

# VARIOUS

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**AFFGHANISTAN**

There are those persons now living who would give their own weight in sovereigns, though drawing against thirteen to sixteen stone, that all of this dreadful subject might be swallowed up by Lethe; that darkness might settle for ever upon the insanities of Cabool; and the grave close finally over the carnage of Tezeen. But it will not be. Blood will have blood, they say. The madness which could sport in levity with a trust of seventeen thousand lives, walks upon the wind towards heaven, coming round by gusts innumerable of angry wailings in the air; voices from nobody knows where are heard clamouring for vengeance; and the caves of Jugdulloc, gorged with the "un-coffined slain," will not rest from the litanies which day and night they pour forth for retribution until this generation shall have passed away.

Are we to have justice or not?—not that justice which executes the sentence, but which points the historical verdict,

and distributes the proportions of guilt. The government must now be convinced, by the unceasing succession of books on this subject, which sleeps at intervals, but continually wakens up again to new life, that it has not died out, nor is likely to do so. And for *that* there is good reason: a sorrow which is past decays gradually, and hushes itself to sleep; not so a sorrow which points too ominously to the future. The last book on this horrible tragedy is that of Mr Lushington;<sup>1</sup> and in point of ability the best; the best in composition; the best for nobility of principle, for warning, for reproach. But, for all that, we do not agree with him: we concede all his major propositions; we deny most of his minors. As for the other and earlier discussions upon this theme, whether by boots, by pamphlets, by journals, English and Indian, or by Parliamentary speeches, they now form a library; and, considering the vast remoteness of the local interest, they express sublimely the paramount power of what is moral over the earthy and the physical. A battle of Paniput is fought, which adds the carnage of Leipsic to that of Borodino, and, numerically speaking, heaps Pelion upon Ossa; but who cares? No principle is concerned: it is viewed as battle of wolves with tiger-cats; and Europe heeds it not. But let a column of less than 5000, from a nation moving by moral forces, and ploughing up for ever new soils of moral promise, betray itself, by folly or by guilt, into the meshes of a frightful calamity, and the earth listens for the details

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<sup>1</sup> *A Great Country's Little Wars*. By HENRY LUSHINGTON. London: Parker, 1844.

from the tropics to the arctic circle. Not Moscow and Smolensko, through all the wilderness of their afflictions, ever challenged the gaze of Christendom so earnestly as the Coord Cabool. And why? The pomp, the procession of the misery, lasted through six weeks in the Napoleon case, through six days in the English case. Of the French host there had been originally 450,000 fighting men; of the English, exactly that same amount read as the numerator of a fraction whose denominator was 100. Forty-five myriads had been the French; forty-five hundreds the English. And yet so mighty is the power of any thing moral, because shadowy and illimitable, so potent to magnify and unvulgarize any interest, that more books have been written upon Cabool, and through a more enduring tract of time, than upon Moscow. Great was the convulsion in either case; but that caused by Cabool has proved the less transitory. The vast *anabasis* to Moscow had emanated from a people not conspicuously careful of public morality. But that later *anabasis*, which ascended to the shining pinnacles of Candahar, and which stained with blood of men the untrodden snows of the Hindoo Koosh, was the work of a nation—no matter whether more moral in a practical sense, upon that we do not here dispute—but undeniably fermenting with the anxieties and jealousies of moral aspirations beyond any other people whatever. Some persons have ascribed to Blumenbach (heretofore the great Goettingen naturalist) an opinion as to the English which we have good reason to think that he never uttered—viz. that the people of this island are the most voluptuous of

nations, and that we bear it written in our national countenance. But suppose him to have said this, and secondly, (which is a trifle more important,) suppose it to be true, not the less we assert the impassioned predominance of a moral interest in this nation. The intensity of this principle is such, that it works with the fury and agitation of an appetite. It urges us to the very brink of civil war. Two centuries back—yes, exactly to a month, two centuries—we were all at Marston Moor, cutting throats upon the largest scale. And why? under the coercion of principles equally sublime on *both* sides. Then it *did* urge us into war. Now it does not—because the resistance is stronger, and by no means because the impulse is less. On a May morning in 1844, a question arises in the senate as to factory labour. On one side it shows an aspect critical for the interests of human nature in its widest stratum—viz. amongst the children of toil. Immediately, as at the sound of a signal-gun, five hundred of our fervent journals open their batteries this way and that upon an inquest of truth. "All the people quake like dew." The demoniacs of Palestine were not more shaken of old by internal possessions, than the heart of England is swayed to and fro under the action of this or similar problems. Epilepsy is not more overmastering than is the tempest of moral strife in England. And a new dawn is arising upon us in the prospect, that henceforth the agitations of peace will be more impassioned for the coming generation than the agitations of war for the last. But that sympathy, almost morbid, which England feels with the condition of social man, other nations

echo by a reflex sympathy with England; not always by a friendly sympathy. Like the [Greek: aerobatentes] and *funambuli* of ancient days, equally when keeping the difficult line of advance, or when losing it, England is regarded with a searching gaze that might seem governed by the fabulous fascination of the rattlesnake. Does she ascend on her proper line of advance? There is heard the murmur of reluctant applause. Does she trip? There arises the yell of triumph. Is she seen purchasing the freedom of a negro nation? The glow of admiration suffuses the countenance of Christendom. Is she descried entering on wars of unprovoked aggression? All faces in Europe are illuminated with smiles of prosperous malice. It is a painful preeminence which England occupies—hard to keep, dangerous to forfeit. Hit, and a million of hearts are tainted with jealousy; fail, and a million revel in malignity. Therefore it was that Cabool and its disasters drew an attention so disproportioned to their military importance. Cabool was one chapter in a transaction which, truly or not, had come to be reputed incompatible with those august principles of public justice professed and worn amongst the phylacteries of Great Britain. Therefore also it was that on this subject, as we have already said, a library of works has been accumulated.

Of these works we assert, fearlessly but not arrogantly, that all are partially in error. They are in fact, one and all, controversial works; often without the design of the writers, and not always perhaps with their consciousness—but the fact is such. Not

one of them but has a purpose to serve for or against Lord Auckland, or Dost Mahommed, or the East India Company, or the government at home and at Calcutta, which replaced that of the Whigs. Some even go into such specialties of partisanship as to manage the cause chiefly as a case depending against the political agents—Mr Ross Bell, Mr Loveday, Captain Outram, or Sir Alexander Burnes. Whilst others, which might seem a service of desperation, hold their briefs as the apologists of that injured young gentleman, Akbar Khan. All, in short, are controversial for a *personal* interest; and, in that sense, to be controversial is to be partial. Now we, who take our station in the centre, and deliver our shot all round the horizon, by intervals damaging every order of men concerned as parties to the Affghan affair, whether by action, by sanction, by counsel, or by subsequent opinion, may claim to be indifferent censors. We *have* political attachments: we do not deny it; but our own party is hardly touched by the sting of the case.

We therefore can be neutral, and we shall pursue our enquiry thus:—*First*, What was the original motive for the Affghan expedition? We insist upon it, that the motive generally assumed and reasoned upon was absurd, in a double sense puerile, as arguing a danger not possible, and (if it had been possible) not existing, and yet, after all, not open to much condemnation from most of those who *did* condemn it. They might object to the particular mode of execution, but they were pledged to the principle of a war in that direction.

*Secondly*, When the amended form was put forward, a rational form and the true form of the motive for this expedition, in what respect was that open to criticism? Far enough are we from going along with the views of the Auckland cabinet at this juncture; but these two things we are sure of—that those views were unsound, not by any vice which has yet been exposed, and that the vice alleged argues gross ignorance of every thing oriental. Lord Auckland might err, as heavily we believe him to have done, in his estimate of Affghanistan and the Affghan condition: he had untrue notions of what the Affghans needed, and what it was that they could bear: but his critics, Indian and domestic, were not in error by default merely of philosophic views as to the state of society in Affghanistan; they erred by want of familiarity with the most prominent usages of eastern economy. Lord Auckland was wrong, only as whole masses of politicians are wrong in Europe; viz. by applying European principles to communities under feelings and prejudices systematically different. But his antagonists were wrong as to palpable facts.

*Thirdly*, If we pass from the motive to the execution of the motive, from the purpose to the means of effecting it, we are compelled to say that Lord Auckland's government adopted for its primary means the most extravagant that could have been devised; viz. the making itself a party to the financial torture of the land.

*Fourthly*, When local insurrection had arisen, whether directed (as every body assumes) against the abuses of a system

introduced by ourselves, or (as *we* assert) proper to the land, and hereditary to the morbid condition of Affghan society—we shall expose the feeble and inadequate solution yet offered by any military guide for the tragical issue of these calamities. Kohistan, or particular cases, need not detain us; but, coming at once *in medias res* as to Cabool itself, we shall undertake to show, that as yet we have no true or rational account of the causes which led to the fatal result. What! four thousand five hundred regular troops, officered by Englishmen—a number which, in the last eighty years, had shown itself repeatedly able to beat armies of sixty thousand men, armies having all the appurtenances and equipments of regular warfare—was this strong column actually unable to fight its way, with bayonet and field artillery, to a fortress distant only eighty miles, through a tumultuary rabble never mustering twenty thousand heads?<sup>2</sup> Times are altered with us if this was inevitable. But the Affghans, you will say, are brave men, stout and stout-hearted, not timid Phrygian Bengalees. True—but at Plassy, and again, forty years after, at Assye, it was not merely Bengalees, or chiefly such, whom we fought—they were Rohillas, Patans, Goorkhas, and Arabs; the three first being of Affghan blood, quite as good as any Barukzye

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<sup>2</sup> "*Heads*," we say, because it is one amongst the grievous neglects of the military writers, that they have made it impossible for us to describe the Affghan soldiery under any better representative term, by giving no circumstantial account of the arms or discipline prevailing through the Affghan forces, the tenure of their service, &c. Many had matchlocks; but many, we presume, had only swords; and artillery the Affghans had none, but what they had been suffered to steal in Cabool.

or Ghilzye, and the last better. No, no—there is more to tell. The calamity ascends to some elder source than the imbecility of General Elphinstone, or the obstinacy of Brigadier Shelton. Others than the direct accomplices in that disaster are included in its guilt; some of the hitherto known only as the slain who have suffered by the insurrection, and as the survivors who have denounced it. Amongst *them* lie some of those impeached by the circumstances. So far we might add little to the satisfaction of the public; to see the rolls of the guilty widening would but aggravate the sorrow of a calamity which now it could do nothing to diminish. But oftentimes to know the persons concerned in a great disaster, is a step to knowing something of its causes. And this we will venture to say—that, in defiance of all professional pedantry incident to military men and engineers, the reader is likely to be of opinion that we, at a distance of 7000 miles, have pointed out capital blunders, ensuring ruin and forming temptations to conspiracy, which Lieutenant Eyre, a principal artillery officer on the spot, has failed to notice; and if he failed to notice them in his book *à fortiori*, he must have failed to notice them officially, whilst yet it would have been in time. There were those things done in Cabool by the "fantastic tricks" of men dressed in authority, which, placed in their proper light, go far to explain all the horrors that ensued. We know not whether they made "the angels weep," or rather made the devils laugh, when hovering over Coord Cabool: but this we know, that they are likely to make the hair stand on end of all considerate men in this

land of energetic foresight.

*Fifthly*, It may be asked, What is the moral of this dreadful affair? What inferences in the way of warning are to be drawn from it? This is a topic untouched by all the writers on the Affghan war. But undoubtedly the Cabool reverse was not more fitted to fix attention as a judgment for the past than as a warning for the future; not more as being (or being thought) the reaction from a public wrong, authorized by English councils, than as a premonitory case, showing us what may be expected under the recurrence of similar circumstances. Circumstances altogether similar are not likely to recur in two centuries; but circumstances only in part similar, a commander-in-chief incapacitated by illness, or a second-in-command blind with infatuation, might easily recur in critical or dreadful emergencies. Such circumstances *did* happen in the Nepaul campaigns; imbecility in more leaders than one, as abject as that at Cabool. And though it could not lead to the same awful results where there had not been the same elaborate *preparation* of folly, and upon ground so much nearer to the means of rectification, still it was then sufficient to tarnish the lustre of our arms for the time, and, under worse circumstances, would menace worse misfortunes. Neither is this all; there are other infirmities in our eastern system than the vicious selection of generals.

But all the topics proper to this fifth head will fall more naturally under a paper expressly applying itself to India; and for the present we shall confine ourselves to the previous four.

I. And *first*, then, as regards the original motive assigned for the Affghan expedition. What profit in prospect, or what danger in reversion, moved us to so costly an enterprise? We insist singly on its cost, which usually proves a sufficient *sufflamen* in these days to the belligerent propensities of nations. Cicero mentions the advocate by name who first suggested the question of *Cui bono*, as a means of feeling backwards in a case of murder for the perpetrator. Who was it that had been interested in the murder? But the same question must be equally good as a means of feeling forwards to the probable wisdom of a war. What was the nature of the benefit apprehended, and who was to reap it? The answer to this very startling question, in the case of the Affghan expedition, stood thus for a long time on the part of our own unofficial press—that the object had been to forestall Russia, driving with headlong malice *en route* for the Indus, by surprising her advanced guard in Kohistan. Certainly, if the surprise were all, there might be something plausible in the idea. If the Russians should ever reach Kohistan, we will answer for their being exceedingly surprised at finding an English camp in that region for the purpose of entertaining themselves. In reality no lunatic projector, not Cleombrotus leaping into the sea for the sake of Plato's Elysium, not Erostratus committing arson at Ephesus for posthumous fame, not a sick Mr Elwes ascending the Himalaya, in order to use the rarity of the atmosphere as a ransom from the expense of cupping in Calcutta, ever conceived so awful a folly. Oh, playful Sir John Mandeville, sagacious Don

Quixote, modest and ingenious Baron Munchausen!—ye were sober men, almost dull men, by comparison with the *tête exaltée* from some upper element of fire, or limbo of the moon, who conceived this sublime idea of leaping forward by a thousand miles, to lay salt on the tail of a possible or a conceivable enemy. The enemy—the tail—the salt—these were all *in nubibus*; the only thing certain was the leap, and the thousand miles. And then, having achieved this first stage on the road, why not go on to St Petersburg, and take the Czar by the beard? The enormity of this extravagance showed from what mint it came. Ever since we have harboured the Czar's rebels in England, there has been a craze possessing our newspaper press, that Russia was, or might be, brewing evil against India. We can all see the absurdity of such reveries when exemplified by our quicksilver neighbour France, bouncing for ever in her dreams about insults meditated from the perfidious England; but we are blind to the image which this French mirror reflects of our own attitude towards Russia. One hundred and fifty years ago, the *incubus* which lay heavy on the slumbers of England was the Pope; of whom Swift remarked, that constantly his holiness was seen *incog.* under one disguise or other, drinking at gin-shops in Wapping, and clearly proved to be spying out the nakedness of the land. In our days the Pope has vanished to the rear of the English phantasmagoria, and now lies amongst the [Greek: neknôn amenêna kasêna]. But not, therefore, is England without her pet nightmare; and that nightmare is now the Czar, who doubtless had his own reasons

lately for examining the ground about Windsor and Ascot Heath—fine ground for the Preobasinsky dragoons. How often in this journal have we been obliged to draw upon these blockheads, and disperse them sword in hand! How, gentlemen, (we have said to them in substance,) if you must play the fool as alarmists, can you find no likelier towers for menacing Calcutta with thunder storms than those of arctic St Petersburg; between which cities lies an interspace equal to both tropics? We remember, as applicable to this case, a striking taunt reported by Dampier, that when one bucanier, on the west coast of Peru, was sailing away from the oppression of another to some East Indian port, with a weak crew in a crazy vessel, the ruffian from whom he fled told him at parting, that, by the time he saw green fields again, the boys in his vessel would be greyheaded. And we suspect that the Russian drummer-boys, by the time they reach the Khyber pass, will all have become field-marsahls, seeing that, after three years' marching, they have not yet reached Khiva. But were the distance, the snows, the famine, and thirst nothing, is the bloodshed nothing? Russia is a colossus, and Bokhara, Khiva, Kokan, &c., are dwarfs. But the finger of a colossus may be no match for the horny heels of a dwarf. The Emperor Tiberius could fracture a boy's skull with a *talitrum*, (or fillip of his middle finger;) but it is not every middle finger that can do that; and a close kick from a khan of Toorkistan might leave an uglier scar than a fillip at arm's length from the Czar. Assuredly his imperial majesty would be stopped at many toll-bars before he

would stable his horses in an Affghan caravansery; and would have more sorts of boxes than diamond snuff-boxes to give and take in approaching the Hindoo Koosh. But suppose him there, and actually sitting astride of the old Koosh in boots and spurs, what next? In our opinion, the best thing he could do, in case, he desired any sleep for the next three months, would be to stay where he was; for should he come down stairs into Affghanistan, we English can by this time give some account of the shocking roads and bad entertainment for man and horse, all the way to the Indus. Little to choose between the Khyber Pass or the Bolan: more kicks perhaps on the first, but worse, dinners on the other. And then, finally, about the costs, the reckoning, the "little account" which will be presented for payment on the banks of the Indus. *Us* it cost forty thousand camels, which for years could not be replaced at any price, and nine millions sterling, for a *part* of our time. But the Czar, who might wish to plant a still larger army on the Indus, say thirty thousand, and would have six times our length of march, could not expect to suffer by less than three times the money, and by the total generation of camels from Mecca to "Samarcand, by Oxus—Temir's throne."

Could any man rationally believe of a governor-general, left at large by his council, that, under the terrors of a phantom invasion such as this, visionary as a dream, and distant as heaven is distant, he could seriously have organized an armament which, merely by its money costs, would be likely to shake the foundations of the empire which he administered? Yet if Lord Auckland *had*

moved upon the impulse of a panic so delirious, under what colour of reason could he have been impeached by the English press, of which the prevailing section first excited, and to this day nurses intermittingly, that miserable Russian superstition?<sup>3</sup> The Polish craze, adopted by the press of England and France, and strengthened by the conviction that in Russia lay the great antagonist balance to the disorganizing instincts of Western Europe, had made the Czar an object of hatred to the Liberal leaders. But to improve this hatred into a *national* sentiment in England, it was requisite to connect him by some relation with English "interests." Hence the idea of describing him as a vulture, (or as Sinbad's roc,) constantly hovering over our sheep-folds in India. Gog and Magog are not more shadowy and remote as objects for Indian armies, artillery, and rockets, than that great prince who looks out upon Europe and Asia through the loopholes of polar mists. Anti-Gog will probably synchronize with the two Gogs. And Lord Auckland would have earned the title of Anti-Gog, had he gone out to tilt on an Affghan process of the Himalaya, with—what? With a reed shaken by the wind? With a ghost, as did the grandfather of Ossian? With an *ens rationis*, or logical abstraction? Not even with objects so palpable as these, but with a Parisian lie and a London craze; with a word,

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<sup>3</sup> "*Miserable Russian superstition.*"—This is now, we believe, decaying. But why? Not from sounder politics, but from more accurate geography. The Affghan campaigns, with the affairs of Bokhara, of Khiva, and Khoondooz, have lighted up as with torches those worlds of wilderness and obstruction; so that, in any practical sense, people are ashamed *now* to talk of St Petersburg as threatening Delhi or Calcutta.

with a name, nay, with a *nominis umbra*. And yet we repeat a thousand times, that, if Lord Auckland had been as mad as this earliest hypothesis of the Affghan expedition would have made him, the bulk of the English journals could have had no right to throw the first stone against a policy which, at great cost of truth and honesty, they had been promoting for years.

But, *secondly*, what was the amended hypothesis of that expedition? Not Russia was contemplated, aërial Russia, but Affghanistan for herself—that was the object present to Lord Auckland's thoughts; no phantom, but a real next-door neighbour in the flesh. The purpose was to raise Affghanistan into a powerful barrier; and against what? Not specially against so cloudy an apparition as Russia, but generally against all enemies who might gather from the west; most of all, perhaps, against the Affghans themselves. It must be known to many of our readers—that, about the opening of the present century, a rumour went traversing all India of some great Indian expedition meditated by the Affghans. It was too steadfast a rumour to have grown out of nothing; and our own belief is—that, but for the intestine feuds then prevailing amongst the Suddozye princes, (Shah Soojah and his brothers,) the scheme would have been executed; in which case, falling in with our own great Mahratta struggle under Lord Wellesley, such an inroad would have given a chance, worth valuing, that the sceptre might have passed from England—England at that time having neither steamers for the Indus, nor improved artillery against Affghan jezails, besides having her

hands full of work. Between 1801 and 1838, it is true that things had altered; for the better, we admit; but also for the worse. Much stronger were we; but, on the other hand, much nearer were the Affghans. Delhi and Agra, with their vast adjacencies, had become ours. Cutch was ours, our outposts were pushed to the Sutlege; and beyond the Sutlege we had stretched a network of political relations. We therefore were vulnerable in a more exquisite sense. And on the other hand, as respected the power of the Affghans to wound, *that* had not essentially declined. The Affghan power, it must be remembered, had never exposed a showy front of regal pomp, such as oftentimes deceives both friend and foe, masking a system of forces hollow and curious when probed by foreign war, but had combined the popular energy arising from a rough republican simplicity, and something even of republican freedom, with the artificial energy for war of a despotism lodged in a few hands. Of all oriental races, the Affghans had best resisted the effeminacy of oriental usages, and in some respects we may say—of Mahometan institutions. Their strength lay in their manly character; their weakness in their inveterate disunion. But this, though quite incapable of permanent remedy under Mahometan ideas, could be suspended under the compression of a common warlike interest; and *that* had been splendidly put on record by the grandfather of Shah Soojah. It was not to be denied—that in the event of a martial prince arising, favourably situated for gaining a momentary hold over the disunited tribes, he might effectually combine them

for all the purposes of an aggressive war, by pointing their desires to the plunder of India. The boundless extent of India, the fabulous but really vast magnificence of her wealth, and the martial propensities of the Affghans, were always moving upon lines tending to one centre. Sometimes these motives were stationary, sometimes moving in opposite directions; but if ever a popular soldier should press them to a convergence, there could be no doubt that a potent Affghan army would soon be thrown beyond the Punjaub. An Affghan armament requires little baggage; and if it be asked how the Affghans were to find supplies for a numerous army which they never could subsist at home, the answer is—for that very reason, because they would *not* be at home. The Roman principle of making war support war would be easily applied to the rich tracts of central India, which an Affghan leader would endeavour to make the theatre of his aggression. They could move faster than we could. Semi-barbarism furnishes strength in that respect; and it would be vain to think of acting politically upon Affghanistan, when all her martial children were in the act of projecting themselves upon stages of action which would soon furnish their own recompense to strength of character and to persevering courage. In fact, the slightest review of Indian history, ever since the first introduction of Mahometanism, justifies Lord Auckland's general purpose of interweaving Affghanistan with the political system of India. This was no purpose of itinerant Quixotism— seeking enemies where none offered of themselves. Affghans were *always*

enemies; they formed the *castra stativa* of hostility to India. For eight hundred years, ever since the earliest invader under the Prophet's banner, (Mahommed of Ghuznee,) the Affghans had been the scourges of India; for centuries establishing dynasties of their own race; leaving behind them populous nations of their own blood; founding the most warlike tribes in Hindostan; and, not content with this representative influence in the persons of their descendants, continually renewing their inroads from the parent hives in Affghanistan. Could such a people, brought by our own advance into so dangerous a neighbourhood, have been much longer neglected?

With any safety to ourselves, certainly not. At least the outline of Lord Auckland's policy must be approved as wise and seasonable. All the great internal enemies of Indian peace had been reduced within English control by former governments; others had dealt, so far as circumstances required, with the most petulant of our outlying neighbours, Nepaul and Burmah; and sooner or later, if mischief were to be *prevented*, as well as healed, it would be necessary to bring Affghanistan within the general system of cautionary ties. We wanted nothing with the independence of that country, nor with its meagre finances; but reasonably we might desire that she herself should not wield either for the perpetual terror of her eastern neighbours. Westwards and northwards furnished surely an ample range for mischief; and with those quarters of the compass we had no mission to interfere. Like Hamlet, the Affghans would still have

a limited license for going mad, viz.—when the wind sate in particular quarters; and along a frontier of more than a thousand miles. Still, whilst seeing the necessity of extending the Indian network of tranquillization to the most turbulent and vigorous of neighbouring powers, the reader will feel a jealousy, as we do, with respect to the time chosen for this measure:—why *then* in particular? After which comes a far more serious question, why by that violent machinery, that system of deposing and substituting, which Lord Auckland chose to adopt?

As to the question of time, it is too clear from the several correspondences, however garbled, which have been laid before Parliament, that Herat was a considerable element in the councils at Calcutta. This seems so far a blunder; because of what consequence to India, or even to Affghanistan, was the attack of an imbecile state like Persia upon the Affghan frontier? Here, however, occurs the place for an important distinction; and it is a distinction which may better the case of Lord Auckland. In ridiculing the idea which regarded Russia as the natural enemy of India, between which two mighty realms we may conceive a *vacuum* to exist so as to cut off all communication, we applied our arguments to the case of a *direct* attempt upon India. This we hold not only to be impossible at present, but even for centuries to come, unless Russia shall penetrate to Bokhara, and form vast colonies along the line of the river Amor; and, if ever such changes should be made, corresponding changes will by that time have established a new state of defensive energy in India. The

Punjab will by that time have long been ours: all the roads, passes, and the five great rivers at the points of crossing, will have been overlooked by scientific fortresses; but, far beyond these mechanic defences, Christianity and true civilization will, by that time, have regenerated the population, who will then be conscious of new motives for defending themselves. A native *militia* will then every where exist; and mere lawless conquerors, on a mission of despotism or of plunder, will have become as powerless against the great ramparts of civilization as American savages. The supposed Russian colonies indeed, in stages of society so advanced, would probably have shared by that time in the social changes; possibly would themselves form a barrier between the countries to the south and any ambitious prince in St Petersburg. Any *direct* action of Russia, therefore, flies before us like a rainbow as futurity expands. But in the mean time an *indirect* action upon India is open to Russia even at present. That action, which she is powerless to carry on for herself, she may originate through Persia. And in that we see the remarkable case realized—that two ciphers may politically form an affirmative power of great strength by combining: Russia, though a giant otherwise, is a cipher as to India by situation—viz. by distance, and the deserts along the line of this distance. Persia, though not so ill situated, is a cipher by her crazy condition as to population and aggressive resources. But this will not hinder each power, separately weak *quoad hoc*, from operating through the advantages of the other; as the blind man in the fable benefits by

the sight of the lame man, whom, for the sake of wider prospect, he raises upon his shoulders; each reciprocally neutralizing his own defects by the characteristic endowments of the other. Russia might use Persia as her wedge for operating, with some effect, upon the Affghans; who again might be used as the wedge of Persia for operating upon ourselves, either immediately if circumstances should favour, or mediately through the Seiks and the Beloochees. On this theory we may see a justification for Lord Auckland in allowing some weight to the Persian Shah's siege of Herat. Connected with the alleged intrigues of the Russian agent, (since disavowed,) this movement of the Shah did certainly look very like a basis for that joint machinery which he and Russia were to work. Yet, on the other hand, we cannot but think that Lord Auckland might safely have neglected it; and on the following argument, that whatever influence Persia could have acquired in Affghanistan through the possession of Herat, would to a certainty have been balanced or overbalanced by an opposition growing out of that very influence. This happened to ourselves; and this will arise always in similar cases out of the incohesion essential, to say nothing of the special feuds incident to the Affghan tribes, khans, and sirdars.

Whilst, therefore, we recognize, as a policy worthy of an Indian statesman, the attempt to raise up a barrier in Affghanistan by way of defensive outwork to India, we conceive that all which should have been desired was a barrier against the Affghans themselves, by means of guarantees reposing on

the structure of the Affghan government, and not any barrier against Persia as the agent of Russia; because, from the social condition of the Affghans, Persia was always sure to raise up barriers against herself, in exact proportion as she should attempt to intermeddle with Affghan affairs. The remedy was certain to grow up commensurately with the evil.

But now, quitting the question of the *when*, or why particularly at that time Lord Auckland interfered with Affghanistan, let us touch on the much more important question of the *how*, or by what machinery it was that he proposed during this interference to realize his object? Here comes the capital blunder, as we regard it, of our Affghan policy. Lord Auckland started from the principle—and in *that* doubtless he was right—that the security sought for Western India could be found only in a regular treaty of alliance with an Affghan government—firm at least by its tenure, if circumstances forbade it to be strong by its action. But where was such a government to be found? Who, in the distracted state of Affghan society, was the man presumptuous enough to guarantee any general submission to his authority? And, if no man could say this for himself, could we say it *for* him? Was there any great Affghan philosopher in a cave, for whom Lord Auckland could become sponsor that he should fulfil all the purposes of British diplomacy? We are come upon evil ground, where not a step can be taken without cutting away right and left upon friend and foe. Never, in fact, do we remember upon any subject so many untruths as were uttered upon this

by our own journals, English and Indian; not untruths of evil intention, but untruths of inconsideration or of perfect ignorance. Let us review the sum of what was said, both as to the man chosen and the man rejected; premising this, however, on behalf of Lord Auckland—that, if he made an evil choice, means there were not for making a better. The case was desperate. Not if Mr Tooke's Pantheon had clubbed their forces to create an Affghan Pandorus, could the perfect creature have faced the emergency. With the shafts of Apollo clanging on one shoulder, he could not have silenced the first feud, viz. on his personal pretensions. But with the tallies of his exchequer rattling on the other—so furiously would a second feud have exploded, that as easily might you gather a hail-storm into a side-pocket, as persuade the Affghans of his right to levy taxes. Do you see the cloud of African locusts warping on the east wind? Will they suffer you to put them into Chancery? Do you see those eagles rising from Mont Blanc on the morning breeze? Will the crack of your mail-coachman's whip bring them to be harnessed? In that case you are the man to tax the Affghans. Pigs can see the wind; and it is not less certain that Affghans can scent a tax-gatherer through the Hindoo Koosh: in which case, off they go on the opposite tack. But no matter if they stay—not the less with them to be taxed is to be robbed—a wrong to be remembered on death-beds, and to be avenged were it in the fourth generation. However, as the reckoning does not come before the banquet, so the taxes do not come before the accession. Let us look, therefore, at the men,

the possible candidates, simply in relation to that magnificent claim. There are two only put in nomination, Dost Mahommed and the Shah Soojah: let us bring them forward on the hustings. Or, considering them as horses entering at Epsom for the Derby, the first to be classed as a five-year old, the other as "aged," let us trot them out, by way of considering their paces.

The comments upon these men in England, whether for or against, were all personal. The Dost was the favourite—which was generous—as he had no solitary merit to plead except that he had lost the election; or, as the watchmaker's daughter so pointedly said on behalf of Nigel Lord Glenvarloch, "Madam, he is unfortunate." Searching, however, in all corners for the undiscovered virtues of the Dost, as Bruce for the coy fountains of the Nile, one man reported by telegraph that he had unkenneled a virtue; that he had it fast in his hands, and would forward it overland. He did so; and what was it? A certain pedlar, or he might be a bagman, had said—upon the not uncommon accident in Cabool of finding himself pillaged—"What! is there no justice to be had amongst you? Is Dost Mohammed dead?" Upon which rather narrow basis was immediately raised in London a glorious superstructure to the justice of the Dost. Certainly, if the Dost's justice had ever any reference to pedlars, it must have been a nervous affection of penitential panic during some fit of the cholera, and as transient as the measles; his regard for pedlars being notoriously of that kind which tigers bear to shoulders of lamb; and Cabool has since rung with his

pillagings of caravans. But we believe the pedlar's *mot* to have been thoroughly misconceived. If we see a poor man bleeding to death in a village lane, we naturally exclaim—"What! is Dr Brown, that used to practise here, gone away?" Not meaning that the doctor could have stopped the hemorrhage, but simply that the absence of all medical aid is shocking, and using the doctor's name merely as a shorthand expression for that aid. Now in the East, down from scriptural days, the functions of a sovereign were two—to lead his people in battle, and to "sit in the gate" for the distribution of justice. Our pedlar, therefore, when invoking Dost Mahommed as the redresser of his wrongs, simply thought of him as the public officer who bore the sword of justice. "He cried to Pharaoh," or he "cried to Artaxerxes"—did not imply any reliance in their virtue as individuals, but merely an appeal to them as professionally the ministers of justice. "Are there no laws and no prisons amongst you?" was the poor man's meaning; and he expressed this symbolically under the name of him who was officially responsible for both.

But, as one throws a bone to a dog, we do not care to dispute the point further, if any man is resolute to settle this virtue upon the Dost as a life-annuity. The case will then stand thus: We have all heard of "Single-speech Hamilton;" and we must then say—"Single-virtue Dost;" for no man mentions a second. "Justice for pedlars" will then be the legend on his coin, as meaning that there is none for any body else. Yet even then the voters for the Dost totally overlooked one thing. Shah Soojah had some shadow

of a pretence, which we shall presently examine, to the throne of all Affghanistan; and a king of that compass was indispensable to Lord Auckland's object. But Dost Mahommed never had even the shadow of an attorney's fiction upon which he could stand as pretender to any throne but that of Cabool, where, by accident, he had just nine points of the law in his favour. How then could we have supported him? "Because thou art virtuous," we must have said, are we to support future usurpation? Because the Dost is just to pedlars, "shall there be no more ale and cakes" for other Affghan princes? All Asia could not have held him upright on any throne comprehensively Affghan. Whether *that* could have been accomplished for any other man, is another question. Yet unless Lord Auckland could obtain guarantees from the unity of an *Affghan* government, nothing at all was done towards a barrier for the Indus.

Let us resume, however, the personal discussion. The Dost's banking account is closed; and we have carried *one* to his credit; but, as the reader knows, "under protest." Now let us go into the items of the Shah's little account. Strange to say, these are all on the wrong side— all marked with the negative sign. The drollest of all was the charge preferred against him by our Radicals. Possibly the Chartists, the Leaguers, and the Repealers have something in reserve against him. What the Radicals said was to this purpose: having heard of the Shah's compulsory flight more than once from Affghanistan, they argued that this never *could* have happened had he not committed some horrible

*faux pas*. What could that be? "Something very naughty, be assured," said another; "they say he keeps a haram."—"Ay," rejoined a third, "but they care little about that in the East. Take my word for it, he has been playing tricks against the friends of liberty: he has violated the 'constitution' of Caboolistan." And immediately reverting to the case of Charles X. under the counsels of Prince Polignac, they resolved that he must have been engaged in suppressing the liberal journals of Peshawur; and that the Khyberees, those noble parliamentary champions of the cause for which Sidney bled on the scaffold, had risen as one man, and, under tricolor banners, had led his horse by the bridle to the frontiers of the Seiks. This was the colouring which the Radical journals gave to the Shah's part in the affair; and naturally they could not give any other than a corresponding one to ours. If Soojah were a tyrant kicked out for his political misdeeds, we must be the vilest of his abettors, leading back this *saevior exul*, reimposing a detested yoke, and facilitating a bloody vengeance. O gentlemen, blockheads! *Silent inter arma leges*— laws of every kind are mute; and as to such political laws as you speak of, well for Affghanistan if, through European neighbourhood, she comes to hear of those refinements in seven generations hence. Shah Soojah saw in youth as many ups and downs as York and Lancaster; but all in the good old honest way of throat-cutting, without any fraternal discord on questions of *Habeas corpus*; and had he been a luckier man in his long rough-and-tumbles for the Affghan sceptre, so as to have escaped the

exile you reproach him with, he would not therefore, by one jot, have been more or less a guilty one.

The *purisms* of political delinquency had little share, therefore, in any remorse which Shah Soojah might ever feel; and considering the scared consciences of oriental princes in such matters, quite as little, perhaps, had the two other counts in his London impeachment. One imputed savage cruelty to him; the other, with a *Johnny-rawness* that we find it difficult to comprehend, profligacy and dissoluteness of life.

As to the cruelty, it has often been alleged; and the worst case, besides being the only attested case, of the Shah's propensities in that direction, is the execution of the Ghazees near the fortress of Ghuznee. We scorn to be the palliators of any thing which is bad in eastern usages—too many things are *very* bad—but we are not to apply the pure standards of Christianity to Mahometan systems; and least of all are we to load the individual with the errors of his nation. What wounds an Englishman most in the affair of the Ghazees, is the possibility that it may have been committed with the sanction of his own country, officially represented by the British commander-in-chief. But then that consideration leads an Englishman to suspend with a stoic [Greek: epochê], and exceedingly to doubt whether the fact could have been as it was originally reported. So said we, when first we heard it; and now, when the zeal of malice has ceased to distort things, let us coolly state the circumstances. A Mahometan Ghazee is a prededicated martyr. It is important

to note the definition. He is one who devotes himself to death in what he deems a sufficient cause, but, as the old miser of Alsatia adds—"for a consideration;" the consideration being, that he wins Paradise. But Paradise he will *not* win, unless he achieves or attempts something really meritorious. Now, in the situation of things before Ghuznee, where a new ruler was brought in under the wing of Feringee infidels, what meritorious service was open to him? To have shot the commander-in-chief would have merely promoted some other infidel. The one sole revolutionary act appropriate to the exigency, was to shoot the Shah Soojah. There, and in one moment, would have gone to wreck the whole vast enterprize of the Christian dogs, their eight hundred lakhs of rupees, and their forty thousand camels. The mighty balloon would have collapsed; for the children of the Shah, it was naturally imagined by Affghans, would divide the support of their father's friends. That alone would have been victory to the Mussulmans; and, in the case of the British army leaving the land, (which then was looked for, at any rate, after one campaign,) the three Shahzades would, by their fraternal feuds, ensure rapid defeat to each other. Under this state of expectations, there was a bounty on regicide. All Ghazees carried the word *assassin* written on their foreheads. To shoot the Shah in battle was their right; but they had no thought of waiting for battle: they meant to watch his privacy; and some, even after they were captured, attempted in good earnest to sting. Such were the men—murderers by choice and

proclamation—and the following were the circumstances:—On the afternoon immediately preceding the storming of Ghuznee, from the heights to the southward of that fortress descended a body of these fanatics, making right for the Shah's camp. They were anxious to do business. Upon this, a large mass of our cavalry mounted, went forward to skirmish with them, and drove them back with the loss of a standard. There the matter would have stopped; but Captain Outram, casually passing, persuaded some of the cavalry to go round the hills, to a point where they would have intercepted the retreat of the Ghazees upon that line. Seeing this, the devotees mounted the heights, whither the cavalry could not follow; but Captain Outram, vexed at the disappointment, just then remarked an English officer marching in command of some matchlocks—him he persuaded to join the chase. Outram leading, the whole party pushed on, under a severe fire, to the very topmost pinnacle of the rocks, where was flying the consecrated banner, green and white, of the fanatic Mussulmans. This was captured, the standard-bearer was shot, thirty or forty killed, and about fifty made prisoners.

The sequel we give from page 164 of the *History*, edited by Mr. Charles Nash:<sup>4</sup>—"A scene now ensued, much less pleasant to contemplate. It of course became a question what to do

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<sup>4</sup> *History of the War in Affghanistan*. Brookes: London. 1843. We cite this work, as one of respectable appearance and composition; but unaccountably to us, from page 269 for a very considerable space, (in fact, from the outbreak of the Cabool insurrection to the end of General Elphinstone's retreat,) we find a *literatim* reprint of Lieutenant Eyre's work. How is *that*?

with the captives, and they were brought before the Shah. *Some of them were released, upon their declaring that they had been forced into the ranks of the king's opponents against their will.*" We pause to remark, that already in this fact, viz. the cheerful dismissal of prisoners upon their own verbal assurance of friendliness, though so little reconcilable with the furious service on which they were taken, there is enough to acquit the Shah of unmerciful designs. He made an opening through which all might have escaped. "But," proceeds the author, "the majority, excited by fanaticism, were not restrained, even by the Shah's presence, from evincing their animosity towards his person, and avowing their determination to have been to seek his life. One of them, more violent than the rest, upon the interference of one of his majesty's attendants, stabbed him with his dagger; and they were then" [*then?* what! because one was worse than the rest?]"immediately ordered for execution. Two of them, however, were afterwards spared; one upon the plea of his being a Syud," (i.e., a descendant collaterally from the Prophet,) "and the other, because he pleaded hard for his life."

This account is not very luminous; and it is painful to observe that the man who was abject, and the man who was lucky, were the two selected for mercy. What proportion had previously been dismissed, is not said. The affair occasioned much discussion, as we all know; and the author speaks doubtfully of the necessity<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> But afterwards, at page 166, there is a dreadful insinuation that such a necessity might have founded itself on the danger of taking prisoners "in a camp already

under which the execution took place, as not "satisfactorily ascertained." He speaks even more doubtfully of the *persons* supposed to be implicated, viz. the Shah and the commander-in-chief, than of the *thing*. Little, indeed, could have been known distinctly, where rumour ascribed to each separately the most contradictory acts and motives. Us it surprises, that Lord Keane has not publicly explained himself under such gloomy insinuations. But, in the mean time, this is plain, that the Shah is entitled to benefit by the doubts hanging over the case, not less than our own officer. The writer suggests as one reason for a favourable judgment on the Shah, "previous acts of humanity in the course of his life." Undoubtedly there are such acts, and there are none well attested in the opposite scale. In particular, he spared the eyes of his brother Mahmood, when, by all oriental policy, he had every temptation to incapacitate an active competitor for the throne. Two considerations heighten the merit of this merciful forbearance; Mahmood was the elder, a fact which slightly improved his title; and Mahmood, in a similar situation, had *not* spared the eyes of an elder brother.

We may certainly, therefore, dismiss the charges of cruelty

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subsisting on half and quarter rations." Now we, in a paper on Casuistry, (long since published by this journal,) anticipated this shocking plea, contending that Napoleon's massacre of 4000 young Albanians at Jaffa, could draw no palliation from the alleged shortness of provisions, whether true or false; and on the ground that a civilized army, consciously under circumstances which will not allow it to take prisoners, has no right to proceed. Napoleon's condition had not changed from the time of leaving Cairo. We little expected to see a Jaffa plea urged, even hypothetically, for a British army.

against the Shah, unless hereafter they shall be better established. But in doing this, it is right to make one remark, overlooked by all who have discussed the subject. If these Ghazees were executed as murderers elect, and as substantially condemned by the very name and character which they assumed, the usages of war in all civilized countries would sustain the sentence; though still there is a difficulty where, on one side, the parties were *not* civilized. But if they were executed as traitors and rebels taken in arms, such an act, *pendente lite*, and when as yet nobody could say *who* was sovereign, must be thought little short of a murder.

With the remaining charge we shall make short work. The reader would laugh heartily if we should call the Dey of Tunis a *dissenter*, the Pasha of Egypt an old *nonconformist*, or the Turkish sultan a *heretic*. But this way of viewing Islamism in some inconceivable relation to the Church of England, or to Protestantism, would not be more extravagant than the attempt to fasten upon an oriental prince the charge of debauchery and a dissolute life. The very viciousness of Asiatic institutions protects him from such reproaches. The effeminate delicacy of easterns, and the morbid principle of seclusion on which they build their domestic honour, will for ever secure both Hindoo Pagans and Mussulmans from blame of this kind, until they pass under the influence of a happier religion. How can *they* act licentiously, in a way cognizable or proveable, whom rank and usage will not permit to wander, and who cannot have a temptation to wander, from their own harems, authorized by the

institutions of their country?

This last charge, indeed, being so intrinsically absurd, is hardly of a nature to have merited any answer, had it not been the one most insisted upon in England, where its ludicrousness is not so apparent, until the mind is recalled from the life of Christendom to that very different life which prevails in Asia. The charge then exhales into vapour; and a man laughs as a ship's company on the broad Atlantic would laugh, if charged with roaming abroad at night.

But why do we notice *personal* considerations at all, in a case where public relations to Affghanistan should naturally be paramount? We notice them, because our own press dwelt on personal qualities almost exclusively; and since this Cabool tragedy will make the whole Affghan policy immortal, we are anxious, by dispersing the cloud of calumny connected with the object of our choice, to clear the ground for a juster estimate of what was either good or erroneous in our further conduct. Not that personal accomplishments of mind or of body were unimportant in a ruler of simple half-barbarous men; nor again is it to be denied that Dost Mahommed, from advantages of age, (forty-five years against the seventy of the Shah,) and from experience more direct and personal, would, under equal circumstances, have been the better man. But the circumstances were *not* equal. The Dost could not have been more than a provincial ruler in the land; consequently he could not have undertaken that responsibility for the whole which formed the

precise postulate of our Indian government.

Yet because the Dost could *not* meet our purposes, is it true that the Shah *could*? That is the point we are going to consider; and to have postponed this question to a question of personalities, even if those personalities had been truly stated, is specifically the error which vitiated all the speculations of our domestic press. We say then, that Shah Soojah had a *primâ facie* fitness for our purposes which the Dost had not; Soojah was the brother, son, and grandson of men who had ruled all Affghanistan; nay, in a tumultuary way, he had ruled all Affghanistan himself. So far he had something to show, and the Dost had nothing; and so far Lord Auckland was right. But he was wrong, and, we are convinced, ruinously wrong, by most extravagantly overrating that one advantage. The instincts of loyalty, and the *prestige* of the royal title, were in no land that ever was heard of so feeble as in coarse, unimaginative Affghanistan. Money was understood: meat and drink were understood: a jezail was understood but nothing spiritual or ancestral had any meaning for an Affghan. Deaf and blind he was to such impressions and perhaps of all the falsehoods which have exploded in Europe for the last six years, the very greatest is that of the *Edinburgh Review*, in saying that the Suddozye families were "sacred" and inviolable to Affghans. How could such a privilege clothe the *species* or subdivision, when even the Dooaraunee or entire *genus* was submitted to with murmurs under the tyranny of accident. In what way had they won their ascendancy? By thumps, by hard knocks, by a vast

assortment of kicks, and by no means through any sanctity of blood. Sanctity indeed!—we should be glad to see the Affghan who would not, upon what he held a sufficient motive, have cut the throat of any shah or shahzade, padishah, or caliph, though it had been that darling of European childhood—Haroun Alraschid himself.

But how could royalty enjoy any privilege of consecration in a land where it was yet but two generations old? Even those two had been generations of tumultuous struggle. Oftener had the Shah been seen racing for his life on a Arab of the Hedjas, than eating "dillecroust"<sup>6</sup> in peace, or dealing round a card-table grand crosses of the Dooraunee order. The very origin of Affghan royalty fathoms the shallowness of the water on which it floated. Three coincidences of luck had raised Ahmed to the throne. One dark night his master Kouli Khan, for the benefit of all Asia, had his throat cut. This Kouli, or Nadir Shah, was much more of a monster than Ahmed; but not very much less of a usurper. Riding off with his cavalry from Persia to Candahar, Ahmed these robbed a caravan! Upon which every body cried out to him, "Go it!" and his lucky connexion by birth with the best of the Dooraunee blood did the rest. A murder, a flight, and a robbery, or pretty nearly in the words of our English litany, "Battle, and murder, and sudden death," together with a silver spoon in his mouth at his natal hour, had made Ahmed a shah;

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<sup>6</sup> "*Dillecroust*."—This is the traditional dish of royalty at our English coronation banquet in Westminster Hall.

and this Ahmed was the grandfather of our own pet Soojah. In such a genealogy there is not much for a poet-laureate to found upon, nor very much to make a saint out of. Ahmed, after a splendid and tumultuous reign of twenty-six years, died of cancer in 1773. His son Timour feigned distractedly for twenty years. Dying in 1793, Timour left a heap of shahzades, amongst whom our good friend Soojah was almost the youngest. As they call people Tertius, Septimus, or Vicesimus, from their station in the line of birth, let us call *him*—Penultimate Soojah Penultimate, if he was, he could fight as respectably as the rest: and many was the kick he bestowed on antepenultimate Mahmood. From that year 1793, the zenith of the French Revolution, in Affghanistan was nothing but fighting for some ten or fifteen years. Truly a battle royal it was; and if we cannot report to a fraction the "list of the killed and wounded," we know the main results. How many of the fraternal combatants leaped upon the throne, we are not quite sure. Four we can swear to, who were all pulled out by the ears before they had time to adjust the folds of their purple. The case of Eteocles and Polynices was a joke to it; and by the time the row or termashaw was over, and the candles were brought back amongst this happy family, the following was the state of matters—two stone blind, three (if not four) stone dead, and two in exile living upon charity; amongst which last was Penultimate Soojah. It is proper to mention, by the way, as an appendix to the adventures of this old friend, that (improving upon his grandpapa's example) he had run off from his elder brother with

the crown jewels; but, like Colonel Blood in our Charles II.'s reign, he benefited only by the glory of this distinguished larceny; for soon after, falling amongst thieves, at the head of whom was our late worthy ally the Seik Maharajah, Runjeet Singh, he in *his* turn, was effectually cleaned out; and, in particular, his silk "wipe," in which he had wrapped up the famous *Koh-i-noor*, or *summit of glory*, was cleanly forked out of his fob by the artful dodger, old Runjeet, himself. Here was a pleasant commentary on the adage of "*Diamond cut Diamond*." The jewels, originally stolen by Ahmed, were passed on (as in our game of *Hunt the Slipper*) from thief to thief, until at least forty thieves had possessed them for a few weeks or months. All the forty are now dead; and at this moment the *summit of glory*, possibly never once worn by one of them, is a derelict in the hands of the latest murderer at Lahore, of course attracting by its light all hands towards his interesting throat.

We have thus sketched a slender memoir for the leading family of saints amongst the Edinburgh reviewer's holy Suddozyes. Great must have been their sanctity amongst the Affghans. The reader will judge for himself whether that *aureola*, or supernatural glory about their heads, was altogether sufficient to guarantee the throne of King Soojah. And it must not be quite forgotten, that on the roll-call of legitimacy Penultimate Soojah did not stand next for promotion. Prince Caumraum, who commanded at Herat, stood before him equally in active qualities, and in precedence of title; for he was the son of

Mahmood. The sons of Zemaun had a still higher precedency.

However, the Affghans, who are essentially democratic by the necessities of their turbulent condition, often make a compromise in their choice of khans between strict primogeniture and personal merits, where they happen to be appropriate. And they might have done so here. But we are now going, in conclusion, to bring forward one remark, which utterly prostrates Lord Auckland's scheme as a scheme of hope for Affghanistan, or of promise for his own purpose. It is this—no legitimacy of title, and no personal merits, supposing both to have met pre-eminently in the person of Soojah, had a chance of winning over the Affghans to a settled state. This truth, not hitherto noticed, reveals itself upon inspecting the policy of all the Suddozye shahs from Ahmed downwards; and probably that policy was a traditional counsel. Ahmed saved himself from domestic feuds by carrying away all the active, or aspiring, or powerful spirits to continual wars in the Punjaub, in Persia, or India. Thus he sustained their hopes, thus he neutralized their turbulence. Timour next, and his son Zemaun after *him*, pursued the very same policy. They have been both taxed with foolish ambition. It was not *that*: the historian has not perceived the key to their conduct:—it was the instinct of self-preservation. No otherwise than by exhausting the martial restlessness of the Affghans upon foreign expeditions, was durability to be had for any government. To live as a dynasty, it was indispensable to cross the Indus in pursuit of plunder. But exactly that policy it

was, the one resource of prudent Affghan princes, the escape-valve for conspiracy and treason, which Lord Auckland's army had been put in motion to abolish.

Now, *thirdly*, let us examine the machinery by which these plans were to be executed. Under the last head we have seen that, if on the whole perhaps the best instrument at hand, and better essentially than the Dost, very soon, indeed, Shah Soojah must have learned the necessity of passing over to that aggressive system which he had been raised up to destroy. Merely for his own safety he must have done this. But now suppose this otherwise, and that Soojah had continued to be that passive instrument for the Indian cabinet which their plans required and presumed. Even on this supposition, our agent or lieutenant Soojah would have required at first some support. By what machinery was this to be given? What was to be the instrument for sustaining our instrument?

Simply taxation, energetic taxation. Yet, if *that* should happen to fail, what was to be the resource? Simply to fine and to amerce—*i.e.* more intense taxation. So, in Molière's *Malade Imaginaire*, the only remedy is "*Saignare et Purgare.*" But *lavemens* had been known to fail. What was to be done in that case? *What is to be done?* shrieks the Macaronic chorus—Why, of course, "*Purgare et ensuite purgare.*" To the present government of India, this organ of administration is all in all. And it was natural to transfer this doctrine to Affghanistan. But in that they mistook the notions of the Affghans. And, in order to understand them, it may be

well to review the possible aspect and modifications under which the idea of a tax may fall.

First, there is the lawful and peaceful revenue raised in free Christian states under their noble civilization, which is paid even thankfully, as the purchase money for inappreciable social benefits. Next, and in the very opposite extreme, is the ruffian levy once raised upon central India by the ferocious Pindarree, who asked for it with the insolence of a robber, and wrenched it from the recusant with the atrocities of a devil. Here there was no pretence of equivalent given or promised: and this was so exquisite an outrage, a curse so withering, that in 1817 we were obliged to exterminate the foul horde (a cross between the Decoit and the Thug) root and branch. Now between these two poles lie two different forms of mitigated spoliation. One was the Mahratta *chout*, the other the *black mail* of the Scottish cateran. Neither of these gave any strict or absolute equivalent; but with a rude sense of justice, both, on different principles, endeavoured to indemnify the sufferer. The Mahratta generally, by a treaty with the local government, induced them to allow for the *chout* as twenty-five per cent advanced out of their own claim for taxes. And the cateran, if he did not go upon a convention with the government, gave the compounder a protection from other caterans, a discharge from irregular demands, and a means of recovering what might be stolen by knaves. The European case of taxation may be viewed as the fairest case of buying and selling; the Pindarree, as the vilest of robberies; and the two last as cases

of compromise, (or what in Roman law was called *transactio*,) —as a toll or fine in fact, though too arbitrarily assessed.

Such are the categories of taxation; and, at the very best, all Affghans viewed it in the light of *chout* or *black mail*, a tribute to be thrown into the one scale if a gleaming sabre lay in the other. King Soojah levying taxes was to him a Mahratta at the least, if he was not even a Pindarree or a Thug. Indeed it is clear that, where the government does nothing for the people, nor pretends to do any thing, where no courts of justice exist, no ambassadors, no police, no defensive militia, (except for internal feuds,) title there can be none to any but a nominal tribute, as a mere peppercorn acknowledgment of superiority: going beyond *that*, taxation is borne only as robbery is borne.

Under these circumstances, and having a motive so strong for reconciling the Affghans to the new government, of all the incidents belonging to sovereignty on our European notions, least and last should we have suffered the Shah to exercise that of taxation. But to exercise it ourselves, that was midsummer madness! If *he* would have seemed a robber in such a function, what must we have seemed? Besides, it is held by some who have more narrowly watched the Affghan modes of thinking, that, even where they *do* submit to pay a tax, it is paid as a loan, and on the understanding that the chief receiving it is bound to refund it indirectly, by leading them at some convenient season (which many conceive to be in every alternate year) upon a lucrative foray. But this was exactly what we came to prevent.

What we should have done is manifestly this. How much could the Shah have levied on all Affghanistan? A matter of L. 300,000 at most. But this was the *gross* sum, before deducting any thing for costs of collecting, which costs were often eighty shillings in the pound, besides counting on the *little* aid of our bayonets as a service wholly gratuitous. The sum netted by the exchequer must have been laughably small; and even in that respect the poor king must often have sighed for his quiet English lodgings on the left bank of the Sutlege. Now, surely this trivial revenue might have been furnished on the following plan. In a country like Affghanistan, where the king *can* be no more than the first of the sirdars, it is indispensable to raise his revenue, meaning the costs of his courtly establishment, as we ourselves did in England till the period of 1688. And how was *that*? Chiefly on crown estates, parks, forests, warrens, mines, just as every private subject raised his revenue, reserving all attempt at *taxes* in the shape of aids, subsidies, or benevolences, for some extraordinary case of war, foreign or domestic. Our kings, English and Scotch, lived like other country gentlemen, on the produce of their farms. Fortunately for such a plan, at that moment there must have been a fine harvest of forfeitures rising to the sickle all over the Affghan land, for rebels were as thick as blackberries. But, if any *deficit* had still shown itself on the Shah's rent-roll, one half of that L.30,000 a-year which we allowed to the Dost when our prisoner, or of that smaller sum<sup>7</sup> which we allowed to the

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<sup>7</sup> *Smaller sum.*—L.20,000 a-year. There was, however, a separate allowance, we

Shah when our guest, would have made it good. Yet what if we had spent a million sterling through a period of ten years, as a sort of scaffolding for the support of our new edifice whilst yet green and rising? Even in that case, and supposing us to have taken our leave of the Dooraanee throne at the end of one year, after planting it as firmly as it ever could be planted, we should have pocketed six million of pounds sterling that now are gone; whereas we insisted on sinking three millions per annum for the first three years, in some bottomless Affghan Chatmoss, with the effect (seemingly with the intention) of enabling King Soojah to earn universal hatred by netting a few lacs of rupees.

This was the rock on which we split. Had we restrained the king from levying taxes, all might have gone well. Had we restrained ourselves from enforcing his levies, all might have gone decently. And had we prompted the king to inaugurate some great public benefit—as, for instance, by conferring upon the people a simple system of judicial process and distributive justice—both he and we might have become popular; for, even in Affghanistan, there must be multitudes of poor men, peasants and tradesmen in towns, mothers and wives, who sigh for peace, and curse their endless agitations. Yes, even amongst their martial spirits, who now live by war and the passions of war, many are they who would relent from their angry feuds, if it were possible to get justice without them.

The sum, therefore, of that question; viz. of the *How* and by

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believe, to Zemaun, the king's blind brother.

what machinery Lord Auckland proposed to accomplish his not unstatesmanlike object, is this—that we failed utterly, and chiefly by applying European principles to Oriental communities; and in particular, 1st, By throwing a prodigious stress on the fancied consecration of royalty in a country where it would have snapped under the weight of a L.10 note.

2dly, By enforcing (and even exercising in our own persons as principals) the odious power of taxation, under the monstrous delusion that it was the first of a king's privileges, where in fact, and with some reason, it was viewed as the last of his excesses.

The first was a *negative* delusion. We fancied a mighty power where simply there was none; fancied a substance where there was not even a shadow. But the second was worse: it was a *positive* delusion. We fancied a resource where simply there was a snare—a mooring cable where simply there was a rope for our execution—a sheet-anchor where simply there was a rock waiting for our shipwreck.

Not the less, however, we maintain, that whilst in fact our ruin was self-prepared, come it would, sooner or later, from the necessity of Affghan society, had the actual occasion of that ruin been wanting. You build a palace on the waters, and you complain that a monsoon has overthrown it. True; but had there been no monsoon, equally it would have been supplanted by the *natural* unsteadiness of the waves.

Now, *fourthly*, however, for Cabool, and the crape-bound banners "perituraque castra!" Fourthly and lastly, for the solution

of that hideous calamity, whose memory is accursed for ever. But the solution— is not *that* plain already? If what we allege be true, if the delusions exposed under the third head are rightly stated, will not *they* solve the ruin of Cabool? Are not *they* sufficient? No, nothing will solve it—no causes are sufficient for such a result, unless a strong spirit of delusion had been inflicted from heaven, distraction, frenzy, judicial madness. No dangers from the enemy, no pressure from without, *could* have accomplished that wreck, had they not been aided by treachery within the counsels of our own hearts.

It is an old saying of any subject too vast or too sad to measure by hurried words—that "*de Carthagine satius est silere, quam parcius dicere.*" And in this case, where we have left ourselves too narrow a space to turn round in, and where no space would exhaust the infinities of the affliction, it is not our purpose to heighten, or rhetorically to colour, any one feature of the dismal story. Rhetoric, and art of all kinds, we forswear in a tragedy so torturing to our national sensibilities. We pass, in sympathy with the burning wrath of our readers, the madness of dallying and moping over the question—to starve or not to starve. We pass the infamy of entertaining a treaty with barbarians, *commenced* in this foul insult to a British army—that *after* we should have submitted to indignities past expression, they (the barbarians) would consider at their leisure whether it would please them to spare our necks; a villany that gallant men *could* not have sanctioned, an which too certainly was not hurled back

in their teeth as it ought to have been. We pass the lunacy of *tempting* barbarians to a perfidy almost systematic in their policy, by consenting to a conference *outside* the British cantonments, not even within range of the British guns, not even within the overlooking of British eyes. We pass the lunacy of taking out sixteen men as an escort against a number absolutely unlimited of the enemy, and where no restraint, even of honour or mutual understanding, forbade that unlimited enemy to come armed from head to foot. It is a trifle to add—that no instructions were given to the sixteen men as to what they were to do, or in what circumstances to act; and accordingly that one man only, out of the whole sixteen, attempted any resistance; and this in defiance of warnings eight several times reiterated by English officers, and by friendly Affghans, that treachery was designed. We pass the triple lunacy of treating at all in a case where Sir William M'Naughtan well knew, and himself avowed his knowledge, that no man or party existed amongst the enemy who could pretend to have authority sufficient for ratifying, or for executing, any treat of whatsoever tenor. The Cabool forces perished eventually by the *dissension* of the two first in command. This is notorious. And yet, to mark the dread fatality which pursued them, the *concord* of these two officers was even more destructive to their victims than the worst of their disputes. In the one solitary case where they agreed, the two leaders, Elphinstone and Shelton, *sealed* their doom. That case was this:—Many felt at that time, as all men of common sense feel now, that the Bala Hissar,

and not Jillalabad, was the true haven for the army. In resisting this final gleam of hope for the army, both General Elphinstone and Brigadier Shelton heartily concurred; *and they concurred then first and then last*. This also, this almost incredible fact, should be added to the anecdote—General Elphinstone, when hard pressed by the general wishes on this point, pleaded as a last reason for his obstinacy—that a particular article, essential to the army, was wanting in the Bala Hillar. Subsequently, but after all was over, it turned out that this plea had been the windiest of chimaeras. True, you reply, but perhaps he was deceived. Yes, reader, but by what manner of deception? He was distant from the Bala Hissar by less than two miles; he was then in almost daily communication with it; and yet, upon a matter confessedly one of life and death for 17,000 souls, he took no steps for ascertaining the truth!

But these things we pass, in order to reach a point most superficially treated by Lieutenant Eyre, which was, in truth, the original fountain of the whole calamity. We have said already, that, (guilty as might be the leaders by unexampled fatuity, obstinacy, and improvidence,) in our judgement, the mischief ascended to elder sources than either General Elphinstone or Shelton. And here was the main source, which (on the principle explained above) we shall barely indicate, not saying one word in aggravation. The cantonments—who was it, what man, what men, what council, on whom rests the horrible responsibility of that selection and that execution? We contend that, besides

those *directly* responsible parties, others were so to a criminal extent; every artillery officer was so; and therefore, unless some further explanations are made, Lieutenant Eyre is so. But surely Lieutenant Eyre has exposed the vices of these cantonments. True, he has so; *some* of the vices, but not all, but not the worst. The ground, he tells us, was bad; the line of fortifications too extensive; the interior overlooked in parts; and (with a view to the accommodation of the envoy) the defences absolutely interrupted in their regular series. True; and therefore, night and day, it became the duty of every artillery officer to cry out, *Delenda est Carthago*. But all this is not the worst. Even a child knows that, under the circumstances of the case, and the known reversionary uses of such a retreat in the event of its being wanted at all, (except as a barrack,) it was of the last importance to destroy all the strong places, nay, even all the cover, strong or not strong, which could shelter an enemy. This was not attempted, or thought of, until it became too late. Next, it was of even more clamorous importance to have the corn magazine *within* the line of defences: no effort was made in that direction. Now, had these been the only defects of the cantonments, they were enough to argue a constructive treason in those who neglected to denounce them. We know how they operated. These three ruins issued from these most culpable negligences:—1st, Starvation fell in one day upon the British host; and *that* it was which placed them at the mercy of the enemy. 2dly, The troops were inadequate to the extent of the defences; so that, together with starvation, loss of

sleep fell upon the fighting men. 3dly, As another effect from that cause, a perpetual Penelope's web was to be maintained; for as often as detachments went out from cantonments against the many neighbouring forts, before they could possibly have time to destroy these nests of hornets, back they were summoned to the defence of their own *lares*; often in broad daylight, by combined assaults of the enemy on their own ramparts, but always by the approach of night. So that all momentary advantages became idle and useless; none could be followed up, none could be maintained. Lucan says of Caesar, when besieged in the fortified palace of the Ptolemies at Alexandria, that often, whilst thrown on his most difficult defence, the matchless soldier became the assailant—

"Obsessusque gerit, tanta est constantia mentis, *Offensoris* opus."

But what *he* did as a trophy of his superiority, we did by imbecile improvidence and for final ruin. Yet even these shocking neglects or oversights were not the worst. Let us now suggest what *were*. Wherefore were the cantonments placed in proximity so close to Cabool? Let that be answered, and we shall see the early commencement of our infatuation. Two considerations will clench the case, and then we shall leave it. 1st, The cantonments were never meant to act upon the city of Cabool: that task was thrown upon the Bala Hissar from its situation. And yet no trial had ever been made of the power possessed by that fortress. The private houses were known to

be forts: not until rebellion commenced was it ascertained of what strength they were; and eventually the city proved more formidable to the Bala Hissar than the Bala Hissar to the city. Such a blunder of ignorance and miscalculation, we believe, was never heard of. But, 2dly, Even that was a trifle by comparison with the capital evil—and the capital evil was this. The enemy was allowed, throughout the autumn of 1841, to accumulate *ad libitum* in Cabool. Retainers of the chiefs, Ghilzyes and others, gathered unwatched throughout October. Now mark what followed from our choice of cantonments. Had they been fixed fifteen or even ten miles off, the impossibility of marching daily to and from Cabool would have strangled the rebellion in its first three days. The evil which crushed ourselves, of having always at sunset to go homewards, would have been thrown upon the enemy, and with as much more of ruinous effect as the distance was greater. As it never was alleged that the cantonments were meant for the overawing of Cabool, and in effect they were totally inefficient as regarded that city—it is clear that the one great advantage by which the Affghans accomplished our destruction, was coolly prepared for them by ourselves, without the shadow of any momentary benefit for our own interests. Even for provisions, the event showed that we had never looked to Cabool. And there reveals itself the last feature of our perfect madness.

# ETCHED THOUGHTS BY THE ETCHING CLUB

In the Number of *Maga* of January 1842, we reviewed one of the labours of the Etching Club—*The Deserted Village*. We congratulated the lovers of art upon the resumption of the needle, and showed the advantages which, in some important respects, it has over the graver. Etching, as it is less mechanical, is more expressive. We have from it the immediate impress of the painter's mind; that peculiar autographic character which marks every turn and shade of thought, even transition of thought and feeling, in what may, at first view, seem vagaries of lines; which, we know not how, (nor is the artist himself at the time conscious of the operation,) discriminate innumerable niceties, each having its own effect, and yet tending to one whole. We rarely come at once, *uno ictu*, to a decision. The operation is progressive—from conception to conception, from feeling to feeling, from many shades of uncertainty to decision. The first fresh hand upon any work is obedient to the mind in this process; and hence it is that we so value, so admire, the sketches and drawings of the great masters. We see not only the full complete sentiment of the subject, but how they came to it; we trace it back through all its varieties, and feel a sensible delight in being in possession of the very mind of the master. Were this not the case, how are we

to account for the charm felt in turning over a portfolio of old drawings? How exquisitely beautiful are those of Raffaele and Titian! The sale of the collection of Sir Thomas Lawrence proves the high estimation in which these are ever held. Thousands of pounds for a few drawings! What sums were given for Claude's "Liber Veritatis!" and why?—Because these original drawings of the old masters possess this very autographic character that we have described. And this is precisely the case with etching. Nor is it only the case with those of the Italian, but those of every school; and, singularly enough, the Flemish and Dutch painters, whose high finish and elaborate colouring give such great value to their works, were eminently successful in the free and expressive style of etching. Rembrandt we need not speak of—wondrous indeed are his works of the needle. How exquisite are the etchings of Berghem, Both and Karel du Jardin! and, to show how characteristic they are, how different are they from each other! It is to be regretted that this art is of modern invention. What treasures might we not have possessed, had this inestimable secret been known to the ancients! We should not be left to conjecture the merits of Apollodorus, Zeuxis, Parrhasius, Timanthes, Apelles. We might have had outlines—first thoughts—"etched thoughts," by Phidias himself. And, as the art of design was earlier than any of those names—even coeval with, or prior to, Homer himself—those who engraved and worked in metal their shields, might have handed down to us etchings of Troy itself, and particulars of the siege. Do we

lose or gain by not having the ancient book of beauty? But we must be content with what we have, and, in the regret, see the value of the present, looking to future value. Etching, is still old enough to interest by its portraiture of ages gone by. The inventor is not known. Perhaps the earliest specimen is the well-known "Cannon" by Albert Durer, dated 1518; and there is one by him, "Moses receiving the Tables of the Law," dated 1524. The art was soon after practised by Parmegiano, and extended to general use. Yet it is clear that the real power and merit of etching was not known to the inventor, nor to those who, in its early state, applied themselves to it. The first aim seems to have been exact imitation of the graver. Le Bosse, in his treatise on engraving, makes the perfection of the art consist in the close similitude of the graver's work. It was this which at first cramped the artist, and delayed the progress of etching, and gave it not only the appearance, but the reality of inferiority—and often times the name and reputation of inferiority is as prejudicial as the thing itself, and we verily believe that it still has its effect upon the public taste. Artists have not sufficiently taken to etching. We have had more amateurs excel in it than professional artists. There was a collection of amateur etchings at Strawberry Hill, given to Walpole by the etchers. The greater part of them is excellent, though they are mostly copies from other works, but not all. There are some surprising imitations of Rembrandt. The best are by Lady Louisa Augusta Neville, afterwards Lady Carlisle.

Then, again, the union of etching and engraving has certainly

retarded the art, and has given it another character. If that union has engrafted freedom on engraving, it has given to the needle too much precision—it has taken from it the working out effects. We have elsewhere noticed that the taste for the precise and labored engraving in landscape, introduced by Woollet, drove out from the field that which was very superior to it. The prints from Claude and Poussin, by Vivares Wood, Mason, and Chatelet, and published by Pond, are infinitely more characteristic of the masters than the works which succeeded them. But we speak here only of imitation. It is in the original handling of artists themselves, not in translated works, and according to the translating phraseology, "done by different hands," that we are to look for the real beauty and power of the art. It is this handwriting of the artist's original mind that constitutes the real beauty; we would not have a touch of the graver to any work professing to be an etching—the graver cannot be used with impunity. If it will admit of any adventitious aid, it may perhaps be, in a very subordinate degree, mezzotint and aquatint. But etching rather improves Prince Rupert's invention than is advantaged by it. The sootiness of mezzotint is dangerous—in bad hands it is the "black art" of Prince Rupert, though the term was applied to a metal of the prince's invention, not to his discovery of mezzotint.

Modern times have brought the art of engraving to a wonderful perfection. Its mechanical work is most exquisite, and reaches the whole effect of picture surprisingly. If the publishing public knew as well what to engrave as our engravers know how

to engrave, we should not see our printsellers' windows teem with worthless works beautifully executed. We often wonder, as we stop occasionally to look at the display, where the purchasers are found for things that pain the eye and weary the mind to see—history, or landscape, or familiar life, it matters not, nearly all without feeling, elaborate nothings—obtrusions, unless we are disposed to examine only the work of the engraver; and even then we must lament to see it thrown away, or rather employed in disseminating bad taste. How rarely is it we see even a subject of any value or interest attempted! It is, as in our play-writing, not the subject, but the peculiarity of some actor, that is to be written up to; so the peculiarities of some few flashy favourite artists employ our best engravers, who ought to be far otherwise employed, in making transcripts from the best works, ancient or modern, by which taste may be improved, the mind enlarged, and the heart made to feel as it ought. If our flashy prints are the index of the public taste in this country, we have little of which to boast; and we undoubtedly keep our artists from rising to any worthy aim, by showing them how satisfied we can be with mediocrity, and even some degrees below it. There is, in etching, a lightness and playfulness of execution which excuses, if it does not quite reconcile us to a bad subject. We lose the idea of effort in the freedom. To present to the eye a laboured nothing, is to disgust by the sense of labour alone. We calculate the time and cost, and look for an object worthy the outlay in vain, and become thoroughly dissatisfied. We have a great

mind to describe the process of etching, that the lovers of art who read *Maga*, and happen to be ignorant of it, may try their hands—it is very fascinating work, and even the uncertainty in the first attempts, and the very failures, give pleasure in the operation. There is something more pleasant in hoping our labour will turn out well, than knowing it. If there be any whose time hangs heavy on their hands, let them take up etching. Johnson lamented that men did not work with their needles, considering the employment of the hands a great aid to thought—and so it is. Now the etching-needle is the one a man may take up without becoming ridiculous. As there are so many "Handmaids" to the art, from which the whole mystery may be learned, we forbear. We have, however, turned to our friend Gerard Larresse for the purpose of setting down, *secundum artem*, a practical account, and find it not: but we like little old treatises better than modern, there is something unsophisticated in their manner of giving information, and there is no study of periods, which, in their music, steal away the understanding; so we refer to Faithorne. But nevertheless our friend Gerard, if he does not give information, supplies amusement. He thinks every thing best told by an emblem—so receive, reader, his pictorial account of the art; we cannot give his plate, so be content with *his* description of it, that is, Etching. "This beautiful virgin, sitting at a table, has before her a copperplate, lying on a sand-bag; and near it stands a little monkey, placing a lighted lamp before her. She is attended by Prudence and Diligence, and Practice is

setting the tools on an oil-stone. Her chair is of ebony, adorned with figures of Sincerity and Assiduity, wrought in ivory, and mutually embracing; behind which stands Judgment, showing her a little further, Painting, accompanied by Apollo and Diana; he holding up his torch, in order to enlighten Sculpture, and she hers reversed, with purpose to extinguish it; the Genii, in the mean time, are every where busy in providing necessary materials. The eldest offers her a drawing, either redded or whited on the back, and a point or needle for tracing it on the plate; this drawing represents the design he is going about. Others, in an inner apartment, are employed in heating a plate on a chafing-dish, and laying the ground even with a feather. Here, one is etching—there, another biting a plate; others taking and reviewing proofs, with great attention and pleasure—while Fame, having a proof of a portrait in her hand, with her trumpet sounds out at a window the praises of masters or engravers. Honour, crowned with laurel, and bearing a small pyramid, is entering the room, ushering in Annona or Prosperity, who has a cornucopia, or horn filled with fruits. Round the room are set on pedestals divers busts of famous etchers and engravers; as Marc Antonio, Audlan, Edelinck, Vander Meulen, and several other Italian and French, as well as Dutch and German masters. In the off-skip, Europe, Asia, and Africa appear standing in surprise at the sound of the trumpet." There is nothing like example! Who sees in this prophetic enigma, in his "chair of ebony," other than "Ebony" himself, the "*most accomplished Christopher*," beaming

with "sincerity," and placid in his "assiduity," with "Judgment" waiting upon him at command, wielding neither crutch nor pen, but, in affable condescension, the contemned needle etching the portrait of his own "Colonsay," and his own famous exploit, to show that one needle in the hand of genius can make a man and a horse too; though nine tailors and nine needles scarcely make up the complement of a man—yet would these nine in one, the renowned of Brentford, scarcely have matched "Christopher on Colonsay!" And as for Fame blowing out of the window, he, in spite of himself and his modesty, is his own trumpeter, and, as *Maga* reaches them, surprises "Europe, Asia, Africa," and America too. Such is the emblematical representation of etching, and we have embellished it with a first-rate performer.

And now let us turn to "Etched Thoughts by the Etching Club." We find a new name or two added to the list—C.G. Lewis, the renowned and best of etchers; and Severn, whose etchings are new to us, not so his other works of art. We remember his "Ship of the Ancient Mariner," and his expressive, sentimental, figures; and poor Fearnley—now no more—we remember greatly admiring a somewhat large picture of his—"A River-Scene in Norway,"—evidently painted immediately from nature, powerfully, expressively given. Somehow or other he did not take in this country, and quitted it, leaving behind him very beautiful studies strangely undervalued, and sold for little. The fact is, he was too true to the solemnity and sobriety of nature to please a public led away by gaudy display and meretricious

colouring. Yet was he a man of more genius—in landscape—than any nine out of ten of our best artists that have, these last ten years, attempted to show nature or art upon our academical walls. Poor Fearnley! We have heard that elsewhere he was appreciated and successful. Stone and Herbert are good additions. Happy is it when the feelings of the artist and poet are in unison; happier still when the poet is himself the artist: and such is the case here. So that, in many cases, they are really "Etched Thoughts"—not etched translations of thoughts; and the work of the pen is not inferior to that of the needle. In the "Deserted Village" was a continuous story; every plate was in connexion with its preceding. In this publication, every artist seems to have been left to his own choice of subject, and to his free fancy.

Cope first comes under our notice. He commences the work with "Love," and a quotation from Spenser. As an etching, it is powerful, but we doubt if quite true: there should be something to account, in such a twilight scene, for the strong light upon the "Ladye-love!" Nor are we quite satisfied with the love of the lover, or the reception it meets with. The man or his guitar, one of the two, if not both, must be out of tune. His "Veteran's Return" tells its tale, and a somewhat mournful one; it is in illustration of some very good and pathetic lines by a member of the club, H.J. Townsend; and as, we believe, they are not to be met with out of "Etched Thoughts," we extract them for the gratification of the reader:—

# THE VETERAN'S RETURN

The old yew, deck'd in even's parting beams,  
From his red trunk reflects a ruddier ray;  
While, flickering through the lengthen'd shadow, gleams  
Of gold athwart the dusky branches play.  
The jackdaws, erst so bustling on the tower,  
Have ceased their cawing clamour from on high;  
And the brown bat, as nears the twilight hour,  
Circles—the lonely tenant of the sky.

The soldier there, ere pass'd to distant climes,  
On Sabbath morn his early mates would meet;  
There list the chant of the familiar chimes,  
And the fond glance of young affection greet.  
There, too, at eve—before the twilight grey  
Led the dark hours, when sprites are wont to walk—  
With his sweet Nancy how he joy'd to stray,  
And tell his rustic love in homely talk.

Now, home return'd, far other thoughts he owns,  
Though still the same the scene that meets his view!  
The same sun glistens o'er the lichen'd stones—  
Scarce one year more seems to have gnarl'd the yew.  
There, too, the hamlet where his boyhood pass'd

Sends, as of old, its curls of smoke to ken—  
So near, his stalwart arm a stone might cast  
Among the cots that deck the coppiced glen!

But ere the joys of that domestic glade  
Can wipe the tear from off his rugged brow,  
A stone beneath the yew-tree's ebon shade  
Deep o'er his heart a heavier shade doth throw.  
(Oh! sad indeed, when thus such tidings come  
That stun, even when by slow degrees they steal,)  
That tablet tells how cold within the tomb  
Are hands whose fond warm grasp he long'd to feel.

The "Painter of the Olden Time."—"His shop is his element, and he cannot, with any enjoyment to himself, live out of it.—Dr South." This is very good. The painter has his back to you, and is at work apparently on a wall. Little wots he of the world without. He is embodying angels, and spreading angelic light; himself, slipshod and loosely girdled, centring the radiance he creates. How differently arrayed are body and mind! By the title, we presume Mr Cope means to satirize some modern fops of the profession. Of all Mr Cope's etchings in the volume, we mostly admire "Love's Enemies." It is from the well-known passage of Shakspeare, "Ah me! for aught that ever I could read," &c. The conception is excellent. War, Death, and Sickness are taking off their prisoner Cupid, chained, from the door of an aged

couple willing enough to part with him, while their poor broken-hearted daughter, with disheveled hair, hides her face with her hands; and, above her, the hard father's uplifted crutch is ready to speed the departure. It is lightly etched, in very good keeping; so that the grouping is clear, and the moral is perceptible at a glance. His "Rejected Addresses" is of another cast. Here he is in the common and beggarly world: yet represents he no common beggar; for, though he be often so named, he is one of rare accomplishments. "He can write a capital letter, enough to make any of the 'quality people' cry. The begging-letter people give him a shilling for a letter. He is now on the tramp." The man was a lawyer, and so astute that he can so adjust himself and his shadow, that he will hide in it from your scrutiny any habitual expression of his villany. And Cope has been most happy in this idea.

"Morning Prayer" is introduced with a few elegant lines, we presume by Mr Cope himself. They have no name to them. The figure is graceful, the effect tender; but we confess we have been so satiated with such subjects in the Annuals, that we do not relish this as perhaps we ought. From the same cause, we do not dwell upon "The Mother." "The Wanderer—the beggar and his dog," is good. The impostor beggar was in sunshine, and which he turned to his purpose: he could cope with the world's broad glare. This is no impostor; and the atmosphere he breathes is suited to his fortunes. The rejecting hand, with its shadow of the dry skinny fingers, is well conceived.

"The Readers," from Boccaccio, is not happy. The figures are not Italian; nor is the costume of the age of the book. His "Girl and Cupid" is a little gem, reminding us of Schidoni. We presume these lines are by the etcher—

"Love, in the virgin breast of beauty lying,  
Laughs at the fate for her he doth prepare—  
Will swiftly turn her sweetest smiles to sighing,  
And flee when she is fixed in despair."

We have seen so many ladies with up-turned eyes, called in the annual catalogues "Meditation," that we will not interrupt the calm of Mr Cope's. C.G. Lewis has but one plate, "A Woodland Dell." A quiet spot of shade and flickering sunshine—a streamlet, and a rural bridge. It is sweetly etched, true to the character.

Richard Redgrave, in more than one instance in the book, shows that he has power over the deep and solemn pathetic, as well as over the tender. His first plate is "The Survivors of the Storm." The story is from Petronius, as told by Jeremy Taylor. A floating body of one of a shipwrecked crew lies pillowed on a wave, and is met with by the survivors in their boat. Solemn and awe-stricken is their expression. The plate is of a fine tone, befitting death in that awful shape. This story of Petronius was the subject of a poetical piece, which we remember to have read in a volume of poems by Thomas Flatman, one of the "mob of gentlemen" condemned by Pope, who, nevertheless, did not

care about borrowing from him pretty much of his version of the "Animula, blandula, vagula"—the Emperor Adrian's address to his soul. We remember the commencement of the piece:—

"After a blustering tedious night,  
The winds all hush'd, and the rude tempest o'er,  
Rolling far off upon a briny wave,  
Compassionate Philander spied  
A floating carcass ride,  
That seem'd to beg the kindness of a grave.  
At near approach he thought he knew the man," &c.

His "Fairy Revels" make a light and elegant plate. A fairy group in a frame of leaves. He is here both painter and poet.

"Hast thou not seen the summer breeze,  
The eddy leaves, and downy feather,  
Whirl round a while beneath the trees,  
Then bear aloft to heaven together?  
With just such motion, gliding light,  
These fairies vanish'd from my sight."

Poor unfortunate Dadd! some years ago he exhibited a picture of this subject, somewhat similarly treated, that was exquisitely ideal.

The "Ellen Orford," from Crabbe's *Borough*, is good in the effect; but it has not the pathos that usually distinguishes Redgrave. "Rizpah watching her Sons," is very fine. The night,

the glaring torchlight, to scare away the approaching wolves, and the paler, more distant light in the sky, with the melancholy mourning Rizpah, are of the best conception. "The Sick Child" has quite the effect of a Rembrandt plate; yet it is very tender—a scene fit for the angelic visit, and pure and devout of thought and purpose is that angel—we do not like the mother. The best description is from Mr Redgrave's own pen.

# "THE SICK CHILD

*"He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee  
in all thy ways."—PSALM xci.*

"In a chamber, faintly crying,  
With its mother o'er it sighing,  
Lay a baby pale and wan;  
Ever turning—restless turning—  
Much she dreaded fever burning,  
Sickness slow or sickness hasting,  
Cough, convulsion, ague wasting.  
Bitter tears there fell upon  
The pale face of her little son.

"The evening chimes had ceased their ringing,  
And the even song was singing  
In the old kirk grey with years;  
Through the air sweet words came welling—  
Words of peace, unto that dwelling;  
Hymns they sang, how angels shielded  
Those who ne'er to sin had yielded:—  
And her pale face lost its fears—  
That lonely mother dried her tears.

"In her arms the babe soon slumber'd;  
That little son, whose days seem'd number'd,  
Smiled upon his mother sleeping.  
The Lord indeed had sorely tried her,  
But his angel knelt beside her;  
Heavenly breezes cool'd the fever  
Of her child—He shall not leave her!  
And this mother ceased her weeping."

The "Expected Return" is quite in Redgrave's best manner

"Fancy, impatient of all painful thoughts,  
Pictured the bliss should welcome his return;

\* \* \* \* \*

And hope and memory made a mingled joy."—

SOUTHEY

This is a lovely figure; a loving and lovable gentle creature! and many such have we seen by Redgrave's hand. Not Raffaele himself could more truly paint the pure mind—that precious jewel, innocence, in its most lovely casket.

Severn has two plates, which may be called companions; racy and good are they, and of one vintage. We are not quite satisfied with either face or figure of the maiden in the "Roman Vintage." Hers is not a face of feeling; nay, we would almost beg Mr Severn's pardon, and pronounce her a bit of a fool. The "Neapolitan" is much better. They are executed in a very bold, broad, free style of etching, and effective. Horsley's "English

"Peasant" might be allowed to be a little weatherbeaten; but, at first sight, we should say that he was not of the temperance society when the aquafortis was on the table. It is black, from being overbitten. Yet, after a while, we see through the darkness into the character. He is an honest fellow, but a little "disguised." His "Twilight" is very good, yet perhaps is the light a little too sharp and strong for that hour. The subject is from verses by Redgrave, and good and quaintlike old gentle rhymes they are. But how comes it that the figures are both feminine?—that does not accord with the lines.

"Time was no more for them: the sun had gone,  
The stars from sunset glow began to peer;  
Yet 'neath those stars that pair still linger'd on,  
Unconscious of the night, fast drawing near!  
His voice to her was daylight, and her smile  
A sunny morning breaking o'er his soul:  
Such hours of bliss come only once—the while  
Long-silent love speaks forth without control,  
And of its hopes and fears first telleth out the whole."

"Welsh Gossips."—

"At every word a reputation dies."

For the credit of Wales, we hope Mr Horsley did not sketch these from nature; yet is there a fearful look of natural acrimony in the one, and sheer busybodyism in the other. The plate is beautifully etched. His "Moonlight" is not quite clear enough—

there are too many sparkling lights. The "Shady Seat" is prettily designed; the lady looks rather too alarmed, and, for the subject, perhaps there is not enough of shadow— certainly not "enough for two." We at once recognize Stonhouse in the "Evening effects of Solitude," and his "Neath Abbey." The former he thus describes:—

"There, woods impervious to the breeze,  
Thick phalanx of embodied trees—  
Here, stillness, height, and solemn shade  
Invite, and contemplation aid."

We are sure that Neath Abbey is from nature, for it has the sooty and smoked character of that manufacture-ruined ruin. But we must not pass by his "Dorothea" from Don Quixote. Nothing can be more happily expressed than the deep shady retirement of the wood; there are nice gradations of shades, which is the very character of retirement, and Dorothea is herself in it, not a bright figure in a black mass—and good is the figure too, but the feet are unfinished.

Mr Creswick is a large contributor, and least fortunate in his first: it is not the scene so well given in verse by his friend Townsend; for it is too pretty, too tight. It wants the "lane;" it is the road-side.

## "THE WAYSIDE

"A lane, retired from noisy haunts of men,  
Whose ruts the solitary lime cart tracks,  
Whose hedge-sides, propp'd by many a mossy stone,  
Are checker'd o'er with foxglove's purple bloom,  
Or graceful fern, or snakehood's curling sheath,  
Or the wild strawberry's crimson peeping through.  
There, where it joins the far-outstretching heath,  
A lengthen'd nook presents its glassy slope,  
A couch with nature's velvet verdure clad,  
Trimm'd by the stragglng sheep, and ever spread  
To rest the weary wanderer on his way.  
There, oft the ashes of the camp-fire lie,  
Marking the gipsy's chosen place of rest.  
Black roots of half-charr'd furze, and capons' bones—  
Relic of spoils from distant farmers' coop—  
Point to the revels of preceding night.  
And fancy pictures forth the swarthy group,  
Their dark eyes flashing in the ruddy glare;  
While laughter, louder after long constraint,  
From every jocund face is peeling round.

His "Summer" is a simple unaffected scene, such as may be met with any where, if you have but "eyes to see:" and pretty much like it, but inferior—for if it be not more common in

subject, it is in treatment— is the "Old Farm-House," from that delighting and most natural painter with her pen, Miss Mitford. Very exquisite in his "Moonlight"—so true, with all the quivering and blending light of nature, where all things are at once lucid and in shade—as Virgil happily expresses it, "luce sub incertâ lineæ." Sweet, too, and in the deep solemn repose of religious eve, is the "Village Church"—from lines by Rogers. He is not so happy in his "Smithy;" neither is the scene of interest nor the effect pleasing. But he makes up for all by his "Outward Bound." The home is left in the calmest, stillest of days; though the "outward bound" has sails, they rather wait for, than feel, the wind; there is the village church still in view, and will yet be an hour and more. The sky is, though really printers' ink, like many a sooty vapour converted into light-shedding yet faint clouds—we can see the colour—it is a grey, in which is gold and ultra-marine. The boat is conveying the "outward bound" to the vessel; there is the moving and the waiting. It is poetical. "The Castle" we do not much admire; it is a villa castle, and on no agreeable river. "Low Water" is quite another thing; it is a beautiful etching. He thus describes it with his pen—

"The flowing tides that spread the land,  
And turn to sea again."

The "River Scene," illustrating lines from Southey, is delicately touched, and a pleasing scene; yet we feel sure it

is not from nature. Why, we can hardly tell. Is it that there is a bridge, apparently without a bank on one side to rest upon? "The Terrace," from lines by Andrew Marvel, is a most fascinating upright plate. It is perfectly true, giving all the thousand intricacies and shades of such a scene; and there is grace in the forms, and the figures well suit the whole. All is gentleness and ease; not a light is too strong, or a shadow too deep; there is no violence—which too many are apt to express when they would give powerful effect. His "Fishing Scene on the Coast of Ireland" is not to our taste, yet is it not without meaning—it is windy and sunny. "The Oriental Palace" is solemn, with its ancient yew in the silence of the crescent moon; but the ruin is to fill up, and does no good.

We have read with pleasure, and extracted, some of Mr Townsend's poetry; let us now see his etching. "Boyhood:" those who delight in the easy, every-day, every-hour play of boyhood, will enjoy this plate. A boy is, with a peacock's feather, tickling a child asleep in the arms of a grave old lady—so sedate have we seen grimalkin look whilst encouraging her kitten, lightly and coquettishly, to play with a ball of cotton. "The Beach" is a well-sketched coast scene, and shows Mr Townsend to have an eye for nature's scenery, as well as nature's sympathies. Very good is "The Model"—an artist sketching in the figure of a Lascar. But his best plate is "Sad Tidings." It is a very sweet figure—youth, elegance, tenderness, are there—and such an even melancholy light, or rather such a mournful evenness of light and shade, that,

as a whole, it is neither light nor dark, and should have no other name than melancholy. He had the judgment and forbearance to hide the face—we know it is lovely, and that is enough; it is this, in part, which separates "Sad Tidings" from such subjects as they are usually treated. There are two etchings by Frederic Tayler—"The Chase" from Somerville, and "The Auld Grey" from Burns—both are lightly etched and good; but they have not that free and certain hand which marks Mr Tayler's style in his drawings, where one wash of the brush hits off his object with great truth. "The Gypsy Boy," by Mr Knight, is very masterly in chiaroscuro, and certainly characteristic of the race. Effect of chiaroscuro seems to be his aim. It is marked in his "Old Fable" (which always means the newest) of "The Peasant and the Forest." It is thus given: "A peasant once went into an old forest of shady oaks, and humbly entreated the same to grant him a small branch to make a handle for his axe, and thereby enable him to pursue his labours at home. The forest very graciously acceded to his request, and the peasant soon formed the required handle; but presently he began to lay about him in every direction, using the very substance with which the forest had furnished him out of its own bosom, and in a short time hewed down its whole growth."

Which are we bound most to admire—John Bell's pen or John Bell's needle? It is a difficulty. "The Devil's Webbe" is admirable in both. What a spider-like wretch is he, watching the toils that he has spread!

"This webbe our passions be, and eke the flies  
Be we poor mortals: in the centre coyles  
Old Nick, a spider grimme, who doth devyse  
Ever to catch us in his cunning toyles.  
Look at his claws—how long they are, and hooked!  
Look at his eyes—and mark how grimme and greedie!  
Look at his horrid fangs—how sharp and crooked!  
Then keep thy distance so, I this arreede ye,  
Oh sillie Flie! an thou wouldst keep thee whole;  
For an he catch thee, he will eate thy soul."

And there they are! the winged insect lovers of pleasure, and of gain and strife—in one word, of sin—entangled in the ladder webb; while such a monster is in the centre, watching his larder. John Bell is instinctively a moral weaver. Fine-spun are his philosophical threads; we stop not to enquire if they will bear the tug of life. He is trying them, however, on the "tug of war." Pen and needle are set to work philosophically, methodically, benignly. In this he is but a unit out of many thousands. His opinions are not singular. Amiable moralist!— delightful is the dream, sweetly sounding the wisdom; but is it practicable? John Bell's warfare, "The Assault," is, without a doubt, "confusion worse confounded;" it is not easy, at a view, to find legs and arms and heads in their anatomical order. We must trace the human figure as through its map. Perhaps this is purposely done to resemble a battle the more truly, where limbs are apt to fly out

of their places. But John Bell thinks—

"The play's the thing  
Wherewith to touch the conscience of the king."

So he pours forth from his "Unpublished Play" a choice tirade against the royal play of human ninepins:—

"And then a battle, too—no doubt it is  
A right fine thing; or rather to have been there.  
But all things have their price; and this, methinks,  
Is rather dear sometimes. Oh! glory's but  
The tatter'd banner in a cobwebb'd hall,  
Open'd not once a-year—a doubtful tomb,  
With half the name effaced. Of all the bones  
Have whiten'd battle-fields, how many names  
Live in the chronicle? and which were in the right?  
One murder hangs a man upon a rope,  
A hundred thousand maketh him a god,  
And builds him up a temple in the air  
Out of men's skulls. A loving mother bears  
A thousand pangs to bring into the world  
One child; your warrior sends a thousand out,  
Then picks his teeth."

*JOHN BELL—Unpublished Play.*

Such was Shakspeare's momentary humour, when he put it into Falstaff's mouth to ask what honour is "to him that died o'

Wednesday." It is a humour that won't last—'tis against nature—man is more than half belligerent, and has a "murder" in him (to give it a bad name) "that will out." Even the peaceable Ephraim took up the handspike, and used it too, with "friend, keep thee in thy own ship." The "friend" was hypocrisy—the use of the handspike, natural; the very elements are at war, and were made to be so—storms are as necessary as sunshine. But excellent able John Bell likes sunshine best; and who does not like him the better for that? And sweet sunshine has he shed around "The good Mayde"—a sunshine that makes its own magic circle, within which evil spirits or evil men shall not come. Tempt on, ye wizards—she looketh upwards, yet think not she will fall or miss her way—the Unseen guideth her steps. Bell's account of the matter is, however, far better. Let him publish his quaint poem, all of it; the specimens warrant the request.

"Thus doth the goode Mayde, with a stedfaste eye,  
Walke through the troubles vaine, and peryls dire,  
That doe beset mayde's path with haytes full slie,  
The trappes and gynnes of mischief's cunning syre.  
Ne nought to her is riches' golden shower,  
Ne gaudy baites of dresse and rich attyre,  
Ne lover's talke, ne flatteries' worthless store,  
Ne scandal's forked tongue—that ancient liar,  
Ne music's magic breath, ne giddy wheel  
Of gay lascivious daunce, ne ill-raised mirthe,  
Ne promised state doth cause her mind to reel,

Or lure from thoughts of heaven to joys of earthe."

Our poet, a moralist etcher, reverts to the old subject; and we have "The Progresse of Warre," in a series, as part of a frieze for his Temple of Peace. This is most clear—for he who runs may read; yet, on a second view, we doubt that—for we see, what we did not at first see, writing under each tablet that is by no means intelligible. Having, with Mr Bell, seen an end of the battle, it is fit time, with Mr Herbert, to discuss "The Day after the Battle." "Next day did many widows come"—that verse of *Chevy Chase* is the subject. The slaughtered knight, the widow, and the dog, tell the tale, and tell it well too. The widow is the best figure. We have had enough of battle and all its horrors; let us turn to tranquillizing nature, where the undisturbed lichen may grow upon the rocks, and the branches of unpruned trees throw out their sheltering leafage, and the innocent insects know it is their home; and even in the seeming silence, if you listen, may you hear the still voice of a busy creation, a world of a few summer hours—yet seemeth it to them an eternity of enjoyment. And such a scene we have in the "Woody Scene," by Thomas Fearnley—poor Fearnley!—and is it not lightly, elegantly touched with the needle? the scene realized? Or, would you see a wilder spot, turn to his "Norwegian Scenery," and see the saw-mill, or whatever the building be, at the very entrance of the deep wood in its gloom, with the mountain torrent pouring over the rocks. In this sequestered spot, man has built him a home, and turned

to human uses the rebellious waters, even on the very skirts of the wilderness; and there he is, for his hours are not all of toil, gloriously angling, for he has hooked his fish. Poor Fearnley! would he could have remained in this country! Had he been moderately patronised, he might have added an honourable name to our dictionary of painters.

And what has become of Webster? We remember well his "Boys let loose from School." Here he is—and but one plate—"Anticipation"—well named. The pie is come home, and the boy's eyes open, and his mouth waters. The story is quaintly told by Townsend thus:—Lights and shadows of boyish days! how bright and deep they are! The schoolmaster's frown may be charmed away by the gift of a new top, or a score of marbles. But what are these in the cotter's life to the stirring vicissitudes of a pie! —Before its departure for the bakehouse, did he not ponder admiringly on the delicate tact that mingled the bony scraps with.

'Herbs, and other country messes,  
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses?'

"Since then, *imagination* has been at play; and, in accordance with its suggestions, his bib and tucker have been donned, as trusty adjutants to the formidable wooden spoon. Thus armed, while sister Phillis—the creative genius of the savoury structure—regards the baker's boy with her modest glance,

young Corydon, with his prophetic anticipation, is ogling the baker's burden. If his knife be as sharp as his appetite, 'twill want no whetting! We must expect that, in the afternoon, when anticipation shall have faded through the stages of its fulfilment, if no longer entranced by the pleasures of Hope, he will solace himself with those of Memory." And there, sure enough, is the grinning baker's boy, and the pie admirably baked; and the boy of the bib and tucker, and the wooden spoon, realizing it through his nostrils, and magnifying it through his eyes; and there is the neat-handed Phillis, who cares little for the eating. Feminine and gluttonous seldom come together. "The little glutton" is ever the male. This was in Webster's own way, and he has hit it off truly; he has seen it hundreds of times, and knew as well as Townsend who should have the wooden spoon. We find we have omitted to notice one plate, and that by Redgrave. We did not expect landscape by his hand. It is, however, very clever; there is a light over the dark church-tower which a little offends. Keep down that a little, and you recognize the true effect of nature. It is a view of Worcester. "A spot," says Mr Redgrave, "memorable as the scene of that battle signalized by Oliver Cromwell as the 'crowning mercy;' and whence the young Charles II. commenced the series of romantic and perilous adventures which terminated in his safety."

Our work of criticism is at an end; not so our pleasure. We shall look at this choice volume again and again; and as we have somewhat arrogantly, and with a conceit of our ability and right

so to do, taken the Etching Club under our especial care, regard, and patronage, we shall think ourselves at liberty to encourage and to exhort them whenever we see fit. We therefore do exhort them to go on, to give a taste for painters' etchings, to improve themselves, too; and let each make it a rule to himself never to take the trouble to touch a subject that is not worth doing; nor to tell a story not worth telling, however such may seem to look pretty or with effect upon copper or paper; by all means to avoid "annual sentimentalities," and commonplace "acting charades;" and never to forget that expression is the soul of the art. For the present, we dismiss them with thanks—like the prudent physician, who, as Fielding says, always stands by to see nature work, and contents himself by clapping her on the back, by way of approbation, when she does well.

# A LOVE-CHASE—IN PROSE

## CHAPTER I

Bandvale Hall had lain empty for a long time—old Frank Edwards, so well known as a sportsman, had been dead for eighteen years, his horses sold, his kennels dismantled, and his son, after so absurdly long a minority, (for his father had capriciously fixed his majority at twenty-three,) only now coming of age; but whether he would reside at Bandvale, or continue in the neighbourhood of Leicester, where his guardian lived, or what he would do, nobody could tell. The estate, we were told, in spite of the economical management of four or five attorneys, and a couple of stewards, was more involved than when old Frank died; and many a time have I sighed, as I ambled past the lodges, and saw grass growing over the drive, contrasting these appearances with the jolly days I had known in the hall, "when the beards wagged all—shall we ever see the like again?" But change passes over all; and Bandvale was not the only place or the only thing that felt its influence. We were all very different from what we were; we had a railway within half an hour's drive; we had a Methodist chapel in the village; we had a clergyman who preached in his surplice, and would have had a hurl off a lame donkey if he had ventured into the saddle; the hounds were

given up; you were asked to dinner at half-past seven, and got home again by ten; rather a changed state of affairs since old Frank kept the ball alive, and Parson Holt rode his grey nag over bank and fence, and we had two packs within ten miles, and no Methodists in the village, and no railroad in the county, and every thing was exactly as it ought to be; and we dined at five, and got home—when it pleased Heaven. Sometimes I turned down the avenue, and took a melancholy look at the old Hall. It is a great square house; flanked with two turrets, with fine old stone windows, and a stone porch in the middle. The Bandvale river runs through the park about three hundred yards from the front door, and is crossed by two bridges in the direction of the lodges, east and west; and beyond it rises the upland, all dotted over with clumps of elm—and at the highest part of the park is the church; a great black figure, kneeling on one knee, used to bear up the sun-dial in the centre of the sweep—his leg had given way from the weight of years and the huge globe he supported, and the poor old fellow lay on his back, kicking up the stump of his leg in a most audacious manner, in the very face of the sun. "The great globe itself had dissolved, and left not a wreck behind." They talk of Marius among the ruins of Carthage, and Coliseums unroofed, and temples of Theseus with crumbling pillars—all these are desolate enough; but then, their condition is picturesque: and I doubt whether Marius in the capitol, and the Coliseum newly finished, and the Temple at the time of its consecration, were half such interesting objects as in the days

of their decline and fall. But to me the true representative of desolation was the long tufts of grass that grew in old Frank Edwards's stable-yard, the weeds that choked up the hall door, and the broken panes of the great dining-room windows—the spacious yard, the hospitable door, the jocund dining-room. And now young Frank was just coming to his legal age, and we were all forming our guesses and conjectures as to what the youth's proceedings would be when he came into possession. I made sure, if the property was really involved to the extent reported, that he would sell some of the lands he had in other counties; a farm or two he had in Sussex; a tolerable estate in the north; and a foolish marine villa somewhere in Devonshire, and pay off all incumbrances, and settle himself for life at Bandvale Hall. He would still have a very fine fortune; and it had been the family seat since the reign of Charles the Second. All the mothers and aunts in the county thought it was a seat like a Spanish saddle, and would carry double; and it certainly was amazing to see the preparations that were made to get the proper foot in the stirrup. It seemed agreed that for a young gentleman of twenty-three, seventeen was the only admissible age; and to reach that desirable date, as great cruelty was practised on the baptismal register books as on ancient travellers by the bed of Procrustes—girls of twenty-four were shortened by seven years, and little children of fourteen elongated by three. In some families there were three or four daughters all of the same age, yet not the least like twins; brothers and fathers were kept in marching order, ready to be

dispatched to make poor Frank's acquaintance the moment he took possession. I also, though unendowed with any possession so valuable as either daughter, or sister, or niece, kept myself prepared to welcome my old friend's son, whenever he arrived.

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