpole and of Bute. Charles James Fox, of course, still continues to be their principal fetish, and they cling to antiquated party toasts with a superstition that would disgrace a Mussulman. But of the freer and bolder regions of history – of all that is great and elevating

– of the numerous lessons to be gleaned, and the examples to be gathered from the grand old records of kingly and loyal England, or of the fall and fate of nations through the imbecility of their rulers, or the ambition of ignorant demagogues, they either know nothing practically, or they fail to acknowledge their importance. Whiggery is a small machine which works according to conventional rules of its own, and will not make allowance for the great springs of human action. A cabinet of Whigs is admirably adapted for the control and legislation of the sovereign state of Pumpfernickel, or some analogous German principality; but they never can assume their place at the helm of affairs in a great empire such as that of Britain, without landing the whole of us in dangerous difficulties, and sneaking off at the last hour under a humiliating sense of their own impotence and presumption.

The case is still worse when men like Mr Cobden come forward to try their hand either as pilots or as coadjutors. We presume that Mr Cobden, if the question were put to him, would candidly admit the narrowness of the range of his peculiar historical studies. We understand that he does not pretend to be a scholar, and that the amount, of the information which he possesses, however great that may be, is limited to modern facts and premises, upon which he usually reasons. A worse kind of education for a statesman, or for the leader of a popular movement, cannot be found than this. It was this kind of partial knowledge, unilluminated by the clear lucid light

which bygone history alone can shed authoritatively upon passing events, which, in the recollection of many still alive, led to the dark catastrophe and horrors of the French Revolution. There is hardly one social change, hardly one political experiment now making, for which a prototype cannot be furnished from the pages of history. And of what possible use, it may be well asked, is history, if we are not to recur to it for a solution of the difficulties which may arise in our onward progress? Are we to gain no confidence, nor take any warning from the rise and decline of nations, not much less powerful than our own, whose checkered career and the causes of it are open to our view? Is the world behind us a blank, that we should go stumbling on at the instigation of every reckless adventurer, more culpable in his attempts to guide us, than the ship-captain who should presume to thread the coral reefs of the Indian Ocean without consulting the authoritative chart? Are we always to derive our information, not from what has been done and acted in the globe before – not from an attentive examination of men and their motives, and the countless springs of action which stir them, but from statistical tables and long columns of figures, compiled by rusty officials in their dens, and brought forth for the first time to be cited as overwhelming testimony by some premier who is meditating apostasy, or seeking some palliative to cover his shameful abandonment of a party? The features of the so-called statesmanship of the present day are essentially those of bureaucracy. A drudging arithmetical clerk, with whom a unit is

every thing, and who would be nearly driven to despair by the discovery of a misquoted fraction, is a leading authority with our statesmen; and his vamped-up tables of export and import are considered sounder expositions of the destinies of the human race, than all the accumulated wisdom, learning, and experience which the annals of the world can afford.

The "tables," however, are now turned, and therefore we shall not say any more for the present about the blue-book and ledger system. Let us go back to Mr Cobden, whom we still find rather uselessly employed in protesting his total inability to command the clemency of the seasons. We have already shown, by papers published in this Magazine in December last and January of the present year, that our exports have lamentably fallen off, and that the balance of trade is against us. Such, we maintained, and we continue still to maintain, must be the effect of the new theories, especially under the restricted operation of the currency. We are glad to see that upon this latter point, at all events, we are supported by a large majority of the press. Mr Cobden, however, denies the evils of the currency; so that he must fall back upon something else to account for the unexpected defalcation.

Such is our position at home and abroad; and if we have been guilty of a digression, which we cannot altogether deny, we shall plead our motive in justification. When Mr Cobden comes forward with his views of foreign policy, with his ideas of the social progress of the universe, and with his notions as to the policy which hereafter may be adopted by great and ambitious

foreign states, – when, after delivering his opinion upon these very weighty matters, he arrives at the inference, not only that we require no addition to our national defences, but that our present establishment of a standing army and navy is absurd, extravagant, and superfluous, we are entitled to inquire into the success with which his first experiment in legislative agitation has been crowned. Of the abundance of good things which he promised, how many have been realised, how many are like to emerge from the dark experimental gulf? If writhing colonies, diminished exports, want of employment, distress at home, enormous failures, monetary restriction, and vast depreciation of property, have followed in the wake of free-trade – if ministry are at present racking such brains as they possess to discover some means of keeping up the revenue to its ordinary level, and if they are forced to lay on a direct additional war-tax in times of the profoundest peace, – surely we shall not incur a charge of fickleness or ingratitude, if we should receive this new oracle of the free-trading Mokanna with some symptoms of dubiety and distrust.

The whole question arose thus. It appears that the Duke of Wellington, whose illustrious reputation and great services entitle him to be heard with the deepest and most reverential respect, has long entertained great uneasiness on account of the undefended state of this country in the case of a hostile invasion. That such an event is likely to take place, no one supposes or has said – that it possibly might take place, very few will venture to

deny. The idea is not a new one; for within the range of the present century, preparations have been actually made for that purpose, and that whilst the wonderful power and facilities of steam-navigation were unknown. Fulton – we have seen men who knew him when he was a humble artisan in the West of Scotland – had, despairing of success at home, submitted his models to the French government, who, fortunately for us, did not then appreciate the merits of the invention. Three years afterwards, he started his first steamer on the Hudson in America. The power which our French neighbours had once so nearly within their grasp, at a time when it might have been used to the exceeding detriment of England, became generally known and adopted, and we need not speak of its progress. It has altogether changed the tactics of naval warfare. It can conquer the old difficulties of wind and tide, and it has immensely shortened the period of transit from the continental coast to our own. The security, therefore, of our insular barriers has been materially weakened, and thus far the possibility of an invasion from abroad has been increased. We are not now speaking of the *probability*, which is matter for subsequent consideration.

This open and admitted fact is the foundation of the whole argument of the Duke of Wellington. In the evening of a glorious life, the greater part of which has been spent in the active service of his country, the veteran soldier has thought it his duty to remind us, for our own guidance and that of our children, of the actual existing state of our national defences,

which he deems to be insufficient. It is one of the last, but not, we think, the least important of the services which the venerable Duke has rendered to the nation, with whose proudest history his name will be eternally associated. We take it – or at least we ought to take it – from his lips, as a solemn warning; as the disinterested testimony of a man alike pre-eminent in war and in council; as the deliberate opinion of the GREAT PACIFICATOR OF EUROPE. For notwithstanding the irreverent, mean, and scurrilous taunts of the Manchester gang of demagogues, it is undeniable that the Great Duke has been the chief instrument in procuring for us the blessing of that peace which for two and thirty years we have enjoyed. It was his conquest at Waterloo which hushed the world. The tranquillity of Europe was the stake for which he fought, and he nobly won it. And now, when, at the last hour, this illustrious man comes forward to offer us his advice, and to warn us against the folly of trusting too implicitly to the continuance of that tranquillity, is it wise that we should scorn his counsel?

And what is the proposal which has excited such wrath, and so sorely roused the choler of the bilious Cobden? Simply this – that the British nation should at all times maintain at home a military force sufficient to repel an invasion, should such be attempted, from our shores. The Duke believes and maintains that we cannot now, as formerly, rely solely and implicitly upon our navy for defence, but that, in the event of a war, we must provide against the contingency of an enemy's landing. Our arsenals, he thinks,

and our dockyards, should be supported by a military force, and at least we ought to exhibit such a front as will hold out no temptation to a hostile attempt. These are not aggressive, but precautionary measures; and without them, according to the Duke, we cannot consider ourselves secure.

Such are the proposals which Cobden and his clique – we are sorry to observe a gentleman like Sir William Molesworth among them – are prepared to resist to the last. They want no defences at all. They are opposed to any augmentation of the army. They would rather do without it, or reduce the establishment so as to make the national saving equivalent to the diminished amount of revenue consequent upon their commercial experiments. They look upon free-trade as a universal panacea which is to cure all national and social ailments, and to remedy every grievance. War is to be no more – territorial aggressions unknown – and the advent of the millennium is to be typified by an unbounded exportation of calico!

These are the views which have been lately propounded at Manchester, and the parties are therefore at issue. Cobden has matched himself against Wellington, and Quaker Bright has volunteered to be his bottle-holder. We really wish that it had been permitted us to approach the argument without mingling with it any asperity. But this is now totally out of the question. The disgusting and vulgar language which Mr Cobden has thought fit to use towards the greatest historical character of the age – the low-minded scurrility which pervades

the whole of his egotistical discourse, – put him beyond the pale of conventional courtesy, or even of dignified rebuke. The man who could stand up in his place – no matter what audience was before him – stigmatise the Duke of Wellington as being in his old age a whetter and fomenter of discord, and finally insinuate *dotage* as the only intelligible excuse, deserves, if there is a spark of national feeling left, to be publicly pilloried throughout Britain. "Would it not," says this disloyal prater, "have been a better employment for him to have been *preaching forgiveness for*, and oblivion of the past, than in reviving the recollection of Toulon, Paris, and Waterloo?" Forgiveness! and for what? For having vindicated the rights of the nations, terminated the insatiable career of Napoleon's rapine, and restored to us that peace which he is still desirous to preserve by maintaining Britain invulnerable, secure, and free!

But let us pass from a matter so deeply discreditable both to the speaker, and to the audience that applauded his sentiments. Meanly as we think of the latter, we are yet to believe that the next morning brought to many some feelings of compunction and of shame. Not so the former, who, wrapped up in the panoply of his own ridiculous conceit, a would-be Gracchus, must remain a Thersites for ever.

Irrespective of the purse argument, which, as a matter of course, is the chief motive of these gentry, the free-traders attempt to brand the Duke of Wellington with a charge of attempting to raise a hostile feeling between this country and the

continental states. The accusation is as false as it is frivolous. The attitude of Britain is not, and never will be, aggressive. She is at this moment in the proud position of the mighty mediator of Europe; and it is to her strong right arm, and not to her powers of producing calico, that she owes that ascendency. Our interest clearly and incontestibly is to maintain peace, but that we cannot hope to maintain, if we abandon the power to enforce it. Among nations as among individuals, the weak cannot hope to prosper in active competition with the strong – nay, they are even in a worse position, because the law will protect individuals, whilst to nations there exists no common Court of Appeal. If we are content to renounce our position, and to give up our foreign possessions – a consummation which the free-trade theorists appear abundantly to desire – if we are to confine ourselves simply to our insular boundaries, and advertise as the workshop of the world – then, indeed, we shall surrender our supremacy, and with it the hope of maintaining peace. Can these men read no lessons from history? Does the sight of what is daily acting around them justify their anticipations of a millennium? What is the real state of the fact? Russia, having absorbed Poland, is now engaged in a territorial war with the Circassians, upon which she has already expended an enormous amount of treasure and of men; and she is prepared for a double sacrifice, if by such means she can gain possession of the passes which are the keys to southern Asia. Austria is hanging upon the skirts of Italy, concentrating her forces upon the frontier, and menacing

an immediate invasion. Very lamb-like and pacific has been the conduct of America to Mexico. As for the French, whom Cobden eulogises as the most "affectionate and domesticated race on the face of the earth" – did the man ever hear of the Revolution? – they are notoriously the most aggressive of all the European nations. Did domestic feelings excite them to the conquest of Algeria? Did affection lead them to Tahiti? Was it a mania for free-trade that brought about the Montpensier marriage? Really it is difficult to know for which palm, that of ignorance or effrontery, this Manchester manufacturer is contending. Has he forgot the Joinville letter, which was hailed with such rapture on the other side of the Channel? Was Paris fortified without a purpose? Is he blind to the fact that the peace of Europe at this moment depends upon the life of a man now in his seventy-fifth year? We maintain that there never was a period, at least within our recollection, when the maintenance of general tranquillity throughout Europe was more precarious. And yet, this is the very moment which Mr Cobden selects for a crusade, or rather a tirade, against our military establishments!

Our feelings are any thing but those of dislike towards the "affectionate and domesticated" French. We admire their genius, and read their novels, – and we have a peculiar affection for their wine. In one point alone we agree with Mr Cobden. We still retain the ancient Caledonian predilection for claret in competition with port, and we should be sorry to be deprived of champagne. Still sorrier should we be to lose our annual

spring trip to Paris; to be banished from the Boulevards and the Palais Royal, and to enjoy only in memory those delicious dinners at the Rocher de Cancale. We have no wish to run the risk of a compulsory detention at Verdun. Nay, we shall go further, and apprise Mr Cobden, that had our lot been cast a few centuries back, we should in all probability have been fervent maintainers of the ancient bond of alliance between King Achaius of Scotland and the Emperor Charlemagne; and nothing would have given us greater pleasure than to have visited Manchester along with a few thousand lads who swore by Saint Andrew, whilst the partisans of Denis were amusing themselves in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth. But times have changed. We have contracted an alliance with the nation of which Mr Cobden is so creditable a representative; and upon the whole, we are not altogether dissatisfied with the arrangement. We can now look upon the French with an eye undimmed by affection; and we must confess that we have very little, if any, faith in that marvellous change of their character which is sworn to by the Manchester spouters. They may be very excellent fellows, but we would rather not trust them with our keys. The tone and temper of a nation do not alter quite so rapidly as Mr Cobden seems to suppose. The history of Algeria is a very significant hint that the old ideas of the French on the score of conquest are not yet wholly obliterated; and we should rather imagine that they have not quite forgotten their pristine appetite for plunder. They deserve, however, considerable credit for the dexterous manner

in which they have thrown dust into the eyes of Mr Cobden. You would think, to hear the man, that he is an inoculated Frenchman. Presume to criticise their character, and his scream is like that of a railway engine. Just hint that you consider them unscrupulous, and our calico-printer overboils "with horror and shame and indignation." We have no doubt that he considers it a great pity that history cannot be annihilated – that is, supposing he has ever condescended to notice any thing so trivial as history. Will he not favour the world with a new version of the French Revolution? We are anxious to hear his grounds for supposing the French to be an "affectionate and domestic people;" and since we are, to fraternise with them altogether, it would be comfortable to know our brethren as they really are. We want to have a true account of the Noyades. Were these really wholesale drownings, or a mere ebullition of national fun? Doubtless, there is much humour – though we have not yet been able to see it – in the clanking of the guillotine; and the expeditions to Moscow and Madrid, with their accompanying tales of rapine and butchery, may possibly be demonstrated by Mr Cobden as instances of a practical joke. Davoust, as the Hamburgians know, was a fine fellow; and so, upon examination, may prove Robespierre and Marat. Perhaps, too, he will come down a little later, and tell us the particulars of the gallant and gentleman-like behaviour of M. Dupetit-Thouars towards Queen Pomare. Or will he undertake to prove that Abd-el-Kader is an infamous scoundrel, utterly beyond the pale or security of national faith and of plighted honour?

It is plain, either that Mr Cobden has been egregiously humbugged by the acute foreigners, or that he has subsided into a state of calm, settled, and imperturbable idiocy. It is too cruel in Bright to parade in such a way his former friend and master, and to quote from his private correspondence. We wonder what is Sir Robert Peel's present opinion of the man whom he chose to bespatter with his praise, and for whose sake he was content to forfeit the elaborate reputation of a life-time. But bad as Cobden may be, he is fairly surpassed in Gallic enthusiasm by the notorious George Thompson, whose patriotism may be gathered from the tone of the following paragraph: – "Why, what were the toasts given at the sixty reform banquets of France? This has been one of their toasts at least, 'Fraternity, liberty, equality.' Let us echo from these shores the shouts that have been raised there, and I am sorry to say, stifled, so far as Paris is concerned, for the banquet did not come off there. Let us send back the echo, fraternity, liberty, equality!" And this pestilential raving has been applauded to the echo in Manchester.

Let us have peace with the French by all means, and with all the world beside; but let us not fall into the despicable and stupid blunder of supposing that human passion and human prejudice, the lust for power, and the cravings of ambition, can ever be eradicated by any system of commercial arrangement. Britain is naturally an object of envy to all the continental states. It is her strength and position which have hitherto maintained the balance of power – and of that the European states are fully

and painfully aware. Every step which can tend to weaken the fidelity of her colonies, is regarded with intense interest abroad, and more especially in France. The people of that country envy us for our wealth, and dislike us for our power; and war with Britain, could the French afford it, would at any time find a host of advocates. We are not believers in the probability of such an event, if we keep ourselves reasonably prepared; but the very first relaxation upon our part would inevitably tend to accelerate it. It is quite possible that France may yet have to undergo another dynastic convulsion. The death of Louis Philippe may be the signal for intestine disorder. The Count of Paris is a mere boy, and popularity is not on the side of his uncle and guardian. A powerful party still exists, acknowledging no king save the rightful heir of St Louis; and the fanatical republican section is still strong and virulent. These are things which it would be imprudent to disregard, and of which no man living can venture to predict the result. The death of the Queen of Spain would, according to all appearances, give rise to a rupture with France, and possibly test, within a shorter period than we could have believed, the sufficiency of our national defences. There is at this moment every reason why our real strength and power should be made apparent to the world, and our weakness, where it does exist, immediately remedied and repaired.

Had the Duke of Wellington proposed, like Friar Bacon in Greene's old play,

"To girt fair England with a wall of brass,"

the outcry could not have been greater. An iron wall might perhaps have been rather popular in the mining districts. But his Grace proposes no such thing. He only suggests the propriety of a small augmentation of the regular forces at home, the strengthening of our neglected fortifications, and the gradual reimbodiment of the militia. It is for the British nation, or rather its representatives, to adopt or reject the proposal. Now, it is worth while that we should keep in mind what is our actual disposable force at present.

According to the most recent authorities, the armies of the principal European powers would rank as follows:

Russia,	568,000
Austria,	414,000
France,	340,000
Prussia, Bavaria, and other German	268,128
Britain,	138,895

The disproportion of force exhibited by this list is sufficiently obvious; but when we descend to particulars, it will in reality be found much greater. Abroad, the majority of the male population are trained to the use of arms: with us it is notoriously the reverse. France, in the course of one week, could materially

increase the amount of her regular army; whilst here that would be obviously impossible. Beyond Algeria, France has almost no colonies as stations for her standing force. We have to provide for the East and West Indies, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Cape, Ceylon, Hong Kong, the Mauritius, Gibraltar, Malta, the Ionian Islands, and others. The profession of the British soldier is any thing but a sinecure. A great portion of his life must be spent abroad; he may be called upon to undergo the most rapid vicissitudes of climate, to pass from one hemisphere to another in the discharge of his anxious duty. There is no service in the world more trying or severe; and it very ill becomes Mr Cobden, or any of his class, to sneer at that establishment, which is kept up for the direct promotion of our commerce. So large a portion of the territorial surface of the world is nowhere defended at so little cost either of money or of men. Indeed, as recent events have shown, we are but too apt to save the one at the expense of the other. No doubt, if the free-trade policy is carried out to the uttermost – if our colonies are to be thrown away as useless, and our foreign stations dismantled, we might submit to a still further reduction. France will be too happy to receive Gibraltar or Malta from our hands, and will cheerfully free us from the expense of maintaining garrisons there. Let us but make over to that affectionate and domesticated people the keys of the Mediterranean, and we shall soon see with what eagerness they will co-operate in the dissemination of Mr Cobden's free-trade dogmas.

Apart from the colonies, we have a serious difficulty at home. Ireland – that most wretched and ungrateful country, which no experience can improve – is as far from tranquillity as ever. The hard-working population of Britain submitted last year without a murmur to an exorbitant taxation, for the purpose of relieving the distress occasioned by the failure of the potato crop. The return is a howl of defiance from the brutal demagogue, and an immediate increase of murder and of crime. Notwithstanding every kind of remedial measure – notwithstanding their exemption, which is an injustice to us, from many of the heaviest burdens of the state – notwithstanding the mistaken policy which fostered their institutions and their schools, the Roman Catholics of Ireland stand out in bad pre-eminence, as the most cold-blooded, unthankful, and cowardly assassins of the world. In order to repress that outrage, which is so villanously rife among them, and which nothing but physical force can restrain from breaking out into open rebellion, we are compelled at all times to keep the largest portion of our remanent disposable force quartered in Ireland. The consequence is, that a mere handful of our standing army is left in Great Britain.

If Mr Cobden should like to see a little terrestrial paradise, in which few birds, with that gaudy plumage which is so offensive to his eyes, can be found, he had better come down to Scotland, and pay us another visit. He is kind enough, we observe, to make himself the mouthpiece of our sentiments upon this matter of the defences; and, certainly, if there be any truth in the adage that we

are entitled at least to see what we are paying for, Scotland has no reason to be peculiarly warlike in her sentiments. Mr Cobden will find us quite as affectionate and domesticated a people as the French; and he may rely upon it, that he will not be shocked by any over-blaze of scarlet. From a turbulent, we have gradually settled down to be a quiet race; and as a natural consequence, we share in none of those benefits which are heaped so liberally upon the "persecuted Irish." Our only excitements are a Church squabble, which does not require the interference of the military, but exhausts itself in the public prints; or a bread row, which is always over, long before a detachment can be brought from the nearest station, it may be at the distance of some hundred miles. We are never noticed in Parliament, except to be praised for our good behaviour, or to have some remaining fragment of our national establishments reduced. We pay for an army and a navy which we never see; indeed, of late years the French and Danish flags have been far more frequently displayed upon our coasts than the broad pendant of Great Britain. In many of our counties a soldier is an unknown rarity; and the only drum that has been heard for the last thirty years, is in the peaceable possession of the town-crier. England, we apprehend, except in the immediate neighbourhood of the metropolis and of Manchester, is not much better supplied: in short, so far as Britain is concerned, we have a remarkably insufficient force, and one which has been declared by the highest military authority alive, wholly incompetent for our protection in the case of an attempted invasion. Cobden,

who has no veneration for successful warriors, having feathered his nest very pleasantly otherwise, admits that he has not the slightest practical knowledge of the trade of war. We therefore demur to his position that this is a question for civilians to determine, and that military and naval men have nothing to do with it. His previous admission involves an inconsistency. He might as well say, that, having no acquaintance whatever with engineering, he is entitled to deliver his opinions in opposition to Walker or Stephenson, on the construction of a skew bridge, or the practicability of boring a tunnel. If one of those vessels in the Tagus, which, according to Cobden, are kept there for the sole purpose of instructing our seamen in the culture of the geranium, was to spring a leak, we should assuredly apply to Jack Chips, the carpenter, to stop it, before invoking the aid of the peripatetic apostle of free-trade. And just so is it with the state of our national defences. Manchester must excuse us, if we prefer the testimony of the Duke of Wellington upon this point to the more dubious experiences of Cobden. It is, of course, quite another question, whether the leak shall be stopped, or the vessel permitted to founder peaceably. Mr Cobden may be heard upon that point, under special reference to the magnitude of the stake which he hazards, but we decline receiving his opinion on the subject of military fortifications. He can no more pronounce a judgement on the adequate state of our defences, than he can parse a paragraph of Xenophon; and therefore, by approaching the subject, he has been guilty of presumption and impertinence.

Mr Cobden proposes that we should rely upon the maintenance of peace by removing all obstacles to invasion. He admits, indeed, that for the present he is in a minority, but he hopes very soon to change it to a majority, and until that time comes he is content to remain in the following position: – "I say this, I am for acting justly and fairly, and holding out the olive branch to the whole world; and I will then take upon myself, *so far as my share goes*, all the risk of any thing happening to ME, without paying for another soldier or another sailor." This is good! What a glorious insurance is here offered to the nation against the risk of foreign aggression! If every man, woman, and child in this mighty empire will remain satisfied without the means of repelling foreign invasion, the magnanimous Cobden will take his risk, *so far as his share goes*, of all that may happen to HIM! Why, who the deuce cares what happens to him or his? Are we all engrossed in Cobden's weal or woe? Would it matter one straw to us, or to the universe, if he and his calico print-works were wrapped in universal conflagration to-morrow? This is, without exception, the most impudent offer of guarantee which we ever remember to have heard of; and it justifies us in remarking that, if all accounts be true, Mr Cobden would be no very great loser by the immediate advent of the French. If any thing happens to him, he may be assured of this, that notwithstanding his cautious salvo, he will have no claim for damage and loss, and little commiseration from any quarter whatsoever. Is the man insane enough to suppose, that he, armed

with his olive branch, stands forth as prominently in the eyes of the world as if he were a sign of the Zodiac? Curtius, who leaped into the gulf in the Forum, which would not close until the most precious thing of Rome was thrown into it, shrinks into insignificance, and becomes absolutely bashful, when compared with the emulous Cobden. According to the Man-in-the-Moon, Curtius was pronounced by the Flamen to be the most precious fool of his day, but in point of conceit he is fairly trumped by the honourable member for the West Riding of Yorkshire. In his opinion there is nothing worth protecting save an inland mill, and he does not care what becomes of our arsenals so long as there is an immunity for calico!

If there are no armaments, thinks Mr Cobden, there can be no wars; and for once he is tolerably right. If iron did not exist there could be no swords; and without gunpowder, or its modern substitute cotton, a discharge of musketry is impossible. But unfortunately there are other armaments besides ours, and no symptom whatever of their reduction. Here the reciprocity theory is once more brought into play. Let Britain be the first to set the example, and every other nation will follow in her wake. Cannons, by unanimous consent, will be spiked, banners handed over to the respectable fraternity of Odd Fellows, and the soldier condemned to the stiffing walls of the factory, never more to stand at ease. Such are the dreams of Cobden; and if he really believes in them, and in the actual regeneration of human nature by means of free-trade instead of religion, we

should like to see him try the experiment on a minor scale. Let him, after having collected within his premises as much plate as he can conveniently acquire, and as much cash as he is worth, dispense with the unnecessary precautions of lock and key; let him dismiss the watchmen from his works, and put up an advertisement that the whole public are welcome to enter at any hour they please, and that not the slightest attempt at resistance will be offered. We presume that the Manchester operatives are at least as affectionate and domesticated as the French; but, notwithstanding that, we should entertain some apprehension as to the fate of Mr Cobden's spoons. The temptation would really be too great. The seeming solidity of the albata plate or purified nickel-silver would infallibly tempt the cupidity of some affectionate artisan. A midnight visit would be paid, and on the morrow there would be wail for the missing tureen! To be consistent, we should begin with municipal reforms. Let us proclaim honesty as a universal principle, do away with the police, abolish Chubb, and keep our doors wide open for ingress as well as for ventilation. If our greatcoats disappear not, if umbrellas are not less, and if the tale of our forks is complete after a reasonable lease of the experiment, we shall then have acquired some data for making a further trial, and intrusting the wealth of Great Britain to the forbearance of our foreign neighbours.

When Blucher, on his visit to this country after the war, rode through the streets of London, he was observed, amidst all the

shouts of acclamation, to be peering curiously at the windows of the shops, which then, as now, exhibited a tempting and valuable display. When asked what he thought of the metropolis, the worthy veteran replied with a deep sigh, whilst a tear rolled down his venerable cheek – "Mein Gott! What a city for to sack!" Such were the first impressions of old Marshal Forwards; and, with all deference to Cobden's sagacity, we suspect that the amiable French, if they had it in their power, would not be slow to realise the sentiments. Indeed, his Royal Highness the Prince of Joinville, being of an open and candid nature, does not hesitate to acknowledge it in as many words. We do not think a whit the worse of Joinville for saying so: on the contrary, we are obliged to him, and, if wise, we shall treasure the hint. He merely speaks the sentiments of a large portion of his countrymen, who very probably have no abstract wish for war, and would rather let things rest as they are. Of all nations in the world, the French have the best possible excuse for reducing their armaments, since France is inundated with troops, and they have few foreign territorial possessions. As compared with Britain proper, France could afford to shake off nearly three-fourths of her establishment, and yet remain upon an equality; but although Algeria may now be considered as safe and tranquil, there are no demonstrations of the kind. The French army is organised and ready to act upon any emergency: ours is too small, is dispersed, and we have not an adequate reserve at home.

Whilst, therefore, the possibility of an invasion remains, we

are bound on every consideration of prudence and of policy, to act as if the probability were likewise at hand. The youngest of us has seen too many changes and revolutions – too many political disagreements and jarrings among the European family, to prophesy with confidence that these shall never be renewed. Even in commerce we have not got reciprocity, and we cannot expect to get it in the more abstract point of armaments. Woodburne House was better fortified by Dominie Sampson's folios, than Britain possibly could be by bales of Cobden's cotton. Our sincere belief is, that the surest method of accelerating a war is to take the advice of the Manchester demagogues, repudiate the ideas of the Duke of Wellington, and remain in stupid inactivity. It was necessary for public safety that this matter should be laid before the country; and the Duke for doing so may yet deserve a debt of gratitude, which will amply recompense him for the vulgar contumely of a host of disloyal bagmen. But it would be preposterous to suppose that the discussion which has arisen at home has not attracted deep observation abroad. The eyes of Europe are upon us, watching what course we are to adopt; and France in particular is waiting, with indrawn breath and tremulous anxiety, the result of the coming discussion. Our weakness at home is now apparent to the world; we cannot conceal it; the sole question is, whether we shall apply the remedy.

Admit the possibility, and the question is a serious one indeed! Let us suppose that, from some unforeseen accident, some

stoppage in the wheels of diplomacy, or some untoward casualty, war was declared between Great Britain and France, or even any other continental power. Such an event could not happen without dividing the nations of Europe. We could not afford to withdraw our forces from the colonies, because these would probably be made the earliest points of attack, – nor from Ireland, except at the immediate and imminent risk of a rebellion. Even should it be thought prudent to leave the colonies to their fate, the transport of the garrisons would involve a considerable period of time – a fact of which our enemy must be aware, and of which he would be foolish not to take advantage. We should be compelled to recruit immediately, and upon a large scale; and it would take some time to metamorphose Mr Cobden's operatives, or even that respectable senator himself, into any thing like the semblance of soldiers. If fifty thousand armed men were to be landed on the southern coast – and no one seems to doubt the possibility of such an occurrence – we should like to know what are our means of resistance? We have read a good many letters upon the subject, in the daily prints – some of them apparently by ex-military men, and some by politicians of the school of Tomkins and Cobden – but not one of them has been able to make out a decent case of opposition. The best, and, indeed, the only rational letters, proceed upon the supposition that there would be a general rising *en masse* of the English population – that every hawbuck would turn out with a musket to repel the invaders, and that the railways from London would vomit forth a cloud of intrepid musketeers.

Every hedge, they think, would be manned, and every farm-house a sort of minor fortress. Now, with all submission, this is downright deplorable drivel. Ever since the English people – and that is now a very old story – have given up the use and exercise of arms, and agreed to be mulcted in purse, rather than undergo the personal fatigue and annoyance of exercise, there has been no martial spirit at all exhibited by the bulk of the population. No doubt, when an invasion was actually threatened by Napoleon, and three hundred thousand men were assembled at Boulogne, there were large demonstrations of volunteer activity; but then, it must be remembered that we were in the very height and fever of a war – the belligerent spirit and strong antipathy to France had prepared us for such a crisis, and we had not been besotted and enfeebled by more than thirty years of peace, and almost as many of gradual but sure demoralisation. We had not then adopted such men as the Manchester Jacobins for our teachers; we were then content to be national and not cosmopolitan in our ideas. We were fighting for our faith and our freedom – not truckling for calico or for yarn. The same crisis is not likely to occur again, and we cannot – dare not venture to calculate upon a similar demonstration of energy. Free-trade and liberal measures have put that utterly beyond our power. We have no more doubt than we have of our own existence, that a body of men of Mr Cobden's way of thinking could be found in this country, ready to contract with the French government for conveying over to Britain an invading army at the rate of eight shillings

a-head, victuals included; and, if the weather was stormy, they would unquestionably clear a handsome profit by the speculation. Morals have nothing earthly to do with free-trade – patriotism is opposed to it – and why make any distinction between the freightage of Frenchmen and of bullocks? The contractors, of course, would take care that their own premises were sufficiently far removed from the scene of immediate action; and we cannot pitch upon a fitter locality than that which is exhibited in Manchester.

We would ask any or all of those gentlemen who depend upon a general rising, to take the trouble, for some half hour or so, to revert to history. If they do so, and seriously think over the matter, they will speedily be convinced that an invasion is by no means a difficult matter, and that no reliance whatever can be placed upon the co-operation of the undisciplined people, either of the country or the metropolis, in the event of an actual invasion. In fact, judging from history, Paris is literally impregnable compared with London, and yet it has been occupied by the Allies. In 1688, William of Orange, a foreign prince, having no claim to the crown, and against the will of the people of England, whatever may be said of the aristocracy, landed in Britain, advanced to London, and took the throne, without the slightest demonstration of hostility. The population were perfectly quiescent. It was not their business to fight: they paid for an army; and accordingly they allowed the Orangeman to march on, just as they would do to Joinville,

provided he desired his troops to be reasonably accommodating and civil. Sack and rapine might undoubtedly provoke resistance; but if ordinary courtesy were used, and more especially if the French proclaimed that they came upon a free-trade errand, and a friendly visit to Mr Cobden, there would be far fewer shots fired, than at the present moment are resounding from the peaceful hedgerows of Tipperary.

The next instance we select – omitting minor efforts – is the enterprise of 1745, which peculiarly concerns Scotland, and of which we are by no means ashamed. The heir of the Stuarts landed in the North, supported by no force at all. The clans, to their immortal honour, and a portion of the best Lowland blood of Scotland, maintaining those principles of loyalty which free-trade cannot comprehend, assumed the white cockade, and after thrashing the English army effectually at Prestonpans, marched south, on the desperate errand of displacing the reigning dynasty. And how were they received? It is important to note the idea which the English people had, at that time, of the Highlanders. They considered them a race of cannibals who ate children; so that it was no uncommon matter, when a Highland officer entered a house, to find the mistress on her knees, praying for a Lenten diet, whilst the terrified urchins were all the while concealed beneath the bed. Such is the positive fact; and yet we will venture to say, that there never was, in the history of the world, an instance of a more blameless or more humane invasion. Donald, though quite ready to cleave a bearded Hanoverian to

the chin, had an extreme weakness for children, and would not, on any provocation, have insulted a defenceless woman. Had Mr Cobden fallen into his hands, the Highlander, after a due estimate of his physical capabilities, would probably have put him to ransom for a quarter of a pound of tobacco. The feeling in England was not in favour of the exiled family, the antipathy to the Highlanders was extreme, and yet an irregular and ill-disciplined host of about six thousand men, with no artillery, no commissariat, and a mere handful of cavalry, penetrated into the heart of England without any show of popular opposition, and reached Derby without the loss of a single man. It is not difficult to understand why Manchester is so uproarious against the military, when we recall to mind the splendid instance of poltroonery exhibited by the manufacturing capital on that memorable occasion. The town of Manchester was captured by a Scots sergeant of the name of Walter Dickson, who, supported by a drummer and a wench, took possession of it in name of Prince Charles, four-and-twenty hours before the clans came up! Not a magistrate was to be found bold enough to issue his warrant against the intruder, nor a constable to execute it, nor a single operative to support it. There was no talk then about finding graves for the invaders: the invaded were quite content with finding cellars for their own particular shelter. Gentlemen who had talked big enough when the danger was at a distance, recoiled at the idea of personal peril, whenever the danger drew nigh; and, being unsupported by a regular force, very prudently

abstained from opposing their persons to the terrible sweep of the claymore. But for internal dissensions and some infirmity of purpose, it is now beyond a doubt that the clans might have penetrated, without any opposition, to London. So little martial spirit was exhibited in the capital, that parties were actually made and carriages engaged for Caxton, to see the Highlanders march by; and George the Second was in full preparation for removing, and had stowed away his valuables in his yachts. As it was, the invaders returned back to their own country almost as scaithless as they came, without any experience of that fiery and patriotic spirit which the correspondents of the newspapers profess to discover blazing within the bosom of every Briton at the mere idea of an invasion.

In fact, it is mere trash to maintain that raw levies or extempore guerilla resistance can be of the slightest use in opposition to a disciplined force. For ourselves, we do not believe that such resistance would be attempted. Men require to be brought together and trained before their individual stanchness can be relied on; and we know perfectly well that a mob has no chance, at any time, against an immeasurably smaller body, if properly organised and directed. Let the people of this country be disciplined and accustomed to the use of arms, and you may search the world in vain for braver or better soldiers. But the power is still latent, and, according to Cobden, it never must be called forth. This is mischievous and stupid folly. If any thing is to be done at all, it must be done regularly and

effectively. Let us have the knowledge, the certainty that, at a few hours' notice, a formidable body of troops, well disciplined and prepared, can be concentrated at any given point of the island, – let this fact be made known to the world, and we have a far better security for the maintenance of peace than if we were to adopt the stupid and pragmatical notions of Mr Cobden. Mr Disraeli took a sound view of the case, when he reminded the honourable member, "that although the profound peace which he had announced might come within the time of those who heard him, still there was something in the catastrophes of nations *sœvior armis*, – catastrophes from other causes leading to their decay. Happily in those causes the limited experience of the Roman empire had not included the rapacity of rival industry, and the quackery of economic science." We are afraid that the lesson which Mr Disraeli attempted to inculcate – one which, of late years, we have repeatedly insisted on in these pages – was somewhat thrown away upon his pupil. Gentlemen of the Cobden school set little store upon the philosophy of history, and prefer to reason within the limits of their own experience. They can as little explain the causes of the decline of ancient empires, as they can account for the palpable falling off in the amount of our exports; and it is idle to remind men of things which they have never heard. It is not to them, but to the intelligent classes of the community, that we would fain address our argument. There is a remarkable and striking analogy between the present state of the country, and the position of England at the time of the Highland

descent in 1745. The nation had become accustomed to peace at home, and was therefore proportionally enervated. The use of arms, and the training of the militia had been abandoned; a false economy had reduced the numbers of the regular forces; and the greater proportion of those which remained were abroad. Under those circumstances the expedition took place: the weakness of the front exhibited by England was the temptation, and we have already seen the consequences. It is now seriously proposed that we shall remain liable to a similar assault, when the stake at issue is incomparably greater. What would be the result of a swoop upon London according to the published Joinville plan? and yet there is hardly another capital in Europe, which has not during the last fifty years been occupied by a hostile force.

We have all an interest in this question, for a descent may be made any where. We have not even the benefit of ships to protect us here in the North; and three or four French frigates would, we apprehend, find little difficulty in effecting a landing in the Forth. Will Mr Cobden be good enough to favour us with his opinion as to the course we should pursue, supposing such a calamity to happen? A simultaneous attack may be made on the south of England, and the Castle and Piershill barracks emptied for the purpose of reinforcing Portsmouth, too weak to maintain itself without their aid. Would he advise us to resist or succumb? Shall we throw ourselves under the protection of our friend George M'Whirter, W.S., and the Edinburgh squadron of the Royal Mid-Lothian Yeomanry? Shall we sound the tocsin of war, and call

out Captain Haining with his reserved band of twenty police, all fierce and furious for battle? Shall we persuade the Archers to string their bows, and compete for the Goose medal with a fire-eating Frenchman as the butt? Shall we barricade Leith Walk, block up the Granton Railway in the teeth of a suspension and interdict, and contest, to the last drop of our blood, the possession of every house in Inverleith Row? May we calculate upon any support from the middle districts of England in the event of such a calamity? Will Mr Bright array himself in drab armour, and come to our rescue, with Welford the flower of chivalry, who has a special objection to guns? Can we depend upon Cobden himself? Will he pledge himself to back us at our need with an overpowering army from the factories, clad in calico, and armed with the tremendous and invincible billy-roller? Will George Thompson, chief of a thousand wordy fights, be there, – or Wilson, ex-monarch of the league? Shall we send them the beacon blaze, or – faster still – the telegraphic signal to the south imploring immediate succour? Or shall we trust to their own noble impulses, and hold —

> Ye need not warn the Cobden clan,
> That ever are stout and true;
> And when they see the blazing bale,
> The Brights and Thompsons never fail!

Indeed, if we are to believe the last mentioned gentleman, we have that assurance already, for he has spoken as follows: – "I

may venture to foretell that the Free-Trade Hall, of Manchester will be more than a match for Apsley House and the Horse Guards put together;" – a highly satisfactory account of the town which was whilom captured by a sergeant!

Upon the whole, unless we can come to a serious understanding with Manchester, we have grave doubts as to the propriety of offering any very obstinate resistance. If we are to do it, we must send off all the women to the Trosachs by the Scottish Central Railway, and perhaps it would be as well for all of us to join the Celtic Society, and fight the battles of our country in the pass of Roderick Dhu. An honourable capitulation, on the understanding that the French were to behave themselves, would probably be the wisest course we could pursue under the circumstances. We love George M'Whirter, and have every confidence in his valour, but we could not bear to see him gasping in his gore; and therefore, unless the regulars are forthcoming, or the Manchester legion on their way, he had better fall back with his comrades upon the western warriors of Dalmahoy. The number of our guardians of the night is at present so small, that we positively cannot afford to spare even one of them as food for powder. It would, we fear, be imprudent to risk the fate of the Scottish capital upon the issue of a combat between our dashing Toxophilites and a body of French artillery, and we are reluctantly compelled to admit that there was some truth in Major Dalgetty's sarcasm against bows and arrows. And now, having gone over the catalogue of our available native forces, which is

not quite so long as the Homeric muster-roll of the ships, will any body tell us what we are to do? It would be a sore humiliation were we compelled to illuminate Holyrood, and give a grand ball in honour of the Duc D'Aumale, and our other ancient and now redintegrated allies. But if you abolish the British uniform, and allow the French to supersede it, what else can you expect? We want to be loyal if you will only tell us how – if not, we see nothing for it but the illumination and the ball.

Mr Cobden is pleased to be especially bitter upon the "horrid trade" of soldiering. He characterises it as barbarous and damnable, and would be rid of it at all risks. Now, setting aside the idiocy of his remarks, there is a monstrous deal of ingratitude in this language of the free-trade apostle. Had it not been for our arms, where would our market have been? If we had succumbed to France instead of humbling her at Waterloo – and we presume that Mr Cobden would have preferred the former alternative, since he thinks that the Duke should now be preaching forgiveness for the past – where would have been our trade, and where our exportations of calico? Hindostan is an acquired country, and British arms have opened up the markets of China; and are these commercial evils? Really it is throwing away language to attempt enforcing a point so clear as this. Commerce owes every thing to the exertions and protection of that military power which these purblind theorists complain of; and were our armaments abolished to-morrow, we should look round us in vain for a customer.

And pray what does the arrogant upstart mean by characterising the honourable profession of a soldier as a damnable trade? Does he intend to disgorge his contempt and contumely upon the graves of those who fell on the field of battle fighting nobly for their king and country? Are we now to be told that the names which we have written in our annals, and embalmed in our memories, are detestable and odious as those of homicides and of robbers? If it has come to this, and if public scorn is not roused to overwhelm the man who can conceive and utter such ignoble sentiments, then indeed we may believe that demoralisation has partially done its work, and that the mean ethics of Manchester are henceforward to influence the nation. Not damnable nor horrid, unless justice and freedom be so, is the profession of those who have drawn the sword in the service of Britain, and died for the maintenance of order, liberty, and religion. Other trades there are far more liable to such epithets, but with these, thank heaven! we have but little practical acquaintance. The trade of the greedy taskmaster, who rears infants for his mills, and grinds them to their task until the sinews shrivel up and the limbs are warped into early decrepitude – of him who will not recognise the existence of an imperishable soul within the tender framework of the children whom he makes the victims of his avarice – of the advocate of long hours, because thereby he may keep his human machinery under the complete control of exhaustion, – the trade of that man, we say, though it may be tolerated in a Christian land, is but one shade less horrid,

and not a whit less damnable, than that of the slave-trader, who is now chuckling over his living cargoes on the African coast – cargoes for which he is indebted to the enlightened legislation of Mr Cobden and his liberal confederates! Are these the men who are to revile and traduce our army? Faugh! The leprosy of mammon is upon them, and our nature recoils from their breath.

In conclusion, let us express a fervent hope that we have heard the last of this dull and deplorable drivelling. It is to the credit of the Whigs, that, far as they have been led astray by adopting the newfangled political doctrines, rather, as we believe, for the sake of maintaining power than from any belief in their efficacy, they have declined all participation with the Manchester crew in their recent attempt to lower the position and diminish the influence of Great Britain. The chiefs of that party know full well how much we have at stake, and what a responsibility would rest upon their heads, were they to reject the advice of the great captain who has already saved his country, and who again comes forward at the close of life to warn that country of its danger. Mr Cobden likewise is furious with the public press, and charges a large portion of it for refusing to be dragged through the Manchester mire, with having abrogated their duties on this question. We apprehend that the editors of the journals to which he alludes are perfectly competent to the discharge of their duties, without submitting to the dictatorial interference of this very much over-rated and extremely shallow personage. As for the Duke of Wellington, he is not likely to suffer in health

or reputation from any want of respect or veneration on the part of Mr Cobden. His fame is too bright to be polluted by such dirty missiles; and the veriest vagabond who broke the windows of Apsley House would shrink from repeating the insults which fell from the lips of the calico-printer.

In short, our impression in rising from the perusal of this notable speech, is deep surprise that such a man should ever have been made the leader of a popular party, or the representative of a fixed opinion. That it should have been so, is a reflection that cannot be flattering to many of his followers, and least of all to those who threw aside their opinions to undertake the advocacy of his. But the spell is now broken, the mask removed, and we behold the egotist, the railer, and the fanatic. Let us sum up in a few words, for the benefit of posterity, the great free-trader's opinion of the Duke of Wellington, and then take leave of the most discreditable subject which for a long time we have been called upon to notice.

Mr Cobden does not share in the general veneration for the Duke. Mr Cobden thinks that the Duke ought to preach forgiveness for Waterloo. Mr Cobden thinks that every man, possessing the ordinary feelings of humanity, must condemn the Duke for having stated that, in his opinion, the defences of the country are insufficient. Mr Cobden thinks it a lamentable spectacle that the Duke should have written such a letter. Mr Cobden hints that the Duke is a dotard, because he has ventured to express, on a military subject, an opinion contrary to that of

Cobden. And Cobden further maintains, that there is not a more affectionate nor domesticated race on the face of the earth than the French.

After this we need add nothing more. Our opinion of Mr Cobden could be thoroughly expressed in a much shorter sentence.

ROMANISM IN ROME
CATECHISM IN THE MINERVA

"Occidit miseros crambe repetita magistros." – Juvenal.

"Et qui parlant beaucoup ne disent jamais rien." – Boileau.

Visitors to Rome are ofttimes puzzled and surprised at hearing the very unusual affix, *della Minerva*, applied to one of the Christian churches of that city; more especially when they find it also familiarly known to the common people, not so well read as their priests in the calendar of the saints, as La Sta. Minerva; but the apparent misnomer originates in an ellipsis of the full title, which runs thus, *Sta. Maria sopra Minerva*– the church in question having supplanted a temple formerly dedicated to Pallas, upon the ruins of which it has been reared. But though the goddess of wisdom still retains a *nominal* interest in the edifice, certainly, to judge from the catechetical exercises of which we are about to give a specimen, her reign is past, and there remains but the *nominis umbra* in lieu of it. Exorcised the church, she has been fain to accept such a humiliating asylum in the library adjoining, as inquisitorial Dominicans would be likely to afford a heathen goddess, whose proceedings they must narrowly watch. There she has the mortification of hearing, from year to year,

some new relay of "gray-hair'd synods damning books unread," and, club-fashion, blackballing all *her* friends in order to make way for their own; just as old Pope Gregory is said to have burned a whole library of Pagan literature, that the Christian Fathers and Roman Catholic Saints might have more elbow-room; and also that, in the absence of rivals, their authority might not be disputed. "*Fertur beatus Gregorius bibliothecam combussisse gentilum, quo divinæ paginæ gratior esset locus et major auctoritas et diligentia studiosior.*"[1]

At Easter-tide, those who have any curiosity on the subject may hear Bellarmine's Catechism, as it is squealed, bawled, or otherwise intonated by the young children of the different *Riones*, and commented on and explained for their edification by the pedagogue priest of the district. He is generally surrounded at such times by a bevy of from forty to fifty scholars, *gamins* or *gamines* as the case may be; and to work they set with such earnestness of vociferation that all Bedlam and Parnassus, raving and reciting together, could not well surpass the discord: the shrill diapason, peeling through nave and aisle, shakes the floating *Baldaquino*, and makes the trembling walls bellow again, furnishing an apt and lively illustration of the "*convulsaque marmora clamant*" of the poet.

Though we had often frequented the churches at this season, and had scores of times heard questions both asked and answered therein, yet, generally intent on the marbles or monuments of

[1] *Vide* Notes to Pope's *Dunciad*, book iii.

the edifice, we had not hitherto given ear to the proceedings of these obstreperous young bull-calves: but, before leaving Rome definitely, it seemed fair to give them an hour's attention on some convenient opportunity, in order to form an unbiassed judgment of how their early religious education was carried on. One soon presented itself in the above-named church of the Minerva; for, chancing to be there at the right hour on an examination-day, in crossing in front of the black-columned chapel of St Dominick, we came suddenly upon a covey of little girls nestling in one of its corners, under the sumptuous tomb of the thirteenth Benedict, and waiting, all primed, for their instructor. Some, absorbed in the contemplation of the silver crown and faded finery of St Philomel – we trust, at so tender an age, without infringement of the tenth commandment – were delighting themselves in anticipating the day when they too might become saints, and wear similar decorations; others, too young for such speculations, were staring with intense vacancy at the flickering of a tiny lamp, in front of a very dingy-looking madonna, to which one or two, in baby simplicity, were repeating *Latin* creeds, paternosters, and aves. Not knowing exactly how long the preceptor of these small folk might keep them waiting, we left them, and proceeded to the body of the building, where a detachment of boys was already drawn up for action, with their *padre* in the midst. Approaching as softly as might be, we stood against a neighbouring pilaster to hear what might be required of such young pupils, and how they were prepared to acquit themselves. Their incessant movements

did not promise a very sustained attention, whatever might be the business in hand: many of them were evidently plagued with fleas – all with fidgets; some shrugged up their shoulders, others swung themselves by their hands on the form; these were buttoning, those unbuttoning their dress; and not a few warmed their feet by kicking the sounding pavement, and then listening to the echoes from the vaults. Every boy carried a book in his hand; but on these no wandering eye ever looked, not even for an instant, in its numerous glancings round. As soon as the additional commotion, occasioned by the approach of a stranger, had subsided, the priest, harking back to what he had just been saying, and not quite sure of his whereabouts, asks his class touching the last question. "You asked that boy," said one, pointing to a comrade near him, "how he supposed he ought to come to church." "Well," said the priest, resuming his cue, and reverting to the last examinee; "and how did you tell me you were to come?" "*Colle mani giunte così*," said the boy, locking his hands, and standing up as he did so. "*Niente avanti?*" said the priest, glancing at two very dirty paws. "Oh yes! I was to wash them." "*Poi?*" "I was to cross myself as I came out of my room, and to cast down my eyes, like the *Mater Indolorata* yonder." "And then?" "As I came to church, besides looking grave, I was to walk, not *così*" – and he walked a few paces as he ought *not* to walk, – "but *così*" – changing the rhythm of his march – "as if I were following my brother's funeral. *E poi finalmente*," (as he resumed his place with a jerk,) "I was to be seated *so*, and hold my tongue

till the *padre* should address me." "Well, my little man," (to another of the motley class,) "were we not talking about the sacrament?" "Oh yes! no one may receive *that* who has been guilty of any mortal sin." "*Bene*, that's quite right; but *why* not?" The following gabble, to which it was quite obvious that none were of an age to attach *any* meaning, served for a reply, and was received as perfectly satisfactory by the priest: – "*Siccome il pane naturale non può dare vita ad un corpo morto; così il pane della Santissima, Eucaristia non può dare vita ad un anima morta.*" "And what may mortal sins be?" turning to the next scholar. "*Eh! chi lo sa*; who is to tell you that?" said a young butcher's boy, turning off the question, and freely offering it to any one who would take it up. Upon this the boys made much noise, and laughed out lustily, not encountering any reprimand from the *padre*, or so gentle a one as to prove no check to their mirth. At length, quiet being partially restored, he resumed his task, and asked a child of *six* years old to give him an example of mortal sin! Not receiving an answer, this question travelled nearly to the end of the first line before any one would take upon himself to venture even a random response; then, at last, by dint of prompting, one boy suggested, that the tasting food before receiving the sacrament was of such a kind; and having been first much commended for his erudition, was next subjected to a long list of *suppositions* from the examiner; such as, "Suppose I were to drink a little water merely?" "*Niente!* no, you mus'nt." "Well; but suppose I only took a small piece of consecrated wafer?"

"*Ne anchè*; not that neither." "What! would even these small indulgences be infringing the rule?" But as the boy had received an approving "*bene*" for his first negative, he had no difficulty in keeping to his text; and at last the whole class, enjoying the joke of punishing their *padre* by cutting him off from all supplies at every fresh demand, roared out *in chorus*, "*Niente, niente*– you mus'nt touch a bit;" till, tired of the shouting, the good man proceeded to the next interrogatory. We were tiring too; but being really desirous of hearing, if possible, something more to the purpose, remained, notwithstanding, yet another half hour at our post – indeed quite long enough to be sure that "*niente*" was all we were likely to get for our pains. Some of the questions were simply frivolous, many jesuitical, others deeply profound; and whatever their character, all were answered in the same careless and irreverent tone; *à tort et à travers*, according to the fancy of the young respondent. In a word, a more complete waste of time for both teacher and taught could not have been easily devised. The instruction of this and similar classes – for we have no reason to suppose that others differ from it – seems about as intellectual and useful (and no more so) than that of an aviary of parrots in the town of Havre, where the young French *psittaci* chiefly learn their χαιρης, and their "*petits dejeuners*." Alike in quality, it is not very dissimilar neither in the mode of its administration. The shopman proposes the first word of a sentence to the whole community, and the greater or less accuracy with which it is taken up and completed, evinces the relative aptitudes of his tyros; and

though great allowance is always made, in the case of both boy and bird, for transpositions or leavings out, yet the priest, like the parrot-merchant, keeps an eye on the pupil who promises to do most credit to his training, and brings him forward on every public occasion. "In all labour," says Solomon, "there is profit, but the *talk of the lips* tendeth only to poverty." It requires no Solomon to see how completely this is the case here; but there is one particular in which the *padre* really deserves praise, and we cheerfully accord it. The forbearance, the patience, meekness, and *bonhomie* which he exercises in proposing the dull routine of questions, and in listening while the pupils "ring round the same unvaried chimes" in reply, cannot be too much admired. Like the patient schoolmaster in Juvenal, he puts up with all their idleness and inattention – in the very doubtful proficiency of many of his scholars, gives them the favour of the doubt – and, above all, never loses his temper! This drilling and preparation of the district classes has for ulterior object a general field-day,[2] which occurs once a-year; when the congregated schools, in the presence of the canons and other dignitaries of the church, being now supposed fully supplied

> "With stores of spiritual provision,
> And magazines of ammunition,"

for the warfare, are expected

[2] *Italian Sketches*, No. V., August 1843.

"To rise and start the ready wherefore,
To all that sceptic may inquire for;
Then raise their scruples dark and nice,
And solve them after in a trice;
As if divinity had catch'd,
The itch, on purpose to be scratch'd!"

In short, these living *fantoccini* are taught to expose heresies, and expound the dogmas of their faith, in words found for them by their priests; and he who best retains the lesson, and proves himself most loud and overbearing in the exercise, receives, for reward, a crown and royal robe, and is metamorphosed out of the *imp*, which he was an hour before, into the *imperator*; more fortunate by half, in the undisputed tenure of his title for a twelvemonth, than many of his Roman predecessors in the laurel. The little girls have an exhibition somewhat similar, but still more theatric in its character. At Christmas they assemble in the churches, dressed out by their parents (who delight in making them as fine as possible) very much, it must be admitted, like ballet-dancers; but supposed to represent, in their habiliments, youthful Christian virgins and martyrs. Thus apparelled, they hold forth on a platform in front of some favourite *Præsepe*, and sustain, with Pagan rivals, long dialogues on the Nativity, syllogising, in the shrill thin voice of childhood, upon all the sublime mysteries of our faith, till the Pagans abandon the scornful air with which they are taught to commence the

discussion, and confess themselves vanquished by the arguments brought against them. The chief spokeswoman is then rewarded, like the head-boy, with robe and crown, and retains her regal dignity for the same period. Of all such education, what shall we say? Why, truly, in Hudibrastic plainness of speech, that it is

> "More fitted for the cloudy night
> Of Popery, than Gospel light."

Are our British *infant* schools quite free from participation in the defects just noticed? By no means; and though the subject is far too important to be dismissed with a few words at the end of a slight sketch like the present, (especially since we hope to return to it later,) yet, even here, we must glance at one or two blemishes, that lie so immediately on the surface as to strike even the most casual observer, when once his attention is called to them. In such seminaries, it is known, the ages of the children usually vary from eighteen months to six years, at which tender period of life it is almost impossible to exercise too much discretion not to over-burden the memory, or to obscure the dawning reason; but alas! in the always well-meant, but certainly not always judicious, zeal for beginning education betimes, how often is it begun too early and pushed too far! In an over-anxiety to prevent, by pre-occupation of the ground, the arch-enemy of mankind from sowing his tares, how often is the good seed thrown in before it can have a chance of quickening! *Festinare*

lente should be the motto, in moral and religious, as it is in all other branches of education; since neither in religion nor morals can we hope to arrive at the full stature of perfection, but by slow degrees and long training. The Bible, to be sure, (the only true source of either,) is *the* Book for all mankind; but as it contains "strong meat for men," as well as "milk for babes," great judgment is necessary, in separating these diets, to give to each age the food particularly adapted for it. We have the apostolic injunction for such discrimination, – "Every one that uses milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But *strong meat* belongeth to them that are *of full age*; even those who *by reason of use have their senses exercised* to discern both good and evil."[3] It is further obvious, from St Paul's catalogue of the armour which is to resist *all* the attacks of the world, the flesh, and the devil, that it comprises many pieces of which young children can neither be made to comprehend the design, nor, at their time of life, to require the use. How unskilful, then, and abortive must be the attempt to put into the hands of *instinct* the weapons of mature *reason*; to seek to explain the "beauty of holiness" to a child who does not "know his right hand from his left," and to invest an unbreeched urchin in the whole Christian panoply at once! With all due respect, too, to the pains-taking compilers of some of the *manuals* used in these classes, we cannot help thinking that their labour has been at times worse than thrown away; and it has excited our

[3] Epistle to the Hebrews, v. 13, 14.

surprise to hear really judicious[4] persons speak of these lesson-books as "perfectly suited" to the purpose of infant education, and as requiring no amendment. Surely they cannot have read them; or they must have forgotten, when doing so, the *age* and *condition* of those for whom they are intended. Not to be thought captious for nothing, we will let that "*farrago libelli*" – that sausage of all the sciences – that "Teacher's Assistant," speak for itself. It has gone through we know not how many editions, and continues to perpetuate in each succeeding one all the blunders of its predecessors. To begin at the beginning, – The scholars have to learn therefrom as many alphabets as there are letters; a historical, a geographical, a profane, and a biblical alphabet, &c., &c., not to attempt an enumeration of the whole. In the biblical, each letter is put opposite to some proper or *improper* person mentioned in Scripture, for whom it is said to stand representative – (leaving it to be supposed that it has been called into existence for no other purpose.) By this means the *written* character of course becomes associated in the child's mind with the *moral* character of the individual whose initial it is; and thus a certain prejudice is apt to arise against certain letters. For instance, the letter *H* is rendered fearfully significant, —

[4] In an otherwise admirable lecture on schools, which was lately delivered by Professor Blount, at Cambridge, we were surprised to hear a general commendation passed on these books. We feel persuaded, that neither the gravity of the class nor the approval of the Professor would have held out long against the recital of a few extracts.

"*H* stands for Herod, who spilt *infants'* blood!"

A theorist might, perhaps, trace the absence of the aspirate in the speech of maturer years to the awe created by that dread tetrarch's name in infancy, when it is first feebly articulated, then dropped, and not recovered afterwards.[5] But we are not theatrical; in proof whereof, we observe that a child's natural aspirations are for tarts, dolls, or marbles; while, to counteract such propensities, these little hypocrites, before their time, are taught to sing out, among other *Scripture wishes*, the following formulary, which must, of course, act as a specific: —

> "May Isaiah's *hallow'd* fire,
> *All* my *fervent* heart inspire;
> Joseph's *purity* impart!
> Isaac's *meditative* heart!!!"

A rhythmical dispute between two children, entitled a "Sabbath Dialogue," brings to our mind a similar farce at Ferrara, which we have formerly described. In this lively piece of absurdity, the naughty boy invites the good one to play instead

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[5] Notwithstanding their number, we would suggest one more, the "corrective alphabet," in which all the symbols should stand representative for objects agreeable to babes, and, *ex. gr.*, after their innocent lips have been made to falter out Herod's formidable name, we would point to ours, where — H stands for honey, so sweet and so good

of going to church, and, waxing warm as the other proves intractable, at length becomes absolutely abusive on finding he is not to prevail.

Once again. Behold a class of children with the picture of a sheep before them – to be taught, one would have supposed, the natural history of that animal, and to learn something about the material of which their little flannel petticoats and worsted stockings are made; when lo! in place of this, they are informed that "though their sins are red as crimson, they shall be as *wool*!!" If it were necessary to use any interjection here, surely a loud ovine *bah!* would be the most appropriate and natural. But *revenons à nos moutons*, for presently afterwards occurs this question – "What does the Bible tell us about wool?" Answer: "Gideon wrung a fleece!" Bah! again, for what other *commentary* can be made on such *instruction* as this? Why, Jason filched one; and the Lord Chancellor sits upon a woolsack; and either of these answers would convey as much useful knowledge to a child's mind, though they are not to be met with in the Bible.

These unfortunate babes are to know a little of every thing: so, after going through *versified* weights and measures – arithmetic, including the higher branches – geometry – we hardly know what is *omitted* in this most comprehensive miscellany – they arrive at philosophy, and learn a great deal to the tune of "Miss Bailley." We give one stanza out of many, as an example: —

"The wondrous globe on which we live,

Is close surrounded every where
By something quite invisible,
And callèd *atmospheric air*!

This air is fluid, light and thin,
And formed of *gases* well *combined*!
It carries sound and odour well,
But put in motion it is *wind*!"

At the end of each verse, the infant chorus repeats with enthusiasm, not "Poor Miss Bailley! unfortunate Miss Bailley!" &c., but —

"Oh how curious, – wonderfully curious,
The *laws of nature* are indeed
Most wonderfully curious!"

The geography is as good as the physics: —

"A *channel* is a passage wide
That flows from sea to sea;
When narrow it is call'd a *strait*, —
Thanks to Geography!"

•••

"When wise and older I am grown,
I'll try and tell you more,
But Teacher says *enough is known*
An infant's mind to *store*!"

No doubt of it! enough and to spare! This is a fine specimen of the class of truths called *unquestionable*. There is, moreover, a pleasing *enjouement* about this last line, which recommends it to our regard. The teacher seems to be expostulating with her young charge, and saying, "My dear little four-year-old, eager for instruction beyond your years, but fearful of *learning up* every thing at school, – don't be frightened; the world will always find science sufficient to employ all good little boys like you." But though this *truth* be unquestionable, we doubt whether the line which conveys it be genuine; and rather fancy, should the original manuscript turn up, it would be found to run —

"*Enough's enough* an infant's mind to store!"

which, though somewhat harsh to the ear, conveys an excellent meaning. Should this be thought to make the verse too rugged, we have yet a second various reading to propose, and that is simply to change the last word into *bore*, by which means the easy flow of the verse is preserved, and the *significatio prægnans* of the original, though somewhat modified, is maintained.

Notwithstanding these blemishes – which, after our strictures

on foreign classes, we felt bound to point out – our English schools are very far superior to the Italian for the same rank. With us, the attention of government and of the public is roused, and directed to their improvement; laymen join with the clergy in forwarding the same scheme; great part of the tuition devolves upon females – and who so fitted as woman to form the mind at an early age? It is no small advantage, too, that authoresses of talent and judgment should have devoted their time to the composition of exclusively moral and religious tales and histories for the young. Lastly, with us, there is none of that masquerading and display, which we reprobate as forming so prominent a part in all Italian tuition. In these schools, women are excluded from their natural office of teaching; there are no books adapted to infant minds; the whole business is vested in the hands of the priests; and they, in strict compliance with the spirit of their Church, train the pupils in passive obedience to authority, and teach them very little besides. We fear it will be long before any revolution can reach these seminaries. The sense of personal importance attaching – not only to the children themselves, but to their parents – from these contemptible yearly exhibitions, added to the interested motives which induce the Church to foster such vanity, would render any considerable alteration for the better extremely difficult, even were the evil more generally *felt* than we fear it is likely to be under the present system of things. We state this opinion with regret; for what is the tendency of such education? Can it inculcate that real humility, not abasement of

mind, which should characterise the true disciples of our blessed Saviour? Nay, must it not rather, by holding out, as it does, a premium to natural quickness and a superficial acquaintance with the dogmas of theology, tend to foster pride and selfishness – those monster evils which it is the prime object of religion to eradicate – whilst the heart remains untouched and the moral sense unexercised? and will not the poor children, who are its victims, learn to prize a few dry leaves from the Tree of Knowledge, beyond the fair fruit of the Tree of Life?

LA CARA VITA

"Mais où sont les vertus qui dementent les tiennes?
Pour éclipser ton jour quel nouveau jour parait?
Toi qui les remplaças,[6] qui te remplacerait?"

De Lamartine, Harmonies, Hymne au Christ.

The Cara Vita is a small church situated in the Corso, and not possessing within itself any thing to attract the stranger's particular attention. It is interesting, however, from the solemn services which take place there every Friday in Lent. On these occasions, after an exciting harangue from the officiating priest, the lights are extinguished, knotted scourges are handed round by the sacristan, and each individual of the congregation takes

[6] (Les faux dieux.)

one and begins to flagellate himself. We have been told – for we were never present at these exhibitions – that the noise and excitement are terrible – every penitent seeking to ease his inner at the expense of his outer man, and proportioning the amount of his physical suffering to that of the moral evil which it is intended to counteract. But all the ceremonies in the Cara Vita are not of this character; and the same friend who described the above, informed us that the preaching there was often eloquent, and the music always fine; so, when we read in the *Diario di Roma*, that at twelve o'clock on Good Friday there was to be a solemn *funzione*, or Service in commemoration of our Saviour's Passion, and that in all probability the church would be crowded, we repaired thither on that day an hour before the time mentioned in the paper, in order to secure a place. Doubtful of the propriety of witnessing, as a pageant, a representation of the most awful and affecting scene that the mind of man can contemplate, yet fearing, from some experience in Roman ceremonies, that our visit might issue merely in *that*, we lingered some time about the porch; then, pushing aside the heavy curtain, irresolutely entered; and what a contrast presented itself between the two sides of that matted door! It seemed the portal between life and death: light, noise, confusion, reigned without; within, all was dark, solemn, still. The ear that had been stunned by the babel of the streets, was startled at the unwonted calm; and the eye, dazzled by the splendour of the meridian sun upon the pavement, experienced a temporary blindness, and required some time

before it could accommodate its powers to the obscurity of the interior. By degrees, however, it was, apparent that the church, notwithstanding the voiceless quiet which prevailed, was full. The whole assembly sat as if spell-bound; not a whisper was to be heard; an awful curiosity tied every tongue. The business and pleasures of life were forgotten; the sexes exchanged no furtive glances; men and women, alike unobservant of their neighbours, counted their beads and bent their eyes upon the ground; while each new comer, awed by the deep silence, entered with cautious tread, and took his seat noiselessly. When our eyes had become somewhat familiarised with the artificial light, they were attracted to two elevated extempore side-boxes, brilliantly illuminated with wax, and filled with choristers in full costume. Between them was stretched a voluminous curtain, not so opaque but that a number of tapers might be seen faintly glimmering through it; and before this curtain a dark temporary stage was erected. The, religious calm that prevailed around was at length gently broken by some soft and plaintive notes, proceeding from the white-robed choir. In a few minutes these died away again upon the ear, and a figure, suddenly rising from the stage, exclaimed in a voice of strenuous emotion – "Once again, ye faithful ones! ye are assembled here to accompany me to Calvary! Yes! another Good Friday has come round, another anniversary of the day announced by God himself for man's deliverance from the wages of his sin; this is the great day when typical sacrifice was done away with, and our blessed Lord made

of 'himself a full and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the' *faithful*. But in order to triumph, my brethren, we must conquer – to conquer we must contend; there is no warfare without wounds, and our Saviour, while in the flesh, must partake of our infirmities: he must be 'the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,' before he can 'lead captivity captive, and receive gifts' *for his holy Church*; the ransom of his faithful followers must be at the expense of his own blood. He bled, as you know, on Good Friday; and accordingly, we are met here – not to celebrate a triumph, but to learn humility, patience, and forgiveness of injuries at the foot of the cross, in order that *we*, like our great Head, may become perfect *through suffering*. Permit me, then, to ask you, with the Psalmist, 'Are your hearts set upon righteousness, O ye congregation?' and are your minds prepared to follow the Lord to Calvary? Have you, for instance, been studying lately his sufferings at *the different stations of the cross*? have you been thinking at all upon his passion? thinking what it must have been to be hooted at, spit upon, reviled, buffeted, and friendless upon earth? If not, ponder well these things now; *now*, at *this moment*; for are we not arrived at the most sacred *hour* of this most sacred but sad and solemn day? About this hour was the Saviour condemned by his unjust judge, delivered up to the rabble to be crucified. Go back in your minds to that moment; see him crowned with thorns, and bearing the cross upon his shoulder, till, lo! he faints under its weight, and his persecutors compel a stranger to carry it to the fatal spot. Then

see him toiling onward, surrounded by his deadly enemies; his chosen friends have forsaken him and fled! a few women follow him afar off, bewailing his fate; he turns and speaks; listen to his words – 'Daughters of Jerusalem! weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and *for your children*!' Well might the merciful Saviour speak thus, when he had just heard the mad shout of the multitude, 'his blood be upon us and *upon our children*.' The crowd approaches Golgotha! they halt to rear the fatal tree; methinks I hear the exulting outcries of his vindictive murderers as they fix it in the ground!" Here the curtain drawn between the preacher and the back of the stage fell, revealing three wooden crucifixes lit up by a lurid red light from above. The effect was startling, and produced a shudder of horror throughout the whole auditory. After a breathless pause, the preacher, turning towards the cross, exclaimed, "What! are we too late for the beginning of this tragedy! Is the Redeemer of mankind already nailed to the cross? Oh, cruel and fiendlike man, is this your triumph! surely he who came to save will reject you now! Such might be our feelings, but they were not Christ's. No, my brethren, far from it. Oh, let us contemplate, for our own future guidance, the behaviour of Jesus to his murderers, not *after* but at the *moment* of his extreme torture; and may the Holy Spirit give us grace to profit by the exercise. Look on your crucified Redeemer writhing and maddened with suffering; and listen to the first words uttered in the depth of his agony: he imprecates no curse upon these guilty men, but exclaims, 'Father, forgive them; they

know not what they do!' *Caro Jesu!*" Here there was much emotion both in the preacher and in the congregation; when it had subsided, he added persuasively, "You have heard Christ pray that his *murderers* may be forgiven, and shall you hesitate to forgive one another?" Then, taking the words of our Saviour for a text, he delivered a short animated sermon upon the forgiveness of injuries; after which came a prayer for grace to perform this duty; the pause which succeeded being filled with music and chanting. Then again the dark form of the preacher rose up. "What, my brethren! did not Christ pass *three hours* in his agony, and shall we leave him in the midst? He has still more gracious words in store. My dear brethren and fellow sinners, now hear his dying address to the penitent thief, 'Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise!' *Ladro felice!* but was *he* then *predestinated* to salvation, and his companion to be the victim of God's wrath? *Niente, niente*; believe, not a word of this false and heretical creed." Then followed a second discourse, with a diatribe against Calvin (who deserved it!) and *all* heretics (who might not deserve it), with an anathema against heresy in general, and a prayer for the pardon and acceptance of the true Catholic, *id est* Roman, Church. In like manner the preacher continued to set before his hearers all the circumstances of our Saviour's passion; pronouncing a short discourse upon every sentence uttered by him in his agony. Each sermonette was succeeded by prayer; and that by an interlude of music and chanting, which enabled him to recover himself, and proceed

with undiminished energy during a three hours' service. We had listened attentively, not always agreeing with his doctrine, but without any great shock to our Protestant principles, when, in conclusion, he exclaimed, "Now, brethren, before we disperse, let us do homage to the blessed Virgin, and sympathise with the afflicted and inconsolable Mother of our Lord. Think of her sufferings to-day; think and weep over them; and forget not the worship due to her holy name; whom Christ honoured, shall not we honour too? Sons of the blessed Virgin! is not your brother Christ her son also? make her then your friend; propitiate her, in order to obtain pardon from him! Let us all, then, fall down upon our knees before the *Indolorata*." A long prayer to the Madonna followed, then a hymn in her honour; and after a last glorious outburst of the organ, accompanying the ardent and sustained Hallelujahs of both choir and congregation, the curtain falls, the doors are thrown open, daylight rushes in through the no longer darkened windows; and presently the thronged and noisy Corso has absorbed the last member of the much moved, slowly dispersing crowd.

A heartfelt and affecting ceremony was that we had just witnessed; every body had shed tears, and there had been evidently great *at*trition, and probably some *con*trition also. The strong appeals of the priest had *told*, though they were not legitimate; for what could be less so than, in the end, his misdirecting the thoughts from the *true* object of worship, to *her*, who was, after all, but a mere mortal like ourselves?

Yet devotional feelings had been called forth, and in this it was unlike, and surely better than, the ordinary cold, formal, glittering, shifting pantomimic service of Te-Deums, and high masses, which, instead of "filling the hungry with good things," send all "empty away;" or worse, *satisfied* with "that which is not bread." Could piety really be appealed to through the senses, then might the ceremonies of the Romish Church hope to reach it, captivating as they are to most of them. The ear is pleased with exquisite music; the eye is dazzled with pictures, processions, scenic representations, glittering colours, gorgeous robes, rich laces, and embroidery; and even the nostril is propitiated by the grateful odour of frankincense; but the only address to the heart and intellect is a barbarous Latin prayer, unintelligible (were it to be heard) to most of the congregation, and rendered so to all by the mode in which it is gone through. On returning from such exhibitions as these, we feel more forcibly than ever, how much reason we have to thank those pious compilers of our expurgated English prayer-book, who, renouncing an *unknown tongue*, and rejecting all unscriptural interpolations, drew from the rich stores of Rome herself, and from the primitive Church, an almost faultless Liturgy,[7] where every desire of the human heart is anticipated, and every expression so carefully weighed, that not an unbecoming phrase can be found in it.

[7] "We were not" (says Jeremy Taylor) "like women and children when they are affrighted with fire in their clothes; we shook off the coal, indeed, but not our garments; lest we should expose our Church to that nakedness which the excellent men of our sister Churches complained to be among themselves."

It is impossible for any one who has been much in Roman Catholic countries, to avoid drawing comparisons between the two services; and especially at this time, when many of our countrymen are halting between two opinions, and almost persuading themselves that there was no need of a Reformation, it behoves those not under the influence of

> "That dark lanthorn of the Spirit
> Which none see by but those that bear it;"

nor yet led away

> "By crosses, relics, crucifixes,
> Beads, pictures, rosaries, and pyxes;
> Those tools for working out salvation
> By mere *mechanic* operation,"

to protest against the return of Popery to this land, to the surrender of our consciences and our Bibles again into the hands of a fellow sinner.[8] "Quis custodet custodem?" – who shall watch our watcher? – was a question that men had been asking themselves for many years in England, but hitherto without

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[8] Bellarmine asserts (and who but a heretic shall dispute it with him?) that men are bound so far to submit their consciences to the Pope, as even to believe *virtue* to be *bad* and *vice* to be *good*, if it shall please his Holiness to say so. (Bellar. *de Rom. Pontif*, lib. iv. cap. v.) When things came to this pass, were we not justified in the insertion of that rough deprecatory clause that stood in our Litany – "From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, Good Lord deliver us!"

result; till our pious Reformers, addressing themselves to the study of the Scriptures, received the sword of the Spirit, with which they were enabled to wage successful war against that wily serpent, coiled now for centuries round the Church of Christ, and waiting but a little further *development* to crush her in his inextricable folds. Alike unallured by concessions and unterrified by threats, they boldly denounced the *heretical* usurpation of Rome; opposing an honest conscience, and Christ the only mediator, to the caprice of councils, and the false unity of a pseudo-infallible head;[9] refusing to purchase their lives by rendering homage to any Phalaris of the Triple Crown.

> Their perjured faith, though zealot Popes command,
> Point to *their* Bull, and raise the threatening hand:
> They deem'd those souls consummate guilt incurr'd,
> At conscience' fearful price, who life preferr'd:
> No length of days for bartered peace can pay,
> And what were life, take life's great end away?[10]

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[9] "We must seek to enter into the real divine unity; if not, the *pseudo* unity to which Mr Newman would bring us back will be attempted once more among us; only to be followed, when its hollowness, its nothingness, its implicit infidelity, is laid bare, by an explicit infidelity, an anarchical unity, without a centre, without a God." (Maurice's *Lectures on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 111.)

[10] Imitated from Juvenal, *Satire* viii.

THE BEATIFICATION

"*Sanctis* Roma, suis jam tollere gestit ad astra,
Et cupit ad *superos* evehere usque deos."

Milton's Sonnets.

To receive Beatification, which is the first step towards Canonisation, and may in time lead to a fellowship with the saints, – to be pronounced "blessed" by him who arrogates to himself the title of *Holy*, and must therefore know the full value of the dignity he confers —*sic laudari a laudato*, and that too in the finest church in Christendom, before the eyes of a countless assembly of all the nations of Europe, – is an honour indeed! No wonder, then, that every promotion should be jealously canvassed, and that sometimes the rumour of "unfairness," or "favouritism," should be heard among the people, when each fresh brevet comes out. For example – "Who's this third St Anthony? Are not two enough in the Calendar? The great St Antonio, and he of the pig! – (*del porco*,) – another will only create confusion;" or else, "Surely the *Beata Ernestina* has not been long enough dead to have attained to such an 'odour of sanctity;'" or, "Though the good Pasquale might deserve the title, the pious Teodoro's miracles are as well attested, and much more numerous, and should therefore have been first

recognised." Of such sort are the comments of the crowd. All this grumbling, however, is at an end, when once the *Festa* comes round; the Church, by the brilliancy of her exhibitions, wins over her discontented children, and the installation is sure to be well attended. Sometimes the saint expectant stops short of true canonisation; and, having gained one step, finds himself like a yellow admiral, placed on the shelf without chance of further promotion. (This by the way.) No one can say precisely what entitles the dead to these honours. Large bequests alone are not always sufficient; witness the rejection of a certain distinguished Begum, who left much of her enormous wealth to the Pope, with a well-known view to this distinction. Some imagine that eminent piety is a necessary condition; but no! there is very little talk of religion. It seems chiefly to be the attestation of a sufficient number of miracles at a tomb, which confers the title of Beatus on its tenant, and converts it into a shrine, sure ever after to be profusely hung with glass eyes, wax fœtuses, silver hearts, discarded crutches, votive shipwrecks, &c., &c.,[11] in token of cures and deliverances which have emanated from it. Next to miracles, perhaps, we may reckon *dates—seniores priores*– first buried, first beatified, and no superannuation here: on the contrary, holiness, like many other good things, requires

[11] It is singular to observe how the "*votiva paries*," in the churches of Papal Rome, are hung with similar offerings to those which formerly ornamented her temples in Pagan times. We possess several of these ancient offerings; *inter alia*– a *uterus* and a *mamma*, in *terra cotta*, from the Temple of *Elvina Ceres* at Aquinum, and an *abortion*, in lead, from the same source.

time to ripen its virtues and to bring it to perfection; and it is a rule of the Church that chemistry must disintegrate the mortal before she can build up the saint. Thus it happens of two candidates of equal merit; he whose dissolution took place half a century or so before his rival, obtains the preference. The first steps are taken by the lawyers; one being retained to advance the merits of the aspirant saint, another to asperse them if possible. Should the election be contested, much special pleading is then resorted to. Both sides are paid by the Church, but he who opposes the nomination is termed the *devil's* counsel. This title, however, is a legal or rather a theological fiction; the miracles alleged to have been performed by the defunct being only more triumphantly established and set off by the apparent disposition of the rival pleader to deny their reality; who, after a proper show of resistance and incredulity, allows himself to be foiled. This is indeed beating Satan with his own weapons; but the advocates of saints belong to that party who

> "E'en to the Devil himself will go,
> If they have motive thereunto;
> And think, as there is war between
> The Devil and them, it is no sin
> If they by subtle stratagem
> Make use of him as he does them."

We had never witnessed a Beatification: so, when the Pope, in his character of umpire, had pronounced his fiat in favour

of "good sister Frances," and all that remained to be done was the church ceremonial necessary to admit her to piety's peerage, we procured one of the many thousand tickets printed for the occasion, and followed the crowd to St Peter's. Here all was prepared to give due effect to the scene: the interior was studiously darkened, that the rich upholstery might be set off by a grove of countless wax lights, thick and tall as young pine trees. The workmen, after a whole fortnight of bustle and activity, had done their part well. Curtains had been hung and carpets spread; organs wheeled up towards the throne of St Peter; and a whole gallery of villanously painted historical pictures, blasphemous and absurd, were suspended round, representing the miracles for which the new "beatified" was to receive her first degree towards sainthood; and showing amongst other wonders, how in one case her blood, in another her image, restored a blind man to sight, and so completely cured the palsy of one Salvator di Sales, that he is dancing a hornpipe on his recovery, while a priest is looking on approvingly. We were too early for the ceremony; and after curiously scanning these preparations, our attention was attracted to a group near, eagerly listening to the recital of a bare-footed Capuchin. On approaching, we found that he was discoursing on the virtues of a picture of the Virgin, known by the name of *Sta Maria del Pianto*, a fresco daub, painted in a very dirty back street. He was affirming that it had lately taken to *winking*, and had also been seen to shed tears over the body of a man recently found murdered under the lamp. "Who saw her weep?" inquired

one of his hearers. "Do you doubt the miracle, my son?" said the friar. "No indeed, father," returned he; "but why did she not call out to the assassin; and what is the use of weeping over a dead man?" "It was owing to the gentleness of her sex," said another, who appeared interested in proclaiming the notoriety of the shrine: he proceeded, therefore, to inform the attentive listeners, that he had the face newly painted some months back, since which operation there was no end to the miracles performed by it. Several persons round hereon testified to having heard repeatedly of these wonders. "Ah!" said a sceptical craftsman, "I dare say you live in another quarter of the city, for it is well known that those at a distance see these things more clearly than the neighbours, unless, like our friend here," nodding to the restorer of the shrine, "they hope to attract customers to the shop by drawing votaries to the shrine." "I don't believe a word of it," said we, taking part in the colloquy. "*Caro lei*– who can help that? we can only pity your unbelief," said the good-humoured Capuchin, offering us, however, a pinch out of his snuff-box. "*You*," continued he, "should call to mind '*in dubiis fides*;' and *we*, in compassion to your being a heretic, will remember '*in omnibus caritas*.'" We accepted the good man's courtesy, albeit no snuff-taker; and he was resuming the interrupted narrative, when a stir among the crowd outside announced the near approach of the procession, and every one hastened to secure a good seat. Presently the Swiss guards enter, the choristers take their places, in come priests, bishops, cardinals, all sumptuously arrayed; at

length the Pope himself arrives and assumes his throne. Mass commences.

And here the reader doubtless expects, if not a full description of the ceremony of canonisation, at least an accurate detail of the various steps of the process by which it was effected; but, as we have stated above, the incubation had been completed six weeks before in a private Eccaleiobion, and the pageant to-day was merely to give publicity to the metamorphosis – to read in, and to enrol among the saints the Beata Francesca. As we cannot give a particular account of the *funzione*, we give a general one of all masses: —

> High mass! The stall'd and banner'd quire —
> White canons – priests in quaint attire —
> The unfamiliar prayer:
> The fumes that practised hands dispense,
> The tinkling bells, the jingling pence,
> The tax'd but welcome chair:
> The beams from ruby panes that glow,
> Of rhythmal chant the ebb and flow:
> The organ, that from boundless stores
> Its trembling inspiration pours
> O'er all the sons of care;
> Now joyous as the festal lyre,
> When torch and song and wine inspire;
> Now tender as Cremona's shell,
> When hush'd orchestras own the spell
> And watch the ductile bow —

Now rolling from its thunder-cloud,
Dark peals o'er that retiring crowd,
And now has ceased to blow.

CRIMES AND REMARKABLE TRIALS IN SCOTLAND

INCIDENTS OF THE EARLIER REIGNS – AN INQUIRY INTO THE CHARACTER OF MACBETH

The sunshine and the green leaves embrace not all that we should know of physical nature. Storm and darkness have their signs, which we do well to study; and in the tempests of the tropics, or the long winter darkness of the poles, we have types of the character of different sections of the globe, more marked than the varying warmth of the sun, or the character of the vegetation – but not perhaps so pleasing. Even so, the storm and darkness of the human soul – the criminal nature of man, provide their peculiar food for the thinker and inquirer. The annals of virtue have their own elevations and delights; but those of vice are no more to be passed over than the dark and stormy hours in the history of each revolution round the sun. "While some affect the sun, and some the shade," there may even be those whose most deeply cherished associations are with these unlit hours – who prefer the night thoughts to the day dreams. But to all, the crimes peculiar to different nations are a large

part of the knowledge which man may profitably have of his race. In the history of its great criminals, a nation's character is drawn, as it were, colossally, with the broadest brush, and in the deepest shadows. National virtues have delicate and subtle tints, and exquisitely minute shadings, inviting to a nearer view – like Carlo Dolci's Madonnas, or Constable's forest landscapes: the crimes of a nation present the character of its people, as they rise from the dead in Michael Angelo's Last Judgment. The *ordinary* vices of men have a certain vulgar air of uniformity; but each great crime is a broad dash of the national character of the people among whom it was committed. The Cenci, and Joanna of Naples were of Italy. It was in Holland that two great and virtuous statesmen were torn to pieces by the mob. The dirk, long buried beyond the Grampians, has re-appeared across the Atlantic in the shape of the bowie-knife. The country of Woldemar and the sorrows of Werther produced that most amiable and sentimental of murderesses, Madame Zwanziger, who loved and was beloved wherever she went; so sensitive, so sympathising, so sedulous, so studious of the wants of those by whom she was surrounded, so disinterestedly patient; she had but one peculiarity to distinguish her from an angel of light – it was an unfortunate propensity to poison people! We read in the *Causes Célèbres*, of a Bluebeard who slew a succession of wives by tickling them till they died in convulsions; and at once we are reminded of that populace who are said to partake of the natures of the ape and the tiger. The people who, for more centuries

than are included in the events of European history, have been resolved into the mysterious classification of castes, produced those equally mysterious criminals the Thugs, for whose deeds our so utterly different habits and ideas are quite incapable of finding or conceiving a motive. Our own country produced the assassinations of Rizzio, Regent Murray, and Archbishop Sharpe – all pregnant with marked national characteristics; aristocratic pride, revenge of wrong, and fanatical fury. We propose to offer for the amusement or instruction – which he pleases – of our reader, a few more records of Scottish crimes, not probably all so conspicuously known to the general reader as the three we have just alluded to, yet not, we trust, without something to commend them to notice, as characteristic of the country and the age in which they were respectively enacted.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.