

VARIOUS

THE MIRROR OF
LITERATURE,
AMUSEMENT, AND
INSTRUCTION. VOLUME
19, NO. 533, FEBRUARY
11, 1832

Various

**The Mirror of Literature,
Amusement, and Instruction. Volume
19, No. 533, February 11, 1832**

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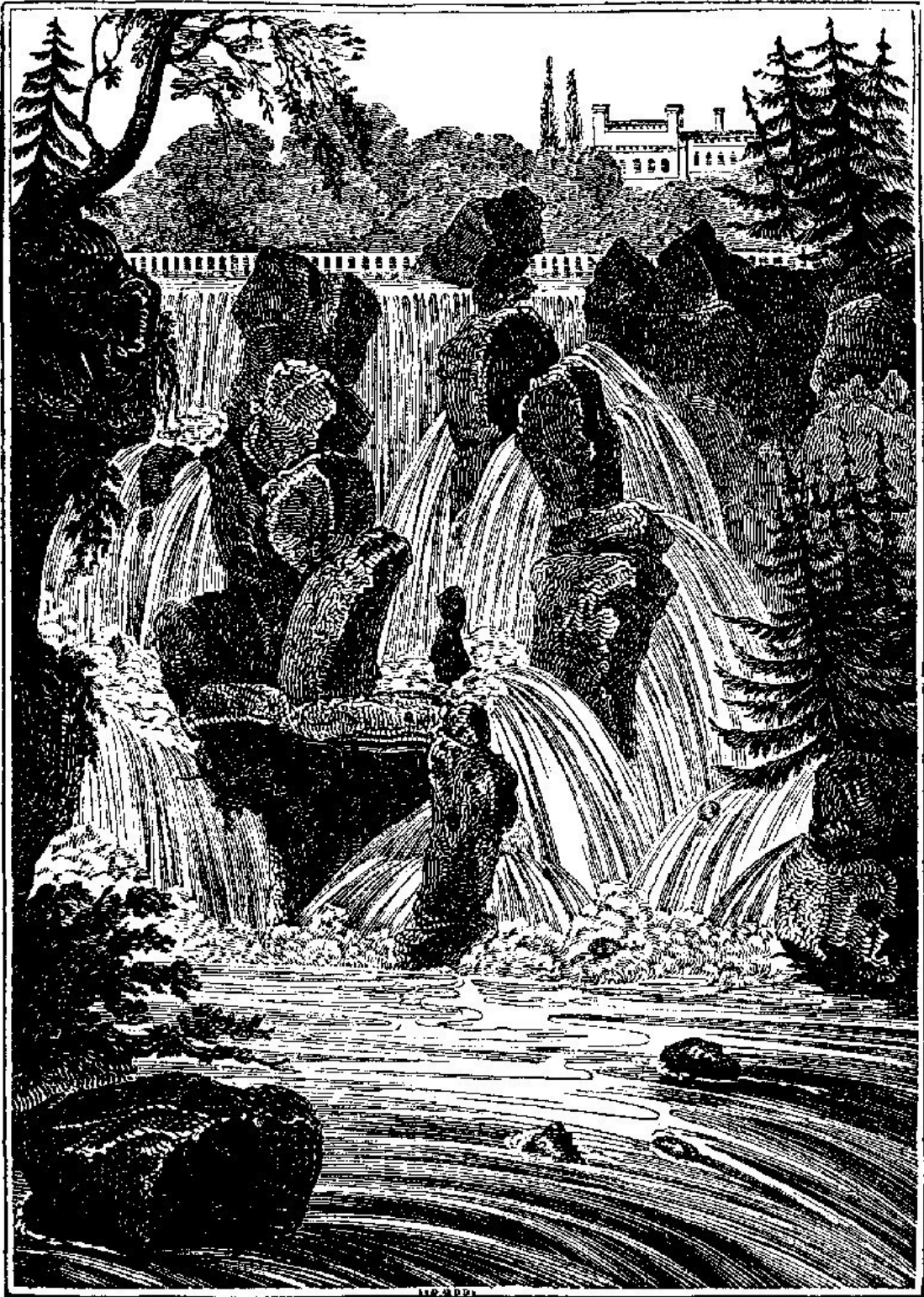
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CASCADE AT VIRGINIA WATER



This has been described as "perhaps the most striking imitation we have of the great works of nature:" at all events, it has less of the mimicry of art than similar works on a smaller scale.

Virginia Water will be recollected as the largest sheet of artificial water in the kingdom, with the exception of that at Blenheim. Near the high Southampton road it forms the above cascade, descending into a glen romantically shaded with plantations of birch, willow, and acacia:

Hollowly here the gushing water sounds

With a mysterious voice; one might pause
Upon its echoes till it seemeth a noise
Of fathomless wilds where man had never walked.

Or it may be described in the graphic words of Thomson:

With woods o'erhung, and shagg'd with mossy rocks,
Whence on each side the gushing waters play,
And down the rough cascade white dashing fall,
Or gleam in lengthened vista through the trees.

Beside the cascade is a stone cave, "moss-o'ergrown," constructed with fragments of immense size and curious shape that were originally dug up at Bagshot Heath, and are supposed to be the remains of a Saxon cromlech. At the base of this fall, it becomes a running stream, and after winding through part of Surrey, falls into the Thames at Chertsey.

The reader will remember Virginia Water as the favourite retreat of the late King; and this embellishment, (if so artificial a term can be applied to a cascade,) was made at the bidding of the Royal taste. It is perhaps the most successful of all the contrivances hereabout to aid the natural enchantment of the scene. We believe the present Court are not so fervent in their attachment to this resort; its seclusion must, however, be a delightful relief to the costly cares of state, and the superb suites of Windsor Castle. A scene of wild nature, such as the annexed is intended to represent, is more acceptable to our sight than all the quarterings on the ceiling of St. George's Hall, though they resemble the pattern-cards of chivalry.

LACONICS, &c

Our natural disposition to evil is evident in this: that vice tracks out its own path and stands in need of no instructor; while it requires not only example but discipline to initiate us in virtue.

We both read and hear bitter complaints about the uncertainty of human affairs; and yet it is that uncertainty alone that gives life its relish, for novelty is the real and radical cause of all our enjoyments.

There is a great outcry against fools on the part of the knaves, but rather with some want of policy; for if there were no fools in the world cunning men would have but a bad trade of it.

The faults of a fool are concealed from himself while they are evident to the world; on the other hand the faults of the wise man are well known to himself, while they are masked over and invisible to the world.

It has been said that "there is a pleasure in being mad that none but madmen know;" but this only applies to that species of madness which is produced by an excess of imagination eventually overpowering the judgment.

The insincerity of a friend has often inclined men to seek for a surer reliance upon money; these unexpected shocks make us disgusted with our species, and it is for this reason that old men who have seen so much of the world become at last avaricious.

The only result an inquirer after truth can derive from metaphysics will be to find himself silenced for the present; they rarely convince, and for the most part mislead.

All the discoveries made within the last century were ridiculed and treated with contempt by our forefathers; yet we are equally prejudiced and hostile to all those improvements proposed to us, which will in all probability be adopted by our children.

All those animals who are associated with man become immediately participants in his misery: when once domesticated they become liable to disease, whereas in a wild state they could have perished only from age or accident.

If we subtract from the twenty-four hours the time spent in eating, sleeping, exercise, and the other indispensable cares of our existence, what a fraction of time is employed on our intellectual faculties! Again, there are few who have the means to enable them to study; fewer the talent requisite; and still fewer the inclination, if they have the ability.

The force of habit affects even our palates; we in time acquire a relish for what was once perfectly nauseous. The Greenlander detests turtle soup as much as we abominate train oil.

Courage, or a contempt of danger, is a mere animal quality, and being only the result of a particular formation, is entitled to no merit, though it may demand our applause: but moral, or acquired courage, is a very different thing. A man who is fortunate in the world and has a sacrifice to make, if he conducts himself with spirit, is also more entitled to our admiration than a mere desperado.

F.

HAMET AND RASCHID

AN EASTERN TALE, VERSIFIED. ¹

The sultry sun had gain'd the middle sky,
Reigning above in cloudless majesty,
When deep engag'd in pray'r, two neighbouring swains
Knelt where the common bound divides their plains.
Hamet and Raschid;—whilst their flocks around
Panting with thirst, or dying, strew the ground,
With hands uplift they beg their god in pray'r,
Themselves to pity, and their flocks to spare.

Sudden the air grew calm, no zephyr stirr'd,
Through all the valley not a sound was heard,
That instant hush'd was all the vocal grove,
And sounds aerial warbled from above:
Around each shepherd cast his wond'ring eye,
And down the vale was seen advancing nigh,
A mighty Being, whom when near he stood,
They knew that Genius who distributes good;
The sheaves of plenty in his hand they see,
In that the avenging sword of misery.

As nearer still the mighty Being drew,
Trembling they stood, and knew not what to do;
When lo! the Genius breath'd these solemn strains,
Soft as the breeze that cools Saboea's plains:—
"Children of dust! approach, fly not your friend,
I leave the heavens above, my aid to lend;
Water you seek, and water I bestow,
But ere you ask, this useful lesson know:—
Whate'er the body for its use enjoys,
Excess no less than scarcity destroys;
Demand no more than what your wants require,
Let Hamet tell me first his heart's desire."

"O, Being, great, beneficent and kind,
Pardon the fear that overspreads my mind;
On me, great God, a little brook bestow,
That winter rains may never overflow,
And when the summer droughts commence their reign,
Stretch forth thy hand and let the brook remain."

¹ See *Rambler*, No. 38.

"'Tis yours," with accents mild the Genius cried,
Streams, as he speaks, o'er all the meadows glide,
A fresher green the fragrant shrubs display,
And every leaf in trembling cheers the day;
Slaking their raging thirst, the flocks are seen,
And new-born herbage clothes the earth in green.
"This trifling wish befits a little soul,
Let the great Ganges o'er my meadows roll!"

Thus Raschid spoke, and thus the God replies,
Rage, as he spoke, rode sparkling in his eyes:—
"Insatiate man, this boundless wish recall
Ere ruin overwhelm yourself, your flocks and all;
See you these sheaves?—Now mark this dreadful sword,
Those are the wise man's—this the fool's reward."

In vain he spoke; and hark, what meets the ear,
The raging flood is now approaching near;
Onward it rolls, o'erwhelming Raschid's plains,
All things it sweeps, and not a tree remains,
His flocks, his herds, the mighty stream o'erpours,
Himself (rash man) a crocodile devours.

A FRAGMENT

On a fork of lightning which sped through heaven,
He rode to space's naught,
And with the flash of a star which his flight had riven,
(The which in his hand of light he caught)
He writ with that flash his burning thought,
On the roll of darkness space had given.

USEFUL DOMESTIC HINTS

SHAVINGS

(For the Mirror.)

Disposed as we are to give the Scotch full credit for superior domestic economy, a practice which we had frequently an opportunity of observing, some five or six years since in Edinburgh, astonished us, we confess, not a little; and which, had we heard of, not beheld, we should rather have been inclined to attribute to our thoughtless Hibernian neighbours.

Every English housemaid knows, if every housekeeper does not, that shavings make a most valuable fuel; for lighting fires they are preferable to those faggots, small bundles of which fetch in London, and large provincial towns, what may be considered a high price, as they commonly swell the weekly expenditure of every family. In Edinburgh, at the period to which we allude, a great deal of building was going on, and it was impossible to walk the streets without passing, (especially in the immediate environs) new houses in various stages of completion; but invariably we found, that the custom of the workmen was, to collect in heaps the shavings from the carpenter's work, and burn with other rubbish, these, which might have been sold for fuel very advantageously; nor was the waste of this practice the only thing to be reprehended; it was dangerous, since such bonfires were lighted before the houses in the open streets, to the great peril of passengers, and at the risk of frightening horses and other cattle, as the high winds prevalent in our northern metropolis carried about in all directions the light, blazing shavings, and sparks.

M.L.B.

FEATHERS

(For the Mirror.)

Valuable as are feathers, and essential as is that article, a feather-bed, to the domestic comforts of the poor, who can rarely afford to purchase one, it has often struck us, as a singular want of thought and economy in humble cottagers residing on village-greens or commons, upon which much poultry is kept, that they should not collect, (a work easily performed by the youngest children) the numerous soft, short, downy feathers, which may be observed floating about. These in time would amount to a quantity worth consideration, but they are usually left, first to litter the land, and secondly to be destroyed by rain and passengers. This is particularly the case in Norfolk, celebrated as everybody knows as well for its geese as its turkeys, and where, it is asserted, that the former fowls undergo regular pluckings for the sake of their feathers, ere submitted to "the poulterer's knife." But experience, unfortunately, only confirms the old observation, that "the poor are the worst economists in the world," and the least obedient of any people to our Saviour's command: "Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost."

M.L.B.

TO TAKE INK OUT OF PAPER, AND STAINS OUT OF CLOTH, SILKS, &C

Mix one teaspoonful of burnt alum, 1/4 oz. of salt of lemons, 1/4 oz. of oxalic acid, in a bottle, with half-a-pint of cold water; to be used by wetting a piece of calico with it, and rubbing it on the spots.

S. AE.

THE SELECTOR; AND LITERARY NOTICES OF *NEW WORKS*

LADIES AND DWARFS

One of the oddest of all odd books that ever fell into our hands is Captain Colville Franckland's *Narrative of a Visit to the Courts of Russia and Sweden*, in 1830 and 1831. It is one of the hop-step-and-a-jump tours that your fashionable folks make for making acquaintances and then making books. The gallant author does not stay long enough in a place to be dull; for he is lively and flippant in every page, and throws a dash of *the service* into every chapter. He feels that Dr. Granville has left him nothing to say which may not be found in his two great big books; yet the Cholera and the Polish war have supplied him with two topics throughout the whole book; and, dull as these subjects are in themselves, they have enabled our tourist to produce a rambling, rattling, frolicsome work of seven or eight hundred pages. His attentions to the softer sex sparkle every where. At Hamburgh, "we dined at a most excellent table d'hote, but thought the ladies plain and dowdy." "We laughed much at the Holsteiner peasantry, the women being dressed like devils, and men like merry-andrews." Again,—

"One of the most pleasing characteristics of Hamburgh, is the neat little, rosy-faced, fair-haired soubrette, tripping along the Yungferstieg, with a basket under her right arm, covered with a handsome shawl of glowing colours. These enticing damsels look as happy and as coquettish as you can well imagine, and might induce many a traveller to pass a few weeks in Hamburgh who had time to dedicate to the pursuit of the fair nymphs of the Alster.

"But, alas! no good is unaccompanied by evil; hideously deformed dwarfs haunt the streets and promenades of the good town, and the eye of the observer, after having rested with complacency on the round and well-turned form of the smart soubrette, reverts with horror to the miserable Flibbertigibbets which abound in a frightful proportion to the whole population."

At Hamburgh he finds fun in every thing.

"I was a good deal amused to-day by the funeral cortège of some citizen of consequence. The bier was surrounded by men dressed in the old Venetian costume of black, with ruffs, well-powdered wigs, and swords by their sides. I regret to say that I must quit Hamburgh without seeing the Schöne Marianna; but I hear she is now rather *passée*, and I must console myself for this mortification by gazing upon the first pair of bright eyes which I shall meet to-morrow on my route to Kiel."

The Russian dwarfs afford our Captain much amusement.

"Madame Divoff, like many other Russian ladies, has a dwarf in her house, who remains constantly with the company. He is less ugly and disagreeable than others of his species. La Princesse Serge Gallitzin has a little fellow of this sort; the Lisianskis have also one in constant attendance. The pretty Mademoiselle Rosetti, two evenings ago, kept caressing the dwarf at Madame Divoff's ball. ('Beauty and the Beast,' said I to her; 'Zemir et Azor.')

"At a very agreeable family party at the Prince Paul Gallitzin's were masks; and a party of male and female dwarfs; these droll little urchins were all very well made and good-looking; they frisked and frolicked about with the children of the house as if they themselves were not (as in reality they were) men and women, but children likewise. One of these poor little mortals, equipped as an officer of hussars, danced a mazurka with great grace and activity, and selected for his partner the *Gouvernante*, a fine, fat bouncing woman of twenty-five. He likewise, at my request, sang a Russian romance, which he accompanied on the piano-forte: his voice was a very plaintive, but weak barytone. The kindness of the Russian nobles to these unfortunate beings does infinite honour to the national character."

We have only time for another extract or two. At Moscow, he notes:

"I passed the remainder of the evening at the Princess Dolgorouki's; the young ladies were in great agitation on account of the sudden indisposition of their mother, Madame Boulgakow, who had, it seems, caught cold in her return from the monastery of Troitza, sixty wersts from hence, a renowned pilgrimage. She had better have stayed at home, for surely Moscow has sufficient churches in which bigots may pray as long as they please. When will superstition cease to usurp the place of true religion in the human mind? I did not pity the *old devotee*, but I felt for the young ladies, who seemed to be a good deal flurried and fluttered by this occurrence."

At St. Petersburg:

"June 8-20.—Weather hot and sultry. At two I walked to the Summer Gardens, which I found full of police-officers and soldiers. To-day there is a celebrated promenade, that in which the young fillies range themselves in two rows along the principal alley to be chosen by their future spouse. However, it was as yet too early for this exhibition, and there was nobody here except police-officers, the very sight of whom makes me sick; so off I set, and was caught near the Newski Prospekt in a tremendous thunder-storm, which forced me to take shelter, first under the arch of a *porte-cochere*, and secondly in the Casan Church, in which I discovered for the first time the bâton of Marshal Davoust, stuck up in a glass-case against one of the piers supporting the dome of the Church. Underneath the bâton, upon a gilded metal-plate, are two inscriptions, the one in Russ, the other in Latin, which state that the bâton is that of Marshal Davoust, taken near Crasnoe, 5th Nov. 1812; so there can be no doubt of the fact."

"I was a good deal amused with a bad painting over the simple unassuming tomb of the immortal Kutusoff, representing the Kremlin, the church of Ivan Blagennoi, and a procession of priests marching out of the former by the Holy Gate towards the latter. Kutusoff's tomb is shaded by banners taken from the Poles, the Prussians, and the French, having at the ends of their staffs, the eagles of the two former, and the horse of the latter."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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