An Outline Of Humor

Edited by

Carolyn Wells

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Title: An outline of humor

Editor: Carolyn Wells

Release date: May 24, 2022 [eBook #68163]
Most recently updated: October 18, 2024

Language: English

Original publication: United States: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1923

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/68163

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK AN OUTLINE OF HUMOR ***

An Outline of Humor

Being a True Chronicle From Prehistoric Ages to the Twentieth Century

Edited by

Carolyn Wells

Editor of
"The Book of Humorous Verse,"
"A Nonsense Anthology," etc.

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York & London
The Knickerbocker Press
1923

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DEDICATED
WITH
HIGHEST REGARD
TO
DOCTOR HUBER GRAY BUEHLER

FOREWORD

Outlining is a modern art. For centuries we have collected and selected, compiled and compended, but only of late have we outlined.

And an Outline is a result differing in kind from the other work mentioned, and presenting different conditions and contingencies.

An Outline, owing to its sweep of magnificent distances, can touch only the high spots, and can but skim those. Not in its province is criticism or exhaustive commentary. Not in its scope are long effusions or lengthy extracts.

Nor may it include everybody or everything that logically belongs to it.

An Outline is at best an irregular proposition, and the Outliner must follow his irregular path as best he may. But one thing is imperative, the Outliner must be conscientious. He must weigh to the best of his knowledge and belief the claims to inclusion that his opportunities present. He must pick and choose with all the discernment of which he is capable and while following his best principles of taste he must sink his personal preferences in his regard for his Outline as a whole.

Nor can he pick and choose his audience. To one reader,—or critic,—a hackneyed selection is tiresome, while to another it is a novelty and a revelation. And it must be remembered that a hackneyed poem is a favorite one and a favorite is one adjudged best, by a consensus of human opinion, and is therefore a high spot to be touched upon.

While the Outline is generally chronological, it is not a history and dates are not given. Also, when it seemed advisable to desert the chronological path for the topographical one, that was done.

Yet Foreign Literatures cannot be adequately treated in an Outline printed in English. Translations are at best misleading. If the translation is a poor one, the pith and moment of the original is partly, or wholly lost. And if the translation be of great merit, the work may show the merit of the new rendition rather than the original.

And aside from all that, few translations of Humor are to be found.

The translators of foreign tongues choose first the philosophy, the fiction or the serious poetry of the other nations, leaving the humor, if any there be, to hang unplucked on the tree of knowledge.

So the foreign material is scant, but the high spots are touched as far as could be found convenient.

The Outline stops at the year 1900. Humor since then is too close to be viewed in proper perspective.

But the present Outliner mainly hopes to show how, with steady footstep, from the Caveman to the current comics Humor has followed the Flag.

C. W.

NEW YORK,

April, 1923.

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SMALL, MAYNARD & COMPANY: For an extract from Finley Peter Dunne (Mr. Dooley).

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An Outline of Humor

INTRODUCTION

Speaking exactly, an Outline of the World's Humor is an impossibility.

For surely the adjectives most applicable to humor are elusive, evasive, evanescent, ephemeral, intangible, imponderable, and other terms expressing unavailability.

To outline such a thing is like trying to trap a sunbeam or bound an ocean.

Yet an Outline of the History of the World's recorded humor as evolved by the Human Race, seems within the possibilities.

First of all, it must be understood that the term humor is here used in its broadest, most comprehensive sense. Including both wit and humor; including the comic, fun, mirth, laughter, gayety, repartee,—all types and classes of jests and jokes.

The earliest reference to this mental element is that of Aristotle, and the word he uses to represent it is translated the Ridiculous.

His definition states that the Ridiculous is that which is in itself incongruous, without involving the notion of danger or pai

Coleridge thus refers to Aristotle's definition:

> "Where the laughable is its own end, and neither inference nor moral is intended, or where

> at least the writer would wish it so to appear, there arises what we call drollery. The pure, unmixed, ludicrous or laughable belongs exclusively to the understanding, and must be presented under the form of the senses; it lies within the spheres of the eye and the ear, and hence is allied to the fancy. It does not appertain to the reason or the moral sense, and accordingly is alien to the imagination. I think Aristotle has already excellently defined the laughable, τὸ γελοίον, as consisting of, or depending on, what is out of its proper time and place, yet without danger or pain. Here the *impropriety*—τὸ ἄτοπον—is the positive qualification; the *dangerlessness*—τὸ ἀχίνδυνον—the negative. The true ludicrous is its own end. When serious satire commences, or satire that is felt as serious, however comically drest, free and genuine laughter ceases; it becomes sardonic. This you experience in reading Young, and also not unfrequently in Butler. The true comic is the blossom of the nettle."

Yet, notwithstanding Coleridge's scientific views on the subject, Humor is not an exact science. It is, more truly, an art, whose principles are based on several accepted theories, and some other theories, not so readily accepted or admitted only in part by these who have thought and written on the subject.

A true solution of the mystery of why a joke makes us laugh, has yet to be found. To the mind of the average human being, anything that makes him laugh is a joke. Why it does so, there are very few to know and fewer still to care.

Nor are the Cognoscenti in much better plight. A definition of humor has been attempted by many great and wise minds. Like squaring the circle, it has been argued about repeatedly, it has been written about voluminously. It has been settled in as many

different ways as there have been commentators on the subject. And yet no definition, no formula has ever been evolved that is entirely satisfactory.

Aristotle's theory of the element of the incongruous has come to be known as the Disappointment theory, or Frustrated Expectation.

But Aristotle voiced another theory, which he, in turn, derived from Plato.

Plato said, though a bit indefinitely, that the pleasure we derive in laughing at the comic is an enjoyment of other people's misfortune, due to a feeling of superiority or gratified vanity that we ourselves are not in like plight.

This is called the Derision theory, and as assimilated and expressed by Aristotle comes near to impinging on and coinciding with his own Disappointment theory.

Moreover, he attempted to combine the two.

For, he said, we always laugh at someone, but in the case, where laughter arises from a deceived expectation, our mistake makes us laugh at ourselves.

In fact, Plato held, in his vague and indefinite statements that there is a disappointment element, a satisfaction element, and sometimes a combination of the two in the make-up of the thing we are calling Humor.

All of which is not very enlightening, but it is to be remembered that those were the first fluttering flights of imagination that sought to pin down the whole matter; yet among the scores that have followed, diverging in many directions, we must admit few, if any, are much more succinct or

satisfactory.

The Derision or Discomfiture Theory holds that all pleasure in laughing at a comic scene is an enjoyment of another's discomfiture. Yet it must be only discomfiture, not grave misfortune or sorrow.

If a man's hat blows off and he runs out into the street after it, we laugh; but if he is hit by a passing motor car, we do not laugh. If a fat man slips on a banana peel and lands in a mud puddle, we laugh; but if he breaks his leg we do not laugh.

It is the ridiculous discomfiture of another that makes a joke, not the serious accident, and though there are other types and other theories of the cause of humor, doubtless the majority of jokes are based on this principle.

From the Circus Clown to Charlie Chaplin, episodes of discomfiture make us laugh. Every newspaper cartoon or comic series hinges on the discomfiture of somebody. The fly on the bald head, the collar button under the bureau, the henpecked husband, all depend for their humor on the trifling misfortune that makes its victim ridiculous.

An enjoyment of this discomfiture of a fellow man is inherent in human nature, and though there are subtler jests, yet this type has a grip on the risibilities that can never be loosened.

Can we doubt that it was the Serpent's laughing at the discomfiture of Adam and Eve, caught in *deshabille*, that caused them to rush for the nearest fig tree? Or perhaps, their eyes being opened, they laughed at one another. Anyway, they were decidedly discomfited, and did their best to remedy matters.

This Derision Theory includes also the jests at the ignorance or stupidity of another. The enormous vogue of the Noodle jokes, some centuries ago, hinged on the delight felt in the superiority of the hearer over the subject of the jest. All laughable blunders, every social *faux pas*, all funny stories of children's sayings and doings are based on the consciousness of superiority. Practical jokes represent the simplest form of this theory, as in them the discomfiture of the other person is the prime element, with no subtle byplay to relieve it.

A mild example is the polite rejoinder of the street car conductor when a lady asked at which end of the car she should get off.

"Either end, madame," he responded, "both ends stop."

An extreme specimen is the man who told the story of a burning house—"I saw a fellow up on the roof," he related, "and I called to him, 'Jump, and I'll catch you in a blanket!' Well, I had to laugh,—he jumped,—and I didn't have no blanket!"

Implied discomfiture is in the story of the agnostic, who was buried in his evening clothes. "Poor Jim," said a funeral guest; "he didn't believe in Heaven and he didn't believe in Hell; and there he lies, all dressed up and no place to go!"

Almost a practical joke is the man who, reading a newspaper, suddenly exclaimed, "Why, here's a list of people who won't eat onions any more!" And when his hearer asked to see the list, he handed over the obituary column.

The Disappointment Theory, though overlapping the Derision Theory at times, is based on the idea that the essence of the laughable is the incongruous.

Hazlitt says:

> "We laugh at absurdity; we laugh at deformity. We laugh at a bottle-nose in a caricature; at a stuffed figure of an alderman in a pantomime, and at the tale of Slaukenbergius. A dwarf standing by a giant makes a contemptible figure enough. Rosinante and Dapple are laughable from contrast, as their masters from the same principle make two for a pair. We laugh at the dress of foreigners, and they at ours. Three chimney-sweepers meeting three Chinese in Lincoln's Inn Fields, they laughed at one another till they were ready to drop down. Country people laugh at a person because they never saw him before. Any one dressed in the height of the fashion, or quite out of it, is equally an object of ridicule. One rich source of the ludicrous is distress with which we cannot sympathize from its absurdity or insignificance. It is hard to hinder children from laughing at a stammerer, at a negro, at a drunken man, or even at a madman. We laugh at mischief. We laugh at what we do not believe. We say that an argument or an assertion that is very absurd, is quite ludicrous. We laugh to show our satisfaction with ourselves, or our contempt for those about us, or to conceal our envy or our ignorance. We laugh at fools, and at those who pretend to be wise—at extreme simplicity, awkwardness, hypocrisy, and affectation."

A beautiful definition of the Disappointment Theory is Max Eastman's, "The experience of a forward motion of interest sufficiently definite so that its 'coming to nothing' can be felt."

Mr. Eastman says further:

> "It is more like a reflex action than a mental result. It arises in the very act of perception, when that act is brought to nothing by two conflicting qualities of fact or feeling. It arises when some

> numb habitual activity, suddenly obstructed, first appears in consciousness with an announcement of its own failure. The blockage of an instinct, a collision between two instincts, the interruption of a habit, a 'conflict of habit systems,' a disturbed or misapplied reflex—all these catastrophes, as well as the coming to nothing of an effort at conceptual thought, must enter into the meaning of the word *disappointment*, if it is to explain the whole field of practical humor. The 'strain' in that expectation is what makes it capable of humorous collapse. It is an active expectation. The feelings are involved."

The point of the Disappointment Theory, that of frustrating a carefully built up expectation is exemplified in jests like these.

"Is your wife entertaining this winter?" asks one society man of another. "Not very," is the reply.

"I have to go to Brooklyn—" says a perplexed-looking old lady to a traffic policeman. "Are you asking directions, ma'am, or just telling me your troubles?"

The incongruity may be merely a collocution of words.

Mark Twain described Turner's Slave Ship as "A tortoise-shell cat having a fit in a platter of tomatoes."

In a newspaper cartoon, a wife says to her husband, "Even if it is Sunday morning and a terribly hot day, that's no reason you should go around looking like the dog's breakfast!"

So we see the element of surprise must be combined with the element of appropriate inappropriateness to gain the desired result.

In this story expectation is aroused for a human tragedy. The incongruity and disappointment make its humor.

As Mr. Caveman was gnawing at a bone in his cave one morning, Mrs. Caveman rushed in, exclaiming, “Quick! get your club! Oh, quick!”

“What’s the matter?” growled Mr. Caveman.

“A sabre-toothed tiger is chasing mother!” gasped his wife.

Mr. Caveman uttered an expression of annoyance.

“And what the deuce do I care,” he said, “what happens to a sabre-toothed tiger?”

It must be admitted that a hard and fast line cannot be drawn between the two theories given us by the Greek philosophers.

Cicero subscribed to the Derision theory, and said the ridiculous rested on a certain meanness and deformity, and a joke to be pleasing must be *on* somebody. But he declared, also, that the most eminent kind of the ridiculous is that in which we expect to hear one thing and hear another said.

Several other Greek and Roman philosophers tackled the subject without adding anything of importance, and some of them, as well as later writers declared that the comic could never be defined, but is to be appreciated only by taste and natural discernment; while many moderns agree that all theories are inadequate and contradictory, however useful they may be for convenience in discussion.

Perhaps the trouble may be that only serious-minded people attempt a definition of humor, and

they are not the ones best fitted for the work.

For the discussion goes on still, and is as fascinating to some types of mentality as is the question of perpetual motion or the Fountain of Immortal Youth.

A useful commentary on the matter, and one appropriate at this juncture is the following extract from the works of the celebrated theologian, Dr. Isaac Barrow, an Englishman of the Seventeenth century.

> "It may be demanded," says he, "what the thing we speak of is, and what this facetiousness doth import; to which question I might reply, as Democritus did to him that asked the definition of a man—*'Tis that which we all see and know!* and one better apprehends what it is by acquaintance, than I can inform him by description. It is indeed a thing so versatile and multiform, appearing in so many shapes, so many postures, so many garbs, so variously apprehended by several eyes and judgments, that it seemeth no less hard to settle a clear and certain notice thereof, than to make a portrait of Proteus, or to define the figure of fleeting air. Sometimes it lieth in pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying, or in forging an apposite tale; sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense, or the affinity of their sound; sometimes it is wrapped in a dress of luminous expression; sometimes it lurketh under an odd similitude. Sometimes it is lodged in a sly question; in a smart answer; in a quirkish reason; in a shrewd intimation; in cunningly diverting or cleverly restoring an objection; sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech; in a tart irony; in a lusty hyperbole; in a startling metaphor; in a plausible reconciling of contradictions; or in acute

nonsense. Sometimes a scenical representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or gesture, passeth for it. Sometimes an affected simplicity, sometimes a presumptuous bluntness, gives it being. Sometimes it riseth only from a lucky hitting upon what is strange; sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose. Often it consisteth in one knows not what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how. Its ways are unaccountable and inexplicable, being answerable to the numberless rovings of fancy and windings of language. It is, in short, a manner of speaking out of the simple and plain way (such as reason teacheth and knoweth things by), which by a pretty surprising uncouthness in conceit or expression doth affect and amuse the fancy, showing in it some wonder, and breathing some delight thereto. It raiseth admiration, as signifying a nimble sagacity of apprehension, a special felicity of invention, a vivacity of spirit, and reach of wit more than vulgar; it seeming to argue a rare quickness of parts, that one can fetch in remote conceits applicable; a notable skill that he can dexterously accommodate them to a purpose before him; together with a lively briskness of humour not apt to damp those sportful flashes of imagination. Whence in Aristotle such persons are termed επιδέξιοι, dexterous men, and ευτροποι, men of facile and versatile manners, who can easily turn themselves to all things, or turn all things to themselves. It also procureth delight, by gratifying curiosity with its rareness or semblance of difficulty (as monsters, not for their beauty but their rarity—as juggling tricks, not for their use but their abstruseness—are beheld with pleasure); by diverting the mind from its road of serious thoughts; by instilling gaiety and airiness of spirit; by provoking to such dispositions of spirit in way of emulation or compliance; and by seasoning

> matter, otherwise distasteful or insipid, with an unusual and thence grateful tang."—*Barrow's Works*, Sermon 14.

Also in the Seventeenth century there sprang into being a definition that has lived, possibly because of the apt wording of its phrase.

It is by Thomas Hobbes, who declared for the Derision Theory, but with less sweetness and light than it had hitherto enjoyed.

> "*Sudden glory* is the passion which maketh those *Grimaces* called LAUGHTER," said Hobbes in the "Leviathan," "and is caused either by some sudden act of their own, that pleaseth them; or by the apprehension of some deformed thing in another, by comparison whereof they suddenly applaud themselves. And it is incident most to them, that are conscious of the fewest abilities in themselves; who are forced to keep themselves in their own favour, by observing the imperfections of other men. And therefore much laughter at the defects of others, is a signe of Pusillanimity. For of great minds, one of the proper workes is, to help and free others from scorn; and compare themselves onely with the most able."

and, also from Hobbes:

> "The passion of laughter is nothing else but *sudden glory* arising from a sudden conception of some *eminency in ourselves* by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly: for men laugh at the *follies* of themselves past, when they come suddenly to remembrance, except they bring with them any present dishonour."—*Treatise on Human Nature*, chap. ix.

There is small doubt that the vogue of Hobbes' definition of this theory rests on the delightfully expressive, "Sudden Glory," for those two words

beautifully picture the emotion caused by the unexpected opportunity to laugh at the discomfiture of another.

Locke followed with a dry and meaningless dissertation, and Coleridge wrote his discerning but all too brief remarks.

Many German writers gave profound if unimportant opinions.

Addison wrote pleasantly about it, and George Meredith, while accepting the Derision Theory, modified its harshness thus:

> "If you believe that our civilization is founded in common-sense (and it is the first condition of sanity to believe it), you will, when contemplating men, discern a Spirit overhead; not more heavenly than the light flashed upward from glassy surfaces, but luminous and watchful; never shooting beyond them, nor lagging in the rear; so closely attached to them that it may be taken for a slavish reflex, until its features are studied. It has the sage's brows, and the sunny malice of a faun lurks at the corners of the half-closed lips drawn in an idle wariness of half tension. That slim feasting smile, shaped like the long-bow, was once a big round satyr's laugh, that flung up the brows like a fortress lifted by gunpowder. The laugh will come again, but it will be of the order of the smile, finely tempered, showing sunlight of the mind, mental richness rather than noisy enormity. Its common aspect is one of unsolicitous observation, as if surveying a full field and having leisure to dart on its chosen morsels without any fluttering eagerness. Men's future upon earth does not attract it; their honesty and shapeliness in the present does; and whenever they wax out of proportion, overblown, affected, pretentious, bombastical, hypocritical, pedantic, fantastically

> delicate; whenever it sees them self-deceived or hoodwinked, given to run riot in idolatries, drifting into vanities, congregating in absurdities, planning shortsightedly, plotting dementedly; whenever they are at variance with their professions, and violate the unwritten but perceptible laws binding them in consideration one to another; whenever they offend sound reason, fair justice; are false in humility or mined with conceit, individually, or in the bulk—the Spirit overhead will look humanely malign and cast an oblique light on them, followed by volleys of silvery laughter. That is the Comic Spirit."

With Kant, however, the other theory of Aristotle came into notice. Kant declared, "Laughter is the affection arising from the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing."

This was dubbed by Emerson, "Frustrated Expectation," and describes the Disappointment Theory as Sudden Glory describes the Derision Theory.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets of the World of Humor.

There are many other theories and sub-theories, there are long and prosy books written about them, but are outside our Outline.

A general understanding of the humorous element is all we are after and that has now been set forth.

A question closely akin to What is Humor? is What is a Sense of Humor?

The phrase seems self-explanatory, and is by no means identical with the thing itself. Nor are the two

inseparable. Humor and the sense of humor need not necessarily lie in the same brain.

Two erudite writers on this subject have chosen to consider the phrase as a unique bit of terminology.

Mr. Max Eastman says; “The creation of that name is the most original and the most profound contribution of modern thought to the problem of the comic.”

While Professor Brander Matthews says; “Ample as the English vocabulary is today, it is sometimes strangely deficient in needful terms. Thus it is that we have nothing but the inadequate phrase *sense of humor* to denominate a quality which is often confounded with humor itself, and which should always be sharply discriminated from it.”

Now it would seem that the phrase was simply a matter of evolution, coming along when the time was ripe. Surely it is no stroke of genius, nor yet is it hopelessly inadequate.

It must be granted that a sense of the humorous is as logical a thought as a sensitive ear for music, or, to be more strictly analogous, a sense of moderation or that very definite thing, card sense.

Sense, used thus, is almost synonymous with taste, and a taste for literature or for the Fine Arts in no way implies a productive faculty in those fields. A taste for humor would mean precisely the same thing as a sense of humor, and the taste or the sense may be more or less natural and more or less cultivated, as in the matter of books or pictures.

A taste for music is a sense of music, and one may appreciate and enjoy music and its rendition to the utmost without being able to sing a note or play

upon any instrument whatever.

One may be a music critic or an art critic, or even a critic of literature, without being able to create any of these things.

Why, then, put forth as a discovery that one may have a sense of humor without being humorous and *vice versa*?

Humor is creative, while the sense of humor is merely receptive and appreciative.

Many great humorists have little or no sense of humor. Try to tell a joke to an accredited joker and note his blank expression of uncomprehension. It is because he has no sense of humor that he takes himself seriously.

Such was the case with Dickens, with Carlyle, with many renowned wits. The humorist without the sense of humor is a bore. He tells long, detailed yarns, proud of himself, and not seeing his hearers' lack of interest.

The man with a sense of humor is a joy to know and to be with.

The man who possesses both is already an immortal.

Now as the sense of humor is negative, recipient, while humor is positive and creative, it follows that a sense of humor alone cannot produce humorous literature.

These mute, inglorious Miltons, therefore, have no place in our Outline, but they deserve a passing word of recognition for the assistance they have been to the humorists, by way of being applauding audiences.

For humor, like beauty is in the eye of the beholder. One with an acute sense of humor will see comic in stones, wit in the running brooks,—while a dull or absent sense of humor can see no fun save in the obvious jest.

The lines,

> "A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
> Of him who hears it. Never in the tongue
> Of him who makes it."

in *Love's Labour's Lost* proves that Shakespeare understood the meaning and value of a sense of humor.

Although it was at a much later date that the word humor came to be used as now, to mean a gentle, good-natured sort of fun.

All types of humor are universal and of all time. But the first definitions were arrived at by the men of Greece and Rome, who were scholarly and analytical, hence the hair-splitting and meticulous efforts to treat it metaphysically.

Humor today rarely is used in a caustic or biting sense,—that is reserved for wit.

Which brings us to another great and futile question,—the distinction between wit and humor.

There is not time or space to take up this subject fully here. But we can sum up the decisions and opinions of some few of the thinking minds that have been bent upon it.

As the best and most comprehensive is the dissertation by William Hazlitt, most of this is here given.

> "Humour is the describing the ludicrous as it is

in itself; wit is the exposing it, by comparing or contrasting it with something else. Humour is, as it were, the growth of nature and accident; wit is the product of art and fancy. Humour, as it is shown in books, is an imitation of the natural or acquired absurdities of mankind, or of the ludicrous in accident, situation, and character; wit is the illustrating and heightening the sense of that absurdity by some sudden and unexpected likeness or opposition of one thing to another, which sets off the quality we laugh at or despise in a still more contemptible or striking point of view. Wit, as distinguished from poetry, is the imagination or fancy inverted and so applied to given objects, as to make the little look less, the mean more light and worthless; or to divert our admiration or wean our affections from that which is lofty and impressive, instead of producing a more intense admiration and exalted passion, as poetry does. Wit may sometimes, indeed, be shown in compliments as well as satire; as in the common epigram—

> "'Accept a miracle, instead of wit:
> See two dull lines with Stanhope's pencil writ.'

But then the mode of paying it is playful and ironical, and contradicts itself in the very act of making its own performance an humble foil to another's. Wit hovers round the borders of the light and trifling, whether in matters of pleasure or pain; for as soon as it describes the serious seriously, it ceases to be wit, and passes into a different form. Wit is, in fact, the eloquence of indifference, or an ingenious and striking exposition of those evanescent and glancing impressions of objects which affect us more from surprise or contrast to the train of our ordinary and literal preconceptions, than from anything in the objects themselves exciting our necessary sympathy or lasting hatred.

> "That wit is the most refined and effectual, which is founded on the detection of unexpected likeness or distinction in things, rather than in words.
>
> "Wit is, in fact, a voluntary act of the mind, or exercise of the invention, showing the absurd and ludicrous consciously, whether in ourselves or another. Cross-readings, where the blunders are designed, are wit; but if any one were to light upon them through ignorance or accident, they would be merely ludicrous.
>
> "Lastly, there is a wit of sense and observation, which consists in the acute illustration of good sense and practical wisdom by means of some far-fetched conceit or quaint imagery. The matter is sense, but the form is wit. Thus the lines in Pope —
>
> "'Tis with our judgments as our watches, none
> Go just alike; yet each believes his own—'
>
> are witty rather than poetical; because the truth they convey is a mere dry observation on human life, without elevation or enthusiasm, and the illustration of it is of that quaint and familiar kind that is merely curious and fanciful."

Thus Hazlitt: yet it is not necessary to be so verbose in the matter of discriminating wit from humor.

They are intrinsically different though often outwardly alike.

Wit is intensive or incisive, while humor is expansive. Wit is rapid, humor is slow. Wit is sharp, humor is gentle. Wit is intentional, humor is fortuitous.

But to my mind the great difference lies in the fact that wit is subjective while humor is objective.

Wit is the invention of the mind of its creator; humor lies in the object that he observes. Wit originates in one's self, humor outside one's self.

Again, wit is art, humor is nature. Wit is creative fancy, more or less educated and skilled. Humor is found in a simple object, and is unintentional.

Yet in these, as in all definitions, we must stretch a point when necessary; we must make allowances for viewpoints and opinions, and we must agree that the question is not one that may be answered by the card.

Nor is it necessary in the present undertaking.

An Outline of Humor is planned to include all sorts and conditions of fun, all types and distinctions of wit and humor from the earliest available records, or deductions from records, down to the dawn of the Twentieth Century.

Man has been defined as the animal capable of laughter. Although this definition has been attacked by lovers of quadrupeds, it has held in the minds of thinkers and students. Aristotle, Milton, Hazlitt, Voltaire, Schopenhauer, Bergson and many other distinguished scholars hold that the playfulness seen in animals is in no way an indication of their sense of humor.

The Laughing Hyena and the Laughing Jackass are so called only because their cry has a likeness to the sound of raucous human laughter, but it is no result of mirthful feeling.

Hazlitt says man is the only animal that laughs

and weeps, for he is the only animal that is struck with the difference between what things are and what they ought to be.

The playfulness of dogs or kittens is often assumed to be humor, when it is mere imitative sagacity. The stolid, imperturbable gravity of animals' faces shows no appreciation of mirth.

Oliver Wendell Holmes speaks of the large brown eyes of oxen as imperfect organisms, because they may show no sign of fun.

Yet it is, in a way, a matter of opinion, for the instinct of humor was among the latest to evolve in the human race, and rudimentary hints of it may be present in other animals as in our own children. A monkey or a baby will show amusement when tickled, but this is mere physical reflex action, and cannot be called a true sense of humor.

Many animal lovers assume intelligences in their pets that are mere reflections of their own mental processes or are thoughts fathered by their own wishes.

It is, however, of little importance, for however appreciative of fun an animal may be, it cannot create or impart wit or humor, and most certainly it cannot laugh.

Bergson goes even farther. He declares the comic does not exist outside the pale of what is strictly human.

He states: You may laugh at an animal, but only because you have detected in it some human attitude or expression.

This is easily proved by the recollection of the fun

of Puss In Boots or The Three Bears, and the gravity of a Natural History.

Therefore, Bergson argues, man is not only the only animal that laughs, he is the only animal which is laughed at, for if any other animal or any lifeless object provokes mirth, it is only because of some resemblance to man in appearance or intent.

So, with such minor exceptions as to be doubtful or negligible, we must accept man as the only exponent or possessor of humor.

And it is one of the latest achievements of humanity.

First, we assent, was the survival of the fittest. Followed a sense of hunger, a sense of safety, a sense of warfare, a sense of Tribal Rights,—through all these stages there was no time or need for humor.

Among the earliest fossilized remains no funny bone has been found.

Doubtless, too, a sense of sorrow came before the sense of humor dawned. Death came, and early man wept long before it occurred to him to laugh and have the world laugh with him. Gregariousness and leisure were necessary before mirth could ensue. All life was subjective; dawning intelligence learned first to look out for Number One.

Yet it was early in the game that our primordial ancestors began to see a lighter side of life.

Indeed, as Mr. Wells tells us, they mimicked very cleverly, gestured, danced and laughed before they could talk!

And the consideration of the development of this almost innate human sense is our present

undertaking.

The matter falls easily,—almost too easily,—into three divisions.

Let us call them, Ancient, Middle and Modern.

This is perhaps not an original idea of division, but it is certainly the best for a preliminary arrangement. And it may not be convenient to stick religiously to consecutive dates; our progress may become logical rather than chronological.

As to a general division, then, let us consider Ancient Humor as a period from the very beginning down to the time of the Greeks. The Middle Division to continue until about the time of Chaucer. And the Modern Period from that time to the present.

ANCIENT HUMOR

After careful consideration of all available facts and theories of the earliest mental processes of our race, we must come to the conclusion that mirth had its origin in sorrow; that laughter was the direct product of tears.

Nor are they even yet completely dissevered. Who has not laughed till he cried? Who has not cried herself into hysterical laughter? All theories of humor include an element of unhappiness; all joy has its hint of pain.

And so, when our archæologists hold the mirror up to prehistoric nature, we see among the earliest reflected pictures, a procession or group of evolving humanity about to sacrifice human victims to their monstrous superstitions and, withal, showing a certain festival cheerfulness. Moreover, we note that they are fantastically dressed, and wear horns and painted masks. Surely, the first glimmerings of a horrid mirth are indubitably the adjunct of such celebrations.

Since we have reason to believe that man mimicked before he could talk,—and, observing a baby, we have no difficulty in believing this,—we readily believe that his earliest mimicries aroused a feeling of amusement in his auditors, and as their applause stimulated him to fresh effort, the ball was set rolling and the fun began.

From mimicry was born exaggeration and the horns and painted masks were grotesque and mirth-provoking.

Yet were they also used to inculcate fear, and moreover had significance as expressions of sorrow and woe.

Thus the emotions, at first, were rather inextricably intermingled, nor are they yet entirely untangled and straightened out.

Not to inquire too closely into the vague stories of these prehistoric men, not to differentiate too exactly between Cro-Magnards and Grimaldis, we at least know a few things about the late Palæolithic people, and one indicative fact is that they had a leaning toward paint.

They buried their dead after painting the body, and they also painted the weapons and ornaments that were interred with him.

It is owing to this addiction to paint that scientists have been enabled to learn so much of primordial life, for the pigments of black, brown, red, yellow and white still endure in the caves of France and Spain.

And, since it is known that they painted their own faces and bodies we can scarce help deducing that they presented grotesque appearances and moved their fellows to laughter.

But any earnest thinker or student is very likely to get out of his subject what he brings to it, at least, in kind. And so, archæologists and antiquarians, being of grave and serious nature, have found no fun or humor in these early peoples,—perhaps, because they brought none to their search.

It remains, therefore, for us to sift their findings, and see, if by a good chance we may discover some traces of mirth among the evidential remains of

prehistoric man.

It would not be, of course, creative or even intentional humor, but since we know he was a clever mimic, we must assume the appreciation of his mimicry by his fellows.

Moreover, he was deeply impressed by his dreams, and it must have been that some of those dreams were of a humorous nature.

We are told his mentality was similar to that of a bright little contemporary boy of five. This theory would give him the power of laughter at simple things and it seems only fair to assume that he possessed it.

In the beginnings of humanity there was very close connection between man and the animals. Not only did man kill and eat the other animals, but he cultivated and bred them, he watched them and studied their habits.

It is, therefore, not surprising that man's earliest efforts at drawing should represent animals.

The earliest known drawings, those of the Palæolithic men show the bison, horse, ibex, cave bear and reindeer. The drawing at first was primitive, but later it became astonishingly clever and life-like.

Also, among these primitive peoples, there was some attempt at sculpture, in the way of little stone or ivory statuettes. These incline to caricature, and are probably the first dawning of that tendency of the human brain.

Yet the accounts of these earliest men show little that can be definitely styled humorous, and while we

cannot doubt they possessed a sense of mirth, they have left us scant traces of it, or else the solemn archæologists have overlooked such.

The latter may be the case, for a scholar with a sense of humor, Thomas Wright, declares as follows:

> "A tendency to burlesque and caricature appears, indeed, to be a feeling deeply implanted in human nature, and it is one of the earliest talents displayed by people in a rude state of society. An appreciation of, and sensitiveness to, ridicule, and a love of that which is humorous, are found even among savages, and enter largely into their relations with their fellow men. When, before people cultivated either literature or art, the chieftain sat in his rude hall surrounded by his warriors, they amused themselves by turning their enemies and opponents into mockery, by laughing at their weaknesses, joking on their defects, whether physical or mental, and giving them nicknames in accordance therewith,—in fact, caricaturing them in words, or by telling stories which were calculated to excite laughter. When the agricultural slaves (for the tillers of the land were then slaves) were indulged with a day of relief from their labours, they spent it in unrestrained mirth. And when these same people began to erect permanent buildings, and to ornament them, the favourite subjects of their ornamentation were such as presented ludicrous ideas. The warrior, too, who caricatured his enemy in his speeches over the festive board, soon sought to give a more permanent form to his ridicule, which he endeavoured to do by rude delineations on the bare rock, or on any other convenient surface which presented itself to his hand. Thus originated caricature and the grotesque in art. In fact, art itself, in its earliest forms, is caricature; for it is only by that exaggeration of features which belongs to

caricature, that unskilful draughtsmen could make themselves understood."

An early development of humor was seen in the recognition of the fool or buffoon.

It is not impossible that this arose because of the discovery or invention of intoxicating drinks.

This important date is set, not very definitely, somewhere between 10,000 B.C. and 2,000 B.C. Its noticeable results were merriment and feast-making. At these feasts the fool, who was not yet a wit, won the laughter of the guests by his idiocy, or, often by his deformity. The wise fool is a later development.

But at these feasts also appeared the bards or rhapsodists, who entertained the company by chanting or reciting stories and jokes.

These are called the artists of the ear as the rock painters are called the artists of the eye. And with them language grew in beauty and power. They were living books, the only books then extant. For writing came slowly and was a clumsy affair at best for a long period. The Bards sang and recited and so kept alive folk-tales and jests that remain to this day.

Writing, like most of the inventions of man served every other purpose before that of humor.

At first it was only for accounts and matters of fact. In Egypt it was used for medical recipes and magic formulas. Accounts, letters, name lists and itineraries followed; but for the preservation of humorous thought writing was not used. That was left to the bards, and of course, to the caricaturists.

Therefore, Egyptian art usually presents itself in solemn and dignified effects with no lightness or gayety implied.

Yet we are told by Sir Gardner Wilkinson, the early Egyptian artists cannot always conceal their natural tendency to the humorous, which creeps out in a variety of little incidents. Thus, in a series of grave historical pictures on one of the great monuments at Thebes, we find a representation of a wine party, where the company consists of both sexes, and which evidently shows that the ladies were not restricted in the use of the juice of the grape in their entertainments; and, as he adds, “the painters, in illustrating this fact, have sometimes sacrificed their gallantry to a love of caricature.” Among the females, evidently of rank, represented in this scene, “some call the servants to support them as they sit, others with difficulty prevent themselves from falling on those behind them, and the faded flower, which is ready to drop from their heated hands, is intended to be characteristic of their own sensations.” Sir Gardner observes that “many instances of a talent for caricature, are observable in the compositions of the Egyptian artists, who executed the paintings of the tombs at Thebes, which belong to a very early period of the Egyptian annals. Nor is the application of this talent restricted always to secular subjects, but we see it at times intruding into the most sacred mysteries of their religion.”

A class of caricatures which dates from a very remote period, shows comparisons between men and the particular animals whose qualities they possess.

As brave as a lion, as faithful as a dog, as sly as a fox or as swinish as a pig,—these things are all represented in these ancient caricatures.

More than a thousand years B.C. there was drawn on an Egyptian papyrus a cat carrying a shepherd’s crook and driving a flock of geese. This is but one

section of a long picture, in which the animals are often shown treating their human tyrants in the manner they are usually treated by them.

All sorts of animals are shown, in odd contortions and grotesque attitudes, and not infrequently the scene or episode depicted refers to the state or condition of the human soul after death.

It is deduced that from these animal pictures arose the class of stories called fables, in which animals are endued with human attributes.

And also connected with them is the belief in metempsychosis or the transmission of the human soul into the body of an animal after death, which is a strong factor in the primitive religions.

Indeed, the intermingling of humans and animals is inherent in all art and literature, as, instance the calling of Our Lord a Lamb, or the Holy Ghost, a Dove.

Or, as to this day we call our children lambs or kittens, or, slangily, kids. As we still call a man an ass or a puppy; or a woman, a cat.

An argument for evolution can perhaps be seen in the inevitable turning back to the animals for a description or representation of human types.

At any rate, early man used this sort of humor almost exclusively, and so combined it with his serious thought, even his religions, that it was a permanently interwoven thread.

And the exaggeration of this mimicry of animals resulted in the grotesque and from that to the monstrous, as the mind grew with what it fed on, and caricature developed and progressed.

Also, a subtler demonstration of dawning wit and humor is seen in the deliberate and intentional burlesque of one picture by another.

In the British Museum is an Egyptian papyrus showing a lion and a unicorn playing chess, which is a caricature of a picture frequently seen on ancient monuments. And in the Egyptian collection of the New York Historical Society there is a slab of limestone, dating back three thousand years, which depicts a lion, seated upon a throne as king. To him, a fox, caricaturing a High Priest, offers a goose and a fan. This, too, is a burlesque of a serious picture.

Again, a lion is engaged in laying out the dead body of another animal, and a hippopotamus is washing his hands in a water jar.

One of these burlesque pictures shows a soul doomed to return to its earthly home in the form of a pig. This picture, of such antiquity that it deeply impressed the Greeks and Romans, is part of the decoration of a king's tomb.

The ancient Egyptians, it may be gathered from their humorous pictures, were not averse to looking on the wine when it was red. Several delineations of Egyptian servants carrying home their masters after a carouse, are graphic and convincing; while others, equally so, show the convivial ones dancing, standing on their heads or belligerently wrestling.

The tombs of the ancient Egyptians abound in these representations of over-merry occasions, and it all goes to prove the close connection in the primitive mind of the emotions of grief and mirth.

Yet, *The Book of the Dead* that monument of Egyptian literature, and the oldest in the world, contains only records of conquests and a few stories

and moral sayings,—not a trace of humor. That, in ancient Egypt is represented solely by the ready and deft pencil of the caricaturist.

Though humor came to them later, the earliest records of the Eastern and Oriental countries show little or no traces of the comic.

Indeed eminent authorities state that there is not a single element of the amusing in the art or literature of the Babylonians or Assyrians. It may be that the eminent authorities hadn't a nose for nonsense, or the statement may be true. We never shall know.

But both these peoples had great skill in drawing and sculpture, and though their records are chiefly historical or religious, we cannot help feeling there may have been some jesting at somebody's expense.

However, there are no existing records of any sort, and we fear the ancient Assyrians and Babylonians must go down in history as serious-minded folk.

The Hebrews show up much better.

In recent years Renan and Carlyle both declared the Jewish race possessed no sense of humor, but their opinions probably reflected their own viewpoint.

For the early examples of Hebrew Satire and Parody are distinctly humorous both in intent and in effect.

Parody is, of course, the direct outcome of the primeval passion for mimicry. The first laugh-provoker was no doubt an exaggerated imitation of

some defect or peculiarity of another. And the development of the art of amusement took centuries to get past that preliminary thought.

The tendency to imitation was the impetus that turned the religious hymns into ribaldry and wine-songs, and the religious or funeral festivals into orgies of grotesque masquerading.

And Hebrew literature is renowned for its parodies of serious matters both of church and state.

With this race, satire sprang from parody and grew and thrived rapidly.

To quote from the learned Professor Chotzner:

> "Since the birth of Hebrew literature, many centuries ago, satire has been one of its many characteristics. It is directed against the foibles and follies of the miser, the hypocrite, the profligate, the snob. The dull sermonizer, who puts his congregation to sleep, fares badly, and even the pretty wickednesses of the fair sex do not escape the hawk-eye of the Hebrew satirist. The luxury and extravagance of the 'Daughters of Zion' were attacked by no less a person than Isaiah himself; but human nature, especially that of a feminine kind, was too strong even for so eminent a prophet as he was, and there is no reason to suppose that the lady of those days wore one trinket the less in deference to his invective.
>
> "There are, in fact, several incidents mentioned here and there in the pages of the Bible, which are decidedly of a satirical nature. Most prominent among them are the two that refer respectively to Bileam, who was sermonized by his ass, and to Haman who, as the Prime Minister of Persia, had to do homage publicly to Mordecai, the very man whom he greatly hated and despised. Nay, we are told, that, by the irony of fate, Haman himself

ended his life on the exceptionally huge gallows which, while in a humorous turn of mind, he had ordered to be erected for the purpose of having executed thereon the object of his intense hatred.

"And again, there are two excellent satires to be found respectively in the 14th chapter of Isaiah, and in the 18th chapter of the 1st Book of Kings. In the first, one of the mighty Babylonian potentates is held up to derision, on account of the ignominious defeat he had sustained in his own dominions, after he had been for a long time a great terror to contemporary nations, living in various parts of the ancient world. Even the trees of the forests are represented there as having mocked at his fall, saying: 'Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.' In the second satire, the false prophets of Baal are ridiculed by Elijah for having maimed their bodies, in order to do thereby honour to a deity which is sometimes sarcastically referred to in the Bible as being 'the god of flies.'

"Delightfully satirical are also the two fables quoted in the Bible in connection with *Jotham* and *Nathan*, the Prophet. These are commonly well-known, and no extracts from them need be given here.

"The satirical turn of mind manifested by Hebrew writers living in Biblical times, has been transmitted by them as a legacy to their descendants, who flourished in subsequent ages down to the present day. The first among them was Ben Sira who, in 180 B.C., wrote a book, some of the contents of which are satirical, for there the vanity of contemporary women, and the arrogance of some of the rich in the community are ridiculed with mild sarcasm.

"But much more keen was the sense of the satirical that was possessed by some of the ancient Rabbis, who were among those that brought into

existence the vast and interesting Talmudical literature. One of their satires, called ‘Tithes,’ runs as follows:—

“In Palestine there once lived a widow with her two daughters, whose only worldly possessions consisted of a little field. When she began to plough it, a Jewish official quoted to her the words of the lawgiver Moses: ‘Thou shalt not plough with ox and ass together.’ When she began to sow, she was admonished in the words of the same lawgiver not to sow the fields with two kinds of seed. When she began to reap and pile up the stacks, she was told that she must leave ‘gleanings,’ the poor man’s sheaf, and the ‘corner.’

“When the harvest time came, she was informed that it was her duty to give the priest’s share, consisting of the first and second ‘tithes.’ She quietly submitted, and gave what was demanded of her. Then she sold the field, and bought two young ewes, in order that she might use their wool, and profit by their offspring. But, as soon as the ewes gave birth to their young, a priest came, and quoted to her the words of Moses: ‘Give *me* the first-born, for so the Lord hath ordained.’ Again she submitted, and gave him the young.

“When the time of shearing came, the priest again made his appearance, and said to her that, according to the Law, she was obliged to give him ‘the shoulder, the two cheeks, and the maw.’

“In a moment of despair, the widow said: ‘Let all the animals be consecrated to the Lord!’ ‘In that case,’ answered the priest, ‘they belong altogether to me; for the Lord hath said: “Everything consecrated in Israel shall be thine.”’ So, he took the sheep, and went his way, leaving the widow and her two daughters in great distress, and bathed in tears!”

A WIFE'S RUSE

(A Rabbinical Tale)

"There is a Rabbinical law which makes it obligatory upon every Jewish husband to divorce his wife, if after ten years of married life she shall remain childless. Now, there once lived in an Oriental town a man and his wife who were greatly attached to each other, but who had, unfortunately, no children, though they had been married for a considerable time.

"When the end of the tenth year of their marriage was approaching, they both went to the Rabbi, and asked him for his advice. The Rabbi listened with great sympathy, but declared his inability to alter or modify the law in their favour. The only suggestion, he said, that he could make, was, that on the last night before their final separation, they should celebrate a little feast together, and that the wife should take some keepsake from her husband which would be a permanent token of her husband's unchangeable affection for her.

"Thus, on the last night, the wife prepared a sumptuous meal for the two of them, and, amidst much merriment and laughter, she filled and refilled her husband's goblet with sparkling wine. Under its influence, he fell into a heavy sleep, and while in this condition, he was carried by his wife's orders to her father's abode, where he continued to sleep till the following morning. When he awoke, and was wondering at his strange surroundings, his cunning wife came smilingly into the room, and said: 'Of, my dear husband, I have actually carried out the Rabbi's suggestion, inasmuch as I have taken away from home a most precious keepsake. This is your own dear self, without whom it would be impossible for me to live.'

"The husband, moved to tears, embraced her

> most affectionately, and promised that they should live together to the end. Thereupon they joyfully returned home, and, going again to the Rabbi, they told him what had happened, and asked him for his forgiveness and blessing, which he readily accorded them. And, indeed, the Rabbi's blessing had an excellent result. For after the lapse of some time, they both enjoyed the happiness of fondling a bright little child of their own."

Arabian and Turkish thought and speech seem to be tinged with the sense of the bizarre and strange rather than the grotesque. Their earliest folk tales and pleasant stories, from which later grew the *Arabian Nights*, form a cumulative, though broken chain from ancient to modern times.

Persian humor leans toward the romantic and sentimental, but no ancient fragments are available. From the later writers, as Omar and Sadi, we feel convinced there was an early literature but we can find none to quote.

India shows the oldest and most definite signs of early folk lore and retold tales.

Buddha's *Jatakas* produced the stories that later proved the germs of merry tales by Boccaccio and Chaucer. That these later writers put in all the fun is not entirely probable.

Some antiquarians claim to find humor in the hymns of the Rig Vedas, whose date is indefinitely put at between 2,000 and 1,500 B.C. while others of different temperament deny it.

From this example the reader may judge for himself.

THE HYMN OF THE FROGS

"When the first shower of the rainy season
Has fallen on them, parched with thirst and longing,
In glee each wet and dripping frog jumps upward;
The green one and the speckled join their voices.

"They shout aloud like Brahmans drunk with soma,
When they perform their annual devotions:
Like priests at service sweating o'er the kettle,
They issue forth; not one remains in hiding.

"The frogs that bleat like goats, that low like cattle,
The green one and the speckled give us riches;
Whole herds of cows may they bestow upon us,
And grant us length of days through sacrificing."

The *Jatakas* of Buddha, though religious writings, and teachings by parables, are not without humor. The one about the silly son who killed the mosquito on his father's bald head with a heavy blow of an ax, has its funny side. Or the old monarch who had reigned 252,000 years and still had 84,000 years more ahead of him, and went into solitary retirement because he discovered a gray hair in his head. Another shrewd fellow made an enormous fortune out of the sale of a dead mouse.

Of course, the animals figure largely. There is the tale of the monkeys who watered a garden and then pulled up the plants to see if their roots were wet, and the angry crows who tried to drink up the sea.

Riddles, too, must be remembered.

Though not many specimens have been preserved, yet we remember Samson's riddle, so disastrous to the Philistines.

"Out of the eater came forth meat; and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

And when his susceptibility to cajolery led him to tell his wife the answer, and she tattled, his comment

was the pithy; “If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.”

The Sphinx’s riddle is well known. “What animal goes on four legs in the morning, on two at noon, and on three at night?”

The answer being: Man, who goes on all-fours in infancy, walks upright in middle life, and adds a staff in old age.

An ancient riddle is ascribed to the problematical personality of Homer, though it was doubtless originated before his time,—if he had a time.

Homer, the tale goes, met some boys coming home from a fishing trip. On his asking them of their luck, they replied, “What we caught we threw away; what we didn’t catch, we have.”

It seems they referred to fleas, not fish, and his inability to guess this so enraged Homer, that he killed himself.

And here is a free translation of an ancient Arabian riddle.

> “The loftiest cedars I can eat,
> Yet neither paunch nor mouth have I.
> I storm whene’er you give me meat,
> Whene’er you give me drink, I die.”

The answer is Fire, and as may be seen, the type of riddle is precisely such as are found in the puzzle columns of today’s papers.

Riddles are frequently mentioned in Ancient Literature,— every country or race indulging in them. Josephus tells us that Solomon and Hiram of Tyre were in the habit of exchanging riddles.

So we find that a love of fun or playfulness was

inherent in our early ancestors, yet it did not reach a height to be called genuine creative humor.

But there is always the feeling that if more of the translators themselves possessed more humor, they might find more in the originals.

As a rule, translators and antiquarian researchers are so engaged in serious seeking that they would probably pass over humor if they ran across it.

When a man is prospecting for iron or coal, he may easily be blind to indications of wells of natural oil.

More wit and humor of Ancient India has come down to us through the caricatures and grotesque drawings than in words.

The innumerable pictures of the God Krishna are the most humorous of these.

Krishna appears to have been a veritable Don Juan, and his multitude of lady friends numbered up to many thousands.

It is narrated that a friend of his, who had no wife, begged for just one from Krishna's multiplicity.

"Court any one you wish," said the light-hearted god, pleasantly.

So the friend went from house to house of Krishna's various wives, but one and all, they declared themselves quite satisfied with husband, Krishna, and moreover each one was convinced that he was hers alone. The seeker visited sixteen thousand and eight houses, and then gave it up.

The endless pictures of Krishna represent him surrounded by lovely ladies, and a curious detail of these drawings is that in many instances the group of

girls is wreathed and twisted into the shape or semblance of a bird or a horse or an elephant, presenting an interesting and not unpleasing effect.

Now, all we have given so far, seems indeed a meager grist for the first division of our Outline. But one may not find what does not exist.

There is no doubt that humor was known and loved from the dawning of independent thought, but as it was not recorded, save for a few drawings, on the enduring rocks, it died with its originators.

Humor was the last need of a self-providing race, and even when found it was a luxury rather than a necessity.

As a fair example of the earliest tales that have lived in various forms ever since their first recital, is appended the bit of ancient Hindoo folk-lore, called

THE GOOD WIFE AND THE BAD HUSBAND

In a secluded village there lived a rich man, who was very miserly, and his wife, who was very kind-hearted and charitable, but a stupid little woman that believed everything she heard. And there lived in the same village a clever rogue, who had for some time watched for an opportunity for getting something from this simple woman during her husband's absence. So one day, when he had seen the old miser ride out to inspect his lands, this rogue of the first water came to the house, and fell down at the threshold as if overcome by fatigue. The woman ran up to him at once and inquired whence he came. "I am come from Kailása," said he; "having been sent down by an old couple living there, for news of their son and his wife." "Who are those fortunate dwellers in Siva's mountain?" she asked. And the rogue gave

the names of her husband's deceased parents, which he had taken good care, of course, to learn from the neighbours. "Do you really come from them?" said the simple woman. "Are they doing well there? Dear old people! How glad my husband would be to see you, were he here! Sit down, please, and rest until he returns. How do they live there? Have they enough to eat and dress themselves withal?" These and a hundred other questions she put to the rogue, who, for his part, wished to get away as soon as possible, knowing full well how he would be treated if the miser should return while he was there. So he replied, "Mother, language has no words to describe the miseries they are undergoing in the other world. They have not a rag of clothing, and for the last six days they have eaten nothing, and have lived on water only. It would break your heart to see them." The rogue's pathetic words deceived the good woman, who firmly believed that he had come down from Kailása, a messenger from the old couple to herself! "Why should they so suffer," said she, "when their son has plenty to eat and clothe himself withal, and when their daughter-in-law wears all sorts of costly garments?" So saying, she went into the house, and soon came out again with two boxes containing all her own and her husband's clothes, which she handed to the rogue, desiring him to deliver them to the poor old couple in Kailása. She also gave him her jewel-box, to be presented to her mother-in-law. "But dress and jewels will not fill their hungry stomachs," said the rogue. "Very true; I had forgot: wait a moment," said the simple woman, going into the house once more. Presently returning with her husband's cash chest, she emptied its glittering contents into the rogue's skirt, who now took his leave in haste, promising to give everything to the

good old couple in Kailása; and having secured all the booty in his upper garment, he made off at the top of his speed as soon as the silly woman had gone indoors.

Shortly after this the husband returned home, and his wife's pleasure at what she had done was so great that she ran to meet him at the door, and told him all about the arrival of the messenger from Kailása, how his parents were without clothes and food, and how she had sent them clothes and jewels and store of money. On hearing this, the anger of the husband was great; but he checked himself, and inquired which road the messenger from Kailása had taken, saying that he wished to follow him with a further message for his parents. So she very readily pointed out the direction in which the rogue had gone. With rage in his heart at the trick played upon his stupid wife, he rode off in hot haste, and after having proceeded a considerable distance, he caught sight of the flying rogue, who, finding escape hopeless, climbed up into a *pipal* tree. The husband soon reached the foot of the tree, when he shouted to the rogue to come down. "No, I cannot," said he; "this is the way to Kailása," and then climbed to the very top of the tree. Seeing there was no chance of the rogue coming down, and there being no one near to whom he could call for help, the old miser tied his horse to a neighbouring tree, and began to climb up the *pipal* himself. When the rogue observed this, he thanked all his gods most fervently, and having waited until his enemy had climbed nearly up to him, he threw down his bundle of booty, and then leapt nimbly from branch to branch till he reached the ground in safety, when he mounted the miser's horse and with his bundle rode into a thick forest, where he was not likely to be discovered. Being thus balked the miser

came down the *pipal* tree slowly, cursing his own stupidity in having risked his horse to recover the things which his wife had given the rogue, and returned home at leisure. His wife, who was waiting his return, welcomed him with a joyous countenance, and cried, “I thought as much: you have sent away your horse to Kailása, to be used by your old father.” Vexed at his wife’s words, as he was, he replied in the affirmative, to conceal his own folly.

MIDDLE DIVISION

PART I

GREECE

In essaying an Outline of the World's Humor, the greatest obstacle to our work is the insufficiency of data.

While we are sure there was humor in the early days, we cannot get much of it for publication. The Fables and Folk Tales that come down to us are of uncertain origin and date. Traditions have been traced to their inception but the tracery is of vague and shadowy lines.

Wherefore it is well nigh impossible to formulate or systematize our chronology.

The simple division of Ancient, Middle and Modern must serve for a main arrangement, with the subdivision of the Middle into Greece, Rome, and the Mediæval Ages.

Greece will include generally the time from 500 B.C. to 500 A.D., although its traditions reach farther back into antiquity.

The whole Middle Division must include all from 500 B.C. to about 1300 A.D.

So, we see the boundaries are inevitable if not entirely satisfactory.

Greece was the primeval European civilization, and in the year 500 B.C. it already had its own literature and the Iliad and Odyssey were even then

antique.

These, at this time, were traditionally ascribed to Homer as they have ever since remained. But Homer's individual existence is a matter of doubt, and his history and personality are as unknown as those of the ancient patriarchs of the Old Testament.

Even from this distant viewpoint the humor of antiquity is, like beauty, in the eye of the beholder.

Coleridge says definitely, "Amongst the classic ancients there was little or no humor." But, on the other hand, that eminent antiquarian, William Hayes Ward says, "The Greeks were the maddest, jolliest race of men that ever inhabited our planet. As they loved games and play, they loved the joke."

So, as more than any other human emotion, humor is a matter of opinion, we must dig up whatever nuggets we can and not assay them too meticulously.

Like Homer, Æsop, is wrapped in mystery. Like Homer, too, various cities claimed the honor of being his birthplace. The truth is not known.

Tradition places Æsop in the sixth century, B.C. and makes him a dwarf and, originally, a slave.

Though probably not a historic personage, his name is inseparably connected with the Fables that have been known to us for centuries; and, according to scholars, some of them were known a thousand years earlier to the Egyptians.

Of these things we cannot speak positively, but *Æsop's Fables* certainly come at or near the beginnings of Greek Literature, and their place is here.

ÆSOP'S FABLES

THE LION, THE BEAR, THE MONKEY, AND THE FOX

The Tyrant of the forest issued a proclamation, commanding all his subjects to repair immediately to his royal den. Among the rest, the Bear made his appearance; but pretending to be offended with the steams which issued from the Monarch's apartments, he was imprudent enough to hold his nose in his Majesty's presence. This insolence was so highly resented, that the Lion in a rage laid him dead at his feet. The Monkey, observing what had passed, trembled for his carcass; and attempted to conciliate favor by the most abject flattery. He began with protesting, that for his part he thought the apartments were perfumed with Arabian spices; and exclaiming against the rudeness of the Bear, admired the beauty of his Majesty's paws, so happily formed, he said, to correct the insolence of clowns. This fulsome adulation, instead of being received as he expected, proved no less offensive than the rudeness of the Bear; and the courtly Monkey was in like manner extended by the side of Sir Bruin. And now his Majesty cast his eye upon the Fox. "Well, Reynard," said he, "and what scent do you discover here?" "Great Prince," replied the cautious Fox, "my nose was never esteemed my most distinguishing sense; and at present I would by no means venture to give my opinion, as I have unfortunately got a terrible cold."

Reflection

It is often more prudent to suppress our sentiments, than either to flatter or to rail.

THE PARTIAL JUDGE

A Farmer came to a neighbouring Lawyer,

expressing great concern for an accident which he said had just happened. “One of your oxen,” continued he, “has been gored by an unlucky bull of mine, and I shall be glad to know how I am to make you a reparation.” “Thou art a very honest fellow,” replied the Lawyer, “and wilt not think it unreasonable that I expect one of thy oxen in return.” “It is no more than justice,” quoth the Farmer, “to be sure: but what did I say!—I mistake—It is your bull that has killed one of my oxen.” “Indeed,” says the Lawyer, “that alters the case: I must inquire into the affair; and if”—“And *if*!” said the Farmer, “the business I find would have been concluded without an *if*, had you been as ready to do justice to others as to exact it from them.”

Reflection

The injuries we do, and those we suffer, are seldom weighed in the same scales.

It is all very well for some wiseacres to say, “Humor came in with civilization,” for others to say, “Humor took its rise in the Middle Ages,” or to set any other arbitrary time.

The truth is that Humor, is an innate emotion, and in a general sense, it is the child of religion.

The primitive religions were conducted with Festival Ceremonies, whose celebrations were of such symbolic nature, and later, such burlesque of symbolism that gaiety ensued and then ribaldry.

The worship of the god Dionysus,—later mixed up in tradition with Bacchus,—was responsible for much reckless license that was the earliest form of comedy.

Dionysus, being deity of the vineyard, as well as of

phallic worship, lent himself readily to the grotesque representations and hysterical orgies of his followers and Greek Comedy was probably the outcome of this.

In these Dionysiac festivals the processions and parades represented everything imaginable that was bizarre or ridiculous.

As in all ages, before and since, the mummers clothed themselves in the likeness of animals, and invented horrible masks.

Comedy came to be abuse, ridicule and parody of sacred things.

Notwithstanding Coleridge's comment, laughter was universal in Greece and Plato declared the *agelastoi* or non-laughers to be the least respectable of mortals.

Small wonder then that their mirth exhibited itself in drawings and paintings. These mediums were easier to come by than writings, and the early grotesques and caricatures of the Greeks are drawings on Greek vases which show the playfulness as well as the serious purpose of the artist-potter. The first and greatest of Greek poets adds strokes of wit to his stories of the Trojan war. When Ulysses returns from the siege of Ilium he stops at the island of Sicily, and he and his companions are caught by the one-eyed giant Polyphemus and imprisoned in his cave. Then comes the story of the crafty leader's escape, after some of his companions had been slain and eaten by the monster. It is a most amusing story, told with all Greek humor, how the giant was blinded with the burnt stick which gouged out his eye while in a drunken sleep; how the Greeks escaped through the entrance by clinging under the

bodies of his sheep, while he felt of them one by one to see that not a Greek escaped. Then comes the giant's howling call to his distant companions, and in answer to their question, who had blinded him, his telling them that "Outis" (Nobody) had done it, *Outis* (*Nobody*) being the name Ulysses had given the giant as his own. "If nobody has done it", replied his companions, "then it is the act of the gods", and they left him to endure his loss. Thus the Greeks escape to their ships and taunt the monster as they flee away, followed by his vain pursuit. Homer relieves the wisdom of Ulysses and the dignity of Agamemnon with the gibes of Thersites or the rude humor of the suitors of Penelope, the trick of whose embroidery is itself an amusing story.

Greece, of course, was the cradle of all that we now call art. Landscape painters, painters of animals and portrait limners, as well as still life artists and sculptors and workers in mosaics reached a high state of perfection.

Then naturally the caricaturists and comic artists could not be wanting there. Burlesque affected their pencils and brushes as it had their speech and caricature and parody were rampant.

A marvelous example is the parody or caricature of the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi. It is taken from an oxybaphon which was brought from the Continent to England, where it passed into the collection of Mr. William Hope. The *oxybaphon*, or, as it was called by the Romans, *acetabulum*, was a large vessel for holding vinegar, which formed one of the important ornaments of the table, and was therefore very susceptible of pictorial embellishment of this description. It is one of the most remarkable Greek caricatures of this kind yet known, and represents a

parody on one of the most interesting stories of the Grecian mythology, that of the arrival of Apollo at Delphi. The artist, in his love of burlesque, has spared none of the personages who belonged to the story. The Hyperborean Apollo himself appears in the character of a quack doctor, on his temporary stage, covered by a sort of roof, and approached by wooden steps. On the stage lies Apollo's luggage, consisting of a bag, a bow, and his Scythian cap. Chron is represented as labouring under the effects of age and blindness, and supporting himself by the aid of a crooked staff, as he repairs to the Delphian quack doctor for relief. The figure of the centaur is made to ascend by the aid of a companion, both being furnished with the masks and other attributes of the comic performers. Above are the mountains, and on them the nymphs of Parnassus, who, like all the other actors in the scene, are disguised with masks, and those of a very grotesque character. On the right-hand side stands a figure which is considered as representing the *epoptes*, the inspector or overseer of the performance, who alone wears no mask. Even a pun is employed to heighten the drollery of the scene, for instead of ΠΥΘΙΑΣ, the Pythian, placed over the head of the burlesque Apollo, it seems evident that the artist had written ΠΕΙΘΙΑΣ, the consoler in allusion, perhaps, to the consolation which the quack-doctor is administering to his blind and aged visitor.

The comic and grotesque led on to the representation of the monstrous, and queer, strange figures became part of their art and architecture. Out of these, perhaps, grew the hideous masks and strange distortions of the human figure.

Perhaps this is why Æsop was represented as a

dwarf and a hunchback.

But the whole trend of the grotesque and monstrous in religious ornamentation grew and flourished on into the Middle Ages and later, and the gargoyles of our latest churches show the persisting influence.

The old comedy of Greece has been called the comedy of caricature, and hand in hand, verbal and pictorial parody have come to us down the centuries.

Pictorial burlesque, however, was not placed on the public monuments, but lent itself more readily to objects of common usage or individual belongings. It is found abundantly on the pottery of Greece and Rome and abounded in the wall paintings of Herculaneum and Pompeii.

This is not the place to discuss the identity of Homer. Whether a real man, a group of men or a myth, the works of Homer are immortal and, for the most part serious.

Our task is to find anything humorous in the Greek epics.

It is not easy, indeed, it is almost impossible. But we subjoin an extract which, we may say, comes the nearest to humor in Homer.

THE BEATING OF THERSITES

Ulysses' ruling thus
restrained
The host from flight; and then again the Council
was maintained
With such a concourse that the shore rang with the
tumult made;
As when the far-resounding sea doth in its rage
invade
His sandy confines, whose sides groan with his

involved wave,
And make his own breast echo sighs. All sate, and audience gave.
Thersites only would speak all. A most disordered store
Of words he foolishly poured out, of which his mind held more
Than it could manage; anything with which he could procure
Laughter, he never could contain. He should have yet been sure
To touch no kings; t'oppose their states becomes not jesters' parts.
But he the filthiest fellow was of all that had deserts
In Troy's brave siege. He was squint-eyed, and lame of either foot;
So crookbacked that he had no breast; sharp-headed, where did shoot
(Here and there 'spersed) thin, mossy hair. He most of all envied
Ulysses and Æacides, whom still his spleen would chide.
Nor could the sacred king himself avoid his saucy vein;
Against whom since he knew the Greeks did vehement hates sustain,
Being angry for Achilles' wrong, he cried out, railing thus:
"Atrides, why complain'st thou now? What wouldst thou more of us?
Thy tents are full of brass; and dames, the choice of all, are thine,
With whom we must present thee first, when any towns resign
To our invasion. Want'st thou, then, besides all this, more gold
From Troy's knights to redeem their sons, whom to be dearly sold
I or some other Greek must take? Or wouldst thou yet again
Force from some other lord his prize, to soothe the lusts that reign
In thy encroaching appetite? It fits no prince to be
A prince of ill, and govern us, or lead our progeny
By rape to ruin. Oh, base Greeks, deserving infamy,
And ills eternal, Greekish girls, not Greeks, ye are! Come, flee

Home with our ships; leave this man here to perish
with his preys,
And try if we helped him or not. He wronged a
man that weighs
Far more than he himself in worth. He forced from
Thetis' son,
And keeps his prize still. Nor think I that mighty
man hath won
The style of wrathful worthily; he's soft, he's too
remiss;
Or else, Atrides, his had been thy last of injuries."
Thus he the people's pastor chid; but straight
stood up to him
Divine Ulysses, who, with looks exceeding grave
and grim,
This bitter check gave: "Cease, vain fool, to vent
thy railing vein
On kings thus, though it serve thee well; nor think
thou canst restrain,
With that thy railing faculty, their wills in least
degree;
For not a worse, of all this host, came with our
king than thee,
To Troy's great siege; then do not take into that
mouth of thine
The names of kings, much less revile the dignities
that shine
In their supreme states, wresting thus this motion
for our home,
To soothe thy cowardice; since ourselves yet know
not what will come
Of these designments, if it be our good to stay, or
go.
Nor is it that thou stand'st on; thou revil'st our
general so,
Only because he hath so much, not given by such
as thou,
But our heroes. Therefore this thy rude vein makes
me vow,
Which shall be curiously observed, if ever I shall
hear
This madness from thy mouth again, let not Ulysses
bear
This head, nor be the father called of young
Telemachus,
If to thy nakedness I take and strip thee not, and
thus
Whip thee to fleet from council; send, with sharp

stripes, weeping hence
This glory thou affect'st to rail." This said, his insolence
He settled with his scepter; struck his back and shoulders so
That bloody wales rose. He shrunk round, and from his eyes did flow
Moist tears, and, looking filthily, he sate, feared, smarted, dried
His blubbered cheeks; and all the press, though grieved to be denied
Their wished retreat for home, yet laughed delightsomely, and spake
Either to other: "Oh, ye gods, how infinitely take
Ulysses' virtues in our good! Author of counsels, great
In ordering armies, how most well this act became his heat,
To beat from council this rude fool. I think his saucy spirit
Hereafter will not let his tongue abuse the sovereign merit,
Exempt from such base tongues as his."

—*The Iliad.*

Attributed to Homer by many, and stoutly denied by others, is a comedy called *The Battle of the Frogs and Mice*.

Again we note the device of animals masquerading as human beings.

Samuel Wesley, himself a humorist, calls this the oldest burlesque in the world, and he also dubs it, *The Iliad in a Nutshell*. He holds that Homer wrote it as a parody of his own masterpiece, while, conversely, Statius contends that it is a work of youth, written by Homer before he wrote *The Iliad*. Chapman deems it the work of the poet's old age, and as none may decide when doctors disagree, many scholars deny a Homeric authorship to it at all. Plutarch asserts the real author was Pigres of Halicarnassus, who flourished during the Persian war.

This first burlesque known to literature has the following plot.

A mouse, while slaking his thirst on the margin of a pond, after a hot pursuit by a weasel, enters into conversation with a frog on the merits of their respective modes of life. The frog invites the mouse to a nearer inspection of the abode and habits of his own nation, and for this purpose offers him a sail on his back. When the party are at some distance from land, the head of an otter suddenly appears on the surface. The terrified frog at once dives to the bottom, disengaging himself from his rider, who, with many a struggle and bitter imprecations on his betrayer, is involved in a watery grave. Another mouse, who from the shore had witnessed the fate of his unfortunate comrade, reports it to his fellow-citizens. A council is held, and war declared against the nation of the offender.

“Jupiter and the gods deliberate in Olympus on the issue of the contest. Mars and Minerva decline personal interference, as well from the awe inspired by such mighty combatants as from previous ill-will towards both contending powers, in consequence of injuries inflicted by each on their divine persons or properties. A band of mosquitoes sound the war-alarum with their trumpets, and, after a bloody engagement, the frogs are defeated with great slaughter. Jupiter, sympathising with their fate, endeavours in vain by his thunders to intimidate the victors from further pursuit. The rescue of the frogs, however, is effected by an army of land-crabs, who appear as their allies, and before whom the mice, in their turn, are speedily put to flight.”

The Battle of the Frogs and Mice, then, is well described as the earliest and most successful extant

specimen of the “mock-heroic,” the double object of which is, according to Barrow’s famous definition, to debase things pompous and elevate things mean. An amusing version of this Homeric *jeu d’esprit* was published in 1851 by an author who gave himself out as the “Singing Mouse,” “the last minstrel of his race.” “The theme,” he says, “belongs to that heroic age of which history has recorded that the very mountains laboured when a mouse was born.” The metre of this translation has been altered from the stately elegance of the original to one which is perhaps better fitted to the subject in itself than to its special object as a travestie on the epic style of the *Iliad*. The names of the heroes are happily rendered; but it will be seen that some difference exists between this author and the one just cited as to certain of the zoological terms in the poem.

THE MEETING

I

It fell on a day that a mouse, travel-spent,
To the side of a river did wearily win;
Of the good house-cat he had baffled the scent,
And he thirstily dipt his whiskered chin;
When, crouched in the sedge by the water’s brink,
A clamorous frog beheld him drink.
“And tell me, fair sir, thy title and birth,
For of high degree thou art surely come;
I have room by my hearth for a stranger of worth,
And a welcome to boot to my royal home.
For, sooth to speak, my name is *Puffcheek*,
And I come of *Bullfrog’s* lordly line;
I govern the bogs, the realm of the frogs,
A sceptred king by right divine.”

II

Then up and spake the mighty mouse:
“And, courteous stranger, ask’st thou, then,
What’s known alike to gods and men,
The lineage of *Crumplunderer’s* house?

Me Princess *Lickfarina* bare,
Daughter of good King *Nibble-the-flitch*,
And she weaned me on many a dainty rare,
As became great *Pie-devourer's* heir,
With filberts and figs and sweetmeats rich.

III

"Never mortal mouse, I ween,
Better versed in man's cuisine;
Not a bun or tartlet, graced
With sweeping petticoat of paste,
Not an oily rasher or creamy cheese,
Or liver so gay in its silver chemise;
Not a dish by artiste for alderman made,
Ever escaped my foraging raid
For when the mice pour on pantry and store,
In foray or fight, I am aye to the fore.

IV

"I fear not man's unwieldy size,
To his very bedside I merrily go;
At his lubberly length the ogre lies,
And sleep never leaves his heavy-sealed eyes
Though I pinch his heel and nibble his toe.
But enemies twain do work my bane,
And both from my inmost soul I hate,
The cat and the kite, who bear me spite;
And, third, the mouse-trap's fatal bait;
And the ferret foul I abhor from my soul,
The robber! he follows me into my hole!"

Wesley's rendering of the *dénouement* is a thoroughly good specimen of the mock-heroic style which runs through the original:

The Muses knowing all things list not show
The Wailings for the Dead and Funeral Rites,
To blameless Æthiopians must they go
To feast with Jove for twelve succeeding nights.
Therefore abrupt thus end they. Let suffice
The gods' august assembly to relate,
Heroic Frogs and Demigods of Mice,
Troxartes' vengeance and Pelides' fate.
Hosts routed, lakes of gore, and hills of slain,
An Iliad, work divine! raised from a day's

campaign.

By this time Greece was ready for definite mirth and laughter. What has come to be known as the Old Comedy was to the Athenians, we are told, what is now shown in the influences of the newspaper, the review, the Broadside, the satire, the caricature of the times and manners.

Nor were cartoons missing, for the grotesque pictures were as important a factor as the verbal or written words.

The Old Comedy is marked by political satire of a virulent personality. This is prohibited in the Middle Comedy, and replaced by literary and philosophical criticism of the ways of the citizens. The New Comedy, more repressed still, is the comedy of manners, and its influence continued to the Roman stage and further.

Of the Old Comedy, save for a few lesser lights, Aristophanes is the sole representative.

At the festivals of the god Dionysus, two elements were present. One the solemn rites, which developed into tragedy, and the other the grotesque and ribald orgies which were equally in evidence and which culminated in the idea of comedy.

The license of these symbolic representations was unbridled and all rules of decorum and decency were violated in the frenzied antics.

Doubtless many writings now lost to us were filled with the broad humor of the day, but we have only the plays of Aristophanes left.

Of the life of this Athenian not much is known. He was born after 450 B.C. and it was after the

Peloponnesian War that he wrote his plays.

The principal and best known of his eleven extant plays is *The Frogs*.

Of this, two clever translations are given.

One, is thus introduced by a writer in *The Quarterly Review*:

> "One of the temples or theatres appropriated to the service of Bacchus in Athens, and in which the scenic performances of the old Greeks took place, was situated near a part of that metropolis usually called 'The Marshes,' and those who know by experience what tenants such places commonly harbour in more southern climates will think it not impossible that the representatives of the stage, and more particularly in theatres which were generally without a roof, were occasionally disturbed, to the great annoyance of the dramatists, by the noisy vociferations of these more ancient and legitimate Lords of the Marshes. One of them was not a man to be offended with impunity by biped or quadruped; and wherever the foes of Aristophanes were to be found, on land or in water, he had shafts both able and willing to reach them.
>
> "In his descent to the lower world, the patron of the stage is accordingly made to encounter a band of most pertinacious and invincible frogs; and the gradations through which the mind of Bacchus runs, after the first moments of irritation have subsided, from coaxing to bullying, from affected indifference to downright force, are probably a mere transcript of the poet's own feelings under similar circumstances."

SCENE.—*The Acherusian Lake*—BACCHUS *at the oar in* CHARON'S *Boat*—CHARON—*Chorus of Frogs—In the background a view of Bacchus's Temple or Theatre, from*

which are heard the sounds of a Scenic Entertainment.

Semich. 1. Croak! croak! croak!
Semich. 2. Croak! croak! croak!
[*In answer, with music 8ve lower.*
Full Chorus. Croak! croak! croak!
Leader of the Chorus. When flagons were foaming,
And roysterers roaming,
And bards flung about them their gibe and their joke;
The holiest song
Still was found to belong
To the Sons of the Marsh with their—
Full Chorus. Croak! croak!
Leader. Shall we pause in our strain,
Now the months bring again
The pipe and the minstrel to gladden the folk?
Rather strike on the ear,
With a note sharp and clear,
A chant corresponding of—
Chorus. Croak! croak!
Bacchus (*mimicking*). Croak! croak! By the Gods, I shall choke
If you pester and bore my ears any more
With your croak! croak! croak!
Leader. Rude companion and vain,
Thus to carp at my strain,
But keep in the vein,
And attack him again
With a croak! croak! croak!
Chorus (*crescendo*). Croak! croak! croak!
Bacchus (*mimicking*). Croak! croak! Vapour and smoke!
Never think it, old huff,
That I care for such stuff
As your croak! croak! croak!
Chorus (*fortissimo*). Croak! croak! croak!
Bacchus. Now fires light on thee
And waters soak,
And March winds catch thee
Without any cloak.
For within and without,
From the tail to the snout,
Thou'rt nothing but—
Croak! croak! croak!
Leader. And what else, captious newcomer, say, should I be?

But you know not to whom you are talking, I see.
[*With dignity.*
I'm the friend of the Muses, and Pan with his pipe
Loves me better by far than a cherry that's ripe:
Who gives them their tone and their moisture but I?
And therefore for ever I'll utter my cry
Of—

Chorus. Croak! croak! croak!

Bacchus. I'm blistered, I'm flustered, I'm sick, I'm ill.

Chorus. Croak! croak! croak!

Bacchus. My dear little bull-frog, do prithee keep still.

Chorus. Croak! croak! croak!

Bacchus. 'Tis a sorry vocation, that reiteration;
I speak on my honour, most musical nation
Of croak! croak! croak!

Leader (*maestoso*). When the sun rides in glory and makes a light day
'Mid lilies and plants of the water I stray;
Or when the sky darkens with tempest and rain,
I sink like a pearl in my watery domain.
But sinking or swimming I lift up my song,
Or drive a gay dance with my eloquent throng.
Then hey, bubble, bubble,
For a knave's petty trouble
Shall I my high charter and birthright revoke?
Nay, my efforts I'll double
And drive him like stubble
Before me with—

Chorus. Croak! croak! croak!

Bacchus. I'm ribs of steel, I'm heart of oak,
Let us see if a note
Can be found in this throat,
To answer their (*croaks loudly*) croak!
croak! croak!

Leader. Poor vanity's son!
And dost think me undone
With a clamour no bigger
Than a maiden's first snigger?
But strike up a tune

[*To Chorus.*

He'll not forget soon
Of our croak! croak! croak!

Chorus (*with discordant crash of music*). Croak! croak! croak!

Bacchus. I'm cinder, I'm coke!
I have got my death-stroke.
O that ever I woke
To be galled by the yoke
Of this croak! croak! croak!

Leader. Friend, friend, I may not be still,
My destinies high I must needs fulfil.
And the march of creation, despite reprobation,
Must proceed with—,

[*To Chorus.*

My lads, may I make application
For a—

Chorus. Croak! croak! croak!

Bacchus (*in a minor key*). Nay, nay! Take your own way,
I've said out my say,
And care nought by my fai'
For your croak! croak! croak!

Leader. Care or care not, 'tis the same thing to me;
My voice is my own, and my actions are free.
I have but one note, and I chant it with glee,
And from morning to night that note it shall be

Chorus. Croak! croak! croak!

Bacchus. Nay then, old rebel,
I'll stop your treble
With a poke! poke! poke!

[*Dashing at the Frogs.*

Take this from my rudder, and that from my oar,
And now let us see if you'll trouble us more
With your croak! croak! croak!

Leader. You may batter and bore,
You may thunder and roar,
Yet I'll never give o'er
Till I'm hard at death's door—
This rib, by the way, is confoundedly sore).

Semich. 1. With my croak! croak! croak!

Semich. 2 (*dim.*). Croak! croak! croak!

Full Chorus (*in a dying cadence*). Croak! croak! croak!

[*The Frogs disappear.*

Bacchus (*looking over the boat's edge*). Spoke! spoke! spoke!

[*To CHARON.*

Pull away, my old friend,
For at last there's an end
To their croak! croak! croak!

[BACCHUS *pays his two oboli and is landed.*

THE PASSAGE OF THE STYX

CHARON, BACCHUS, *and* XANTHIAS

Charon. Hoy! Bear a hand there! Heave ashore!
Bacchus. What's this?
Xanthias. The lake it is—the place he told us of.
By Jove! and there's the boat—and here's old Charon!
Bacchus. Well, Charon! Welcome, Charon! Welcome kindly!
Charon. Who wants the ferryman? Anybody waiting
To leave the pangs of life? A passage, anybody?
To Lethe's wharf? To Cerberus' reach?
To Tartarus? To Tænarus? To Perdition?
Bacchus. Yes, I.
Charon. Get in then.
Bacchus. Tell me, where are you going?
To perdition, really?
Charon. Yes, to oblige you, I will—
With all my heart. Step in there.
Bacchus. Have a care!
Take care, good Charon! Charon, have a care!
(*Getting into the boat.*)
Come, Xanthias, come!
Charon. I take no slaves aboard,
Except they've volunteer'd for the naval victory.
Xanthias. I could not; I was suffering with sore eyes.
Charon. Off with you, round by the end of the lake.
Xanthias. And whereabouts shall I wait?
Charon. At the Stone of Repentance,
By the Slough of Despond, beyond the Tribulations.
You understand me?

Xanthias. Yes, I understand you—
A lucky, promising direction, truly.
Charon (*to* BACCHUS). Sit down at the oar. Come, quick, if there are more coming!—
Hullo! what's that you're doing?
(BACCHUS *is seated in a buffoonish attitude in the side of the boat where the oar was fastened.*)
Bacchus. What you told me.
I'm sitting at the oar.
Charon. Sit *there*, I tell you,
You fatguts; that's your place.
Bacchus (*changes his place*). Well, so I do.
Charon. Now ply your hands and arms.
Bacchus (*makes a silly motion with his arms*). Well, so I do.
Charon. You'd best leave off your fooling. Take to the oar,
And pull away.
Bacchus. But how shall I contrive?
I've never served on board; I'm only a landsman;
I'm quite unused to it.
Charon. We can manage it.
As soon as you begin you shall have some music;
That will teach you to keep time.
Bacchus. What music's that?
Charon. A chorus of frogs—uncommon musical frogs.
Bacchus. Well, give me the word and the time.
Charon. Whooh, up, up! Whooh, up, up!

CHORUS OF FROGS

Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!
Shall the choral quiristers of the marsh
Be censured and rejected as hoarse and harsh,
And their chromatic essays
Deprived of praise?
No; let us raise afresh
Our obstreperous brekeke-kesh!
The customary croak and cry
Of the creatures
At the theaters
In their yearly revelry.
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bacchus (*rowing in great misery*).

How I'm maul'd!
How I'm gall'd!
Worn and mangled to a mash—
There they go! Koash, koash!
Frogs. Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!
Bacchus. Oh, beshrew,
All your crew!
You don't consider how I smart.
Frogs. Now for a sample of the art!
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!
Bacchus. I wish you hanged, with all my heart!
Have you nothing else to say?
Brekeke-kesh, koash, all day!
Frogs. We've a right,
We've a right,
And we croak at ye for spite.
We've a right,
We've a right,
Day and night,
Day and night,
Night and day,
Still to creak and croak away.
Phœbus and every Grace
Admire and approve of the croaking race;
And the egregious guttural notes
That are gargled and warbled in their
lyrical throats.
In reproof
Of your scorn,
Mighty Pan
Nods his horn;
Beating time
To the rime
With his hoof,
With his hoof.
Persisting in our plan,
We proceed as we began.
Brekeke-kesh, brekeke-kesh,
Koash, koash!
Bacchus. Oh, the frogs, consume and rot 'em!
I've a blister on my bottom!
Hold your tongues, you noisy creatures!
Frogs. Cease with your profane entreaties,
All in vain forever striving;
Silence is against our natures;
With the vernal heat reviving,
Our aquatic crew repair
From their periodic sleep,

In the dark and chilly deep,
To the cheerful upper air.
Then we frolic here and there
All amid the meadows fair;
Shady plants of asphodel
Are the lodges where we dwell;
Chanting in the leafy bowers
All the livelong summer hours,
Till the sudden gusty showers
Send us headlong, helter-skelter,
To the pool to seek for shelter.
Meager, eager, leaping, lunging,
From the sedgy wharfage plunging
To the tranquil depth below,
There we muster all a-row;
Where, secure from toil and trouble,
With a tuneful hubble-bubble,
Our symphonious accents flow.
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bacchus. I forbid you to proceed.

Frogs. That would be severe, indeed,
Arbitrary, bold, and rash—
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bacchus. I command you to desist—
Oh, my back, there! Oh, my wrist
What a twist!
What a sprain!

Frogs. Once again
We renew the tuneful strain—
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bacchus. I disdain—hang the pain!—
All your nonsense, noise, and trash.
Oh, my blister! Oh, my sprain!

Frogs. Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!
Friends and frogs, we must display
All our powers of voice to-day.
Suffer not this stranger here,
With fastidious, foreign ear,
To confound us and abash
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bacchus. Well, my spirit is not broke;
If it's only for the joke,
I'll outdo you with a croak.
Here it goes—(*very loud*) "Koash, koash!"

Frogs. Now for a glorious croaking crash,
(still louder)
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bacchus (*splashing with his oar*).

I'll disperse you with a splash.
Frogs. Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!
Bacchus. I'll subdue
Your rebellious, noisy crew—
Have among you there, slap-dash!
(*Strikes at them.*)
Frogs. Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!
We defy your oar, and you.
Charon. Hold! We're ashore. Now shift your oar.
Get out. Now pay your fare.
Bacchus. There—there it is—the twopence.
—*The Frogs.*

Another play of Aristophanes is *The Birds*.

The plot of this is simply that two Athenians, disgusted with the state of things in their native city, form the idea of building a city where the birds shall regain their old traditional supremacy.

The proposal is happily received by the birds and the city of Nephelococyggia, or Cloud-cuckoo-town is the result.

It was merely a burlesque on the Athenians who were given to building castles in the air.

Lack of space forbids further quotation from Aristophanes, but his comedies are available to all who wish to read them.

Among the predecessors of Aristophanes was Cratinus, who was an enemy of water drinkers, and expressed the dictum that no verses written by abstainers could ever please or live!

Another, whose fragmentary lines have a certain modern ring, is Simonides, who left us a poem of the ladies, which, it has been said, gave the tone to all the Greek pasquinades of the same class. He compares the different types of ladies to various members of the lower orders in creation; and the "Fine Lady" is represented by a high-bred steed.

THE FINE LADY. BY SIMONIDES.

Next in the lot a gallant dame we see,
Sprung from a mare of noble pedigree;
No servile work her spirit proud can brook,
Her hands were never taught to bake or cook;
The vapour of the oven makes her ill,
She scorns to empty slops or turn the mill.
To wash or scour would make her soft hands rough,
Her own ablutions give pursuit enough;
Three baths a day, with balms and perfumes rare,
Refresh her tender limbs. Her long rich hair
Each time she combs and decks with blooming flowers.
No spouse more fit than she the idle hours
Of wealthy lords or kings to recreate,
And grace the splendour of their courtly state;
For men of humbler sort no better guide
Heaven in its wrath to ruin can provide.

Two more examples of the wit of Cratinus follow:

"Apollo, of fine verses here's a gush!
They come, like springs and fountains, with a rush.
A river's in his windpipe! Turn the tap;
This spouting, if not stopped, will cause some dire mishap."

"How can one stop him from this thirst for drink?
How *can* one? Well, I've found a way, I think.
For every cup and every mug I'll smash,
His flasks and pitchers into fragments dash,
Shiver all kinds of pots that come to table,
And not one crock to keep shall he be able."

Plato Comicus (as distinguished from the philosopher), who carried on a poetic contest with Aristophanes, ranks among the best of the poets of the Old Comedy, but only a few fragments of his work remain.

Here are two of them:

"Henceforth no four-legged creature should be slain,
Except the pig; of this the reason's plain.
Its use—unless for food—man vainly seeks;

It only gives him bristles, dirt, and squeaks."

"We're swamped with 'public men'; for one scamp dead,
Two louder talkers, greater scamps, instead
Spring up like Hydra's heads: the more's the pity
We have no Iolaus in the city
To singe the necks from which these pests arise,
In whom foul lives alone secure the prize."

As students of the Classics themselves find great difficulty in drawing strict boundaries between the Old and Middle Comedy, we need not pay careful attention to exact dates, but accept the general idea that one passed into the other at about the time the Peloponnesian War ended.

This was 404 B.C. and Middle Comedy may be said to extend from that date until the overthrow of the Athenians by Philip of Macedon in 338 B.C.

The most distinguished poet of the Middle Comedy was Antiphanes, who lived in the Fourth Century, B.C.

His lines are epigrammatic and frequently refer to the prevailing theme of drunkenness.

"No trade more pleasant is, no art,
Than ours who play the flatterer's part.
The painter overworked gets cross,
Your farmer learns his risk by loss;
While care and pains each workman takes,
"Laugh and get fat" *our* motto makes.
Fun, laughter, banter, drink, I hold
Are life's chief pleasures—next to gold."

"I have a vintner near who keeps a shop,
The only man who, when I want a drop,
Mixes my grog to suit my special taste;
Not neat,—nor letting water run to waste."

"Wives are bad property, I'd have you know,—
Except in countries where grapes do not grow."

"'Tis life in paradise to find a host
To dine with, where you've not to count the cost.
And so new shifts to try I shall not pause,
To get a bite that's toothsome for my jaws."

"One single thing I trust a woman saying,
To other statements no attention paying:
'When I am dead, I won't return to grieve you.'
Till death takes place, in naught else I'll believe you."

"What! when you court concealment, will you tell
The matter to a woman? Just as well
Tell all the criers in the public squares!
'Tis hard to say which of them louder blares."

"Married? He's done for! Ah! I had misgiving.
And yet I only lately left him living."

"Two states there are that we can always prove,—
If one's in liquor, and if one's in love.
Both words and looks these two conditions show;
By these if the denial's false we know."

Another epigrammatist was

ANAXANDRIADES

He who composed the ditty, "Health is best,
Good looks come next, then money," and the rest,
Right in the first, in the other two was wrong.
None but a madman could have made that song!
Next after "health" comes "wealth"; your handsome face,
When pinched by famine, loses all its grace.

A man who doubts if he should marry,
Or thinks he has good cause to tarry,
Is foolish if he takes a wife,
The source of half the plagues in life!
A poor man to a rich wife sold
Exchanges liberty for gold.
If she has nothing, then, 'tis true,
There is a different ill to rue;

For now he has, with all his need,
Two mouths instead of one to feed.
Perhaps she's ugly; married life

Thenceforth is never-ending strife!
Perhaps she's pretty; then *your* boast
Is made by all your friends their toast.
Does ugly, handsome, poor, or rich,
Bring most ill luck?—I know not which.

One course in life there is that's hard to roam,
Back from a husband's to a father's home;
And every decent wife should fear to tread it;
The "homing heat" wins nothing but discredit.

Other Greek wits offer these:

EUBULUS

He who first drew or modelled Love with wings
Might paint a swallow; but how many things
In Love are different from a bird! Not light
To him who bears the weight, nor quick in flight,
Unmoved the imp upon his shoulders sits.
How can a thing have *wings* that never flits?

For sober folk three bowls alone I mix,
For health, cheer, sleep; the order thus I fix.
The first they toss off; *that's* for stomach's sake.
The next, for love and pleasure, all may take.
The third, the few who are with wisdom blessed;
It sends them home to bed, to take their rest.
The fourth's no longer *mine*! 'tis "drinkers' bowl."
A fifth they call for; then they shout and howl.
The sixth sends forth the party for a lark.
The seventh to fight and bear the drunkard's mark.
Lawsuits the eighth. The ninth breeds furious talking;
The tenth, to rave and lose the power of walking.
Small though the bowl, much wine, if poured in neat,
The head at first affects, and last the feet.

ARISTOPHON

Bad luck to him who *second* came to wed!
The first I blame not; home a wife he led
Not knowing what a curse a wife might prove,
What deadly feuds oft spring from miscalled love.
But he who married next, in haste unwise
Rushed to his fate with fully opened eyes.

ALEXIS

Your Sophists say, it is not Love almighty
That roams on wings, but *lovers* that are flighty.
Love wrongly bears the blame; 'twas one who knew
Nought of his ways who first winged Cupids drew.
A drunken party coming up! To evade them I must try.
My sole chance now to keep my cloak is having
wings to fly.

Old Chaerephon some trick is always trying,
As now, to dine without his share supplying,
Early he goes to shops which cooks beset,
To whom by contract crockery is let,
And when he sees one choosing dishes, "Say,"
He cries, "what house do *you* cook for to-day?"
So, when the door's left gaping, he contrives
To slip in as the first guest that arrives.

In wine and man this difference appears:
The old man bores you, but the old wine cheers.
Men do not, like your wine, improve by age;
The more their years, the less their ways engage.

Aristotle, though the first to put into words the definition of the ridiculous, can furnish no extracts which come within our present scope.

Indeed the great teacher considered comedy from its dramatic side rather than as mere humor.

One of his pupils, Theophrastus, left us some fragments, especially a short collection of character sketches which show both wit and humor.

OF SLOVENLINESS

This vice is a lazy and beastly negligence of a man's person, whereby he becomes so filthy as to be offensive to those who are about him. You'll see him come into a company when he is covered all over with a leprosy or scurf, or with very long nails, and he says those distempers are hereditary, that his

father and grandfather had them before him. He will speak with his mouth full, and gurgle at his cup in drinking. He will intrude into the best company in ragged clothes. If he goes with his mother to the soothsayers, he cannot even then refrain from coarse and profane expressions. When he is making his oblations at the temple, he will let the dish fall out of his hand, and laugh as at some jocular exploit. At the finest concert of music he cannot forbear clapping his hands and making a rude noise. He will pretend to sing along with the singers, and rail at them when they leave off.

—*The Characters.*

OF LOQUACITY

If we would define loquacity, it is an excessive affluence of words. The prater will not suffer any person in company to tell his own story, but, let it be what it will, tells you you mistake the matter, that he takes the thing right, and that if you will listen, he will make it clear to you. If you make any reply, he suddenly interrupts you, saying, “Why, sir, you forget what you were talking about; it’s very well you should begin to remember, since it is most beneficial for people to inform one another.” Then presently he says, “But what was I going to say? Why, truly, you very soon apprehend a thing, and I was waiting to see if you would be of my sentiment in this matter.” And thus he always takes such occasions as these to prevent the person he talks with the liberty of breathing. After he has thus tormented all who will hear him, he is so rude as to break into the company of persons met to discuss important affairs, and drives them away by his troublesome impertinence. Thence he goes into the public schools and places of exercise, where he interrupts the

masters by his foolish prating, and hinders the scholars from improving by their instruction. If any person shows an inclination to go away, he will follow him, and will not part from him till he comes to his own door. If he hears of anything transacted in the public assembly of the citizens, he runs up and down to tell it to everybody. He gives you a long account of the famous battle that was fought when Aristophanes the orator was governor, or when the Lacedæmonians were under the command of Lysander; then tells you with what general applause he made a speech in public, repeating a great deal of it, with invectives against the common people, which are so tiresome to those that hear him that some forget what he says as soon as it is out of his mouth, others fall asleep, and others leave him in the midst of his harangue. If this talker be sitting on the bench, the judge will be unable to determine matters. If he's at the theater, he'll neither let you hear nor see anything; nor will he even permit him that sits next to him at the table to eat his meat. He declares it very hard for him to be silent, his tongue being so very well hung that he'd rather be accounted as garrulous as a swallow than be silent, and patiently bears all ridicule, even that of his own children, who, when they want to go to rest, request him to talk to them that they may the sooner fall asleep.

—*The Characters.*

One of the Characters described by Theophrastus is *The Stupid Man*, and runs thus:

"The stupid man is one who, after doing a sum and setting down the total, will ask the person next him, 'What does it come to?'"

It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that this is the beginning or at least the popularizing of the

class of jests known as Noodles or Noodle Stories.

For all nations and races have folk-lore that details the sayings and doings of the witless or silly.

The Literature of the Orient abounds in these tales and European stories of the same sort are equally abundant.

The collection of jokes ascribed to Hierocles, may or may not have been gathered by that Alexandrian philosopher. The only form in which we may read them is said to have been made not earlier than the Ninth Century, but the stories themselves are among the very earliest of the traditional jests of all time.

Some of these old jokemongers' witticisms are capital—so good, in fact, that the parentage of many of them has been claimed by modern wits. No doubt we shall recognise some old friends as we read:

I. A pedant (for so we must probably translate, in conventional phrase, the pervading Scholastichus of the old jokemonger) wishing to teach his horse not to eat much, gave him no food. Eventually the horse died of starvation; and he complained to his friends, "I have suffered a great loss, for just when I had taught my horse to live upon nothing he died."

II. A pedant having bought a cask of wine, sealed it. But his slave bored a hole and stole the wine. The master was amazed to find that, though his seals were unbroken, the wine gradually diminished. Someone suggested that he should examine whether it had been taken out from the bottom. "Fool," he replied, "it isn't the lower part that's gone. It's the upper."

III. A pedant suffered shipwreck in a tempest, and seeing the passengers tie themselves to different

articles on board, fastened himself to one of the anchors.

IV. Another had to cross a river, and went on board the ferry-boat on horseback. Somebody asked him why he did so, and he replied because he was in a hurry.

V. Yet another, anxious to know whether he looked well when he was asleep, stood before a looking-glass with his eyes shut to see.

VI. A landlord, who had a house to sell, went about amongst his friends, carrying a brick as a specimen.

In connection with these stories may be cited the following, from a Persian jest-book: A poor wrestler, who had passed all his life in forests, resolved to try his fortune in a great city, and as he drew near it he observed with wonder the crowds on the road, and thought, “I shall certainly not be able to know myself among so many people if I have not something about me that the others have not.” So he tied a pumpkin to his right leg and, thus decorated, entered the town. A young wag, perceiving the simpleton, made friends with him, and induced him to spend the night at his house. While he was asleep, the joker removed the pumpkin from his leg and tied it to his own, and then lay down again. In the morning, when the poor fellow awoke and found the pumpkin on his companion’s leg, he called to him, “Hey! get up, for I am perplexed in my mind. Who am I, and who are you? If I am myself, why is the pumpkin on your leg? And if you are yourself, why is the pumpkin not on my leg?”

Modern counterparts of the following jest are not far to seek: Quoth a man to a pedant, “The slave I

bought of you has died." Rejoined the other, "By the gods, I do assure you that he never once played me such a trick while I had him." The old Greek pedant is transformed into an Irishman, in our collections of facetiæ, who applied to a farmer for work. "I'll have nothing to do with you," said the farmer, "for the last five Irishmen I had all died on my hands." Quoth Pat, "Sure, sir, I can bring you characters from half a dozen gentlemen I've worked for that I never did such a thing." And the jest is thus told in an old translation of *Les Contes Facetieux de Sieur Gaulard*: "Speaking of one of his Horses which broake his Neck at the descent of a Rock, he said, Truly it was one of the handsomest and best Curtalls in all the Country; he neuer shewed me such a trick before in all his life."

Equally familiar is the jest of the pedant who was looking out for a place to prepare a tomb for himself, and on a friend indicating what he thought to be a suitable spot, "Very true," said the pedant, "but it is unhealthy." And we have the prototype of a modern "Irish" story in the following: A pedant sealed a jar of wine, and his slaves perforated it below and drew off some of the liquor. He was astonished to find his wine disappear while the seal remained intact. A friend, to whom he had communicated the affair, advised him to look and ascertain if the liquor had not been drawn off from below. "Why, you fool," said he, "it is not the lower, but the upper, portion that is going off."

It was a Greek pedant who stood before a mirror and shut his eyes that he might know how he looked when asleep—a jest which reappears in Taylor's *Wit and Mirth* in this form: "A wealthy monsieur in France (hauing profound reuenues and a shallow

braine) was told by his man that he did continually gape in his sleepe, at which he was angry with his man, saying he would not belieue it. His man verified it to be true; his master said that he would neuer belieue any that told him so, except (quoth hee) I chance to see it with mine owne eyes; and therefore I will have a great Looking glasse at my bed's feet for the purpose to try whether thou art a lying knaue or not."

Not unlike some of our "Joe Millers" is the following: A citizen of Cumæ, on an ass, passed by an orchard, and seeing a branch of a fig-tree loaded with delicious fruit, he laid hold of it, but the ass went on, leaving him suspended. Just then the gardener came up, and asked him what he did there. The man replied, "I fell off the ass."—An analogue to this drollery is found in an Indian story-book, entitled *Kath*à *Manjari*: One day a thief climbed up a cocoanut tree in a garden to steal the fruit. The gardener heard the noise, and while he was running from his house, giving the alarm, the thief hastily descended from the tree. "Why were you up that tree?" asked the gardener. The thief replied, "My brother, I went up to gather grass for my calf." "Ha! ha! is there grass, then, on a cocoanut tree?" said the gardener. "No," quoth the thief; "but I did not know; therefore I came down again."—And we have a variant of this in the Turkish jest of the fellow who went into a garden and pulled up carrots, turnips, and other kinds of vegetables, some of which he put into a sack, and some into his bosom. The gardener, coming suddenly on the spot, laid hold of him, and said, "What are you seeking here?" The simpleton replied, "For some days past a great wind has been blowing, and that wind blew me hither." "But who pulled up these vegetables?" "As the wind blew very

violently, it cast me here and there; and whatever I laid hold of in the hope of saving myself remained in my hands." "Ah," said the gardener, "but who filled this sack with them?" "Well, that is the very question I was about to ask myself when you came up."

The Greek Anthology brings together short poems and epigrams written during the thousand years between Simonides' time and the sixth century A.D.

Collected shortly before the beginning of the Christian Era and added to later, they comprise about four thousand five hundred specimens, by three hundred authors. Few of these are witty, as, indeed, few are epigrammatic, but of them we quote some which seem most appurtenant.

FROM THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY

LUCIAN

DARKNESS

"A blockhead bit by fleas put out the light,
And, chuckling, cried, 'Now you can't see to bite!'"

CRATES

CURES FOR LOVE

"Hunger, perhaps, may cure your love,
Or time your passion greatly alter;
If both should unsuccessful prove,
I strongly recommend a halter."

JULIAN

BEER

"What! whence this, Bacchus? For, by Bacchus' self,
The son of Jove, I know not this strange elf.
The other smells like nectar; but thou here
Like the he-goat. Those wretched Celts, I fear,
For want of grapes, made thee of ears of corn.
Demetrius art thou, of Demeter born,
Not Bacchus, Dionysus, nor yet wine—

Those names but fit the products of the vine;
Beer thou mayst be from barley; or, that failing,
We'll call thee ale, for thou wilt keep us ailing."

AGATHIAS

GRAMMAR AND MEDICINE

"A thriving doctor sent his son to school
To gain some knowledge, should he prove no fool;
But took him soon away with little warning,
On finding out the lesson he was learning—
How great Pelides's wrath, in Homer's rime,
Sent many souls to Hades ere their time.
'No need for this my boy should hither come;
That lesson he can better learn at home;
For I myself, now, I make bold to say,
Sent many souls to Hades ere their day,
Nor e'er found want of grammar stop my way.'"

NEARCHUS

A SINGER

"Men die when the night-raven sings or cries;
But when Dick sings, e'en the night-raven dies."

AMMIANUS

AN EPITAPH

"Light lie the earth, Nearchus, on thy clay,
That so the dogs may easier find their prey."

LUCILIUS

ENVY

"Poor Diophon of envy died,
His brother thief to see
Nailed next to him and crucified
Upon a higher tree."

A PROFESSOR WITH A SMALL CLASS

"Hail, Aristides, rhetoric's great professor!
Of wondrous words we own thee the possessor.
Hail ye, his pupils seven, that mutely hear him—
His room's four walls, and the three benches near
him."

FALSE CHARMS

"Chloe, those locks of raven hair,
Some people say you dye with black;
But that's a libel, I can swear,
For I know where you buy them black."

A SCHOOLMASTER WITH A GAY WIFE

"You in your school forever flog and flay us,
Teaching what Paris did to Menelaus;
But all the while, within your private dwelling,
There's many a Paris courting of your Helen."

BOARD OR LODGING

"Asclepiades, the miser, in his house
Espied one day, to his surprise, a mouse.
'Tell me, dear mouse,' he cried, 'to what cause is it
I owe this pleasant but unlooked-for visit?'
The mouse said, smiling, 'Fear not for your hoard;
I come, my friend, to lodge, and not to board.'"

ANON

CONVENIENT PARTNERSHIP

"Damon, who plied the undertaker's trade,
With Doctor Crateas an agreement made.
What linens Damon from the dead could seize,
He to the doctor sent for bandages;
While the good doctor, here no promise-breaker,
Sent all his patients to the undertaker."

ANON

LONG AND SHORT

"Dick cannot blow his nose whene'er he pleases
His nose so long is, and his arm so short;
Nor ever cries, 'God bless me!' when he sneezes—
He cannot hear so distant a report."

ANON

THE LERNEANS

"Lerneans are bad: not some bad and some not
But all; there's not a Lernean in the lot,
Save Procles, that you could a good man call.

But Procles—is a Lernean, after all."

ANON

PERPLEXITY

"Sad Heraclitus, with thy tears return;
Life more than ever gives us cause to mourn.
Democritus, dear droll, revisit earth;
Life more than ever gives us cause for mirth.
Between you both I stand in thoughtful pother,
How I should weep with one, how laugh with
t'other."

Beside his short poems, we quote a little of the prose of

LUCIAN

A QUESTION OF PRECEDENCE

ZEUS, ÆSCULAPIUS, *and* HERACLES

"*Zeus.* Do, Æsculapius and Heracles, stop your wrangling, in which you indulge as if you were a couple of mortals; for this sort of behavior is unseemly, and quite strange to the banquets of the gods.

"*Heracles.* But, Zeus, would you have that quack drug-dealer there take his place at table above me?

"*Æsculapius.* By Zeus, yes, for I am certainly the better man.

"*Heracles.* How, you thunderstruck fellow, is it, pray, because Zeus knocked you on the head with his bolt for your unlawful actions, and because now, out of mere pity, by way of compensation, you have got a share of immortality?

"*Æsculapius.* What! have you, for your part, Heracles, altogether forgotten your having been burned to ashes on Mount Œta, that you throw in my

teeth this fire you talk of?

"*Heracles.* We have not lived at all an equal or similar sort of life—I, who am the son of Zeus, and have undergone so many and great labors, purifying human life, contending against and conquering wild beasts, and punishing insolent and injurious men; whereas you are a paltry herb-doctor and mountebank, skilful, possibly, in palming off your miserable drugs upon sick fools, but who have never given proof of any noble, manly disposition.

"*Æsculapius.* You say well, seeing I healed your burns when you came up but now half-burned, with your body all marred and destroyed by the double cause of your death—the poisoned shirt, and afterward the fire. Now I, if I have done nothing else, at least have neither worked like a slave, as you have, nor have I carded wool in Lydia, dressed in a fine purple gown; nor have I been beaten by that Omphale of yours, with her golden slipper. No, nor did I, in a mad fit, kill my children and my wife!

"*Heracles.* If you don't stop your ribald abuse of me at once, you shall very speedily learn your immortality will not avail you much; for I will take and pitch you head first out of heaven, so that not even the wonderful Pæon himself shall cure you and your broken skull.

"*Zeus.* Have done, I say, and don't disturb the harmony of the company, or I will pack both of you off from the supper-room; although, to speak the truth, Heracles, it is fair and reasonable Æsculapius should have precedence of you at table, inasmuch as he even took precedence of you in death."

—"*Dialogues of the Gods.*"

ODYSSEUS'S TRICK ON POLYPHEMUS

POSEIDON *and* POLYPHEMUS

"*Polyphemus.* Oh, father, what have I endured at the hands of the cursed stranger, who made me drunk and put out my eye, assaulting me when I was lulled to sleep!

"*Poseidon.* Who dared to do this, my poor Polyphemus?

"*Polyphemus.* In the first instance, he called himself Outis; but when he had got clear away, and was out of reach of my arrow, he said that his name was Odysseus.

"*Poseidon.* I know whom you speak of—him of Ithaca, and he was on his return voyage from Ilium. But how did he do it, for he is by no means a man of too much courage?

"*Polyphemus.* Returning from my accustomed attending of my flock, I caught a number of fellows in my cave, evidently having designs on my herds; for when I placed the stone block against the door—the rock is of huge size—and had lighted the fire by igniting the tree which I brought from the mountain, evidently they appeared to be trying to conceal themselves. Well, when I had got hold of some of them I devoured them for a pack of thieves, as was reasonable. Hereupon that most villainous rascal, whether he was Outis or Odysseus, pours out a sort of drug and gives me to drink—sweet, indeed, and of delicious smell, but most insidious, and which caused great disorder in my head; for, immediately upon my drinking, everything seemed to me to be in a whirl, and the cave itself was turned upside down, and I was no longer at all in my senses; and at last I was

dragged down into sleep. Then sharpening the bar, and igniting it besides, he blinded me as I slept, and from that time I am a blind man, at your service, Poseidon.

"*Poseidon.* How soundly you slept, my son, that you did not jump up while you were being blinded! But as for this Odysseus, then, how did he escape? For he could not—I am well assured that he could not—move away the rock from the door.

"*Polyphemus.* Yes, but it was I who removed it, that I might the better catch him as he was going out; and, sitting down close to the door, I groped for him with extended hands, letting only my sheep go out to pasture, after having given instructions to the ram what he was to do in my place.

"*Poseidon.* I perceive: they slipped away unnoticed, under the sheep. But you ought to have shouted, and called the rest of the Cyclopes to your aid.

"*Polyphemus.* I did summon them, father, and they came. But when they asked the sneaking rascal's name, and I said it was Outis, thinking I was in a mad fit, they took themselves off at once. Thus the cursed fellow tricked me with his name; and what especially vexes me is, that he actually threw my misfortune in my teeth. 'Not even,' said he, 'will your father Poseidon cure you.'

"*Poseidon.* Never mind, my child, for I will revenge myself upon him; he shall learn that, even if it is not possible for me to heal the mutilation of people's eyes, at all events the fate of voyagers is in my hands. And he is still at sea."

—*Dialogues of the Sea-Gods.*

Remembering that the dividing lines may not be too strictly drawn, we close our survey of Greek Humor with some of the fragments of Menander.

Menander, who was to the Middle or New Comedy what Aristophanes was to the Old Comedy, left only fragments. One bit, rather longer than the others, shows, with the inevitable animal element not lacking, a surprisingly modern spirit of satire.

> "Suppose some god should say: Die when thou wilt,
> Mortal, expect another life on earth;
> And for that life make choice of all creation
> What thou wilt be—dog, sheep, goat, man, or horse;
> For live again thou must; it is thy fate;
> Choose only in what form; there thou art free.
> So help me, Crato, I would fairly answer
> Let me be all things, anything but man.
> He only of all creatures feels afflictions.
> The generous horse is valued for his worth.
> And dog by merit is preferred to dog,
> And warrior cock is pampered for his courage,
> And awes the baser brood. But what is man?
> Truth, virtue, valour, how do they avail him?
> Of this world's good the first and greatest share
> Is flattery's prize. The informer takes the next.
> And barefaced knavery garbles what is left.
> I'd rather be an ass than what I am
> And see these villains lord it o'er their betters."

Other Fragments of Menander follow.

> "Be off! these shams of golden tresses spare;
> No honest woman ever dyes her hair."

> "Better to have, if good you rightly measure,
> Little with joy than much that brings not pleasure,
> Scant means with peace than piles of anxious treasure."

> "Marriage, if truth be told (of this be sure),
> An evil is—but one we must endure."

> "Wretched is he that has one son; or, rather,
> More wretched he who of more sons is father."

"Think this, on marriage when your mind is set:
If the harm is small, 'tis the chief good you'll get."

"Slave not for one who has been himself a slave;
Steers, loosed from ploughs, of toil small memory have."

"A handsome person, with perverted will,
Is a fine craft that's handled without skill."

"Let not a friend your cherished secrets hear;
Then, if you quarrel, you've no cause for fear."

"More love a mother than a father shows:
He *thinks* this is his son; she only *knows*."

"Fathers' and lovers' threats no truth have got.
They swear dire vengeance,—but they mean it not."

"Your petty tyrant's insolence I hate;
If wrong is done me, be it from the great."

"A lie has often, I have known before,
More weight than truth, and people trust it more."

"Don't talk of birth and family; all of those
Who have no natural worth on that repose.
Blue blood, grand pedigree, illustrious sires
He boasts of, who to nothing more aspires.
What use long ancestry your *pride* to call?
One must have had them to be born at all!
And those who have no pedigree to show,
Or who their grandsires were but scantly know."

"From change of homes or lack of friends at need,
And so have lost all record of their breed,
Are not more "low-born" than your men of blood;
A nigger's well-born, if he makes for good!"

The following are a few more epigrammatic bits from the writings of less noted contemporaries.

PHILIPPIDES

'Tis easy, while at meals you take your fill,
To say to sickly people, Don't be ill!

Easy to blame bad boxing at a fight,
But not so for oneself to do it right.
Action is one thing, talk another quite.

Your fortune differs as to bed and board;
Your wife—if ugly—can good fare afford.

DIPHILUS

Learn, mortal, learn thy natural ills to bear:
These, these alone thou *must* endure; but spare
A heavier load upon thyself to bring
By burdens that from thine own follies spring.

When I am asked by some rich man to dine,
I mark not if the walls and roofs are fine,
Nor if the vases such as Corinth prizes,—
But *solely* how the smoke from cooking rises.
If dense it runs up in a column straight,
With fluttering heart the dinner-hour I wait.
If, thin and scant, the smoke-puffs sideway steal,
Then I forebode a thin and scanty meal.

So plain is she, her father shuns the sight:
She holds out bread; no dog will take a bite.
So dark is she, that entering a room
Night seems to follow her, and all is gloom.

APOLLODORUS

Sweet is a life apart from toil and care;
Blessed lot, with others such repose to share!
But if with beasts and apes you have to do,
Why, *you* must play the brute and monkey too!

In youth I felt for the untimely doom
Of offspring carried to an early tomb.
But now I weep when old men's death I see;
That moved my pity; this comes home to *me*.

Seek not, my son, an old man's ways to spurn;
To these in old age you yourself will turn.
Herein we fathers lose a point you gain;
When you of "father's cruelty" complain,
"*You* once were young," we tauntingly are told.
We can't retort, "My son, you once were old."

PART II

ROME

The Roman Juvenal observed, “All Greece is a comedian.” But he could not say the same of his own country.

Though there was Roman Comedy and Roman Satire, the real and spontaneous spirit of fun was conspicuously lacking in the tastes and tendencies of the Romans.

Glory is attributed to Greece and grandeur to Rome, and it may be the “sudden glory” of humor was an integral part of the Grecian nature.

Yet we must not differentiate too carefully between the two, for the literature of Greece and Rome is so fused and intermingled that only a historian may take up the chronological tabulation.

For our purpose it is well to let the literature of the two countries merge and continue the consideration of classic comedy without over cautious regard for dates.

The Greek influence on literature of all ages will never disappear, but the Greek spirit of pure joy and gaiety will, probably never reappear.

From the beginnings of Greece, on through the existence of Rome, and down through the Mediæval Ages, the world of letters was self-contained, a single proposition. From 500 B.C. to 1300 A.D. the traditions of primal Greece and Rome continued to be the common possession of all Europe.

After that, literature became diverse and divergent

among the countries. It was independent as well as interdependent, but this condition makes an inevitable division of time.

Greece, Rome, Mediæval Times,—these are the three sections of the Middle portion of this book.

Rome, then, considered by herself, brought forth little quotable humorous literature, and what we have to choose from is ponderous and heavy.

Like Greece, the first germs of Roman comic literature may be traced to the religious festivals, which were marked by an admixture of religious rites and riotous Bacchanalian orgies, where as the crowds danced and sang and feasted, they became first hilarious and then abusive and indecent.

Like the Greeks, the Romans used grotesque masks, large enough to represent face and hair, too, the duplicates of which we see decorating our theater proscenium arches and drop curtains to this day.

It would seem these masks were universally made use of in their dramatic performances, for all caricatures and grotesque drawings show them.

In the burlesque entertainments there was a Buffoon, corresponding to our clown, called a Sannio, from the Greek word meaning a fool.

Later, undoubtedly, the Court Fool and the King's Jester were the natural successors of this character.

In all these masks the features were exaggerated and made monstrous of form and size. But one reason for the greatly enlarged mouth is that it was so shaped in order to form a sort of speaking trumpet, that the actors' voices might be heard at

greater distance.

In contrast to the grotesquerie of enlargement, there was also a branch of caricature which depicted the pigmies.

The legend of the pigmies and cranes is as ancient, at least, as Homer, and many examples are found in the buried cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii.

Comic Literature was not plentiful in the days of Early Rome. Up to the second century B.C. we can glean but the two names, Plautus and Terence.

These two, nearly contemporary, founded their plays on the comedies of Menander and a few other earlier dramatic writers.

Perhaps twenty plays are left us from the hands of these two Romans, and these, though pronounced amusing by scholars who can read the original text, are not what the modern layman deems very humorous.

A few examples of them will suffice.

PLAUTUS

MILITARY SWAGGER

PYRGOPOLINICES, ARTOTROGUS, *and* SOLDIERS

Pyrgopolinices. Take care that the luster of my shield is more bright than the rays of the sun when the sky is clear, that, when occasion comes, the battle being joined, 'mid the fierce ranks right opposite it may dazzle the eyesight of the enemy. But I must console this saber of mine, that it may not lament nor be downcast in spirits, because I have thus long been wearing it keeping holiday, though it so dreadfully longs to make havoc of the enemy. But where is Artotrogus?

Artotrogus. Here he is; he stands close by the hero, valiant and successful, and of princely form. Mars could not dare to style himself so great a warrior, nor compare his prowess with yours.

Pyrgopolinices. Him you mean whom I spared on the Gorgonidonian plains, where Bumbomachides Clytomestoridysarchides, the grandson of Neptune, was the chief commander?

Artotrogus. I remember him; him, I suppose you mean, with the golden armor, whose legions you puffed away with your breath, just as the wind blows away leaves or the reed-thatched roof.

Pyrgopolinices. That, by my troth, was really nothing at all.

Artotrogus. Faith, that really was nothing at all in comparison with other things I could mention (*aside*) which you never did. If any person ever beheld a more perjured fellow than this, or one more full in vain boasting, let him have me for himself: I'll become his slave.

Pyrgopolinices. What are you saying?

Artotrogus. Why, that I remember in what fashion you broke the foreleg of an elephant, in India, with your fist.

Pyrgopolinices. How—the foreleg?

Artotrogus. I meant to say the thigh.

Pyrgopolinices. I struck the blow without an effort.

Artotrogus. Troth, if, indeed, you had put forth your strength, your arm would have passed right through the hide, the entrails, and the frontispiece of the elephant.

Pyrgopolinices. I don't care to talk about these things just now.

Artotrogus. I' faith, 'tis really not worth while for you to tell me of it, who know your prowess well. (*Aside.*) My appetite creates all these tales. I must hear him right out with my ears, that my teeth mayn't have time to grow, and whatever lie he shall tell I must agree to it.

Pyrgopolinices. What was it I was saying?

Artotrogus. Oh, I know what you were going to say just now. I' faith 'twas bravely done; I remember its being done.

Pyrgopolinices. What was that?

Artotrogus. Whatever it was you were going to say.

Pyrgopolinices. Have you got your tablets?

Artotrogus. Are you intending to enlist some one? I have them, and a pen as well.

Pyrgopolinices. How quickly you guess my thoughts!

Artotrogus. 'Tis fit that I should study your inclinations, so that whatever you wish should first occur to me.

Pyrgopolinices. What do you remember?

Artotrogus. I do remember this: In Cilicia there were a hundred and fifty men, a hundred in Cryphiolathronia, thirty at Sardis, sixty men of Macedon, whom you slaughtered altogether in one day.

Pyrgopolinices. What is the sum total of those men?

Artotrogus. Seven thousand.

Pyrgopolinices. It must be as much; you keep the reckoning well.

Artotrogus. Yet I have none of them written down; still, I remember it was so.

Pyrgopolinices. By my troth, you have a right good memory.

Artotrogus (*aside*). 'Tis the flesh-pots give it a fillip.

Pyrgopolinices. So long as you shall do as you have done hitherto, you shall always have something to eat; I will always make you a partaker at my table.

Artotrogus. Besides, in Cappadocia you would have killed five hundred men altogether at one blow, had not your saber been blunt.

Pyrgopolinices. I let them live, because I was quite sick of fighting.

Artotrogus. Why should I tell you what all mortals know, that you, Pyrgopolinices, live upon the earth with your valor, beauty, and achievements unsurpassed? All the women are in love with you, and that not without reason, since you are so handsome. Witness those girls that pulled me by my mantle yesterday.

Pyrgopolinices. What was it they said to you?

Artotrogus. They questioned me about you. "Is Achilles here?" says one to me. "No," says I, "his brother is." Then says the other to me, "By my troth, but he is a handsome and a noble man. See how his long hair becomes him! Certainly the women are lucky who share his favors."

Pyrgopolinices. And pray, did they really say so?

Artotrogus. They both entreated me to bring you

past today, so that they might see you.

Pyrgopolinices. 'Tis really a very great plague to a man to be too handsome!

Artotrogus. They are quite a nuisance to me; they are praying, entreating, beseeching me to let them see you; sending for me for that purpose, so that I can't give my attention to your business.

Pyrgopolinices. It seems that it is time for us to go to the Forum, that I may count out their pay to those soldiers whom I lately enlisted; for King Seleucus entreated me with most earnest suit that I would raise and enlist recruits for him. To that business I have resolved to devote my attention this day.

Artotrogus. Come, let's be going, then.

Pyrgopolinices. Guards, follow me.

—*The Braggart Captain.*

THE SUSPICIOUS MISER

MEGADORUS *and* EUNOMIA

Eunomia. Tell me pray, who is she whom you would like to take for a wife?

Megadorus. I'll tell you. Do you know that Euclio, the poor old man close by?

Eunomia. I know him; not a bad sort of man.

Megadorus. I'd like his maiden daughter to be promised me in marriage. Don't make any words about it, sister; I know what you are going to say—that she's poor. This poor girl pleases me.

Eunomia. May the gods prosper it!

Megadorus. I hope the same.

Eunomia. Do you wish me to stay for anything else?

Megadorus. No; farewell.

Eunomia. And to you the same, brother.

(*Goes into the house.*)

Megadorus. I'll go to see Euclio, if he's at home. But, ah! here comes the very man toward his own house!

Enter EUCLIO

Euclio (*to himself*). I had a presentiment that I was going out to no purpose when I left my house, and therefore I went unwillingly; for neither did any one of the wardsmen come, nor yet the master of the ward, who ought to have distributed the money. Now I'm making all haste to hasten home; for, though I myself am here, my mind's at home.

Megadorus. May you be well, and ever fortunate, Euclio!

Euclio. May the gods bless you, Megadorus!

Megadorus. How are you? Are you quite well and contented?

Euclio (*aside*). It isn't for nothing when a rich man accosts a poor man courteously. Now, this fellow knows that I've got some gold; for that reason he salutes me more courteously.

Megadorus. Do you say that you are well?

Euclio. Oh, I'm not very well in the money line.

Megadorus. But if you've a contented mind, you have enough for passing a happy life with.

Euclio (*aside*). By my faith, the old woman has

made a discovery to him about the gold; it is clear she has told him. I'll cut off her tongue, and tear out her eyes, when I get home.

Megadorus. Why are you talking to yourself?

Euclio. I'm lamenting my poverty. I've a grown-up girl without a portion, and one that can't be disposed of in marriage; nor am I able to marry her to anybody.

Megadorus. Hold your peace; be of good courage, Euclio; she shall have a husband; you shall be assisted by myself. If you have need of help, command me.

Euclio (*aside*). Now he is aiming at my property, while he's making promises. He's gaping for my gold, that he may devour it; in the one hand he is carrying a stone, while he shows the bread in the other. I trust no person who, rich himself, is exceedingly courteous to a poor man; when he extends his hand with a kind air, then is he loading you with some damage. I know these polyps, who, when they've touched a thing, hold it fast.

Megadorus. Give me your attention, Euclio, for a little while; I wish to speak a few words to you about a common concern of yours and mine.

Euclio (*aside*). Alas! wo is me! My gold has been carried off from my house. Now he's wishing for this thing, I'm sure, to come to a compromise with me; but I'll look in my house first.

(*He goes toward his door.*)

Megadorus. Where are you going?

Euclio. I'll return to you directly, for there's something I must go and see to at home.

(*Goes into his house.*)

Megadorus. I verily believe that when I make mention of his daughter, for him to promise her to me, he'll suppose that I am laughing at him; for I do not know of any man poorer than he.

EUCLIO *returns from his house*

Euclio (*aside*). The gods favor me; my property's all safe. If nothing's lost, it's safe. I was dreadfully afraid before I went indoors. I was almost dead. (*Aloud.*) I'm come back to you, Megadorus, if you wish to say anything to me.

Megadorus. I thank you. I beg that as to what I shall inquire of you, you'll not hesitate to speak out boldly.

Euclio. So long, indeed, as you inquire nothing that I mayn't choose to speak out upon.

Megadorus. Tell me, of what sort of family do you consider me to be sprung?

Euclio. Of a good one.

Megadorus. What do you think about my character?

Euclio. It's a good one.

Megadorus. What of my conduct?

Euclio. Neither bad nor dishonest.

Megadorus. Do you know my age?

Euclio. I know that you are as rich in years as in pocket.

Megadorus. I surely did always take you to be a citizen without evil guile, and now I am convinced.

Euclio (*aside*). He smells the gold. (*Aloud.*) What do you want with me now?

Megadorus. Since you know me, and I know you, what sort of person you are, may it bring a blessing on myself, and you and your daughter, if I now ask your daughter as my wife. Promise me that it shall be so.

Euclio. Heyday! Megadorus, you are doing a deed that's not becoming to your usual actions, in laughing at me, a poor man, and guiltless toward yourself and toward your family. For neither in act, nor in words, have I ever deserved it of you that you should do what you are doing now.

Megadorus. I vow that I neither came to laugh at you nor am I laughing at you, nor do I think you deserving of it.

Euclio. Why, then, do you ask my daughter for yourself?

Megadorus. Because I believe that the match would be a good thing for all of us.

Euclio. It suggests itself to my mind, Megadorus, that you are a wealthy man, a man of rank, and that I am the poorest of the poor. Now, if I should give my daughter in marriage to you, it suggests itself to my mind that you are the ox, and that I am the ass; when I'm yoked to you, and when I'm not able to bear the burden equally with yourself, I, the ass, must lie down in the mire; you, the ox, would regard me no more than if I had never been born. I should then feel aggrieved, and my own class would laugh at me. In neither direction should I have a fixed stall, if there should be a divorce; the asses would tear me with their teeth, the oxen would butt at me with

their horns. This is the great risk, in my passing over from the asses to the oxen.

Megadorus. The nearer you can unite yourself in alliance with honorable people the better. Do you receive this proposal, listen to me, and promise her to me.

Euclio. But there is no marriage portion, I tell you.

Megadorus. You are to give none; so long as she comes with good principles, she is sufficiently portioned.

Euclio. I say so for this reason, that you mayn't be supposing that I have found any treasures.

Megadorus. I know that; don't enlarge upon it. Promise her to me.

Euclio. So be it. (*Starts and looks about.*) But, oh, Jupiter, am I not utterly undone?

Megadorus. What's the matter with you?

Euclio. What was it sounded just now as though it were iron?

Megadorus. I ordered them to dig up the garden at my place. (EUCLIO *runs off into his house.*) But where has this man gone? He's off, and he hasn't fully answered me; he treats me with contempt. Because he sees that I wish for his friendship, he acts after the usual manner of mankind. For if a wealthy person goes to ask a favor of a poorer one, the poor man is afraid to treat with him; through suspicion he hurts his own interest. The same person, when this opportunity is lost, afterward wishes for it too late.

Euclio (*coming out of the house, addressing servant within*). By the powers, if I don't give you up to have your tongue cut out by the roots, I order and I

authorize you to hand me over to any one you please, to be mutilated.

Megadorus. By my troth, Euclio, I perceive that you consider me a fit man for you to make sport of in my old age, for no fault of my own.

Euclio. I' faith, Megadorus, I am not doing so, nor should I desire it were I able to.

Megadorus. Well, then, do you betroth your daughter to me?

Euclio. On those terms, and with that portion which I mentioned to you.

Megadorus. Do you promise her, then?

Euclio. I do promise her.

Megadorus. May the gods bestow their blessings on it!

Euclio. May the gods do so! Observe and remember that we've agreed, that my daughter is not to bring you any portion.

Megadorus. I remember it.

Euclio. But I understand in what fashion people are wont to equivocate; an agreement is no agreement, no agreement is an agreement—just as it pleases you.

Megadorus. I'll have no misunderstanding with you. But what reason is there why we shouldn't have the nuptials this day?

Euclio. Why, by my troth, there is very good reason why we should.

Megadorus. I'll go, then, and prepare matters. Do you want me for anything more?

Euclio. All is settled. Farewell.

Megadorus (*going to the door of his house and calling out*). Hullo! Strobilus, follow me quickly to the meat-market.

(*Exit* MEGADORUS.)

Euclio. He has gone. Immortal gods, I do beseech you! How powerful is gold! I do believe, now, that he has had some intimation that I've got a treasure at home. He's gaping for that; for the sake of that has he persisted in this alliance!

—*The Pot of Gold.*

TERENCE

PARASITES AND GNATHONITES

Gnathonites (*soliloquizing*). Immortal gods! how far does one man excel another! What a difference there is between a wise person and a fool! This came strongly into my mind from the following circumstance. As I was walking along to-day I met a certain individual of this place, of my own rank and station—no mean fellow—one who, like myself, had guttled away his paternal estate. I saw him, shabby, dirty, sickly, beset with rags and years. "What's the meaning of this garb?" said I. He answered, "Wretch that I am, I've lost what I possessed; see to what I am reduced; all my acquaintances and friends have forsaken me." On this I felt contempt for him as in comparison with myself. "What!" said I, "you pitiful sluggard, have you so managed matters as to have no hope left? Have you lost your wits together with your estate? Don't you see me, who have risen from the same condition? What a complexion I have, how spruce and well dressed, what portliness of person? I have everything, yet have nothing; and although I

possess nothing, still I am in want of nothing." "But I," said he, "unhappily, can no longer find anybody who will feed me in exchange for making me the butt of his jokes." "What!" said I, "do you suppose it is managed by those means? You are quite mistaken. Once upon a time, in the early ages, there was a calling of that sort; but I will tell you a new mode of coney-catching; I, in fact, have been the first to strike into this path. There is a class of men who strive to be the first in everything, but are not; to these I pay my court. I do not offer myself to them to be laughed at, but I am the first to laugh with them, and at the same time to admire their parts. Whatever they say, I commend; if they contradict that selfsame thing, I commend again. Does any one deny? I deny; does he affirm? I affirm. In fine, I have so trained myself as to humor them in everything. This calling is now by far the most productive." While we were thus talking, we arrived at the market-place. Overjoyed, all the confectioners ran at once to meet me; fishmongers, butchers, cooks, sausage-makers, fishermen, whom, both when my fortunes were flourishing and when they were ruined, I had served, and often serve still; they complimented me, asked me to dinner, and gave me a hearty welcome. When this poor hungry wretch saw that I was in such great esteem, and that I obtained a living so easily, then the fellow began to entreat me that I would allow him to learn this method of me. So I bade him become my follower—if he could. As the disciples of the philosophers take their names from the philosophers themselves, so, too, the Parasites ought to be called Gnathonites.—*Eunuchus.*

At the beginning of the Christian Era, Roman Literature writers had begun to come into their own, and the first century A.D. saw many of the greatest

Romans of them all in the paths of Literature.

Catullus, the blithe poet who left us some hundred or so of his poems, frequently wrote lines more lyrical than chaste. Yet he himself bids us remember that if a poet's life be chaste, his lines need not necessarily be so, too.

As Herrick later put it, "Jocund his muse was, but his life was chaste."

But the self-revelations of Catullus are probably no more improper to read than those of many later and lesser poets.

CATULLUS

THE ROMAN COCKNEY

Stipends Anius even on opportunity *shtipends*,
Ambush as *hambush* still Anius used to declaim;
Then, hoped fondly the words were a marvel of articulation,
While with an *h* immense *hambush* arose from his heart.
So his mother of old, so e'en spoke Liber his uncle,
Credibly; so grandsire, grandam, alike did agree.

Syria took him away; all ears had rest for a moment;
Lightly the lips those words, slightly could utter again.
None was afraid any more of a sound so clumsy returning;
Sudden a solemn fright seized us: a message arrives.
"News from Sonia country; the sea, since Anius entered,
Changed; 'twas *Ionian* once, now 'twas *Hionian* all."

A FIXED SMILE

Egnatius, spruce owner of superb white teeth,
Smiles sweetly, smiles forever. Is the bench in view,
Where stands the pleader just prepared to rouse our tears,

Egnatius smiles sweetly. Near the pyre they mourn,
Where weeps a mother o'er the lost, the kind, one son;
Egnatius smiles sweetly—what the time, or place,
Or thing soe'er, smiles sweetly. Such a rare complaint
Is his, not handsome, scarce to please the town, say I.

So take a warning for the nonce my friend; town-bred
Were you, a Sabine hale, a pearly Tiburtine,
A frugal Umbrian body, Tuscan, huge of paunch,
A grim Samnian, black of hue, prodigious-tooth'd,
A Transpadane, my country not to pass untaxed —
In short, whoever cleanly cares to rinse foul teeth;
Yet sweetly smiling ever I would have you not:
For silly laughter, it's a silly thing indeed.

Of Horace it is difficult to say anything without saying too much.

In this Outline there is no space for discussion, informative or discursive, of the writers, it is our province but to name them and to give examples of their humor.

Horace was not a comedian but in his Satires, as well as in some of his other works, the comic muse is discernible.

HORACE

OBTRUSIVE COMPANY ON THE SACRED WAY

Along the Sacred Road I strolled one day,
Deep in some bagatelle (you know my way),
When up comes one whose name I scarcely knew:
"Ah, dearest of dear fellows, how d'ye do?"
He grasped my hand: "Well, thanks; the same to you."
Then, as he still kept walking by my side,
To cut things short, "You've no commands?" I cried.
"Nay, you should know me; I'm a man of lore."

"Sir, I'm your humble servant all the more."
All in a fret to make him let me go,
I now walk fast, now loiter and walk slow,
Now whisper to my servant, while the sweat
Ran down so fast my very feet were wet.
"Oh, had I but a temper worth the name,
Like yours, Bolanus!" inly I exclaim,
While he keeps running on at a hand-trot
About the town, the streets, I know not what.
Finding I made no answer, "Ah, I see
You're at a strait to rid yourself of me;
But 'tis no use; I'm a tenacious friend,
And mean to hold you till your journey's end."
"No need to take you such a round; I go
To visit an acquaintance you don't know.
Poor man, he's ailing at his lodging, far
Beyond the bridge, where Cæsar's gardens are."
"Oh, never mind; I've nothing else to do,
And want a walk, so I'll step on with you."
Down go my ears in donkey-fashion, straight;
You've seen them do it, when their load's too great.
"If I mistake not," he begins, "you'll find
Viscus not more, nor Varius, to your mind;
There's not a man can turn a verse so soon,
Or dance so nimbly when he hears a tune;
While, as for singing—ah, my forte is there;
Tigellius' self might envy me, I'll swear."
He paused for breath. I falteringly strike in:
"Have you a mother? Have you kith or kin
To whom your life is precious?" "Not a soul;
My line's extinct; I have interred the whole."
Oh, happy they! (so into thought I fell)
After life's endless babble they sleep well.
My turn is next: despatch me, for the weird
Has come to pass which I so long have feared,
The fatal weird a Sabine beldame sung
All in my nursery days, when life was young:
"No sword nor poison e'er shall take him off,
Nor gout, nor pleurisy, nor racking cough;
A babbling tongue shall kill him; let him fly
All talkers, as he wishes not to die."
We got to Vesta's temple, and the sun
Told us a quarter of the day was done.
It chanced he had a suit, and was bound fast
Either to make appearance or be cast.
"Step here a moment, if you love me." "Nay,
I know no law; 'twould hurt my health to stay.
And then, my call." "I'm doubting what to do,

Whether to give my lawsuit up, or you."
"Me, pray!" "I will not." On he strides again.
I follow, unresisting, in his train.
"How stand you with Mæcenas?" he began;
"He picks his friends with care—a shrewd, wise man.
In fact, I take it, one could hardly name
A head so cool in life's exciting game.
'Twould be a good deed done, if you could throw
Your servant in his way; I mean, you know.
Just to play second. In a month, I'll swear,
You'd make an end of every rival there."
"Oh, you mistake; we don't live there in league;
I know no house more sacred from intrigue;
I'm never distanced in my friend's good grace
By wealth or talent; each man finds his place."
"A miracle! If 'twere not told by you,
I scarce should credit it." "And yet 'tis true."
"Ah, well, you double my desire to rise
To special favor with a man so wise."
"You've but to wish it; 'twill be your own fault,
If, with your nerve, you win not by assault.
He can be won; that puts him on his guard,
And so the first approach is always hard."
"No fear of me, sir. A judicious bribe
Will work a wonder with the menial tribe.
Say I'm refused admittance for to-day,
I'll watch my time; I'll meet him in the way,
Escort him, dog him. In this world of ours
The path to what we want ne'er runs on flowers."
'Mid all this prating met me, as it fell,
Aristius, my good friend, who knew him well.
We stop. Inquiries and replies go round:
"Where do you hail from?" "Whither are you bound?"
There as he stood, impassive like a clod,
I pull at his limp arms, frown, wink, and nod,
To urge him to release me. With a smile
He feigns stupidity. I burn with bile.
"Something there was you said you wished to tell
To me in private." "Aye, I mind it well;
But not just now. 'Tis a Jews' fast to-day:
Affront a sect so touchy? Nay, friend, nay!"
"Faith, I've no scruples." "Ah, but I've a few!
I'm weak, you know, and do as others do.
Some other time—excuse me." Wretched me,
That ever man so black a sun should see!
Off goes the rogue, and leaves me in despair,

> Tied to the altar, with the knife in air,
> When, by rare chance, the plaintiff in the suit
> Knocks up against us: “Whither now, you brute?”
> He roars like thunder. Then to me: “You’ll stand
> My witness, sir?” “My ear’s at your command.”
> Off to the court he drags him; shouts succeed;
> A mob collects—thank Phœbus, I am freed!
>
> —*Satires.*

The humorist feels a sense of personal grievance against the Roman writers for that they wrote so wisely and so well, yet gave us so little that can be used as Humor for Humor’s sake.

Petronius wrote engagingly, but with such indecency that he can scarce be quoted for polite society.

His Trimalchio’s Dinner offers this:

AN INGENIOUS COOK

We little thought, as the saying is, that after so many dainties we had another hill to climb; for the table being uncovered to a flourish of music, three muzzled white hogs were brought in, with bells hanging on their necks. The man leading them said one was two years old, the other three, and the last full grown. For my part, I took them for acrobats, and imagined the hogs were to perform some of the surprising feats practised at the circus. But Trimalchio broke in upon our expectation by asking us, “Which of these will you have dressed for supper? Cocks and pheasants are country fare, but my cooks have pans in which a calf can be roasted whole.” And immediately commanding a cook to be called, Trimalchio, without waiting for our choice, bade him kill the largest. He then inquired of the cook how he came by him saying, “Were you bought, or were you born in my house?” “Neither,” replied the cook, “but

left you by Pansa's testament." "Then see to it," answered Trimalchio, "that this beast is prepared quickly, or I shall make you serve my footmen." ...

While our host was talking on, an overgrown hog was brought to table. We all wondered at the expedition which had been used, swearing a capon could not have been dressed in that time; and what increased our surprise was that this hog seemed larger than the boar which had been set before us. Trimalchio, after gazing steadfastly upon him, exclaimed, "What! have his entrails not been taken out? No, by Hercules, they have not! Bring in that rogue of a cook!" The cook, being dragged in before us, hung his head, excusing himself that he had forgotten. "Forgotten!" roared his master. "Strip the rascal! Strip him!" The poor man was stripped forthwith, and placed between two tormentors. We all interceded for him, alleging that such an error might occasionally happen, and therefore desired his pardon, protesting we would never speak for him if he repeated the same offense.

I thought he richly deserved his fate, and could not forbear whispering to Agamemnon, "This must certainly be a most careless rascal. How could any one forget to disembowel a hog? I would not have forgiven him, by Hercules, had he thus served up a dish for me!" Our host, resuming a pleasant look, said, "Come, now, you with the short memory, let us see if you can disembowel the animal before us." Upon which the cook, having put his garments on again, took his knife, and with a trembling hand slashed the hog on both sides of the belly, when out tumbled a load of hog's-puddings and sausages....

The dessert consisted of a blackbird pie, dried grapes, and candied nuts. There were also quinces,

stuck so full of spices that they looked like so many hedgehogs. Yet all this might have been endured, had not the next dish been so monstrous and disgusting that we would rather have perished of hunger than touched it; for, it being placed upon the table, and, as we imagined, a good fat goose, with fish and all kinds of fowl round it, Trimalchio cried, “Whatever you see here is all made out of one body!” I, being a cunning spark, took a guess at what it might really be, and, turning to Agamemnon, “I wonder,” said I, “whether all this is not made of loam? I once remember seeing such an imaginary dish in the Saturnalia at Rome.” Scarce had I ended, when Trimalchio began to praise his cook:

“There is no cleverer fellow in the world. Out of the belly he’ll make you a dish of fish; a plover out of a piece of fat bacon; a turtle out of leg of pork; and a hen out of the intestines. And therefore, in my opinion, he has a very suitable name, for we call him Dædalus. Because he is such an ingenious fellow, a friend of his brought him a present of knives from Rome, of German steel; and immediately he called for them, and, turning them over, gave us the liberty to try the edges on his cheeks.”

Just then in rushed two servants in high dispute, as if they were quarreling about a yoke, from which hung two earthen jars. And when Trimalchio had judged between them, neither of them stood to the sentence, but each fell to club law, and broke the other’s jar. Amazed at the insolence of these drunken rascals, all our eyes were fixed on their conflict, when we perceived oysters and other shell-fish to fall from the broken jars, a boy collecting them in a charger and handing them about among the guests.

Nor was the cook’s ingenuity in the least

unworthy of this extraordinary magnificence; for he brought us snails upon a silver gridiron, and with a shrill, unpleasant voice sang us a song.... We were almost pushed off our couches by the crowd of servants who rushed into the hall; and who should be seated above me but the ingenious cook, that had made a goose from a piece of pork, all reeking of pickles and kitchen slops. Not content with being seated at table, he began to act Thespis the Tragedian; and soon after he challenged his master to contend with him for the laurel wreath at the next chariot-races.

—*Trimalchio's Banquet.*

Persius, who died at twenty-eight, left us six satires. Though an imperfect imitator of Horace, his work is characterized by earnestness and a true sense of satire.

POETIC FAME

Immured within our studies, we compose;
Some, shackled meter; some, freefooted prose;
But all, bombast—stuff, which the breast may strain,
And the huge lungs puff forth with awkward pain.
'Tis done! And now the bard, elate and proud,
Prepares a grand rehearsal for the crowd.
Lo! he steps forth in birthday splendor bright,
Combed and perfumed, and robed in dazzling white,
And mounts the desk; his pliant throat he clears,
And deals, insidious, round his wanton leers;
While Rome's first nobles, by the prelude wrought,
Watch, with indecent glee, each prurient thought,
And squeal with rapture, as the luscious line
Thrills through the marrow and inflames the chine.
Vile dotard! Canst thou thus consent to please,
To pander for such itching fools as these?
Fools, whose applause must shoot beyond thy aim,
And tinge thy cheek, bronzed as it is, with shame!
But wherefore have I learned, if, thus represt,
The leaven still must swell within my breast;

If the wild fig-tree, deeply rooted there,
Must never burst its bounds and shoot in air?
  Are these the fruits of study, these of age?
Oh, times, oh, manners! Thou misjudging sage,
Is science only useful as 'tis shown,
And is thy knowledge nothing if not known?
  But, sure, 'tis pleasant, as we walk, to see
The pointed finger, hear the loud "That's he!"
On every side. And seems it, in your sight,
So poor a trifle, that whate'er we write
Is introduced to every school of note
And taught the youth of quality by rote?
Nay, more! Our nobles, gorged, and swilled with wine,
Call, o'er the banquet, for a lay divine.
Here one, on whom the princely purple glows.
Snuffles some musty legend through his nose,
Slowly distils Hypsipyle's sad fate,
And love-lorn Phyllis dying for her mate,
With what of woful else is said or sung,
And trips up every word with lisping tongue.
  The maudlin audience, from the couches round,
Hum their assent, responsive to the sound.
And are not now the poet's ashes blest?
Now lies the turf not lightly on his breast?
They pause a moment, and again the room
Rings with his praise. Now will not roses bloom,
Now, from his relics, will not violets spring,
And o'er his hallowed urn their fragrance fling?
  You laugh ('tis answered), and too freely here
Indulge that vile propensity to sneer.
Lives there, who would not at applause rejoice,
And merit, if he could the public voice?
Who would not leave posterity such rimes,
As cedar oil might keep to latest times—
Rimes which should fear no desperate grocer's hand,
Nor fly with fish and spices through the land?
  Thou, my kind monitor, whoe'er thou art,
Whom I suppose to play the opponent's part,
Know, when I write, if chance some happier strain
(And chance it needs must be) rewards my pain,
Know, I can relish praise with genuine zest;
Not mine the torpid, mine the unfeeling breast.
But that I merely toil for this acclaim,
And make these eulogies my end and aim,
I must not, cannot grant. For—sift them all,
Mark well their value, and on what they fall—

Are they not showered (to pass these trifles o'er)
On Labeo's Iliad, drunk with hellebore,
On princely love-lays driveled without thought,
And the crude trash on citron couches wrought?
You spread the table, 'tis a master-stroke,
And give the shivering guest a threadbare cloak;
Then, while his heart with gratitude dilates
At the glad vest and the delicious cates,
"Tell me," you cry, "for truth is my delight,
What says the town of me, and what I write?"
He cannot; he has neither ears nor eyes.
But shall I tell you who your bribes despise?
Bald trifler! cease at once your thriftless trade;
That mountain paunch for verse was never made.
—*Satires.*

In Martial we find a humorist after our own heart. As Homer was the father of poetry and Herodotus the father of prose, so to Martial must be ascribed the paternity of the epigram.

Epigrams, so-called, had been made before, but in Martial's work they rose to a new height, took on a new meaning.

Before Martial, epigram meant merely inscription, —any short poem that might conveniently be cut on stone.

Martial's epigrams have keen wit and sharp point, such as appeal to the mind and appreciation of the reader.

Fourteen hundred and fifty is his legacy of epigrams to us, and most of them properly short, as an epigram should be.

TO SABIDIUS

I love thee not, Sabidius. But why?
I love thee not—that's all I can reply.

PLAY'S THE THING

Aper pierced his wife's heart with an arrow:
While playing, friends say.
The wife was exceedingly wealthy:
He knows how to play.

TO CATULLUS

My name's in your will as your heir,
So you've said.
I'll continue to doubt till the day—
When it's read.

BETWEEN THE LINES

The man who sends you presents, Gaurus,—
You so rich and gray—
Remarks, if you've got sense and insight,
"Kindly pass away."

TO AULUS

Though my readers sincerely admire me,
A poet finds fault with my books.
What's the odds? When I'm giving a dinner
I'd rather please guests than the cooks.

TO POSTUMUS

When you kiss me you use only half of your mouth.
I approve. Half that half, though, will do.
Will you grant me a greater, ineffable boon?
Keep the rest of that latter half, too.

ROUNDED WITH A SLEEP

Though he bathed with us yesterday, dined with us, too,
And was quite in the pink of condition,
Ancus died this A.M.—of a dream that he'd asked
Hermocrates to be his physician.

VENDETTA

Though it's true, Theodorus, you frequently pray
For my book in a flattering tone,
No wonder I'm slow; I've good cause for delay
In my fear you'd then send me your own.

A MERE SUGGESTION

You read us your verse with your throat wrapped
in wool.
The reason we're anxious to know,
For to us it appears
That some wool in our ears
Would really be more apropos.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

I hear that Lycoris has buried
Every friend that she's had in her life.
I sincerely regret, Fabianus,
She's not introduced to my wife.

A TOTAL ABSTAINER

Though you serve richest wines,
Paulus, Rumor opines
That they poisoned your four wives, I think.
It's of course all a lie;
None believes less than I—
No, I really don't care for a drink.

MUTE MILLIONS

In the verse Cinna writes
I am slandered, it's said.
But the man doesn't write
Whose verses aren't read.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

"Quintus loves Thais." What Thais is that?
"Why, Thais the one-eyed, who—" Who?
Well, I was aware
She'd lost one of her pair,
But I didn't know he had lost two.

TO LINUS

You ask what I grow on my Sabine estate.
A reliable answer is due.
I grow on that soil—
Far from urban turmoil—
Very happy at not seeing you.

CREDE EXPERTO

Diaulus left his doctoring
To practise undertaking.
His training as a medic, though,
Has really been his making.

NUMBERS SWEET

Two of your teeth were blown out by a cough,
And a subsequent cough blew out two.
You can now cough away, Delia, all night and day
—
There's nothing a third cough can do.

MILLIONS IN IT

Just *give* Linus half what he asks as a loan;
Then console
Yourself with the thought that you'd rather lose
half
Than the whole.

TO MAMERCUS

Though you never have read us a line of your
verse,
You insist on our thinking you write.
Yes, yes, be a poet; be anything else—
If you'll only forbear to recite.

About the last of the great Latin Satirists is Juvenal, a contemporary of Martial.

His lines in translation, have a modern ring, but that may be merely because the fundamental sources and themes of wit are universal.

JUVENAL

COSMETIC DISGUISE

A woman stops at nothing when she wears
Rich emeralds round her neck, and in her ears
Pearls of enormous size; these justify
Her faults, and make all lawful in her eye.
Sure, of all ills with which mankind are cursed,

A wife who brings you money is the worst.
Behold! her face a spectacle appears,
Bloated, and foul, and plastered to the ears
With viscous paste. The husband looks askew,
And sticks his lips in this detested glue.
She meets the adulterer bathed, perfumed, and dressed,
But rots in filth at home, a very pest!
For him she breathes of nard; for him alone
She makes the sweets of Araby her own;
For him, at length, she ventures to uncase,
Scales the first layer of roughcast from her face,
And, while the maids to know her now begin,
Clears, with that precious milk, her muddy skin
For which, though exiled to the frozen main,
She'd lead a drove of asses in her train!
But tell me now: this thing, thus daubed and oiled,
Thus poulticed, plastered, baked by turns and boiled,
Thus with pomatums, ointments, lacquered o'er—
Is it a face, pray tell me, or a sore?

—*Satires.*

ON DOMINEERING WIVES

Now tell me, if thou canst not love a wife,
Made thine by every tie, and thine for life,
Why wed at all? Why waste the wine and cakes
The queasy-stomached guest at parting takes,
And the rich present, which the bridal right
Claims for the favors of the happy night,
The charger, where, triumphantly inscrolled,
The Dacian Hero shines in current gold?
If thou canst love, and thy besotted mind
Is so uxoriously to *one* inclined,
Then bow thy neck, and with submissive air
Receive the yoke thou must forever wear.
To a fond spouse a wife no mercy shows;
Though warmed with equal fires, she mocks his wos,
And triumphs in his spoils; her wayward will
Defeats his bliss, and turns his good to ill.
Naught must be given, if she opposes; naught,
If she opposes, must be sold or bought;
She tells him where to love, and where to hate;
Shuts out the ancient friend, whose beard his gate
Knew from its downy to its hoary state;
And when pimps, parasites, of all degrees,

Have power to will their fortunes as they please,
She dictates his, and impudently dares
To name his very rivals for his heirs.
"Go, crucify that slave!" "For what offense?
Who the accuser? Where the evidence?
For when the life of man is in debate,
No time can be too long, no care too great.
Hear all, weigh all with caution, I advise—"
"Thou sniveler! Is a slave a man?" she cries.
"He's innocent!" "Be't so; 'tis my command,
My will. Let that, sir, for a reason stand."
Thus the virago triumphs, thus she reigns.
Anon she sickens of her first domains,
And seeks for new; husband on husband takes,
Till of her bridal veil one rent she makes.
Again she tires, again for change she burns,
And to the bed she lately left returns,
While the fresh garlands and unfaded boughs
Yet deck the portal of her wondering spouse.
"EIGHT HUSBANDS TO HERSELF SHE GAVE"—
A rare inscription for her grave!

—*Satires.*

Apuleius was the skilful teller of a long and fantastic tale called Metamorphoses, commonly known as the Golden Ass.

But a small extract may be given.

APULEIUS

METAMORPHOSES

Fotis came running to me one day in great excitement and trepidation, and informed me that her mistress, having hitherto made no proficiency by other means in her present amour, intended to assume feathers like a bird, and so take flight to the object of her love, and that I must prepare myself with all due care for the sight of such a wonderful proceeding. And now, about the first watch of the night, she escorted me, on tiptoe and with noiseless steps, to that same upper chamber, and bade me peep through a chink in the door, which I did

accordingly.

In the first place, Pamphile divested herself of all her garments, and having unlocked a certain cabinet, took out of it several little boxes. Taking the lid off one of them, and pouring some ointment therefrom, she rubbed herself for a considerable time with her hands, smearing herself all over from the tips of her toes to the crown of her head. Then, after she had muttered a long while in a low voice over a lamp, she shook her limbs with tremulous jerks, then gently waved them to and fro, until soft feathers burst forth, strong wings displayed themselves, the nose was hardened and curved into a beak, the nails were compressed and made crooked. Thus did Pamphile become an owl. Then, uttering a querulous scream, she made trial of her powers, leaping little by little from the ground; and presently, raising herself aloft, on full wing, she flew out-of-doors. And thus was she, of her own will, changed, by her own magic arts.

But I, though not enchanted by any magic spell, still, riveted to the spot by astonishment at this performance, seemed to myself to be anything else rather than Lucius. Thus deprived of my senses, and astounded even to insanity, I was in a waking dream, and rubbed my eyes for some time to ascertain whether or not I was awake at all. At last, however, returning to consciousness of the reality of things, I took hold of the right hand of Fotis, and putting it to my eyes, “Suffer me,” said I, “I beg of you, to enjoy a great and singular proof of your affection, while the opportunity offers, and give me a little ointment from the same box. Grant this, my sweetest, I entreat you by these breasts of yours, and thus, by conferring on me an obligation that can never be repaid, bind

me to you forever as your slave. Be you my Venus, and let me stand by you a winged Cupid."

"And are you, then, sweetheart, for playing me a fox's trick, and for causing me, of my own accord, to let fall the ax upon my legs? Must I run such risk of having my Lucius torn from me by the wolves of Thessaly? Where am I to look for him when he is changed into a bird? When shall I see him again?"

"May the celestial powers," said I, "avert from me such a crime! Though borne aloft on the wings of the eagle itself, soaring through the midst of the heavens, as the trusty messenger, or joyous arm-bearer, of supreme Jove, would I not, after I had obtained this dignity of wing, still fly back every now and then to my nest? I swear to you, by that lovely little knot of hair with which you have enchanted my spirit, that I would prefer no other to my Fotis. And then, besides, I bethink me that as soon as I am rubbed with that ointment, and shall have been changed into a bird of this kind, I shall be bound to keep at a distance from all human habitations; for what a beautiful and agreeable lover will the ladies gain in an owl! Why, do we not see that these birds of night, when they have got into any house, are eagerly seized and nailed to the doors, in order that they may atone, by their torments, for the evil destiny which they portend to the family by their inauspicious flight? But one thing I had almost forgot to inquire: what must I say, or do, in order to get rid of my wings and return to my own form as Lucius?"

"Be in no anxiety," she said, "about all that matter; for my mistress has made me acquainted with everything that can again change such forms into the human shape. But do not suppose that this was done through any kind feeling toward me, but in

order that I might assist her with the requisite remedies when she returns home. Only think with what simple and trifling herbs such a mighty result is brought about: for instance, a little anise, with some leaves of laurel infused in spring water, and used as a lotion and a draft."

Having assured me of this over and over again, she stole into her mistress's chamber with the greatest trepidation, and took a little box out of the casket. Having first hugged and kissed it, and offered up a prayer that it would favor me with a prosperous flight, I hastily divested myself of all my garments, then greedily dipping my fingers into the box, and taking thence a considerable quantity of the ointment, I rubbed it all over my body and limbs. And now, flapping my arms up and down, I anxiously awaited my change into a bird. But no down, no shooting wings appeared. Instead, my hairs became thickened into bristles, and my tender skin was hardened into a hide; my hands and feet, too, no longer furnished with distinct fingers and toes, formed into massive hoofs, and a long tail projected from the extremity of my spine. My face was now enormous, my mouth wide, my nostrils gaping, and my lips hanging down. In like manner my ears grew hairy and of immoderate length, and I found in every respect I had become enlarged. Thus, hopelessly surveying all parts of my body, I beheld myself changed—not into a bird, but an ass.

I wished to upbraid Fotis for the deed she had done; but, now deprived both of the gesture and voice of man, I could only expostulate with her silently with my under-lip hanging down, and looking sidewise at her with tearful eyes. As for her, as soon as she beheld me thus changed she beat her

face with her hands, and cried aloud, “Wretch that I am, I am undone! In my haste and flurry I mistook one box for the other, deceived by their similarity. It is fortunate, however, that a remedy for this transformation is easily to be obtained; for, by only chewing roses, you will put off the form of an ass, and in an instant will become my Lucius once again. I only wish that I had prepared as usual some garlands of roses for us last evening; for then you would not have had to suffer the delay even of a single night. But at the break of dawn the remedy shall be provided for you.”

Thus did she lament; and as for me, though I was a perfect ass, and instead of Lucius, a beast of burden, I still retained human sense. Long and deeply, in fact, did I consider with myself whether I ought not to bite and kick that most wicked woman to death. However, better thoughts recalled me from such rash designs, lest, by inflicting on Fotis the punishment of death, I should at once put an end to all chances of efficient assistance. So, bending my head low, and shaking my ears, I silently swallowed my wrongs for a time, and submitting to my most dreadful misfortune, I betook myself to the stable to the good horse which had carried me so well, and there I found another ass also, which belonged to my former host, Milo. Now it occurred to me that, if there are in dumb animals any silent and natural ties of sympathy, this horse of mine, being influenced by a certain feeling of recognition and compassion, would afford me room for a lodging and the rights of hospitality. But, oh, Jupiter Hospitalis, and all you the guardian divinities of Faith! this very excellent nag of mine and the ass put their heads together and immediately plotted schemes for my destruction; and as soon as they beheld me approaching the manger,

laying back their ears and quite frantic with rage, they furiously attacked me with their heels, fearing I had design upon their food. Consequently, I was driven away into the farthest corner from that very barley which the evening before I had placed, with my own hands, before that most grateful servant of mine.

Thus harshly treated and sent into banishment, I betook myself to a corner of the stable. And while I reflected on the insolence of my companions, and formed plans of vengeance against the perfidious steed, for the next day, when I should have become Lucius once more by the aid of the roses, I beheld against the central square pillar which supported the beams of the stable, a statue of the goddess Hippona, standing within a shrine, and nicely adorned with garlands of roses, and those, too, recently gathered. Inspired with hope, the moment I espied the salutary remedy I boldly mounted as far as ever my forelegs could stretch; and then, with neck at full length, and extending my lips as much as I possibly could, I endeavored to catch hold of the garlands. But by a most unlucky chance, just as I was endeavoring to accomplish this, my servant lad, who had the constant charge of my horse, suddenly espied me, sprang to his feet in a great rage, and exclaimed, “How long are we to put up with this vile hack, which but a few moments ago was for making an attack upon the food of the cattle, and is now doing the same even to the statues of the gods? But if I don’t this very instant cause this sacrilegious beast to be both sore and crippled”—and searching for something with which to strike me, he stumbled upon a bundle of sticks that lay there, and, picking out a knotted cudgel, the largest he could find among them all, he did not cease to belabor my poor sides,

until a loud thumping and banging at the outer gates, and an uproar of the neighbors shouting "Thieves!" struck him with terror, and he took to his heels.

—*The Golden Ass.*

VICISSITUDES OF A DONKEY

When the keeper of the horses had taken me to the country, I found there none of the pleasure or the liberty I expected; for his wife, an avaricious, bad woman, immediately yoked me to the mill, and frequently striking me with a green stick, prepared bread for herself and her family at the expense of my hide. And not content to make me drudge for her own food only, she also ground corn for her neighbors, and so made money by my toil. Nor, after all my weary labors, did she even afford me the food which had been ordered for me; for she sold my barley to the neighboring husbandmen, after it had been bruised and ground in that very mill by my own roundabout drudgery; but to me, who had worked during the whole of the day at that laborious machine, she only gave, toward evening, some dirty, unsifted, and very gritty bran. I was brought low enough by these miseries; but cruel fortune exposed me to fresh torments, in order, I suppose, that I might boast of my brave deeds, both in peace and war, as the saying is. For that excellent equerry, complying, rather late, indeed, with his master's orders, for a short time permitted me to associate with the herds of horses.

At length a free ass, I capered for joy, and softly ambling up to the mares, chose out such as I thought would be the fittest for my concubines. But here my joyful hopes gave place to extreme danger. For the

stallions, who were terribly strong creatures, more than a match for any ass, regarding me with suspicion, furiously pursued me as their rival, without respect for the laws of hospitable Jupiter. One of them, with his head and neck and ample chest aloft, struck at me like a pugilist with his forefeet; another, turning his brawny back, let fly at me with his hind feet; and another, with a vicious neigh, his ears thrown back, and showing his white teeth, sharp as spears, bit me all over. It was like what I have read in history of the King of Thrace, who exposed his unhappy guests to be lacerated and devoured by wild horses; for so sparing was that powerful tyrant of his barley, that he appeased the hunger of his voracious horses by casting human bodies to them for food. In fact, I was so worried and distracted by the continual attacks of the horses, that I wished myself back again at the mill-round.

Fortune, however, would not be satisfied with my torments, and soon after visited me with another calamity; for I was employed to bring home wood from a mountain, and a boy, the most villainous of all boys, was appointed to drive me. It was not only that I was wearied by toiling up and down the steep and lofty mountain, nor that I wore away my hoofs by running on sharp stones, but I was cudgeled without end, so that all my bones ached to the very marrow. Moreover, by continually striking me on the off-haunch, and always in the same place, till the skin was broken, he occasioned a great ulcerous cavity, gaping like a trench or a window; yet he never ceased to hit me on the raw. He likewise laid such a load of wood on my back that you might have thought it was a burden prepared for an elephant, and not for a donkey. And whenever the ill-balanced load inclined to one side, instead of taking away

some of the fagots from the heavier side, and thus easing me by somewhat lightening, or at least equalizing the pressure, he always remedied the inequality of the weight by the addition of stones. Nor yet, after so many miseries which I had endured, was he content with the immoderate weight of my burden; but when it happened that we had to pass over a river, he would leap on my back in order to keep his feet dry, as if his weight was but a trifling addition to the heavy mass. And if by any accident I happened to fall, through the weight of my burden and the slipperiness of the muddy bank, instead of giving me a helping hand, as he ought to have done, and pulling me up by the head-stall, or by my tail, or removing a part of my load, till at least I had got up again, this paragon of ass-drivers gave me no help at all, however weary I might be, but beginning from my head, or rather from my ears, he thrashed all the hair off my hide with a huge stick.

Another piece of cruelty he practised on me was this: he twisted together a bundle of the sharpest and most venomous thorns, and tied them to my tail as a pendulous torment; so that, jerking against me when I walked, they pricked and stabbed me intolerably. Hence, I was in a sore dilemma; for when I ran away from him, to escape his unmerciful drubbings, I was hurt by the more vehement pricking of the thorns; and if I stood still for a short time, in order to avoid that pain, I was compelled by blows to go on. In fact, the rascally boy seemed to think of nothing else than how he might be the death of me by some means or other; and that he sometimes threatened with oaths to accomplish. And, indeed, there happened a thing by which his detestable malice was stimulated to more baneful efforts. On a certain day, when his excessive insolence had overcome my patience, I

lifted up my powerful heels against him; and for this he retaliated by the following atrocity: he brought me into the road heavily laden with a bundle of coarse flax, securely bound together with cords, and placed in the middle of the burden a burning coal, which he had stolen from the neighboring village. Presently the fire spread through the slender fibers, flames burst forth, and I was ablaze all over. There appeared no refuge from immediate destruction, no hope of safety, and such a conflagration did not admit of delay or afford time for deliberation. Fortune, however, shone upon me in these cruel circumstances—perhaps for the purpose of reserving me for future dangers, but, at all events, liberating me from present and decreed death. By chance perceiving a neighboring pool muddy with the rain of the preceding day, I threw myself headlong into it; and the flame being immediately extinguished, I came out, lightened of my burden and liberated from destruction. But that audacious young rascal cast the blame of this most wicked deed of his on me, and affirmed to all the shepherds that as I was passing near the neighbors' fires, I stumbled on purpose, and threw my load into the blaze. And he added, laughing at me, "How long shall we waste food on this fiery monster?"

—*The Golden Ass.*

PART III

MEDIÆVAL AGES

SHAKESPEARE'S line,

> "In the vast deep and middle of the night,"

gives no stronger or more absolute effect of darkness and blankness than the state of humorous literature during the vast deep and middle of the Mediæval Ages.

It is not possible to catalogue it with reference to time or place, for the mass of it came from the mouths of Tale-tellers or Song-singers, supplemented by the pencils or chisels of the caricaturists.

In the East, Folk Tales were abundant and they were brought to Europe as the wind scatters the seeds of vegetation.

Fables, Fairy Tales, Mother Goose Jingles, Collections of Anecdotes, all hark back to these jesting stories of the ancient Orientals.

Probably the oldest and most important link in the tracing of Indo-European Folk Lore is found in the Fables of Pilpay, or Bidpai.

This is the Arabic translation of the Pahlavi translation of the Sanscrit original of the Panchatantra.

The scope of the work is advice for the conduct of princes, offered in the guise of beast fables, and perhaps containing much of the material commonly

attributed to Æsop.

Little or nothing is known of Pilpay, and his era has been variously placed at different dates between 100 B.C. and 300 B.C.

Others, indeed, declare that Pilpay was not an individual but the name is that of a bidbah, the court scholar of an Indian prince.

The fables, as may be seen from the following selections, inculcate the moral teachings by means of stories about animals, to whom are attributed the thoughts and impulses of men.

Kalidasa, called the greatest poet and dramatist of India, is also of uncertain origin and birth date. He probably lived early in the Christian Era, and his writings, though not strictly humorous are instinct with the spirit of satire.

KALIDASA

HUNTING WITH A KING

MATHAVYA, *a Jester*

Mathavya. Heigh-ho, what an unfortunate fellow I am, worn to a shadow by my royal friend's sporting propensities! "Here's a deer!" "There goes a boar!" "Yonder's a tiger!" This is the constant subject of his remarks, while we tramp about in the heat of the day from jungle to jungle on paths where the trees give us no shade. If we are thirsty, we can get nothing to drink but some dirty water from a mountain stream full of dry leaves, tasting vilely bitter. If we are hungry, we are obliged to eat tough, flavorless game, and have to gulp it down at odd times as best we can. Even at night I have no peace. Sleeping is out of the question, with my bones all aching from trotting after my sporting friend; or, if I do contrive to doze, I

am awakened at early dawn by the horrible din of a lot of rascally beaters and huntsmen, who must needs begin their deafening operations before sunrise. But these are not my only troubles; for here's a fresh grievance, like a new boil rising upon an old one: Yesterday, while some of us were lagging behind, my royal friend went into a hermit's enclosure after a deer, and there—worse luck—he caught sight of a beautiful girl called Sakuntala, the hermit's daughter. From that moment not a single thought did he have of returning to town; and all night long not a wink of sleep did he get for his thoughts of the girl. But see—here he comes! I will pretend to stand in the easiest attitude for resting my bruised and crippled limbs.

Enter KING DUSHYANTA

Mathavya. Ah, my friend, my hands cannot move to greet you with the accustomed salutation! I can do no more than command my lips to wish your Majesty success.

King. Why, what has paralyzed your limbs?

Mathavya. You might as well ask me how it is my eye waters after you have poked your finger into it!

King. I don't understand what you mean. Explain yourself.

Mathavya. My dear friend, is that straight reed you see yonder bent crooked by its own act, or by the force of the current?

King. The current of the river is the cause, I suppose.

Mathavya. Yes, just as you are the cause of my crippled limbs.

King. How so?

Mathavya. Here you are, living the life of a savage in a desolate, forlorn region, while the government of the country is taking care of itself. And poor I am no longer master of my own legs, but have to follow you about day after day in your hunting for wild beasts, till all my bones ache and get out of joint. Please, my dear friend, do let us have one day's rest! —"*Sakuntala.*"

Unknown Author

THE CREATION OF WOMAN

In the beginning, when Twashtri came to the creation of women, he found that he had exhausted his materials in the making of man, and that no solid elements were left. In this dilemma, after profound meditation, he did as follows:

He took the rotundity of the moon, and the curves of creepers and the clinging of tendrils, and the trembling of grass, and the slenderness of the reed, and the bloom of flowers, and the lightness of leaves, and the tapering of the elephant's trunk, and the glances of deer, and the joyous gaiety of sunbeams, and the weeping of clouds, and the fickleness of the winds, and the timidity of the hare, and the vanity of the peacock, and the softness of the parrot's bosom, and the hardness of adamant, and the cruelty of the tiger, and the hot glow of fire, and the coldness of snow, and the chattering of jays, and the cooing of the dove, and the hypocrisy of the crane, and the fidelity of the drake. Compounding all these together, he made woman, and gave her to man.

But after a week man came to him, and said:

"Lord, this creature that you have given me makes

my life miserable. She chatters incessantly, and teases me beyond endurance, never leaving me alone. She requires attention every moment, takes up all my time, weeps about nothing, and is always idle. So I have come to give her back again, as I cannot live with her."

Then Twashtri said, "Very well," and took her back.

After another week man came to him again, saying:

"Lord, I find that my life is lonely since I surrendered that creature. I remember how she used to dance and sing to me, and look at me out of the corner of her eye, and play with me, and cling to me. Her laughter was music; she was beautiful to look at, and soft to touch. Pray give her back to me again."

And Twashtri said, "Very well," and returned woman to man.

But after only three days had passed, man appeared once more before the Creator, to whom he said:

"Lord, I know not how it is, but, after all, I have come to the conclusion that she is more trouble than pleasure to me. Therefore I beg that you take her back again."

Twashtri, however, replied:

"Out upon you! Be off! I will have no more of this. You must manage how you can."

Then quoth man:

"But I cannot live with her!"

To which Twashtri answered:

"Neither could you live without her." And he turned his back on man, and went on with his work.

Then said man:

"Alas, what is to be done? For I cannot live either with or without her!"—*The Churning of the Ocean of Time* (*Sansara-sagara-manthanam*).

The Talmud is far from a humorous work, but it embodies many bits of wise wit, and is the original source of many present day proverbs.

In its twelve folio volumes it contains the work of the ancient Jews for nearly a thousand years, and among its fine parables and interesting legends gleams of rare wit frequently occur.

EXTRACTS FROM THE TALMUD

The forest trees once asked the fruit trees: "Why is the rustling of your leaves not heard in the distance?" The fruit trees replied: "We can dispense with the rustling to manifest our presence, our fruits testify for us." The fruit trees then inquired of the forest trees: "Why do your leaves rustle almost continually?" "We are forced to call the attention of man to our existence."

Too many captains sink the ship.

Birds of a feather flock together; and so with men —like to like.

He laid his money on the horns of a deer.

Keep partners with him whom the hour favors.

Attend no auctions if thou hast no money.

Poverty comes from God, but not dirt.

Ignorance and conceit go hand in hand.

Better eat onions all thy life than dine upon geese and chickens once and then long in vain for more ever after.

Go to sleep without supper, but rise without debt.

Do not live near a pious fool.

If thy friends agree in calling thee an ass, go and get a halter around thee.

Love your wife truly and faithfully, and do not compel her to hard work.

When our conjugal love was strong, the width of the threshold offered sufficient accommodation for both of us; but now that it has cooled down, a couch sixty yards wide is too narrow.

Man is generally led the way which he is inclined to go.

If the thief has no opportunity, he thinks himself honorable.

Were it not for the existence of passions, no one would build a house, marry a wife, beget children, or do any work.

What should man do in order to live? Deaden his passions. What should man do in order to die? Give himself entirely to life.

He who hardens his heart with pride softens his brain with the same.

Do not reveal thy secret to the apes.

> Keep shut the doors of thy mouth
> Even from the wife of thy bosom.

Use thy best vase to-day, for to-morrow it may, perchance, be broken.

The world is only saved by the breath of the school-children.

“Repeat,” “repeat,” that is the best medicine for memory.

A woman schemes while plying the spindle.

Alas! for one thing that goes and never returns. What is it? Youth.

Rab Safra had a jewel for which he asked the price of ten pieces of gold. Several dealers saw the jewel and offered five gold pieces. Rab Safra declined, and the merchants left him. After a second consideration, he, however, resolved upon selling the jewel for five pieces. The next day, just as Rab Safra was at prayers, the merchants unexpectedly returned: “Sir,” said they to him, “we come to you again to do business after all. Do you wish to part with the jewel for the price we offered you?” But Rab Safra made no reply. “Well, well; be not angered; we will add another two pieces.” Rab Safra still remained silent. “Well, then, be it as you say; we will give you ten pieces, the price you asked.” By this time Rab Safra had ended his prayer, and said: “Sirs, I was at prayers, and could not hear you. As for the jewel, I have already resolved upon selling it at the price you offered me yesterday. If you then pay me five pieces of gold, I shall be satisfied.”

Chief of the Arabian collections of tales is, of course, The Arabian Nights’ Entertainment, or The Thousand And One Nights.

Many of these tales are of very ancient origin, others have been added as the centuries went by.

Though the stories show their Persian, Indian and Arabian origin, the collection as it stands at present

was compiled in Egypt not more than five or six centuries ago.

As is well known, the stories were told night after night, by Scheherazade, to preserve her life so long as the king's interest might be held. Most of the tales show little or no humor, many are long and wearisome, many more too broad to quote, but several are given that may be considered as representative of Oriental wit.

THE SIMPLETON AND THE SHARPER

A certain simple fellow was once going along, haling his ass after him by the halter, when a couple of sharpers saw him and one said to his fellow, "I will take that ass from yonder man." "How wilt thou do that?" asked the other. "Follow me and I will show thee," replied the first. So he went up to the ass and loosing it from the halter, gave the beast to his fellow; then clapped the halter on his own head and followed the simpleton, till he knew that the other had got clean off with the ass when he stood still. The man pulled at the halter, but the thief stirred not; so he turned and seeing the halter on a man's neck, said to him, "Who art thou?" Quoth the sharper, "I am thine ass and my story is a strange one. Know that I have a pious old mother and came in to her one day, drunk; and she said to me, "O my son, repent to God the Most High of these thy transgressions." But I took the cudgel and beat her, whereupon she cursed me and God the Most High changed me into an ass and caused me fall into thy hands, where I have remained till now. However, today, my mother called me to mind and her heart relented towards me; so she prayed for me, and God restored me to my former shape of a man." "There is

no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!" cried the simpleton. "O my brother, I conjure thee by Allah acquit me of what I have done with thee in the way of riding and so forth."

Then he let the sharper go and returned home, drunken with chagrin and concern. His wife asked him, "What ails thee and where is the ass?" And he answered, "Thou knowest not what was this ass; but I will tell thee." So he told her the story, and she exclaimed, "Woe worth us for God the Most High! How could we have used a man as a beast of burden, all this while?" And she gave alms and asked pardon of God. Then the man abode awhile at home, idle, till she said to him, "How long wilt thou sit at home, idle? Go to the market and buy us an ass and do thy business with it." Accordingly, he went to the market and stopping by the ass-stand, saw his own ass for sale. So he went up to it and clapping his mouth to its ear, said to it, "Out on thee, thou good-for-nought! Doubtless thou hast been getting drunk again and beating thy mother! But, by Allah, I will never buy thee more!" And he left it and went away.

THE THIEF TURNED MERCHANT AND THE OTHER THIEF

There was once a thief who repented to God the Most High and making good his repentance, opened himself a shop for the sale of stuffs, where he continued to trade awhile. One day, he locked his shop and went home; and in the night there came to the bazaar a cunning thief disguised in the habit of the merchant, and pulling out keys from his sleeve, said to the watchman of the market, "Light me this candle." So the watchman took the candle and went to get a light, whilst the thief opened the shop and lit another candle he had with him. When the

watchman came back, he found him seated in the shop, looking over the account books and reckoning with his fingers; nor did he leave to do thus till point of day, when he said to the man, “Fetch me a camel-driver and his camel, to carry some goods for me.” So the man fetched him a camel, and the thief took four bales of stuffs and gave them to the camel-driver, who loaded them on his beast. Then he gave the watchman two dirhems and went away after the camel-driver, the watchman the while believing him to be the owner of the shop.

Next morning, the merchant came and the watchman greeted him with blessings, because of the two dirhems, much to the surprise of the former, who knew not what he meant. When he opened his shop, he saw the droppings of the wax and the account-book lying on the floor, and looking round, found four bales of stuffs missing. So he asked the watchman what had happened and he told him what had passed in the night, whereupon the merchant bade him fetch the camel-driver and said to the latter, “Whither didst thou carry the stuffs?” “To such a wharf,” answered the driver; “and I stowed them on board such a vessel.” “Come with me thither,” said the merchant. So the camel-driver carried him to the wharf and showed him the barque and her owner. Quoth the merchant to the latter, “Whither didst thou carry the merchant and the stuff?” “To such a place,” answered the master, “where he fetched a camel-driver and setting the bales on the camel, went I know not whither.” “Fetch me the camel-driver,” said the merchant; so he fetched him and the merchant said to him, “Whither didst thou carry the bales of stuffs from the ship?” “To such a khan,” answered he. “Come thither with me and show it to me,” said the merchant.

So the camel-driver went with him to a khan at a distance from the shore, where he had set down the stuffs, and showed him the mock merchant's magazine, which he opened and found therein his four bales untouched and unopened. The thief had laid his mantle over them; so the merchant took the bales and the cloak and delivered them to the camel-driver, who laid them on his camel; after which the merchant locked the magazine and went away with the camel-driver. On the way, he met the thief who followed him, till he had shipped the bales, when he said to him "O my brother (God have thee in His keeping!), thou hast recovered thy goods, and nought of them is lost; so give me back my cloak." The merchant laughed and giving him back his cloak, let him go unhindered.

THE IGNORANT MAN WHO SET UP FOR A SCHOOLMASTER

There was once, among the hangers-on of the collegiate mosque, a man who knew not how to read and write and got his bread by gulling the folk. One day, he bethought him to open a school and teach children; so he got him tablets and written scrolls and hung them up in a conspicuous place. Then he enlarged his turban and sat down at the door of the school. The people, who passed by and saw his turban and the tablets and scrolls, thought he must be a very learned doctor; so they brought him their children; and he would say to this, "Write," and to that, "Read"; and thus they taught one another.

One day, as he sat, as of wont, at the door of the school, he saw a woman coming up, with a letter in her hand, and said to himself, "This woman doubtless seeks me, that I may read her the letter she has in her hand. How shall I do with her seeing I

cannot read writing?" And he would fain have gone down and fled from her; but, before he could do this, she overtook him and said to him, "Whither away?" Quoth he, "I purpose to pray the noontide-prayer and return." "Noon is yet distant," said she; "so read me this letter." He took the letter and turning it upside down, fell to looking at it, now shaking his head and anon knitting his eyebrows and showing concern. Now the letter came from the woman's husband, who was absent; and when she saw the schoolmaster do thus, she said, "Doubtless my husband is dead, and this learned man is ashamed to tell me so." So she said to him, "O my lord, if he be dead, tell me." But he shook his head and held his peace. Then said she, "Shall I tear my clothes?" "Tear," answered he. "Shall I buffet my face," asked she; and he said, "Buffet." So she took the letter from his hand and returning home, fell a-weeping, she and her children.

One of her neighbours heard her weeping and asking what ailed her, was answered, "She hath gotten a letter, telling her that her husband is dead." Quoth the man, "This is a lying saying; for I had a letter from him but yesterday, advising me that he is in good health and case and will be with her after ten days." So he rose forthright and going in to her, said, "Where is the letter thou hast received?" She brought it to him, and he took it and read it; and it ran as follows, after the usual salutation, "I am well and in good health and case and will be with thee after ten days. Meanwhile, I send thee a quilt and an extinguisher."[1] So she took the letter and returning with it to the schoolmaster, said to him, "What moved thee to deal thus with me?" And she repeated to him what her neighbour had told her of his having sent her a quilt and an extinguisher. "Thou art in the right," answered he. "But excuse me, good woman;

for I was, at the time, troubled and absent-minded and seeing the extinguisher wrapped in the quilt, thought that he was dead and they had shrouded him." The woman, not smoking the cheat, said, "Thou art excused," and taking the letter, went away.

THE HUSBAND AND THE PARROT

There lived once a good man who had a beautiful wife, of whom he was so passionately fond that he could scarcely bear to have her out of his sight. One day, when some particular business obliged him to leave her, he went to a place where they sold all sorts of birds. Here he purchased a parrot, which was not only highly accomplished in the art of talking, but also possessed the rare gift of telling everything that was done in its presence. The husband took it home in a cage to his wife, and begged of her to keep it in her chamber, and take great care of it during his absence. After this he set out on his journey.

On his return he did not fail to interrogate the parrot on what had passed while he was away; and the bird very expertly related a few circumstances which occasioned the husband to reprimand his wife. She supposed that some of her slaves had betrayed her, but they all assured her they were faithful, and agreed in charging the parrot with the crime. Desirous of being convinced of the truth of this matter, the wife devised a method of quieting the suspicions of her husband, and at the same time of revenging herself on the parrot, if he were the culprit. The next time the husband was absent she ordered one of her slaves during the night to turn a handmill under the bird's cage, another to throw water over it like rain, and a third to wave a looking-

glass before the parrot by the light of a candle. The slaves were employed the greater part of the night in doing what their mistress had ordered them, and succeeded to her satisfaction.

The following day, when the husband returned, he again applied to the parrot to be informed of what had taken place. The bird replied, “My dear master, the lightning, the thunder, and the rain have so disturbed me the whole night, that, I cannot tell you how much I have suffered.”

The husband, who knew there had been no storm that night, became convinced that the parrot did not always relate facts, and that having told an untruth in this particular, he had also deceived him with respect to his wife. Being therefore extremely enraged with it, he took the bird out of the cage and, dashing it on the floor, killed it. He, however, afterward learned from his neighbors that the poor parrot had told no falsehood in reference to his wife’s conduct, which made him repent of having destroyed it.

BAKBARAH’S VISIT TO THE HAREM

Bakbarah the Toothless, my second brother, walking one day through the city, met an old woman in a retired street. She thus accosted him: “I have,” said she, “a word to say to you, if you will stay a moment.” He immediately stopped, and asked her what she wished. “If you have time to go with me,” she replied, “I will take you to a most magnificent palace, where you shall see a lady more beautiful than the day. She will receive you with a great deal of pleasure, and will treat you with a collation and excellent wine. I have no occasion, I believe, to say any more.” “But is what you tell me,” replied my

brother, “true?” “I am not given to lying,” replied the old woman; “I propose nothing to you but what is the fact. You must, however, pay attention to what I require of you. You must be prudent, speak little, and must comply with everything.”

Bakbarah having agreed to the conditions, she walked on before, and he followed her. They arrived at the gate of a large palace, where there were a great number of officers and servants. Some of them wished to stop my brother, but the old woman no sooner spoke to them, than they let him pass. She then turned to my brother, and said, “Remember that the young lady to whose house I have brought you is fond of mildness and modesty; nor does she like being contradicted. If you satisfy her in this, there is no doubt you will obtain whatever you wish.” Bakbarah thanked her for this advice, and promised to profit by it.

She then took him into a very beautiful apartment, which formed part of a square building. It corresponded with the magnificence of the palace; there was a gallery all round it, and in the midst of it a very fine garden. The old woman made him sit down on a sofa that was handsomely furnished, and desired him to wait there a moment, till she went to inform the young lady of his arrival.

As my brother had never before been in so superb a place, he immediately began to observe all the beautiful things that were in sight; and judging of his good fortune by the magnificence he beheld, he could hardly contain his joy. He almost immediately heard a great noise, which came from a long troop of slaves who were enjoying themselves, and came toward him, bursting out at the same time into violent fits of laughter. In the midst of them he

perceived a young lady of most extraordinary beauty, whom he easily discovered to be their mistress, by the attention they paid her. Bakbarah, who expected merely a private conversation with the lady, was very much surprised at the arrival of so large a company. In the meantime the slaves, putting on a serious air, approached him; and when the young lady was near the sofa, my brother, who had risen up, made a most profound reverence. She took the seat of honor, and then, having requested him to resume his, she said to him, in a smiling manner, “I am delighted to see you, and wish you everything you can yourself desire.” “Madam,” replied Bakbarah, “I cannot wish a greater honor than that of appearing before you.” “You seem to me,” she replied, “of so good-humored a disposition, that we shall pass our time very agreeably together.”

She immediately ordered a collation to be served up, and they covered the table with baskets of various fruits and sweetmeats. She then sat down at the table along with my brother and the slaves. As it happened that he was placed directly opposite to her, she observed, as soon as he opened his mouth to eat, he had no teeth; she remarked this to her slaves, and they all laughed immoderately at it. Bakbarah, who from time to time raised his head to look at the lady and saw that she was laughing, imagined it was from the pleasure she felt at being in his company, and flattered himself, therefore, that she would soon order the slaves to retire, and that he should enjoy her conversation in private. The lady easily guessed his thoughts, and took a pleasure in continuing a delusion which seemed so agreeable to him: she said a thousand soft, tender things, and presented the best of everything to him with her own hand.

When the collation was finished, she arose from table; ten slaves instantly took some musical instruments and began to play and sing, the others to dance. In order to make himself the more agreeable, my brother also began dancing, and the young lady herself partook of the amusement. After they had danced for some time, they all sat down to take breath. The lady ordered him to bring her a glass of wine, then cast a smile at my brother, to intimate that she was going to drink to his health. He instantly rose up, and stood while she drank. As soon as she had finished, instead of returning the glass, she had it filled again, and presented it to my brother, that he might pledge her.

Bakbarah took the glass, and in receiving it from the young lady he kissed her hand, then drank to her, standing the whole time, to show his gratitude for the favor she had done him. After this the young lady made him sit down by her side, and began to give him signs of affection. She put her arm round his neck, and frequently gave him gentle pats with her hand. Delighted with these favors, he thought himself the happiest man in the world; he also was tempted to begin to play in the same manner with this charming creature, but he durst not take this liberty before the slaves, who had their eyes upon him, and who continued to laugh at this trifling. The young lady still kept giving him such gentle taps, till at last she began to apply them so forcibly that he grew angry at it. He reddened, and got up to sit farther from so rude a playfellow. At this moment the old woman, who had brought my brother there, looked at him in such a way as to make him understand that he was wrong, and had forgotten the advice she had before given him. He acknowledged his fault, and, to repair it, he again approached the

young lady, pretending that he had not gone to a distance through anger. She then took hold of him by the arm, and drew him toward her, making him again sit down close by her, and continuing to bestow a thousand pretended caresses on him. Her slaves, whose only aim was to divert her, began to take a part in the sport. One of them gave poor Bakbarah a fillip on the nose with all her strength, another pulled his ears almost off, while the rest kept giving him slaps, which passed the limits of raillery and fun.

My brother bore all this with the most exemplary patience; he even affected an air of gaiety, and looked at the old woman with a forced smile. “You were right,” said he, “when you said that I should find a very fine, agreeable, and charming young lady. How much am I obliged to you for it!” “Oh, this is nothing yet,” replied the old woman; “let her alone, and you will see very different things by and by.” The young lady then spoke. “You are a fine man,” said she to my brother, “and I am delighted at finding in you so much kindness and complaisance toward all my little fooleries, and that you possess a disposition so conformable to mine.” “Madam,” replied Bakbarah, ravished with this speech, “I am no longer myself, but am entirely at your disposal; you have full power to do with me as you please.” “You afford me the greatest delight,” added the lady, “by showing so much submission to my inclination. I am perfectly satisfied with you, and I wish that you should be equally so with me. Bring,” cried she to the attendants, “perfumes and rose-water!” At these words two slaves went out and instantly returned, one with a silver vase, in which there was exquisite aloe-wood, with which she perfumed him, and the other with rose-water, which she sprinkled over his

face and hands. My brother could not contain himself for joy at seeing himself so handsomely and honorably treated.

When this ceremony was finished, the young lady commanded the slaves who had before sung and played to recommence their concert. They obeyed; and while this was going on, the lady called another slave, and ordered her to take my brother with her saying, “You know what to do; and when you have finished, return with him to me.” Bakbarah, who heard this order given, immediately got up, and going toward the old woman, who had also risen to accompany the slave, he requested her to tell him what they wished him to do. “Our mistress,” replied she, in a whisper, “is extremely curious, and she wishes to see how you would look disguised as a female; this slave, therefore, has orders to take you with her, to paint your eyebrows, shave your mustachios, and dress you like a woman.” “You may paint my eyebrows,” said my brother, “as much as you please; to that I readily agree, because I can wash them again; but as to shaving me, that, mind you, I will by no means suffer. How do you think I dare appear without my mustachios?” “Take care,” answered the woman, “how you oppose anything that is required of you. You will quite spoil your fortune, which is going on as prosperously as possible. She loves you, and wishes to make you happy. Will you, for the sake of a paltry mustachio, forego the most delicious favors any man can possibly enjoy?”

Bakbarah at length yielded to the old woman’s arguments, and without saying another word, he suffered the slave to conduct him to an apartment, where they painted his eyebrows red. They shaved

his mustachios, and were absolutely going to shave his beard. But the easiness of my brother's tempter did not carry him quite so far as to suffer that. "Not a single stroke," he exclaimed, "shall you take at my beard!" The slave represented to him that it was of no use to have cut off his mustachios if he would not also agree to lose his beard; that a hairy countenance did not at all coincide with the dress of a woman; and that she was astonished that a man, who was on the very point of possessing the most beautiful woman in Bagdad, should care for his beard. The old woman also joined with the slave, and added fresh reasons; she threatened my brother with being quite in disgrace with her mistress. In short, she said so much that he at last permitted them to do what they wished.

As soon as they had dressed him like a woman, they brought him back to the young lady, who burst into so violent a fit of laughter at the sight of him, that she fell down on the sofa on which she was sitting. The slaves all began to clap their hands, so that my brother was put quite out of countenance. The young lady then got up, and continuing to laugh all the time, said, "After the complaisance you have shown to me, I should be guilty of a crime not to bestow my whole heart upon you; but it is necessary that you should do one thing more for love of me: it is only to dance before me as you are." He obeyed; and the young lady and the slaves danced with him, laughing all the while as if they were crazy. After they had danced for some time, they all threw themselves upon the poor wretch, and gave him so many blows, both with their hands and feet, that he fell down almost fainting. The old woman came to his assistance, and without giving him time to be angry at such ill treatment, she whispered in his ear,

“Console yourself, for you are now arrived at the conclusion of your sufferings, and are about to receive the reward for them. You have only one thing more to do,” added she, “and that is a mere trifle. You must know that my mistress makes it her custom, whenever she has drunk a little, as she has done to-day, not to suffer anyone she loves to come near her, unless they are stripped to their shirt. When they are in this situation, she takes advantage of a short distance, and begins running before them through the gallery, and from room to room, till they have caught her. This is one of her fancies. Now, at whatever distance from you she may start, you, who are so light and active, can easily overtake her. Undress yourself quickly, therefore, and remain in your shirt, and do not make any difficulty about it.”

My brother had already carried his complying humor too far to stop at this. The young lady at the same time took off her outer robe, in order to run with greater ease. When they were both ready to begin the race, the lady took the advantage of about twenty paces, and then started with wonderful celerity. My brother followed her with all his strength, but not without exciting the risibility of the slaves, who kept clapping their hands all the time. The young lady, instead of losing any of the advantage she had first taken, kept continually gaining ground of my brother. She ran round the gallery two or three times, then turned off down a long dark passage, where she saved herself by a turn of which my brother was ignorant. Bakbarah, who kept constantly following her, lost sight of her in this passage, and he was also obliged to run much slower, because it was so dark. He at last perceived a light, toward which he made all possible haste; he went out through a door which was instantly shut upon

him.

You may easily imagine what was his astonishment at finding himself in the middle of a street inhabited by curriers. Nor were they less surprised at seeing him in his shirt, his eyebrows painted red, and without either beard or mustachios. They began to clap their hands, to hoot at him; and some even ran after him, and kept lashing him with strips of their leather. They then stopped him, and set him on an ass, which they accidentally met with, and led him through the city, exposed to the laughter and shouts of the mob.

To complete his misfortune, they led him through the street where the judge of the police court lived, and this magistrate immediately sent to inquire the cause of the uproar. The curriers informed him that they saw my brother, exactly in the state he then was, come out of the gate leading to the apartments of the women belonging to the grand vizier, which opened into their street. The judge then ordered the unfortunate Bakbarah, upon the spot, to receive a hundred strokes on the soles of his feet, to be conducted without the city, and forbade him ever to enter it again.—*History of the Barber's Second Brother.*

Persian Wit and humor is best known to us through the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.*

While their interest lies partly in the adept translation, the wit of the original is clearly self evident.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

XXVIII

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

XXIX

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing
Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

XXX

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence*?
And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence!

XXXI

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
And many a Knot unravel'd by the Road;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

XXXII

There was the Door to which I found no Key;
There was the Veil through which I might not see:
Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
There was—and then no more of THEE and ME.

LIV

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute;
Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

LV

You know, my Friends, with what a brave Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my house;
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

LIX

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

LXI

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, Who set it there?

LXVIII

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with the Sun-illumin'd Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

LXIX

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days:
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

LXX

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Here or There as strikes the Player goes;
And He that toss'd you down into the Field,
He knows about it all—HE knows—HE knows!

LXXII

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,
Lift not your hands to *It* for help—for it

As impotently moves as you or I.

XCIII

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my credit in this World much wrong:
  Have drown'd my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

XCIV

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
  And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-
  hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

XCV

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour—Well,
  I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

Firdausi, the greatest Epic poet of Persia, gives us this witty epigram.

ON SULTAN MAHMOUD

'Tis said our monarch's liberal mind
Is like the ocean, unconfined.
Happy are they who prove it so;
'Tis not for me that fact to know:
I've plunged within its waves, 'tis true,
But not a single pearl could view.

Sadi, one of the greatest of Persian poets, was also a great scholar, and wrote in both Persian and Arabian, beside being, it is said, the first poet to write in Hindustani.

His works are numerous and beautiful, both in verse and prose, and show a graceful wit.

DISCOMFORT BETTER THAN DROWNING

A king was embarked along with a Persian boy slave on board a ship. The boy had never been at sea nor experienced the inconvenience of a ship. He set up a weeping and wailing, and all his limbs were in a state of trepidation; and however much they soothed him, he was not to be pacified. The king's pleasure-party was disconcerted by him; but there was no help for it. On board that ship there was a physician. He said to the king, "If you will order it, I can manage to silence him." The king replied, "It will be an act of great favor."

The physician so directed that they threw the boy into the sea, and after he had plunged repeatedly, they seized him by the hair of the head and drew him close to the ship, when he clung with both hands to the rudder, and, scrambling upon the deck, slunk into a corner and sat down quiet. The king, pleased with what he saw, said, "What art is there in this?" The boy replied that originally he had not experienced the danger of being drowned, and undervalued the safety of being in a ship. In like manner, a person is aware of the preciousness of health when he is overtaken with the calamity of sickness.

A barley loaf of bread has, oh, epicure, no relish for thee.

To the houris, or nymphs of paradise, purgatory would be a hell. Ask the inmates of hell whether purgatory is not paradise.

There is a distinction between the man that folds his mistress in his arms and him whose two eyes are fixed on the door expecting her.—The Rose Garden (Gulistan).

THE STRICT SCHOOLMASTER AND THE MILD

In the west of Africa I saw a schoolmaster of a sour aspect and bitter speech, crabbed, misanthropic, and intemperate, insomuch that the sight of him would derange the ecstasies of the orthodox, and his manner of reading the Koran cast a gloom over the minds of the pious. A number of handsome boys and lovely virgins were subject to his despotic sway; they had neither the permission of a smile nor the option of a word, for this moment he would smite the silver cheek of one of them with his hand, and the next put the crystalline legs of another in the stocks. In short, their parents, I heard, were made aware of a part of his angry violence, and beat and drove him from his charge.

They made over his school to a peaceable creature, so pious, meek, simple, and good-natured that he never spoke till forced to do so, nor would he utter a word that could offend anybody. The children forgot that awe in which they had held their first master, and remarking the angelic disposition of their second master, they became one after another as wicked as devils. Relying on his clemency, they would so neglect their studies as to pass most part of their time at play, and break the tablets of their unfinished tasks over each other's heads.

When the schoolmaster relaxes in his discipline, the children will stop to play at marbles in the market-place.

A fortnight after I passed by the gate of that mosque, and saw the first schoolmaster, with whom they had been obliged to make friends and to restore him to his place. I was in truth offended, and calling on God to witness, asked, saying, "Why have they again made a devil the preceptor of angels?"

A facetious old gentleman, who had seen much of life, listened to me, and replied, "A king sent his son

to school, and hung a tablet of silver round his neck. On the face of that tablet he had written in golden letters, 'The severity of the master is more useful than the indulgence of the father.'"—*The Rose Garden (Gulistan).*

HATEFULNESS OF OLD HUSBANDS

An old man married a young virgin. He adorned the bridal chamber with flowers, seated himself with her in private, and riveted his heart and eyes upon her. Many a long night he would lie awake and indulge in pleasantries and jests, in order to remove any coyness on her part, and encourage familiarity. One of those nights he addressed her thus:

"Lofty fortune was your friend, and the eye of your prosperity broad awake, when you fell into the society of such an old gentleman as I am, being of mature judgment, well-bred, worldly experienced, inured to the vicissitudes of heat and cold, and practised in the goods and evils of life, who can appreciate the rights of good-fellowship, and fulfil the duties of loving attachment and is kind and affable, sweet-spoken, and cheerful. I will treat you with affection, as far as I can, and if you deal with me unkindly, I will not be unkind in return. *If, like a parrot, thy food be sugar, I will devote my sweet life for thy nourishment.* And you did not become the victim of a rude, conceited, rash, and headstrong youth, who one moment gratifies his lust, and the next has a fresh object; who every night shifts his abode, and every day changes his mistress. Young men are lively and handsome, but they keep good faith with nobody. *Expect not constancy from nightingales, who will every moment serenade a fresh rose.* Whereas my class of seniors regulate their lives by good breeding

and sense, and are not deluded by youthful ignorance."

Court the society of a superior, and make much of the opportunity! for in the company of an equal thy good fortune must decline.

The old man spoke a great deal in this style, and thought that he had caught her heart in his snare, and made sure of her as his prey, when she suddenly drew a cold sigh from the bottom of a much-afflicted bosom, and answered:

"All this speech which you have delivered has not, in the scale of my judgment, the weight of that one sentence which I have heard of my nurse, that it were better to plant a spear in a young maiden's side than to lay her by an old man in bed. Much contention and strife will arise in that house where the wife shall get dissatisfied with her husband."

Unable to rise without the help of a staff, how can an old man stir the staff of life?

In short, there being no prospect of concord, they agreed to separate. After lapse of the period prescribed by the law, she united in wedlock with a young man of an ill-tempered and sullen disposition, and in very narrow circumstances, so that she endured much tyranny and violence, penury and hardship. Yet she was thus offering up thanksgivings for the Almighty's goodness, and saying:

"Praised be God that I have escaped from such hell-torment, and secured a blessing so permanent. With all this violence and impetuosity of temper, I bear with his caprice, because he is handsome. It were better for me to burn with him in hellfire than to dwell in paradise with the other."

The smell of an onion from the mouth of the lovely is sweeter than that of a rose in the hand of the ugly.

—The Rose Garden (Gulistan).

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1. LOCMAN the wise being asked, "Whence did you learn wisdom?" answered, *From the blind, who try the path with a stick before they tread on it....*

4. HORMUS the tyrant, being asked, why he had put his father's courtiers in prison, answered, *Because they feared me; and the wise say, Fear him who fears thee, though he be a fly, and thou an elephant.*

5. A religious was famous at Bagdad for his powerful prayers. Hoschas Joseph, king of Persia, begged him to pray for him. The religious said, *O God, take away this man's life! for no better prayer can I make either for him or his subjects.*

6. An infamous king asked a Dervise, "Of all pious offices, which is the chief?" The Dervise answered, *For thee, the chief is a long sleep at noon, that thou mayest, for a short time, cease to injure mankind.*

7. A courtier being deprived of his place, became a religious. After some time, the king wished to restore him to his station; but he said, *Experience has now taught me to prefer ease to dignity.*

7. A slave of Omer, the viceroy, fled from his service, but was retaken, and brought before the king; who, at Omer's instigation, condemned him to death. The slave upon this said, *O king, I am an innocent man; and, if I die by thy command, my blood will be required. Permit me then to incur guilt before I meet my sentence. Let me kill this Omer, my master, and*

I shall die contented. It is for thy sake only I desire this. The king, laughing at this new mode of clearing his own justice, acquitted the wretch.

9. A master had taught a youth to wrestle; who, proud of his acquired skill, and possest of more strength than his master, wished to acquire fame at his expence, and challenged him to wrestle before the court. The master, by one trick, which he had not taught the youth, threw him at once: and, the youth complaining that he had not taught him all his art, the master said, *No. I always provide against ingratitude*.

10. A religious sitting by the highway, the king passed by; but the religious took no notice of him. A courtier saying "Do not you see the king?" was answered, *I want nothing of him. Kings are made for subjects, not subjects for kings. Why then should I respect him who is the publick servant?* This anecdote from Sadi differs much from present Eastern despotism.

11. A courtier went to his master, SUELNUN, king of Egypt, and begged permission to retire; saying, "Though I am night and day anxious in thy service; yet the fear of once displeasing thee makes me wretched." Suelnun, in tears, exclaimed, *Ah, did I serve God, as thou thy king, I should be one of the just.*

12. A king condemned an innocent man to death, who said, *O king, thy anger rages against me, but will injure thyself*. "How?" rejoined the king. *Because my pain lasts but for a moment; but thine for ever.* Pardon followed.

13. The courtiers of king Nourshivan consulting with him on important business, when the king had spoken, one of them assented to his opinion, against

the rest. Being asked the cause, he said, *Human affairs depend on chance, not on wisdom: and, if we err with the king, who shall condemn us? ...*

17. A king saying to a Dervise, “Do you never think on me?” was answered, *Yes: but it is when I forget God.*

18. A Dervise, in a dream, saw a king in paradise, but a religious in hell, and thought that, upon enquiring the cause, he was told, *The king used to keep company with Dervises; and the Dervise with kings.*

19. LOCMAN, the sage, being asked, where he learned virtue, he answered, *Of the vicious, for they taught me what to shun.*

20. Abu Hurura used often to visit MUSTAPHA, who one day said to him, *O Abu Hurura, visiting seldom feeds love and friendship.*

21. SADI, being taken prisoner by the Franks, or Christians, was redeemed for ten pieces of gold, by one, who also gave him his daughter in marriage, with one hundred pieces of gold as a dower. The lady, being a termagant, once reproached him with this; and he said, *Yes, I was redeemed for ten pieces, and made a slave for a hundred.*

22. Some wicked men using a religious very ill, he went to an old dervise, and complained much. The elder told him, *Son, our habit is that of patience. Why do you wear it, if it does not fit you?*

23. A sage seeing a strong man in a passion, asked the cause, and being told that it was on account of an affronting word, he exclaimed, *O strong man, with a weak mind! who could bear an elephant’s load, yet cannot bear a word.*

24. A lawyer gave his daughter, who was very

deformed in marriage to a blind man. A celebrated oculist coming to the place, the lawyer was asked why he did not employ him for his son-in-law? To which he answered, *Why should I endeavour to procure the divorce of my daughter?*

25. Ardeschir enquiring of a physician, how much food was necessary for a day? was answered, eight ounces. Ardeschir said, "How can so little support a man?" The physician replied, *That will support him; if he takes more, he must support it.*...

27. A robber said to a beggar, "Art thou not ashamed to stretch out thy hand to all for a piece of copper?" The beggar answered, *It is better to stretch it out for a piece of copper, than have it cut off for a piece of gold.*

29. SADI being about to purchase a house, a Jew came up and said, "I am an old neighbour, and know the house to be good and sufficient. Buy it by all means." Sadi answered, *The house must be bad if thou art a neighbour*....

31. An old man being asked, why he did not take a wife, answered, *I do not like old women: and a young woman, I judge from that, can never like me.*

32. A courtier sent a foolish son to be educated by a sage. He made no progress, and some time after the sage brought him back, saying, *This boy will never be wiser; and he has even made me foolish in teaching him.*

33. A king sent his son to an instructor, desiring him to educate the boy, as he did his own sons. The preceptor laboured in vain to teach the young prince, though his own sons made great progress. The king sending for him and reproaching him for this; he answered, *O king, the education was the same, but the capacity differed. We find gold in the soil! yet gold is not*

found in every soil.

34. A man having sore eyes went to a mule-doctor, who gave him an ointment that struck him blind. The man brought his doctor before the cadi, who acquitted him; saying to the patient, *If you had not been an ass, you would not have applied to a mule-doctor.*

35. Sadi saw two boys, one the son of a rich man, the other of a poor, sitting in a cemetery. The former said "My father's tomb is marble, marked with letters of gold: but what is your father's? two turfs and a handful of dust spread over them." The poor boy answered, *Be silent. Before your father shall have moved his marble! mine shall be already in paradise.*

36. MUHAMMED, the learned priest of Gasala, being asked, how he had acquired so much science? answered, *I never was ashamed to ask and learn what I did not know....*

Jalal uddin Rumi was another Persian who wrote a series of stories conveying moral maxims.

THE SICK SCHOOLMASTER

The boys of a certain school were tired of their teacher, as he was very strict in the exaction of diligence; so they consulted together for the best means of getting rid of him for a time. Said they, "Why does he not fall ill, so that he may be obliged to be away from school, and we be released from confinement and work? Alas! he stands as firm as a rock." One of them, who was wiser than the rest, suggested this plan: "I shall go to the teacher, and ask him why he looks so pale, saying, 'May it turn out well! But your face has not its usual color. Is it due to the weather, or to fever?' This will create

some alarm in his mind. Then you, brother," he continued, turning to another boy, "must assist me by using similar words. When you come into the schoolroom you must say to the teacher, 'I hope, sir, you are well.' This will tend to increase his apprehension, even though in a slight degree; and you know that even slight doubts are often enough to drive a man mad. Then a third, a fourth, and a fifth boy must one after another express his sympathy in similar words, till at last, when thirty boys successively have given expression to words of like nature, the teacher's apprehension will be confirmed."

The boys praised his ingenuity, and wished each other success; and they bound themselves by solemn promises not to shirk doing what was expected of them. Then the first boy bade them take oaths of secrecy, lest some telltale should let the matter out.

Next morning the boys came to school in a cheerful mood, having resolved on adopting the foregoing plan. They all stood outside the schoolhouse, waiting for the arrival of the friend who had helped them in the time of need—since it was he who had originated the plan: it is the head that is the governor of the legs. The first boy arrived, entered the schoolroom, and greeted the teacher with "I hope you are well, sir, but the color of your face is very pale."

"Nonsense!" said the teacher; "there is nothing the matter with me. Go and take your seat." But inwardly he was somewhat apprehensive. Another boy came in, and in similar words greeted the teacher, whose misgivings were thereby somewhat increased. And so on, one boy after another greeted him, till his worst apprehensions seemed to be

confirmed, and he was in great anxiety regarding the state of his health.

He got enraged at his wife. “Her love for me is waning,” he thought. “I am in this bad state of health, and she did not even ask what was the matter with me. She did not draw my attention to the color of my face. Perhaps she is not unwilling that I should die.”

Full of such thoughts, he came to his home, followed by the boys, and flung open the door. His wife exclaimed, “I hope nothing is the matter with you! Why have you returned so soon?”

“Are you blind?” he answered. “Look at the color of my face, and at my condition! Even strangers show sympathetic alarm about my health.”

“Well, I see nothing wrong,” said the wife. “You must be laboring under some senseless delusion.”

“Woman,” he rejoined impatiently, “you are most obstinate! Can you not perceive the altered hue of my face and the shivering of my body? Go and get my bed made, that I may lie down, for my head is dizzy.”

The bed was prepared, and the teacher lay down on it, giving vent to sighs and groans. The boys he ordered to sit there and read the lessons, which they did with much vexation. They said to themselves, “We did so much to be free, and still we are in confinement. The foundation was not well laid; we are bad architects. Some other plan must now be adopted, so that we may be rid of this annoyance.”

The clever boy who had instigated the first plot advised the others to read their lessons very loudly; and when they did so, he said, in a tone to be

overheard by the teacher, “Boys, your voices disturb our teacher. Loud voices will only increase his headache. Is it proper that he should be made to suffer pain for the sake of the trifling fees he gets from us?”

The teacher said, “He is right. Boys, you may go. My headache has increased. Be off with you!” And the boys scampered away home as eagerly as birds fly toward a spot where they see grain.

The mothers of the boys, on seeing them return, got angry, and thus challenged them, “This is the time for you to learn writing, and you are engaged in play. This is the time for acquiring knowledge, and you fly from your books and your teacher.”

The boys urged that it was no fault of theirs, and that they were in no way to blame, for, by the decree of fate, their teacher had become very ill.

The mothers, disbelieving, said, “This is all deceit and falsehood. You would not scruple to tell a hundred lies to get a little quantity of buttermilk. To-morrow morning we shall go to the teacher’s house, and shall ascertain what truth there is in your assertions.”

So the next morning the mothers went to visit the teacher, whom they found lying in bed like a very sick person. He had perspired freely, owing to his having covered himself with blankets. His head was bandaged, and his face was covered with a kerchief. He was groaning in a feeble voice.

The ladies expressed their sympathy, hoped his headache was getting less, and swore by his soul that they had been unaware until quite lately that he was so ill.

"I, too," said the teacher, "was unaware of my illness. It was through those little bastards that I learned of it."

—*Stories in Rime (Masnavi).*

THE INVALID AND HIS DEAF VISITOR

A deaf man was informed that an neighbor of his was ill, so he resolved upon going to see him. "But," said he to himself, "owing to my deafness I shall not be able to catch the words of the sick man, whose voice must be very feeble at this time. However, go I must. When I see his lips moving I shall be able to make a reasonably good conjecture of what he is saying. When I ask him, 'How are you, oh, my afflicted friend?' he will probably reply, 'I am well,' or 'I am better.' I shall then say, 'Thanks be to God! Tell me, what have you taken for food?' He will probably mention some liquid food or gruel. I shall then wish that the food may agree with him, and shall ask him the name of the physician under whose treatment he is. On his naming the man, I shall say, 'He is a skilful leech. Since it is he who is attending upon you, you will soon be well. I have had experience of him. Wherever he goes, his patients very soon recover."

So the deaf man, having prepared himself for the visit, went to the invalid's bedside, and sat down near the pillow. Then, rubbing his hands together with assumed cheerfulness, he inquired, "How are you?" "I am dying," replied the patient. "Thanks be to God!" rejoined the deaf man.

The sick man was troubled in his heart, and said to himself, "What kind of thanksgiving is this? Surely he must be an enemy of mine!"—little thinking that

his visitor's remark was but the result of wrong conjecture.

"What have you been eating?" was the next question; to which the reply was, "Poison!" "May it agree with you," was the wish expressed by the deaf man which only increased the other's vexation.

"And pray, who is your physician?" again asked the visitor, "Azrael, the Angel of Death. And now, begone with you!" growled the invalid. "Oh, is he?" pursued the deaf man. "Then you ought to rejoice, for he is a man of auspicious footsteps. I saw him only just now, and asked him to devote to you his best possible attention."

With these words he bade the sick man good-by, and withdrew, rejoicing that he had satisfactorily performed a neighborly duty. Meanwhile, the other man was angrily muttering to himself, "This fellow is an implacable foe of mine. I did not know his heart was so full of malignity."

—*Stories in Rime (Masnavi).*

OLD AGE—DIALOGUE

Old Man. I am in sore trouble owing to my brain.

Physician. The weakness of the brain is due to old age.

Old Man. Dark spots are floating before my eyes.

Physician. That, too, comes from old age, oh, venerable sheikh!

Old Man. My back aches very much.

Physician. The result of old age, oh, lean sheikh!

Old Man. No food that I take agrees with me.

Physician. The failure of the digestive organs is also due to old age.

Old Man. I am afflicted with hard breathing.

Physician. Yes, the breathing ought to be affected in that manner. When old age comes, it brings a hundred complaints in its train.

Old Man. My legs are getting feeble, and I am unable to walk much.

Physician. It is nothing but old age which obliges you to sit in a corner.

Old Man. My back has become bent like a bow.

Physician. This trouble is merely the consequence of old age.

Old Man. My eyesight is quite dim, oh, sage physician!

Physician. Nothing but old age, oh, wise man!

Old Man. Oh, you idiot, always harping on the same theme! Is this all you know of the science of medicine? Fool, does not your reason tell you that God has assigned a remedy to every ailment? You are a stupid ass, and with your paltry stock of learning are still fumbling in the mire!

Physician. Oh, you dotard past sixty, know, then, that even this rage and fury is due to old age!

From Abu Ishak we glean this delightful bit of parody on Hafiz.

PARODY ON HAFIZ

HAfiz	ABU-ISHAK

Will those who can transmute dust into gold by looking at it ever give a sidelong glance at us?

Will those who sell cooked sheep's-head give us a sidelong glance, when they open their pots in the morning?

The beauteous Turk, who is the cause of death to her lovers, has to-day gone forth intoxicated. Let us see from whose eyes the heart's blood shall begin to flow.

The cook has to-day bought onions for giving a relish to minced meat. Let us see, now, from whose eyes tears shall begin to flow.

I have a yearning for seclusion and peace. But, oh! those narcissus-like eyes! The commotion they cause me is inexpressible!

I have an inclination for abstinent living and observing fasts. But, oh! in what a tempting way doth the roasted lamb wink at me!

No one should give up his heart and his religion in the expectation of faithfulness from his sweetheart. My having done so has resulted to me in lifelong repentance. And from

No one should partake of sauce to accompany sweetened rice colored with saffron. My having done so has given me cause for infinite regret.

DO-PYAZAH

THESE DEFINITIONS

Angel. A hidden telltale.

King. The idlest man in the country.

Minister of State. The target for the arrows of the sighs of the oppressed.

Flatterer. One who drives a profitable trade.

Lawyer. One ready to tell any lie.

Fool. An official, for instance, who is honest.

Physician. The herald of death.

Widow. A woman in the habit of praising her husband when he is gone.

Poet. A proud beggar.

Mirror. One that laughs at you to your face.

Bribe. The resource of him who knows he has a bad cause.

National Calamity. A ruler who cares for nothing but the pleasures of the harem.

Salutation. A polite hint to others to get up and greet you with respect.

Priest Calling to Prayers. A disturber of the indolent.

Faithful Friend. Money.

Truthful Man. One who is regarded as an enemy by every one.

Silence. Half consent.

Service. Selling one's independence.

Hunting. The occupation of those who have no work to do.

Mother-in-Law. A spy domiciled in your house.

Debtor. An ass in a quagmire.

Liar. A person making frequent use of the expression, "I swear to God it is true!"

Guest. One in your house who is impatient to hear the dishes clatter.

Poverty. The consequence of marriage.

Hunger. Something which falls to the lot of those out of employment.

Soporific. Reading the verses of a dull poet.

Druggist. One who wishes everybody to be ill.

Learned Man. One who does not know how to earn his livelihood.

Miser's Eye. A vessel which is never full.

DIVING FOR AN EGG—ANECDOTE

The Emperor Akbar was one day sitting with his attendants in the garden of the palace, close to a large cistern full of water. At the suggestion of a courtier, the emperor commanded some of the men present to procure an egg each, and to place it in the cistern in such a manner that it could easily be found when searched for.

Soon after the order had been obeyed, the Mollah Do-pyazah came to this spot. Akbar then turned to his attendants, saying he had dreamed the night before that there were eggs in the cistern, and that all who were his faithful servants had dived in, and brought out an egg. Whereupon the attendants one by one dived into the water, each one issuing forth with an egg in his hand. Do-pyazah, not disposed himself to enter the water, the emperor asked why he alone held aloof. The mollah, thus pressed, divested himself of his outer garments and plunged in.

He searched for a long time, but could not find a single egg. At length he emerged from the cistern, and, moving his arms in the manner of a cock flapping his wings, he cried aloud, "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

"What," asked Akbar, "is the meaning of this?"

"Your Majesty," came the reply, "those who brought you the eggs were hens, but I am a cock, and you must not expect an egg from me."

At which Akbar laughed heartily, and had Dopyazah well rewarded.

The Chinese are more noted for their wit that is wisdom, than for their humor.

Confucius, doubtless the greatest of their philosophers, born 551 B.C., left many sayings which became proverbs, yet which embodied only the elementary morality of all ages and races.

These are some of the sayings from *The Analects of Confucius*.

"While a man's father is alive, look at the bent of his will; when his father is dead, look at his conduct."

"An accomplished scholar is not a cooking-pot."

"When good order prevailed in his country, Ning Wu acted the part of a wise man; when his country was in disorder, he acted the part of a fool. Others may equal his wisdom, but they cannot equal his folly."

"How can one know about death, when one does not understand life?"

"Four horses cannot overtake the tongue."

"If you were not covetous, you could not even bribe a man to steal from you."

"When their betters love the *Rules* [*of Propriety*],

then the folk are easy tools."

"Why use an ox-knife to kill a hen?"

"There are two classes that never change: the supremely wise and the profoundly stupid."

"If a man is disliked at forty, he always will be."

"When driving with a woman, hold the reins in one hand and keep the other behind your back."

Chwang Tze, another ancient, wrote much of life, death and immortality, but showed little sense of humor therein.

One of his anecdotes, in lighter vein, follows.

THE PLEASURE OF FISHES—ANECDOTE

Chwang Tze and a friend had strolled on to a bridge over the Hao, when the former observed, "Look how the minnows are darting about! That is the pleasure of fishes."

"Not being a fish yourself," objected the friend, "how can you possibly know in what the pleasure of fishes consists?"

"And you not being I," retorted Chwang Tze, "how can you know that I do not know?"

To which the friend replied, "If I, not being you, cannot know what you know, it follows that you, not being a fish, cannot know in what the pleasure of fishes consists."

"Let us go back," rejoined Chwang Tze, "to your original question. You ask me how I know in what the pleasure of fishes consists. Well, I know that I am enjoying myself over the Hao, and from this I infer that the fishes are enjoying themselves in it."—

Autumn Floods.

Sung Yu gives us this satirical outburst about

POPULARITY

The eagle is king of the birds; among fishes
Leviathan holds the first place.
Cleaving the far, crimson clouds,
The eagle soars upward apace,
With only the blue sky above,
Into remote realms of space;
But the grandeur of heaven and earth
Is naught to the hedge-sparrow race.
The whale through one oceans swims,
To take its course through a second;
While the minnow measures a puddle
As the width of the sea might be reckoned.
And just as with birds and fishes,
Is the case, to be sure, with man.
Here soars a resplendent eagle,
There swims one huge leviathan:
Behold the philosopher sapient,
Whose fame will never grow dim;
Alone in the might of his wisdom—
Can the rabble understand him?

Yuan Mei, however, possessed a satiric humor so keen as to place him among the true wits.

His letter to a friend might have been written today and his Cookery Notes are such as are found in our current comics.

A STANZA FOR A TOBACCO-POUCH

DEAR FRIEND:

I have received your letter of congratulation, and am much obliged. At the end of the letter, however, you mention that you have a tobacco-pouch for me, which will be forwarded upon the receipt of a stanza. But such an exchange would seem to establish a curious precedent. If for a tobacco pouch you expect

in return a stanza, for a hat or a pair of boots you would demand a whole poem; while your brother might bestow a cloak or coat upon me, and believe himself entitled to an epic. At this rate, dear friend, your congratulations would become rather costly to me.

Let me instruct you, on the other hand, that a man once gave a thousand yards of silk for a phrase, and another man a beautiful girl for a stanza—which makes your tobacco-pouch look like a slight inducement, does it not?

Mencius forbids the taking advantage of people on the ground of one's rank or merits. How much worse, therefore, to do so by virtue of a mere tobacco-pouch! Elegant as a tobacco-pouch may be, it is only the work of a sempstress; but my poetry, poor as it may be, is the work of my brain. The exchange would evidently be complimentary to the sempstress, and the reverse to me.

Now, if you had taken needle and thread and made the pouch yourself—ah, then what a difference! Then, indeed, a dozen stanzas would not have been too great a return. But it would hardly be proper to ask a famous warrior like yourself to lay down sword and shield for needle and thread. Nor, dear friend, am I likely to get the pouch at all, if you take offense at these little jokes of mine. What I advise you to do is, to bear with me patiently, send the tobacco-pouch, and wait for the stanza until it comes.

—Letters.

RECIPES

Birds' nests and water-slugs have no particular

flavor of their own, and are therefore not worth eating.

The best cook cannot prepare artistically more than five or six different dishes in one day. A host of mine once had forty courses served at a meal, and as soon as I got home I called for a bowl of rice to still my hunger.

In order to enjoy the pleasures of the palate to the fullest degree, you must be sober. If you are drunk, you cannot tell one flavor from another.

The ingredients of a dish should always harmonize with one another—like two people in marriage.

Some cooks use the flesh of chickens and pigs for one soup, and as chickens and pigs have souls, they will hold those cooks to account, in the next world, for their treatment of them in this.

Bamboo-shoots ought never to be cut with a knife which has just been used on onions.

While cooking, do not allow ashes from your pipe, perspiration from your face, soot from the fuel, or beetles from the ceiling to drop into the saucepan: the guests would be likely to pass the dish by.—*Cookery Book*

The following proverbs are generally attributed to the Chinese, some of them being the wisdom of Confucius.

PROVERBS

An avaricious man, who can never get enough, is

like a snake trying to swallow an elephant.

To draw the picture of a tiger, and make a dog out of it, is to imitate a masterpiece and spoil it.

Human pleasures are like the flittings of sparrows.

A narrow-minded man resembles a frog in a well.

Do not pull up your stockings in a melon-patch, or straighten your hat in a peach orchard; any one seeing you may think you are stealing.

To talk much and arrive nowhere is the same as climbing a tree to catch a fish.

One thread does not make a rope.

The tiger does not walk with the hind.

You can neither buy wood in the forest nor fish by the lake.

If a blind man leads another blind man, they will both fall into a hole.

No maker of idols worships the gods; he knows their composition too well.

A man with a purple nose may be very temperate in drink, only no one will believe it.

Money makes the blind man see.

We admire our own writings, but other men's wives.

If you are afraid of being found out, leave it alone.

Bend your neck if the eaves are low.

It's not the wine that makes a man drunk; it's the man himself.

A whisper on earth sounds like thunder in heaven.

To get a favor granted is harder than to kill a tiger.

Sweep the snow from your own door.

If there were no error there could be no truth.

A needle never pricks with both ends.

Don't put two saddles on one horse.

Trust nature rather than a bad doctor.

The Japanese offer little that can be quoted. Their comedies are long and not very funny, their wit is heavy and bitterly satirical.

One specimen is given from *The Land of Dreams* by Kiokutei Bakin.

ON CLOTHES AND COMFORTS

However much money you have, you will not keep it long; it will leave you, just like a traveler who has stayed overnight at an inn. The only substantial things in life are food and drink. Any little house you can just crawl into is large enough. The only difference between an emperor's palace and a straw hut is in their size and their situation, one being in town and the other in the country. A single room, with a mat long enough for you to stretch out your whole body, is quite sufficient lodging. As for the clothes which you dress your carcass in, the richest brocades and the commonest sackcloth differ only in being clean or dirty. After you are dead, no one can tell, from looking at your naked body, what sort of clothes you wore while alive. If these facts were to become recognized, our clothes would be

patched with any sort of material or color. Now, however, a man will buy new, expensive garments which he does not really want, owe the money for them, strut about in these borrowed plumes, and finally pawn them.

—*The Land of Dreams.*

COLLECTIONS

Apologues and stories, now common to all the world, had their origin in remote antiquity. Eastern narratives were for the most part brought to Europe orally, but some were later translated from the Oriental writings.

Since at first, Religion and Learning went hand in hand, these stories were of a moral and instructive nature. Their wit was the wit of wisdom, the pithiness of graphic representation of truth.

But with the development of the wit of amusement, the rise of ribald laughter and the supremacy of priests and monks, the stories took on a mirthful character which may or may not have added to their efficacy as cautionary teachings.

Humor, then, as now, was founded on the feeling of superiority which comes from knowledge. The stories were invariably of the discomfiture of some foolish person, and thereby, either definitely or tacitly advised against that particular foolishness.

Narrative fiction was entirely in parables or apologues, the latter term having come to be used exclusively for the tales in which animals are invested with human traits.

Fables, also, is a term usually restricted to moral lessons taught by anecdotes of beasts in human

conditions.

As usual in the matter of legendary literature various countries contend for the honor of producing the first fables.

The bestowal of the palm rests between the Hindus and the Hebrews, but the decision may never be made.

A plausible assumption for the necessity of fables lies in the fact that it was not the part of wisdom openly to administer reproof or advice to the Asiatic potentates, wherefore it was done by the device of speaking through the mouths of the fictitious characters.

And, through the ages, this plan has been found to work with intractables of less celebrity.

But the question of the origin of these stories is outside our Outline,—we may merely state that before, during and after the Crusades, the flood of stories and tales from the Orient into Europe was continuous.

Which accounts for the fact that among the oldest stories of the various countries, duplicates are always found, and the ancient jests of the Far East have raised and will raise appreciative laughter as they are translated into all European tongues, including the Scandinavian.

As religion gave rise to laughter, so religion was the medium for disseminating mirth.

The preachers of the mediæval ages used many amusing stories in their sermons and the monks often preserved these, with additions of their own, in enduring literature.

But literature then was not in the form of circulating libraries, so the tales traveled from mouth to mouth, gaining sometimes in interest and sometimes losing charm or worth.

Perhaps about the tenth century translations began to be grouped into collections, in Europe, and among the first was the Greek version of the Fables of Pilpay. Soon after came the *Book of Sindibad*, which would seem to be the original form of the story of Scheherazade.

But in most cases the monks were the go-between.

Their zeal and indefatigability produced masses of material, primarily designed for the use of preachers, but easily adopted by the laymen.

The *Sermones* of Jacques de Vitry, Crusader and prelate, and the *Liber de Donis* of Etienne de Bourbon are both remarkable collections that predated and later gave material to the Gesta Romanorum.

As an instance of the ubiquity of stories, it may be mentioned here that in both the books above noticed, occurs the old tale of the husband who had two wives, the younger one of whom plucked out all his gray-white hairs, the older one plucked out all his black hairs, leaving the poor chap entirely bald. This story is also in the Talmud, in Chinese Jestbooks and in innumerable others.

So with many of the ancient tales. They come down through the Fabliaux, Gesta Romanorum, the Heptameron, the Decameron and on to our own dinner tables, where many of the “latest” are merely rehashed witticisms of the ancient monks and priests.

Nor are the stories fastened on to celebrities often authentic. Many of Sydney Smith’s witticisms hark

back to the Eastern Tales, most of Joe Miller's jests have similar paternity.

Hierocles made a famous collection of old stories translated into Greek. Others followed rapidly even before the invention of printing.

After that achievement, collections of stories flooded the book mart even as they do today.

Selections from various collections follow.

Perhaps the oldest collection of tales in the world is that known as the *Fables of Bidpai or Pilpay*. Both author and date of production are unknown, but tradition tells us that they were written in Sanscrit and were the work of one Vishnu Sarma, who wrote them for the advice and edification of certain princes. The book is enormously long and though not of humorous intent shows much of the native wit of the country.

Fables

THE GREEDY AND AMBITIOUS CAT

There was formerly an old Woman in a village, extremely thin, half-starved, and meager. She lived in a little cottage as dark and gloomy as a fool's heart, and withal as close shut up as a miser's hand. This miserable creature had for the companion of her wretched retirements a Cat meager and lean as herself; the poor creature never saw bread, nor beheld the face of a stranger, and was forced to be contented with only smelling the mice in their holes, or seeing the prints of their feet in the dust. If by some extraordinary lucky chance this miserable animal happened to catch a mouse, she was like a beggar that discovers a treasure; her visage and her eyes were inflamed with joy, and that booty served

her for a whole week; and out of the excess of her admiration, and distrust of her own happiness, she would cry out to herself, “Heavens! Is this a dream, or is it real?” One day, however, ready to die for hunger, she got upon the ridge of her enchanted castle, which had long been the mansion of famine for cats, and spied from thence another Cat, that was stalking upon a neighbour’s wall like a Lion, walking along as if she had been counting her steps, and so fat that she could hardly go. The old Woman’s Cat, astonished to see a creature of her own species so plump and so large, with a loud voice, cries out to her pursy neighbour, “In the name of pity, speak to me, thou happiest of the Cat kind! why, you look as if you came from one of the Khan of Kathai’s feasts; I conjure ye, to tell me how, or in what region it is that you get your skin so well stuffed?” “Where?” replied the fat one; “why, where should one feed well but at a King’s table? I go to the house,” continued she, “every day about dinner-time, and there I lay my paws upon some delicious morsel or other, which serves me till the next, and then leave enough for an army of mice, which under me live in peace and tranquillity; for why should I commit murder for a piece of tough and skinny mouse flesh, when I can live on venison at a much easier rate?” The lean Cat, on this, eagerly inquired the way to this house of plenty, and entreated her plump neighbour to carry her one day along with her. “Most willingly,” said the fat Puss; “for thou seest I am naturally charitable, and thou art so lean that I heartily pity thy condition.” On this promise they parted; and the lean Cat returned to the old Woman’s chamber, where she told her dame the story of what had befallen her. The old Woman prudently endeavoured to dissuade her Cat from prosecuting

her design, admonishing her withal to have a care of being deceived. “For, believe me,” said she, “the desires of the ambitious are never to be satiated, but when their mouths are stuffed with the dirt of their graves. Sobriety and temperance are the only things that truly enrich people. I must tell thee, poor silly Cat, that they who travel to satisfy their ambition, have no knowledge of the good things they possess, nor are they truly thankful to Heaven for what they enjoy, who are not contented with their fortune.”

The poor starved Cat, however, had conceived so fair an idea of the King’s table, that the old Woman’s good morals and judicious remonstrances entered in at one ear and went out at the other; in short, she departed the next day with the fat Puss to go to the King’s house; but alas! before she got thither, her destiny had laid a snare for her. For being a house of good cheer, it was so haunted with cats, that the servants had, just at this time, orders to kill all the cats that came near it, by reason of a great robbery committed the night before in the King’s larder by several grimalkins. The old Woman’s Cat, however, pushed on by hunger, entered the house, and no sooner saw a dish of meat unobserved by the cooks, but she made a seizure of it, and was doing what for many years she had not done before, that is, heartily filling her belly; but as she was enjoying herself under the dresser-board, and feeding heartily upon her stolen morsels, one of the testy officers of the kitchen, missing his breakfast, and seeing where the poor Cat was solacing herself with it, threw his knife at her with such an unlucky hand, that he stuck her full in the breast. However, as it has been the providence of Nature to give his creature nine lives instead of one, poor Puss made a shift to crawl away, after she had for some time shammed dead: but, in

her flight, observing the blood come streaming from her wound; “Well,” said she, “let me but escape this accident, and if ever I quit my old hold and my own mice for all the rarities in the King’s kitchen, may I lose all my nine lives at once.”

A RAVEN, A FOX, AND A SERPENT

A Raven had once built her nest for many seasons together in a convenient cleft of a mountain, but however pleasing the place was to her, she had always reason enough to resolve to lay there no more; for every time she hatched, a Serpent came and devoured her young ones. The Raven complaining to a Fox that was one of her friends, said to him, “Pray tell me, what would you advise me to do to be rid of this Serpent?” “What do you think to do?” answered the Fox. “Why, my present intent is,” replied the Raven, “to go and peck out his eyes when he is asleep, that so he may no longer find the way to my nest.” The Fox disapproved this design, and told the Raven, that it became a prudent person to manage his revenge in such a manner, that no mischief might befall himself in taking it: “Never run yourself,” says he, “into the misfortune that once befell the Crane, of which I will tell you the Fable.”

THE CRANE AND THE CRAY-FISH

A Crane had once settled her habitation by the side of a broad and deep lake, and lived upon such fish as she could catch in it; these she got in plenty enough for many years; but at length being become old and feeble, she could fish no longer. In this afflicting circumstance she began to reflect, with sorrow, on the carelessness of her past years; “I did ill,” said she to herself, “in not making in my youth

necessary provision to support me in my old age; but, as it is, I must now make the best of a bad market, and use cunning to get a livelihood as I can": with this resolution she placed herself by the waterside, and began to sigh and look mighty melancholy. A Cray-fish, perceiving her at a distance, accosted her, and asked her why she appeared so sad? "Alas," said she, "how can I otherwise choose but grieve, seeing my daily nourishment is like to be taken from me? for I just now heard this talk between two fishermen passing this way: said the one to the other, Here is great store of fish, what think you of clearing this pond? to whom his companion answered, no; there is more in such a lake: let us go thither first, and then come hither the day afterwards. This they will certainly perform; and then," added the Crane, "I must soon prepare for death."

The Cray-fish, on this, went to the fish, and told them what she had heard: upon which the poor fish, in great perplexity, swam immediately to the Crane, and addressing themselves to her, told her what they had heard, and added, "We are now in so great a consternation, that we are come to desire your protection. Though you are our enemy, yet the wise tell us, that they who make their enemy their sanctuary, may be assured of being well received: you know full well that we are your daily food; and if we are destroyed, you, who are now too old to travel in search of food, must also perish; we pray you, therefore, for your own sake, as well as ours, to consider, and tell us what you think is the best course for us to take." To which the Crane replied, "That which you acquaint me with, I heard myself from the mouths of the fishermen; we have no power sufficient to withstand them; nor do I know any

other way to secure you, but this: it will be many months before they can clear the other pond they are to go about first: and, in the mean time, I can at times, and as my strength will permit me, remove you one after another into a little pond here hard by, where there is very good water, and where the fishermen can never catch you, by reason of the extraordinary depth." The fish approved this counsel, and desired the Crane to carry them one by one into this pond. Nor did she fail to fish up three or four every morning, but she carried them no farther than to the top of a small hill, where she eat them: and thus she feasted herself for a while.

But one day, the Cray-fish, having a desire to see this delicate pond, made known her curiosity to the Crane, who, bethinking herself that the Cray-fish was her most mortal enemy, resolved to get rid of her at once, and murder her as she had done the rest; with this design she flung the Cray-fish upon her neck, and flew towards the hill. But when they came near the place, the Cray-fish, spying at a distance the small bones of her slaughtered companions, mistrusted the Crane's intention, and laying hold of a fair opportunity, got her neck in her claw, and grasped it so hard, that she fairly saved herself, and strangled the Crane.

"This example," says the Fox, "shows you, that crafty tricking people often become victims to their own cunning." The Raven, returning thanks to the Fox for his good advice, said, "I shall not by any means neglect your wholesome instructions; but what shall I do?" "Why," replied the Fox, "you must

snatch up something that belongs to some stout man or other, and let him see what you do, to the end he may follow you. Which that he may easily do, do you fly slowly; and when you are just over the Serpent's hole, let fall the thing that you hold in your beak or talons whatever it be, for then the person that follows you, seeing the Serpent come forth, will not fail to knock him on the head." The Raven did as the Fox advised him, and by that means was delivered from the Serpent.

THE MERCHANT AND HIS FRIEND

A Certain Merchant, said Kalila, pursuing her discourse, had once a great desire to make a long journey. Now in regard that he was not very wealthy, it is requisite, said he to himself, that before my departure I should leave some part of my estate in the city, to the end that if I meet with ill luck in my travels, I may have wherewithal to keep me at my return. To this purpose he delivered a great number of bars of iron, which were a principal part of his wealth, in trust to one of his friends, desiring him to keep them during his absence; and then taking his leave, away he went. Some time after, having had but ill luck in his travels, he returned home; and the first thing he did was to go to his Friend, and demand his iron: but his Friend, who owed several sums of money, having sold the iron to pay his own debts, made him this answer: "Truly friend," said he, "I put your iron into a room that was close locked, imagining it would have been there as secure as my own gold; but an accident has happened which nobody could have suspected, for there was a rat in the room eat it all up." The Merchant, pretending ignorance, replied, "It is a terrible misfortune to me indeed; but I know of old

that rats love iron extremely; I have suffered by them many times before in the same manner, and therefore can the better bear my present affliction." This answer extremely pleased the Friend, who was glad to hear the Merchant so well inclined to believe that the rats had eaten his iron; and to remove all suspicions, desired him to dine with him the next day. The Merchant promised he would, but in the mean time he met in the middle of the city one of his Friend's children; the child he carried home, and locked up in a room. The next day he went to his Friend, who seemed to be in great affliction, which he asked him the cause of, as if he had been perfectly ignorant of what had happened. "Oh, my dear friend," answered the other, "I beg you to excuse me, if you do not see me so cheerful as otherwise I would be; I have lost one of my children; I have had him cried by sound of trumpet, but I know not what is become of him." "Oh!" replied the Merchant, "I am grieved to hear this; for yesterday in the evening, as I parted from hence, I saw an owl in the air with a child in his claws; but whether it were yours I cannot tell." "Why, you most foolish and absurd creature!" replied the Friend, "are you not ashamed to tell such an egregious lie? An owl, that weighs at most not above two or three pounds, can he carry a boy that weighs above fifty?" "Why," replied the merchant, "do you make such a wonder at that? as if in a country where one rat can eat an hundred ton weight of iron, it were such a wonder for an owl to carry a child that weighs not above fifty pounds in all." The Friend, upon this, found that the Merchant was no such fool as he took him to be, begged his pardon for the cheat which he designed to have put upon him, restored him the value of his iron, and so had his son again.

Other and very ancient Hindoo stories follow.

THE MAID, THE MONKEY, AND THE MENDICANT

On the banks of the Ganges there was once a city named Makandi. And in a temple, not far from the river, there lived a religious mendicant with a large number of disciples. He was a great rogue, but to impress the minds of the credulous people of the neighbourhood, he affected to be perfectly indifferent to all worldly affairs, and even went so far as to have taken a vow of perpetual silence. Now, in this city there resided a wealthy merchant, who believed in the mendicant, and was one of his devoted followers. The merchant had a beautiful daughter, who had just come of age, and who, entertaining a tender feeling for a handsome prince who lived in the neighbourhood, had begun to communicate with him by means of a confidential servant. One day the mendicant came on a begging excursion to the house of the merchant, and his daughter, beautifully dressed, came out with a silver cup in her hand to give him alms. The beggar as soon as he saw her forgot his vow of perpetual silence, and exclaimed, “Oh! what a sight!” but immediately afterwards he was ashamed of the words which he had uttered, and hastened home to the temple. The merchant, who had heard these words, thought that there was something unusual in them, and followed the mendicant to his abode. The latter, on seeing him, said with tears in his eyes, “Friend, I know that you are greatly devoted to me, and I grieve to say that a great misfortune will come upon you. The marks upon the body of your beautiful daughter foretell the ruin of your family, and the loss of your

wealth as soon as she is married." These words frightened the merchant almost out of his wits, and he implored the hypocritical mendicant to tell him if there were any means of averting the catastrophe. "There is one remedy," he replied, "but you will find it hard to practise. You must make a box with holes in the lid, in the form of a boat, and having administered a narcotic to your daughter, place her in it, and closing the box, put it into the Ganges with a lamp burning on it. The waters of the river will carry her to some distant country, where doubtless she will be married, but her marriage there will not affect your fortune here." Pleased with this apparently disinterested advice, the silly merchant returned home, and did as he was told. Fortunately, however, for the girl, her confidential servant heard what was going to be done, and immediately informed the young prince, the girl's lover, of the intentions of her father. At night he accordingly watched by the river, and as soon as the box was left there he got hold of it, and brought it home, and taking the sleeping girl out, put into her place a large and ferocious monkey, and, having closed the lid, sent it back to the river upon whose broad stream it was floated once more. In the meantime the mendicant was enjoying golden dreams about the future. Thinking to secure the girl for himself, he sent some of his disciples to the river side, and told them to get hold of the box as it came floating down the stream. He further enjoined them not to pay any attention to anything they might hear inside the box, but to bring it directly to him as soon as they found it. On the box being brought, he had it carried to his cell, and then told his disciples to remain at a distance, and not to disturb him, as he had to perform some religious ceremonies in connection

with it. The disciples then retired, and the mendicant began to open the box with the most pleasing anticipations. But alas, the retribution of sin is often too near. The ferocious monkey, exasperated by his confinement, jumped out at once, and began to bite, scratch, and tear the poor mendicant in every way. The latter bawled out as loud as he could, but his disciples thinking that he was performing religious ceremonies, or fighting with the devil, did not come to his assistance. At last he succeeded in opening the door of his room, and got away with the loss of his nose and an ear. The monkey also bolted through the door, and disappeared into the jungle. The good people of Nakandi were much amused with the incident, and drove the mendicant out of the town. The merchant's daughter was delighted to find herself with her lover, while her father, covered with shame, consoled himself with the idea that she had got a good husband.

ABOUT A WOMAN'S PROMISE

In the city of Madanpur there reigned a king, named Birbar. In the same city there lived a trader, called Hermyadutt, who had a daughter, by name Madansena. One day, in the season of spring, she went with her female friends to a garden, and when there met a young man, named Somdatt, the son of the merchant Dharmdatt. This young man fell violently in love with her at first sight, and involuntarily went up to her, and, taking hold of her hand, began to say, "If thou wilt not love me, I shall abandon my life on thy account." The girl said, "You must not do so, for in doing this you will commit a great sin." Somdatt replied, "Excessive love has pierced my heart. The fear of separation has burnt up my body. From the pain all my memory and intellect

are lost, and at present, through my excess of love, I have no regard for virtue or sin. If you will give me a promise, I shall hope to live." Madansena said, "On the fifth day from this I am going to be married, then I shall first meet you, and after that I shall go with my husband." Having given this promise, and affirming it by oath, she went home.

On the fifth day after this she was married, and her husband took her to his house. After several days her sisters-in-law forcibly took her to her husband at night, but she would have nothing to do with him; and, when he wished to embrace her, she jerked him with her hand, and told the story of her promise to the merchant's son. Hearing this, her husband said, "If thou truly wishest to go with him, then go."

Having thus obtained her husband's consent, she put on her best clothes and jewels, and started for the merchant's house. On her way she met a thief, who asked her where she was going alone at that midnight hour so adorned. She replied, "That she was going to meet her lover." On hearing this, the thief said, "Who is your protector here?" She replied, "Kama, the god of love, with his weapons is my protector." She then told the whole story to the thief, and said, "Do not spoil my attire. I promise you that, on my return, I will give you up all my jewels."

The thief let her go, and she proceeded to the place where Somdatt was lying asleep. Awaking him suddenly, he arose bewildered, and asked her who she was, and why she had come. She replied, "I am the daughter of the merchant Hermyadutt. Do you not remember that you forcibly took my hand in the garden, and insisted on my giving you my oath, and I swore, at your bidding, that I would leave the man I was married to, and come to you. I have come

accordingly; do to me whatever thou pleasest."

Somdatt asked her if she had told the story to her husband, and she said that she had told him all, and that he had allowed her to come. The youth said: "This affair is like jewels without apparel; or food without clarified butter; or singing out of tune; all these things are alike. In the same way, dirty garments take away beauty, bad food saps the strength, a wicked wife takes away life, a bad son ruins the family. What a woman does not do is of little moment, for she does not give utterance to the thoughts of her mind; and what is at the tip of her tongue she does not reveal, and what she does, she does not tell of. God has created a woman in the world as a wonder."

After uttering these words, the merchant's son said: "I will have nothing to do with the wife of a stranger." Hearing this, she returned homeward. On her way she met the thief, and told him the whole story. He applauded her highly, and let her go, and she went to her husband and related to him the whole circumstance. Her husband, however, evinced no affection for her, but said, "The beauty of the cuckoo consists in its note alone; the beauty of a woman consists in her fidelity to her husband; the beauty of an ugly man is his knowledge; the beauty of a devotee is his patient suffering."

Having related so much, the sprite said, "O king! whose is the highest merit of these three?" Vickram replied: "The thief's merit is the greatest." "How," asked the sprite? The king answered: "Seeing that her heart was set on another man, the husband let

her go; through fear of the king, Somdatt let her alone; whereas there was no reason for the thief leaving her unmolested; therefore the thief is superior."

OF A QUEER RELATIONSHIP

There is a city in the south named Dhurumpoor, the king of which was named Mahabal. Once upon a time another king of the same region led an army against him, and invested his capital. After much fighting Mahabal was defeated, and, taking his wife and daughter with him, he fled by night into the jungle. After travelling several miles the day broke, and a village came in view. Leaving the queen and princess seated beneath a tree, he himself went to the village to get something to eat, and in the meantime a band of Bhils, or hill robbers, came and surrounded him, and told him to throw down his arms.

The king, on hearing this, commenced discharging arrows at them, and the Bhils did the same from their side. After fighting for some time, an arrow struck the king's forehead with such force that he reeled and fell, and one of the Bhils came up and cut off his head. When the queen and the princess saw that the king was dead, they went back into the jungle weeping and beating their breasts. After going some distance they became tired and sat down, and began to be troubled with anxiety.

Now, it happened that a king named Chandrasen, together with his son, while pursuing game, came into that very jungle, and the king, noticing the footprints of the two women, said to his son, "How have the footprints of human feet come into this vast forest?" The prince replied, "These are women's

footprints, a man's foot is not so small." The king said, "Come let us look for them, and if we find them I will give her whose foot is the largest to thee, and I will take the other for myself." Having entered into this mutual compact, they went forward, and soon perceived the two women seated on the ground. They were delighted at finding them, and seating them on their horses in the manner agreed upon, they brought them home. The prince took possession of the queen, as her feet were the largest, and the king took the princess, and they were married accordingly.

Having related so much the sprite said, "Your majesty, what relationship will there be between the children of these two?" On hearing this, the king held his tongue through ignorance, being unable to describe the relationship.

Hierocles' collection of jests is mostly short anecdotes of pedants who are shown up as simpletons or noodles.

This principle of humor which is, of course, the rock bottom theory of the feeling of superiority induced by the discomfiture of the other man, often pins the jest on the pedant or scholar by way of emphasizing the point.

Hierocles was an Alexandrian Neoplatonic philosopher who lived in the Fifth Century A.D.

With authorship of the usual legendary haziness

the collection may not have been made by him at all, but it passes for his work.

The stories themselves came into popular knowledge among the churchmen of the Middle Ages, and in their existing form probably date about the ninth century.

As will be seen from the following examples, many of the jests are still being used as the basis of Twentieth century after dinner stories and Comic Weekly jokes.

Jests of Hierocles

A scholar meeting a physician, said, *I beg your pardon for never being sick, though you are one of my best friends*.

A scholar wishing to catch a mouse that eats his books, baited and set a trap, and sat by it to watch.

A scholar wishing to teach his horse to eat little, gave him no food at all; and the horse dying, *How unlucky*, said he; *as soon as I had taught him to live without food he died*!

A scholar meaning to sell a house, carried about a stone of it as a specimen.

A scholar desiring to see if sleep became him, shut both his eyes, and went to the mirror.

A scholar having bought a house, looked out of the window, and asked the passengers, *If the house became him*?

A scholar dreaming he hit his foot on a nail, felt it pain him when he waked, and bound it up. Another scholar coming to see him, asked him, *Why he went to bed without shoes*.

A scholar being told the river had carried off a great part of his ground, answered, *What shall I say?*

A scholar sealed a wine vessel he had, but his man bored the bottom and stole the liquor. He was astonished at the liquor's diminishing, though the seal was entire; and another saying, "Perhaps it is taken out at the bottom." The scholar answered, *Most foolish of men, it is not the under part, but the upper that is deficient.*

A scholar meeting a person, said to him, "I heard you were dead." To which the other answered, "You see I am alive." The scholar replied, *Perhaps so, but he who told me the contrary was a man of much more*

credit than you.

A scholar hearing that crows lived two hundred years, bought one, saying, *I wish to make the experiment.*

A scholar being on board a ship in a tempest, when the rest seized upon different articles to swim ashore on, he laid hold of the anchor.

A scholar hearing one of two twins was dead, when he met the other, asked, *Which of you was it that died? You or your brother?*

A scholar coming to a ferry, went into the boat on horseback. Being asked the reason, he said, *I am in great haste.*

A scholar wanting money sold his books, and wrote to his father, *Rejoice with me, for now my books maintain me.*

A scholar sending his son to war, the youth said, “I shall bring you back an enemy’s head.” To which the scholar replied, *If you even lose your own head, I shall be happy to see you return in good health.*

A scholar in Greece receiving a letter from a friend, desiring him to buy some books there, neglected the business. But the friend arriving some time after, the scholar said, *I am sorry I did not receive your letter about the books*.

A scholar, a bald man, and a barber, travelling together, agreed each to watch four hours at night, in turn, for the sake of security. The barber’s lot came first, who shaved the scholar’s head when asleep, then waked him when his turn came. The scholar scratching his head, and feeling it bald, exclaimed, *You wretch of a barber, you have waked the bald man instead of me.*

Pope Alexander VII. asking the celebrated Greek, Leo Allatius, why he did not enter into orders? he answered, *Because I desire to have it in my power to marry if I chuse*. The pope adding, And why do you not marry? Leo replied, *Because I desire to have it in my power to enter into orders if I chuse*.

Erasmus, himself a Satirist, collected thousands of the jests of the Greeks and Romans. These more often noted the wit than the witlessness of the speakers and include all degrees of wit from mere whimsicality to sharpest satire.

Some of the best ones follow.

GREEK

A friend asking him how great glory was procured, Agesilaus answered, *By contempt of death.*

Being asked the boundaries of the Spartan state, he answered, *The points of our spears.*

One asking him why Sparta had no walls, he shewed him armed citizens, saying, *These are the walls of Sparta.*

Being very fond of his children, he would sometimes ride about on a cane among them. A friend catching him at this sport, Agesilaus said, *Tell nobody till you are yourself a father.*

King Demaratus being asked in company whether he was silent through folly, or wisdom, answered, *A fool cannot be silent.*

Cleomenes the son of Cleombrotus, when presented with some game-cocks, by a person who, enhancing the gift, said they were of a breed who would die before they yielded; answered, *Give me rather some of the breed that kill them.*

Pausanias, when a physician told him "You look well," answered, *Yes, you are not my physician.*

When the same was blamed by a friend, for speaking ill of a physician, whom he had never tried, he replied, *If I had tried him, I should not have lived to speak ill of him.*

Charillus, being angry with his slave, said to him, *Were I not in a passion, I would kill thee.*

A dancer saying to a Spartan, "You cannot stand so long on one leg as I can." *True*, answered the Spartan, *but any goose can.*

Another Spartan mother giving her son his shield, when going to battle, said *Son, either this, or upon this.*

Another to her son who complained that his sword was short, said *Do you add a step to it.*

One objecting to him his luxurious feeding, he showed him some dear-bought dish, and said, "Would not you buy this, if it were sold for a penny?" "Surely," said the other. *Then*, said Aristippus, *I only give to luxury what you give to avarice.*

Diogenes the Cynic, being in the house of Plato, strode over the carpets with his dirty feet, saying *I trample the pride of Plato. True*, said Plato, *but with a greater pride.*

Seeing a very unskilful archer shoot, he seated himself by the mark. The reason was *That he may not hit me.*

Going to the town of Myndus, and seeing the gates very large, and the town small, he called out *Men of Myndus! shut your gates least the town should escape.*

Being asked of what beast the bite is most dangerous, he answered *Of wild beasts, that of a slanderer: of tame, that of a flatterer.*

Entering a dirty bath he said *Where are those washed who wash here?*

Being asked what wine he liked best, he said *Another's.*

Crates the Cynic of Thebes, being asked a remedy for love, said *Hunger is one remedy. Time is a better. The best is a rope*.

Theophrastus to one who was silent in company said *If you are a fool you do wisely! if you are wise you do foolishly*.

Empedocles saying to Xenophanes the philosopher "That a wise man could not be found." *True*, answered Xenophanes, *for it must be a wise man who knows him*.

Archelaus, to a prating barber, who asked how he would please to be shaved? answered, *In silence*.

One asking Demosthenes what is the first point in eloquence, he answered, *Acting*. And the second? *Acting.* And the third? *Acting still.*

An Athenian who wanted eloquence, but was very brave, when another had, in a long and brilliant speech, promised great affairs, got up and said, *Men of Athens, all that he has said, I will do*.

Zeuxis entered into a contest of art with Parrhasius. The former painted grapes so truly that birds came and pecked at them. The latter delineated a cloth so exactly, that Zeuxis coming in, said, "Take away the cloth that we may see this piece." And finding his error, said, *Parrhasius, thou hast conquered. I deceived but birds, thou an artist*.

Zeuxis painted a boy carrying grapes: the birds came again and pecked. Some applauding, Zeuxis flew to the picture in a passion, saying, *My boy must be very ill painted*.

Gnathena the courtesan, when a very small bottle of wine was brought in, with the praise that it was

very old, answered, *It is very little for its age*.

Philip of Macedon, sitting in judgment after dinner, an old woman receiving an unjust sentence, exclaimed, “I appeal.” “To whom!” said Philip. *To Philip, when sober*, answered the matron. The king took the lesson.

ROMAN

A soldier boasting of a scar in his face, from a wound in battle, Augustus said, *Yes, you will look back when you run away*.

Fabia Dollabella saying, she was thirty years of age; Cicero answered, *It must be true, for I have heard it these twenty years*.

Seeing Lentulus, his son-in-law, a man of very small stature, walking up, with a long sword at his side, he called out, *Who has tied my son-in-law to that sword?*

One finding his shoes eaten with mice, in the morning when he rose, asked Cato, in great agitation, the meaning of the portent; who answered, *It is no prodigy that mice should eat shoes! had the shoes eaten the mice, it would have been indeed a prodigy*.

When Brutus was dissuaded from his last battle, as the jeopardy was great, he only said, *To-day all will be well, or I shall not care*.

A large bull being produced in the amphitheatre, the hunter struck ten times, and missed. Gallienus, the emperor, who was present, sent the hunter a

wreath: and all wondering, he said, *It is extremely difficult to miss such a mark so often.*

One saying, that in Sicily he had bought a lamprey five feet long, for a trifle; Galba, the orator, to reprove the lye, said, *No wonder. They are found there so long, that the fishers constantly use them for cables.*

Scipio Nasica going to visit Ennius the poet, was told by his maid-servant, that he was not at home, though he knew he was. A few days after Ennius came to see Nasica, who hearing his voice, called out, that he was not within. Then said Ennius, “What! Do not I hear your voice?” To which Nasica replied, *You are an impudent fellow. I believed your maid! and you will not believe myself*.

Sulpitius Galba the orator, pretended to sleep once, while Mecenas made love to his wife, but seeing, at the same time, a slave stealing wine from the side-board, he cried, *Friend, I do not sleep for all.*

From the collection of Poggio we get other Italian stories.

Some clowns going to Arezzo, to buy a crucifix for their church, the carver seeing them very stupid, said, Do you want a living or a dead crucifix? They requiring time to consider: after much deliberation, returned, saying, *Make us a living one! for if our neighbours be not pleased with that, we can easily kill it.*

An inhabitant of a maritime town, looking out at a window, and seeing the ocean in a violent storm, and many vessels tossing about, said to a friend who was with him, “I wonder so many people go to sea, when so many die there.” *Do not you wonder*, answered the friend, *why so many people go to bed, when so many die there?*

Bardella da Mantoua, being led to execution, a priest, who was with him, said, “Be of good cheer, for to-night you will sup with the Virgin Mary, and with the apostles.” Bardella answered, *It will be a favour if you will go for me, for this is a fast-day with me*.

Marcello da Scopeto, consulting Coccheto da Trievi, the physician, he wrote a receipt, and said, “Here, take this at three times; one every morning.” Marcello cut the paper in three; and made a shift to swallow it in three mornings.

Tosetto one day putting the physician Zerboico in a violent passion; he said, “Peace, rogue. Do not I know that your father was a bricklayer?” Tosetto answered, *Nobody knew this, save your father, who used to carry him lime*.

The following are from *Il Cortegiano*, by Castiglione.

An Italian Doctor of Law, seeing a criminal, who was whipped, walking very slowly during the operation, asked him why he did not hasten, that he might have fewer stripes; adding many arguments to shew that the slower he went, the more he must suffer. To which, the criminal, standing still, and looking him full in the face, replied with great gravity, *When you are whipped through the streets, walk as you please, and pray allow me to enjoy the same liberty*.

Duke Frederic of Modena, having built a palace, was at a loss what to do with the rubbish. An abbot, standing by, told him to cause a pit to be digged large enough to contain it. “And what,” said Frederic, laughing, “shall I do with the earth which is dug out of the pit?” To which the abbot, with great wisdom, replied, *Make the pit so large as to hold all.*

Ponzio of Sila seeing a rustic who had two capons

to sell, and agreeing on the price, begged him also to carry them to his lodging, where he was going, and he would pay him for his pains. Ponzio led him to a round bell-tower, separate from the church, near which was an alley: when standing still, Ponzio said, “I have wagered a couple of capons with a friend, that this bell-tower is not forty feet round, and have got a packthread here that we may try it.” So drawing the thread from his pocket, he gave one end to the rustic; bidding him hold it, while he went round. But when Ponzio came to the other side of the bell-tower, where the alley was, he fixed the thread with a nail, and ran down the alley with the capons. The peasant after long standing and bawling, went round, and had the nail and packthread for his capons and labour.

Not every tongue offers us collections to be translated, nor are all those that are available yet translated, but we may give a few of Spanish origin, taken from the collection of Melchior de Santa Cruz which are the flowers of Spanish Apothegms and wise or witty sayings.

Like jesters of all other nations the Spaniards saw fit to heap sarcasms on the medical profession.

We can only assume that in those days doctors had not reached the heights of sapience they have since attained.

And also, we must remember that it was the custom for the unlearned to poke fun at the scholars, hence all professions felt the satiric lash.

At the table of Pope Alexander the sixth, the company debated one day, if it were advantageous to a state to have physicians in it? The greater part held not; and alleged, as a reason, that Rome had passed her first, and best, six hundred years without them. But the pope said, he was not of that opinion, *for were there no physicians, the multitude of mankind would be so great, that the world could not contain them.*

A Biscayan clergyman, a follower of the cardinal Don Pedro Gonzales de Mendoza, pulled one day a pistol out of his pocket. The cardinal saw him, and reproved him, saying, “That it was indecent for a clergyman to carry arms.” The Biscayan answered, “Most reverend lord, I do not carry arms to hurt any man, but to defend myself against the dogs of this country, which are remarkable for fierceness.” The cardinal said, “I can tell you a charm against dogs. You need only repeat any verse of the gospel of St. John.” The Biscayan replied, *Yes, my lord, but that does not apply in every case, for many of our dogs do not understand Latin.*

The same cardinal said of the monks, who, by shaving the top and under part of the head, form a crown of hair around, that they had crowns which the most ambitious would not envy.

A bishop sent a present of six capons to brother Bernaldino Palomo, but the servant who carried them stole one. *Tell his lordship*, said Palomo, *that I kiss his hands for the five capons.—Do you kiss his hands for the other*.

Juan de Ayala, lord of the town of Cabolla, slew a crane. His cook, when he dressed it, gave a leg to his mistress. When it was served up, Juan said, Where is the other leg? The cook answered, Cranes have but one leg. The day following, Juan took his cook to the chace with him, and perceiving a flock of cranes, which, as usual with that bird, all stood upon one leg, the cook said, Your worship sees the truth of what I said. Juan riding up to the birds called, *Ox, Ox, Ox*. The cranes being startled, put down the other leg: and Juan said, See, you knave, have they two legs or one? The cook answered, *Body of me, sir, had you called Ox, Ox, to the one you dined on yesterday it would have produced its other leg too*.

Perico de Ayala, the buffoon of the Marquis de Villena, came to see Don Frances, the buffoon of Charles V. when he lay on his death bed. Perico seeing him in so bad a way, said, Brother Don Frances, I request you, by the great friendship which always was between us, that when you go to heaven (which I believe must be very soon, since you lived so pious a life), you will beseech God to have mercy on my soul. Frances answered, *Tie a thread on this finger, that I may not forget it.* These were his last

words; and he instantly expired.

The servants of a Spanish lord said, in his presence, that Don Diego Deza, archbishop of Seville, was very liberal to his domestics. The lord answered, So he may, for he has his wealth but for his life. A page replied, *And for how many lives has your lordship yours?*

Some thieves trying one night to break into a shop, in which two servant men lay; one of them called to the robbers. *Come back when we are asleep.*

A rich man sent to call a physician for a slight disorder he had suffered the preceding night. The physician felt his pulse, and said, Sir, do you eat well? Yes, said the patient. Do you sleep well? I do. *Then*, said the physician, *I shall give you something to take away all that.*

A labourer intending to bind his son apprentice to a butcher, asked a gentleman of the village, his friend, to whom he should put him. The answer was, *You had best bind him to the physician, for he is the best butcher I know*.

A physician went to visit a young lady, daughter of a nobleman. Desiring her arm, to feel her pulse, the damsel, from pride, covered the place with the sleeve of her shift. The physician also drew down his coat sleeve, and applying it, said, *A linen pulse must have a woollen physician.*

A bad painter, who had never produced any thing worth, went to another place, and commenced physician. A person who knew him, meeting him there, asked the reason of this change. *Because* said he, *if I now commit faults, the earth covers them.*

To a student of a college was brought a large dish of soup, and only one pea in it. He rose, and began to strip. His companion asking what was the matter, he answered, *I am going to swim after that pea.*

The effects of a merchant, who was greatly in debt, being on sale, one bought a pillow, saying, *That it must be good to sleep on, since he could sleep on it, who owed so much.*

The same merchant being asked, how he could sleep with such debts upon him? said, *The wonder is, how my creditors could sleep.*

A Gallician, being at the war of Granada, received a wound in the head with an arrow. The surgeon arriving, said, upon examination, You are a dead man, the arrow has pierced your brain. The Gallician said, Look again, for that is impossible. The surgeon replied, It is so; I see it plain. *It cannot be*, said the Gallician: *for if I had any brain, I should not have been here*.

A man went to borrow an ass of a neighbour, who said the ass was from home. Meanwhile the animal chanced to bray: upon which the borrower exclaimed, How! did you not tell me the ass was abroad? The other replied, in a passion, *Will you prefer the ass's word to mine?*

A passenger going to Peru, a great storm arose; and the master of the vessel ordered, that the most burdensome articles that every one had should be thrown into the sea, to lighten the vessel. Upon which this passenger ran and brought up his wife, saying, *That she was the most burdensome article he had.*

A squire being asked, why he had married a deaf wife? said, *In hopes she was also dumb*.

The German nation made small pretence to wit or humor. What we have of their early efforts is either gross or stupid.

A few specimens taken from their mediæval Jest collections will quickly prove this.

A malicious woman often beat her husband; being reproved for it, and told that her husband was her head, she answered, *May not I beat my own head as I please?*

Some Dutchmen conversing in a bookseller's shop at Leyden, an unknown German came in, upon which one of them exclaimed, "Why is Saul among the prophets?" The German retorted: *He is seeking his father's asses*.

A very ignorant priest saying mass, saw on the margin of his book, *Salta per tria* (skip three); meaning that he should find the rest of the office three leaves further on; upon which he leaped three steps forwards from the altar. The clowns about him, thinking he had suddenly gone mad, took and bound him, and carried him home.

One being asked, what made him bald? said, *My*

hair.

A lady asking that celebrated general, prince Maurice, who was the first captain of the age? he answered, *The marquis of Spinola is the second*. He thereby gave to understand, that he knew himself to be the first; but did not chuse either to say so, or tell a falsehood.

Two ladies of high rank, disputing the precedence in a procession, the Emperor, Charles V. desired they would make him their arbiter. Having heard the reasons on both sides, he found no other way to end the difference, than by ordering that the most foolish should go first. After which there were as many disputes who should go last; till they agreed, that each should be foolish in her turn.

Charles V. going to see the new cloister of the Dominicans at Vienna, overtook a peasant, who was carrying a sucking pig, and whose cries were so disagreeable to the emperor, that, after many expressions of impatience, he said to the peasant, “My friend, do not you know how to silence a sucking pig?” The poor man said modestly, that he really did not, and should be happy to learn. “Take it by the tail,” said the Emperor. The peasant finding this succeed upon trial, turned to the Emperor, and said, *Faith, friend, you must have been longer at the*

trade than me, for you understand it better. An answer which furnished repeated laughter to Charles and his court.

EPIGRAMS

Collections of Mediæval Epigrams are both numerous and lengthy and not infrequently their comparative value depends largely on the translator's learning or talent.

For instance a distich of Plato's is thus translated by Coleridge,

THE THIEF AND THE SUICIDE

> Jack, finding gold, left a rope on the ground;
> Bill, missing his gold, used the rope which he found.

and is thus rendered by Shelley,

> A man was about to hang himself,
> Finding a purse, then threw away his rope;
> The owner, coming to reclaim his pelf,
> The halter found and used it. So is Hope
> Changed for Despair—one laid upon the shelf,
> We take the other. Under heaven's high cope
> Fortune is God—all you endure and do
> Depends on circumstance as much as you.

But the modernization is not just now our pursuit, so the epigrams will be given in something approaching chronological order and the translator's name mentioned when known.

PLATO

THE MISER AND THE MOUSE

> "Thou little rogue, what brings thee to my house?"
> Said a starv'd miser to a straggling mouse.
> "Friend," quoth the mouse, "thou hast no cause to fear;
> I only *lodge* with thee, I *eat* elsewhere."

LUCILLIUS

A MISER'S DREAM

> Flint dream'd he gave a feast, 'twas regal fare,
> And hang'd himself in 's sleep in sheer despair.

NICARCHUS

THE GREAT CONTENTION

> Three dwarfs contended by a state decree,
> Which was the least and lightest of the three.
> First, Hermon came, and his vast skill to try,
> With thread in hand leap'd through a needle's eye.

Forth from a crevice Demas then advanc'd
And on a spider's web securely danc'd.
What feat show'd Sospiter in this high quarrel?—
No eyes could see him, and he won the laurel.

UNKNOWN AUTHOR

ON LATE-ACQUIRED WEALTH

Poor in my youth, and in life's later scenes
  Rich to no end, I curse my natal hour,
Who nought enjoy'd while young, denied the means;
  And nought when old enjoy'd, denied the power.

A VOICE FROM THE GRAVE

Phido nor hand nor touch to me applied;
Fever'd, I thought but of his name—and died.

ON THE INCONSTANCY OF WOMAN'S LOVE

My Fair says, she no spouse but me
Would wed, though Jove himself were he.
  She says it: but I deem
That what the fair to lovers swear
Should be inscribed upon the air,
  Or in the running stream.

CATULLUS

ON HIS OWN LOVE

That I love thee, and yet that I hate thee, I feel;
  Impatient, thou bid'st me my reasons explain:
I tell thee, nor more for my life can reveal,
  That I love thee, and hate thee—and tell it with pain.

ALY BEN AHMED BEN MANSOUR

TO THE VIZIR CASSIM OBID ALLAH, ON THE DEATH OF ONE OF HIS SONS

Poor Cassim! thou art doom'd to mourn
  By destiny's decree;
Whatever happen it must turn
  To misery for thee.
Two sons hadst thou, the one thy pride,

The other was thy pest;
Ah, why did cruel death decide
To snatch away the best?
No wonder thou should'st droop with woe,
Of such a child bereft;
But now thy tears must doubly flow,
For ah!—the other's left.

THE KHALIPH RADHI BILLAH

TO A LADY UPON SEEING HER BLUSH

Leila! whene'er I gaze on thee
My alter'd cheek turns pale,
While upon thine, sweet maid, I see
A deep'ning blush prevail.
Leila, shall I the cause impart
Why such a change takes place?
The crimson stream deserts my heart,
To mantle on thy face.

JANUS PANNONIUS

ON AURISPA

Aurispa nothing writes though learn'd, for he
By a wise silence seems more learn'd to be.

ACTIUS SANNAZARIUS

ON AUFIDIUS

A hum'rous fellow in a tavern late,
Being drunk and valiant, gets a broken pate;
The surgeon with his instruments and skill,
Searches his skull, deeper and deeper still,
To feel his brains, and try if they were sound;
And, as he keeps ado about the wound,
The fellow cries—Good surgeon, spare your pains,
When I began this brawl I had no brains.

EURICIUS CORDUS

TO PHILOMUSUS

If only when they're dead, you poets praise,
I own I'd rather have your blame always.

THE DOCTOR'S APPEARANCE

Three faces wears the doctor; when first sought

An angel's—and a god's the cure half wrought:
But when, that cure complete, he seeks his fee,
The devil looks then less terrible than he.

GEORGIUS BUCHANANUS

TO ZOILUS

With industry I spread your praise,
With equal, you my censure blaze;
But, Zoilus, all in vain we do—
The world nor credits me nor you.

ON LEONORA

There's a lie on thy cheek in its roses,
A lie echoed back by thy glass.
Thy necklace on greenhorns imposes,
And the ring on thy finger is brass.
Yet thy tongue, I affirm, without giving an inch back,
Outdoes the sham jewels, rouge, mirror, and pinchbeck.

JOHANNES SECUNDUS

ON CHARINUS, THE HUSBAND OF AN UGLY WIFE

Your wife's possest of such a face and mind,
So charming that, and this so soft and kind,
So smooth her forehead, and her voice so sweet,
Her words so tender and her dress so neat;
That would kind Jove, whence man all good derives,
In wondrous bounty send me three such wives,
Dear happy husband, take it on my word,
To Pluto I'd give two, to take the third.

THEODORUS BEZA

In age, youth, and manhood, three wives have I tried,
Whose qualities rare all my wants have supplied.
The first, goaded on by the ardour of youth,
I woo'd for the sake of her person, forsooth:
The second I took for the sake of her purse;
And the third—for what reason? I wanted a nurse.

PAULUS THOMAS

ON CELSUS

With self love Celsus burns: is he not blest?
For thus without a rival he may rest.

STEPHANUS PASCHASIUS

MARRIED LIFE

No day, no hour, no moment, is my house
Free from the clamour of my scolding spouse!
My servants all are rogues; and so am I,
Unless, for quiet's sake, I join the cry.
I aim, in all her freaks, my wife to please;
I wage domestic war, in hopes of ease.
I vain the hopes! and my fond bosom bleeds,
To feel how soon to peace mad strife succeeds:
To find, with servants jarring, or my wife,
The worst of lawsuits is a married life.

JOHANNES AUDŒMUS

TO A FRIEND IN DISTRESS

I wish thy lot, now bad, still worse, my friend;
For when at worst, they say, things always mend.

ADVICE TO PONTICUS

Thou nothing giv'st, but dying wilt: then die:
He giveth twice, who giveth speedily.

BALTHASAR BONIFACIUS

DANGEROUS LOVE

All whom I love die young; Zoilus, I'll try,
Tho' loath'd, to love thee—that thou too may'st die.

From Bhartrihari, an Indian philosopher who flourished about the ninth century, we select the following cynical paragraphs.

I believed that one woman was devoted to me, but she is now attracted by another man, and another man takes pleasure in her, while a second woman interests herself in me. Curses on them both, and on the god of love, and on the other woman, and on myself.

The fundamentally ignorant man is easily led, and the wise man still more easily; but not even the Almighty Himself can exercise any influence on the smatterer.

A man may tear the pearl from between the teeth of the crocodile; he may steer his ship over the roughest seas; he may twine a serpent round his brow like a laurel; but he cannot convince a foolish and stubborn opponent.

A man may squeeze oil from sand; he may slake his thirst from the well in a mirage; he may even obtain possession of a hare's horn; but he cannot convince a foolish and stubborn opponent.

A dog will eat with delight the most noisome and decaying bones, and will pay no attention even if the ruler of the gods stands before him—and in like manner a mean man takes no heed of the

worthlessness of his belongings.

Our nobility of birth may pass away; our virtues may fall into decay: our moral character may perish as if thrown over a precipice: our family may be burnt to ashes, and a thunderbolt may dash away our power like an enemy: let us keep a firm grip on our money, for without this the whole assembly of virtues are but as blades of glass.

Let a man be wealthy, and he shall be quite wise, learned in the sacred writings and of good birth; virtuous, handsome and eloquent. Gold attracts all the virtues to itself.

The same portion of the sky that forms a circle round the moon by night also forms a circle round the sun by day How great is the labour of both!

A sour heart; a face hardened with inward pride and a nature as difficult to penetrate as the narrowest of mountain passes—these things are known to be characteristic of women: their mind is known by the wise to be as changeable as the drop of dew on the lotus leaf. Faults develop in a woman as she grows up, exactly as poisonous branches sprout from the creeper.

The beautiful features of a woman are praised by the poets—her breasts are compared to pots of gold: her face to the shining moon, and her hips to the forehead of an elephant: nevertheless the beauty of a woman merits no praise.

From *The Baharistan*, the work of Jami, a Persian poet and philosopher.

Bahlúl being asked to count the fools of Basrah, replied: “They are without the confines of computation. If you ask me, I will count the wise men, for they are no more than a limited few.”

A learned man being annoyed while writing a letter to one of his confidential friends, at the conduct of a person who, seated at his side, glanced out of the corner of his eye at his writing, wrote: “Had not a hireling thief been seated at my side and engaged in reading my letter I should have written to thee all my secrets.” The man said: “By God, my lord, I have neither read nor even looked at thy letter.” “Fool!” exclaimed the other; “how then canst thou say what thou now sayest?”

A mendicant once coming to beg something at the door of a house, the master of it called out to him from the interior: “Pray excuse me: the women of the house are not here.” The beggar retorted: “I wish for a morsel of bread, not to embrace the women of the

house."

A certain person made a claim of ten dirams on Júhí. The judge enquired: "Hast thou any testimony to offer?" On the answer being in the negative he continued: "Shall I put him on his oath?" "Of what value is *his* oath?" said the man in reply. "O judge of the Faithful," then proposed Júhí in his turn, "there lives in my quarter of the town an Imám, temperate, truthful and beneficent, send for him and put him on his oath instead of me, that this man's mind may be easy."

A poet read me once a wretched ode—
Verse of the kind where "alif" finds no place.
I said the kind of verse that *thou* should'st make,
Is that in which *no* letter we could trace.

Jáhiz relates: "I never experienced so much shame as this event occasioned me. One day a woman took my hand and led me to the shop of a master metal founder, saying to him: 'Be it thus formed.' I being puzzled to know what this conduct signified, questioned the master, who in reply said: 'She had ordered me to make her a figure in the form of Satan. When I told her that I did not know in what semblance to make it, she brought thee, as thou knowest, and said: 'Make it in this semblance.'"

The same learned man, too, gives us this relation: “As I was once standing in the street, in conversation with a friend, a woman came and standing opposite me, gazed in my face. When her staring had exceeded all bounds, I said to my slave: ‘Go to that woman and ask her what she seeks.’ The slave returning to me thus reported her answer: ‘I wished to inflict some punishment on my eyes which had committed a great fault, and could find none more severe for them than the sight of thy ugly face.’”

A person who perceived an ugly man asking pardon for his sins, and praying for deliverance from the fire of hell, said to him: “Wherefore, O friend, with such a countenance as thou hast, would’st thou cheat hell, and give such a face reluctantly to the fire?”

An assembly of people being seated together, and engaged in discussing the merits and defects of men, one of them observed: “Whoever has not two seeing eyes is but half a man; and whoever has not in his house a beautiful bride is but half a man; finally he who cannot swim in the sea is but half a man.” A blind man in the company who had no wife, and could not swim, called out to him: “O my dear friend, thou hast laid down an extraordinary principle, and cast me so far out of the circle of manhood, that still half a man is required before I can take the name of one who is no man.”

A Beduin having lost a camel, made an oath that

when he found it he would sell it for one diram. When however he found it, repenting of his oath, he tied a cat to its neck, and called out: “Who will buy the camel for one diram and the cat for a hundred dirams; but both together, as I will not part them.” “How cheap,” said a person who had arrived there, “would be this camel, had it not this collar attached to its neck!”

A Beduin who had lost a camel, proclaimed: “Whoever brings me my camel shall have two camels as a reward.” “Out, man!” said they to him; “what kind of business is this? Is the whole ass load of less value than a small additional bundle laid upon it?” “You have this excuse for your words,” replied he, “that you have never tasted the pleasure of finding, and the sweetness of recovering what has been lost.”

A Khalíf was partaking of food with an Arab from the desert. During the repast as his glance fell upon the Arab’s portion he saw in it a hair, and said: “O Arab, take that hair out of thy food.” The Arab exclaimed: “It is impossible to eat at the table of one who looks so at his guest’s portion as to perceive a hair in it.” Then withdrawing his hand he swore never again to partake of food at his table.

A weaver left a deposit in the house of a learned man. After a few days had elapsed, finding some

necessity for it, he paid him a visit and found him seated at the door of his house giving instruction to a number of pupils who were standing in a row before him. “O Professor,” said the man, “I am in want of the deposit which I left.” “Be seated a moment,” replied the other, “until I have finished the lesson.” The weaver sat down, but the lesson lasted a long time and he was pressed for time. Now that learned man had a habit when giving lessons, of wagging his head, and the weaver seeing this, and fancying that to give a lesson was merely to wag the head, said: “Rise up, O Professor, and make me thy deputy till thy return: let me wag my head in place of thee, and do thou bring out my deposit, for I am in a hurry.” The learned man, hearing this, laughed and said:

In public halls the city jurist boasts
That all, obscure or clear, to him is known;
But if thou ask him aught, his answer mark:—
A gesture with the hand or head alone.

From a collection called *The Pleasantries of Cogia Nasr Eddin Effendi*, the typical noodle of the Turks.

Cogia Effendi one day went into a garden, pulled up some carrots and turnips and other kinds of vegetables, which he found, putting some into a sack and some into his bosom; suddenly the gardener coming up, laid hold of him, and said, “What are you seeking here?” The Cogia, being in great consternation, not finding any other reply, answered, “For some days past a great wind has been blowing, and that wind blew me hither.” “But who pulled up

these vegetables," said the gardener? "As the wind blew very violently," replied the Cogia, "it cast me here and there, and whatever I laid hold of in the hope of saving myself remained in my hands." "Ah," said the gardener, "but who filled the sack with them?" "Well," said the Cogia, "that is the very question I was about to ask myself when you came up."

One day Cogia Nasr Eddin Effendi said, "O Mussulmen, give thanks to God Most High that He did not give the camel wings; for, had He given them, they would have perched upon your houses and chimneys, and have caused them to tumble upon your heads."

One day the, Cogia saw a great many ducks playing on the top of a fountain. The Cogia, running towards them, said, "I'll catch you"; whereupon they all rose up and took to flight. The Cogia, taking a little bread in his hand, sat down on the side of the fountain, and crumbling the bread in the fountain, fell to eating. A person coming up, said, "What are you eating?" "Duck broth," replied the Cogia.

One day the Cogia went with Cheragh Ahmed to the den of a wolf, in order to see the cubs. Said the Cogia to Ahmed: "Do you go in." Ahmed did so. The old wolf was abroad, but presently returning, tried to

get into the cave to its young. When it was about half way in the Cogia seized hard hold of it by the tail. The wolf in its struggles cast a quantity of dust into the eyes of Ahmed. “Hallo, Cogia,” he cried, “What does this dust mean.” “If the wolf’s tail breaks,” said the Cogia, “You’ll soon see what the dust means.”

One day a thief got into the Cogia’s house. Cries his wife, “O Cogia, there is a thief in the house.” “Don’t make any disturbance,” says the Cogia. “I wish to God that he may find something, so that I may take it from him.”

Cogia Effendi, every time he returned to his house, was in the habit of bringing a piece of liver, which his wife always gave to a common woman, placing before the Cogia leavened patties to eat when he came home in the evening. One day the Cogia said, “O wife, every day I bring home a liver: where do they all go to?” “The cat runs away with all of them,” replied the wife. Therefore the Cogia getting up, put his hatchet in the trunk and locked it up. Says his wife to the Cogia, “For fear of whom do you lock up the hatchet?” “For fear of the cat,” replied the Cogia. “What should the cat do with the hatchet?” said the wife. “Why,” replied the Cogia, “as he takes a fancy to the liver, which costs two aspres, is it not likely that he will take a fancy to the hatchet, which costs four?”

One day the Cogia, being out on a journey, encamped along with a caravan, and tied up his horse along with the others. When it was morning the Cogia could not find his horse amongst the rest, not knowing how to distinguish it; forthwith taking a bow and arrow in his hand, he said, “Men, men, I have lost my horse.” Every one laughing, took his own horse; and the Cogia looking, saw a horse which he instantly knew to be his own. Forthwith placing his right foot in the stirrup, he mounted the horse, so that his face looked to the horse’s tail. “O Cogia,” said they, “why do you mount the horse the wrong way?” “It is not my fault,” said he, “but the horse’s, for the horse is left-handed.”

One day as the Cogia was travelling in the Derbend he met a shepherd. Said the shepherd to the Cogia. “Art thou a faquir?” “Yes,” said the Cogia. Said the shepherd, “See these seven men who are lying here, they were men like you whom I killed because they could not answer questions which I asked. Now, in the first place let us come to an understanding; if you can answer my questions let us hold discourse, if not, let us say nothing.” Says the Cogia, “What may your questions be?” Said the shepherd, “The moon, when it is new, is small, afterwards it increases, until it looks like a wheel; after the fifteenth, it diminishes, and does not remain; then again, there is a little one, of the size of Hilal, which does remain. Now what becomes of the old moons?” Says the Cogia. “How is it that you don’t know a thing like that? They take those old moons and make lightning of them, have you not seen them when the heaven thunders, glittering like

so many swords?" "Bravo, Fakeer," said the shepherd. "Well art thou acquainted with the matter, I had come to the same conclusion myself."

One day the Cogia's wife, in order to plague the Cogia, boiled some broth exceedingly hot, brought it into the room and placed it on the table. The wife then, forgetting that it was hot, took a spoon and put some into her mouth, and, scalding herself, began to shed tears. "O, wife," said the Cogia, "what is the matter with you; is the broth hot?" "Dear Efendy," said the wife, "my mother, who is now dead loved broth very much; I thought of that, and wept on her account." The Cogia thinking that what she said was truth, took a spoonful of the broth and burning his mouth began to cry and bellow. "What is the matter with you," said his wife; "why do you cry?" Said the Cogia, "You cry because your mother is gone, but I cry because her daughter is here."

One day a man came to the house of the Cogia and asked him to lend him his ass. "He is not at home," replied the Cogia. But it so happened that the ass began to bray within. "O Cogia Efendy," said the man, "you say that the ass is not at home, and there he is braying within." "What a strange fellow you are!" said the Cogia. "You believe the ass, but will not believe a grey bearded man like me."

One day the Cogia roasted a goose, and set out in order to carry it to the Emperor. On the way, feeling very hungry, he cut off one leg and ate it. Coming into the presence of the Emperor, he placed the goose before him. On seeing it, Tamerlank said to himself, “The Cogia is making game of me,” and was very angry, and demanded, “How happens it that this goose has but one foot?” Said the Cogia, “In our country all the geese have only one foot. If you disbelieve me, look at the geese by the side of that fountain.” Now at that time there was a flock of geese by the rim of the fountain, all of whom were standing on one leg. Timour instantly ordered that all the drummers should at once play up; the drummers began to strike with their sticks, and forthwith all the geese stood on both legs. On Timour saying, “Don’t you see that they have two legs?” the Cogia replied, “If you keep up that drumming you yourself will presently have four.”

One day the Cogia’s wife, having washed the Cogia’s kaftan, hung it upon a tree to dry; the Cogia going out saw, as he supposed, a man standing in the tree with his arms stretched out. Says the Cogia to his wife, “O wife, go and fetch me my bow and arrow.” His wife fetched and brought them to him; the Cogia taking an arrow, shot it and pierced the kaftan and stretched it on the ground; then returning, he made fast his door and lay down to sleep. Going out in the morning he saw that what he had shot was his own kaftan; thereupon, sitting down, he cried aloud, “O God, be thanked; if I had been in it I should have certainly been killed.”

One day as the Cogia was going to his house, he met a number of students, and said to them, “Gentlemen, pray this night come to our house and taste a sup of the old father’s broth.” “Very good,” said the students, and following the Cogia, came to the house. “Pray enter,” said he, and brought them into the house, then going up to where his wife was, “O wife,” said he, “I have brought some travellers that we may give them a cup of broth.” “O master,” said his wife, “is there oil in the house or rice, or have you brought any that you wish to have broth?” “Bless me,” said the Cogia, “give me the broth pan,” and snatching it up, he forthwith ran to where the students were, and exclaimed, “Pray, pardon me gentlemen, but had there been oil or rice in our house, this is the pan in which I would have served the broth up to you.”

One day the Cogia going into a person’s garden climbed up into an apricot tree and began to eat the apricots. The master coming said, “Cogia, what are you doing here?” “Dear me,” said the Cogia, “don’t you see that I am a nightingale sitting in the apricot tree?” Said the gardener, “Let me hear you sing.” The Cogia began to warble. Whereupon the other fell to laughing, and said: “Do you call that singing?” “I am a Persian nightingale,” said the Cogia, “and Persian nightingales sing in this manner.”

From *The Book of Laughable Stories*, collected by Gregory Bar Hebræus in the thirteenth century. The collection includes some seven hundred stories taken from the literary products of all the Oriental countries available at that time.

Bazarjamhir said, “When thou dost not know which of two things is the better for thee [to do], take counsel with thy wife and do the opposite of that which she saith, for she will only counsel [thee to do] the things which are injurious to thee.”

A certain woman saw Socrates as they were carrying him along to crucify him, and she wept and said, “Woe is me, for they are about to slay thee without having committed any offence.” And Socrates made answer unto her, saying, “O foolish woman, wouldst thou have me also commit some crime that I might be punished like a criminal?”

Alexander [the Great] saw among the soldiers of his army a man called Alexander who continually took to flight in the time of war, and he said to him, “It is said that upon the ring of Pythagoras there was written, ‘The evil which is not perpetual is better than the good which is not perpetual.’”

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It was said to Socrates, “Which of the irrational animals is not beautiful?” And he replied, “Woman,” referring to her folly.

Another of the sages said, “The members of a

man's household are the moth of his money."

A certain man who had once been a painter left off painting and became a physician. And when it was said to him, "Why hast thou done this?" he replied, "The errors [made] in painting [all] eyes see and scrutinize; but the mistakes of the healing art the ground covereth."

Another king was asked by his sages, "To what limit hath thine understanding reached?" And he replied, "To the extent that I believe no man, neither do I put any confidence in any man whatsoever."

Another king said, "If men only knew how pleasant to me it is to forgive faults there is not one of them who would not commit them."

A poet said unto a certain avaricious man, "Why dost thou never bid me to a feast with thee?" He replied to him, "Because thou eatest very heartily indeed, besides thou swallowest so hurriedly; and whilst thou art still eating one morsel thou art getting ready for the next." The poet said to him, "What wouldst thou have then? Wouldst thou have me whilst I am eating one morsel to stand up and bow the knee, and then take another?"

Another sage said, “I hold every man who saith that he hateth riches to be a liar until he establisheth a sure proof thereof from what he hath gathered together, and having established his belief it is, at the same time, quite certain that he is a fool!”

Another miser whilst quarreling violently with his neighbour was asked by a certain man, “Why art thou fighting with him?” He replied to him, “I had eaten a roasted head, and I threw the bones outside my door, so that my friends might rejoice and mine enemies be sorry when they saw in what a luxurious manner I was living; and this fellow rose up and took the bones and threw them before his own door.”

Another poet was questioned by a man concerning a certain miser, saying, “Who eateth with him at his table?” and the poet replied, “Flies.”

To a certain comedian it was said, “When a cock riseth up in the early morning hours, why doth he hold one foot in the air?” He replied, “If he should lift up both feet together he would fall down.”

Another actor went into his house and found a

sieve laid upon his couch, and he went and hung himself up on the peg in the wall. His wife said to him, “What is this? Art thou possessed of a devil?” And he said to her, “Nay, but when I saw the sieve in my place, I went to its place.”

Another fool had two hunting dogs, one black and the other white. And the governor said to him, “Give me one of them.” The man said to him, “Which of them dost thou want?” and the governor said, “The black one.” The man said, “The black one I love more than the white,” and the governor replied, “Then give me the white one.” And the foolish man said to him, “The white one I love more than both put together.”

Another fool said, “My father went twice to Jerusalem, and there did he die and was buried, but I do not know which time he died, whether it was during the first visit or the last.”

When another fool was told, “Thy ass is stolen,” he said, “Blessed be God that I was not upon him.”

Another silly man buried some zûzê coins in the plain, and made a fragment of a cloud a mark of the place where it was. And some days after he came to carry away the money, but could not find the place to do so, and he said, “Consider now; the zûzê were

in the ground, and they must have been carried away by some people. For who can steal the cloud which is in the sky? And what arm could reach there unto? This matter is one worthy to be wondered at."

Another simpleton was asked, "How many days' journey is it between Aleppo and Damascus?" and he replied, "Twelve; six to go and six to come back."

Another silly man having gone on a journey to carry on his trade wrote to his father, saying, "I have been ill with a very grievous sickness, and if any one else had been in my place he would not have been able to live." And his father made him answer, saying, "Believe me, my son, if thou hadst died thou wouldst have grieved me sadly, and I would never have spoken to thee again in the whole course of my life."

A certain lunatic put on a skin cloak with the hairy side outwards, and when people asked him why he did so, he replied, "If God had known that it was better to have the hairy side of the skin cloak inwards, He would not have created the wool on the outside of the sheep."

Another fool owned a house together with some

other folk, and he said one day, “I want to sell the half of it which is my share and buy the other half, so that the whole building may be mine.”

From earliest times the stupid or blundering fellow has been the butt of his comrades’ shafts of wit or sarcasm.

The feeling of superiority, so delightful to the human mind, found easy expression in jeering at the discomfiture of the noodle.

More often than not, noodle stories are told of residents of some particular locality or district, whose people are looked upon as simpletons. Doubtless this originally meant merely country people, who were provincial or outlandish compared to the city bred.

But as the Greeks chose Bœotia for their noodle colony and the Persians guyed the people of Emessa, so each country has had a location or a community for its laughing stock down to the Gothamites of the English.

As a rule the same noodle stories are found in many languages, and only an exhaustive study of comparative folk lore can adequately consider the various tales.

As an instance, there is the story, of Eastern origin, that may be found in the booby tales of all nations. It has come down in late years in the form of a play, called in a German version, “Der Tisch Ist Gedeckt” and in an English form, “The Obstinate Family.”

In the Arabian tale,

A blockhead, having married his pretty cousin, gave the customary feast to their relations and friends. When the festivities were over, he conducted his guests to the door, and from absence of mind neglected to shut it before returning to his wife. “Dear cousin,” said his wife to him when they were alone, “go and shut the street door.” “It would be strange indeed,” he replied, “if I did such a thing. Am I just made a bridegroom, clothed in silk, wearing a shawl and a dagger set with diamonds, and am I to go and shut the door? Why, my dear, you are crazy. Go and shut it yourself.” “Oh, indeed!” exclaimed the wife. “Am I, young, robed in a dress, with lace and precious stones—am I to go and shut the street door? No, indeed! It is you who are become crazy, and not I. Come, let us make a bargain,” she continued; “and let the first who speaks go and fasten the door.” “Agreed,” said the husband, and immediately he became mute, and the wife too was silent, while they both sat down, dressed as they were in their nuptial attire, looking at each other and seated on opposite sofas. Thus they remained for two hours. Some thieves happened to pass by, and seeing the door open, entered and laid hold of whatever came to their hands. The silent couple heard footsteps in the house, but opened not their mouths. The thieves came into the room and saw them seated motionless and apparently indifferent to all that might take place. They continued their pillage, therefore, collecting together everything valuable, and even dragging away the carpets from beneath them; they laid hands on the noodle and his wife, taking from their persons every article of jewellery, while they, in fear of losing the wager, said not a word. Having thus cleared the house, the thieves departed quietly,

but the pair continued to sit, uttering not a syllable. Towards morning a police officer came past on his tour of inspection, and seeing the door open, walked in. After searching all the rooms and finding no person, he entered their apartment, and inquired the meaning of what he saw. Neither of them would condescend to reply. The officer became angry, and ordered their heads to be cut off. The executioner's sword was about to perform its office, when the wife cried out, "Sir, he is my husband. Do not kill him!" "Oh, oh," exclaimed the husband, overjoyed and clapping his hands, "you have lost the wager; go and shut the door." He then explained the whole affair to the police officer, who shrugged his shoulders and went away.

Another story, known in a score of variants is found in a collection of tales of the Kabaïl, Algeria, to this effect:

The mother of a youth of the Beni Jennad clan gave him a hundred reals to buy a mule; so he went to market, and on his way met a man carrying a water melon for sale. "How much for the melon?" he asks. "What will you give?" says the man. "I have only got a hundred reals," answered the booby; "had I more, you should have it." "Well," rejoined the man, "I'll take them." Then the youth took the melon and handed over the money. "But tell me," says he, "will its young one be as green as it is?" "Doubtless," answered the man, "it will be green." As the booby was going home, he allowed the melon to roll down a slope before him. It burst on its way, when up started a frightened hare. "Go to my house, young one," he shouted. "Surely a green animal has come out of it." And when he got home, he inquired of his mother if the young one had arrived.

Other stories of boobies or simpletons follow, taken here and there from the enormous mass of humorous literature on this theme.

Yet noodles are not always witless fools.

The principle of the humor in such tales is merely and only the superiority complex, that loves to laugh good naturedly or with a contemptuous tolerance at the speech or actions of those less clever than itself. It is the attitude of the cognoscenti toward,

> "The lady from the provinces, who dresses like a guy,
> Who doesn't think she waltzes,—but would rather like to try,"

as W. S. Gilbert puts it.

One day some men were walking by the riverside, and came to a place where the contrary currents caused the water to boil as in a whirlpool. "See how the water boils!" says one. "If we had plenty of oatmeal," says another, "we might make enough porridge to serve all the village for a month." So it was resolved that part of them should go to the village and fetch their oatmeal, which was soon brought and thrown into the river. But there presently arose the question of how they were to know when the porridge was ready. This difficulty was overcome by the offer of one of the company to jump in, and it was agreed that if he found it ready for use, he should signify the same to his companions. The man jumped in, and found the water deeper than he expected. Thrice he rose to the surface, but said nothing. The others, impatient at his remaining so long silent, and seeing him smack his lips, took this for an avowal that the porridge was good, and so they all jumped in after him and were

drowned.

A poor old woman used to beg her food by day and cook it at night. Half of the food she would eat in the morning, and the other half in the evening. After a while a cat got to know of this arrangement, and came and ate the meal for her. The old woman was very patient, but at last could no longer endure the cat's impudence, and so she laid hold of it. She argued with herself as to whether she should kill it or not. "If I slay it," she thought, "it will be a sin; but if I keep it alive, it will be to my heavy loss." So she determined only to punish it. She procured some cotton wool and some oil, and soaking the one in the other, tied it on to the cat's tail and then set it on fire. Away rushed the cat across the yard, up the side of the window, and on to the roof, where its flaming tail ignited the thatch and set the whole house on fire. The flames soon spread to other houses, and the whole village was destroyed.

Not a few of the *Bizarrures* of the Sieur Gaulard are the prototypes of bulls and foolish sayings of the typical Irishman, which go their ceaseless rounds in popular periodicals, and are even audaciously reproduced as original in our "comic" journals. To cite some examples:

A friend one day told M. Gaulard that the Dean of Besançon was dead. "Believe it not," said he, "for had it been so he would have told me himself, since he writes to me about everything."

M. Gaulard asked his secretary one evening what hour it was. "Sir," replied the secretary, "I cannot tell you by the dial, because the sun is set." "Well,"

quoth M. Gaulard, “and can you not see by the candle?”

On another occasion the Sieur called from his bed to a servant desiring him to see if it was daylight yet. “There is no sign of daylight,” said the servant. “I do not wonder,” rejoined the Sieur, “that thou canst not see day, great fool as thou art. Take a candle and look with it out at the window, and thou shalt see whether it be day or not.”

In a strange house, the Sieur found the walls of his bed chamber full of great holes. “This,” exclaimed he in a rage, “is the cursedest chamber in all the world. One may see day all the night through.”

Travelling in the country, his man, to gain the fairest way, rode through a field sowed with pease, upon which M. Gaulard cried to him, “Thou knave, wilt thou burn my horse’s feet? Dost thou not know that about six weeks ago I burned my mouth with eating pease, they were so hot?”

A poor man complained to him that he had had a horse stolen from him. “Why did you not mark his visage,” asked M. Gaulard, “and the clothes he wore?” “Sir,” said the man, “I was not there when he

was stolen." Quoth the Sieur, "You should have left somebody to ask him his name, and in what place he resided."

M. Gaulard felt the sun so hot in the midst of a field at noontide in August that he asked of those about him, "What means the sun to be so hot? How should it not keep its heat till winter, when it is cold weather?"

A proctor, discoursing with M. Gaulard, told him that a dumb, deaf, or blind man could not make a will but with certain additional forms. "I pray you," said the Sieur, "give me that in writing, that I may send it to a cousin of mine who is lame."

One day a friend visited the Sieur and found him asleep in his chair. "I slept," said he, "only to avoid idleness; for I must always be doing something."

The Abbé of Poupet complained to him that the moles had spoiled a fine meadow, and he could find no remedy for them. "Why, cousin," said M. Gaulard, "it is but paving your meadow, and the moles will no more trouble you."

M. Gaulard had a lackey belonging to Auvergne,

who robbed him of twelve crowns and ran away, at which he was very angry, and said he would have nothing that came from that country. So he ordered all that was from Auvergne to be cast out of the house, even his mule; and to make the animal more ashamed, he caused his servants to take off its shoes and its saddle and bridle.

Among the cases decided by a Turkish Kází, two men came before him one of whom complained that the other had almost bit his ear off. The accused denied this, and declared that the fellow had bit his own ear. After pondering the matter for some time, the judge told them to come again two hours later. Then he went into his private room, and attempted to bring his ear and his mouth together; but all he did was to fall backwards and break his head. Wrapping a cloth round his head, he returned to court, and the two men coming in again presently, he thus decided the question: “No man can bite his own ear, but in trying to do so he may fall down and break his head.”

The typical noodle of the Turks, the Khoja Nasru ’d-Dín, quoted above as Cogia Nasr Eddin Effendi, is said to have been a subject of the independent prince of Karaman, at whose capital, Konya, he resided, and he is represented as a contemporary of Timúr (Tamerlane), in the middle of the fourteenth century. The pleasantries which are ascribed to him are for the most part common to all countries, but some are

probably of genuine Turkish origin. To cite a few specimens: The Khoja's wife said to him one day, "Make me a present of a kerchief of red Yemen silk, to put on my head." The Khoja stretched out his arms and said, "Like that? Is that large enough?" On her replying in the affirmative he ran off to the bazaar, with his arms still stretched out, and meeting a man on the road, he bawled to him, "Look where you are going, O man, or you will cause me to lose my measure!"

One evening the Khoja went to the well to draw water, and seeing the moon reflected in the water, he exclaimed, "The moon has fallen into the well; I must pull it out." So he let down the rope and hook, and the hook became fastened to a stone, whereupon he exerted all his strength, and the rope broke, and he fell upon his back. Looking into the sky, he saw the moon, and cried out joyfully, "Praise be to Allah! I am sorely bruised, but the moon has got into its place again."

The Chinese have a story of a lady who had been recently married, and on the third day saw her husband returning home, so she slipped quietly behind him and gave him a hearty kiss. The husband was annoyed, and said she offended all propriety. "Pardon! pardon!" said she. "I did not know it was you."

Indian fiction abounds in stories of simpletons, and probably the oldest extant drolleries of the Gothamite type are found in the *J[.a]takas*, or Buddhist Birth stories. Assuredly they were own brothers to our mad men of Gotham, the Indian villagers who, being pestered by mosquitoes when at work in the forest, bravely resolved, according to *J[.a]taka* 44, to take their bows and arrows and other weapons and make war upon the troublesome insects until they had shot dead or cut in pieces every one; but in trying to shoot the mosquitoes they only shot, struck, and injured one another. And nothing more foolish is recorded of the Schildburgers than Somadeva relates, in his *Kathá Sarit Ságara*, of the simpletons who cut down the palm-trees: Being required to furnish the king with a certain quantity of dates, and perceiving that it was very easy to gather the dates of a palm which had fallen down of itself, they set to work and cut down all the date-palms in their village, and having gathered from them their whole crop of dates, they raised them up and planted them again, thinking they would grow.

In Málava there were two Bráham brothers, and the wealth inherited from their father was left jointly between them. And while they were dividing that wealth they quarrelled about one having too little and the other having too much, and they made a teacher learned in the Vedas arbitrator, and he said to them, “You must divide everything your father left into two halves, so that you may not quarrel about the inequality of the division.” When the two fools heard this, they divided every single thing into two equal parts—house, beds, in fact, all their property,

including their cattle.

Henry Stephens (Henri Estienne), in the Introduction to his *Apology for Herodotus*, relates some very amusing noodle-stories, such as of him who, burning his shins before the fire, and not having wit enough to go back from it, sent for masons to remove the chimney; of the fool who ate the doctor's prescription, because he was told to "take it"; of another wittol who, having seen one spit upon iron to try whether it was hot, did likewise with his porridge; and, best of all, he tells of a fellow who was hit on the back with a stone as he rode upon his mule, and cursed the animal for kicking him. This last exquisite jest has its analogue in that of the Irishman who was riding on an ass one fine day, when the beast, by kicking at the flies that annoyed him, got one of its hind feet entangled in the stirrup, whereupon the rider dismounted, saying, "Faith, if you're going to get up, it's time I was getting down."

The poet Ovid alludes to the story of Ino persuading the women of the country to roast the wheat before it was sown, which may have come to India through the Greeks, since we are told in the *Kathá Sarit S[.a]gara* of a foolish villager who one day roasted some sesame seeds, and finding them nice to eat, he sowed a large quantity of roasted seeds, hoping that similar ones would come up. The story also occurs in Coelho's *Contes Portuguezes*, and

is probably of Buddhistic origin. An analogous story is told of an Irishman who gave his hens hot water, in order that they should lay boiled eggs!

Few folk-tales are more widely diffused than that of the man who set out in quest of as great noodles as those of his own household. The details may be varied more or less, but the fundamental outline is identical, wherever the story is found; and, whether it be an instance of the transmission of popular tales from one country to another, or one of those "primitive fictions" which are said to be the common heritage of the Aryans, its independent development by different nations and in different ages cannot be reasonably maintained.

Thus, in one Gaelic version of this diverting story —in which our old friends the Gothamites reappear on the scene to enact their unconscious drolleries—a lad marries a farmer's daughter, and one day while they are all busily engaged in peat cutting, she is sent to the house to fetch the dinner. On entering the house, she perceives the speckled pony's packsaddle hanging from the roof, and says to herself, "Oh, if that packsaddle were to fall and kill me, what should I do?" and here she began to cry, until her mother, wondering what could be detaining her, comes, when she tells the old woman the cause of her grief, whereupon the mother, in her turn, begins to cry, and when the old man next comes to see what is the matter with his wife and daughter, and is informed about the speckled pony's packsaddle, he too, "mingles his tears" with theirs. At last the young husband arrives, and finding the trio of noodles thus

grieving at an imaginary misfortune, he there and then leaves them, declaring his purpose not to return until he has found three as great fools as themselves. In the course of his travels he meets with some strange folks: men whose wives make them believe whatever they please—one, that he is dead; another, that he is clothed, when he is stark naked; a third, that he is not himself. He meets with the twelve fishers who always miscounted their number; the noodles who went to drown an eel in the sea; and a man trying to get his cow on the roof of his house, in order that she might eat the grass growing there.

In Russian variants the old parents of a youth named Lutonya weep over the supposititious death of a potential grandchild, thinking how sad it would have been if a log which the old woman had dropped had killed that hypothetical infant. The parents' grief appears to Lutonya so uncalled for that he leaves the house, declaring he will not return until he has met with people more foolish than they. He travels long and far, and sees several foolish doings. In one place a horse is being inserted into its collar by sheer force; in another, a woman is fetching milk from the cellar a spoonful at a time; and in a third place some carpenters are attempting to stretch a beam which is not long enough, and Lutonya earns their gratitude by showing them how to join a piece to it.

A well known English version is to this effect: There was a young man who courted a farmer's

daughter, and one evening when he came to the house she was sent to the cellar for beer. Seeing an axe stuck in a beam above her head, she thought to herself, “Suppose I were married and had a son, and he were to grow up, and be sent to this cellar for beer, and this axe were to fall and kill him—oh, dear! oh dear!” and there she sat crying and crying, while the beer flowed all over the cellar floor, until her old father and mother come in succession and blubber along with her about the hypothetical death of her imaginary grown up son. The young man goes off in quest of three bigger fools, and sees a woman hoisting a cow on to the roof of her cottage to eat the grass that grew among the thatch, and to keep the animal from falling off, she ties a rope round its neck, then goes into the kitchen, secures at her waist the rope, which she had dropped down the chimney, and presently the cow stumbles over the roof, and the woman is pulled up the flue till she sticks half way. In an inn he sees a man attempting to jump into his trousers—a favourite incident in this class of stories; and farther along he meets with a party raking the moon out of a pond.

Another English variant relates that a young girl having been left alone in the house, her mother finds her in tears when she comes home, and asks the cause of her distress. “Oh,” says the girl, “while you were away, a brick fell down the chimney, and I thought, if it had fallen on me I might have been killed!” The only novel adventure which the girl’s betrothed meets with, in his quest of three bigger fools, is an old woman trying to drag an oven with a rope to the table where the dough lay.

There is a Sicilian version in Pitrá's collection, called *The Peasant of Larcarà*, in which the bride's mother imagines that her daughter has a son who falls into the cistern. The groom—they are not yet married—is disgusted, and sets out on his travels with no fixed purpose of returning if he finds some fools greater than his mother-in-law, as in the Venetian tale. The first fool he meets is a mother, whose child, in playing the game called *nocciole*, tries to get his hand out of the hole whilst his fist is full of stones. He cannot, of course, and the mother thinks they will have to cut off his hand. The traveller tells the child to drop the stones, and then he draws out his hand easily enough. Next he finds a bride who cannot enter the church because she is very tall and wears a high comb. The difficulty is settled as in the former story. After a while he comes to a woman who is spinning and drops her spindle. She calls out to the pig, whose name is Tony, to pick it up for her. The pig does nothing but grunt, and the woman in anger cries, "Well, you won't pick it up? May your mother die!" The traveller, who had overheard all this, takes a piece of paper, which he folds up like a letter, and then knocks at the door. "Who is there?" "Open the door, for I have a letter for you from Tony's mother, who is ill and wishes to see her son before she dies." The woman wonders that her imprecation has taken effect so soon, and readily consents to Tony's visit. Not only this, but she loads a mule with everything necessary for the comfort of the body and soul of the dying pig. The traveller leads away the mule with Tony, and returns home so pleased with having found that the outside world contains so many fools that he marries as he had first intended.

In other Italian versions, a man is trying to jump into his stockings; another endeavours to put walnuts into a sack with a fork; and a woman dips a knotted rope into a deep well, and then having drawn it up, squeezes the water out of the knots into a pail.

Mediæval writers most frequently gave voice to short proverbs, maxims or epigrams, but a longer story is this delightful one from the old Folk tales of India.

SAN SHROE BU

ENFORCED GREATNESS

Once upon a time there lived a very poor middle aged couple on the outskirts of a great and magnificent city. Early in the morning the man used to set out to the city and return home in the evening with a few odd annas earned by picking up small jobs in the warehouses of wealthy merchants. One fine morning, being lazier than usual, he remained in bed with his eyes closed though fully awake, and furtively watched the proceedings of his wife during her toilette. When she was completely satisfied with her performance the man pretended to wake up as though from a deep sleep and addressed his wife, “you know, my dear, of late I have been feeling that some strange power has been granted to me by the gracious nats who preside over our destinies. To illustrate my point, you saw just now that I was fast asleep, and yet, would you believe it, I know exactly what you were doing a little while ago from the time you rose from your bed up till the present moment,” and proceeded to tell her all she did at her toilette.

As may be imagined, his wife was quite astonished at this feat, and womanlike, she began to see in this power the means to a profitable living.

Just about this time the kingdom became greatly distracted by a series of daring thefts which took place both by day and night. All efforts made by the authorities to capture the culprits proved useless. At length the king became seriously alarmed for the safety of his treasures, and in order to afford better protection he redoubled the guards round the palace. But in spite of all this precaution the thieves entered the palace one night and succeeded in carrying away a large quantity of gold, silver and precious stones.

On the following morning the king issued a proclamation to the effect that a thousand gold mohurs would be given as a reward to the person who could either capture the thieves or restore the stolen property. So without consulting her husband in whom she had absolute faith, she went off to the palace and informed the king that her husband was a great astrologer and that it would be quite easy for him to find the lost treasures. The king's heart was filled with gladness on receiving this information. He told the good woman that if her husband could do all that she promised, further honours and rewards would be heaped upon him.

When the woman returned home she joyfully related to her husband the details of her interview with the king. "What have you done, you silly fool?" shouted the man with mingled astonishment and alarm. "The other day when I spoke to you about my powers I was merely imposing upon you. I am neither an astrologer nor a diviner. It will be impossible for me to find the lost property. By your silly act you have not only brought disgrace upon us

but you have also imperilled our lives. I don't care what happens to you; I only know that I am going to commit suicide this very day."

So saying he left the house and entered a dense forest with the intention of cutting a stout creeper with which to hang himself. After he got what he wanted he climbed up a big tree to tie one end of the creeper to a branch. But while he was engaged in this act the notorious thieves came to the foot of the very tree on which he was perched and proceeded to divide the treasures which they stole from the palace. The man on the top remained absolutely still and eagerly listened to all that was going on down below. Apparently the division was not quite satisfactory to every one, and as a result a terrible dispute arose among them. For long hours they argued and abused each other without being able to come to a settlement. At length seeing that the sun was already declining they agreed to bury the treasure at the foot of the tree and to return on the morrow for a further discussion relative to their respective shares.

As soon as they left the place the poor man came down from the tree and ran home as fast as he could. "My dear wife, I know exactly where the treasures are to be found. If you make haste and come along with me I shall be able to remove the whole lot to our house." So they hastened together with baskets on their heads and reached the spot when darkness had properly set in. They then dug up the treasures as quickly as they could and conveyed them home.

On the following day they went to the palace and restored the lost treasures to the king. Greatly overjoyed at his good fortune the king praised the man and marvelled at his rare knowledge. In

addition to the reward which he received, the man was forthwith appointed the chief astrologer to the King with a handsome salary which placed him beyond the dreams of avarice.

While in the enjoyment of such honours and rewards the astrologer one day thought to himself, “So far I have been very fortunate. My luck has been phenomenally good. Everybody takes me to be a great man, though actually I am not. I wonder for how long my luck will befriend me?” From that time forward his mind became uneasy. He often sat up in bed at nights dreading the future which should bring about his exposure and disgrace. Every day he spoke to his wife about his false position and the peril that threatened him. He saw that it would be utter folly and madness to make a clean breast of everything as he had already committed himself too far. So he decided to say nothing for the present but to await a favourable opportunity of extricating himself from the awkward situation.

It so happened that one day the king received a letter from the ruler of a distant country which stated that he had heard about the famous astrologer. But that somehow he did not quite believe all that was said concerning the wisdom and knowledge of the man. By way of testing his real powers would he, the king, enter into a bet? If acceptable, he said he would send him a gourd fruit by his Envoys, and if his astrologer could say how many seeds it contained, he was willing to forfeit his kingdom provided he (the former) did the same in the event of his protégé going wrong in his calculations. Having absolute faith in his astrologer the king forthwith sent a reply to the letter accepting the bet.

For many days after this the poor astrologer thought very hard how he should act in the matter. He knew that the gourd fruit usually contained thousands of seeds and that to attempt a guess would be worse than useless. Being fully convinced that the day of reckoning had at last arrived, he determined to run away and hide himself in some obscure corner rather than face the disgrace of a public exposure. So the next thing he did was to procure a boat. He then loaded it with food for many days and quietly left the shores of the city.

The following day as he was nearing the mouth of the river, a foreign vessel came sailing up under a full spread of canvas. He saw from a distance that the sailors, having nothing particular to do, sat in a group and were engaged in pleasant conversation. As he came alongside the vessel he heard a man remark to the others, “Somehow I feel quite certain that our king will lose the bet. Don’t you fellows know that this country possesses an astrologer who is infallible in his calculations? He is reputed to possess the combined sight of a thousand *devas*. To such a one the single seed, lying hidden within this gourd we now convey with us, will not prove an obstacle of any serious difficulty. You may therefore rest assured that he will find it out in a very short time.”

When the man heard these words he felt very glad and blessed his good luck for having freed him once again from a dangerous situation. Instead, therefore, of continuing his journey, he swung his boat round and made for home, happy in the possession of his freshly acquired knowledge. On his arrival he related everything to his wife who shed tears of joy on hearing the good news.

Early next day, hearing that the king was about to

grant an audience to the foreign Envoys, the royal astrologer went to the palace. The courtiers were very glad to see him turn up, for so great was their confidence in him that they felt that their country was quite safe and that the chances were in favour of their acquiring a new kingdom. When the king entered the Hall of Audience he invited the astrologer to sit on his right while the others sat in front of him with their faces almost touching the floor. Then the real proceedings began.

First of all presents were exchanged and complimentary speeches were delivered on both sides. When these ceremonies were over the Chief Envoy addressed the king in the following terms, “Oh Mighty Monarch! The real object of our journey to your most beautiful country has already formed the subject of correspondence between your Majesty and my king. I will not therefore tire you by its recital all over again. My master commands me to show you this gourd and to ask you to say how many seeds exactly it contains. If what you say be correct his kingdom passes into your possession, but on the other hand should you be wrong your kingdom becomes the property of my master.”

Hearing these words the king smiled and turning to the astrologer near him, said, “My dear *saya*, it is unnecessary for me to tell you what you have got to do. Consult your stars and tell us how many seeds the fruit contains. You already know how generous I have been to you in the past. And now at this crisis, if you are able to assist me in winning a kingdom, my reward to you shall be such as to make you rejoice for all the remaining days of your life.” “Your Majesty,” replied the astrologer, “everything I have, including my life, belongs to you. By your will I am

able to live, and by your will I must also die. In the present case my calculations point to one answer only, and therefore I have no hesitation in saying that this gourd contains one seed only."

Accustomed to seeing gourds with thousands of seeds, the king turned pale when he heard the astrologer's answer. But still having complete faith in him, with effort he restrained himself from further questioning him. The gourd was then placed upon a gold plate and was cut open in the presence of all those present. To the astonishment of everybody there was but a single seed as was said by the astrologer. The foreign Envoy congratulated the king on having won his bet and on the possession of so valuable a servant. He then returned home with a heavy heart bearing the news of his sovereign's ruin and his country's misfortune.

As to the astrologer his fame spread far and wide. All sorts of honours and rewards were heaped upon him. He was even granted the unique privilege of entering or leaving any part of the palace at all hours, just as his own inclinations directed him. Yet in spite of all these things he was not happy. He knew he was an imposter who stood in imminent danger of being found out. He was more than satisfied with the reputation he had made and the riches he had acquired. He did not desire any more of these things. His greatest ambition now was to find a graceful way of escape from his false position.

So he thus spoke to his wife one day, "My dear wife, so far I have had most wonderful luck. It has enabled me to escape two great dangers with honour to myself. But how long will this luck stand by me? Something tells me that I shall be found out on the third occasion. What I propose to do next is this.

Listen carefully so that you may carry out my instructions without a hitch. Tomorrow while I am at the palace with the king you must set fire to our house. Being of thatch and bamboo it will not take long to be consumed. You must then come running to the palace to inform me about it and at the same time you must keep on repeating these words, 'the Astrological Tables are gone.' I will then do the rest."

On the following day while the king was holding a grand Durbar in the Hall of Audience, a great commotion was heard outside the gates. On enquiry the king was informed that the astrologer's wife had come to inform her husband that their house was burnt down and that everything of value, including the most precious astrological tables by which her husband made his wonderful predictions, had been consumed by the fire. Hearing these words the astrologer pretended to be terribly affected. He struck his forehead with the palm of his hand and for a long time he remained silent and motionless with grief. Then turning to the king he said, "May it please your Majesty I am now utterly ruined. For had it been my riches alone that perished in the fire I should not have minded so much. They could have been easily replaced. But now since these precious tables are gone it is impossible to procure a similar set from anywhere else. I hope I have served your Majesty faithfully and to your satisfaction in the past; but I grieve to say that I shall not be in a position to give you the same service in the future. I beseech you therefore to release me from the present responsible position, for I shall no longer be useful to you. But in recognition of my past humble services if your Majesty, in your great goodness of heart, can see fit to grant me a small pension for the rest of my life I shall have cause to consider myself

exceptionally favoured."

The king was very sad to hear of his favourite's misfortune. And as there was nothing else to be said or done in the matter he ordered a beautiful building to be erected on the site of the house that was burnt down. Next he filled it with a large retinue of servants and other equipments such as horses, carriages and so forth. Then the whole thing was made over to the astrologer with the command that for the rest of his life he was to draw from the Royal Treasury no less a sum than ten thousand gold mohurs a month.

As may be imagined the lucky astrologer was more than satisfied with the arrangements and inwardly congratulated himself upon his good fortune which once more enabled him to escape from a dangerous situation. Thus some men are born great, some achieve greatness; but there are also others who have greatness forced upon them, and it is to this third and last class that our hero the pretentious astrologer belongs.

In the Middle Ages, popular sculpture and painting were but the translation of popular literature, and nothing was more common to represent, in pictures and carvings, than individual men under the forms of the animals who displayed similar characters or similar propensities. Cunning, treachery, and intrigue were the prevailing vices of the middle ages, and they were those also of the fox, who hence became a favourite character in satire. The victory of craft over force always provoked mirth. The fabulists, or, we should perhaps rather say, the satirists, soon began to extend their canvas and enlarge their picture, and, instead of single examples of fraud or injustice, they introduced a

variety of characters, not only foxes, but wolves, and sheep, and bears, with birds also, as the eagle, the cock, and the crow, and mixed them up together in long narratives, which thus formed general satires on the vices of contemporary society. In this manner originated the celebrated romance of “Reynard the Fox,” which in various forms, from the twelfth century to the eighteenth, has enjoyed a popularity which was granted probably to no other book. The plot of this remarkable satire turns chiefly on the long struggle between the brute force of Isengrin the Wolf, possessed only with a small amount of intelligence, which is easily deceived—under which character is presented the powerful feudal baron—and the craftiness of Reynard the Fox, who represents the intelligent portion of society, which had to hold its ground by its wits, and these were continually abused to evil purposes. Reynard is swayed by a constant impulse to deceive and victimise everybody, whether friends or enemies, but especially his uncle Isengrin. It was somewhat the relationship between the ecclesiastical and baronial aristocracy. Reynard was educated in the schools, and intended for the clerical order; and at different times he is represented as acting under the disguise of a priest, of a monk, of a pilgrim, or even of a prelate of the church. Though frequently reduced to the greatest straits by the power of Isengrin, Reynard has generally the better of it in the end: he robs and defrauds Isengrin continually, outrages his wife, who is half in alliance with him, and draws him into all sorts of dangers and sufferings, for which the latter never succeeds in obtaining justice. The old sculptors and artists appear to have preferred exhibiting Reynard in his ecclesiastical disguises, and in these he appears often in the ornamentation of mediæval

architectural sculpture, in wood-carvings, in the illuminations of manuscripts, and in other objects of art. The popular feeling against the clergy was strong in the middle ages, and no caricature was received with more favour than those which exposed the immorality or dishonesty of a monk or a priest. A sculpture in the church of Christchurch, in Hampshire, represents Reynard in the pulpit preaching; behind, or rather perhaps beside him, a diminutive cock stands upon a stool—in modern times we should be inclined to say he was acting as clerk. Reynard's costume consists merely of the ecclesiastical hood or cowl. Such subjects are frequently found on the carved seats, or misereres, in the stalls of the old cathedrals and collegiate churches. The painted glass of the great window of the north cross-aisle of St. Martin's church in Leicester, which was destroyed in the last century, represented the fox, in the character of an ecclesiastic, preaching to a congregation of geese.

Reynard's mediæval celebrity dates certainly from a rather early period. Montfaucon has given an alphabet of ornamental initial letters, formed chiefly of figures of men and animals, from a manuscript which he ascribes to the ninth century, among which is one representing a fox walking upon his hind legs, and carrying two small cocks, suspended at the ends of a cross staff. It is hardly necessary to say that this group forms the letter T. Long before this, the Frankish historian Fredegarius, who wrote about the middle of the seventh century, introduces a fable in which the fox figures at the court of the lion. The same fable is repeated by a monkish writer of Bavaria, named Fromond who flourished in the tenth century, and by another named Aimoinus, who lived about the year 1,000. At length, in the twelfth

century, Guibert de Nogent, who died about the year 1124, and who has left us his autobiography (*de Vita Sua*), relates an anecdote in that work, in explanation of which he tells us that the wolf was then popularly designated by the name of Isengrin; and in the fables of Odo, as we have already seen, this name is commonly given to the wolf, Reynard to the fox, Teburg to the cat, and so on with the others. This only shows that in the fables of the twelfth century the various animals were known by these names, but it does not prove that what we know as the romance of Reynard existed. Jacob Grimm argued from the derivation and forms of these names, that the fables themselves, and the romance, originated with the Teutonic peoples, and were indigenous to them; but his reasons seem more specious than conclusive, and Paulin Paris holds that the romance of Reynard was native of France, and that it was partly founded upon old Latin legends perhaps poems. Its character is altogether feudal, and it is strictly a picture of society, in France primarily, and secondly in England and the other nations of feudalism, in the twelfth century. The earliest form in which this romance is known is in the French poem—or rather poems, for it consists of several branches or continuations—and is supposed to date from about the middle of the twelfth century. It soon became so popular, that it appeared in different forms in all the languages of Western Europe, except in England, where there appears to have existed no edition of the romance of Reynard the Fox until Caxton printed his prose English version of the story. From that time it became, if possible, more popular in England than elsewhere, and that popularity had hardly diminished down to the commencement of the present century.

The popularity of the story of Reynard caused it to be imitated in a variety of shapes, and this form of satire, in which animals acted the part of men, became altogether popular.

A direct imitation of “Reynard the Fox” is found in the early French romance of “Fauvel,” the hero of which is neither a fox nor an ass, but a horse. People of all ranks and classes repair to the court of Fauvel, the horse, and furnish abundant matter for satire on the moral, political, and religious hypocrisy which pervaded the whole frame of society. At length the hero resolves to marry, and, in a finely illuminated manuscript of this romance, preserved in the Imperial Library in Paris, this marriage furnishes the subject of a picture, which gives the only representation to be met with of one of the popular burlesque ceremonies which were so common in the middle ages.

Among other such ceremonies, it was customary with the populace, on the occasion of a man’s or woman’s second marriage, or an ill-sorted match, or on the espousals of people who were obnoxious to their neighbours, to assemble outside the house, and greet them with discordant music. This custom is said to have been practiced especially in France, and it was called a *charivari*. There is still a last remnant of it in our country in the music of marrow-bones and cleavers, with which the marriages of butchers are popularly celebrated; but the derivation of the French name appears not to be known. It occurs in old Latin documents, for it gave rise to such scandalous scenes of riot and licentiousness, that the Church did all it could, though in vain, to suppress it. The earliest mention of this custom, furnished in the *Glossarium* of Ducange, is contained in the synodal

statutes of the church of Avignon, passed in the year 1337, from which we learn that when such marriages occurred, people forced their way into the houses of the married couple, and carried away their goods, which they were obliged to pay a ransom for before they were returned, and the money thus raised was spent in getting up what is called in the statute relating to it a *Chalvaricum*. It appears from this statute, that the individuals who performed the *charivari* accompanied the happy couple to the church, and returned with them to their residence, with coarse and indecent gestures and discordant music, and uttering scurrilous and indecent abuse, and that they ended with feasting. In the statutes of Meaux, in 1365, and in those of Hugh, bishop of Beziers, in 1368, the same practice is forbidden, under the name of *Charavallium*; and it is mentioned in a document of the year 1372, also quoted by Ducange, under that of *Carivarium*, as then existing at Nîmes. Again, in 1445, the Council of Tours made a decree, forbidding, under pain of excommunication, "the insolences, clamours, sounds, and other tumults practiced at second and third nuptials, called by the vulgar a *Charivarium*, on account of the many and grave evils arising out of them." It will be observed that these early allusions to the charivari are found almost solely in documents coming from the Roman towns in the south of France, so that this practice was probably one of the many popular customs derived directly from the Romans. When Cotgrave's "Dictionary" was published (that is, in 1632) the practice of the *charivari* appears to have become more general in its existence, as well as its application; for he describes it as "a public defamation, or traducing of; a foule noise made, blacke santus rung, to the shame and

disgrace of another; hence an infamous (or infaming) ballad sung, by an armed troupe, under the window of an old dotard, married the day before unto a young wanton, in mockerie of them both." And, again, a *charivaris de poelles* is explained as "the carting of an infamous person, graced with the harmonie of stinging kettles and frying-pan musicke." The word is now generally used in the sense of a great tumult of discordant music, produced often by a number of persons playing different tunes on different instruments at the same time.

The sermons and satires against extravagance in costume began at an early period. The Anglo-Norman ladies, in the earlier part of the twelfth century, first brought in vogue in our island this extravagance in fashion, which quickly fell under the lash of satirist and caricaturist. It was first exhibited in the robes rather than in the head-dress. These Anglo-Norman ladies are understood to have first introduced stays, in order to give an artificial appearance of slenderness to their waists; but the greatest extravagance appeared in the forms of their sleeves. The robe, or gown, instead of being loose, as among the Anglo-Saxons, was laced close around the body, and the sleeves, which fitted the arm tightly till they reached the elbows, or sometimes nearly to the wrist, then suddenly became larger, and hung down to an extravagant length, often trailing on the ground, and sometimes shortened by means of a knot. The gown, also, was itself worn very long. The clergy preached against these extravagances in fashion, and at times, it is said, with effect; and they fell under the vigorous lash of the satirist. In a class of satires which became extremely popular in the twelfth century, and which produced in the

thirteenth the immortal poem of Dante—the visions of purgatory and of hell—these contemporary extravagances in fashion are held up to public detestation, and are made the subject of severe punishment. They were looked upon as among the outward forms of pride. It arose, no doubt, from this taste—from the darker shade which spread over men's minds in the twelfth century—that demons, instead of animals, were introduced to personify the evil-doers of the time. Such is the figure, seen in a very interesting manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Cotton. Nero, C iv.). The demon is here dressed in the fashionable gown with its long sleeves, of which one appears to have been usually much longer than the other. Both the gown and sleeve are shortened by means of knots, while the former is brought close round the waist by tight lacing. It is a picture of the use of stays made at the time of their first introduction.

This superfluity of length in the different parts of the dress was a subject of complaint and satire at various and very distant periods, and contemporary illuminations of a perfectly serious character show that these complaints were not without foundation.

The professional entertainers of the Middle Ages performed in the streets and public places, or in the theatres, and especially at festivals, and they were often employed at private parties, to entertain the guests at a supper.

We trace the existence of this class of performers during the earlier period of the middle ages by the expressions of hostility towards them used from time to time by the ecclesiastical writers, and the denunciations of synods and councils. Nevertheless, it is evident from many allusions to them, that they

found their way into the monastic houses, and were in great favour not only among the monks, but among the nuns also; that they were introduced into the religious festivals; and that they were tolerated even in the churches. It is probable that they long continued to be known in Italy and the countries near the centre of Roman influence, and where the Latin language was continued, by their old name of *mimus*. The Anglo-Saxon vocabularies interpret the Latin *mimus* by *glig-mon*, a gleeman. In Anglo-Saxon, *glig* or *gliu* meant mirth and game of every description, and as the Anglo-Saxon teachers who compiled the vocabularies give, as synonyms of *mimus*, the words *scurra*, *jocifta*, and *pantomimus*, it is evident that all these were included in the character of the gleeman, and that the latter was quite identical with his Roman type. It was the Roman *mimus* introduced into Saxon England. We have no traces of the existence of such a class of performers among the Teutonic race before they became acquainted with the civilisation of imperial Rome. We know from drawings in contemporary illuminated manuscripts that the performances of the gleeman did include music, singing, and dancing, and also the tricks of mountebanks and jugglers, such as throwing up and catching knives and balls, and performing with tamed bears, etc.

But even among the peoples who preserved the Latin language, the word *mimus* was gradually exchanged for others employed to signify the same thing. The word *jocus* had been used in the signification of a jest, playfulness, *jocari* signified to jest, and *joculator* was a word for a jester; but, in the debasement of the language, *jocus* was taken in the signification of everything which created mirth. It became, in the course of time the French verb *jeu*,

and the Italian *gioco*, or *giuoco*. People introduced a form of the verb *jocare*, which became the French *juer*, to play or perform. *Joculator* was then used in the sense of *mimus*. In French the word became *jogléor*, or *jougléor*, and in its later form *jougleur*. I may remark that, in mediæval manuscripts, it is almost impossible to distinguish between the *u* and the *n*, and that modern writers have misread this last word as *jongleur*, and thus introduced into the language a word which never existed, and which ought to be abandoned. In old English, as we see in Chaucer, the usual form was *jogelere*. The mediæval joculator, or jougleur, embraced all the attributes of the Roman *mimus*, and perhaps more. In the first place he was very often a poet himself, and composed the pieces which it was one of his duties to sing or recite. These were chiefly songs, or stories, the latter usually told in verse, and so many of them are preserved in manuscripts that they form a very numerous and important class of mediæval literature. The songs were commonly satirical and abusive, and they were made use of for purposes of general or personal vituperation. Out of them, indeed, grew the political songs of a later period. They carried about with them for exhibition tame bears, monkeys, and other animals, taught to perform the actions of men. As early as the thirteenth century, we find them including among their other accomplishments that of dancing upon the tight-rope. Finally, the jougleurs performed tricks of sleight of hand, and were often conjurers and magicians. As, in modern times, the jougleurs of the middle ages gradually passed away, sleight of hand appears to have become their principal accomplishment, and the name only was left in the modern word *juggler*. The jougleurs of the middle ages, like the mimi of antiquity, wandered

about from place to place, and often from country to country, sometimes singly and at others in companies, exhibited their performances in the roads and streets, repaired to all great festivals, and were employed especially in the baronial hall, where, by their songs, stories, and other performances, they created mirth after dinner.

This class of society had become known by another name, the origin of which is not so easily explained. The primary meaning of the Latin word *minister* was a servant, one who ministers to another, either in his wants or in his pleasures and amusements. It was applied particularly to the cupbearer. In low Latinity, a diminutive of this word was formed, *minestellus*, or *ministrellus*, a petty servant, or minister. When we first meet with this word, which is not at a very early date, it is used as perfectly synonymous with *joculator*, and, as the word is certainly of Latin derivation, it is clear that it was from it the middle ages derived the French word *menestrel* (the modern *menetrier*), and the English *minstrel*. The mimi or jougleurs were perhaps considered as the petty ministers to the amusements of their lord, or of him who for the time employed them. Until the close of the middle ages, the minstrel and the jougleur were absolutely identical. Possibly the former may have been considered the more courtly of the two names. But in England, as the middle ages disappeared, and lost their influence on society sooner than in France, the word minstrel remained attached only to the musical part of the functions of the old mimus, while, as just observed, the juggler took the sleight of hand and the mountebank tricks. In modern French, except where employed technically by the antiquity, the word *menetrier* means a fiddler.

The jougleurs, or minstrels, formed a very numerous and important, though a low and despised, class of mediæval society. The dulness of every-day life in a feudal castle or mansion required something more than ordinary excitement in the way of amusement, and the old family bard, who continually repeated to the Teutonic chief the praises of himself and his ancestors, was soon felt to be a wearisome companion. The mediæval knights and their ladies wanted to laugh, and to make them laugh sufficiently it required that the jokes, or tales, or comic performances, should be broad, coarse, and racy, with a good spicing of violence and of the wonderful. Hence the jougleur was always welcome to the feudal mansion, and he seldom went away dissatisfied. But the subject of the present chapter is rather the literature of the jougleur than his personal history, and, having traced his origin to the Roman mimus, we will now proceed to one class of his performances.

It has been stated that the mimus and the jougleurs told stories. Of those of the former, unfortunately, none are preserved, except, perhaps, in a few anecdotes scattered in the pages of such writers as Apuleius and Lucian, and we are obliged to guess at their character, but of the stories of the jougleurs a considerable number has been preserved. It becomes an interesting question how far these stories have been derived from the mimi, handed down traditionally from mimus to jougleur, how far they are native in our race, or how far they were derived at a later date from other sources. And in considering this question, we must not forget that the mediæval jougleurs were not the only representatives of the mimi, for among the Arabs of the East also there had originated from them, modified under

different circumstances, a very important class of minstrels and story-tellers, and with these the jougleurs of the west were brought into communication at the commencement of the crusades. There can be no doubt that a very large number of the stories of the jougleurs were borrowed from the East, for the evidence is furnished by the stories themselves; and there can be little doubt also that the jougleurs improved themselves, and underwent some modification, by their intercourse with Eastern performers of the same class.

The people of the middle ages, who took their word *fable* from the Latin *fabula*, which they appear to have understood as a mere term for any short narration, included under it the stories told by the mimi and jougleurs; but, in the fondness of the middle ages for diminutives, by which they intended to express familiarity and attachment, applied to them more particularly the Latin *fabella*, which in the old French became *fablel*, or, more usually, *fabliau*. The fabliaux of the jougleurs form a most important class of the comic literature of the middle ages. They must have been wonderfully numerous, for a very large quantity of them still remain, and these are only the small portion of what once existed, which have escaped perishing like the others by the accident of being written in manuscripts which have had the fortune to survive; while manuscripts containing others have no doubt perished, and it is probable that many were only preserved orally, and never written down at all. The recital of these fabliaux appears to have been the favourite employment of the jougleurs, and they became so popular that the mediæval preachers turned them into short stories in Latin prose, and made use of them as illustrations in their sermons. Many

collections of these short Latin stories are found in manuscripts which had served as note-books to the preachers, and out of them was originally compiled that celebrated mediæval book called the "Gesta Romanorum."

The *Trouvères*, or poets, who wrote the Fabliaux flourished chiefly from the close of the twelfth century to the earlier part of the fourteenth. They all composed in French, which was a language then common to England and France, but some of their compositions bear internal evidence of having been composed in England. No objection appears to have been entertained to the recital of these licentious stories before the ladies of the castle or of the domestic circle, and their general popularity was so great, that the more pious clergy seem to have thought necessary to find something to take their place in the post-prandial society of the monastery, and especially of the nunnery; and religious stories were written in the same form and metre as the fabliaux. Some of these have been published under the title of *Contes Devots*, and, from their general dulness, it may be doubted if they answered their purpose of furnishing amusement so well as the others.

Troubadour was the Provençal name for the *Trouvères*, and in the twelfth century these poets flourished so luxuriantly that their influence is still felt in the poetic sentiment of today.

Yet they were in no sense humorous writers, unless their satire on the foibles and follies of the times may be so construed. They were Boudoir poets and their airs and graces were romantic rather than mirthful.

Much of their production was of the languishing,

sighing order, but the Fabliaux, of a ruder narrative type were also popular.

These Fabliaux, now usually given out in expurgated editions, were extremely plain spoken, and, as so often occurred, were adopted and adapted by the monks for the real or pretended furtherance of their religious teachings.

The Troubadours did much for lyric art by their conscientious attention to form, but the humor of their productions is almost a negligible quantity. Their songs were invariably sung, and usually to the accompaniment of the blue-ribboned guitar, but oftenest the burden was of sorrowful intent.

And it was, perhaps, owing to the want of a humorous sense, that the Troubadours could carry on their lackadaisical and lovesick careers.

Yet there were some of the Troubadours' songs which showed a departure from the usual romantic wailings and a few are here given.

Doubtless the very free translation adds to their humor, but the motive is clear.

Rambaud d'Orange thus declares his policy in treatment to the fair sex.

I.

My boy, if you'd wish to make constant your Venus,
  Attend to the plan I disclose.
Her first naughty word you must meet with a menace,
  Her next—drop your fist on her nose.
    When she's bad, be you worse,
    When she scolds, do you curse,
  When she scratches, just treat her to blows.

II.

Defame and lampoon her, be rude and uncivil,
Then you'll vanquish the haughtiest dame.
Be proud and presumptuous, deceive like the ——
And aught that you wish you may claim.
All the beautiful slight,
To the plain be polite,
That's the way the proud hussies to tame.

Bernard de Ventadour is thus unromantic.

You say the moon is all aglow,
The nightingale a-singing.
I'd rather watch the red wine flow
And hear the goblets ringing.

You say 'tis sweet to hear the gale
Creep sighing through the willows.
I'd rather hear a merry tale
'Mid a group of jolly fellows.

You say 'tis sweet the stars to view
Upon the waters gleaming.
I'd rather see ('twixt me and you
And the post) my supper steaming.

While the Monk of Montaudon, an incorrigible satirist, thus descants on the ladies.

I am a saint of good repute, by mortals called St. Julian;
Being wanted much on earth I go not oft to realms cerulean.
Yet once of late I made a call, which you may term a high call—
I went aloft to have a chat along with good St. Michael.
But soon the saint was called away, which closed our conversation,
To judge between some dames and monks engaged in disputation.
Paint was the subject of their strife, the rock on which they split;
Each party wanted to monopolise the use of it.
The monks declared, with many tears, that they were ruined quite,
For not an ounce of it was left to keep their pictures bright.

The ladies laid it on so thick, as you can understand,
That the compounders could not quite keep pace with their demand.
And so, unless the former were restrained by stringent law,
Each shrine they swore would quickly cease its worshippers to draw.

Then stepped an ancient beauty forth, and thus to Mike descanted:
"Our sex was painted long before paint was for pictures wanted;
As for myself, how can it hurt a clergyman or saint,
If the crows'-feet beneath my eyes I cover up with paint?
In keeping up my beauteous looks I cannot see a crime;
In spite of them I'll still repair the ravages of time."

St. Michael scratched his pate awhile, then, looking very wise,
Said: "Dames and monks, let me suggest, I pray, a compromise.
The soul as well as body, dames, requires both paint and padding.
You should not wholly spend your years in love-making and gadding.
And you, my monks, be less severe, nor bend the bow to breaking;
All dames should have a moderate time allowed to them for raking.
Then let them paint till forty-five"—at this the dames looked glum—
"Or fifty," cried the saint in haste. "Agree, my monks, now come."

"No," said the monks, "that cannot be, the time is far too long;
But, though we feel within our souls the compromise is wrong,
Yet, in our deep respect for you, our scruples we will drop,
And let the dames, till thirty-five, frequent the painter's shop;
But only on condition that thereafter they shall cease
To daub, and let us monks enjoy our privilege in

peace."

Before the ladies could rejoin, two other saints
appeared—
Peter and Lawrence—by the dames no less than
monks revered.
They reasoned with the parties, and so well
employed their wit,
That they persuaded them at length the difference
to split.
The monks agreed to yield five years; the ladies
condescended
Up to their fortieth year to paint, and there the
trial ended.

And the same merry Monk of Montaudon voices his sentiments thus:

I like those sports the world calls folly,
Banquets that know no melancholy;
I love a girl whose talk is jolly,
Not silent like a painted dolly.

A rich man of my love is winner,
His foe I feel must be a sinner;
And I adore, or I'd be thinner,
A fine fat salmon-trout for dinner.

I hold among my chief of blisses,
Basking beside a stream with misses;
Love sunshine, flowers; but O than this is
A joy more deep—I *do* like kisses.

I hate a husband who's uxorious;
A grocer's son, whose dress is glorious;
Hate men in drink who get uproarious
And maids whose conduct is censorious.

I hate young folks who are precocious,
Hate parsons with a beard ferocious;
Of wine too much can no one broach us;
But too much water is atrocious!

The Court of Love, a gay and whimsical institution, doubtless originated in the contests of the Troubadours, when the poets recited for a prize the

particular style of an ode called the *Tenson*.

Though a fascinating subject, we may not dwell on it further than to quote the thirty-one articles of the Code of Love, this being the most available bit of humor.

1. Marriage is no legitimate excuse against love.
2. Whoever cannot conceal cannot love.
3. No one must have two lovers at the same time.
4. Love must always be increasing or diminishing.
5. Favours unwillingly granted have no charm.
6. No male must love until of full age.
7. Whoever of two lovers survives the other must observe a widowhood of two years.
8. None should be deprived of love except they lose their reason.
9. None can love except when compelled by the stress of love.
10. Love is an exile from the homes of avarice.
11. She who is scrupulous of the marriage tie should not love.
12. A true lover desires no embraces save those of his lady-love.
13. Love divulged rarely lasts.
14. Easy winning makes love contemptible; difficulty renders it dear.
15. Every lover grows pale at the sight of his lady-love.
16. The heart of a lover trembles at the sudden sight of his lady-love.
17. A new love makes an old one depart.
18. Probity alone makes a man worthy to be loved.
19. If love diminishes it soon fails, and rarely recovers its strength.
20. The lover is always timid.
21. From true jealousy love always increases.
22. When suspicion is aroused about a lover, jealousy and love increase.
23. Filled with thoughts of love, the lover eats and

drinks less [than usual].
24. Every act of a lover is determined by thoughts of the beloved.
25. A true lover thinks naught happy save what would please his beloved.
26. Love can deny nothing to love.
27. A lover cannot be satiated with the charms of the beloved.
28. A slight prejudice makes a lover think ill of the beloved.
29. He is not wont to love who is oppressed by too great abundance of pleasure.
30. A true lover is always without intermission filled with the image of his lady-love.
31. Nothing hinders one woman being loved by two men, or one man by two women.

On these rules—some nonsensical, many contradictory, and all abominable—the following decisions, among many others, were based.

The first is that of the Countess of Champagne already quoted, with its approval by Queen Eleanor. In its original verbiage it runs thus:

Question. Can true love exist between married persons?

Judgment, by the Countess of Champagne: "We say and establish, by the tenor of these presents, that love cannot extend its rights to married persons. In fact, lovers accord everything to each other mutually and gratuitously, without being constrained by motives of necessity; while married people are bound by the duty of mutually sacrificing their wills and refusing nothing the one to the other.

"Let this judgment, which we have given with extreme care, and after taking counsel of a large number of ladies, be to you a constant and irrefragable truth. Thus determined in the year 1174, the third day before the kalends of May."

Question. Do the greater affection and livelier attachment exist between lovers or married people? [It having been already decided, let us remember, that married people could not love one another.]

Judgment, by Ermengarde, Viscountess of Narbonne: "The attachment of married people and the tender affection of lovers are sentiments of a nature and custom altogether different. There can consequently be no just comparison established between objects which have no resemblance or connection the one with the other."

Question. A lady attached to a gentleman in an honorable love marries another. Has she the right to repel her former lover and refuse him his accustomed favours?

Judgment, by Ermengarde, Viscountess of Narbonne: "The supervenience of the marriage bond does not bar the right of the prior attachment, unless the lady utterly renounces love, and declares that she does so for ever."

The *Gesta Romanorum*, one of the most important collections of moral tales, was put together during the thirteenth century by a learned Frenchman named Pierre Bercheure, who was a Benedictine Prior. He chose to lay the scenes of the stories in Rome, though this was not historically true. Gesta means merely acts or exploits, and many of the tales are descended from Oriental Folk Lore.

Not all students of ancient literature agree as to the authorship of the Gesta as it appears in its present form, but the consensus of opinion seems to point to the aforesaid Frenchman.

However, the collector's name matters little; the work itself, while it harks back to the Fables of Æsop and Pilpay and to the *Talmud*, is of interest as a veritable storehouse of Mediæval stories.

Each of these has its religious application, but it is easy to think that the readers were oftener intrigued by the story than by the appended moral.

OF SLOTH

The emperor Pliny had three sons, to whom he was extremely indulgent. He wished to dispose of his kingdom, and calling the three into his presence, spoke thus—"The most slothful of you shall reign after my decease." "Then," answered the elder, "the kingdom must be mine; for I am so lazy, that sitting once by the fire, I burnt my legs, because I was too indolent to withdraw them." The second son observed, "The kingdom should properly be mine, for if I had a rope round my neck, and held a sword in my hand, my idleness is such, that I should not put forth my hand to cut the rope." "But I," said the third son, "ought to be preferred to you both; for I outdo both in indolence. While I lay upon my bed, water dropped from above upon my eyes; and though, from the nature of the water, I was in danger of becoming blind, I neither could nor would turn my head ever so little to the right hand or to the left." The emperor, hearing this, bequeathed the kingdom to him, thinking him the laziest of the three.

Application

My beloved, the king is the devil; and the three sons, different classes of corrupt men.

OF THE GOOD, WHO ALONE WILL ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

There was a wise and rich king who possessed a beloved, but not a loving wife. She had three illegitimate sons who proved ungrateful and rebellious to their reputed parent. In due time she brought forth another son, whose legitimacy was undisputed; and after arriving at a good old age, he died, and was buried in the royal sepulchre of his fathers. But the death of the old king caused great strife amongst his surviving sons, about the right of succession. All of them advanced a claim, and none would relinquish it to the other; the three first, presuming upon their priority in birth, and the last upon his legitimacy. In this strait, they agreed to refer the absolute decision of their cause to a certain honourable soldier of the late king. When this person, therefore, heard their difference, he said, “Follow my advice, and it will greatly benefit you. Draw from its sepulchre the body of the deceased monarch; prepare, each of you, a bow and single shaft, and whosoever transfixes the heart of his father, shall obtain the kingdom.” The counsel was approved, the body was taken from its repository and bound naked to a tree. The arrow of the first son wounded the king’s right hand—on which, as if the contest were determined, they proclaimed him heir to the throne. But the second arrow went nearer, and entered the mouth; so that he too considered himself the undoubted lord of the kingdom. However, the third perforated the heart itself, and consequently imagined that his claim was fully decided, and his

succession sure. It now came to the turn of the fourth and last son to shoot; but instead of fixing his shaft to the bow-string, and preparing for the trial, he broke forth into a lamentable cry, and with eyes swimming in tears, said, “Oh! my poor father; have I then lived to see you the victim of an impious contest? Thine own offspring lacerate thy unconscious clay?—Far, oh! far be it from me to strike thy venerated form, whether living or dead.” No sooner had he uttered these words, than the nobles of the realm, together with the whole people, unanimously elected him to the throne; and depriving the three barbarous wretches of their rank and wealth, expelled them for ever from the kingdom.

Application

My beloved, that wise and rich king is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who joined himself to our flesh, as to a beloved wife. But going after other gods, it forgot the love due to him in return, and brought forth by an illicit connection, three sons, viz., Pagans, Jews, and Heretics. The first wounded the right hand—that is, the doctrine of Christ by persecutions. The second, the mouth—when they gave Christ vinegar and gall to drink; and the third, wounded, and continue to wound the *heart*,—while they strive, by every sophistical objection, to deceive the faithful. The fourth son is any good Christian.

OF THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD

A certain king was remarkable for three qualities. Firstly, he was braver than all men; secondly, he was wiser; and lastly, more beautiful. He lived a long time unmarried; and his counsellors would persuade him to take a wife. “My friends,” said he, “it is clear

to you that I am rich and powerful enough; and therefore want not wealth. Go, then, through town and country, and seek me out a beautiful and wise virgin; and if ye can find such a one, however poor she may be, I will marry her." The command was obeyed; they proceeded on their search, until at last they discovered a lady of royal extraction with the qualifications desired. But the king was not so easily satisfied, and determined to put her wisdom to the test. He sent to the lady by a herald a piece of linen cloth, three inches square; and bade her contrive to make for him a shirt exactly fitted to his body. "Then," added he, "she shall be my wife." The messenger, thus commissioned, departed on his errand, and respectfully presented the cloth, with the request of the king. "How can I comply with it," exclaimed the lady, "when the cloth is but three inches square? It is impossible to make a shirt of that; but bring me a vessel in which I may work, and I promise to make the shirt long enough for the body." The messenger returned with the reply of the virgin, and the king immediately sent a sumptuous vessel, by means of which she extended the cloth to the required size, and completed the shirt. Whereupon the wise king married her.

Application

My beloved, the king is God; the virgin, the mother of Christ; who was also the chosen vessel. By the messenger, is meant Gabriel. The cloth, is the Grace of God, which, by proper care and labour, is made sufficient for man's salvation.

OF THE DECEITS OF THE DEVIL

There were once three friends, who agreed to make a pilgrimage together. It happened that their

provisions fell short, and having but one loaf between them, they were nearly famished. “Should this loaf,” they said to each other, “be divided amongst us, there will not be enough for any one. Let us then take counsel together, and consider how the bread is to be disposed of.” “Suppose we sleep upon the way,” replied one of them; “and whosoever hath the most wonderful dream, shall possess the loaf.” The other two acquiesced, and settled themselves to sleep. But he who gave the advice, arose while they were sleeping, and eat up the bread, not leaving a single crumb for his companions. When he had finished he awoke them. “Get up quickly,” said he, “and tell us your dreams.” “My friends,” answered the first, “I have had a very marvellous vision. A golden ladder reached up to heaven, by which angels ascended and descended. They took my soul from my body, and conveyed it to that blessed place where I beheld the Holy Trinity; and where I experienced such an overflow of joy, as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. This is my dream.” “And I,” said the second, “beheld the devils with iron instruments, by which they dragged my soul from the body, and plunging it into hell flames, most grievously tormented me; saying, ‘As long as God reigns in heaven this will be your portion.’” “Now then,” said the third, who had eaten the bread, “hear my dream. It appeared as if an angel came and addressed me in the following manner, ‘My friend, would you see what is become of your companions?’ I answered, ‘Yes, Lord. We have but one loaf between us, and I fear that they have run off with it.’ ‘You are mistaken,’ he rejoined, ‘it lies beside us: follow me.’ He immediately led me to the gate of heaven, and by his command I put in my head and saw you; and I thought that you were snatched up into heaven and sat upon a throne of

gold, while rich wines and delicate meats stood around you. Then said the angel, 'Your companion, you see, has an abundance of good things, and dwells in all pleasures. There he will remain for ever; for he has entered a celestial kingdom and cannot return. Come now where your other associate is placed.' I followed, and he led me to hell-gates, where I beheld you in torment, as you just now said. Yet they furnished you, even there, with bread and wine in abundance. I expressed my sorrow at seeing you in misery, and you replied, 'As long as God reigns in heaven here I must remain, for I have merited it. Do you then rise up quickly, and eat all the bread, since you will see neither me nor my companion again.' I complied with your wishes; arose, and eat the bread."

Application

My beloved, the Saracens and Jews; the rich and powerful; and finally, the perfect among men, are typified by the three companions. The bread, represents the kingdom of heaven.

OF VIGILANCE IN OUR CALLING

A thief went one night to the house of a rich man, and scaling the roof, peeped through a hole to examine if any part of the family were yet stirring. The master of the house, suspecting something, said secretly to his wife, "Ask me in a loud voice how I acquired the property I possess; and do not desist until I bid you." The woman complied, and began to vociferate, "My dear husband, pray tell me, since you never were a merchant, how you obtained all the wealth which you have now collected." "My love," answered her husband, "do not ask such foolish questions." But she persisted in her enquiries; and at

length, as if overcome by her urgency, he said, “Keep what I am going to tell you a secret, and your curiosity shall be gratified.”

“Oh, trust me.”

“Well, then, you must know that I was a thief, and obtained what I now enjoy by nightly depredations.” “It is strange,” said the wife, “that you were never taken.” “Why,” replied he, “my master, who was a skilful clerk, taught me a particular word, which, when I ascended the tops of people’s houses, I pronounced, and thus escaped detection.” “Tell me, I conjure you,” returned the lady, “what that powerful word was.” “Hear, then; but never mention it again, or we shall lose all our property.” “Be sure of that;” said the lady, “it shall never be repeated.”

“It was—is there no one within hearing?—the mighty word was ‘FALSE.’”

The lady, apparently quite satisfied, fell asleep; and her husband feigned it. He snored lustily, and the thief above, who had heard their conversation with much pleasure, aided by the light of the moon, descended, repeating seven times the cabalistic sound. But being too much occupied with the charm to mind his footing, he stepped through the window into the house; and in the fall dislocated his leg and arm, and lay half dead upon the floor. The owner of the mansion, hearing the noise, and well knowing the reason, though he pretended ignorance, asked, “What was the matter?” “Oh!” groaned the suffering thief, “*False* words have deceived me.” In the morning he was taken before the judge, and afterwards suspended on a cross.

Application

My beloved, the thief is the devil; the house is the

human heart. The man is a good prelate, and his wife is the church.

To sum up, then, it would appear that the humorous muse in the Middle Ages concerned herself chiefly with scattering and disseminating moral lessons, which, because of the superiority of the teachers to the taught, showed up an ignorance that was laughable.

The fables and maxims that had been passed from mouth to mouth were put into writing and translated into various tongues.

The Sanscrit or Hindoo stories were undoubtedly the oldest and from them were taken the Arabic and Persian tales. These drifted into Europe and took a proper place among the literatures of the world.

Coleridge says that humor took its rise in the Middle Ages, while a present day writer contradictingly asserts that nobody smiled from the second century until the fifteenth.

It is true, that as the advent of Christianity put a full stop to all progress in the arts and sciences so it impeded the advance of learning and delayed the development of humor.

And yet, though men may not have smiled during the dark ages, they now and then laughed, at a humor that was far from subtle, but which was the foundation of the world's merriment.

The monks and ecclesiastics who formulated the moral precepts for the people found that the lessons were better conveyed by funny stories than by serious ones, and the preachers came to use the hammer of amusement to drive home their good advices.

MODERN HUMOR

With the readiness of the essayists to ascribe literary paternity, Chaucer is called the Father of English Poetry.

Coleridge observes that he is the best representative in English of the Norman-French Trouvères, but even more than by the French, Chaucer was influenced by the great Italians, Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, as well as by Ovid and Virgil.

Father of Modern Poetry more correctly describes Chaucer, and as he was the first notable English poet who was a layman, so also, was he the first connected with the court.

Though his time, the Fourteenth Century, is practically in the Middle Ages, Chaucer is distinctly modern in viewpoint and philosophy.

Born in London, he lived his life in the company of the men and women of the circles he knew and loved. Mankind was his study and his theme.

The average reader is hampered by the difficulties of the early English diction, and the modern mind is shocked by the freedom of speech then in vogue.

But we append such bits of Chaucer's verse as space allows.

The story of the Cock and the Fox, in the Nun's Priest's Tale, is allowed by judges to be the most

admirable fable (in the narration) that ever was written. The description of the birds, the delightful gravity with which they are invested with intellectual endowments, are conceived in the highest taste of true poetry and natural humour.

THE COCK AND THE FOX

Now every wise man, let him hearken me:
This story is all so true, I undertake,
As is the book of Lancelot du Lake,
That women hold in full great reverence.
Now will I turn again to my sentence.
A col fox, full of sly iniquity,
That in the grove had wonned yearés three,
By high imagination forecast.
The samé night throughout the hedges brast
Into the yard where Chanticleer the fair
Was wont, and eke his wivés to repair,
And in a bed of wortés still he lay
Till it was passed undern of the day,
Waiting his time on Chanticleer to fall,
As gladly do these homicidés all
That in await liggen to murder men.
O falsé murderer! rucking in thy den,
O newé Scariot, newé Ganelon!
O false dissimuler, O Greek Simon!
That broughtest Troy all utterly to sorrow.
O Chanticleer, accursed be the morrow
That thou into thy yard flew from thy beams
Thou were full well ywarnéd by thy dreams
That thilké day was perilous to thee:
But what that God forewot must needés be,
After the opinion of certain clerkés,
Witness on him that any perfect clerk is,
That in schoolé is great altercation
In this matteré, and great disputision,
And hath been of a hundred thousand men:
But I ne cannot boult it to the bren,
As can the holy Doctor Augustin,
Or Boece, or the Bishop Bradwardin,
Whether that Godde's worthy foreweeting
Straineth me needly for to do a thing
(Needely clepe I simple necessity)
Or elles if free choice be granted me
To do the samé thing or do it naught

Though God forewot it ere that it was wrought,
Or if his weeting straineth never a deal
But by necessity conditional.
I will not have to do of such mattere;
My Tale is of a Cock, as ye may hear,
That took his counsel of his wife with sorrow,
To walken in the yard upon the morrow
That he had met the dream, as I you told.
Womenne's counsels be full often cold;
Womenne's counsels brought us first to woe,
And made Adam from Paradise to go,
There as he was full merry and well at ease:
But for I n'ot to whom I might displease
If I counsel of women wouldé blame—
Pass over, for I said it in my game.
Read authors where they treat of such mattere,
And what they say of women ye may hear,
These be the cocke's wordés and not mine:
I can none harm of no womán devine.
Fair in the sand to bathe her merrily
Li'th Partelote, and all her sisters by,
Against the sun, and Chanticleer so free
Sang merrier than the mermaid in the sea,
(For Phisiologus sayeth sikerly
How that they singeth well and merrily).
And so befell that as he cast his eye
Among the wortés on a butterfly,
He was ware of this fox that lay full low,
Nothing he list him thenné for to crow,
But cried anon, "Cok! cok!" and up he start
As man that was affrayed in his heart,
For naturally a beast desireth flee
From his contráry if he may it see,
Though he ne'er erst had seen it with his eye.
This Chanticleer, when he 'gan him espy,
He would have fled, but that the fox anon
Said: "Gentle sir, alas! what will be done?
Be ye afraid of me that am your friend?
Now, certes, I were worse than any fiend
If I to you would harm or villany.
I am not come your counsel to espy;
But truély the cause of my coming
Was only for to hearken how ye sing,
For truély ye have as merry a steven
As any angel hath that is in heaven;
Therwith ye have of music more feeling
Than had Boece, or any that can sing.
My Lord, your father (God his soulé bless!)

And eke your mother of her gentleness,
Have in my house ybeen to my great ease,
And certés, Sir, full fain would I you please.
But for men speak of singing, I will say,
(So may I brouken well my eyen tway,)
Save you, ne heard I never man so sing
As did your father in the morrowning:
Certés it was of heart all that he sung:
And for to make his voice the moré strong
He would so pain him, that with both his eyen
He musté wink, so loud he wouldé crien,
And standen on his tiptoes therewithal,
And stretchen forth his necké long and small.
And eke he was of such discretion,
That there n'as no man in no región
That him in song or wisdom mighté pass.
I have well read in Dan Burnel the ass
Among his Vers, how that there was a cock,
That for a Priestés son gave him a knock
Upon his leg when he was young and nice
He made him for to lose his benefice;
But certain there is no comparison
Betwixt the wisdom and discretion
Of youré father and his subtilty.
Now singeth, Sir, for Sainté Charity:
Let see, can ye your father counterfeit?
  This Chanticleer his wingés 'gan to beat,
As man that could not his treason espy,
So was he ravished with his flattery.
  Alas! ye lordés, many a false flatour
Is in your court, and many a losengeour,
That pleaseth you well moré, by my faith,
Than he that sothfastness unto you saith.
Readeth Ecclesiast of flattery:
Beware ye lordés of their treachery.
  This Chanticleer stood high upon his toes
Stretching his neck, and held his eyen close,
And 'gan to crowen loude for the nones;
And Dan Russell the fox start up at once,
And by the gargat henté Chanticleer
And on his back toward the wood him bear,
For yet ne was there no man that him sued.
  O destiny! that mayst not be eschew'd,
Alas that Chanticleer flew from the beams,
Alas his wife ne raughté not of dreams!
And on a Friday fell all this mischance.

TO MY EMPTY PURSE

To you, my purse, and to none other wight,
Complain I, for ye be my lady dear;
I am sorry now that ye be so light,
For certés ye now make me heavy cheer;
Me were as lief be laid upon a bier,
For which unto your mercy thus I cry,
Be heavy again, or ellés must I die.

Now vouchsafen this day, ere it be night,
That I of you the blissful sound may hear,
Or see your colour like the sunné bright,
That of yellowness ne had never peer;
Ye be my life, ye be my heartés steer;
Queen of comfórt and of good company,
Be heavy again, or ellés must I die.

Now, purse, that art to me my livés light,
And saviour, as down in this world here,
Out of this towné help me by your might,
Sithen that you will not be my tresór,
For I am shave as nigh as any frere,
But I prayen unto your courtesy,
Be heavy again, or ellés must I die.

BALLAD OF WOMEN'S DOUBLENESS

This world is full of variance
In everything; who taketh heed,
That faith and trust, and all Constance,
Exiléd be, this is no drede,
And save only in womanhead,
I can ysee no sikerness;
But, for all that, yet as I read,
Beware alway of doubleness.

Also that the fresh summer flowers,
The white and red, the blue and green,
Be suddenly with winter showers,
Made faint and fade, withouten ween;
That trust is none, as ye may seen,
In no thing, nor no steadfastness,
Except in women, thus I mean;
Yet aye beware of doubleness.

The crooked moon (this is no tale),
Some while isheen and bright of hue,
And after that full dark and pale,
And every moneth changeth new,

That who the very sothé knew
All thing is built on brittleness,
Save that women always be true;
Yet aye beware of doubleness.

The lusty freshé summer's day,
And Phœbus with his beamés clear,
Towardés night they draw away,
And no longer list t' appear,
That in this present life now here
Nothing abideth in his fairness,
Save women aye be found entere,
And devoid of all doubleness.

The sea eke with his sterné wawés
Each day yfloweth new again,
And by the concourse of his lawés
The ebbe floweth in certain;
After great drought there cometh rain;
That farewell here all stableness,
Save that women be whole and plein;
Yet aye beware of doubleness.

Fortunés wheel go'th round about
A thousand timés day and night,
Whose course standeth ever in doubt
For to transmue she is so light,
For which adverteth in your sight
Th' untrust of worldly fickleness,
Save women, which of kindly right
Ne hath no touch of doubleness.

What man ymay the wind restrain,
Or holden a snake by the tail?
Who may a slipper eel constrain
That it will void withouten fail?
Or who can driven so a nail
To maké sure newfangleness,
Save women, that can gie their sail
To row their boat with doubleness?

At every haven they can arrive
Whereat they wot is good passáge;
Of innocence they cannot strive
With wawés, nor no rockés rage;
So happy is their lodemanage
With needle and stone their course to dress,
That Solomon was not so sage

To find in them no doubleness.

Therefore whoso doth them accuse
Of any double intentión,
To speaké rown, other to muse,
To pinch at their conditión,
All is but false collusión,
I dare right well the soth express;
They have no better protectión,
But shroud them under doubleness.

So well fortunéd is their chance,
The dice to-turnen up so down,
With sice and cinque they can advance,
And then by revolutión
They set a fell conclusión
Of lombés, as in sothfastness,
Though clerkés maken mentión
Their kind is fret with doubleness.

Sampson yhad experience
That women were full true yfound
When Dalila of innocence
With shearés 'gan his hair to round;
To speak also of Rosamond,
And Cleopatra's faithfulness,
The stories plainly will confound
Men that apeach their doubleness.

Single thing is not ypraiséd,
Nor of old is of no renown,
In balance when they be ypesed,
For lack of weight they be borne down,
And for this cause of just reason
These women all of rightwisness
Of choice and free electión
Most love exchange and doubleness.

L'ENVOI

O ye women! which be inclinéd
By influence of your natúre
To be as pure as gold yfinéd,
And in your truth for to endure,
Armeth yourself in strong armúre,
(Lest men assail your sikerness,)
Set on your breast, yourself t'assure,
A mighty shield of doubleness.

Chaucer was called the Morning Star of Song, and his immediate followers proved to be satellites of far less magnitude.

John Skelton, an early Poet Laureate, was of a buffoon type of humor, yet thus speaks of his own verse.

> Though my rhyme be ragged,
> Tattered and gagged,
> Rudely rainbeaten,
> Rusty, moth-eaten,
> If ye take well therewith,
> It hath in it some pith.

One, at least, of his whimsical poems is not without charm.

TO MAISTRES MARGARET HUSSEY

> Mirry Margaret
> As midsomer flowre,
> Gentyll as faucon
> Or hauke of the towre,
> With solace and gladnes
> Moch mirth, and no madnes,
> All good and no badnes,
> So joyously
> So maydenly
> So womanly
> Her demeynynge
> In every thynge
> Far, far passynge
> That I can endite
> Or suffice to write
> Of mirry Margaret
> As mydsomer flowre
> Gentill as faucon
> Or hawke of the towre.
> As pacient and as styll
> And as ful of good wil
> As faire Isiphyll
> Coliander
> Sweete pomaunder
> Good Cassander;
> Stedfast of thought

Wel made, wel wroght,
Far may be sought
Erst that ye can fynde
So curteise so kynde
As mirry Margaret
This midsomer flowre,
Gentyll as faucon
Or hauke of the towre.

The Troubadours and Minstrels were followed by a type of entertainer known as the Fool or the Court Fool, who took the place of the satirist in the great households.

Soon various jests were collected, and attributed to these domestic fools, whose garb began to take the form of the cap and bells, accompanied by the jester's bauble.

As printing became more widespread, the jestbooks multiplied, and many collections were published in England.

Skelton seems to have been quite as much Court Jester as Poet Laureate under Henry VII and Henry VIII, and a volume of *Merie Tayles of Skelton* is one of the earliest of the Jest Books.

Yet, since this was published some forty years after Skelton's death it is assumed that but few of the tales are really of the poet's origination.

Likewise, Scogin's Jests and the stories attributed to Tarlton and Peele are considered unauthentic as to authorship and merely the work of the hack writers of the period.

These Jestbooks as well as the *C. Mery Talys*, or *Hundred Merry Tales*, which, with its companion volume, *Mery Tales and Quicke Answeres*, was, we are told, used by Shakespeare, are now found in many reprints, and only a few bits of their witty or

humorous lore may be given here.

As an example of the sharp satire of Skelton, the following shows how he regarded the prevalent practice of obtaining letters patent of monopoly from the crown, and also is a hit at the fondness for drinking among the Welsh.

HOW THE WELSHMAN DYD DESYRE SKELTON TO AYDE HIM IN HYS SUTE TO THE KYNGE FOR A PATENT TO SELL DRYNKE

Skelton, when he was in London went to the kynge's courte, where there dyd come to him a Welshman saying, "Syr, it is so that many dooth come upp of my country to the kynge's court, and some doth get of the kynge by a patent a castell, and some a parke, and some a forest, and some one fee and some another, and they doe lyve lyke honest men, and I should lyve as honestly as the best, if I might have a patent for good drynke, wherefore I dooe praye you to write a fewe woords for me in a lytle byll to geve the same to the kynge's handes, and I will geve you well for your laboure. I am contented sayde Skelton. Syte downe, then, sayd the Welshman and write. What shall I wryte? sayde Skelton. The Welshman said wryte "*dryncke*." Nowe sayde the Welshman wryte "*more dryncke*." What nowe? said Skelton. Wryte now "*A great deale of dryncke*." Nowe sayd the Welshman putte to all thys dryncke "*A littell crome of breade*, and *a great déale of dryncke to it*," and reade once again. Skelton dyd reade "*Dryncke, more dryncke, and a great deale of dryncke and a lytle crome of breade and a great deale of dryncke to it*." Then the Welshman sayde Put oute the litle crome of breade, and sette in *all dryncke and no breade*. And if I myght have thys sygned of the kynge, sayde the Welshman, I care for no more as long as I lyve. Well,

then, sayde Skelton, when you have thys sygned of the kynge then will I labour for a patent to have bread, that you wyth your dryncke and I with the bread may fare well, and seeke our livinge with bagge and staffe.

Here Begynneth Certayne Merye Tales of Skelton, Poet Lauriat

HOW SKELTON CAME LATE HOME TO OXFORD FROM ABINGTON

Skelton was an Englysheman borne as Skogyn was, and hee was educated & broughte up in Oxfoorde: and there was he made a poete lauriat. And on a tyme he had ben at Abbington to make mery, wher that he had eate salte meates, and hee did com late home to Oxforde, and he did lye in an ine named ye Tabere whyche is now the Angell, and hee dyd drynke, & went to bed. About midnight he was so thyrstie or drye that hee was constrained to call to the tapster for drynke, & the tapster harde him not. Then hee cryed to hys oste & hys ostes, and to the ostler, for drinke; and no man wold here hym. Alacke, sayd Skelton, I shall peryshe for lacke of drynke! what reamedye? At the last he dyd crie out and sayd: Fyer, fyer, fyer! when Skelton hard euery man bustle hymselfe upward, & some of them were naked, & some were halfe asleepe and amased, and Skelton dyd crye: Fier, fier! styll, that everye man knewe not whether to resorte. Skelton did go to bed, and the oste and ostis, & the tapster with the ostler, dyd runne to Skeltons chamber with candles lyghted in theyr handes, saying: where, where, where is the fyer? Here, here, here, said Skelton, & poynted hys fynger to hys moouth, saying: fetch me some drynke to quenche the fyer and the heate and the drinesse in my mouthe: & so they dyd. Wherfore it is good for

everye man to helpe hys owne selfe in tyme of neede wythe some policie or crafte, so bee it there bee no deceit nor falshed used.

THE JESTS OF SCOGIN

HOW JACKE BY SOPHISTRY WOULD MAKE OF TWO EGGS THREE

Scogin on a tyme had two egs to his breakfast, and Jack his scholler should rost them; and as they were rosting, Scogin went to the fire to warme him. And as the egs were rosting, Jacke said: sir, I can by sophistry prove that here be three egs. Let me se that, said Scogin. I shall tel you, sir, said Jack. Is not here one? Yes, said Scogin. And is not here two? Yes, said Scogin; of that I am sure. Then Jack did tell the first egge againe, saying: is not this the third? O, said Scogin, Jack, thou art a good sophister; wel, said Scogin, these two eggs shall serve me for my breakfast, and take thou the third for thy labour and for the herring that thou didst give mee the last day. So one good turne doth aske another, and to deceive him that goeth about to deceive is no deceit.

This is a very common story. It is, in a slightly varied form, No. 67 of *A C Mery Tales*, and Johnson has introduced it into *The Pleasant Conceits of Old Hobson, the Merry Londoner*, 1607.

HOW SCOGIN SOLD POWDER TO KILL FLEAS

Scogin divers times did lacke money, and could not tell what shift to make. At last, he thought to play the physician, and did fill a box full of the powder of a rotten post; and on a Sunday he went to a Parish Church, and told the wives that hee had a

powder to kil up all the fleas in the country, and every wife bought a pennyworth; and Scogin went his way, ere Masse was done. The wives went home, and cast the powder into their beds and in their chambers, and the fleas continued still. On a time, Scogin came to the same Church on a sunday, and when the wives had espied him, the one said to the other: this is he that deceived us with the powder to kill fleas; see, said the one to the other, this is the selfe-same person. When Masse was done, the wives gathered about Scogin, and said: you be an honest man to deceive us with the powder to kill fleas. Why, said Scogin, are not your fleas all dead? We have more now (said they) than ever we had. I marvell of that, said Scogin, I am sure you did not use the medicine as you should have done. They said: wee did cast it in our beds and in our chambers. I, said he, there be a sort of fooles that will buy a thing, and will not aske what they should doe with it. I tell you all, that you should have taken every flea by the neck, and then they would gape; and then you should have cast a little of the powder into every flea's mouth, and so you should have killed them all. Then said the wives: we have not onely lost our money, but we are mocked for our labour.

FROM MERY TALES OF THE MAD MEN OF GOTTAM

THE SECOND TALE

There was a man of Gottam did ride to the market with two bushells of wheate, and because his horse should not beare heavy, he caried his corne upon his owne necke, & did ride upon his horse, because his horse should not cary to heavy a burthen. Judge you which was the wisest, his horse or himselfe.

THE THIRD TALE

On a tyme, the men of Gottam would have pinned in the Cuckoo, whereby shee should sing all the yeere, and in the midst of ye town they made a hedge round in compasse, and they had got a Cuckoo, and had put her into it, and said: Sing here all the yeere, and thou shalt lacke neither meate nor drinke. The Cuckoo, as soone as she perceived her selfe incompassed within the hedge, flew away. A vengeance on her! said they; we made not our hedge high enough.

From Mother Bunches Merriments

HOW MADDE COOMES, WHEN HIS WIFE WAS DROWNED, SOUGHT HER AGAINST THE STREAME

Coomes of Stapforth, hearing that his wife was drowned comming from market, went with certayne of his friends to see if they could find her in the river. He, contrary to all the rest, sought his wife against the streame; which they perceyving, sayd he lookt the wrong way. And why so? (quoth he.) Because (quoth they) you should looke downe the streame, and not against it. Nay, zounds (quoth hee), I shall never find her that way: for shee did all things so contrary in her life time, that now she is dead, I am sure she will goe against the streame.

The Pleasant Conceits of Old Hobson

HOW MAISTER HOBSON SAID HE WAS NOT AT HOME

On a time Master Hobson upon some ocation came to Master Fleetewoods house to speake with him, being then new chosen the recorder of London, and asked one of his men if he were within, and he said he was not at home. But Maister Hobson, perceving that his maister bad him say so, and that he was within (not being willing at that time to be

spoken withall), for that time desembling the matter, he went his way. Within a few dayes after, it was Maister Fleetwoods chaunse to come to Maister Hobson's, and knocking at the dore, asked if he were within. Maister Hobson, hearing and knowing how he was denyed Maister Fleetwoods speach before time, spake himselfe aloud, and said hee was not at home. Then sayd Maister Fleetwood: what, Master Hobson, thinke you that I knowe not your voyce? Whereunto Maister Hobson answered and said: now, Maister Fleetewood, am I quit with you: for when I came to speake with you, I beleeved your man that said you were not at home, and now you will not beleeve mine owne selfe; and this was the mery conference betwixt these two merry gentlemen.

FROM CERTAINE CONCEYTS & JEASTS; AS WELL TO LAUGH DOWNE OUR HARDER UNDIGESTED MORSELLS, AS BREAKE UP WITH MYRTH OUR BOOKE AND BANQUET. COLLECTED OUT OF SCOTUS POGGIUS, AND OTHERS

A certayne Poore-man met king Phillip, & besought him for something, because he was his kinsman. The king demanded frō whence descended. Who answered: from Adam. Then the K. commaunded an Almes to be given. Hee replyed, an Almes was not the gift of a king; to whome the king answered: if I should so reward all my kindred in that kinde, I should leave but little for myselfe.

A certaine conceyted Traveller being at a Banquet, where chanced a flye to fall into his cuppe, which hee (being to drinke) tooke out for himselfe, and afterwards put in againe for his fellow: being demanded his reason, answered, that for his owne

part he affected them not, but it might be some other did.

A certaine player, seeing Thieves in his house in the night, thus laughingly sayde: I knowe not what you will finde here in the dark, when I can find nothing my selfe in the light.

WIT AND MIRTH. CHARGEABLY COLLECTED OUT OF TAVERNS, ORDINARIES, INNES, BOWLING-GREENES AND ALLYES, ALEHOUSES, TOBACCO-SHOPS, HIGHWAYES, AND WATER-PASSAGES. MADE UP, AND FASHIONED INTO CLINCHES, BULLS, QUIRKES, YERKES, QUIPS, AND JERKES. APOTHEGMATICALLY BUNDLED UP AND GARBLED AT THE REQUEST OF JOHN GARRET'S GHOST

Taylor the Water-Poet was one of the favourite authors of Robert Southey, who has given an account of his life and writings in his *Uneducated Poets*, and has quoted him largely in his *Common-Place Book*.

John Garret, at the request of whose ghost the Water-Poet professes to have formed the present collection, was a jester of the period, mentioned by Bishop Corbet and others. Heylin, author of the Cosmography, speaks of "Archy's bobs, and Garrets sawcy jests." In his dedication of the *Wit and Mirth*, Taylor alludes to Garret as "that old honest mirrour of mirth deceased."

Taylor, to forestall possible cavils at his plagiarisms from others, or adoption of good sayings already published and well-known, expressly says in the dedication: "Because I had many of them [the jests] by relation and heare-say, I am in doubt that some of them may be in print in some other Authors, which I doe assure you is more than I doe know."

One said, that hee could never have his health in *Cambridge*, and that if hee had lived there till this time, hee thought in his conscience that hee had dyed seven yeeres agoe.

A Judge upon the Bench did aske an old man how old he was. My Lord, said he, I am eight and fourscore. And why not fourscore and eight? said the Judge. The other repli'd: because I was eight, before I was fourescore.

A rich man told his nephew that hee had read a booke called *Lucius Apuleius of the Golden Asse*, and that he found there how Apuleius, after he had beene an asse many yeeres, by eating of Roses he did recover his manly shape againe, and was no more an asse: the young man replied to his uncle: Sir, if I were worthy to advise you, I would give you counsell to eate a salled of Roses once a weeke yourselfe.

A country man being demanded how such a River was called, that ranne through their Country, hee answered that they never had need to call the River, for it alwayes came without calling.

One borrowed a cloake of a Gentleman, and met one that knew him, who said: I thinke I know that cloake. It may be so, said the other, I borrowed it of

such a Gentleman. The other told him that it was too short. Yea, but, quoth he that had the cloake, I will have it long enough, before I bring it home againe.

OF THE WOMAN THAT FOLLOWED HER FOURTH HUSBANDS BERE AND WEPT

A woman there was which had had iiii husbandys. It fourtuned also that this fourth husbande dyed and was brought to chyrche upon the bere; whom this woman folowed and made great mone, and waxed very sory, in so moche that her neyghbours thought she wolde swown and dye for sorow. Wherfore one of her gosseps cam to her, and spake to her in her ere, and bad her, for Godds sake, comfort her self and refrayne that lamentacion, or ellys it wold hurt her and peraventure put her in jeopardy of her life. To whom this woman answeryd and sayd: I wys, good gosyp, I have grete cause to morne, if ye knew all. For I have beryed iii husbandes besyde this man; but I was never in the case that I am now. For there was not one of them but when that I folowed the corse to chyrch, yet I was sure of an nother husband, before the corse cam out of my house, and now I am sure of no nother husband; and therfore ye may be sure I have great cause to be sad and hevy.

By thys tale ye may se that the olde proverbe ys trew, that it is as great pyte to se a woman wepe as a gose to go barefote.

A C. MERY TALYS

OF THE MERCHAUNTE OF LONDON THAT DYD PUT NOBLES IN HIS MOUTHE IN HYS DETHE BEDDE

A ryche covetous marchant there was that dwellid in London, which ever gaderyd mony and could never fynd in hys hert to spend ought *upon* hym selfe

nor upon no man els. Whiche fell sore syke, and as he laye on hys deth bed had his purs lyenge at his beddys hede, and [he] had suche a love to his money that he put his hande in his purs, and toke out thereof x or xii li. in nobles and put them in his mouth. And because his wyfe and other perceyved hym very syke and lyke to dye, they exortyd hym to be confessyd, and brought the curate unto hym. Which when they had caused him to say Benedicite, the curate bad hym crye God mercy and shewe to hym his synnes. Than this seyck man began to sey: I crey God mercy I have offendyd in the vii dedly synnes and broken the x commaundementes; but because of the gold in his mouth he muffled so in his speche, that the curate could not well understande hym: wherfore the curat askyd hym, what he had in his mouthe that letted his spech. I wys, mayster parsone, quod the syke man, muffelynge, I have nothyng in my mouthe but a lyttle money; bycause I wot not whither I shal go, I thought I wold take some spendynge money with me: for I wot not what nede I shall have therof; and incontynent after that sayeng dyed, before he was confessyd or repentant that any man coulde perceyve, and so by lyklyhod went to the devyll.

By this tale ye may se, that they that all theyr lyves wyll never do charyte to theyr neghbours, that God in tyme of theyr dethe wyll not suffre them to have grace of repentaunce.

OF THE SCOLER OF OXFORDE THAT PROVED BY SOVESTRY II CHYKENS III

A ryche Frankelyn in the contrey havynge by his wyfe but one chylde and no mo, for the great affeccyon that he had to his sayd chylde founde hym

at Oxforde to schole by the space of ii or iii yere. Thys yonge scoler, in a vacacyon tyme, for his disporte came home to his father. It fortuned afterwarde on a nyght, the father, the mother and the sayd yonge scoler

5 lines wanting.

I have studyed sovestry, and by that scyence I can prove, that these ii chekyns in the dysshe be thre chekyns. Mary, sayde the father, that wolde I fayne se. The scoller toke one of the chekyns in his hande and said: lo! here is one chekyn, and incontynente he toke bothe the chekyns in his hande jointely and sayd: here is ii chekyns; and one and ii maketh iii: ergo here is iii chekyns. Than the father toke one of the chekyns to him selfe, and gave another to his wyfe, and sayd thus: lo! I wyll have one of the chekyns to my parte, and thy mother shal have a nother, and because of thy good argumente thou shalte have the thyrde to thy supper: for thou gettyst no more meate here at this tyme; whyche promyse the father kepte, and so the scoller wente without his supper.

By this tale men may se, that it is great foly to put one to scole to lerne any subtyll scyence, whiche hathe no naturall wytte.

OF THE COURTEAR THAT ETE THE HOT CUSTARDE

A certayne merchaunt and a courtear, *being upon a time together* at dyner having a hote custerd, *the courtear being* somwhat homely of maner toke *parte of it and put it* in hys mouth, whych was so hote that made him *shed teares.* The merchaunt, lookyng on him, thought that he had *ben weeping, and asked hym why* he wept. This curtear, not wyllynge it to be

known that he had brent his mouth with the hote custerd, answered and said, sir: *quod he, I had* a brother whych dyd a certayn offence wherfore he was hanged; *and, chauncing* to think now uppon his deth, it maketh me to wepe. This merchaunt thought the courtear had said trew, and anon after the merchaunt was disposid to ete *of the custerd*, and put a sponefull of it in his mouth, and brent his mouth also, that his *eyes watered*. This courtear, that percevyng, spake to the merchaunt and seyd: sir, quod *he, pray* why do ye wepe now? The merchaunt perseyved how he had *bene deceived* and said: mary, quod he, I wepe, because thou wast not hangid, *when that* they brother was hangyd.

OF HYM THAT SOUGHT HIS WYFE AGAYNST THE STREME

A man there was whose wyfe, as she came over a bridg, fell in to the ryver and was drowned; wherfore he wente and sought for her upward against the stream, wherat his neighboures, that wente with hym, marvayled, and sayde he dyd nought, he shulde go seke her downeward with the streme. Naye, quod he, I am sure I shall never fynde her that waye: for she was so waywarde and so contrary to every thynge, while she lyvedde, that I knowe very well nowe she is deed, she wyll go a gaynste the stream.

OF THE FOOLE THAT THOUGHT HYM SELFE DEED

There was a felowe dwellynge at Florence, called Nigniaca, whiche was nat verye wyse, nor all a foole, but merye and jocunde. A sorte of yonge men, for to laughe and pastyme, appoynted to gether to make hym beleve that he was sycke. So, whan they were agreed howe they wolde do, one of them mette hym in the mornynge, as he came out of his house, and

bad him good morowe, and than asked him, if he were nat yl at ease? No, quod the foole, I ayle nothynge, I thanke God. By my faith, ye have a sickely pale colour, quod the other, and wente his waye.

Anone after, an other of them mette hym, and asked hym if he had nat an ague: for your face and colour (quod he) sheweth that ye be very sycke. Than the foole beganne a lyttel to doubt, whether he were sycke or no: for he halfe beleved that they sayd trouth. Whan he had gone a lytel farther, the thyrde man mette hym, and sayde: Jesu! manne, what do you out of your bed? ye loke as ye wolde nat lyve an houre to an ende. Nowe he doubted greatly, and thought verily in his mynde, that he had hadde some sharpe ague; wherfore he stode styll and wolde go no further; and, as he stode, the fourth man came and sayde: Jesu! man, what dost thou here, and arte so sycke? Gette the home to thy bedde: for I parceyve thou canste nat lyve an houre to an ende. Than the foles harte beganne to feynte, and [he] prayde this laste man that came to hym to helpe hym home. Yes, quod he, I wyll do as moche for the as for myn owne brother. So home he brought hym, and layde hym in his bed, and than he fared with hym selfe, as thoughe he wolde gyve up the gooste. Forth with came the other felowes, and saide he hadde well done to lay hym in his bedde. Anone after, came one whiche toke on hym to be a phisitian; whiche, touchynge the pulse, sayde the malady was so vehement, that he coulde nat lyve an houre. So they, standynge aboute the bedde, sayde one to an other: nowe he gothe his waye: for his speche and syght fayle him; by and by he wyll yelde up the goste. Therfore lette us close his eyes, and laye his hands a crosse, and cary hym forth to be buryed. And than

they sayde lamentynge one to an other: O! what a losse have we of this good felowe, our frende?

The foole laye stylle, as one [that] were deade; yea, and thought in his mynde, that he was deade in dede. So they layde hym on a bere, and caryed hym through the cite. And whan any body asked them what they caryed, they sayd the corps of Nigniaca to his grave. And ever as they went, people drew about them. Among the prece ther was a taverners boy, the whiche, whan he herde that it was the cors of Nigniaca, he said to them: O! what a vile bestly knave, and what a stronge thefe is deed! by the masse, he was well worthy to have ben hanged longe ago. Whan the fole harde those wordes, he put out his heed and sayd: I wys, horeson, if I were alyve nowe, as I am deed, I wolde prove the a false lyer to thy face. They, that caryed him, began to laugh so hartilye, that they sette downe the bere, and wente theyr waye.

By this tale ye maye se, what the perswasion of many doth. Certaynly he is very wyse, that is nat inclined to foly, if he be stered thereunto by a multitude. Yet sapience is founde in fewe persones: and they be lyghtly olde sobre men.

A few further bits are added, being witty sayings from Camden, Bacon and the Jest Books and manuscripts of the period.

Queen Elizabeth seeing a gentleman in her garden, who had not felt the effect of her favours so

soon as he expected, looking out of her window, said to him, in Italian, “What does a man think of, Sir Edward, when he thinks of nothing?” After a little pause, he answered, “He thinks, Madam, of a woman’s promise.” The queen shrunk in her head, but was heard to say, *Well, Sir Edward, I must not confute you: Anger makes dull men witty, but it keeps them poor*.

A certain nobleman sold a gentleman a horse for a good round sum, which he took upon his lordship’s word, that he had no fault. About three weeks after, he met my lord; “Why, your lordship told me,” says he, “that your horse had no fault, and he is blind of an eye.” *Well, Sir*, says my lord, *it is no fault, it is only a misfortune*.

A doctor of little learning, and less modesty, having talked much at table; one, much admiring him, asked another, when the doctor was gone, if he did not think him a great scholar? The answer was, *He may be learned, for aught I know, or can discover; but I never heard learning make such a noise*.

Sir Drue Drury called for tobacco-pipes at a tavern. The waiter brought some, and, in laying them down on the table, broke most of them. Sir Drue swore a great oath, that they were made of the same metal with the Commandments. “Why so?” says one.

Because they are so soon broken.

A rich usurer was very lame of one of his legs, and yet nothing of hurt outwardly to be seen, whereupon he sent for a surgeon for his advice; who, being more honest than ordinary, told him, “It was in vain to meddle with it, for it was only old age that was the cause.” *But why then* (said the usurer) *should not my other leg be as lame as this, seeing that the one is no older than the other?*

A gentleman disputing about religion in Button’s Coffeehouse, some of the company said, “You talk of religion! I will hold you five guineas, you cannot repeat the Lord’s prayer; Sir Richard Steele here shall hold stakes.” The money being deposited, the gentleman began, *I believe in God*; and so went through his Creed. *Well*, said the other, *I own I have lost, but I did not think that you could have done it.*

A gentleman calling for small-beer at another gentleman’s table, finding it very hard, gave it the servant again without drinking. “What,” said the master of the house, “do you not like the beer?” *It is not to be found fault with*, answered the other, *for one should never speak ill of the dead.*

Some gentlemen being at a tavern together, for want of better diversion, some proposed play; but,

said another of the company, “I have fourteen good reasons against gaming.” “What are those,” said another? “In the first place,” answered he, *I have no Money*. *Oh!* said the first, *if you had four hundred reasons, you need not name another*.

Quin used to apply a story to the then ministry. A master of a brig calls out, *Who is there?* A boy answered, *Will, Sir.—What are you doing?—Nothing, Sir.—Is Tom there?—Yes*, says Tom.—*What are you doing, Tom?—Helping Will, Sir.*

A gentleman, passing a woman who was skinning eels, and observing the torture of the poor animals, asked her, how she could have the heart to put them to such pain. *Ah*, said she, *poor creatures! they be used to it.*

A silly priest at Trumpington being to read that place, *Eli, Eli, Lamasabachthani*, began to consider with himself, that it might be ridiculous and absurd for him to read it as it stood, because he was vicar of Trumpington, and not of Ely: and therefore he read it, *Trumpington, Trumpington, Lamasabachthani*.

It seems impossible, right here, not to digress, chronologically, for a moment.

Every one will have noticed that these old time jests are the foundations on which many modern stories are built, but the last one quoted above is so palpably the prototype of a current Boston story that it must be told.

A small child named Halliwell, spending the night with a neighbor, Mrs. Cabot, knelt at the knee of her hostess to say her evening prayer.

"Our Father who art in Heaven," the little visitor began devoutly, "Cabot be thy name—"

"What? What do you mean?" asked the startled lady.

"Oh," said the child, "of course, at home, I say 'Halliwell be thy name,' but here, I thought it more polite to say Cabot."

It is held by most writers on the subject that the great influx of humor into literature took place in the latter half of the sixteenth century.

This is partly because the progressing art of printing brought about the influx of many elements into literature at that time, and also because then appeared the work of three of the greatest of the world's humorists.

Shakespeare in England, Rabelais in France and Cervantes in Spain, gave us their immortal works.

Earlier in the century Thomas More in his *Utopia*

and Nicholas Udall in his *Ralph Royster Doyster* wrote in humorously satiric vein, but these works are difficult to quote from satisfactorily.

Having reached the period when Humor began to be produced in various countries independently of one another, it becomes necessary to modify our strict chronological arrangement and consider the nations and their humorists separately.

Before this, broadly speaking, literature should be considered as a whole, but as great names began to appear in certain widely separated localities, a national division must be made.

And so, continuing in England, we come to William Shakespeare.

With Shakespeare's greatness as a poet and dramatist we are not here concerned, but there are some critics who dispute his preeminence as a humorist.

While Hazlitt declared that in his opinion Molière was as great or greater than Shakespeare as a comic genius; Doctor Johnson, on the other hand, held that Shakespeare's comedies are better than his tragedies.

However, few are found to support Johnson's opinion, and Hazlitt qualifies his by saying that as Shakespeare's imagination and poetry were the master qualities of his mind, the ludicrous was forced to take second place.

Both these worthies, however, agree on the question of Falstaff's greatness, and Hazlitt takes this attitude.

"I would not be understood to say that there are not scenes or whole characters in Shakespeare equal

in wit and drollery to anything upon record. Falstaff alone is an instance, which, if I would, I could not get over. He is the leviathan of all the creatures of the author's comic genius, and tumbles about his unwieldy bulk in an ocean of wit and humour. But in general it will be found (if I am not mistaken), that even in the very best of these the spirit of humanity and the fancy of the poet greatly prevail over the mere wit and satire, and that we sympathize with his characters oftener than we laugh at them. His ridicule wants the sting of ill-nature. He had hardly such a thing as spleen in his composition. Falstaff himself is so great a joke, rather from his being so huge a mass of enjoyment than of absurdity."

While with equal perceptive judgment "Falstaff," says Dr. Johnson, "unimitated, unimitable Falstaff, how shall I describe thee? Thou compound of sense and vice; of sense which may be admired but not esteemed; of vice which may be despised, but hardly detested! Falstaff ... is a thief and a glutton, a coward and a boaster, always ready to cheat the weak and prey upon the poor; to terrify the timorous and insult the defenceless. At once obsequious and malignant, he satirizes in their absence those whom he lives by flattering.... Yet the man thus corrupt, thus despicable, makes himself necessary to the Prince that despises him, by the most pleasing of all qualities, perpetual gaiety, by an unfailing power of exciting laughter, which is the more freely indulged, as his wit is not of the splendid or ambitious kind, but consists in easy scapes and sallies of levity, which make sport, but raise no envy."

One of the most difficult of all poets to quote from, we can only offer detached and fugitive fragments of Shakespeare's plays; beginning with a

bit quoted by Hazlitt and accompanied by his delightful observations thereon.

“Shakespeare takes up the meanest subjects with the same tenderness that we do an insect’s wing, and would not kill a fly. To give a more particular instance of what I mean, I will take the inimitable and affecting, though most absurd and ludicrous dialogue, between Shallow and Silence, on the death of old Double.”

Shallow. Come on, come on, come on; give me your hand, sir; give me your hand, sir; an early stirrer, by the rood. And how doth my good cousin Silence?

Silence. Good morrow, good cousin Shallow.

Shallow. And how doth my cousin, your bedfellow? and your fairest daughter, and mine, my god-daughter Ellen?

Silence. Alas, a black ouzel, cousin Shallow.

Shallow. By yea and nay, sir; I dare say, my cousin William is become a good scholar: he is at Oxford still, is he not?

Silence. Indeed, sir, to my cost.

Shallow. He must then to the inns of court shortly. I was once of Clement’s inn; where, I think, they will talk of mad Shallow yet.

Silence. You were called lusty Shallow then, cousin.

Shallow. I was called anything, and I would have done anything indeed, and roundly too. There was I,

and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and black George Bare, and Francis Pickbone, and Will Squele, a Cotswold man, you had not four such swinge-bucklers in all the inns of court again; and, I may say to you, we knew where the bonarobas were, and had the best of them all at commandment. Then was Jack Falstaff, now Sir John, a boy, and page to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

Silence. This Sir John, cousin, that comes hither anon about soldiers?

Shallow. The same Sir John, the very same: I saw him break Schoggan's head at the court-gate, when he was a crack, not thus high; and the very same day did I fight with one Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer, behind Gray's-inn. O, the mad days that I have spent! and to see how many of mine old acquaintances are dead!

Silence. We shall all follow, cousin.

Shallow. Certain, 'tis certain, very sure, very sure: death (as the Psalmist saith) is certain to all, all shall die.—How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair?

Silence. Truly cousin, I was not there.

Shallow. Death is certain. Is old Double of your town living yet?

Silence. Dead, sir.

Shallow. Dead! see, see! he drew a good bow; and dead? he shot a fine shoot. John of Gaunt loved him well, and betted much money on his head. Dead! he would have clapped i' th' clout at twelve score; and carried you a forehand shaft a fourteen and a half, that it would have done a man's heart good to see.—How a score of ewes now?

Silence. Thereafter as they be: a score of good ewes may be worth ten pounds.

Shallow. And is old Double dead?

There is not anything more characteristic than this in all Shakespeare. A finer sermon on mortality was never preached. We see the frail condition of human life, and the weakness of the human understanding in Shallow's reflections on it; who, while the past is sliding from beneath his feet, still clings to the present. The meanest circumstances are shown through an atmosphere of abstraction that dignifies them: their very insignificance makes them more affecting, for they instantly put a check on our aspiring thoughts, and remind us that, seen through that dim perspective, the difference between the great and little, the wise and foolish, is not much. 'One touch of nature makes the whole world kin': and old Double, though his exploits had been greater, could but have had his day. There is a pathetic *naïveté* mixed up with Shallow's commonplace reflections and impertinent digressions. The reader laughs (as well he may) in reading the passage, but he lays down the book to think. The wit, however diverting, is social and humane. But this is not the distinguishing characteristic of wit, which is generally provoked by folly, and spends its venom upon vice.

The fault, then, of Shakespeare's comic Muse is, in my opinion, that it is too good-natured and magnanimous. It mounts above its quarry. It is 'apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes': but it does not take the

highest pleasure in making human nature look as mean, as ridiculous, and contemptible as possible. It is in this respect, chiefly, that it differs from the comedy of a later, and (what is called) a more refined period."

FROM HENRY IV, PART I

Enter HENRY *Prince of Wales and* SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

Falstaff. Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?

Prince Henry. Thou art so fat-witted with drinking of old sack, and unbuttoning thee after supper, and sleeping upon benches after noon, that thou hast forgotten to demand that truly which thou wouldst truly know. What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes capons, and clocks the tongues of bawds, and dials the signs of leaping-houses, and the blessed sun himself a fair hot wench in flame-colored taffata, I see no reason why thou should'st be so superfluous to demand the time of the day.

Falstaff. Indeed, you come near me now, Hal; for we that take purses, go by the moon and seven stars; and not by Phœbus—he, "that wand'ring knight so fair." And, I pray thee, sweet wag, when thou art king, as God save thy grace (majesty I should say; for grace thou wilt have none)—

Prince Henry. What! none?

Falstaff. No, by my troth; not so much as will serve to be prologue to an egg and butter.

Prince Henry. Well, how then? come, roundly, roundly.

Falstaff. Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art

king, let not us that are squires of the night's body, be called thieves of the day's beauty; let us be—Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon: and let men say, we be men of good government; being governed, as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we—steal.

Prince Henry. Thou say'st well, and it holds well, too; for the fortune of us, that are the moon's men, doth ebb and flow like the sea; being governed as the sea is, by the moon. As, for proof, now, a purse of gold most resolutely snatched on Monday night, and most dissolutely spent on Tuesday morning; got with swearing—*lay by*; and spent with crying—*bring in*; now, in as low an ebb as the foot of the ladder; and, by and by, in as high a flow as the ridge of the gallows.

Falstaff. By the Lord, thou say'st true, lad. And is not my hostess of the tavern a most sweet wench?

Prince Henry. As the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the castle. And is not a buff jerkin a most sweet robe of durance?

Falstaff. How now, how now, mad wag? what, in thy quips and thy quiddities? what a plague have I to do with a buff jerkin?

Prince Henry. Why, what a pox have I to do with my hostess of the tavern?

Falstaff. Well, thou hast called her to a reckoning many a time and oft.

Prince Henry. Did I ever call for thee to pay thy part?

Falstaff. No, I'll give thee thy due, thou hast paid

all there.

Prince Henry. Yea, and elsewhere, so far as my coin would stretch; and where it would not I have used my credit.

Falstaff. Yea, and so used it, that, were it not here apparent that thou art heir apparent,—But, I pr'ythee, sweet wag, shall there be gallows standing in England when thou art king? and resolution thus fobbed as it is, with the rusty curb of old father antic the law? Do not thou, when thou art king, hang a thief.

Prince Henry. No; thou shalt.

Falstaff. Shall I? Oh, rare! By the Lord, I'll be a brave judge.

Prince Henry. Thou judgest false already; I mean thou shalt have the hanging of the thieves, and so become a rare hangman.

Falstaff. Well, Hal, well; and in some sort it jumps with my humor, as well as waiting in the court, I can tell you.

Prince Henry. For obtaining of suits?

Falstaff. Yea, for obtaining of suits; whereof the hangman hath no lean wardrobe. 'Sblood, I am as melancholy as a gib-cat or a lugged bear.

Prince Henry. Or an old lion; or a lover's lute.

Falstaff. Yea, or the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe.

Prince Henry. What say'st thou to a hare, or the melancholy of Moor-ditch.

Falstaff. Thou hast the most unsavory similes; and art, indeed, the most comparative, rascalliest,—sweet

young prince,—But Hal, I pr'ythee trouble me no more with vanity. I would to God thou and I knew where a commodity of good names were to be bought: an old lord of the council rated me the other day in the street about you, sir; but I marked him not; and yet he talked very wisely; but I regarded him not: and yet he talked wisely, and in the street too.

Prince Henry. Thou didst well; for wisdom cries out in the streets and no man regards it.

Falstaff. Oh, thou hast damnable iteration; and art, indeed, able to corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal,—God forgive thee for it! Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew nothing; and now am I, if a man should speak truly, little better than one of the wicked. I must give over this life, and I will give it over; by the Lord, and I do not, I am a villain; I'll be damned for never a king's son in Christendom.

Prince Henry. Where shall we take a purse tomorrow, Jack?

Falstaff. Zounds, where thou wilt, lad; I'll make one; an I do not, call me villain, and baffle me.

Prince Henry. I see a good amendment of life in thee; from praying to purse-taking.

FROM MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

CONRADE, BORACHIO, DOGBERRY, VERGES, SEXTON, *and the* WATCH.

Dogberry. Is our whole dissembly appeared?

Verges. Oh, a stool and a cushion for the sexton!

Sexton. Which be the malefactors?

Dogberry. Marry, that am I and my partner.

Verges. Nay, that's certain. We have the exhibition to examine.

Sexton. But which are the offenders that are to be examined? Let them come before master constable.

Dogberry. Yea, marry, let them come before me. What is your name, friend?

Borachio. Borachio.

Dogberry. Pray, write down—Borachio.—Yours, sirrah?

Conrade. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

Dogberry. Write down—master gentleman Conrade.—Masters, do you serve God?

Conrade, Borachio. Yea, sir, we hope.

Dogberry. Write down—that they hope they serve God. And write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains!—Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

Conrade. Marry, sir, we are none.

Dogberry. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him.—Come you hither, sirrah; a word in your ear, sir; I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

Borachio. Sir, I say to you, we are none.

Dogberry. Well, stand aside.—'Fore God, they are both in a tale. Have you writ down, that they are none?

Sexton. Master constable, you go not the way to examine: you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Dogberry. Yea, marry, that's the eftest way.—Let the watch come forth.—Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

1st Watch. This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

Dogberry. Write down—Prince John a villain. Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

Borachio. Master constable—

Dogberry. Pray thee, fellow, peace: I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

Sexton. What heard you him say else?

2d Watch. Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John, for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

Dogberry. Flat burglary as ever was committed!

Verges. Yea, by the mass, that it is.

Sexton. What else, fellow?

1st Watch. And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

Dogberry. O villain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.

Sexton. What else?

2d Watch. This is all.

Sexton. And this is more, masters, than you can

deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away; Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner refused, and, upon the grief of this, suddenly died.—Master constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's: I will go before, and show him their examination.

(*Exit.*)

Dogberry. Come, let them be opinioned.

Verges. Let them be in the hands—

Conrade. Off, coxcomb!

Dogberry. God's my life! Where's the sexton? Let him write down—the prince's officer, coxcomb.—Come, bind them.—Thou naughty varlet!

Conrade. Away! You are an ass! you are an ass!

Dogberry. Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years?—Oh, that he were here to write me down an ass!—But, masters, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not than I am an ass.—No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a householder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and everything handsome about him.—Bring him away.—Oh, that I had been writ down an ass!

FROM THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Launcelot. Certainly, my conscience will serve me to run this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine

elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, “Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,” or “good Gobbo,” or “good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.” My conscience says, “No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo”; or, as aforesaid, “honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.” Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: “Via!” says the fiend; “away!” says the fiend; “for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,” says the fiend, “and run.” Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, “My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man’s son,” or rather an honest woman’s son; for, indeed, my father did something smack—something grow to—he had a kind of taste—well, my conscience says, “Launcelot, budge not.” “Budge,” says the fiend. “Budge not,” says my conscience. “Conscience,” say I, “you counsel well.” “Fiend,” say I, “you counsel well.” To be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who—God bless the mark!—is a kind of devil; and to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly, the Jew is the very devil incarnation; and, in my conscience, my conscience is a kind of hard conscience to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your commandment; I will run.

FROM HAMLET

POLONIUS *and* HAMLET, *reading.*

Polonius. How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Hamlet. Well, God-’a’-mercy.

Polonius. Do you know me, my lord?

Hamlet. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger

Polonius. Not I, my lord.

Hamlet. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Polonius. Honest, my lord?

Hamlet. Ay, sir: to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Polonius. That's very true, my lord.

Hamlet. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion—Have you a daughter?

Polonius. I have, my lord.

Hamlet. Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing; but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to't.

Polonius. How say you by that? (*Aside.*) Still harping on my daughter. Yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Hamlet. Words, words, words.

Polonius. What is the matter, my lord?

Hamlet. Between who?

Polonius. I mean the matter that you read, my lord.

Hamlet. Slanders, sir. For the satirical slave says here, that old men have gray beards; that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber or

plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with weak hams. All of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for you yourself, sir, shall grow old as I am: if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Polonius. (*Aside.*) Though this be madness, yet there is method in't.—Will you walk out o' the air, my lord?

Hamlet. Into my grave?

Polonius. Indeed, that is out o' the air. (*Aside.*) How pregnant sometimes his replies are! A happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Hamlet. You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal: except my life, except my life, except my life.

Polonius. Fare you well, my lord.

Hamlet. These tedious old fools!

FROM AS YOU LIKE IT

ROSALIND *and* ORLANDO

Rosalind. (*Aside.*) I will speak to him like a saucy lackey, and under that habit play the knave with him.—Do you hear, forester?

Orlando. Very well: what would you?

Rosalind. I pray you, what is't o'clock?

Orlando. You should ask me, what time o' day:

there's no clock in the forest.

Rosalind. Then there is no true lover in the forest; else sighing every minute, and groaning every hour, would detect the lazy foot of Time as well as a clock.

Orlando. And why not the swift foot of Time? Had not that been as proper?

Rosalind. By no means, sir. Time travels in divers paces with divers persons. I'll tell you, who Time ambles withal, who Time trots withal, who Time gallops withal, and who he stands still withal.

Orlando. I prithee, who doth he trot withal?

Rosalind. Marry, he trots hard with a young maid, between the contract of her marriage and the day it is solemnised: if the interim be but a se'nnight, Time's pace is so hard that it seems the length of seven years.

Orlando. Who ambles Time withal?

Rosalind. With a priest that lacks Latin, and a rich man that hath not the gout; for the one sleeps easily, because he cannot study; and the other lives merrily, because he feels no pain: the one lacking the burden of lean and wasteful learning; the other knowing no burden of heavy, tedious penury. These Time ambles withal.

Orlando. Who doth he gallop withal?

Rosalind. With a thief to the gallows; for though he go as softly as foot can fall, he thinks himself too soon there.

Orlando. Who stays it still withal?

Rosalind. With lawyers in the vacation; for they sleep between term and term, and then they perceive

not how Time moves.

Orlando. Where dwell you, pretty youth?

Rosalind. Here in the skirts of the forest, like fringe upon a petticoat.

Orlando. Are you native of this place?

Rosalind. As the cony, that you see dwell where she is kindled.

Orlando. Your accent is something finer than you could purchase in so removed a dwelling.

Rosalind. I have been told of so many: but, indeed, an old religious uncle of mine taught me to speak, who was in his youth an inland man; one that knew courtship too well, for there he fell in love. I have heard him read many lectures against it; and I thank God I am not a woman, to be touched with so many giddy offences as he hath generally taxed their whole sex withal.

Orlando. Can you remember any of the principal evils that he laid to the charge of women?

Rosalind. There were none principal: they were all like one another, as half-pence are; every one fault seeming monstrous, till its fellow fault came to match it.

Orlando. I prithee, recount some of them.

Rosalind. No; I will not cast away my physic but on those that are sick. There is a man haunts the forest, that abuses our young plants with carving Rosalind on their barks; hangs odes upon hawthorns, and elegies on brambles; all, forsooth, deifying the name of Rosalind: if I could meet that fancy-monger I would give him some good counsel, for he seems to have the quotidian of love upon him.

Orlando. I am he that is so love-shaked. I pray you, tell me your remedy.

Rosalind. There is none of my uncle's marks upon you: he taught me how to know a man in love; in which cage of rushes, I am sure, you are not prisoner.

Orlando. What were his marks?

Rosalind. A lean cheek, which you have not; a blue eye, and sunken, which you have not; an unquestionable spirit, which you have not; a beard neglected, which you have not (but I pardon you for that, for, simply, your having in beard is a younger brother's revenue. Then, your hose shall be ungartered, your bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned, your shoe untied, and everything about you demonstrating a careless desolation. But you are no such man; you are rather point-device in your accoutrements, as loving yourself, than seeming the lover of any other.

Orlando. Fair youth, I would I could make thee believe I love.

Rosalind. Me believe it? You may as soon make her that you love believe it; which, I warrant, she is apter to do than to confess she does. That is one of the points in the which women still give the lie to their consciences. But, in good sooth, are you he that hangs the verses on the trees, wherein Rosalind is so admired?

Orlando. I swear to thee, youth, by the white hand of Rosalind, I am that he, that unfortunate he.

Rosalind. But are you so much in love as your rhymes speak?

Orlando. Neither rhyme nor reason can express

how much.

Rosalind. Love is merely a madness; and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do. And the reason why they are not so punished and cured is, that the lunacy is so ordinary that the whippers are in love too. Yet I profess curing it by counsel.

Orlando. Did you ever cure any so?

Rosalind. Yes, one; and in this manner. He was to imagine me his love, his mistress, and I set him every day to woo me: at which time would I, being but a moonish youth, grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing, and liking; proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles; for every passion something, and for no passion truly anything, as boys and women are, for the most part, cattle of this colour: would now like him, now loathe him; then entertain him, then forswear him; now weep for him, then spit at him; that I drave my suitor from his mad humour of love, to a living humour of madness, which was, to forswear the full stream of the world, and to live in a nook merely monastic. And thus I cured him; and in this way will I take upon me to wash your liver as clean as a sound sheep's heart, that there shall not be one spot of love in't.

Orlando. I would not be cured, youth.

Rosalind. I would cure you, if you would but call me Rosalind, and come every day to my cote, and woo me.

Orlando. Now, by the faith of my love, I will. Tell me where it is.

Rosalind. Go with me to it, and I'll show it you;

and, by the way, you shall tell me where in the forest you live. Will you go?

Orlando. With all my heart, good youth.

Francis, Lord Bacon, gave us much wise writing, and, incidentally much of the wit of wisdom, but we look to him in vain for laughable humor.

A few epigrammatic selections from his essays are given.

All colours will agree in the dark.

This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keepeth his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well.

Whosoever esteemeth too much of an amourous affection, quitteth both riches and wisdom.

Money is like muck: not good except it be spread.

Princes are like to heavenly bodies, which cause good or evil times, and which have much veneration, and no rest.

Old men object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon.

To take advice of some few friends is ever honourable; for lookers-on many times see more than gamesters.

Suspicions that the mind of itself gathers are but buzzes; but suspicions that are artificially nourished and put into men's heads by the tales and whisperings of others, have stings.

Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore, if man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning to seem to know that which he doth not.

Sir John Harington, chiefly remembered for his translation of *Orlando Furioso*, wrote clever humorous verse.

OF A PRECISE TAILOR

A tailor, thought a man of upright dealing—
True, but for lying, honest, but for stealing—
Did fall one day extremely sick by chance,
And on the sudden was in wondrous trance.
The fiends of hell, mustering in fearful manner,
Of sundry coloured silks displayed a banner
Which he had stolen, and wished, as they did tell,
That he might find it all one day in hell.
The man, affrighted with this apparition,
Upon recovery grew a great precisian.
He bought a Bible of the best translation,
And in his life he showed great reformation;
He walked mannerly, he talked meekly,
He heard three lectures and two sermons weekly;
He vowed to shun all company unruly,
And in his speech he used no oath but "truly";
And, zealously to keep the Sabbath's rest,
His meat for that day on the eve was drest;
And, lest the custom which he had to steal
Might cause him sometimes to forget his zeal,
He gives his journeyman a special charge,
That if the stuff, allowance being large,
He found his fingers were to filch inclined,
Bid him to have the banner in his mind.
This done—I scant can tell the rest for laughter—
A captain of a ship came three days after,
And brought three yards of velvet and three-quarters,
To make Venetians down below the garters.
He, that precisely knew what was enough,
Soon slipt aside three-quarters of the stuff.
His man, espying it, said, in derision,
"Master, remember how you saw the vision!"
"Peace, knave!" quoth he; "I did not see one rag
Of such a coloured silk in all the flag."

OF A CERTAIN MAN

There was (not certain when) a certain preacher
That never learned, and yet became a teacher,
Who, having read in Latin thus a text
Of *erat quidam homo*, much perplext,
He seemed the same with studie great to scan,
In English thus: *There was a certain man.*
But now (quoth he), good people, note you this:
He saith there *was*—he doth not say there *is*;
For in these days of ours it is most plain
Of promise, oath, word, deed, no man's certain;

Yet by my text you see it comes to pass
That surely once a certain man there was;
But yet, I think, in all your Bible no man
Can find this text, *There was a certain woman.*

Ben Jonson, next to Shakespeare as a dramatist, is a master of satiric wit. His strong, somewhat psychological comedies are difficult to quote from except in long extracts.

FROM "EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOR"

Bobadil. I will tell you, sir, by the way of private, and under seal, I am a gentleman, and live here obscure, and to myself; but were I known to her majesty and the lords (observe me), I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of her subjects in general, but to save the one-half, nay, three parts of her yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. And how would I do it, think you?

E. Knowell. Nay, I know not, nor can I conceive.

Bobadil. Why, thus, sir. I would select nineteen more, to myself, throughout the land; gentlemen they should be of good spirit, strong and able constitution; I would choose them by an instinct, a character that I have: and I would teach these nineteen the special rules—as your punto, your reverso, your stoccata, your imbroccato, your passado, your montanto—till they could all play very near, or altogether as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong, we twenty would come into the field the tenth of March, or thereabouts; and we would challenge twenty of the enemy; they could not in their honor refuse us; well, we would kill them: challenge twenty more, kill

them; twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them too; and thus would we kill every man his twenty a day, that's twenty score; twenty score, that's two hundred; two hundred a day, five days a thousand; forty thousand; forty times five, five times forty, two hundred days kills them all up by computation. And this will I venture my poor gentleman-like carcass to perform, provided there be no treason practised upon us, by fair and discreet manhood; that is, civilly by the sword.

FROM "VOLPONE"

Volpone. Lady, I kiss your bounty, and for this timely grace you have done your poor Scoto, of Mantua, I will return you, over and above my oil, a secret of that high and inestimable nature which shall make you for ever enamoured on that minute, wherein your eye first descended on so mean, yet not altogether to be despised, an object. Here is a powder concealed in this paper, of which, if I should speak to the worth, nine thousand volumes were but as one page, that page as a line, that line as a word; so short is this pilgrimage of man, which some call life, to the expression of it. Would I reflect on the price? Why, the whole world is but as an empire, that empire as a province, that province as a bank, that bank as a private purse to the purchase of it. I will only tell you it is the powder that made Venus a goddess, given her by Apollo, that kept her perpetually young, cleared her wrinkles, firmed her gums, filled her skin, coloured her hair, from her derived to Helen, and at the sack of Troy unfortunately lost: till now, in this our age, it was as happily recovered, by a studious antiquary, out of some ruins of Asia, who sent a moiety of it to the Court of France, but much sophisticated, wherewith

the ladies there now colour their hair. The rest, at this present, remains with me, extracted to a quintessence; so that, wherever it but touches in youth it perpetually preserves, in age restores the complexion; seats your teeth, did they dance like virginal jacks, firm as a wall; makes them white as ivory, that were black as coal.

A VINTNER,

To whom Jonson was in debt, told him that he would excuse the payment, if he could give an immediate answer to the following questions: What God is best pleased with; what the devil is best pleased with: what the world is best pleased with; and what he was best pleased with. Jonson, without hesitation, replied thus:

> God is best pleas'd, when men forsake their sin;
> The devil's best pleas'd, when they persist therein:
> The world's best pleas'd, when thou dost sell good wine;
> And you're best pleas'd, when I do pay for mine.

It was the fashion to flatter in those days, and King James had abundance of such incense offered to him, though according to Ben Jonson it was impossible to *flatter* so perfect a monarch. The dramatist addressed the following epigram *To the Ghost of Martial* (Ep. 36):

> Martial, thou gav'st far nobler epigrams
> To thy Domitian, than I can my James:
> But in my royal subject I pass thee,
> Thou flattered'st thine, mine cannot flatter'd be.

A thought which has been humorously expanded by Ben Jonson (Ep. 42):

> Who says that Giles and Joan at discord be?

Th' observing neighbours no such mood can see.
Indeed, poor Giles repents he married ever;
But that his Joan doth too. And Giles would never
By his free will be in Joan's company;
No more would Joan he should. Giles riseth early,
And having got him out of doors is glad;
The like is Joan. But turning home is sad;
And so is Joan. Oft-times when Giles doth find
Harsh sights at home, Giles wisheth he were blind;
All this doth Joan. Or that his long-yearn'd life
Were quite outspun; the like wish hath his wife.

*****

If now, with man and wife, to will and nill
The self-same things, a note of concord be,
I know no couple better can agree.

John Donne, one of the greatest preachers of the English church, was also a noted wit, poet and courtier. Like his contemporaries his wit was satirical, but in more playful vein than most.

THE WILL

Before I sigh my last gasp, let me breathe,
Great Love, some legacies: Here I bequeathe
Mine eyes to Argus, if mine eyes can see;
If they be blind, then, Love, I give them thee;
My tongue to fame; to embassadors mine ears;
To women or the sea, my tears.
Thou, Love, hast taught me heretofore,
By making me serve her who had twenty more,
That I should give to none but such as had too much before.

My constancy I to the planets give;
My truth to them who at the court do live;
My ingenuity and openness
To Jesuits; to buffoons my pensiveness;
My silence to any who abroad have been;
My money to a Capuchin.
Thou, Love, taught'st me, by appointing me
To love there where no love received can be,
Only to give to such as have an incapacity.

My faith I give to Roman Catholics;

All my good works unto the schismatics
Of Amsterdam; my best civility
And courtship to a university;
My modesty I give to soldiers bare;
My patience let gamesters share.
Thou, Love taught'st me, by making me
Love her that holds my love disparity,
Only to give to those that count my gifts indignity.

I give my reputation to those
Which were my friends; mine industry to foes;
To schoolmen I bequeathe my doubtfulness;
My sickness to physicians, or excess;
To Nature all that I in rhyme have writ;
And to my company my wit.
Thou, Love, by making me adore
Her who begot this love in me before,
Taught'st me to make as though I gave, when I do
but restore.

To him for whom the passing bell next tolls
I give my physic-books; my written rolls
Of moral counsel I to Bedlam give;
My brazen medals unto them which live
In want of bread; to them which pass among
All foreigners, mine English tongue.
Thou, Love, by making me love one
Who thinks her friendship a fit portion
For younger lovers, dost my gifts thus
disproportion.

Therefore I'll give no more, but I'll undo
The world by dying, because love dies too.
Then all your beauties will no more be worth
Than gold in mines where none doth draw it
forth;
And all your graces no more use shall have
Than a sundial in a grave.
Thou, Love, taught'st me, by making me
Love her who doth neglect both thee and me,
To invent and practise this one way to annihilate
all three.

Thomas Dekker was a prolific dramatic author of the period, and his satirical characterizations are among the wittiest of his day.

OBEDIENT HUSBANDS

There is a humour incident to a woman, which is, when a young man hath turmoiled himself so long that with much ado he hath gotten into marriage, and hath perhaps met with a wife according to his own desire, and perchance such an one that it had been better for him had he lighted on another, yet he likes her so well that he would not have missed her for any gold; for, in his opinion, there is no woman like unto her. He hath a great delight to hear her speak, is proud of his match, and is, peradventure, withal of so sheepish a nature, that he has purposed to govern himself wholly by her counsel and direction, so that if any one speak to him of a bargain, or whatsoever other business, he tells them that he will have his wife's opinion on it, and if she be content, he will go through with it; if not, then will he give it over.

Thus he is as tame and pliable as a jackanapes to his keeper. If the Prince set forth an army, and she be unwilling that he should go, who (you may think) will ask her leave, then must he stay at home, fight who will for the country. But if she be desirous at any time to have his room (which many times she likes better than his company), she wants no journey to employ him in, and he is as ready as a page to undertake them. If she chide, he answers not a word; generally, whatsoever she does, or howsoever, he thinks it well done.

Judge, now, in what a case this silly calf is! Is not he, think you, finely dressed, that is in such subjection? The honestest woman and most modest of that sex, if she wear the breeches, is so out of reason in taunting and controlling her husband—for this is their common fault—and be she never so wise,

yet a woman, scarce able to govern herself, much less her husband and all his affairs; for, were it not so, God would have made her the head. Which, since it is otherwise, what can be more preposterous than that the head should be governed by the foot?

If, then, a wise and honest woman's superiority be unseemly, and breed great inconvenience, how is he dressed, think you, if he light on a fond, wanton, and malicious dame? Then doubtless he is soundly sped. She will keep a sweetheart under his nose, yet is he so blind that he can perceive nothing. But, for more security, she will many times send him packing beyond sea, about some odd errand that she will buzz in his ears, and he will perform it at her pleasure, though she send him forth at midnight, in hail, rain, and snow, for he must be a man for all weathers.

Their children, if they have any, must be brought up, apparelled, taught, and fed according to her pleasure, and one point of their learning is always to make no account of their father. Finally, she orders all things as she thinks best herself, making no more account of him, especially if he be in years, than men do of an old horse that is put to labour. Thus is he mewed up, plunged in a sea of cares; and yet he, kind fool, deems himself most happy in his happiness, wherein he must now perforce remain while life doth last, and pity it were he should want it, since he likes it so well.—*The Bachelor's Banquet.*

Horace is thus amusingly introduced as in the act of concocting an ode:

> To thee whose forehead swells with roses,
> Whose most haunted bower
> Gives life and scent to every flower,
> Whose most adoréd name encloses

Things abstruse, deep and divine;
Whose yellow tresses shine
Bright as Eoan fire.
Oh, me thy priest inspire!
For I to thee and thine immortal name,
In—in—in golden tunes,
For I to thee and thine immortal name—
In—sacred raptures flowing, flowing, swimming,
swimming:
In sacred raptures swimming,
Immortal name, game, dame, tame, lame, lame,
lame,
[Foh,] hath, shame, proclaim, oh—
In sacred raptures flowing, will proclaim [no!].
Oh, me they priest inspire!
For I to thee and thine immortal name,
In flowing numbers filled with spright and flame
(Good, good!)
In flowing numbers filled with spright and flame.

John Fletcher is believed to have composed the greater part of the plays by Beaumont and Fletcher.

The *Laughing Song* is attributed to Fletcher alone.

LAUGHING SONG

(*For several voices*)

Oh how my lungs do tickle! ha ha ha!
Of how my lungs do tickle! ho ho ho ho!
Set a sharp jest
Against my breast,
Then how my lungs do tickle!
As nightingales,
And things in cambric rails,
Sing best against a prickle.
Ha ha ha ha!
Ho ho ho ho ho!
Laugh! Laugh! Laugh! Laugh!
Wide! Loud! And vary!
A smile is for a simpering novice,—
One that ne'er tasted caviarë,
Nor knows the smack of dear anchovies.
Ha ha ha ha ha!
Ho ho ho ho ho!
A giggling waiting-wench for me,
That shows her teeth how white they be,—
A thing not fit for gravity,

For theirs are foul and hardly three.
Ha ha ha!
Ho ho ho!
“Democritus, thou ancient fleerer,
How I miss thy laugh, and ha’ since!”
There thou named the famous[est] jeerer
That e’er jeered in Rome or Athens.
Ha ha ha!
Ho ho ho!
“How brave lives he that keeps a fool,
Although the rate be deeper!”
But he that is his own fool, sir,
Does live a great deal cheaper.
“Sure I shall burst, burst, quite break,
Thou art so witty.”
“’Tis rare to break at court,
For that belongs to the city.”
Ha ha! my spleen is almost worn
To the last laughter.
“Oh keep a corner for a friend!
A jest may come hereafter.”

Bishop Corbet, more sociable and vivacious than many of his calling wrote rollicking verses as well as wise and serious sermons.

Perhaps this is the first known example of sheer nonsense verse.

LIKE TO THE THUNDERING TONE

Like to the thundering tone of unspoke speeches,
Or like a lobster clad in logic breeches,
Or like the gray fur of a crimson cat,
Or like the mooncalf in a slipshod hat;
E’en such is he who never was begotten
Until his children were both dead and rotten.

Like to the fiery tombstone of a cabbage,
Or like a crab-louse with its bag and baggage,
Or like the four square circle of a ring,
Or like to hey ding, ding-a, ding-a, ding;
E’en such is he who spake, and yet, no doubt,
Spake to small purpose, when his tongue was out.

Like to a fair, fresh, fading, wither’d rose,
Or like to rhyming verse that runs in prose,

Or like the stumbles of a tinder-box,
Or like a man that's sound yet sickness mocks;
E'en such is he who died and yet did laugh
To see these lines writ for his epitaph.

It may be that utter nonsense was more in vogue at this time than can be definitely asserted, for such productions would, naturally, not be preserved as were the more important matters.

This anonymous bit of nonsense is said to have been written in 1617, and may be from the pen of the same worthy Bishop.

NONSENSE

Oh, that my lungs could bleat like butter'd Pease;
But bleating of my lungs hath caught the itch,
And are as mangy as the Irish seas
That offer wary windmills to the Rich.

I grant that Rainbowes being lull'd asleep,
Snort like a woodknife in a Lady's eyes;
Which makes her grieve to see a pudding creep,
For Creeping puddings only please the wise.

Not that a hard-row'd herring should presume
To swing a tyth pig in a Cateskin purse;
For fear the hailstons which did fall at Rome,
By lesning of the fault should make it worse.

For 'tis most certain Winter woolsacks grow
From geese to swans if men could keep them so.
Till that the sheep shorn Planets gave the hint
To pickle pancakes in Geneva print.

Some men there were that did suppose the skie
Was made of Carbonado'd Antidotes;
But my opinion is, a Whale's left eye,
Need not be coynéd all King Harry groates.

The reason's plain, for Charon's Westerne barge
Running a tilt at the Subjunctive mood,
Beckoned to Bednal Green, and gave him charge
To fasten padlockes with Antartic food.

The End will be the Mill ponds must be laded,

To fish for white pots in a Country dance;
So they that suffered wrong and were upbraded
Shall be made friends in a left-handed trance.

A charming lyric by Bishop Corbet is:

FAREWELL TO THE FAIRIES

"Farewell, rewards and fairies!"
Good housewives now may say,
For now foul sluts in dairies
Do fare as well as they.
And, though they sweep their hearths no less
Than maids were wont to do,
Yet who of late, for cleanliness,
Finds sixpence in her shoe?

Lament, lament, old Abbeys,
The fairies lost command!
They did but change priests' babies,
But some have changed your land;
And all your children stoln from thence
Are now grown Puritans;
Who live as changelings ever since,
For love of your domains.

At morning and at evening both,
You merry were and glad,
So little care of sleep or sloth
These pretty ladies had;
When Tom came home from labour,
Or Cis to milking rose,
Then merrily went their tabor,
And nimbly went their toes.

Witness those rings and roundelays
Of theirs, which yet remain,
Were footed in Queen Mary's days
On many a grassy plain;
But, since of late Elizabeth,
And later James, came in,
They never danced on any heath
As when the time hath been.

By which we note the fairies
Were of the old profession,
Their songs were Ave-Maries,
Their dances were procession:

But now, alas! they all are dead,
Or gone beyond the seas;
Or further for religion fled,
Or else they take their ease.

A tell-tale in their company
They never could endure,
And whoso kept not secretly
Their mirth was punished sure;
It was a just and Christian deed
To pinch such black and blue:
Oh how the commonwealth doth need
Such justices as you!

Bishop Corbet's epigram on Beaumont's early death is well known:

He that hath such acuteness and such wit,
As would ask ten good heads to husband it;
He, that can write so well that no man dare
Refuse it for the best, let him beware:
Beaumont is dead, by whose sole death appears,
Wit's a disease consumes men in few years.

Sir Walter Raleigh, the graceful and brilliant courtier, is thought by most students of the subject to have written *The Lie*. Though it has been attributed to various authors the weight of evidence is in favor of Raleigh.

THE LIE

Go, Soul, the body's guest,
Upon a thankless errand;
Fear not to touch the best;
The truth shall be thy warrant.
Go, since I needs must die,
And give them all the lie.

Go tell the Court it glows
And shines like rotten wood;
Go tell the Church it shows
What's good, but does no good.
If Court and Church reply,
Give Court and Church the lie.

Tell Potentates they live
Acting, but oh! their actions;
Not loved, unless they give,
Not strong but by their factions.
If Potentates reply,
Give Potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition,
That rule affairs of state,
Their purpose is ambition;
Their practice only hate;
And if they do reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell those that brave it most,
They beg for more by spending,
Who in their greatest cost
Seek nothing but commending;
And if they make reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

Tell zeal it wants devotion;
Tell love it is but lust;
Tell time it is but motion;
Tell flesh it is but dust:
And wish them not reply,
For thou must give the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth;
Tell honor how it alters;
Tell beauty how she blasteth;
Tell favor how it falters:
And as they shall reply,
Give every one the lie.

Tell wit how much it wrangles
In tickle points of niceness;
Tell wisdom she entangles
Herself in over-wiseness:
And when they do reply,
Straight give them both the lie.

Tell physic of her boldness;
Tell skill it is pretension;
Tell charity of coldness;
Tell law it is contention:
And as they do reply,
So give them still the lie.

Tell fortune of her blindness;
Tell nature of decay;
Tell friendship of unkindness;
Tell justice of delay:
And if they will reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell arts they have no soundness,
But vary by esteeming;
Tell schools they want profoundness,
And stand too much on seeming:
If arts and schools reply,
Give arts and schools the lie.

Tell faith it's fled the city;
Tell how the country erreth;
Tell, manhood shakes off pity;
Tell, virtue least preferreth:
And if they do reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

So when thou hast, as I
Commanded thee, done blabbing,—
Although to give the lie
Deserves no less than stabbing,—
Yet, stab at thee that will,
No stab the soul can kill.

The following well-known and thoroughly characteristic verses originally appeared in *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, an old English comedy, which was long supposed to be the earliest written in the language, but which now ranks as the second in point of age. It was written by John Still, afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells.

JOLLY GOOD ALE AND OLD

I cannot eat but little meat;
My stomach is not good;
But sure I think that I can drink
With him that wears a hood.
Though I go bare, take ye no care,
I nothing am a-cold,
I stuff my skin so full within
Of jolly good ale and old.

Back and side go bare, go bare;
Both foot and hand go cold;
But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old.

I love no roast but a nut-brown toast,
And a crab laid in the fire;
And little bread shall do me stead;
Much bread I nought desire.
No frost, no snow, no wind, I trow,
Can hurt me if I wold,
I am so wrapp'd, and thoroughly lapp'd,
Of jolly good ale and old.

Back and side, etc.

And Tib, my wife, that as her life
Loveth well good ale to seek,
Full oft drinks she, till ye may see
The tears run down her cheek:
Then doth she troul to me the bowl,
Even as a maltworm should,
And saith, "Sweetheart, I took my part
Of this jolly good ale and old."

Back and side, etc.

Now let them drink till they nod and wink
Even as good fellows should do;
They shall not miss to have the bliss
Good ale doth bring men to.
And all poor souls that have scour'd bowls
Or have them lustily troul'd,
God save the lives of them and their wives,
Whether they be young or old.

Back and side, etc.

Sir John Davies, poet and lawyer, wrote many acrostics to Queen Elizabeth, and other witty verses.

ACROSTICS

Earth now is green and heaven is blue;
Lively spring which makes all new,
Iolly spring doth enter.
Sweet young sunbeams do subdue
Angry aged winter.

Blasts are mild and seas are calm,
Every meadow flows with balm,
The earth wears all her riches,
Harmonious birds sing such a psalm
As ear and heart bewitches.
Reserve (sweet spring) this nymph of ours,
Eternal garlands of thy flowers,
Green garlands never wasting;
In her shall last our state's fair spring,
Now and forever flourishing,
As long as heaven is lasting.

THE MARRIED STATE

Wedlock, indeed, hath oft comparèd been
To public feasts, where meet a public rout,
Where they that are without would fain go in,
And they that are within would fain go out.

John Marston, both dramatist and divine, gives us this bit of humorous satire—

THE SCHOLAR AND HIS DOG

I was a scholar: seven useful springs
Did I deflower in quotations
Of cross'd opinions 'bout the soul of man;
The more I learnt, the more I learnt to doubt.
Delight my spaniel slept, whilst I baus'd leaves,
Toss'd o'er the dunces, pored on the old print
Of titled words: and still my spaniel slept.
Whilst I wasted lamp-oil, baited my flesh,
Shrunk up my veins: and still my spaniel slept.
And still I held converse with Zabarell,
Aquinas, Scotus, and the musty saw
Of antick Donate: still my spaniel slept.
Still on went I; first, *an sit anima*;
Then, an it were mortal. Oh, hold, hold! at that
They're at brain buffets, fell by the ears amain
Pell-mell together; still my spaniel slept.
Then, whether 't were corporeal, local, fixt,
Ex traduce, but whether 't had free will
Or no, hot philosophers
Stood banding factions, all so strongly propt,
I stagger'd, knew not which was firmer part,
But thought, quoted, read, observ'd, and pryed,
Stufft noting-books: and still my spaniel slept.
At length he wak'd, and yawned; and by yon sky,

For aught I know he knew as much as I.

Following the example of Jest Books and collections of Merry Tales, came the Anthologies.

The most important of these was the *Miscellany*, which went through eight editions in thirty years, and is said to be the book of songs and sonnets that Master Slender missed so much.

This book was first published in 1557 and was followed by many less worthy collections.

In 1576 appeared *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* which also ran through many editions.

As a rule these collections were uninteresting and composed largely of dull and prosy numbers. Their chief charm lay in their titles, which were such as *A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions*, *A Handful of Pleasant Delights*, and *A Bouquet of Dainty Conceits*.

Yet it must be remembered that this latter half of the Sixteenth Century saw the splendid flowering of lyric poetry, and in the last year appeared a famous book called *England's Helicon* or *The Muses' Harmony*, which was a sort of Golden Treasury of the Elizabethan age.

This was supplemented two years later by the *Poetical Rhapsody*, edited by Francis Davison, and from then on, the collected songs and verses of England showed poetry from the masters.

Also there were produced at this period many translations, both of the classics and of more modern works of various countries; though no important humorous work was translated until the next century, when Urquhart gave Rabelais to the English people.

FRENCH WIT AND HUMOR

Rutebœuf, the Trouvère, of the Thirteenth Century, if not the principal author of the Fabliaux was the first to put them into rhyme.

Most of his tales are too long and rambling to quote, and we content ourselves with one.

THE ASS'S TESTAMENT

A priest there was in times of old,
Fond of his church, but fonder of gold,
Who spent his days and all his thought
In getting what he preached was naught.
His chests were full of robes and stuff,
Corn filled his garners to the roof,
Stored up against the fair-times gay,
From Saint Rémy to Easter Day.
An ass he had within his stable,
A beast most sound and valuable.
For twenty years he lent his strength
For the priest, his master, till at length,
Worn out with work and age, he died.
The priest, who loved him, wept and cried;
And, for his service long and hard,
Buried him in his own churchyard.

Now turn we to another thing:
'Tis of a bishop that I sing.
No greedy miser he, I ween;
Prelate so generous ne'er was seen.
Full well he loved in company
Of all good Christians still to be;
When he was well, his pleasure still,
His medicine best when he was ill.
Always his hall was full, and there
His guests had ever best of fare.
Whate'er the bishop lack'd or lost
Was bought at once despite the cost;
And so, in spite of rent and score,
The bishop's debts grew more and more.
For true it is—this ne'er forget—
Who spends too much gets into debt.
One day his friends all with him sat,
The bishop talking this and that,
Till the discourse on rich clerks ran,

Of greedy priests, and how their plan
Was all good bishops still to grieve,
And of their dues their lords deceive.
And then the priest of whom I've told
Was mention'd; how he loved his gold.
And because men do often use
More freedom than the truth would choose,
They gave him wealth, and wealth so much,
As those like him could scarcely touch.
"And then besides, a thing he's done,
By which great profit might be won,
Could it be only spoken here."
Quoth the bishop, "Tell it without fear."
"He's worse, my lord, than Bedouin,
Because his own dead ass, Baldwin,
He buried in the sacred ground."
"If this is truth, as shall be found,"
The bishop cried, "a forfeit high
Will on his worldly riches lie.
Summon this wicked priest to me;
I will myself in this case be
The judge. If Robert's word be true,
Mine are the fine and forfeit too."

*****

"Disloyal! God's enemy and mine,
Prepare to pay a heavy fine.
Thy ass thou buriedst in the place
Sacred to church. Now, by God's grace,
I never heard of crime more great.
What! Christian men with asses wait?
Now, if this thing be proven, know
Surely to prison thou wilt go."
"Sir," said the priest, "thy patience grant;
A short delay is all I want.
Not that I fear to answer now—
But give me what the laws allow."
And so the bishop leaves the priest,
Who does not feel as if at feast.
But still, because one friend remains,
He trembles not at prison pains.
His purse it is which never fails
For tax or forfeit, fine or vails.

The term arrived, the priest appeared,
And met the bishop, nothing feared;
For 'neath his girdle safe there hung

A leathern purse, well stocked and strung
With twenty pieces fresh and bright,
Good money all, none clipped or light.
“Priest,” said the bishop, “if thou have
Answer to give to charge so grave,
’Tis now the time.”
“Sir, grant me leave
My answer secretly to give.
Let me confess to you alone,
And, if needs be, my sins atone.”
The bishop bent his head to hear,
The priest he whispered in his ear:
“Sir, spare a tedious tale to tell.
My poor ass served me long and well,
For twenty years my faithful slave,
Each year his work a saving gave
Of twenty sous—-so that in all
To twenty livres the sum will fall;
And, for the safety of his soul,
To you, my lord, he left the whole.”
“’Twas rightly done,” the bishop said,
And gravely shook his godly head:
“And, that his soul to heaven may go,
My absolution I bestow.”
Now have you heard a truthful lay,
How with rich priests the bishops play;
And Rutebœuf the moral draws
That, spite of kings’ and bishops’ laws,
’Gainst evil is the man secure
That shields himself with money’s lure.

In the Fourteenth century, Eustache Deschampes wrote more than a thousand ballades, virelais and other forms of light verse.

One of his ballades, here given in translation, is of a distinctly modern type of wit.

ADVICE TO A FRIEND ON MARRIAGE

Ope! Who? A friend! What wouldst obtain?
  Advice! Whereof? Is't well to wed?
I wish to marry. What's your pain?
  No wife have I for board and bed,
  By whom my house is wisely led.
One meek and fair I wish to gain,
  Young, wealthy, too, and nobly bred;
You're crazy—batter out your brain!

Consider! Grief can you sustain?
  Women have tempers bold and dread;
When for a dish of eggs you're fain,
  Broth, cheese, you'll have before you spread:
  Now free, you'll be a slave instead—
When married, you yourself have slain.
  Think well. My first resolve is said;
You're crazy—batter out your brain!

No wife will be like her you feign;
  On angry words you shall be fed,
So shall you bitterly complain,
  With woes too hard to bear, bested:
  Better a life in forest led
Than of such beast to bear the strain.
  No! The sweet fancy fills my head;
You're crazy—batter out your brain!

ENVOY

Soon you will long that you were dead
  When married; seek in street or lane
Some love. No! Passion bids me wed;
  You're crazy—batter out your brain!

Olivier Basselin who flourished in the Fifteenth century, and who was a fuller by trade, is another one of the literary "Fathers," his title being, "Le Pere Joyeux du Vaudeville." Born at Vire, surrounded by valleys, it is held by some, while contradicted by others, that the modern term vaudeville is a corruption of Vaux de Vire.

His songs are mostly convivial and his humor

broad and rollicking.

TO MY NOSE

Fair Nose! whose rubies red have cost me many a barrel
Of claret wine and white,
Who wearest in thy rich and sumptuous apparel
Such red and purple light!

Great Nose! who looks at thee through some huge glass at revel,
More of thy beauty thinks:
For thou resemblest not the nose of some poor devil
Who only water drinks.

The turkey-cock doth wear, resembling thee, his wattles,
How many rich men now
Have not so rich a nose! To paint thee, many bottles
And much time I allow.

The glass my pencil is for thine illumination;
My color is the wine,
With which I've painted thee more red than the carnation,
By drinking of the fine.

'Tis said it hurts the eyes; but shall they be the masters?
Wine is the cure for all;
Better the windows both should suffer some disasters,
Than have the whole house fall.

APOLOGY FOR CIDER

Though Frenchmen at our drink may laugh,
And think their taste is wondrous fine,
The Norman cider, which we quaff,
Is quite the equal of his wine,—
When down, down, down it freely goes,
And charms the palate as it flows.

Whene'er a potent draught I take,
How dost thou bid me drink again?

Yet, pray, for my affection's sake,
Dear Cider, do not turn my brain.
O, down, down, down it freely goes,
And charms the palate as it flow.

I find I never lose my wits,
However freely I carouse,
And never try in angry fits
To raise a tempest in the house;
Though down, down, down the cider goes,
And charms the palate as it flows.

To strive for riches in all stuff,
Just take the good the gods have sent;
A man is sure to have enough
If with his own he is content;
As down, down, down, the cider goes,
And charms the palate as it flows.

In truth that was a hearty bout;
Why, not a drop is left,—not one;
I feel I've put my thirst to rout;
The stubborn foe at last is gone.
So down, down, down the cider goes,
And charms the palate as it flows.

Francois Villon, born 1431, though not paternally designated, is called, and rightly, the Prince of Ballade Makers.

Two translations are here given of one of his most popular poems, and another witty Ballade is added.

THE BALLADE OF DEAD LADIES

Translated by Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Tell me now in what hidden way is
Lady Flora the lovely Roman?
Where's Hipparchia, and where is Thais,
Neither of them the fairer woman?
Where is Echo, beheld of no man,
Only heard on river and mere,—
She whose beauty was more than human?...
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Where's Héloïse, the learned nun,
For whose sake Abeillard, I ween,

Lost manhood and put priesthood on?
(From Love he won such dule and teen!)
And where, I pray you, is the Queen
Who willed that Buridan should steer
Sewed in a sack's mouth down the Seine?...
But where are the snows of yester-year?

White Queen Blanche, like a queen of lilies,
With a voice like any mermaiden,—
Bertha Broad-foot, Beatrice, Alice,
And Ermengarde the lady of Maine,—
And that good Joan whom Englishmen
At Rouen doomed and burned her there,—
Mother of God, where are they then?...
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Envoi:

Nay, never ask this week, fair lord,
Where they are gone, nor yet this year,
Except with this for an overword,—
But where are the snows of yester-year?

A BALLADE OF OLD TIME LADIES

Translated by John Payne

Tell me, where, in what land of shade,
Hides fair Flora of Rome? and where
Are Thaìs and Archipiade,
Cousins-german in beauty rare?
And Echo, more than mortal fair,
That when one calls by river flow,
Or marish, answers out of the air?
But what has become of last year's snow?

Where did the learn'd Héloïsa vade,
For whose sake Abelard did not spare
(Such dole for love on him was laid)
Manhood to lose and a cowl to wear?
And where is the queen who will'd whilere
That Buridan, tied in a sack, should go
Floating down Seine from the turret-stair?
But what has become of last year's snow?

Blanche, too, the lily-white queen, that made
Sweet music as if she a siren were?
Broad-foot Bertha? and Joan, the maid,
The good Lorrainer the English bare

Captive to Rouen, and burn'd her there?
Beatrix, Eremburge, Alys—lo!
Where are they, virgins debonair?
But what has become of last year's snow?

Envoi:

Prince, you may question how they fare,
This week, or liefer this year, I trow:
Still shall the answer this burden bear—
But what has become of last year's snow?

BALLAD OF THE WOMEN OF PARIS

Albeit the Venice girls get praise
For their sweet speech and tender air,
And though the old women have wise ways
Of chaffering for amorous ware,
Yet at my peril dare I swear,
Search Rome, where God's grace mainly tarries,
Florence and Savoy, everywhere,
There's no good girl's lip out of Paris.

The Naples women, as folk prattle,
Are sweetly spoken and subtle enough:
German girls are good at tattle,
And Prussians make their boast thereof;
Take Egypt for the next remove,
Or that waste land the Tartar harries,
Spain or Greece, for the matter of love,
There's no good girl's lip out of Paris.

Breton and Swiss know nought of the matter,
Gascony girls or girls of Toulouse;
Two fisherwomen with a half-hour's chatter
Would shut them up by threes and twos;
Calais, Lorraine, and all their crews,
(Names enow the mad song marries)
England and Picardy, search them and choose,
There's no good girl's lip out of Paris.

Envoi:

Prince, give praise to our French ladies
For the sweet sound their speaking carries;
'Twixt Rome and Cadiz many a maid is,
But no good girl's lip out of Paris.

From Clement Marot, a delightful French poet of the Sixteenth century, we give the following two extracts translated by Leigh Hunt.

A LOVE-LESSON

A sweet "No! no!" with a sweet smile beneath
  Becomes an honest girl,—I'd have you learn it;
As for plain "Yes!" it may be said, i' faith.
  Too plainly and too oft,—pray, well discern it!

Not that I'd have my pleasure incomplete,
  Or lose the kiss for which my lips beset you;
But that in suffering me to take it, Sweet!
  I'd have you say—"No! no! I will not let you."

MADAME D'ALBRET'S LAUGH

Yes! that fair neck, too beautiful by half,
Those eyes, that voice, that bloom, all do her honour;
Yet, after all, that little giddy laugh
Is what, in my mind, sits the best upon her.

Good God! 'twould make the very streets and ways,
Through which she passes, burst into a pleasure!
Did melancholy come to mar my days
And kill me in the lap of too much leisure,
No spell were wanting, from the dead to raise me,
But only that sweet laugh wherewith she slays me.

About this time appeared the Heptameron, a series of tales of similar form and character to the Decameron of Boccaccio. This work was attributed to Margaret of Navarre, and doubtless was written by the queen with the assistance of some of her people. The tales are too long to quote.

Jehan du Pontalais wrote a clever satirical skit on the love of money.

MONEY

Who money has, well wages the campaign;
Who money has, becomes of gentle strain;

Who money has, to honor all accord:
He is my lord.
Who money has, the ladies ne'er disdain;
Who money has, loud praises will attain;
Who money has, in the world's heart is stored,
The flower
adored.
O'er all mankind he holds his conquering track—
They only are condemned who money lack.

Who money has, will wisdom's credit gain;
Who money has, all earth is his domain;
Who money has, praise is his sure reward,
Which all afford.
Who money has, from nothing need refrain;
Who money has, on him is favor poured;
And, in a word,
Who money has, need never fear attack—
They only are condemned who money lack.

Who money has, in every heart does reign;
Who money has, all to approach are fain;
Who money has, of him no fault is told,
Nor harm can
hold.
Who money has, none does his right restrain;
Who money has, can whom he will maintain;
Who money has, clerk, prior, by his gold,
Is straight
enrolled.
Who money has, all raise, none hold him back—
They only are condemned who money lack.

Francois Rabelais was born in or about 1495, in Chinon, Touraine. Successively, monk, physician and scientist, he is best known as a master of humor and grotesque invention. His romance of Gargantua and Pantagruel is an extravagant, satirical criticism of the follies and vices of the period, burlesquing the current abuses of government and religion.

Unable to escape a paternal label,

An able writer in the *Foreign Quarterly Review* speaks of Rabelais as "an author without parallel in

the history of literature: an author who is the literary parent of many authors, since without him we should probably have never known a Swift, a Sterne, a Jean Paul, or, in fact, any of the irregular humorists: an author who did not appear as a steadily shining light to the human race, but as a wild, startling meteor, predicting the independence of thought, and the downfall of the authority of ages: an author who for the union of heavy learning with the most miraculous power of imagination, is perhaps without a competitor."

The works of Rabelais abound in learning and serious intent, but the riotous humor and flashing wit are presented with an accompaniment of repulsive coarseness intolerable to the modern mind.

This phase, however, was a part of the manners and customs of his time, and to philosophers and students Rabelais will ever be a mine of deep and recondite wisdom and thought.

Indicative of his wildly extravagant fancy are the following extracts.

OF THE ECLIPSES THIS YEAR

This year there will be so many eclipses of the sun and moon, that I fear (not unjustly) our pockets will suffer inanition, be full empty, and our feeling at a loss. Saturn will be retrograde, Venus direct, Mercury as unfixed as quicksilver. And a pack of planets won't go as you would have them.

For this reason the crabs will go side-long, and the rope-makers backward; the little stools will get upon the benches, and the spits on the racks, and the bands on the hats; fleas will be generally black; bacon will run away from peas in lent; there won't

be a bean left in a twelfth cake, nor an ace in a flush; the dice won't run as you wish, tho' you cog them, and the chance that you desire will seldom come; brutes shall speak in several places; Shrovetide will have its day; one part of the world shall disguise itself to gull and chouse the other, and run about the streets like a parcel of addle-pated animals and mad devils; such a hurly-burly was never seen since the devil was a little boy; and there will be above seven and twenty irregular verbs made this year, if Priscian don't hold them in. If God don't help us, we shall have our hands and hearts full.

OF THE DISEASES THIS YEAR

This year the stone-blind shall see but very little; the deaf shall hear but scurvily; the dumb shan't speak very plain; the rich shall be somewhat in a better case than the poor, and the healthy than the sick. Whole flocks, herds, and droves of sheep, swine and oxen; cocks and hens, ducks and drakes, geese and ganders, shall go to pot; but the mortality will not be altogether so great among apes, monkeys, baboons and dromedaries. As for old age, 'twill be incurable this year, because of the years past. Those who are sick of the pleurisy will feel a plaguy stitch in their sides; catarrhs this year shall distill from the brain on the lower parts; sore eyes will by no means help the sight; ears shall be at least as scarce and short in Gascony, and among knights of the post, as ever; and a most horrid and dreadful, virulent, malignant, catching, perverse and odious malady, shall be almost epidemical, insomuch that many shall run mad upon it, not knowing what nails to drive to keep the wolf from the door, very often plotting, contriving, cudgeling and puzzling their weak shallow brains, and syllogizing and prying up

and down for the philosopher's stone, tho' they only get Midas's lugs by the bargain. I quake for very fear when I think on't; for I assure you, few will escape this disease, which Averroes calls lack of money, and by consequence of the last year's comet, and Saturn's retrogradation, there will be a horrid clutter between the cats and the rats, hounds and hares, hawks and ducks, and eke between the monks and eggs.

OF THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH THIS YEAR

I find by the calculations of Albumazar in his book of the great conjunction, and elsewhere, that this will be a plentiful year of all manner of good things to those who have enough; but your hops of Picardy will go near to fare the worse for the cold. As for oats they'll be a great help to horses. I dare say, there won't be much more bacon than swine. Pisces having the ascendant, 'twill be a mighty year for muscles, cockles, and periwinkles. Mercury somewhat threatens our parsly-beds, yet parsly will be to be had for money. Hemp will grow faster than the children of this age, and some will find there's but too much on't. There will be a very few *bon-chretiens*, but choak-pears in abundance. As for corn, wine, fruit and herbs, there never was such plenty as will be now, if poor folks may have their wish.

RABELAIS IMITATES DIOGENES

(*From the Author's Prologue to Book III.*)

When Philip, King of Macedon, enterprised the siege and ruin of Corinth, the Corinthians having received certain intelligence by their spies, that he with a numerous army in battle array was coming against them, were all of them, not without cause, most terribly afraid; and, therefore, were not

neglective of their duty, in doing their best endeavors to put themselves in a fit posture to resist his hostile approach, and defend their own city. Some from the fields brought into the fortified places their movables, cattle, corn, wine, fruit, victuals and other necessary provisions. Others did fortify and rampire their walls, set up little fortresses, bastions, squared ravelins, digged trenches, cleansed countermines, fenced themselves with gabions, contrived platforms, emptied casemates, barricaded the false brayes, erected the cavalliers, repaired the contrescarpes, plaistered the courtines, lengthened ravelins, stopped parapets, mortised barbacans, new pointed the portcullises with fine steel or good iron, fastened the herses and cataracts, placed their sentries and doubled their patrol.

Every one did watch and ward, and not one was exempted from carrying the basket. Some polished corselets, varnished backs and breasts, cleaned the headpieces, mailcoats, brigandins, salads, helmets, murrions, jacks, gushets, gorgets, hoguines, brassars and cuissars, corselets, haubergeons, shields, bucklers, targets, greves, gauntlets and spurs.

Others made ready bows, slings, cross-bows, pellets, catapults, migraines or fire-balls, firebrands, balists, scorpions, and other such warlike engines, repugnatory, and destructive to the Helepolides.

They sharpened and prepared spears, staves, pikes, brown bills, halberts, long hooks, lances, zagages, quarterstaves, eelspears, partisans, troutstaves, clubs, battle-axes, maces, darts, dartlets, glaves, javelins, javelots, and truncheons.

They set edges upon scimetars, cutlasses, badelairs, backswords, tucks, rapiers, bayonets, arrow-heads, dags, daggers, mandousians, poniards,

whinyards, knives, skenes, chipping knives, and raillons.

Diogenes seeing them all so warm at work, and himself not employed by the magistrates in any business whatsoever, he did very seriously (for many days together, without speaking one word) consider, and contemplate the countenance of his fellow-citizens.

Then on a sudden, as if he had been roused up and inspired by a martial spirit, he girded his cloak, scarf-ways, about his left arm, tucked up his sleeves to the elbow, trussed himself like a clown gathering apples, and giving to one of his old acquaintance his wallet, books, and opistographs, away went he out of town towards a little hill or promontory of Corinth called Craneum; and there on, the strand, a pretty level place, did he roll his jolly tub, which served him for an house to shelter him from the injuries of the weather: there, I say, in a great vehemency of spirit, did he turn it veer it, wheel it, whirl it, frisk it, jumble it, shuffle it, hurdle it, tumble it, hurry it, jolt it, jostle it, overthrow it, evert it, invert it, subvert it, overturn it, beat it, thwack it, bump it, batter it, knock it, thrust it, push it, jerk it, shock it, shake it, toss it, throw it, overthrow it upside down, topsyturvy, tread it, trample it, stamp it, tap it, ting it, ring it, tingle it, towl it, sound it, resound it, stop it, shut it, unbung it, close it, unstopple it. And then again in a mighty bustle he bandied it, slubbered it, hacked it, whittled it, wayed it, darted it, hurled it, staggered it, reeled it, swinged it, brangled it, tottered it, lifted it, heaved it, transformed it, transfigured it, transposed it, transplaced it, reared it, raised it, hoised it, washed it, dighted it, cleansed it, rinsed it, nailed it, settled it, fastened it, shackled

it, fettered it, levelled it, blocked it, tugged it, tewed it, carried it, bedashed it, bewrayed it, parched it, mounted it, broached it, nicked it, notched it, bespattered it, decked it, adorned it, trimmed it, garnished it, gaged it, furnished it, bored it, pierced it, tapped it, rumbled it, slid it down the hill, and precipitated it from the very height of the Craneum; then from the foot to the top (like another Sisyphus with his stone) bore it up again, and every way so banged it and belabored it, that it was ten thousand to one he had not struck the bottom of it out.

Which when one of his friends had seen, and asked him why he did so toil his body, perplex his spirit, and torment his tub? the philosopher's answer was, that not being employed in any other office by the Republic, he thought it expedient to thunder and storm it so tempestuously upon his tub, that amongst a people so fervently busy and earnest at work, he alone might not seem a loitering slug and lazy fellow. To the same purpose may I say to myself,—

> Tho' I be rid from fear,
> I am not void of care.

For perceiving no account to be made of me towards the discharge of a trust of any great concernment, and considering that through all the parts of this most noble kingdom of France, both on this and on the other side of the mountains, every one is most diligently exercised and busied; some in the fortifying of their own native country, for its defence; others, in the repulsing of their enemies by an offensive war; and all this with a policy so excellent, and such admirable order, so manifestly profitable for the future, whereby France shall have its frontiers most magnifically enlarged, and the French assured of a long and well-grounded peace,

that very little withholds me from the opinion of good Heraclitus, which affirmeth war to be the parent of all good things; and therefore do I believe that war is in Latin called *bellum*, not by antiphrasis, as some patchers of old rusty Latin would have us to think, because in war there is little beauty to be seen; but absolutely and simply; for that in war (*bellum* in *Latin*) appears all that is good and graceful, *bon* and *bel* in French, and that by the wars is purged out all manner of wickedness and deformity. For proof whereof the wise and pacific Solomon could no better represent the unspeakable perfection of the divine wisdom, than by comparing it to the due disposure and ranking of an army in battle array, well provided and ordered.

Therefore by reason of my weakness and inability, being reputed by my compatriots unfit for the offensive part of warfare; and on the other side, being no way employed in matter of the defensive, although it had been but to carry burdens, fill ditches, or break clods, each whereof had been to me indifferent, I held it not a little disgraceful to be only an idle spectator of so many valorous, eloquent, and warlike persons, who in the view and sight of all Europe act this notable interlude or tragicomedy, and not exert myself, and contribute thereto this nothing, my all; which remained for me to do. For, in my opinion, little honor is due to such as are mere lookers on, liberal of their eyes, and of their strength parsimonious; who conceal their crowns and hide their silver; scratching their head with one finger like grumbling puppies, gaping at the flies like tithe calves; clapping down their ears like Arcadian asses at the melody of musicians, who with their very countenances in the depth of silence express their consent to the prosopopeia.

Having made this choice and election, it seemed to me that my exercise therein would be neither unprofitable nor troublesome to any, whilst I should thus set agoing my Diogenical Tub.

THE LOST HATCHET

There once lived a poor honest country fellow of Gravot, Tom Wellhung by name, a wood-cleaver by trade, who in that low drudgery made shift so to pick up a sorry livelihood. It happened that he lost his hatchet. Now tell me who ever had more cause to be vexed than poor Tom? Alas, his whole estate and life depended on his hatchet; by his hatchet he earned many a fair penny of the best wood-mongers or log-merchants, among whom he went a-jobbing; for want of his hatchet he was like to starve; and had Death but met him six days after without a hatchet, the grim fiend would have mowed him down in the twinkling of a bed-staff. In this sad case he began to be in a heavy taking, and called upon Jupiter with most eloquent prayers (for, you know, necessity was the mother of eloquence), with the whites of his eyes turned up toward heaven, down on his marrow-bones, his arms reared high, his fingers stretched wide, and his head bare, the poor wretch without ceasing was roaring out by way of Litany at every repetition of his supplications, “My hatchet, Lord Jupiter, my hatchet, my hatchet, only my hatchet, oh, Jupiter, or money to buy another, and nothing else; alas, my poor hatchet!”

Jupiter happened then to be holding a grand council about certain urgent affairs, and old Gammer Cybele was just giving her opinion, or, if you had rather have it so, it was young Phœbus the Beau; but, in short, Tom’s outcry and lamentations were so loud

that they were heard with no small amazement at the council-board by the whole consistory of the gods. “What a devil have we below,” quoth Jupiter, “that howls so horridly? By the mud of Styx, haven’t we had all along, and haven’t we here still, enough to do to set to rights a world of puzzling businesses of consequence? Let us, however, despatch this howling fellow below; you, Mercury, go see who it is, and discover what he wants.” Mercury looked out at heaven’s trapdoor, through which, as I am told, they hear what’s said here below. By the way, one might well enough mistake it for the scuttle of a ship; though Icaromenippus said it was like the mouth of a well. The light-heeled deity saw that it was honest Tom, who asked for his lost hatchet; and, accordingly, he made his report to the Synod. “Marry,” said Jupiter, “we are finely holped up, as if we had now nothing else to do here but to restore lost hatchets. Well, he must have it for all that, for so ’tis written in the Book of Fate, as well as if it was worth the whole Duchy of Milan. The truth is, the fellow’s hatchet is as much to him as a kingdom to a king. Come, come, let no more words be scattered about it; let him have his hatchet again. Run down immediately, and cast at the poor fellow’s feet three hatchets! his own, another of gold, and a third of massy silver, all of one size; then, having left it to his will to take his choice, if he take his own, and be satisfied with it, give him t’other two. If he take another, chop his head off with his own; and henceforth serve me all those losers of hatchets after that manner.”

Having said this, Jupiter, with an awkward turn of his head, like a jackanapes swallowing pills, made so dreadful a phiz that all the vast Olympus quaked again. Heaven’s foot-messenger, thanks to his low-

crowned, narrow-brimmed hat, and plume of feathers, heel-pieces, and running-stick with pigeon-wings, flings himself out at heaven's wicket, through the empty deserts of the air, and in a trice nimbly alights on the earth, and throws at friend Tom's feet the three hatchets, saying to him: "Thou hast bawled long enough to be a-dry; thy prayers and requests are granted by Jupiter; see which of these three is thy hatchet, and take it away with thee."

Wellhung lifts up the golden hatchet, peeps upon it, and finds it very heavy; then staring on Mercury cries, "Gadzooks, this is none of mine; I won't ha't." The same he did with the silver one, and said, "'Tis not this either; you may e'en take them again." At last, he takes up his own hatchet, examines the end of the helve, and finds his mark there; then, ravished with joy, like a fox that meets some straggling poultry, and sneering from the tip of the nose, he cries, "By the Mass, this is my hatchet; Master God, if you will leave it me, I will sacrifice to you a very good and huge pot of milk, brim full, covered with fine strawberries, next Ides, *i.e.*, the 15th of May."

"Honest fellow," said Mercury, "I leave it thee; take it; and because thou hast wished and chosen moderately, in point of hatchet, by Jupiter's command I give thee these two others; thou hast now wherewith to make thyself rich: be honest."

Honest Tom gave Mercury a whole cart-load of thanks, and paid reverence to the most great Jupiter. His old hatchet he fastened close to his leathern girdle, and girds it about his breech like Martin of Cambray; the two others, being more heavy, he lays on his shoulder. Thus he plods on, trudging over the fields, keeping a good countenance among his neighbors and fellow-parishioners, with one merry

saying or other, after Patelin's way.

The next day, having put on a clean white jacket, he takes on his back the two precious hatchets, and comes to Chinon, the famous city, noble city, ancient city, yea, the first city in the world, according to the judgment and assertion of the most learned Massoreths. In Chinon he turned his silver hatchet into fine testons, crown-pieces, and other white cash; his golden hatchet into fine angels, curious ducats, substantial ridders, spankers, and rose nobles. Then with them purchases a good number of farms, barns, houses, outhouses, thatch-houses, stables, meadows, orchards, fields, vineyards, woods, arable lands, pastures, ponds, mills, gardens, nurseries, oxen, cows, sheep, goats, swine, hogs, asses, horses, hens, cocks, capons, chickens, geese, ganders, ducks, drakes, and a world of all other necessaries, and in a short time became the richest man in all the country. His brother bumpkins, and the yeomen and other country-puts thereabout, perceiving his good fortune, were not a little amazed, insomuch that their former pity of poor Tom was soon changed into an envy of his so great and unexpected rise; and, as they could not for their souls devise how this came about, they made it their business to pry up and down, and lay their heads together, to inquire, seek, and inform themselves by what means, in what place, on what day, what hour, how, why, and wherefore, he had come by this great treasure.

At last, hearing it was by losing his hatchet, "Ha, ha!" said they, "was there no more to do, but to lose a hatchet, to make us rich?" With this they all fairly lost their hatchets out of hand. The devil a one that had a hatchet left; he was not his mother's son, that did not lose his hatchet. No more was wood felled or

cleared in that country through want of hatchets. Nay, the Æsopian apologue even saith, that certain petty country gents, of the lower class, who had sold Wellhung their little mill and little field to have wherewithal to make a figure at the next muster, having been told that this treasure was come to him by that means only, sold the only badge of their gentility, their swords, to purchase hatchets to go to lose them, as the silly clodpates did, in hopes to gain store of coin by that loss.

You would have truly sworn they had been a parcel of your petty spiritual usurers, Rome-bound, selling their all, and borrowing of others to buy store of mandates, a pennyworth of a new-made pope.

Now they cried out and brayed, and prayed and bawled, and lamented and invoked Jupiter, "My hatchet! My hatchet! Jupiter, my hatchet!" On this side, "My hatchet!" On that side, "My hatchet! Ho, ho, ho, ho, Jupiter, my hatchet!" The air round about rung again with the cries and howlings of these rascally losers of hatchets.

Mercury was nimble in bringing them hatchets; to each offering that which he had lost, as also another of gold, and a third of silver.

Everywhere he still was for that of gold, giving thanks in abundance to the great giver Jupiter; but in the very nick of time, that they bowed and stooped to take it from the ground, whip in a trice, Mercury lopped off their heads, as Jupiter had commanded. And of heads thus cut off, the number was just equal to that of the lost hatchets.

—*Gargantua and Pantagruel.*

There is an epigram in Martial, and one of the very good ones—for he has all sorts—where he

pleasantly tells the story of Cælius, who, to avoid making his court to some great men of Rome, to wait their rising, and to attend them abroad, pretended to have the gout; and the better to color this, anointed his legs and had them lapped up in a great many swathings, and perfectly counterfeited both the gesture and countenance of a gouty person; till in the end, Fortune did him the kindness to make him one indeed.

> "Tantum cura potest, et ars doloris!
> Desit fingere Cælius podagram."

I think I have read somewhere in Appian, a story like this, of one who to escape the proscriptions of the triumvirs of Rome, and the better to be concealed from the discovery of those who pursued him, having hidden himself in a disguise, would yet add this invention, to counterfeit having but one eye; but when he came to have a little more liberty, and went to take off the plaster he had a great while worn over his eye, he found he had totally lost the sight of it indeed, and that it was absolutely gone. 'Tis possible that the action of sight was dulled from having been so long without exercise, and that the optic power was wholly retired into the other eye for we evidently perceive that the eye we keep shut sends some part of its virtue to its fellow, so that it will swell and grow bigger; and so, inaction, with the heat of ligatures and plaster might very well have brought some gouty humor upon this dissembler of Martial.

Reading in Froissart the vow of a troop of young English gallants, to keep their left eyes bound up till they had arrived in France and performed some notable exploit upon us, I have often been tickled with the conceit: suppose it had befallen them as it

did the Roman, and they had returned with but one eye apiece to their mistresses, for whose sakes they had made his ridiculous vow.

Mothers have reason to rebuke their children when they counterfeit having but one eye, squinting, lameness, or any other personal defect; for, besides that their bodies being then so tender may be subject to take an ill bent, Fortune, I know not how, sometimes seems to delight in taking us at our word; and I have heard several examples related of people who have become really sick, by only feigning to be so. I have always used, whether on horseback or on foot, to carry a stick in my hand, and even to affect doing it with an elegant air; many have threatened that this fancy would one day be turned into necessity: if so, I should be the first of my family to have the gout.

But let us a little lengthen this chapter, and add another anecdote concerning blindness. Pliny reports of one who, dreaming he was blind, found himself so indeed in the morning without any preceding infirmity in his eyes. The force of imagination might assist in this case, as I have said elsewhere, and Pliny seems to be of the same opinion; but it is more likely that the motions which the body felt within, of which physicians, if they please, may find out the cause, taking away his sight, were the occasion of his dream.

Let us add another story, not very improper for this subject, which Seneca relates in one of his epistles: “You know,” says he, writing to Lucilius, “that Harpaste, my wife’s fool, is thrown upon me as an hereditary charge for I have naturally an aversion to those monsters; and if I have a mind to laugh at a fool, I need not seek him far, I can laugh at myself.

This fool has suddenly lost her sight: I tell you a strange, but a very true thing; she is not sensible that she is blind, but eternally importunes her keeper to take her abroad, because she says the house is dark. That what we laugh at in her, I pray you to believe, happens to every one of us: no one knows himself to be avaricious or grasping: and again, the blind call for a guide, while we stray of our own accord. I am not ambitious, we say; but a man cannot live otherwise at Rome; I am not wasteful, but the city requires a great outlay; 'tis not my fault if I am choleric—if I have not yet established any certain course of life: 'tis the fault of youth. Let us not seek our disease out of ourselves; 'tis in us, and planted in our bowels; and the mere fact that we do not perceive ourselves to be sick, renders us more hard to be cured. If we do not betimes begin to see to ourselves, when shall we have provided for so many wounds and evils wherewith we abound? And yet we have a most sweet and charming medicine in philosophy; for of all the rest we are sensible of no pleasure till after the cure: this pleases and heals at once." This is what Seneca says, that has carried me from my subject, but there is advantage in the change.

As in England, the French published many jest books containing short anecdotes or epigrams, as well as the ubiquitous noodle stories.

A wife said to her husband, who was much attached to reading, "I wish I were a book, that I might always have your company." *Then*, answered he, *I should wish you an almanac, that I might change*

once a year.

It was said of a malicious parasite, that he never opened his mouth but at the expense of others; because he always ate at the tables of others, and spoke ill of everybody.

The Duke of Vivonne, who was a heretic in medicine, being indisposed, his friends sent for a physician. When the Duke was told a physician was below, he said, *Tell him I cannot see him, because I am not well. Let him call again at another time*.

The Marechal de Faber, at a siege, was pointing out a place with his finger. As he spoke, a musket-ball carried off the finger. Instantly stretching another, he continued his discourse, *Gentlemen, as I was saying—*. This was true *sang froid*.

A man, carrying on an unjust process, was advised to pray to God for its success. *Stop, stop*, replied he, *God must hear nothing of this*.

Another princess of France, being espoused by the king of Spain, in passing through a town, on her way to Madrid, the magistrates of the place, which was a famous mart for stockings, waited on the queen with

a present of a dozen pairs of remarkable fineness. The Spanish grandee, who attended her, full of the jealous humour of his nation, said, in a passion. “You fools, know that a queen of Spain has no legs.” The magistrates retired in terror, and the poor queen, weeping sadly, said, *Must I then have both my legs cut off?*

In a village of Poitou, a peasant’s wife, after a long illness, fell into a lethargy. She was thought dead; and being only wrapped in linen, as the custom of burying the poor in that country is, she was carried to the place of interment. In going to church, the body, being borne aloft, was caught hold of by some briars, and so scratched, that as if bled by a surgeon, she revived. Fourteen years after, she died in earnest, as was thought; and as they carried her to church, the husband exclaimed, *For God’s sake, do not go near the briars*.

A gentleman, seeing in his yard a mass of rubbish, blamed his people for not removing it. A domestic said, no cart could be got. “Why,” answered the master, “do you not make a pit beside the rubbish, and bury it?” “But,” answered the domestic, “where shall we put the earth that comes out of the pit?” *You great fool*, replied his master, *make the pit so large as to hold all*.

A lady sitting near the fire, and telling a long story, a spark flew on her gown, and she did not perceive it till it had burnt a good while. *I saw it at first, madam*, said a lady who was present, *but I could not be so rude as to interrupt you.*

When Rabelais lay on his death-bed, he could not help jesting at the very last moment; for, having received the extreme unction, a friend coming to see him, said, he hoped he was prepared for the next world. *Yes, yes*, answered Rabelais, *I am ready for my journey now; they have just greased my boots*.

GERMAN WIT AND HUMOR

Brandt's *Das Narrenschiff*, or *The Ship of Fools*, a long satirical poem, was published at the close of the Fifteenth century.

It was followed by *The Boats of Foolish Women* and other imitative works.

Among them, was *The Praise of Folly*, by Desiderius Erasmus, a Dutch classical scholar and satirist.

The following is from the Dedicatory Epistle which introduces *The Praise of Folly*, and which is addressed to Sir Thomas More.

"But those who are offended at the lightness and pedantry of this subject, I would have them consider that I do not set myself for the first example of this kind, but that the same has been oft done by many considerable authors. For thus, several ages since, Homer wrote of no more weighty a subject than of a war between the frogs and mice; Virgil of a gnat and a pudding cake; and Ovid of a nut. Polycrates commended the cruelty of Busiris; and Isocrates, that

corrects him for this, did as much for the injustice of Glaucus. Favorinus extolled Thersites, and wrote in praise of a quartane ague. Synesius pleaded in behalf of baldness; and Lucian defended a sipping fly. Seneca drollingly related the deifying of Claudius; Plutarch the dialogue betwixt Gryllus and Ulysses; Lucian and Apuleius the story of an ass; and somebody else records the last will of a hog, of which St. Hierom makes mention. So that, if they please, let themselves think the worst of me, and fancy to themselves that I was, all this while, a playing at push-pin, or riding astride on a hobby-horse. For how unjust is it, if when we allow different recreations to each particular course of life, we afford no diversion to studies; especially when trifles may be a whet to more serious thoughts, and comical matters may be so treated of, as that a reader of ordinary sense may possibly thence reap more advantage than from some more big and stately argument.... As to what relates to myself, I must be forced to submit to the judgment of others, yet, except I am too partial to be judge in my own case, I am apt to believe I have praised Folly in such a manner as not to have deserved the name of fool for my pains."

A short extract from the book follows.

"It is one farther very commendable property of fools, that they always speak the truth, than which there is nothing more noble and heroical. For so, though Plato relates it as a sentence of Alcibiades, that in the sea of drunkenness truth swims uppermost, and so wine is the only teller of truth, yet this character may more justly be assumed by me, as I can make good from the authority of Euripides, who lays down this as an axiom, 'Children and fools always speak the

truth.' Whatever the fool has in his heart, he betrays in his face; or what is more notifying, discovers it by his words; while the wise man, as Euripides observes, carries a double tongue; the one to speak what may be said, the other what ought to be; the one what truth, the other what time requires; whereby he can in a trice so alter his judgment, as to prove that to be now white, which he had just swore to be black; like the satyr at his porridge, blowing hot and cold at the same breath; in his lips professing one thing, when in his heart he means another.

Furthermore, princes in their greatest splendor seem upon this account unhappy, in that they miss the advantage of being told the truth, and are shammed off by a parcel of insinuating courtiers, that acquit themselves as flatterers more than as friends. But some will perchance object that princes do not love to hear the truth, and therefore wise men must be very cautious how they behave themselves before them, lest they should take too great a liberty in speaking what is true, rather than what is acceptable. This must be confessed, truth indeed is seldom palatable to the ears of kings, yet fools have so great a privilege as to have free leave, not only to speak bare truths, but the most bitter ones too; so as the same reproof which, had it come from the mouth of a wise man would have cost him his head, being blurted out by a fool, is not only pardoned, but well taken, and rewarded. For truth has naturally a mixture of pleasure, if it carry with it nothing of offence to the person whom it is applied to; and the happy knack of ordering it so, is bestowed only on fools...."

However, but few individual names stand out in the early German literature that can by any stretch of definition be called humorous.

As in all other countries, legends and folk lore tales were rife, and eventually produced popular heroes about whom stories were invented.

Brother Rush, who seems to be merely a demon of darkness, is first found in print in Germany in 1515.

He is a tricksy sprite and goes through various vicissitudes of rather dull interest.

He was followed by Tyll Eulenspiegel, a far more popular personage, and translated to England under the name of Owleglas or Howleglas.

Eulenspiegel was a shrewd and cunning proposition and had many startling adventures, two of which are here given.

EULENSPIEGEL'S PRANKS

The Golden Horseshoes

Eulenspiegel came to the court of the King of Denmark, who liked him well, and said that if he would make him some diversion, then might he have the best of shoes for his horse's hoofs. Eulenspiegel asked the king if he was minded to keep his word well and truly, and the king did answer most solemnly, "Yes."

Now did Eulenspiegel ride his horse to a goldsmith, by whom he suffered to be beaten upon the horse's hoofs shoes of gold with silver nails. This done, Eulenspiegel went to the king, that the king might send his treasurer to pay for the shoeing. The treasurer believed he should pay a blacksmith, but Eulenspiegel conducted him to the goldsmith, who did require and demand one hundred Danish marks. This would the treasurer not pay, but went and told his master.

Therefore the king caused Eulenspiegel to be summoned into his presence, and spoke to him:

"Eulenspiegel, why did you have such costly shoes? Were I to shoe all my horses thus, soon would I be without land or any possessions."

To which Eulenspiegel did make reply:

"Gracious King, you did promise me the best of shoes for my horse's hoofs, and I did think the best were of gold."

Then the king laughed:

"You shall be of my court, for you act upon my very word."

And the king commanded his treasurer to pay the hundred marks for the horse's golden shoes. But these Eulenspiegel caused to be taken off, and iron shoes put on in their stead; and he remained many a long day in the service of the King of Denmark.

Paying with the Sound of a Penny

Eulenspiegel was at a tavern where the host did one day put the meat on the spit so late that Eulenspiegel got hungry for dinner. The host, seeing his discontent, said to him:

"Who cannot wait till the dinner be ready, let him eat what he may."

Therefore Eulenspiegel went aside, and ate some dry bread; after that he had eaten he sat by the fire and turned the spit until the meat was roasted. Then was the meat borne upon the table, and the host, with the guests, did feast upon it. But Eulenspiegel stayed on the bench by the fire, nor would he sit at the board, since he told the host that he had his fill from the odor of the meat. So when they had eaten,

and the host came to Eulenspiegel with the tray, that he might place in it the price of the food, Eulenspiegel did refuse, saying:

"Why must I pay for what I have not eaten?"

To which the host replied, in anger:

"Give me your penny; for by sitting at the fire, and swallowing the savor of the meat, you had the same nourishment as though you had partaken of the meat at the board."

Then Eulenspiegel searched in his purse for a penny, and threw it on the bench, saying to the host:

"Do you hear this sound?"

"I do, indeed," answered the host.

Then did Eulenspiegel pick up the penny and restore it to his purse; which done, he spoke again:

"To my belly the odor of the meat is worth as much as the sound of the penny is to you."

About this time came into being the tales of the Schildburgers, or Noodles, who correspond to the Gothamites of England.

Schildburg, we are told, was a town "in Misnopotamia, beyond Utopia, in the kingdom of Calecut." The Schildburgers were originally so renowned for their wisdom, that they were continually invited into foreign countries to give their advice, until at length not a man was left at home, and their wives were obliged to assume the charge of the duties of their husbands. This became at length so onerous, that the wives held a council,

and resolved on despatching a solemn message in writing to call the men home. This had the desired effect; all the Schildburgers returned to their own town, and were so joyfully received by their wives that they resolved upon leaving it no more. They accordingly held a council, and it was decided that, having experienced the great inconvenience of a reputation of wisdom, they would avoid it in future by assuming the character of fools. One of the first evil results of their long neglect of home affairs was the want of a council-hall, and this want they now resolved to supply without delay. They accordingly went to the hills and woods, cut down the timber, dragged it with great labour to the town, and in due time completed the erection of a handsome and substantial building. But, when they entered their new council-hall, what was their consternation to find themselves in perfect darkness! In fact, they had forgotten to make any windows. Another council was held, and one who had been among the wisest in the days of their wisdom, gave his opinion very oracularly; the result of which was that they should experiment on every possible expedient for introducing light into the hall, and that they should first try that which seemed most likely to succeed. They had observed that the light of day was caused by sunshine, and the plan proposed was to meet at mid-day when the sun was brightest, and fill sacks, hampers, jugs, and vessels of all kinds, with sunshine and daylight, which they proposed afterwards to empty into the unfortunate council-hall. Next day, as the clock struck one, you might see a crowd of Schildburgers before the council-house door, busily employed, some holding the sacks open, and others throwing the light into them with shovels and any other appropriate implements which came to hand.

While they were thus labouring, a stranger came into the town of Schildburg, and, hearing what they were about, told them they were labouring to no purpose, and offered to show them how to get the daylight into the hall. It is unnecessary to say more than that this new plan was to make an opening in the roof, and that the Schildburgers witnessed the effect with astonishment, and were loud in their gratitude to the new comer.

The Schildburgers met with further difficulties before they completed their council-hall. They sowed a field with salt, and when the salt-plant grew up next year, after a meeting of the council, at which it was stiffly disputed whether it ought to be reaped, or mowed, or gathered in in some other manner, it was finally discovered that the crop consisted of nothing but nettles. After many accidents of this kind, the Schildburgers are noticed by the emperor, and obtain a charter of incorporation and freedom, but they profit little by it. In trying some experiments to catch mice, they set fire to their houses, and the whole town is burnt to the ground, upon which, in their sorrow, they abandon it altogether, and become, like the Jews of old, scattered over the world, carrying their own folly into every country they visit.

Another tale relates how the boors of Schilda contrived to get their millstone twice down from a high mountain:

The boors of Schilda had built a mill, and with extraordinary labour they had quarried a millstone for it out of a quarry which lay on the summit of a high mountain; and when the stone was finished, they carried it with great labour and pain down the hill. When they had got to the bottom, it occurred to one of them that they might have spared themselves

the trouble of carrying it down by letting it roll down. “Verily,” said he, “we are the stupidest of fools to take these extraordinary pains to do that which we might have done with so little trouble. We will carry it up, and then let it roll down the hill by itself, as we did before with the tree which we felled for the council-house.”

This advice pleased them all, and with greater labour they carried the stone to the top of the mountain again, and were about to roll it down, when one of them said, “But how shall we know where it runs to? Who will be able to tell us aught about it?” “Why,” said the bailiff, who had advised the stone being carried up again, “this is very easily managed. One of us must stick in the hole [for the millstone, of course, had a hole in the middle], and run down with it.” This was agreed to, and one of them, having been chosen for the purpose, thrust his head through the hole, and ran down the hill with the millstone. Now at the bottom of the mountain was a deep fish-pond, into which the stone rolled, and the simpleton with it, so that the Schildburgers lost both stone and man, and not one among them knew what had become of them. And they felt sorely angered against their old companion who had run down the hill with the stone, for they considered that he had carried it off for the purpose of disposing of it. So they published a notice in all the neighbouring boroughs, towns, and villages, calling on them, that “if any one come there with a millstone round his neck, they should treat him as one who had stolen the common goods, and give him to justice.” But the poor fellow lay in the pond, dead. Had he been able to speak, he would have been willing to tell them not to worry themselves on his account, for he would give them their own again. But his load pressed so

heavily upon him, and he was so deep in the water, that he, after drinking water enough—more, indeed, than was good for him—died; and he is dead at the present day, and dead he will, shall, and must remain!

The earliest known edition of the history of the Schildburgers was printed in 1597, but the story itself is no doubt older. It will be seen at once that it involves a satire upon the municipal towns of the middle ages.

ITALIAN WIT AND HUMOR

Of Italian wit and humor up to and through the Sixteenth Century there is little to be said. Translators who have given us in English the early literature of Italy have been so concerned with the serious poetry and prose that they neglected the lighter veins.

If, indeed, there were any worth while.

The outstanding name of the Fourteenth Century is that of Giovanni Boccaccio.

But though the Decameron, a collection of one hundred stories, is a mirror of the humorous taste of that time, the stories are for the most part, long, dull and prosy.

They relate the intrigues of lovers in a freely licentious way, but both humorous description and witty repartee are consciously lacking.

One of the most amusing of the decent tales is here given, also a sonnet of Boccaccio's translated by Rossetti.

OF THREE GIRLS AND THEIR TALK

By a clear well, within a little field
Full of green grass and flowers of every hue,
Sat three young girls, relating (as I knew)
Their loves. And each had twined a bough to shield
Her lovely face; and the green leaves did yield
The golden hair their shadow,—while the two
Sweet colours mingled, both blown lightly through
With a soft wind for ever stirr'd and still'd.
After a little while one of them said
(I heard her)—"Think! if ere the next hour struck
Each of our lovers should come here to-day,
Think you that we should fly or feel afraid?"
To whom the others answer'd—"From such luck
A girl would be a fool to run away!"

THE STOLEN PIG

Calandrino had a little farm, not far from Florence, which came to him through his wife. There he used to have a pig fatted every year, and some time about December he and his wife went always to kill and salt it for the use of the family. Now it happened once—she being unwell at the time—that he went thither by himself to kill his pig; which Bruno and Buffalmacco hearing, and knowing she was not to be there, they went to spend a few days with a great friend of theirs, a priest in Calandrino's neighborhood. Now the pig had been killed the very day they came thither, and Calandrino, seeing them along with the priest, called to them and said, "Welcome, kindly; I would gladly you should see what a good manager I am." Then, taking them into the house, he showed them this pig. They saw that it was fat, and were told by him that it was to be salted for his family. "Salted, booby?" said Bruno. "Sell it, let us make merry with the money, and tell your wife that it was stolen." "No," said Calandrino, "she will never believe it; and, besides, she would turn me out of doors. Trouble me, then, no further about any such thing, for I will never do it." They said a great

deal more to him, but all to no purpose. At length he invited them to supper, but did it in such a manner that they refused.

After they had come away from him, said Bruno to Buffalmacco, “Suppose we steal this pig from him to-night.” “How is it possible?” “Oh, I know well enough how to do it, if he does not remove it in the meantime from the place where we just now saw it.” “Then let us do it, and afterward we and the parson will make merry over it.” The priest assured them that he should like it above all things. “We must use a little art,” quoth Bruno; “you know how covetous he is, and how freely he drinks when it is at another’s cost. Let us get him to the tavern, where the parson shall make a pretense of treating us all, out of compliment to him. He will soon get drunk, and then the thing will be easy enough, as there is nobody in the house but himself.”

This was done, and Calandrino, finding that the parson was to pay, took his glasses pretty freely, and, getting his dose, walked home betimes, left the door open, thinking that it was shut, and so went to bed. Buffalmacco and Bruno went from the tavern to sup with the priest, and as soon as supper was over they took proper tools with them to get into the house; but finding the door open, they carried off the pig to the priest’s and went to bed likewise.

In the morning, as soon as Calandrino had slept off his wine, he rose, came down-stairs, and finding the door open and his pig gone, began to inquire of everybody if they knew anything of the matter; and receiving no tidings of it, he made a terrible outcry, saying, “What shall I do now? Somebody has stolen my pig!” Bruno and Buffalmacco were no sooner out of bed than they went to his house to hear what he

would say; and the moment he saw them he roared out, “Oh, my friends, my pig is stolen!” Upon this Bruno whispered to him and said, “Well, I am glad to see you wise in your life for once.” “Alas!” quoth he, “it is too true.” “Keep to the same story,” said Bruno, “and make noise enough for every one to believe you.”

Calandrino now began to bawl louder, “Indeed! I vow and swear to you that it is stolen.” “That’s right; be sure you let everybody hear you, that it may appear so.” “Do you think that I would forswear myself about it? May I be hanged this moment if it is not so!” “How is it possible!” quoth Bruno; “I saw it but last night; never imagine that I can believe it.” “It is so, however,” answered he, “and I am undone. I dare not now go home again, for my wife will never believe me, and I shall have no peace this twelve-month.” “It is a most unfortunate thing,” said Bruno, “if it be true; but you know I put it into your head to say so last night, and you should not make sport both of your wife and us at the same time.”

At this Calandrino began to roar out afresh, saying, “Good God! you make me mad to hear you talk. I tell you once for all it was stolen this very night!” “Nay, if it be so,” quoth Buffalmacco, “we must think of some way to get it back again.” “And what way must we take,” said he “to find it?” “Depend upon it,” replied the other, “that nobody came from the Indies to steal it; it must be somewhere in your neighborhood, and if you could get the people together I could make a charm, with some bread and cheese, that would soon discover the thief.” “True,” said Bruno, “but they would know in that case what you were about; and the person that has it would never come near you.” “How must we

manage, then?" said Buffalmacco. "Oh!" replied Bruno, "you shall see me do it with some pills of ginger and a little wine, which I will ask them to come and drink. They will have no suspicion what our design is, and we can make a charm of these as well as of the bread and cheese." "Very well," quoth the other. "What do you say, Calandrino? Have you a mind we should try it?" "For Heaven's sake do," he said; "if I only knew who the thief is, I should be half comforted." "Well, then," quoth Bruno, "I am ready to go to Florence for the things, if you will only give me some money." He happened to have a few florins in his pocket, which he gave him, and off went Bruno.

When he got to Florence, Bruno went to a friend's house and bought a pound of ginger made into pills. He also got two pills made of aloes, which had a private mark that he should not mistake them, being candied over with sugar like the rest. Then, having bought a jar of good wine, he returned to Calandrino, and said, "To-morrow you must take care to invite every one that you have the least suspicion of; it is a holiday, and they will be glad to come. We will finish the charm to-night, and bring the things to your house in the morning, and then I will take care to do and say on your behalf what is necessary upon such an occasion."

Calandrino did as he was told, and in the morning he had nearly all the people in the parish assembled under an elm-tree in the churchyard. His two friends produced the pills and wine, and, making the people stand round in a circle, Bruno said to them, "Gentlemen, it is fit that I should tell you the reason of your being summoned here in this manner, to the end, if anything should happen which you do not

like, that I be not blamed for it. You must know, then, that Calandrino had a pig stolen last night, and, as some of the company here must have taken it, he, that he may find out the thief, would have every man take and eat one of these pills, and drink a glass of wine after it. Whoever the guilty person is, you will find he will not be able to get a bit of it down, but it will taste so bitter that he will be forced to spit it out. Therefore, to prevent such open shame, he had better, whoever he is, make a secret confession to the priest, and I will proceed no further."

All present declared their readiness to eat; so, placing them all in order, he gave every man his pill and coming to Calandrino, he gave one of the aloe pills to him, which he straightway put into his mouth, and no sooner did he began to chew it than he was forced to spit it out. Every one was now attentive to see who spit his pill out, and while Bruno kept going round, apparently taking no notice of Calandrino, he heard somebody say behind him, "Hey-day! what is the meaning of its disagreeing so with Calandrino?" Bruno now turned suddenly about, and seeing that Calandrino had spit out his pill, he said, "Stay a little, honest friends, and be not too hasty in judging; it may be something else that has made him spit, and therefore he shall try another." So he gave him the other aloe pill, and then went on to the rest that were unserved. But if the first was bitter to him, this he thought much more so. However, he endeavored to get it down as well as he could. But it was impossible; it made the tears run down his cheeks, and he was forced to spit it out at last, as he had done the other. In the meantime Buffalmacco was going about with the wine; but when he and all of them saw what Calandrino had done, they began to bawl out that he

had robbed himself, and some of them abused him roundly.

After they were all gone, Buffalmacco said, “I always thought that you yourself were the thief, and that you were willing to make us believe the pig was stolen in order to keep your money in your pocket, lest we should expect a treat upon the occasion.” Calandrino, who had still the taste of the aloes in his mouth, fell a-swearing that he knew nothing of the matter. “Honor bright, now, comrade,” said Buffalmacco, “what did you get for it?” This made Calandrino quite furious.

To crown all, Bruno struck in: “I was just now told,” said he, “by one of the company, that you have a mistress in this neighborhood to whom you are very kind, and that he is confident you have given it to her. You know you once took us to the plains of Mugnone, to look for some black stones, when you left us in the lurch, and pretended you had found them; and now you think to make us believe that your pig is stolen, when you have either given it away or sold it. You have played so many tricks upon us, that we intend to be fooled no more by you. Therefore, as we have had a deal of trouble in the affair, you shall make us amends by giving us two couple of fowls, unless you mean that we should tell your wife.”

Calandrino, now perceiving that he would not be believed, and being unwilling to have them add to his troubles by bringing his wife upon his back, was forced to give them the fowls, which they joyfully carried off along with the pork.

—*The Decameron.*

Rather earlier than Boccaccio lived Rustico di

Filippo, who gives us the following satirical bit.

THE MAKING OF MASTER MESSERIN

When God had finished Master Messerin,
  He really thought it something to have done:
  Bird, man, and beast had got a chance in one,
And each felt flattered, it was hoped, therein.
For he is like a goose i' the windpipe thin,
  And like a camelopard high i' the loins,
  To which for manhood, you'll be told, he joins
Some kind of flesh hues and a callow chin.
As to his singing, he affects the crow,
As to his learning, beasts in general,
  And sets all square by dressing like a man.
God made him, having nothing else to do,
And proved there is not anything at all
  He cannot make, if that's a thing He can.

Among other collections of tales was the *Novellino*, collected by Massuchio di Salerno, about the middle of the Fifteenth Century.

We quote

THE INHERITANCE OF A LIBRARY

Jeronimo, who had inherited the place of master and head of the house, found himself in possession of many thousand florins in ready money. Wherefore the youth, seeing that he himself had endured no labor and weariness in gathering together the same, forthwith made up his mind not to place his affection in possessions of this sort, and at once began to array himself in sumptuous garments, to taste the pleasures of the town in the company of certain chosen companions of his, to indulge in amorous adventures, and in a thousand other ways to dissipate his substance abroad without restraint of any kind. Not only did he banish from his mind all thought and design of continuing his studies, but he

even went so far as to harbor against the books, which his father had held in such high esteem and reverence and had bequeathed to him, the most fierce and savage hatred. So violent, indeed, was his resentment against them that he set them down as the worst foes he had in the world.

On a certain day it happened that the young man, either by accident or for some reason of his own, betook himself into the library of his dead father, and there his eye fell upon a vast quantity of handsome and well-arranged books, such as are wont to be found in places of this sort. At the first sight of these he was somewhat stricken with fear, and with a certain apprehension that the spirit of his father might pursue him; but, having collected his courage somewhat, he turned with a look of hatred on his face toward the aforesaid books and began to address them in the following terms:

"Books, books, so long as my father was alive you waged against me war unceasing, forasmuch as he spent all his time and trouble either in purchasing you, or in putting you in fair bindings; so that, whenever it might happen that there came upon me the need of a few florins or of certain other articles, which all youths find necessary, he would always refuse to let me have them, saying that it was his will and pleasure to dispense his money only in the purchase of such books as might please him. And over and beyond this, he purposed in his mind that I, altogether against my will, should spend my life in close companionship with you, and over this matter there arose between us many times angry and contumelious words. Many times, also, you have put me in danger of being driven into perpetual exile from this my home. Therefore it cannot but be

pleasing to God—since it is no fault of yours that I was not hunted forth from this place—that I should send you packing from this my house in such fashion that not a single one of you will ever behold my door again. And, in sooth, I wonder more especially that you have not before this disordered my wits, a feat you might well have accomplished with very little more trouble on your part, in your desire to do with me as you did with my father, according to my clear recollection. He, poor man, as if he had become bemused through conversing with you alone, was accustomed to demean himself in strange fashion, moving his hands and his head in such wise that over and over again I counted him to be one bereft of reason. Now, on account of all this, I bid you have a little patience, for the reason that I have made up my mind to sell you all forthwith, and thus in a single hour to avenge myself for all the outrages I have suffered on your account and, over and beyond this, to set myself free from the possible danger of going mad."

After he had thus spoken, and had packed up divers volumes of the aforesaid books—one of his servants helping him in the work—he sent the parcel to the house of a certain lawyer, who was a friend of his, and then in a very few words came to an agreement with the lawyer as to the business, the issue of the affair being that, though he had simply expelled the books from his house, and had not sold them, he received, nevertheless, on account of the same, several hundred florins. With these, added to the money which still remained in his purse, he continued to pursue the course of pleasure he had begun.

Another ironical skit is by Francesco Berni, entitled

LIVING IN BED

Yet field-sports, dice, cards, balls, and such like courses,
Things which he might be thought to set store by,
Gave him but little pleasure. He liked horses,
But was content to let them please his eye—
Buying them, not squaring with his resources.
Therefore his *summum bonum* was to lie
Stretch'd at full length—yea, frankly be it said,
To do no single thing but lie in bed.

'Twas owing all to that infernal writing.
Body and brains had borne such grievous rounds
Of kicks, cuffs, floors, from copying and inditing,
That he could find no balsam for his wounds,
No harbor for his wreck half so inviting
As to lie still, far from all sights and sounds,
And so, in bed, do nothing on God's earth
But try and give his senses a new birth.

"Bed—bed's the thing, by Heaven!" thus would he swear.
"Bed is your only work, your only duty.
Bed is one's gown, one's slippers, one's armchair,
Old coat; you're not afraid to spoil its beauty.
Large you may have it, long, wide, brown, or fair,
Down-bed or mattress, just as it may suit ye.
Then take your clothes off, turn in, stretch, lie double;
Be but in bed, you're quit of earthly trouble!"

Borne to the fairy palace then, but tired
Of seeing so much dancing, he withdrew
Into a distant room, and there desired
A bed might be set up, handsome and new,
With all the comforts that the case required:
Mattresses huge, and pillows not a few
Put here and there, in order that no ease
Might be found wanting to cheeks, or arms, or knees.

The bed was eight feet wide, lovely to see,
With white sheets, and fine curtains, and rich

loops
Things vastly soothing to calamity;
The coverlet hung light in silken droops;
It might have held six people easily;
But he disliked to lie in bed by groups.
A large bed to himself, that was his notion,
With room enough to swim in—like the ocean.

In this retreat there joined him a good soul,
A Frenchman, one who had been long at court,
An admirable cook—though, on the whole,
His gains of his deserts had fallen short.
For him was made, cheek, as it were, by jowl,
A second bed of the same noble sort,
Yet not so close but that the folks were able
To set between the two a dinner-table.

Here was served up, on snow-white table-cloths,
Each daintiest procurable comestible
In the French taste (all others being Goths),
Dishes alike delightful and digestible.
Only our scribe chose sirups, soups, and broths,
The smallest trouble being a detestable
Bore, into which not ev'n his dinner led him.
Therefore the servants always came and fed him.

Nothing at these times but his head was seen;
The coverlet came close beneath his chin;
And then, from out the bottle or tureen,
They fill'd a silver pipe, which he let in
Between his lips, all easy, smooth, and clean,
And so he filled his philosophic skin.
And not a finger all the while he stirred,
Nor, lest his tongue should tire, scarce uttered word.

The name of that same cook was Master Pierre;
He told a tale well—something short and light.
Quoth scribe, "Those people who keep dancing there
Have little wit." Quoth Pierre, "You're very right."
And then he told a tale, or hummed an air;
Then took a sip of something, or a bite;
And then he turned himself to sleep; and then
Awoke and ate. And then he slept again.

One more thing I may note that made the day

Pass well—one custom, not a little healing,
Which was, to look above him, as he lay.
And count the spots and blotches in the ceiling;
Noting what shapes they took to, and which way,
And where the plaster threatened to be peeling;
Whether the spot looked new, or old, or what—
Or whether 'twas, in fact, a spot or not.
—From *Roland Enamored*.

Francho Sacchetti, poet and novelist, wrote many stories and verses in lighter vein.

ON A WET DAY

As I walk'd thinking through a little grove,
Some girls that gather'd flowers came passing me,
Saying—"Look here! look there!" delightedly.
"O here it is!" "What's that?" "A lily? love!"
"And there are violets!"
"Farther for roses! O the lovely pets!
The darling beauties! O the nasty thorn!
Look here, my hand's all torn!"
"What's that that jumps?" "O don't! it's a grasshopper!"
"Come, run! come, run!
Here's blue-bells!" "O what fun!"
"Not that way! stop her!"
"Yes! this way!" "Pluck them then!"
"O, I've found mushrooms! O look here!" "O, I'm
Quite sure that farther on we'll get wild thyme."
"O, we shall stay too long; it's going to rain;
There's lightning; O! there's thunder!"
"O sha'n't we hear the vesper bell? I wonder."
"Why, it's not nones, you silly little thing!
And don't you hear the nightingales that sing—
Fly away O die away?"
"O, I hear something; hush!"
"Why, where? what is it then?" "Ah! in that bush."
So every girl here knocks it, shakes and shocks it:
Till with the stir they make
Out skurries a great snake.
"O Lord! O me! Alack! Ah me! alack!"
They scream, and then all run and scream again,
And then in heavy drops comes down the rain.

Each running at the other in a fright,
Each trying to get before the other, and crying.

And flying, and stumbling, tumbling, wrong or right;—
One sets her knee
There where her foot should be;
One has her hands and dress
All smother'd up with mud in a fine mess;
And one gets trampled on by two or three.
What's gathered is let fall
About the wood, and not pick'd up at all.
The wreaths of flowers are scatter'd on the ground,
And still as, screaming, hustling, without rest,
They run this way and that and round and round,
She thinks herself in luck who runs the best.

I stood quite still to have a perfect view,
And never noticed till I got wet through.
—*Translated by Rossetti.*

This brings us to Benvenuto Cellini, who, though not classed among the humorists, gives us many flashes of wit and humor in his celebrated Biography.

A COMPULSORY MARRIAGE AT SWORD'S POINT

One of those busy personages who delight in spreading mischief came to inform me that Paolo Micceri had taken a house for his new lady and her mother, and that he made use of the most injurious and contemptuous expressions regarding me, to wit:

"Poor Benvenuto! he paid the piper while I danced; and now he goes about boasting of the exploit. He thinks I am afraid of him—I, who can wear a sword and dagger as well as he. But I would have him to know my weapons are as keen as his. I, too, am a Florentine, and come of the Micceri, a much better house than the Cellini any time of day."

In short, the vile informer painted the things in such colors to my disadvantage that it fired my whole blood. I was in a fever of the most dangerous kind. And feeling it must kill me unless it found vent,

I had recourse to my usual means on such occasions. I called to my workman, Chioccia, to accompany me, and told another to follow me with my horse. On reaching the wretch's house, finding the door half open, I entered abruptly in. There he sat with his precious "lady-love," his boasted sword and dagger beside him, in the very act of jesting with the elder woman upon my affairs. To slam the door, draw my sword and present the point to his throat, was the work of a moment, giving him no time to think of defending himself:

"Vile poltroon, recommend thy soul to God! Thou art a dead man!"

In the excess of his terror he cried out thrice, in a feeble voice, "Mama! mama! mama! Help, help, help!"

At this ludicrous appeal, so like a girl's, and the ridiculous manner in which it was uttered, though I had a mind to kill, I lost half my rage and could not forbear laughing. Turning to Chioccia, however, I bade him make fast the door; for I was resolved to inflict the same punishment upon all three. Still with my sword-point at his throat, and pricking him a little now and then, I terrified him with the most desperate threats, and finding that he made no defense, was rather at a loss how to proceed. It was too poor a revenge—it was nothing—when suddenly it came into my head to make it effectual, and compel him to espouse the girl upon the spot.

"Up! Off with that ring on thy finger, villain!" I cried. "Marry her this instant, and then I shall have my full revenge."

"Anything—anything you like, provided you will not kill me," he eagerly answered.

Removing my sword a little:

"Now, then," I said, "put on the ring."

He did so, trembling all the time.

"This is not enough. Go and bring me two notaries to draw up the contract." Then, addressing the girl and her mother in French:

"While the notaries and witnesses are coming, I will give you a word of advice. The first of you that I know to utter a word about my affairs, I will kill you —all three. So remember."

I afterward said in Italian to Paolo:

"If you offer the slightest opposition to the least thing I choose to propose, I will cut you up into mince-meat with this good sword."

"It is enough," he interrupted in alarm, "that you will not kill me. I will do whatever you wish."

So this singular contract was duly drawn out and signed. My rage and fever were gone. I paid the notaries, and went home.—*The Biography.*

CRITICISM OF A STATUE OF HERCULES

Bandinello was incensed to such a degree that he was ready to burst with fury, and turning to me said, "What faults have you to find with my statues?"

I answered, "I will soon tell them, if you have but the patience to hear me."

He replied, "Tell them, then."

The duke and all present listened with the utmost attention. I began by promising that I was sorry to be obliged to lay before him all the blemishes of his work, and that I was not so properly delivering my

own sentiments as declaring what was said of it by the artistic school of Florence. However, as the fellow at one time said something disobliging, at another made some offensive gesture with his hands or his feet, he put me into such a passion that I behaved with a rudeness which I should otherwise have avoided.

"The artistic school of Florence," said I, "declares what follows: If the hair of your Hercules were shaved off, there would not remain skull enough to hold his brains. With regard to his face, it is hard to distinguish whether it be the face of a man, or that of a creature something between a lion and an ox; it discovers no attention to what it is about; and it is so ill set upon the neck, with so little art and in so ungraceful a manner, that a more shocking piece of work was never seen. His great brawny shoulders resemble the two pommels of an ass's packsaddle. His breasts and their muscles bear no similitude to those of a man, but seem to have been drawn from a sack of melons. As he leans directly against the wall, the small of the back has the appearance of a bag filled with long cucumbers. It is impossible to conceive in what manner the two legs are fastened to this distorted figure, for it is hard to distinguish upon which leg he stands, or upon which he exerts any effort of his strength; nor does he appear to stand upon both, as he is sometimes represented by those masters of the art of statuary who know something of their business. It is plain, too, that the statue inclines more than one-third of a cubit forward; and this is the greatest and the most insupportable blunder which pretenders to sculpture can be guilty of. As for the arms, they both hang down in the most awkward and ungraceful manner imaginable; and so little art is displayed in them that people would be almost

tempted to think that you had never seen a naked man in your life. The right leg of Hercules and that of Cacus touch at the middle of their calves, and if they were to be separated, not one of them only, but both, would remain without a calf, in the place where they touch. Besides, one of the feet of the Hercules is quite buried, and the other looks as if it stood upon hot coals."—*The Biography*.

SPANISH WIT AND HUMOR

The Spanish literature of this time contains little that can be quoted as humor.

Hurtado de Mendoza, a novelist, historian and poet, and Lope de Vega, dramatist, are the principal names among the Spanish writers.

About 1600 there flourished a poet named Baltazar del Alcazar, whose work shows a rather modern type of humor.

SLEEP

Sleep is no servant of the will;
  It has caprices of its own;
  When most pursued, 'tis swiftly gone;
When courted least, it lingers still.
With its vagaries long perplext,
  I turned and turned my restless sconce,
  Till, one fine night, I thought at once
I'd master it. So hear my text.

When sleep doth tarry, I begin
  My long and well-accustomed prayer,
  And in a twinkling sleep is there,
Through my bed-curtains peeping in.
When sleep hangs heavy on my eyes,
  I think of debts I fain would pay,
  And then, as flies night's shade from day,
Sleep from my heavy eyelids flies.

And, thus controlled, the winged one bends

E'en his fantastic will to me,
And, strange yet true, both I and he
Are friends—the very best of friends.
We are a happy wedded pair,
And I the lord and he the dame;
Our bed, our board, our dreams the same,
And we're united everywhere.

I'll tell you where I learned to school
This wayward sleep: a whispered word
From a church-going hag I heard,
And tried it, for I was no fool.
So, from that very hour I knew
That, having ready prayers to pray,
And having many debts to pay,
Will serve for sleep, and waking too.

In 1605 was published the first part of *Don Quixote de la Mancha* the celebrated satirical work of Miguel de Cervantes.

Of this book Hallam says, "it is the only Spanish book which can be said to possess a European reputation."

Its reputation is world wide and fine translations have given us the spirit of the original.

HE SECURES SANCHO PANZA AS HIS SQUIRE

In the meantime, Don Quixote tampered with a laborer, a neighbor of his and an honest man (if such an epithet can be given to one that is poor), but shallow-brained; in short, he said so much, used so many arguments and made so many promises, that the poor fellow resolved to sally out with him and serve him in the capacity of a squire. Among other things, Don Quixote told him that he ought to be very glad to accompany him, for such an adventure might, some time or the other, occur that by one stroke an island might be won, where he might leave him governor. With this and other promises, Sancho

Panza (for that was the laborer's name) left his wife and children and engaged himself as squire to his neighbor. Don Quixote now set about raising money; and, by selling one thing, pawning another, and losing by all, he collected a tolerable sum. He fitted himself likewise with a buckler, which he borrowed of a friend, and, patching up his broken helmet in the best manner he could, he acquainted his squire Sancho of the day and hour he intended to set out, that he might provide himself with what he thought would be most needful. Above all, he charged him not to forget a wallet, which Sancho assured him he would not neglect; he said also that he thought of taking an ass with him, as he had a very good one, and he was not used to travel much on foot. With regard to the ass, Don Quixote paused a little, endeavoring to recollect whether any knight-errant had ever carried a squire mounted on ass-back, but no instance of the kind occurred to his memory. However, he consented that he should take his ass, resolving to accommodate him more honorably, at the earliest opportunity, by dismounting the first discourteous knight he should meet. He provided himself also with shirts, and other things, conformably to the advice given him by the innkeeper.

All this being accomplished, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, without taking leave, the one of his wife and children, or the other of his housekeeper and niece, one night sallied out of the village unperceived; and they travelled so hard that by break of day they believed themselves secure, even if search were made after them. Sancho Panza proceeded upon his ass like a patriarch, with his wallet and leathern bottle, and with a vehement desire to find himself governor of the island which

his master had promised him. Don Quixote happened to take the same route as on his first expedition, over the plain of Montiel, which he passed with less inconvenience than before; for it was early in the morning, and the rays of the sun, darting on them horizontally, did not annoy them. Sancho Panza now said to his master, “I beseech your worship, good Sir Knight-errant, not to forget your promise concerning that same island, for I shall know how to govern it, be it ever so large.” To which Don Quixote answered: “Thou must know, friend Sancho Panza, that it was a custom much in use among the knights-errant of old to make their squires governors of the islands or kingdoms they conquered; and I am determined that so laudable a custom shall not be lost through my neglect; on the contrary, I resolve to outdo them in it, for they, sometimes, and perhaps most times, waited till their squires were grown old; and when they were worn out in their service, and had endured many bad days and worse nights, they conferred on them some title, such as count, or at least marquis, of some valley or province of more or less account; but if you live and I live, before six days have passed I may probably win such a kingdom as may have others depending on it, just fit for thee to be crowned king of one of them. And do not think this any extraordinary matter, for things fall out to knights by such unforeseen and unexpected ways, that I may easily give thee more than I promise.” “So, then,” answered Sancho Panza, “if I were a king, by some of those miracles your worship mentions, Joan Gutierrez, my duck, would come to be a queen, and my children infantas!” “Who doubts it?” answered Don Quixote. “I doubt it,” replied Sancho Panza; “for I am verily persuaded that, if God were to rain down kingdoms upon the earth, none of them

would set well upon the head of Mary Gutierrez; for you must know, sir, she is not worth two farthings for a queen. The title of countess would sit better upon her, with the help of Heaven and good friends." "Recommend her to God, Sancho," answered Don Quixote, "and He will do what is best for her; but do thou have a care not to debase thy mind so low as to content thyself with being less than a viceroy." "Sir, I will not," answered Sancho; "especially having so great a man for my master as your worship, who will know how to give me whatever is most fitting for me and what I am best able to bear."

OF THE VALOROUS DON QUIXOTE'S SUCCESS IN THE DREADFUL AND NEVER-BEFORE-IMAGINED ADVENTURE OF THE WINDMILLS

Engaged in this discourse, they came in sight of thirty or forty windmills which are in that plain; and as soon as Don Quixote espied them, he said to his squire, "Fortune disposes our affairs better than we ourselves could have desired; look yonder, friend Sancho Panza, where thou mayest discover somewhat more than thirty monstrous giants, whom I intend to encounter and slay, and with their spoils we will begin to enrich ourselves; for it is lawful war, and doing God good service, to remove so wicked a generation from off the face of the earth." "What giants?" said Sancho Panza. "Those thou seest yonder," answered his master, "with their long arms; for some are wont to have them almost of the length of two leagues."

"Look, sir," answered Sancho, "those which appear yonder are not giants, but windmills, and what seem to be arms are the sails, which, whirled about by the wind, make the millstone go." "It is very evident," answered Don Quixote, "that thou art

not versed in the business of adventures. They are giants; and if thou art afraid, get thee aside and pray, whilst I engage with them in fierce and unequal combat." So saying, he clapped spurs to his steed, notwithstanding the cries his squire sent after him, assuring him that they were certainly windmills, and not giants. But he was so fully possessed that they were giants, that he neither heard the outcries of his squire Sancho, nor yet discerned what they were, though he was very near them, but went on, crying out aloud, "Fly not, ye cowards and vile caitiffs! for it is a single knight who assaults you." The wind now rising a little, the great sails began to move, upon which Don Quixote called out, "Although ye should have more arms than the giant Briareus, ye shall pay for it."

Thus recommending himself devoutly to his lady Dulcinea, beseeching her to succor him in the present danger, being well covered with his buckler and setting his lance in the rest he rushed on as fast as Rozinante could gallop and attacked the first mill before him, when, running his lance into the sail, the wind whirled it about with so much violence that it broke the lance to shivers, dragging horse and rider after it, and tumbling them over and over on the plain in very evil plight. Sancho Panza hastened to his assistance as fast as the ass could carry him; and when he came up to his master he found him unable to stir, so violent was the blow which he and Rozinante had received in their fall.

"God save me!" quoth Sancho, "did not I warn you to have a care of what you did, for that they were nothing but windmills? And nobody could mistake them but one that had the like in his head."

"Peace, friend Sancho," answered Don Quixote;

"for matters of war are, of all others, most subject to continual change. Now I verily believe, and it is most certainly the fact, that the sage Freston, who stole away my chamber and books, has metamorphosed these giants into windmills, on purpose to deprive me of the glory of vanquishing them, so great is the enmity he bears me! But his wicked arts will finally avail but little against the goodness of my sword."

"God grant it!" answered Sancho Panza. Then, helping him to rise, he mounted him again upon his steed, which was almost disjointed.—*Don Quixote.*

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Though still serious-minded in the main, the world at the beginning of the Seventeenth century recognized and appreciated humor.

And, growing with what it fed upon the vein of humor became more marked and more important in literature.

Wherefore our outline must from now on be less comprehensive and more discriminating.

The field is getting too wide, the harvest too bountiful for gleaning, even for general reaping; we can now only pluck spears of ripened grain.

An Outline can touch only the high spots, and though many wonderful flashes of wit and humor occur in the works of the most serious writers space cannot be given to such, it must be conserved for the definitely and intentionally humorous writers.

This is greatly to be regretted, for not infrequently the jests of the serious-minded are more intrinsically witty than those of professed humorists.

As an example may be mentioned George Herbert, the famous clergyman who was called Holy George Herbert.

His religious writings are interspersed with flashes of exquisite wit.

“God gave thy soul brave wings; put not those feathers Into a bed to sleep out all ill weathers,”

is a most graceful bit of word play.

And so with scores, even hundreds of worthy writers, among whose pages brilliant shafts of wit are found.

Such excursions we have no room for, and must abide by the inexorable laws of limitation.

Nor can such a matter as the Ballads be touched upon.

The historical ballads of this time were narrative poems of exceeding great length and usually, of exceeding great dulness. Fun they show, here and there, but the bulk of them are destitute of mirth-provoking lines.

Not so the Ballad Literature intended for social diversion and lovers of ribaldry. These, in large numbers, were put forth, and were oftener than not, founded on the old Jest Books, the Merry Tales, and even the Gesta and Fabliaux of earlier days.

Collections of these include the effusions of the balladists from the short stanzas, mere epigrams, to the intolerably long tales based on political or religious matters.

Yet it is at this juncture we must mention the name of Thomas Hobbes, the Malmesbury Philosopher, and a most important figure of the

seventeenth century.

Not because of his own wit or humor, but of his understanding and valuation of it.

His observations on laughter, hereinbefore referred to, must be quoted entire.

FROM HUMAN NATURE

LAUGHTER

There is a passion that hath no name; but the sign of it is that distortion of the countenance which we call laughter, which is always joy: but what joy, what we think, and wherein we triumph when we laugh, is not hitherto declared by any. That it consisteth in wit, or, as they call it, in the jest, experience confuteth; for men laugh at mischances and indecencies, wherein there lieth no wit nor jest at all. And forasmuch as the same thing is no more ridiculous when it groweth stale or usual, whatsoever it be that moveth laughter, it must be new and unexpected. Men laugh often—especially such as are greedy of applause from everything they do well—at their own actions performed never so little beyond their own expectations as also at their own jests: and in this case it is manifest that the passion of laughter proceedeth from a sudden conception of some ability in himself that laugheth. Also, men laugh at the infirmities of others by comparison wherewith their own abilities are set off and illustrated. Also men laugh at jests the wit whereof always consisteth in the elegant discovering and conveying to our minds some absurdity of another; and in this case also the passion of laughter proceedeth from the sudden imagination of our own odds and eminency; for what is else the

recommending of ourselves to our own good opinion, by comparison with another man's infirmity or absurdity? For when a jest is broken upon ourselves, or friends, of whose dishonour we participate, we never laugh thereat. I may therefore conclude that the passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly; for men laugh at the follies of themselves past, when they come suddenly to remembrance, except they bring with them any present dishonour. It is no wonder, therefore, that men take heinously to be laughed at or derided—that is, triumphed over. Laughing without offence must be at absurdities and infirmities abstracted from persons, and when all the company may laugh together; for laughing to one's self putteth all the rest into jealousy and examination of themselves. Besides, it is vain-glory, and an argument of little worth, to think the infirmity of another sufficient matter for his triumph.

Robert Herrick, among the most exquisite of lyric poets, was a classical scholar, addicted to Martial. His works, neglected for long years, came into their own about a century ago, and his spontaneous gayety and tenderness is not frequently equalled.

The temptation is to quote his lyrics, but his whimsical humor is more clearly shown in his waggish lines.

THE KISS—A DIALOGUE

1. Among thy fancies, tell me this:
   What is the thing we call a kisse?

2. I shall resolve ye, what it is.

It is a creature born and bred
Between the lips, (all cherrie red,)
By love and warme desires fed;
Chorus.—And makes more soft the bridal bed.

2. It is an active flame, that flies
First to the babies of the eyes,pupils
And charms them there with lullabies;
Chorus.—And stils the bride too, when she cries.

2. Then to the chin, the cheek, the eare
It frisks and flyes; now here, now there;
'Tis now farre off, and then 'tis nere;
Chorus.—And here, and there, and every where.

1. Has it a speaking virtue?—2. Yes.
1. How speaks it, say?—2. Do you but this,
Part your joyn'd lips, then speaks your kisse;
Chorus.—And this loves sweetest language is.

1. Has it a body?—2. Ay, and wings,
With thousand rare encolourings;
And as it flies, it gently sings,
Chorus.—Love honie yeelds, but never stings.

A TERNARY OF LITTLES, UPON A PIPKIN OF JELLY SENT TO A LADY

A little saint best fits a little shrine,
A little prop best fits a little vine;
As my small cruse best fits my little wine.

A little seed best fits a little soil,
A little trade best fits a little toil;
As my small jar best fits my little oil.

A little bin best fits a little bread,
A little garland fits a little head;
As my small stuff best fits my little shed.

A little hearth best fits a little fire,
A little chapel fits a little choir;
As my small bell best fits my little spire.

A little stream best fits a little boat,
A little lead best fits a little float;
As my small pipe best fits my little note.

A little meat best fits a little belly,
As sweetly, lady, give me leave to tell ye,
This little pipkin fits this little jelly.

Thomas Carew, Edmund Waller, Sir John Suckling and Richard Lovelace all followed more or less in Herrick's footsteps, and though each possessed what is called a pretty wit, they were not primarily humorous writers.

A few poems are given, perhaps of more lyric than witty value.

RICHARD LOVELACE

SONG

Why should you swear I am forsworn,
  Since thine I vowed to be?
Lady, it is already morn,
  And 'twas last night I swore to thee
  That fond impossibility.

Have I not loved thee much and long,
  A tedious twelve hours' space?
I must all other beauties wrong,
  And rob thee of a new embrace,
  Could I still dote upon thy face.

Not but all joy in thy brown hair
  By others may be found;
But I must search the black and fair,
  Like skilful mineralists that sound
  For treasure in unploughed-up ground.

Then, if when I have loved my round,
  Thou prov'st the pleasant she;
With spoils of meaner beauties crowned
  I laden will return to thee,
  Even sated with variety.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING

THE CONSTANT LOVER

  Out upon it! I have loved
Three whole days together,
And am like to love three more,

If it prove fair weather.

Time shall moult away his wings
Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide world again
Such a constant lover.

But the spite on 'tis, no praise
Is due at all to me:
Love with me had made no stays,
Had it any been but she.

Had it any been but she,
And that very face,
There had been at least ere this
A dozen dozen in her place.

THE REMONSTRANCE

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prithee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prithee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prithee, why so mute?

Quite, quit, for shame! this will not move,
This cannot take her;
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her!

John Milton, second only to Shakespeare in all literature, is not usually looked upon as a humorist.

A wise commentator (of more wisdom than wit), has said, of Milton, "Few great poets are so utterly without humor; alone among the greatest poets he has not sung of love."

We take objection to both these statements,

though with the second we are not now concerned.

But surely no humorless pen could have indited *L'Allegro*, and as to less subtle humor, we give in evidence the well known Epitaph on the Carrier.

FROM L'ALLEGRO

But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore:
Or whether (as some sages sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora, playing,
As he met her once a-Maying!
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew,
Fill'd her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful jollity,
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides
Come, and trip it, as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreproved pleasures free:

*****

Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How faery Mab the junkets ate;
She was pinch'd, and pulled, she said;
And he, by friar's lantern led,
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,

When in one night, ere glimpses of morn,
His shadowy flail had thresh'd the corn,
That ten day-laborers could not end;
Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And, crop-full, out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.
  Tower'd cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men.
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge and prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robes, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse;
Such as the melting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regain'd Eurydice.
  These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

EPITAPH FOR AN OLD UNIVERSITY CARRIER

Here lieth one who did most truly prove
That he could never die while he could move;
So hung his destiny, never to rot
While he might still jog on and keep his trot;
Made of sphere-metal, never to decay
Until his revolution was at stay.
Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
'Gainst old truth) motion number'd out his time,
And, like an engine moved with wheel and weight,
His principles being ceased, he ended straight.
Rest, that gives all men life, gave him his death,
And too much breathing put him out of breath.
Nor were it contradiction to affirm,
Too long vacation hastened on his term.
Merely to drive away the time, he sicken'd,
Fainted, died, nor would with ale be quicken'd.
"Nay," quoth he, on his swooning bed outstretch'd,
"If I mayn't carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetch'd,
But vow, though the cross doctors all stood
hearers,
For one carrier put down to make six bearers."
Ease was his chief disease; and, to judge right,
He died for heaviness that his cart went light.
His leisure told him that his time was come,
And lack of load made his life burdensome,
That even to his last breath (there be that say't),
As he were press'd to death, he cried, "More
weight!"
But had his doings lasted as they were,
He had been an immortal carrier.
Obedient to the moon, he spent his date
In course reciprocal, and had his fate
Link'd to the mutual flowing of the seas,
Yet (strange to think) his *wain* was his *increase*.
His letters are deliver'd all and gone;
Only remains this superscription.

Samuel Butler, a brilliant and satiric wit, wrote *Hudibras*, the immortal Cavalier burlesque of the views and manners of the English Puritans. In some degree imitated from *Don Quixote* as to plan, this burlesque is so full of shrewd wit and felicitous drollery as to hold a unique place in literature.

Like all such long works, it is difficult to quote from, but some passages are given, as well as some of

Butler's clever epigrams.

THE RELIGION OF HUDIBRAS

For his religion it was fit
To match his learning and his wit:
Twas Presbyterian true blue;
For he was of that stubborn crew
Of errant saints, whom all men grant
To be the true Church militant;
Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun;
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery,
And prove their doctrine orthodox,
By apostolic blows and knocks;
Call fire, and sword, and desolation,
A godly, thorough reformation.
Which always must be carried on,
And still be doing, never done;
As if religion were intended
From nothing else but to be mended;
A sect whose chief devotion lies
In odd perverse antipathies;
In falling out with that or this,
And finding somewhat still amiss;
More peevish, cross, and splenetic,
Than dog distract or monkey sick;
That with more care keep holy-day
The wrong, than others the right way;
Compound for sins they are inclin'd to,
By damning those they have no mind to;
Still so perverse and opposite,
As if they worshipped God for spite;
The self-same thing they will abhor
One way, and long another for;
Free-will they one way disavow,
Another, nothing else allow;
All piety consists therein
In them, in other men all sin;
Rather than fail, they will defy
That which they love most tenderly;
Quarrel with minc'd pies, and disparage
Their best and dearest friend, plum porridge;
Fat pig and goose itself oppose,
And blaspheme custard through the nose.

SAINTSHIP VERSUS CONSCIENCE

"Why didst thou choose that cursed sin,
Hypocrisy, to set up in?"
"Because it is the thriving'st calling,
The only saints' bell that rings all in;
In which all churches are concern'd,
And is the easiest to be learn'd."

*****

Quoth he, "I am resolv'd to be
Thy scholar in this mystery;"
"And therefore first desire to know
Some principles on which you go."

"What makes a knave a child of God,
And one of us?" "A livelihood."
"What renders beating out of brains,
And murder, godliness?" "Great gains."
"What's tender conscience?" "'Tis a botch
That will not bear the gentlest touch;
But, breaking out, despatches more
Than th' epidemical'st plague-sore."
"What makes y' incroach upon our trade,
And damn all others?" "To be paid."
"What's orthodox and true believing
Against a conscience?" "A good living."
"What makes rebelling against kings
A good old cause?" "Administ'rings."
"What makes all doctrines plain and clear?"
"About two hundred pounds a-year."
"And that which was proved true before,
Prove false again?" "Two hundred more."
"What makes the breaking of all oaths
A holy duty?" "Food and clothes."
"What laws and freedom, persecution?"
"Being out of power, and contribution."
"What makes a church a den of thieves?"
"A dean and chapter, and white sleeves."
"And what would serve, if those were gone,
To make it orthodox?" "Our own."
"What makes morality a crime,
The most notorious of the time—
Morality, which both the saints
And wicked too cry out against?"
"'Cause grace and virtue are within
Prohibited degrees of kin;
And therefore no true saint allows
They shall be suffered to espouse."

DESCRIPTION OF HOLLAND

A country that draws fifty foot of water,
In which men live as in the hold of Nature,
And when the sea does in upon them break,
And drowns a province, does but spring a leak;
That always ply the pump, and never think
They can be safe but at the rate they stink;
They live as if they had been run aground,
And, when they die, are cast away and drowned;
That dwell in ships, like swarms of rats, and prey
Upon the goods all nations' fleets convey;
And when their merchants are blown up and crackt,
Whole towns are cast away in storms, and wreckt;
That feed, like cannibals, on other fishes,
And serve their cousin-germans up in dishes:
A land that rides at anchor, and is moored,
In which they do not live, but go aboard.

POETS

It is not poetry that makes men poor;
For few do write that were not so before;
And those that have writ best, had they been rich,
Had ne'er been clapp'd with a poetic itch;
Had loved their ease too well to take the pains
To undergo that drudgery of brains;
But, being for all other trades unfit,
Only t' avoid being idle, set up wit.

PUFFING

They that do write in authors' praises,
And freely give their friends their voices,
Are not confined to what is true;
That's not to give, but pay a due:
For praise, that's due, does give no more
To worth, than what it had before;
But to commend, without desert,
Requires a mastery of art,
That sets a gloss on what's amiss,
And writes what should be, not what is.

Samuel Pepys, whose literary work is in Diary form, is no doubt one of the world's greatest egoists. But the spontaneity and naturalness of the account of

his daily doings, as told by himself, have a charm all their own and a unique and inimitable humor.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY

Rose early, and put six spoons and a porringer of silver in my pocket to give away to-day. To dinner at Sir William Batten's; and then, after a walk in the fine gardens, we went to Mrs. Browne's, where Sir W. Pen and I were godfathers, and Mrs. Jordan and Shipman godmothers to her boy. And there, before and after the christening, we were with the woman above in her chamber; but whether we carried ourselves well or ill, I know not; but I was directed by young Mrs. Batten. One passage of a lady that ate wafers with her dog did a little displease me. I did give the midwife 10*s.* and the nurse 5*s.* and the maid of the house 2*s.* But for as much I expected to give the name to the child, but did not (it being called John), I forbore then to give my plate.

December 26th, 1662.—Up, my wife to the making of Christmas pies all day, doeing now pretty well again, and I abroad to several places about some businesses, among others bought a bake-pan in Newgate Market, and sent it home, it cost me 16*s.* So to Dr Williams, but he is out of town, then to the Wardrobe. Hither come Mr Battersby; and we falling into discourse of a new book of drollery in use, called Hudibras, I would needs go find it out, and met with it at the Temple: cost me 2*s.* 6*d.* But when I come to read it, it is so silly an abuse of the Presbyter Knight going to the warrs, that I am ashamed of it; and by and by meeting at Mr Townsend's at dinner, I sold it to him for 18*d.* ...

February 6th.— ... Thence to Lincoln's Inn Fields; and it being too soon to go to dinner, I walked up

and down, and looked upon the outside of the new theatre now a-building in Covent Garden, which will be very fine. And so to a bookseller's in the Strand, and there bought Hudibras again, it being certainly some ill-humour to be so against that which all the world cries up to be the example of wit; for which I am resolved once more to read him, and see whether I can find it or no....

November 28th.— ... And thence abroad to Paul's Churchyard, and there looked upon the second part of Hudibras, which I buy not, but borrow to read, to see if it be as good as the first, which the world cry so mightily up, though it hath not a good liking in me, though I had tried by twice or three times reading to bring myself to think it witty. Back again and home to my office....

May 11th, 1667.—And so away with my wife, whose being dressed this day in fair hair did make me so mad, that I spoke not one word to her, though I was ready to burst with anger.... After that ... Creed and I into the Park, and walked, a most pleasant evening, and so took coach, and took up my wife, and in my way home discovered my trouble to my wife for her white locks [false hair], swearing by God several times, which I pray God forgive me for, and bending my fist, that I would not endure it. She, poor wretch, was surprized with it, and made me no answer all the way home; but there we parted, and I to the office late, and then home, and without supper to bed, vexed.

12th (Lord's Day).—Up and to my chamber, to settle some accounts there, and by and by down comes my wife to me in her night-gown, and we begun calmly, that, upon having money to lace her gown for second mourning, she would promise to

wear white locks no more in my sight, which I, like a severe fool, thinking not enough, began to except against, and made her fly out to very high terms and cry, and in her heat told me of keeping company with Mrs Knipp, saying, that if I would promise never to see her more—of whom she hath more reason to suspect than I had heretofore of Pembleton—she would never wear white locks more. This vexed me, but I restrained myself from saying anything, but do think never to see this woman—at least, to have her here more; but by and by I did give her money to buy lace, and she promised to wear no more white locks while I lived, and so all very good friends as ever, and I to my business, and she to dress herself.

August 18th (Lord's Day).—Up, and being ready, walked up and down to Cree Church, to see it how it is: but I find no alteration there, as they say there was, for my Lord Mayor and Aldermen to come to sermon, as they do every Sunday, as they did formerly to Paul's.... There dined with me Mr Turner and his daughter Betty. Betty is grown a fine young lady as to carriage and discourse. I and my wife are mightily pleased with her. We had a good haunch of venison, powdered and boiled, and a good dinner and merry.... I walked towards Whitehall, but, being wearied, turned into St Dunstan's Church, where I heard an able sermon of the minister of the place; and stood by a pretty, modest maid, whom I did labour to take by the hand ...; but she would not, but got further and further from me; and, at last, I could perceive her to take pins out of her pocket to prick me if I should touch her again—which seeing, I did forbear, and was glad I did spy her design. And then I fell to gaze upon another pretty maid, in a pew close to me, and she on me; and I did go about to

take her by the hand, which she suffered a little, and then withdrew. So the sermon ended, and the church broke up.

John Dryden, famous alike for his verse, prose and drama, shows his wit in biting, stinging satire.

Equally caustic are his epigrams, save one—the immortal lines on Milton.

ON SHADWELL

All human things are subject to decay,
And, when Fate summons, monarchs must obey.
This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young
Was called to empire, and had governed long.
In prose and verse was owned, without dispute,
Through all the realms of Nonsense absolute.
This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
And blest with issue of a large increase,
Worn out with business, did at length debate
To settle the succession of the state;
And pondering which of all his sons was fit
To reign, and wage immortal war with Wit,
Cried: "'Tis resolved; for Nature pleads that he
Should only rule who most resembles me.
Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,
Mature in dulness from his tender years;
Shadwell alone of all my sons is he
Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
But Shadwell never deviates into sense.
Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
Strike through, and make a lucid interval,
But Shadwell's genuine night admits no ray;
His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye,
And seems designed for thoughtless majesty—
Thoughtless as monarch oaks that shade the plain,
And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign."

ON THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

Some of their chiefs were princes of the land:
In the first rank of these did Zimri stand,
A man so various, that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts, and nothing long,
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon,
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ
With something new to wish or to enjoy,
Railing, and praising, were his usual themes;
And both, to show his judgment, in extremes:

So over-violent, or over-civil,
That every man with him was god or devil.
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art;
Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
Beggared by fools, whom still he found too late,
He had his jest and they had his estate.
He laughed himself from court, then sought relief
By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief;
For spite of him, the weight of business fell
On Absalom and wise Achitophel.
Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,
He left not faction, but of that was left.

MILTON COMPARED WITH HOMER AND VIRGIL

Under a Picture of Milton in the 4th Edition of *Paradise Lost.*

Three Poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first, in loftiness of thought surpass'd
The next, in majesty; in both the last.
The force of nature could no further go;
To make a third, she join'd the former two.

The original of these fine lines was probably a Latin distich written by Selvaggi at Rome, which has been thus translated:

Greece boasts her Homer, Rome her Virgil's name,
But England's Milton vies with both in fame.

Cowper's lines on Milton may be compared with Dryden's:

Ages elapsed ere Homer's lamp appear'd,
And ages ere the Mantuan Swan was heard
To carry Nature lengths unknown before,
To give a Milton birth, ask'd ages more.
Thus Genius rose and set at order'd times,
And shot a day-spring into distant climes,
Ennobling every region that he chose;
He sunk in Greece, in Italy he rose;
And, tedious years of gothic darkness pass'd,
Emerged all splendour in our isle at last,
Thus lovely halcyons dive into the main,
Then show far off their shining plumes again.

In Bishop Gibson's edition of Camden's *Britannia*, there is a very free translation of some old monkish verses on S. Oswald by Basil Kennet, brother of Bishop White Kennet. The last line, to which there is nothing corresponding in the Latin, seems to have been copied from the last line of Dryden's epigram:

> *Cæsar* and *Hercules* applaud thy fame,
> And *Alexander* owns thy greater name,
> Tho' one himself, one foes, and one the world o'ercame:
> Great conquests all! but bounteous Heav'n in thee,
> To make a greater, join'd the former three.

The comedies of William Congreve, brilliantly witty though they are, offer no suitable passages to quote.

Likewise the works of Daniel Defoe, who, beside the story of *Robinson Crusoe*, wrote satirical humor.

FROM ROBINSON CRUSOE

Friday's Conflict with the Bear

But never was a fight managed so hardily, and in such a surprising manner, as that between Friday and the bear, which gave us all—though at first we were surprised and afraid for him—the greatest diversion imaginable.

My man Friday had delivered our guide, and when we came up to him he was helping him off from his horse, for the man was both hurt and frightened, and indeed the last more than the first, when on a sudden we espied the bear come out of the wood, and a vast, monstrous one it was, the biggest by far that ever I saw. We were all a little surprised when we saw him; but when Friday saw him, it was easy to see joy and courage in the fellow's countenance. "Oh, oh, oh!" says Friday three times, pointing to him; "oh, master!

you give me te leave, me shakee te hand with him; me makee you good laugh."

I was surprised to see the fellow so pleased. "You fool!" said I, "he will eat you up." "Eatee me up! eatee me up!" says Friday twice over again; "me eatee him up; me makee you good laugh; you all stay here, me show you good laugh." So down he sits, and gets his boots off in a moment, and puts on a pair of pumps (as we call the flat shoes they wear, and which he had in his pocket), gives my other servant his horse, and with his gun away he flew, swift like the wind.

The bear was walking softly on, and offered to meddle with nobody, till Friday, coming pretty near, calls to him as if the bear could understand him, "Hark ye, hark ye," says Friday, "me speakee with you." We followed at a distance, for now, being come down to the Gascony side of the mountains, we were entered a vast, great forest, where the country was plain and pretty open, though it had many trees in it scattered here and there. Friday, who had, as we say, the heels of the bear, came up with him quickly, and took up a great stone and threw it at him, and hit him just on the head, but did him no more harm than if he had thrown it against a wall; but it answered Friday's end, for the rogue was so void of fear that he did it purely to make the bear follow him and show us some laugh, as he called it. As soon as the bear felt the stone, and saw him, he turns about and comes after him, taking very long strides, and shuffling on at a strange rate, so as would have put a horse to a middling gallop. Away runs Friday, and takes his course as if he ran toward us for help; so we all resolved to fire at once upon the bear, and deliver my man; though I was angry at him heartily

for bringing the bear back upon us, when he was going about his own business another way; and especially I was angry that he had turned the bear upon us and then run away; and I called out, “You dog!” said I, “is this your making us laugh? Come away, and take your horse, that we may shoot the creature.” He heard me, and cried out, “No shoot! no shoot! stand still, you get much laugh.” And as the nimble creature ran two feet for the beast’s one, he turned on a sudden on one side of us, and seeing a great oak-tree fit for his purpose, he beckoned us to follow; and doubling his pace, he got nimbly up the tree, laying his gun down upon the ground, at about five or six yards from the bottom of the tree.

The bear soon came to the tree, and we followed at a distance. The first thing he did, he stopped at the gun, smelled at it, but let it lie, and up he scrambles into the tree, climbing like a cat, though so monstrous heavy. I was amazed at the folly, as I thought it, of my man, and could not for my life see anything to laugh at yet, till, seeing the bear get up the tree, we all rode near to him.

When we came to the tree, there was Friday got out to the small end of a large limb of the tree, and the bear got about half-way to him. As soon as the bear got out to that part where the limb of the tree was weaker, “Ha!” says he to us, “now you see me teachee the bear dance”; so he began jumping and shaking the bough, at which the bear began to totter, but stood still, and began to look behind him, to see how he should get back; then, indeed, we did laugh heartily. But Friday had not done with him by a great deal. When seeing him stand still, he called out to him again, as if he had supposed the bear could speak English, “What, you no come farther? Pray you

come farther." So he left jumping and shaking the bough; and the bear, just as if he had understood what he had said, did come a little farther. Then he began jumping again, and the bear stopped again. We thought now was a good time to knock him on the head, and called to Friday to stand still, and we would shoot the bear; but he cried out earnestly, "Oh, pray! oh, pray! no shoot! me shoot by-and-then." He would have said by-and-by.

However, to shorten the story, Friday danced so much, and the bear stood so ticklish, that we had laughing enough indeed, but still could not imagine what the fellow would do; for first we thought he depended upon shaking the bear off; and we found the bear was too cunning for that too; for he would not go out far enough to be thrown down, but clung fast with his great broad claws and feet, so that we could not imagine what would be the end of it, and what the jest would be at last. But Friday put us out of doubt quickly; for, seeing the bear cling fast to the bough, and that he would not be persuaded to come any farther, "Well, well," says Friday, "you no come farther, me go; you no come to me, me come to you." And upon this he went out to the smaller end of the bough, where it would bend with his weight, and gently let himself down by it, sliding down the bough till he came near enough to jump down on his feet, and away he ran to his gun, took it up, and stood still. "Well," said I to him, "Friday, what will you do now? Why don't you shoot him?" "No shoot," says Friday, "no yet; me shoot now, me no kill; me stay, give you one more laugh." And, indeed, so he did, as you will see presently. For when the bear saw his enemy gone, he came back from the bough where he stood, but did it very cautiously, looking behind

him every step, and coming backward till he got into the body of the tree. Then, with the same hinder end foremost, he came down the tree, grasping it with his claws, and moving one foot at a time, very leisurely. At this juncture, and just before he could set his hind feet upon the ground, Friday stepped up close to him, clapped the muzzle of his piece into his ear, and shot him dead as a stone. Then the rogue turned about to see if we did not laugh; and when he saw we were pleased by our looks, he began to laugh very loud. “So we kill bear in my country,” says Friday. “So you kill them?” says I; “why, you have no guns.” “No,” says he, “no gun, but shoot great much long arrow.”

Matthew Prior was called by Thackeray the most charmingly humorous of the English poets, and Cowper speaks of Prior’s charming ease.

AN EPITAPH

Interred beneath this marble stone
Lie sauntering Jack and idle Joan.
While rolling threescore years and one
Did round this globe their courses run.
If human things went ill or well,
If changing empires rose or fell,
The morning past, the evening came,
And found this couple just the same.
They walked and ate, good folks. What then?
Why, then they walked and ate again;
They soundly slept the night away;
They did just nothing all the day,
Nor sister either had, nor brother;
They seemed just tallied for each other.
Their moral and economy
Most perfectly they made agree;
Each virtue kept its proper bound,
Nor trespassed on the other’s ground.

Nor fame nor censure they regarded;
They neither punished nor rewarded.
He cared not what the footman did;
Her maids she neither praised nor chid;
So every servant took his course,
And, bad at first, they all grew worse;
Slothful disorder filled his stable.
And sluttish plenty decked her table.
Their beer was strong, their wine was port;
Their meal was large, their grace was short.
They gave the poor the remnant meat,
Just when it grew not fit to eat.
They paid the church and parish rate,
And took, but read not, the receipt:
For which they claimed their Sunday's due
Of slumbering in an upper pew.
No man's defects sought they to know,
So never made themselves a foe.
No man's good deeds did they commend,
So never raised themselves a friend.
Nor cherished they relations poor,
That might decrease their present store;
Nor barn nor house did they repair,
That might oblige their future heir.
They neither added nor confounded;
They neither wanted nor abounded.
Nor tear nor smile did they employ
At news of grief or public joy
When bells were rung and bonfires made,
If asked, they ne'er denied their aid;
Their jug was to the ringers carried,
Whoever either died or married
Their billet at the fire was found,
Whoever was deposed or crowned.
Nor good, nor bad, nor fools, nor wise;
They would not learn, nor could advise;
Without love, hatred, joy, or fear,
They led—a kind of—as it were;
Nor wished, nor cared, nor laughed, nor cried.
And so they lived, and so they died.

A SIMILE

Dear Thomas, didst thou never pop
Thy head into a tin-man's shop?
There, Thomas, didst thou never see
('Tis but by way of simile)
A squirrel spend his little rage,

In jumping round a rolling cage?
The cage, as either side turned up,
Striking a ring of bells a-top?—
  Mov'd in the orb, pleas'd with the chimes,
The foolish creature thinks he climbs:
But here or there, turn wood or wire,
He never gets two inches higher.
  So fares it with those merry blades,
That frisk it under Pindus' shades.
In noble songs, and lofty odes,
They tread on stars, and talk with gods;
Still dancing in an airy round,
Still pleased with their own verses' sound;
Brought back, how fast soe'er they go,
Always aspiring, always low.

PHILLIS' AGE

How old may Phillis be, you ask,
  Whose beauty thus all hearts engages?
To answer is no easy task:
  For she has really two ages.

Stiff in brocade, and pinch'd in stays,
  Her patches, paint and jewels on;
All day let envy view her face,
  And Phillis is but twenty-one.

Paint, patches, jewels laid aside,
  At night astronomers agree,
The evening has the day belied;
  And Phillis is some forty-three.

Prior delighted in epigrams on ladies who wore false hair and teeth, and who attempted to retain the beauty of youth by means of paint and dye. They are generally imitated from Martial.

A REASONABLE AFFLICTION

In a dark corner of the house
Poor Helen sits, and sobs, and cries;
She will not see her loving spouse,
  Nor her more dear picquet allies:
    Unless she find her eye-brows,
    She'll e'en weep out her eyes.

FRENCH HUMOR

The first French humorist of note in the seventeenth century was Cyrano de Bergerac. His History of the Moon and History of the Sun are of the nature of *Gulliver's Travels*.

THE SOUL OF THE CABBAGE

We laid ourselves along upon very soft quilts, covered with large carpets; and a young man that waited on us, taking the oldest of our philosophers led him into a little parlor apart, where my Spirit called to him to come back to us as soon as he had supped.

This humor of eating separately gave me the curiosity of asking the cause of it. "He'll not relish," said he, "the steam of meat, nor yet of herbs, unless they die of themselves, because he thinks they are sensible of pain." "I wonder not so much," replied I, "that he abstains from flesh, and all things that have had a sensitive life. For in our world the Pythagoreans, and even some holy Anchorites, have followed that rule; but not to dare, for instance, cut a cabbage, for fear of hurting it—that seems to me altogether ridiculous." "And for my part," answered my Spirit, "I find a great deal of reason in his opinion.

"For, tell me is not that cabbage you speak of a being existent in Nature as well as you? Is not she the common mother of you both? Yet the opinion that Nature is kinder to mankind than to cabbage-kind, tickles and makes us laugh. But, seeing she is incapable of passion, she can neither love nor hate anything; and were she susceptible of love, she would rather bestow her affection upon this cabbage,

which you grant cannot offend her, than upon that man who would destroy her if it lay in his power.

"And, moreover, man cannot be born innocent, being a part of the first offender. But we know very well that the first cabbage did not offend its Creator. If it be said that we are made after the image of the Supreme Being, and the cabbage is not—grant that to be true; yet by polluting our soul, wherein we resembled Him, we have effaced that likeness, seeing nothing is more contrary to God than sin. If, then, our soul be no longer His image, we resemble Him no more in our feet, hands, mouth, forehead, and ears, than a cabbage in its leaves, flowers, stalk, pith, and head—do not you really think that if this poor plant could speak when one cuts it, it would not say, 'Dear brother man, what have I done to thee that deserves death? I never grow but in gardens, and am never to be found in desert places, where I might live in security; I disdain all other company but thine, and scarcely am I sowed in thy garden when, to show thee my good-will, I blossom, stretch out my arms to thee, offer thee my children in grain; and, as a requital for my civility, thou causest my head to be chopped off.' Thus would a cabbage discourse if it could speak.

"To massacre a man is not so great sin as to cut and kill a cabbage, because one day the man will rise again, but the cabbage has no other life to hope for. By putting to death a cabbage, you annihilate it; but in killing a man, you make him only change his habitation. Nay, I'll go farther with you still: since God doth equally cherish all His works, and hath equally, divided the benefits betwixt us and plants, it is but just we should have an equal esteem for them as for ourselves. It is true we were born first, but in

the family of God there is no birthright. If, then, the cabbage share not with us in the inheritance of immortality, without doubt that want was made up by some other advantage, that may make amends for the shortness of its being—maybe by an universal intellect, or a perfect knowledge of all things in their causes. And it is for that reason that the wise Mover of all things hath not shaped for it organs like ours, which are proper only for simple reasoning, not only weak, but often fallacious too; but others, more ingeniously framed, stronger, and more numerous, which serve to conduct its speculative exercises. You'll ask me, perhaps, whenever any cabbage imparted those lofty conceptions to us? But tell me, again, who ever discovered to us certain beings, which we allow to be above us, to whom we bear no analogy nor proportion, and whose existence it is as hard for us to comprehend as the understanding and ways whereby a cabbage expresses itself to its like, though not to us, because our senses are too dull to penetrate so far?

"Moses, the greatest of philosophers, who drew the knowledge of nature from the fountain-head, Nature herself, hinted this truth to us when he spoke of the Tree of Knowledge; and without doubt he intended to intimate to us under that figure that plants, in exclusion of mankind, possess perfect philosophy. Remember, then, oh, thou proudest of animals, that though a cabbage which thou cuttest sayeth not a word, yet it pays in thinking. But the poor vegetable has no fit organs to howl as you do, nor yet to frisk about and weep. Yet it hath those that are proper to complain of the wrong you do it, and to draw a judgment from Heaven upon you for the injustice. But if you still demand of me how I come to know that cabbages and coleworts conceive

such pretty thoughts, then will I ask you, how come you to know that they do not; and how that some among them, when they shut up at night, may not compliment one another as you do, saying, 'Good-night, Master *Cole-Curled-Pate*! Your most humble servant, good Master *Cabbage-Round-Head*!'"

Marc-Antoine Gerard, sieur de Saint Amant, was one of the brightest and best of the French early poets.

We give a specimen of his lighter verse. The following is "An Address to Bacchus:"

In idle rhymes we waste our days,
With yawning fits for all our praise,
While Bacchus, god of mirth and wine,
Invites us to a life divine.
Apollo, prince of bards and prigs,
May scrape his fiddle to the pigs;
And for the Muses, old maids all,
Why let them twang their lyres, and squall
Their hymns and odes on classic themes,
Neglected by their sacred streams.
As for the true poetic fire,
What is it but a mad desire?
While Pegasus himself, at best,
Only a horse must be confess'd;
And he must be an ass indeed,
Who would bestride the winged steed.

Bacchus, thou who watchest o'er
All feasts of ours, whom I adore
With each new draught of rosy wine
That makes my red face like to thine—
By thy ivied coronet,
By this glass with rubies set,
By thy thyrsus—fear of earth—
By thine everlasting mirth,
By the honor of the feast,
By thy triumphs, greatest, least,
By thy blows, not struck, but drunk,

With king and bishop, priest and monk,
By the jesting, keen and sharp,
By the violin and harp,
By the bells, which are but flasks,
By our sighs which are but masks
Of mirth and sacred mystery,
By thy panthers fierce to see,
By this place so fair and sweet,
By the he-goat at thy feet,
By Ariadne, buxom lass,
By Silenus on his ass,
By this sausage, by this stoup,
By this rich and thirsty soup,
By this pipe from which I wave
All the incense thou dost crave,
By this ham, well spiced, long hung,
By this salt and wood-smoked tongue,
Receive us in the happy band
Of those who worship glass in hand.
And, to prove thyself divine,
Leave us never without wine.

Molière (the stage name of Jean Baptiste Poquelin), the greatest comic dramatist of France, wrote thirty or more plays. Though difficult to quote significant passages, two are here given:

FROM "THE LEARNED WOMEN"

Trissotin. Your verses have beauties unequaled by any others.

Vadius. Venus and the graces reign in all yours.

Trissotin. You have an easy style, and a fine choice of words.

Vadius. In all your writings one finds *ithos* and *pathos*.

Trissotin. We have seen some eclogues of your composition which surpass in sweetness those of Theocritus and Vergil.

Vadius. Your odes have a noble, gallant, and

tender manner, which leaves Horace far behind.

Trissotin. Is there anything more lovely than your canzonets?

Vadius. Is there anything equal to the sonnets you write?

Trissotin. Is there anything more charming than your little rondeaus?

Vadius. Anything so full of wit as your madrigals?

Trissotin. If France could appreciate your value ——

Vadius. If the age could render justice to a lofty genius——

Trissotin. You would ride in the streets in a gilt coach.

Vadius. We should see the public erect statues to you. Hem—It is a ballad; and I wish you frankly to ——

Trissotin. Have you heard a certain little sonnet upon the Princess Urania's fever?

Vadius. Yes; I heard it read yesterday.

Trissotin. Do you know the author of it?

Vadius. No, I do not; but I know very well that, to tell him the truth, his sonnet is good for nothing.

Trissotin. Yet a great many people think it admirable.

Vadius. It does not prevent it from being wretched; and if you had read it you would think like me.

Trissotin. I know that I should differ from you altogether, and that few people are able to write such a sonnet.

Vadius. Heaven forbid that I should ever write one so bad!

Trissotin. I maintain that a better one cannot be made, and my reason is that I am the author of it.

Vadius. You?

Trissotin. Myself.

Vadius. I cannot understand how the thing could have happened.

Trissotin. It is unfortunate that I had not the power of pleasing you.

Vadius. My mind must have wandered during the reading, or else the reader spoiled the sonnet; but let us leave that subject, and come to my ballad.

Trissotin. The ballad is, to my mind, an insipid thing; it is no longer the fashion, and savors of ancient times.

Vadius. Yet a ballad has charms for many people.

Trissotin. It does not prevent me from thinking it unpleasant.

Vadius. That does not make it worse.

Trissotin. It has wonderful attractions for pedants.

Vadius. Yet we see that it does not please you.

Trissotin. You stupidly impose your qualities on others.

Vadius. You very impertinently cast yours upon me.

Trissotin. Go, you little dunce, you pitiful quill-driver!

Vadius. Go, you penny-a-liner, you disgrace to the

profession!

Trissotin. Go, you book-manufacturer, you impudent plagiarist!

Vadius. Go, you pedantic snob!

Philosopher. Ah! gentlemen, what are you about?

Trissotin (*to* VADIUS). Go, go, and make restitution to the Greeks and Romans for all your shameful thefts!

Vadius. Go, and do penance on Parnassus for having murdered Horace in your verses!

Trissotin. Remember your book, and the little stir it made.

Vadius. And you, remember your bookseller, reduced to the workhouse.

Trissotin. My fame is established; in vain would you endeavor to shake it.

Vadius. Yes, yes; I'll send you to the author of the *Satires*.

Trissotin. I, too, will send you to him.

Vadius. I have the satisfaction of having been honorably treated by him; he gives me a passing thrust, and includes me among several authors well known at court. But you he never leaves in peace; in all his verses he attacks you.

Trissotin. By that we see the honorable rank I hold. He leaves you in the crowd, and esteems one blow enough to crush you. He has never done you the honor of repeating his attacks, whereas he assails me separately, as a noble adversary against whom all his efforts are necessary. His blows, repeated against me on all occasions, show that he never thinks himself

victorious.

Vadius. My pen will teach you what soft of man I am!

Trissotin. And mine will make you know your master!

Vadius. I defy you in verse, prose, Greek, and Latin!

Trissotin. Very well, we shall meet again at the bookseller's!

FROM "THE GENTLEMAN CIT"

Professor of Philosophy. I will thoroughly explain all these curiosities to you.

M. Jourdain. Pray do. And now I want to entrust you with a great secret. I am in love with a lady of quality, and I should be glad if you would help me to write something to her in a short letter which I mean to drop at her feet.

Professor of Philosophy. Very well.

M. Jourdain. That will be gallant, will it not?

Professor of Philosophy. Undoubtedly. Is it verse you wish to write to her?

M. Jourdain. Oh, no, not verse.

Professor of Philosophy. You only wish for prose?

M. Jourdain. No, I wish neither verse nor prose.

Professor of Philosophy. It must be one or the other.

M. Jourdain. Why?

Professor of Philosophy. Because, sir, there is nothing by which we can express ourselves except prose or verse.

M. Jourdain. There is nothing but prose or verse?

Professor of Philosophy. No, sir. Whatever is not prose is verse, and whatever is not verse is prose.

M. Jourdain. And when we speak, what is that, then?

Professor of Philosophy. Prose.

M. Jourdain. What! when I say, "Nicole, bring me my slippers, and give me my night-cap," is that prose?

Professor of Philosophy. Yes, sir.

M. Jourdain. Upon my word, I have been talking prose these forty years without being aware of it! I am under the greatest obligation to you for informing me. Well, then, I wish to write to her in a letter, *Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love!* but I would have this worded in a genteel manner, and turned prettily.

Professor of Philosophy. Say that the fire of her eyes has reduced your heart to ashes; that you suffer day and night for her tortures——

M. Jourdain. No, no, no; I don't want any of that. I simply wish to say what I tell you: *Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love.*

Professor of Philosophy. Still, you might amplify the thing a little?

M. Jourdain. No, I tell you, I will have nothing but those very words in the letter; but they must be put in a fashionable way, and arranged as they should be. Pray explain a little, so that I may see the different ways in which they can be put.

Professor of Philosophy. They may be put, first of all, as you have said, *Fair marchioness, your beautiful*

eyes make me die of love; or else, *Of love die make me, fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes*; or, *Your beautiful eyes of love make me, fair marchioness, die*; or, *Die of love your beautiful eyes, fair marchioness, make me*; or else, *Me make your beautiful eyes die, fair marchioness, of love*.

M. Jourdain. But of all these ways, which is the best?

Professor of Philosophy. The one you said—*Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love*.

M. Jourdain. Yet I have never studied, and I did all that right off at the first shot. I thank you with all my heart, and I beg you to come early again to-morrow morning.

Professor of Philosophy.—I shall not fail you.

Paul Scarron, described as a "pure bird of pleasure," wrote plays, novels, epigrams, letters, and best known of all, a classic burlesque called *Virgile Travesti*.

Quotations cannot be made from his longer works, but two poems are given.

FAREWELL TO CHLORIS

Adieu, fair Chloris, adieu:
'Tis time that I speak,
After many and many a week,
('Tis not thus that at Paris we woo)
You pay me for all with a smile
And cheat me the while,
Speak now. Let me go.
Close your doors, or open them wide,
Matters not, so that I am outside;
Devil take me, if ever I show

Love or pity for you and your pride.

To laugh in my face,
It is all that she grants me
Of pity and grace:
Can it mean that she wants me?
This for five or six months is my pay.
Now hear my command,
Shut your doors, keep them tight night and day,
With a porter at hand
To keep every one in;
Well, I know my own mind.
The devil himself, if once you begin
To go out, couldn't keep me behind.

The following is better known. It is his description of Paris:

Houses in labyrinthine maze:
The streets with mud bespattered all;
Palace and prison, churches, quays,
Here stately shop, there shabby stall.
Passengers black, red, gray, and white,
The pursed-up prude, the light coquette;
Murder and treason dark as night;
With clerks, their hands with inkstains wet;
A gold-laced coat without a sou,
And trembling at a bailiff's sight;
A braggart shivering with fear;
Pages and lackeys, thieves of night;
And 'mid the tumult, noise, and stink of it,
There's Paris—Pray, what do you think of it?

François de la Rochefoucauld, famous French moralist, is best known through the wit and wisdom of his Maxims.

A woman is faithful to her first lover a long time—unless she happens to take a second.

He who is pleased with nobody is much more unhappy than he with whom nobody is pleased.

We all have sufficient fortitude to bear the misfortunes of our friends.

Had we no faults of our own, we should notice them with less pleasure in others.

We promise according to our hopes, and perform according to our fears.

Old men are fond of giving good advice to console themselves for their impotence to give bad examples.

We often do good in order that we may do evil with impunity.

If we resist our passions it is more from their weakness than from our strength.

We should have very little pleasure if we did not

sometimes flatter ourselves.

It is easier to be wise for others than for ourselves.

Men would not live long in society if they were not dupes to each other.

Virtue would not travel so far if vanity did not keep her company.

Hypocrisy is the homage which vice renders to virtue.

In the adversity of our best friends we often find something which does not displease us.

Gravity is a mystery of the face, invented to conceal the defects of the mind.

Affected simplicity is refined imposture.

We often pardon those who weary us, but never those whom we weary.

Blaise Pascal, celebrated geometrician and writer, left a series of delightful satires upon the Jesuits.

FROM LES PROVINCIALES
ON MENTAL RESERVATIONS

"I proceed to the facilities we have invented for the avoidance of sin in the conversation and intrigues of the world. One of the most embarrassing things to provide against is *lying*, when it is the object to excite confidence in any false representation. In this case, our doctrine of *equivocals* is of admirable service, by which, says Sanchez, 'it is lawful to use ambiguous terms to give the impression a different sense from that which you understand yourself.'" "This I am well aware of, father." "We have," continued he, "published it so frequently, that in fact every body is acquainted with it; but pray, do you know what is to be done when no equivocal terms can be found?" "No, father." "Ha, I thought this would be new to you: it is the doctrine of *mental reservations*. Sanchez states it in the same place: 'A person may take an oath that he has not done such a thing, though in fact he has, by saying to himself, it was not done on a certain specified day or before he was born, or by concealing any other similar circumstance which gives another meaning to the

statement. This is in numberless instances extremely convenient, and is always justifiable when it is necessary to your welfare, honor, or property.'"

"But, father, is not this adding perjury to lying?" "No; Sanchez and Filiutius show the contrary: 'It is the *intention* which stamps the quality of the action'; and the latter furnishes another and surer method of avoiding lying. After saying in an audible voice, *I swear that I did not do this*, you may add inwardly, *to-day*; or after affirming aloud, *I swear* you may repeat in a whisper, *I say*; and then resuming the former tone—*I did not do it*. Now this you must admit is telling the truth." "I own it is," said I; "but it is telling truth in a whisper, and a lie in an audible voice; besides, I apprehend that very few people have sufficient presence of mind to avail themselves of this deception." "Our fathers," answered the Jesuit, "have in the same place given directions for those who do not know how to manage these niceties, so that they may be indemnified against the sin of lying, while plainly declaring they have not done what in reality they have, provided 'that, in general, they intended to give the same sense to their assertion which a skilful man would have contrived to do.'"

"Now confess," he asked, "have not you sometimes been embarrassed through an ignorance of this doctrine?" "Certainly." "And will you not admit, too, that it would often be very convenient to violate your word with a good conscience?" "Surely, one of the most convenient things in the world!" "Then, sir, listen to Escobar; he gives this general rule: 'Promises are not obligatory when a man has no intention of being bound to fulfil them; and it seldom happens that he has such an intention, unless he

confirms it by an oath or bond, so that when he merely says *I will do it*, it is to be understood *if he do not change his mind*; for he did not intend by what he promised to deprive himself of his liberty.' He furnishes some other rules which you may read for yourself, and concludes thus: 'Everything is taken from Molina and our other authors—*omnia ex Molina et aliis'*; it is, consequently, indisputable."

"Father," exclaimed I, "I never knew before that the direction of the intention could nullify the obligation of a promise." "Now, then," said he, "you perceive this very much facilitates the intercourse of mankind."

Jean de la Fontaine, the universally known French Fabulist, was a prolific writer, but his wit shows at its best in his *Fables*.

THE COUNCIL HELD BY THE RATS

Old Rodilard, a certain cat,
  Such havoc of the rats had made,
'Twas difficult to find a rat
  With nature's debt unpaid.
The few that did remain,
  To leave their holes afraid.
From usual food abstain,
  Not eating half their fill.
  And wonder no one will,
That one, who made on rats his revel,
With rats passed not for cat, but devil.
Now, on a day, this dread rat-eater,
Who had a wife, went out to meet her;
And while he held his caterwauling,
The unkilled rats, their chapter calling,
Discussed the point, in grave debate,
How they might shun impending fate.
  Their dean, a prudent rat,
Thought best, and better soon than late,
  To bell the fatal cat;
That, when he took his hunting-round,
The rats, well cautioned by the sound,
Might hide in safety under ground;

Indeed, he knew no other means.
And all the rest
At once confessed
Their minds were with the dean's.
No better plan, they all believed,
Could possibly have been conceived;
No doubt, the thing would work right well,
If any one would hang the bell.
But, one by one, said every rat,
"I'm not so big a fool as that."
The plan knocked up in this respect,
The council closed without effect.
And many a council I have seen,
Or reverend chapter with its dean,
That, thus resolving wisely,
Fell through like this precisely.

To argue or refute,
Wise counsellors abound;
The man to execute
Is harder to be found.

THE COCK AND THE FOX

Upon a tree there mounted guard
A veteran cock, adroit and cunning;
When to the roots a fox up running
Spoke thus, in tones of kind regard:
"Our quarrel, brother, is at an end;
Henceforth I hope to live your friend;
For peace now reigns
Throughout the animal domains.
I bear the news. Come down, I pray,
And give me the embrace fraternal:
And please, my brother, don't delay:
So much the tidings do concern all,
That I must spread them far to-day.
Now you and yours can take your walks
Without a fear or thought of hawks;
And should you clash with them or others,
In us you'll find the best of brothers—
For which you may, this joyful night,
Your merry bonfires light.
But, first, let's seal the bliss
With one fraternal kiss."
"Good friend," the cock replied, "upon my word,
A better thing I never heard;
And doubly I rejoice

To hear it from your voice:
And, really, there must be something in it,
For yonder come two greyhounds, which I flatter
Myself, are couriers on this very matter;
They come so fast, they'll be here in a minute,
I'll down, and all of us will seal the blessing
With general kissing and caressing."
"Adieu," said the fox; "my errand's pressing,
I'll hurry on my way,
And we'll rejoice some other day."
So off the fellow scampered, quick and light,
To gain the fox-holes of the neighboring height—
Less happy in his stratagem than flight.
The cock laughed sweetly in his sleeve—
'Tis doubly sweet deceiver to deceive.

THE CROW AND THE FOX

A master crow, perched on a tree one day
Was holding in his beak a cheese—
A master fox, by the odor drawn that way,
Spake unto him in words like these:
"O, good morning, my Lord Crow!
How well you look, how handsome you do grow!
'Pon my honor, if your note
Bears a resemblance to your coat,
You are the phœnix of the dwellers in these woods."
At these words does the crow exceedingly rejoice;
And, to display his beauteous voice,
He opens a wide beak, lets fall his stolen goods.
The fox seized on't, and said, "My good Monsieur,
Learn that every flatterer
Lives at the expense of him who hears him out.
This lesson is well worth a cheese, no doubt."
The crow, ashamed, and much in pain,
Swore, but a little late, they'd not catch him so again.

Nicolas Boileau-Despreaux, commonly called Boileau, was a famous critic and poet. His *Art Poétique* had a decided influence on later French verse.

His wit was keen and his satire sharp.

TO PERRAULT

How comes it, Perrault, I would gladly know,
That authors of two thousand years ago,
Whom in their native dress all times revere,
In your translations should so flat appear?
'Tis you divest them of their own sublime,
By your vile crudities and odious rime.
They're thine when suffering thy wretched phrase,
And then no wonder if they meet no praise.

ON COTIN

Of all the pens which my poor rimes molest,
Cotin's is sharpest, and succeeds the best.
Others outrageous scold and rail downright,
With hearty rancor, and true Christian spite.
But he, a readier method does design,
Writes scoundrel verses, and then says they're mine.

Alan René Le Sage, novelist and dramatist, is best known for his celebrated work, *Gil Blas*. He also wrote many farce-operettas, which offer no opportunity for quotation.

Jean de la Bruyère, is best known for his work called *The Characters*, an imitation of Theophrastus.

IPHIS

Iphis at church sees a new-fashioned shoe; he looks upon his own and blushes, and can no longer believe himself dressed. He came to prayers only to show himself, and now he hides himself. The foot keeps him in his room the rest of the day. He has a soft hand, with which he gives you a gentle pat. He is sure to laugh often to show his white teeth. He strains his mouth to a perpetual smile. He looks upon his legs, he views himself in the glass, and nobody

can have so good an opinion of another as he has of himself. He has acquired a delicate and clear voice, and has a happy manner in talking. He has a turn of the head, a sweetness in his glance that he never fails to make use of. His gait is slow, and the prettiest he is able to contrive. He sometimes employs a little rouge, but seldom; he will not make a habit of it. It is true that he wears breeches and a hat, has neither earrings nor necklace, therefore I have not put him in the chapter on woman.

THOUGHTS

The pleasure of criticizing robs us of the pleasure of unconscious delight.

The most accomplished work of the age would fail under the hands of censors and critics, if the author would listen to all their objections, and allow each one to throw out the passage that had pleased him least.

This good we get from the perfidiousness of woman, that it cures us of jealousy.

There are but two ways of rising in the world—by your own industry, or by the weakness of others.

If life is miserable, it is painful to live; if happy, it is terrible to die; both come to the same thing.

There is nothing men are so anxious to preserve, or so careless about, as life.

We are afraid of old age, and afraid not to attain it.

If some men died, and others did not, death would indeed be a terrible affliction.

There are but three events that happen to men—birth, life, and death. They know nothing of their birth, suffer when they die, and forget to live.

Gilles Ménage, a French philologist, is now best known as the Author of *Ménagiana*, one of the most excellent and original of the celebrated Ana of France. The following poem bears a remarkable resemblance to Goldsmith's *Madame Blaize*, and it is quite possible that the latter may have been suggested by it.

La Gallisse now I wish to touch;
Droll air! if I can strike it,
I'm sure the song will please you much;
That is, if you should like it.

La Gallisse was indeed, I grant,

Not used to any dainty
When he was born—but could not want,
As long as he had plenty.

Instructed with the greatest care,
He always was well bred,
And never used a hat to wear,
But when ’twas on his head.

His temper was exceeding good,
Just of his father’s fashion;
And never quarrels broil’d his blood,
Except when in a passion.

His mind was on devotion bent;
He kept with care each high day,
And Holy Thursday always spent,
The day before Good Friday.

He liked good claret very well,
I just presume to think it;
For ere its flavour he could tell,
He thought it best to drink it.

Than doctors more he loved the cook,
Though food would make him gross;
And never any physic took,
But when he took a dose.

O happy, happy is the swain
The ladies so adore;
For many followed in his train,
Whene’er he walk’d before.

Bright as the sun his flowing hair
In golden ringlets shone;
And no one could with him compare,
If he had been alone.

His talents I can not rehearse,
But every one allows,
That whatsoe’er he wrote in verse,
No one could call it prose.

He argued with precision nice,
The learnèd all declare;
And it was his decision wise,
No horse could be a mare.

His powerful logic would surprise,
Amuse, and much delight:
He proved that dimness of the eyes
Was hurtful to the sight.

They liked him much—so it appears
Most plainly—who preferr'd him;
And those did never want their ears,
Who any time had heard him.

He was not always right, 'tis true,
And then he must be wrong;
But none had found it out, he knew,
If he had held his tongue.

Whene'er a tender tear he shed,
'Twas certain that he wept;
And he would lay awake in bed,
Unless, indeed, he slept.

In tilting everybody knew
His very high renown;
Yet no opponents he o'erthrew,
But those that he knock'd down.

At last they smote him in the head—
What hero e'er fought all?
And when they saw that he was dead,
They knew the wound was mortal.

And when at last he lost his breath,
It closed his every strife;
For that sad day that seal'd his death,
Deprived him of his life.

Italy and Spain offer us little of seventeenth century humor. Their comedies are long and verbose, and rather dull. Also, there are few satisfactory translations.

The Italian, Francesca Redi, gives us a rollicking song of a Bacchanalian order.

DIATRIBE AGAINST WATER

He who drinks water,

I wish to observe,
Gets nothing from me;
He may eat it and starve.
Whether it's well, or whether it's fountain,
Or whether it comes foaming white from the mountain,
I cannot admire it,
Nor ever desire it.
'Tis a fool, and a madman, an impudent wretch,
Who now will live in a nasty ditch,
And then grows proud, and full of his whims,
Comes playing the devil, and cursing his brims,
And swells, and tumbles, and bothers his margins,
And ruins the flowers, although they be virgins.
Wharves and piers, were it not for him,
Would last forever,
If they're built clever;
But no, it's all one with him—sink or swim.

Let the people yclept Mameluke
Praise the Nile without any rebuke;
Let the Spaniards praise the Tagus;
I cannot like either, even for negus.
If any follower of mine
Dares so far to forget his wine
As to drink a drop of water,
Here's the hand to devote him to slaughter.
Let your meager doctorlings
Gather herbs and such like things,
Fellows who with streams and stills
Think to cure all sorts of ills;
I've no faith in their washery,
Nor think it worth a glance of my eye.
Yes, I laugh at them, for that matter,
To think how they, with their heaps of water,
Petrify their skulls profound,
And make 'em all so thick and so round,
That Viviana, with all his mathematics,
Would fail to square the circle of their attics.

Away with all water wherever I come;
I forbid it ye, gentlemen, all and some.
Lemonade water,
Jessamine water,
Our tavern knows none of 'em—
Water's a hum!
Jessamine makes a pretty crown,
But as a drink 'twill never go down.

All your hydromels and flips
Come not near these prudent lips.
All your sippings and sherbets,
And a thousand such pretty sweets,
Let your mincing ladies take 'em,
And fops whose little fingers ache 'em.
Wine, wine is your only drink!
Grief never dares to look at the brink.
Six times a year to be mad with wine,
I hold it no shame, but a very good sign.
I, for my part, take my can,
Solely to act like a gentleman,
And, acting so, I care not, I,
For all the hail and snow in the sky.
I never go poking,
And cowering and cloaking,
And wrapping myself from head to foot,
As some people do, with their wigs to boot—
For example, like dry and shivering Redi,
Who looks just like a peruk'd old lady.

From the Spanish poet, José Morell we include two quotations.

ADVICE TO AN INNKEEPER

"'Mingle the sweet and useful,' says a sage,
Whose name, perchance, is lost in history's page,
But whose advice withal is good and wise.
It caught a tavern-keeper's busy eyes,
And he exclaimed, 'Delightful! That's for me!'
I see the sense, I read the mystery;
This is its meaning, I can well divine:
'Mix useful water with your luscious wine.'"

TO A POET

"You say your verses are of gold.
And how, my friend? I'd fain inquire.
But, no—I see the truth you've told:
They must be purified by fire."

GERMAN HUMOR

Germany in the seventeenth century wakes up to a dim and dawning humorous sense, but gives little

definite expression to it, unless we except Abraham á Sancta Clara, an Augustinian monk and satirical writer of repute.

THE DONKEY'S VOICE

A certain singer was most vain of his voice, thinking it so enchanting it might allure the very dolphins, or if not them, the pike, from out of the deep. But it is an old custom of the Lord to punish the vain ones of the earth, who like nothing better than praise. So the Lord made this man sing false at Holy Mass, and the whole congregation was utterly displeased. Close by the altar there was kneeling an old woman, who wept bitterly during the Mass. The conceited songster, thinking that the old woman had been moved to those tears by the sweetness of his voice, after Mass approached the dame, asking her, in the presence of the congregation, why she had wept so sadly. His mouth watered for the expected praise, when, "Sir," said the woman, "while you were singing I remembered my donkey; I lost him, poor soul three days ago, and his voice was very natural, like yours. Oh, heavenly Father, if I could only find that good and useful beast!"

—*Judas, the Arch-Rogue.*

A BURDENSOME WIFE

A man set sail from Venice for Ancona, with his wife, both being minded to offer their devotions at the shrine of Santa Maria di Loreto. But during the voyage there arose such a great storm that all thought the ship in extreme peril of sinking. The owner of the ship therefore gave his command that each traveler should forthwith throw his most burdensome possessions into the sea, so that the

vessel might be made lighter. Some rolled casks of wine overboard, and others bales of cloth; the man from Venice, who did not desire to be found tarrying behind the rest, seized his wife, exclaiming, “Forgive me, Ursula mine, but this day you must drink to my health in salt water!” and would throw her into the sea. The frightened wife making a commotion with her screams, others ran up, and scolded the husband, asking him the cause of his action. “The owner of the ship,” said he, “urgently commanded that we all should throw overboard our heaviest burdens. Now, throughout my whole life nothing has ever been so burdensome to me as this woman; hence I was gladly willing to make her over to Father Neptune.”

—Hie! Fie!

ST. ANTHONY’S SERMON TO THE FISHES

Saint Anthony at church
Was left in the lurch,
So he went to the ditches
And preached to the fishes.
  They wriggled their tails,
  In the sun glanced their scales.

The carps with their spawn,
Are all thither drawn;
Have opened their jaws,
Eager for each clause.
  No sermon beside
  Had the carps so edified.

Sharp-snouted pikes,
Who keep fighting like tikes,
Now swam up harmonious
To hear Saint Antonius.
  No sermon beside
  Had the pikes so edified.

And that very odd fish,
Who loves fast-days, the cod-fish,—
The stock-fish, I mean,—
At the sermon was seen.

No sermon beside
Had the cods so edified.

Good eels and sturgeon,
Which aldermen gorge on,
Went out of their way
To hear preaching that day.
No sermon beside
Had the eels so edified.

Crabs and turtles also,
Who always move low,
Make haste from the bottom
As if the devil had got 'em.
No sermon beside
The crabs so edified.

Fish great and fish small,
Lord, lackeys, and all,
Each looked at the preacher
Like a reasonable creature,
At God's word,
They Anthony heard.

The sermon now ended,
Each turned and descended;
The pikes went on stealing,
The eels went on eeling.
Much delighted were they,
But preferred the old way.

The crabs are back-sliders,
The stock-fish thick-siders,
The carps are sharp-set,
All the sermon forget.
Much delighted were they,
But preferred the old way.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Jonathan Swift, the famous author of *Gulliver's Travels*, wrote voluminously. His wit was rather heavy, his satire stinging.

It is unsatisfactory to quote from his longer works, but examples of his lighter vein are offered.

AGAINST ABOLISHING CHRISTIANITY

Another advantage proposed by the abolishing of Christianity is the clear gain of one day in seven, which is now entirely lost, and consequently the kingdom one-seventh less considerable in trade, business, and pleasure; besides the loss to the public of so many stately structures now in the hands of the clergy, which might be converted into play-houses, exchanges, market-houses, common dormitories, and other public edifices.

I hope I shall be forgiven a hard word if I call this a perfect cavil. I readily own there hath been an old custom, time out of mind, for people to assemble in the churches every Sunday, and that shops are still frequently shut, in order, as it is conceived, to preserve the memory of that ancient practice; but how this can prove a hindrance to business or pleasure is hard to imagine. What if the men of pleasure are forced, one day in the week, to game at home instead of the chocolate-house? Are not the taverns and coffee-houses open? Can there be a more convenient season for taking a dose of physic? Is not that the chief day for traders to sum up the accounts of the week, and for lawyers to prepare their briefs? But I would fain know how it can be pretended that the churches are misapplied? Where are more appointments and rendezvouses of gallantry? Where more care to appear in the foremost box, with greater advantage of dress? Where more meetings for business? Where more bargains driven of all sorts? And where so many conveniences or incitements to sleep?...

It may perhaps admit a controversy, whether the banishing all notions of religion whatsoever would be inconvenient for the vulgar. Not that I am in the

least of opinion, with those who hold religion to have been the invention of politicians, to keep the lower part of the world in awe by the fear of invisible powers, unless mankind were then very different from what it is now; for I look upon the mass or body of our people here in England to be as Freethinkers—that is to say, as staunch unbelievers—as any of the highest rank. But I conceive some scattered notions about a superior Power to be of singular use for the common people, as furnishing excellent materials to keep children quiet when they grow peevish, and providing topics of amusement in a tedious winter night.

THE FURNITURE OF A WOMAN'S MIND

A set of phrases learned by rote;
A passion for a scarlet coat;
When at a play, to laugh or cry,
Yet cannot tell the reason why;
Never to hold her tongue a minute,
While all she prates has nothing in it;
Whole hours can with a coxcomb sit,
And take his nonsense all for wit.
Her learning mounts to read a song,
But half the words pronouncing wrong;
Has every repartee in store
She spoke ten thousand times before;
Can ready compliments supply
On all occasions, cut and dry;
Such hatred to a parson's gown,
The sight would put her in a swoon;
For conversation well endued,
She calls it witty to be rude;
And, placing raillery in railing,
Will tell aloud your greatest failing;
Nor make a scruple to expose
Your bandy leg or crooked nose;
Can at her morning tea run o'er
The scandal of the day before;
Improving hourly in her skill,
To cheat and wrangle at quadrille.
In choosing lace, a critic nice,
Knows to a groat the lowest price;

Can in her female clubs dispute
What linen best the silk will suit,
What colours each complexion match,
And where with art to place a patch.
If chance a mouse creeps in her sight,
Can finely counterfeit a fright;
So sweetly screams, if it comes near her,
She ravishes all hearts to hear her.
Can dexterously her husband tease,
By taking fits whene'er she please;
By frequent practice learns the trick
At proper season to be sick;
Thinks nothing gives one airs so pretty,
At once creating love and pity.
If Molly happens to be careless,
And but neglects to warm her hair-lace,
She gets a cold as sure as death,
And vows she scarce can fetch her breath;
Admires how modest woman can
Be so robustious, like a man.
In party, furious to her power,
A bitter Whig, or Tory sour,
Her arguments directly tend
Against the side she would defend;
Will prove herself a Tory plain,
From principles the Whigs maintain,
And, to defend the Whiggish cause,
Her topics from the Tories draws.

SUNT QUI SERVARI NOLUNT

As Thomas was cudgell'd one day by his wife,
He took to the street, and he fled for his life.
Tom's three dearest friends came by in the squabble
And sav'd him at once from the shrew and the rabble;
Then ventur'd to give him some sober advice—
But Tom is a person of honour so nice,
Too wise to take counsel, too proud to take warning,
That he sent to all three a challenge next morning.
Three duels he fought, thrice ventur'd his life,
Went home—and was cudgell'd again by his wife.

ON HIS OWN DEAFNESS

Deaf, giddy, helpless, left alone,

To all my friends a burden grown;
No more I hear my church's bell,
Than if it rang out for my knell;
At thunder now no more I start,
Than at the rumbling of a cart;
And what's incredible, alack!
No more I hear a woman's clack.

TO MRS. HOUGHTON OF BORMOUNT, UPON PRAISING HER HUSBAND TO DR. SWIFT

You always are making a god of your spouse;
But this neither reason nor conscience allows:
Perhaps you will say, 'tis in gratitude due,
And you adore him, because he adores you.
Your argument's weak, and so you will find;
For you, by this rule, must adore all mankind.

Alexander Pope, a true poet and humorist, sometimes dropped into sheer nonsense, and often into satirical epigrammatic writing.

For some inexplicable reason, certain commentators have denied any sense of humor to Pope, but the following extracts refute this:

LINES BY A PERSON OF QUALITY

Fluttering spread thy purple pinions,
  Gentle Cupid, o'er my heart,
I a slave in thy dominions,
  Nature must give way to art.

Mild Arcadians, ever blooming,
  Nightly nodding o'er your flocks,
See my weary days consuming,
  All beneath yon flowery rocks.

Thus the Cyprian goddess weeping,
  Mourned Adonis, darling youth:
Him the boar, in silence creeping,
  Gored with unrelenting tooth.

Cynthia, tune harmonious numbers;
  Fair Discretion, tune the lyre;
Soothe my ever-waking slumbers;

Bright Apollo, lend thy choir.

Gloomy Pluto, king of terrors,
Armed in adamantine chains,
Lead me to the crystal mirrors,
Watering soft Elysian plains.

Mournful Cypress, verdant willow,
Gilding my Aurelia's brows,
Morpheus, hovering o'er my pillow,
Hear me pay my dying vows.

Melancholy, smooth Mæaunder,
Swiftly purling in a round,
On thy margin lovers wander
With thy flowery chaplets crowned.

Thus when Philomela, drooping,
Softly seeks her silent mate,
So the bird of Juno stooping;
Melody resigns to fate.

WORMS

To the Ingenious Mr. Moore, inventor of the celebrated worm powder.

How much, egregious Moore? are we,
Deceived by shows and forms?
Whate'er we think, whate'er we see,
All human race are worms.

Man is a very worm by birth,
Proud reptile, vile and vain,
Awhile he crawls upon the earth,
Then shrinks to earth again.

That woman is a worm, we find,
E'er since our grannum's evil;
She first conversed with her own kind,
That ancient worm, the Devil.

The fops are painted butterflies,
That flutter for a day;
First from a worm they took their rise,
Then in a worm decay.

The flatterer an ear-wig grows,
Some worms suit all conditions;
Misers are muck-worms; silk-worms, beaus,

And death-watches, physicians.

That statesmen have a worm, is seen
By all their winding play;
Their conscience is a worm within,
That gnaws them night and day.

Ah, Moore! thy skill were well employ'd,
And greater gain would rise
If thou couldst make the courtier void
That worm that never dies.

Thou only canst our fate adjourn
Some few short years, no more;
E'en Button's wits to worms shall turn,
Who maggots were before.

EPIGRAM ON MRS. TOFTS

(*A celebrated Opera Singer.*)

So bright is thy beauty, so charming thy song,
As had drawn both the beasts and their Orpheus along;
But such is thy avarice, and such is thy pride,
That the beasts must have starved and the poet have died.

Joseph Addison, whose literary work had a decided influence on English letters and manners, contributed much to *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, from which the following extract is taken.

THE WILL OF A VIRTUOSO

I, Nicholas Gimcrack, being in sound health of mind, but in great weakness of body, do, by this my last will and testament, bestow my worldly goods and chattels in manner following:

Imprimis.—To my dear wife,

One box of butterflies,

One drawer of shells,

A female skeleton,

A dried cockatrice.

Item.—To my daughter Elizabeth,

My receipt for preserving dead caterpillars,

As also my preparations of winter Maydew and embryo-pickle.

Item.—To my little daughter Fanny,

Three crocodile's eggs,

And upon the birth of her first child, if she marries with her mother's consent,

The nest of a humming-bird.

Item.—To my eldest brother, as an acknowledgment for the lands he has vested in my son Charles, I bequeath

My last year's collection of grasshoppers.

Item.—To his daughter Susanna, being his only child, I bequeath my

English weeds pasted on royal paper,

With my large folio of Indian cabbage.

Having fully provided for my nephew Isaac, by making over to him some years since,

A horned scarabæus,

The skin of a rattlesnake, and

The mummy of an Egyptian king,

I make no further provision for him in this my will.

My eldest son, John, having spoke disrespectfully of his little sister, whom I keep by me in spirits of

wine, and in many other instances behaved himself undutifully toward me, I do disinherit, and wholly cut off from any part of this my personal estate, by giving him a single cockle-shell.

To my second son, Charles, I give and bequeath all my flowers, plants, minerals, mosses, shells, pebbles, fossils, beetles, butterflies, caterpillars, grasshoppers, and vermin, not above specified; as also all my monsters, both wet and dry; making the said Charles whole and sole executor of this my last will and testament: he paying, or causing to be paid, the aforesaid legacies within the space of six months after my decease. And I do hereby revoke all other wills whatsoever by me formerly made.

John Philips, who was a devoted student and admirer of Milton, wrote a poem in which he parodied Milton's style, and which Addison called the finest burlesque in the English language.

THE SPLENDID SHILLING

"Sing, heavenly Muse.
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme";
A shilling, breeches, and chimeras dire.

Happy the man, who, void of acres and strife,
In silken or in leathern purse retains
A Splendid Shilling: he nor hears with pain
New oysters cried, nor sighs for cheerful ale;
But with his friends, when nightly mists arise,
To Juniper's Magpie, or Town Hall repairs;
Where, mindful of the nymph, whose wanton eye
Transfixed his soul, and kindled amorous flames,
Chloe or Phyllis, he each circling glass
Wisheth her health and joy and equal love.
Meanwhile he smokes, and laughs at merry tale,
Or pun ambiguous or conundrum quaint.
But I, whom griping penury surrounds,

And hunger, sure attendant upon want,
With scanty offals, and small acid tiff
(Wretched repast!) my meagre corpse sustain:
Then solitary walk, or doze at home
In garret vile, and with a warming puff
Regale chilled fingers; or from tube as black
As winter-chimney or well-polished jet,
Exhale mundungus, ill-perfuming scent.
Not blacker tube, nor of a shorter size,
Smokes Cambro-Briton (versed in pedigree,
Sprung from Cadwallador and Arthur, kings
Full famous in romantic tale) when he
O'er many a craggy hill and barren cliff,
Upon a cargo of famed Cestrian cheese,
High overshadowing rides, with a design
To wend his wares at the Arvonian mart,
Or Maridunum, or the ancient town
Ycleped Brechinia, or where Vaga's stream
Encircles Ariconium, fruitful soil!
Whence flow nectareous wines, that well may vie
With Massic, Setin, or renowned Falern.
Thus, while my joyless minutes tedious flow,
With looks demure, and silent pace, a Dun,
Horrible monster! hated by gods and men,
To my aerial citadel ascends.
With vocal heel thrice thundering at my gate,
With hideous accent thrice he calls; I know
The voice ill-boding, and the solemn sound,
What should I do? or whither turn? Amazed,
Confounded, to the dark recess I fly
Of wood-hole; straight my bristling hairs erect
Through sudden fear; a chilly sweat bedews
My shuddering limbs, and (wonderful to tell!)
My tongue forgets her faculty of speech;
So horrible he seems! His faded brow
Intrenched with many a frown, and conic beard,
And spreading band, admired by modern saints,
Disastrous acts forebode; in his right hand
Long scrolls of paper solemnly he waves,
With characters and figures dire inscribed,
Grievous to mortal eyes, (ye gods, avert
Such plagues from righteous men!) Behind him stalks
Another monster, not unlike itself,
Sullen of aspect, by the vulgar called
A Catchpole, whose polluted hands the gods
With force incredible, and magic charms,
First have endued: if he his ample palm

Should haply on ill-fated shoulder lay
Of debtor, straight his body to the touch
Obsequious (as whilom knights were wont)
To some enchanted castle is conveyed,
Where gates impregnable, and coercive chains,
In durance strict detain him, till, in form
Of money, Pallas sets the captive free.
Beware, ye debtors! when ye walk, beware,
Be circumspect; oft with insidious ken
The caitiff eyes your steps aloof, and oft
Lies perdue in a nook or gloomy cave,
Prompt to enchant some inadvertent wretch
With his unhallowed touch. So (poets sing)
Grimalkin to domestic vermin sworn
An everlasting foe, with watchful eye
Lies nightly brooding o'er a chinky gap,
Portending her fell claws, to thoughtless mice
Sure ruin. So her disembowelled web
Arachne, in a hall or kitchen, spreads
Obvious to vagrant flies; she secret stands
Within her woven cell; the humming prey,
Regardless of their fate, rush on the toils
Inextricable, nor will aught avail
Their arts, or arms, or shapes of lovely hue.
The wasp insidious, and the buzzing drone,
And butterfly proud of expanded wings
Distinct with gold, entangled in her snares,
Useless resistance make; with eager strides,
She towering flies to her expected spoils:
Then with envenomed jaws the vital blood
Drinks of reluctant foes, and to her cave
Their bulky carcasses triumphant drags.
So pass my days. But when nocturnal shades
This world envelop, and the inclement air
Persuades men to repel benumbing frosts
With pleasant wines and crackling blaze of wood,
Me, lonely sitting, nor the glimmering light
Of make-weight candle, nor the joyous talk
Of loving friend, delights; distressed, forlorn,
Amidst the horrors of the tedious night,
Darkling I sigh, and feed with dismal thoughts
My anxious mind; or sometimes mournful verse
Indite, and sing of groves and myrtle shades,
Or desperate lady near a purling stream,
Or lover pendent on a willow-tree.
Meanwhile I labor with eternal drought,
And restless wish, and rave; my parchèd throat
Finds no relief, nor heavy eyes repose:

But if a slumber haply does invade
My weary limbs, my fancy, still awake,
Thoughtful of drink, and eager, in a dream,
Tipples imaginary pots of ale;
In vain;—awake I find the settled thirst
Still gnawing, and the pleasant phantom curse.
  Thus do I live, from pleasure quite debarred,
Nor taste the fruits that the sun's genial rays
Mature, john-apple, nor the downy peach,
Nor walnut in rough-furrowed coat secure,
Nor medlar fruit delicious in decay;
Afflictions great! yet greater still remain.
My galligaskins, that have long withstood
The winter's fury and encroaching frosts,
By time subdued, (what will not time subdue!)
An horrid chasm disclose with orifice
Wide, discontinuous; at which the winds
Eurus and Auster and the dreadful force
Of Boreas, that congeals the Cronian waves,
Tumultuous enter with dire chilling blasts,
Portending agues. Thus a well-fraught ship,
Long sails secure, or through the Ægean deep,
Or the Ionian, till cruising near
The Lilybean shore, with hideous crush
On Scylla or Charybdis (dangerous rocks)
She strikes rebounding; whence the shattered oak,
So fierce a shock unable to withstand,
Admits the sea. In at the gaping side
The crowding waves gush with impetuous rage,
Resistless, overwhelming; horrors seize
The mariners; Death in their eyes appears,
They stare, they lave, they pump, they swear, they pray:
(Vain efforts!) still the battering waves rush in,
Implacable, till, deluged by the foam,
The ship sinks foundering in the vast abyss.

John Arbuthnot, celebrated both as a physician and a man of letters, leaves us this bit of nonsense.

JOHN ARBUTHNOT

A DISSERTATION ON DUMPLINGS

The dumpling is, indeed, an ancient institution and of foreign origin; but, alas! what were those dumplings? Nothing but a few lentils sodden

together, moistened and cemented with a little seethed fat, not much unlike our grit or oatmeal pudding; yet were they of such esteem among the ancient Romans, that a statue was erected to Fulvius Agricola, the first inventor of these lentil dumplings. How unlike the gratitude shown by the public to our modern projectors!

The Romans, though our conquerors, found themselves much outdone in dumplings by our forefathers, the Roman dumplings being no more to compare to those made by the Britons than a stone-dumpling is to a marrow-pudding; though, indeed, the British dumpling at that time was little better than what we call a stone-dumpling, nothing else but flour and water. But every generation growing wiser and wiser, the project was improved, and dumpling grew to be pudding. One projector found milk better than water; another introduced butter; some added marrow, others plums; and some found out the use of sugar; so that, to speak truth, we know not where to fix the genealogy or chronology of any of these pudding projectors; to the reproach of our historians, who ate so much pudding, yet have been so ungrateful to the first professors of this most noble science as not to find them a place in history....

The invention of eggs was merely accidental, two or three of which having casually rolled from a shelf into the pudding which a goodwife was making, she found herself under the necessity either of throwing away her pudding or letting the eggs remain. But concluding, from the innocent quality of the eggs, that they would do no hurt, if they did no good, she wisely jumbled them all together, after having carefully picked out the shells. The consequence is easily imagined: the pudding became a pudding of

puddings, and the use of eggs from thence took its date. The woman was sent for to Court to make puddings for King John, who then swayed the scepter, and gained such favour that she was the making of the whole family.

I cannot conclude this paragraph without owning I received this important part of the history of pudding from Mr. Lawrence, of Wilson-Green, the greatest antiquary of the present age....

From that time the English became so famous for puddings, that they are called pudding-eaters all over the world to this day.

At her demise, the woman's son was taken into favour, and made the King's chief cook; and so great was his fame for puddings, that he was called Jack Pudding all over the kingdom, though, indeed, his real name was John Brand, as by the records of the kitchen you will find. This Jack Pudding became yet a greater favourite than his mother, insomuch that he had the King's ear as well as his mouth at command, for the King, you must know, was a mighty lover of pudding. It is needless to enumerate the many sorts of pudding he made. He made every pudding except quaking pudding, which was solely invented by our friends of the *Bull and Mouth*.

Lord Chesterfield, best known for his *Letters to his Son*, showed clever wit in his ideas and Phraseology.

Men who converse only with women are frivolous, effeminate puppies, and those who never converse with them are bears.

The desire of being pleased is universal. The desire of pleasing should be so too. Misers are not so much blamed for being misers as envied for being rich.

Dissimulation to a certain degree is as necessary in business as clothes are in the common intercourse of life; and a man would be as imprudent who should exhibit his inside naked, as he would be indecent if he produced his outside so.

Hymen comes whenever he is called, but Love only when he pleases.

An abject flatterer has a worse opinion of others, and, if possible, of himself, than he ought to have.

A woman will be implicitly governed by the man whom she is in love with, but will not be directed by the man whom she esteems the most. The former is the result of passion, which is her character; the latter must be the effect of reasoning, which is by no means of the feminine gender.

The best moral virtues are those of which the vulgar are, perhaps, the best judges.

A fool never has thought, a madman has lost it; and an absent man is for the time without it.

Advice is seldom welcome; and those who want it the most always like it the least.

Of the writers who come next, chronologically, Fielding, Sterne, Garrick, Smollett, Foote, and others of lesser degree, we can quote no extracts, owing to the continuous character of their work.

At this time, humor was broad and wit coarse, yet the plays and novels of the period have lasted and retained their reputation.

Which brings us to Samuel Johnson.

Doctor Johnson's wit was ponderous, but as his is one of the greatest names in Eighteenth Century literature, we give a bit from *The Idler* which is not entirely inappropriate to the present day.

ON LYING NEWS-WRITERS

No species of literary men has lately been so much multiplied as the writers of news. Not many years ago the nation was content with one gazette; but now we have not only in the metropolis papers for

every morning and every evening, but almost every large town has its weekly historian, who regularly circulates his periodical intelligence, and fills the villages of his district with conjectures on the events of war, and with debates on the true interest of Europe.

To write news in its perfection requires such a combination of qualities, that a man completely fitted for the task is not always to be found. In Sir Henry Wotton's jocular definition, "An ambassador is said to be a man of virtue sent abroad to tell lies for the advantage of his country; a news-writer is a man without virtue, who writes lies at home for his own profit." To these compositions is required neither genius nor knowledge, neither industry nor sprightliness; but contempt of shame and indifference to truth are absolutely necessary. He who by a long familiarity with infamy has obtained these qualities, may confidently tell to-day what he intends to contradict to-morrow; he may affirm fearlessly what he knows that he shall be obliged to recant, and may write letters from Amsterdam or Dresden to himself.

In a time of war the nation is always of one mind, eager to hear something good of themselves and ill of the enemy. At this time the task of news-writers is easy; they have nothing to do but to tell that a battle is expected, and afterward that a battle has been fought, in which we and our friends, whether conquering or conquered, did all, and our enemies did nothing.

Scarcely anything awakens attention like a tale of cruelty. The writer of news never fails in the intermission of action to tell how the enemies murdered children and ravished virgins; and, if the

scene of action be somewhat distant, scalps half the inhabitants of a province.

Among the calamities of war may be justly numbered the diminution of the love of truth, by the falsehoods which interest dictates and credulity encourages. A peace will equally leave the warrior and relater of wars destitute of employment; and I know not whether more is to be dreaded from the streets filled with soldiers accustomed to plunder, or from garrets filled with scribblers accustomed to lie.

Also, lapsing into sheer nonsense verse, Doctor Johnson has left for our delectation these delightful rhymes.

As with my hat upon my head
I walked along the Strand,
I there did meet another man
With his hat in his hand.

The tender infant, meek and mild,
Fell down upon the stone;
The nurse took up the squealing child,
But still the child squealed on.

If a man who turnips cries,
Cry not when his father dies,
'Tis a proof that he would rather
Have a turnip than a father.

Oliver Goldsmith, humorous writer of plays and novels, left many world famous books.

His rhymes are often of the nonsense variety, and, as was common in his day, abounded in puns, or punning ideas.

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG

Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wondrous short
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man
Of whom the world might say
That still a godly race he ran
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends,
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain his private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wondering neighbours ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That show'd the rogues they lied:
The man recover'd of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

AN ELEGY

ON THE GLORY OF HER SEX, MRS. MARY BLAIZE

Good people all, with one accord,
Lament for Madam Blaize,
Who never wanted a good word—
From those who spoke her praise.

The needy seldom pass'd her door,
And always found her kind:
She freely lent to all the poor—
Who left a pledge behind.

She strove the neighborhood to please
With manners wondrous winning;
And never follow'd wicked ways—
Unless when she was sinning.

At church, in silks and satins new,
With hoop of monstrous size,
She never slumber'd in her pew—
But when she shut her eyes.

Her love was sought, I do aver,
By twenty beaux and more;
The King himself has follow'd her—
When she has walk'd before.

But now, her wealth and finery fled,
Her hangers-on cut short all;
The doctors found, when she was dead—
Her last disorder mortal.

Let us lament, in sorrow sore,
For Kent Street well may say,
That had she lived a twelvemonth more
She had not died to-day.

PARSON GRAY

A quiet home had Parson Gray,
Secluded in a vale;
His daughters all were feminine,
And all his sons were male.

How faithfully did Parson Gray
The bread of life dispense—
Well "posted" in theology,
And post and rail his fence.

'Gainst all the vices of the age
He manfully did battle;
His chickens were a biped breed,
And quadruped his cattle.

No clock more punctually went,

He ne'er delayed a minute—
Nor ever empty was his purse,
When he had money in it.

His piety was ne'er denied;
His truths hit saint and sinner;
At morn he always breakfasted;
He always dined at dinner.

He ne'er by any luck was grieved,
By any care perplexed—
No filcher he, though when he preached,
He always "took" a text.

As faithful characters he drew
As mortal ever saw;
But, ah! poor parson, when he died,
His breath he could not draw.

William Cowper for the most part writes with a gentle, genial spirit, a love of nature and a joy in the domestic relations

His muse, when humorous, is also a bit stilted.

A FAITHFUL PICTURE OF ORDINARY SOCIETY

The circle formed, we sit in silent state,
Like figures drawn upon a dial-plate.
"Yes, ma'am" and "No, ma'am" uttered softly,
show
Every five minutes how the minutes go.
Each individual, suffering a constraint—
Poetry may, but colours cannot, paint—
As if in close committee on the sky,
Reports it hot or cold, or wet or dry,
And finds a changing clime a happy source
Of wise reflection and well-timed discourse.
We next inquire, but softly and by stealth,
Like conservators of the public health,
Of epidemic throats, if such there are
Of coughs and rheums, and phthisic and catarrh.
That theme exhausted, a wide chasm ensues,
Filled up at last with interesting news:
Who danced with whom, and who are like to wed;
And who is hanged, and who is brought to bed,
But fear to call a more important cause,
As if 'twere treason against English laws.

The visit paid, with ecstasy we come,
As from a seven years' transportation, home
And there resume an unembarrassed brow,
Recovering what we lost we know not how,
The faculties that seemed reduced to naught,
Expression, and the privilege of thought.

THE COLUBRIAD

Close by the threshold of a door nailed fast,
Three kittens sat; each kitten looked aghast.
I, passing swift and inattentive by,
At the three kittens cast a careless eye;
Not much concerned to know what they did there;
Not deeming kittens worth a poet's care.
But presently, a loud and furious hiss
Caused me to stop, and to exclaim, "What's this
When lo! upon the threshold met my view,
With head erect, and eyes of fiery hue,
A viper long as Count de Grasse's queue.
Forth from his head his forked tongue he throws,
Darting it full against a kitten's nose;
Who, having never seen, in field or house,
The like, sat still and silent as a mouse;
Only projecting, with attention due,
Her whiskered face, she asked him, "Who are
you?"
On to the hall went I, with pace not slow,
But swift as lightning, for a long Dutch hoe:
With which well armed, I hastened to the spot
To find the viper—but I found him not.
And, turning up the leaves and shrubs around,
Found only that he was not to be found;
But still the kittens, sitting as before,
Sat watching close the bottom of the door.
"I hope," said I, "the villain I would kill
Has slipped between the door and the door-sill;
And if I make despatch, and follow hard,
No doubt but I shall find him in the yard":
(For long ere now it should have been rehearsed,
'Twas in the garden that I found him first.)
E'en there I found him: there the full-grown cat
His head, with velvet paw, did gently pat;
As curious as the kittens erst had been
To learn what this phenomenon might mean.
Filled with heroic ardour at the sight,
And fearing every moment he would bite,

And rob our household of our only cat
That was of age to combat with a rat;
With outstretched hoe I slew him at the door
And taught him never to come there no more!

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, brilliant dramatist and gifted political orator, wrote many plays, from which it is not possible to quote at length.

His epigrammatic style, and his humorous trend are shown in the bits here given.

LET THE TOAST PASS

FROM "THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL"

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;
  Here's to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,
  And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.
    Let the toast pass,
    Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize,
  Now to the maid who has none, sir;
Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
  And here's to the nymph with but one, sir.
    Let the toast pass, etc.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow;
  Now to her that's as brown as a berry;
Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,
  And now to the damsel that's merry.
    Let the toast pass, etc.

For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,
  Young or ancient, I care not a feather;
So fill a pint bumper quite up to the brim,
So fill up your glasses, nay, fill to the brim,
  And let us e'en toast them together.
    Let the toast pass, etc.

LORD ERSKINE'S SIMILE

Lord Erskine, at woman presuming to rail,
Called a wife a tin canister tied to one's tail;
And fair Lady Anne, while this raillery he carries

on,
Seems hurt at his lordship's degrading comparison.
But wherefore degrading, if taken aright?
A canister's useful and polished and bright,
And if dirt its original purity hide,
'Tis the fault of the puppy to whom it is tied.

SHERIDAN'S CALENDAR

January snowy,
February flowy,
March blowy,

April showry,
May flowry,
June bowery,

July moppy,
August croppy,
September poppy,

October breezy,
November wheezy,
December freezy.

George Colman, the Younger, best known as a comic dramatist, also wrote many poetical travesties, which he published under various titles, including the well known one of Broad Grins. These compositions show a broad humor, not always in the best taste.

George Canning, among other amusements, chose to ridicule the Sapphic rhymes of Southey, and wrote this burlesque upon the humanitarian sentiments of Southey in his younger days, as well as of the Sapphic stanzas in which he sometimes embodied them.

THE FRIEND OF HUMANITY AND THE KNIFE-GRINDER

FRIEND OF HUMANITY

Needy knife-grinder! whither are you going?
Rough is the road; your wheel is out of order.

Bleak blows the blast;—your hat has got a hole in't;
So have your breeches!

Weary knife-grinder! little think the proud ones,
Who in their coaches roll along the turnpike-
Road, what hard work 'tis crying all day,
"Knives and
Scissors to grind O!"

Tell me, knife-grinder, how came you to grind knives?
Did some rich man tyrannically use you?
Was it the squire? or parson of the parish?
Or the attorney?

Was it the squire for killing of his game? or
Covetous parson for his tithes distraining?
Or roguish lawyer made you lose your little
All in a lawsuit?

(Have you not read the Rights of Man, by Tom Paine?)
Drops of compassion tremble on my eyelids,
Ready to fall as soon as you have told your
Pitiful story.

KNIFE-GRINDER

Story! God bless you! I have none to tell, sir;
Only, last night, a-drinking at the Chequers,
This poor old hat and breeches, as you see, were
Torn in a scuffle.

Constables came up for to take me into
Custody; they took me before the justice;
Justice Oldmixon put me into the parish
Stocks for a vagrant.

I should be glad to drink your honor's health in
A pot of beer, if you will give me sixpence;
But for my part, I never love to meddle
With politics, sir.

FRIEND TO HUMANITY

I give thee sixpence! I will see thee damned first,—
Wretch! whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to
vengeance,—

Sordid, unfeeling, reprobate, degraded,
Spiritless outcast!

(Kicks the knife-grinder, overturns his wheel, and exit in a transport of republican enthusiasm and universal philanthropy.)

Robert Burns, one of the chief names in Scottish literature, has been called the Dictionary of Poetical Quotations.

Byron said, "The rank of Burns is the very first of his art"; and the many-sided Scotchman had both admirers and detractors galore.

It has been noted that the Scotch have a sense of humor, "because it is a gift." Burns' sense of humor secures for him a high place among humorists, and though coarse in his expressions, he is not intentionally vulgar.

HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER

Holy Willie was a small farmer, leading elder to Dr. Auld, austere in speech, scrupulous to all outward appearances, a professing Christian. He experienced, however, "a sore fall"; he was "found out" to be a hypocrite after Burns' castigation, and was expelled the church for embezzling the money of the poor of the parish. His name was William Fisher.

O Thou, wha in the Heavens dost dwell,
Wha, as it pleases best thysel',
Sends ane to Heaven and ten to Hell,
A' for thy glory,
And no for onie guid or ill
They've done afore thee.

I bless and praise thy matchless might,
Whan thousands thou hast left in night,
That I am here afore thy sight,
For gifts and grace,

A burning an' a shining light
To a' this place.

What was I, or my generation,
That I should get such exaltation?
I, wha deserve such just damnation,
For broken laws,
Five thousand years 'fore my creation,
Thro' Adam's cause.

When frae my mither's womb I fell,
Thou might hae plung'd me into Hell,
To gnash my gums, to weep and wail
In burnin' lake,
Where damned Devils roar and yell,
Chain'd to a stake.

Yet I am here a chosen sample,
To show thy grace is great and ample;
I'm here a pillar in thy temple,
Strong as a rock.
A guide, a buckler, an example,
To a' thy flock.

O L—d, thou kens what zeal I bear,
When drinkers drink, and swearers swear,
And singin' here, and dancing there,
Wi' great and sma':
For I am keepit by thy fear,
Free frae them a'.

But yet, O L—d! confess I must,
At times I'm fash'd wi' fleshly lust,
An' sometimes, too, wi' warldly trust—
Vile self gets in;
But thou remembers we are dust,
Defil'd in sin.

O L—d! yestreen, thou kens, wi' Meg—
Thy pardon I sincerely beg,
O! may it ne'er be a livin' plague
To my dishonor,
An' I'll ne'er lift a lawless leg
Again upon her.

Besides, I farther maun allow,
Wi' Lizzie's lass, three times I trow;
But, L—d, that Friday I was fou,

When I came near her,
Or else thou kens thy servant true
Wad ne'er hae steer'd her.

May be thou lets this fleshly thorn
Beset thy servant e'en and morn,
Lest he owre high and proud should turn,
'Cause he's sae gifted;
If sae, thy hand maun e'en be borne,
Until thou lift it.

L—d, bless thy chosen in this place,
For here thou hast a chosen race;
But G—d confound their stubborn face,
And blast their name,
Wha bring thine elders to disgrace,
An' public shame.

L—d, mind Gawn Hamilton's deserts,
He drinks, an swears, an' plays at cartes,
Yet has sae monie takin' arts,
Wi' great and sma',
Frae God's ain priests the people's hearts
He steals awa'.

An' whan we chasten'd him therefore,
Thou kens how he bred sic a splore,
As set the warld in a roar
O' laughin' at us,
Curse thou his basket and his store,
Kail and potatoes.

L—d, hear my earnest cry an' pray'r,
Against that presbyt'ry o' Ayr;
Thy strong right hand, L—d, make it bare,
Upo' their heads;
L—d, weigh it down, and dinna spare,
For their misdeeds.

O L—d, my G—d, that glib-tongued Aiken,
My very heart and saul are quakin',
To think how we stood sweatin', shakin',
An' swat wi' dread,
While he wi' hingin' lips gaed snakin',
And hid his head.

L—d, in the day of vengeance try him,
L—d, visit them wha did employ him,

And pass not in thy mercy by 'em,
Nor hear their pray'r;
But, for thy people's sake, destroy 'em,
And dinna spare.

But, L—d, remember me and mine
Wi' mercies temp'ral and divine,
That I for gear and grace may shine,
Excelled by nane,
An' a' the glory shall be thine,
Amen, Amen.

ADDRESS TO THE TOOTHACHE

My curse upon thy venomed stang,
That shoots my tortured gums alang;
An' through my lugs gies mony a twang,
Wi' gnawing vengeance!
Tearing my nerves wi' bitter pang,
Like racking engines.

When fevers burn, or ague freezes,
Rheumatics gnaw, or cholic squeezes;
Our neighbor's sympathy may ease us,
Wi' pitying moan;
But thee,—thou hell o' a' diseases,
Aye mocks our groan.

Adown my beard the slavers trickle;
I throw the wee stools o'er the mickle,
As round the fire the giglets keckle
To see me loup;
While, raving mad, I wish a heckle
Were in their doup.

O' a' the numerous human dools,
Ill har'sts, daft bargains, cutty-stools,
Or worthy friends raked i' the mools,
Sad sight to see!
The tricks o' knaves or fash o' fools,
Thou bear'st the gree.

Where'er that place be priests ca' hell,
Whence a' the tones o' mis'ry yell,
And rankèd plagues their numbers tell,
In dreadfu' raw,
Thou, Toothache, surely bear'st the bell,

Among them a';

O thou grim mischief-making chiel,
That gars the notes of discord squeal,
Till daft mankind aft dance a reel
In gore a shoe-thick!—
Gie a' the faes o' Scotland's weal
A fowmond's Toothache!

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Quite lately, a well known humorist of the present day was making an after dinner speech. A voice from the audience called out, "Louder!—and funnier!"

Some such voice must have called out to the World's Humor at the close of the Eighteenth Century, for the beginning of the Nineteenth finds the Humorous element in literature decidedly louder and funnier.

The Romantic Revival which at this time affected all literature and art has been called both the effect and the cause of the French Revolution.

It has also been called the Renascence of Wonder, and as such it let loose hitherto hidebound fancies and imaginations on boundless and limitless flights. In these flights Humor showed speed and endurance quite equal to those of Romance or Poesy.

Both in energy and methods, Humor came to the front with tremendous strides. In quality and quantity it forged ahead, both as a component part of more serious writings and also independently.

And while this was a consummation devoutly to be wished, it makes harder the task of the Outliner.

Many great writers held to the conviction that in Romantic poetry humor has no place. Others were avowed comic writers of verse or prose. But others

still allowed humor to meet and mingle with their numbers, to a greater or less degree.

And the difficulty of selection lies in the fact that the incidental humor is often funnier than the entirely humorous concept.

It is hard to omit such as Jane Austen, Sir Walter Scott, William Wordsworth, yet quotations from their works, showing their humorous vein, would occupy space demanded by the humorists themselves.

So, let us start in boldly with Sydney Smith, one of the most popular wits of all ages.

Aside from this author's epigrams and witty sayings, he wrote with great wisdom and insight about the principles of humor itself, from which we quote his sapient remarks on punning.

"It is imagined that wit is a sort of inexplicable visitation, that it comes and goes with the rapidity of lightning, and that it is quite as unattainable as beauty or just proportion. I am so much of a contrary way of thinking, that I am convinced a man might sit down as systematically and as successfully, to the study of wit as he might to the study of mathematics; and I would answer for it that by giving up only six hours a day to being witty, he should come on prodigiously before midsummer, so that his friends should hardly know him again. For what is there to hinder the mind from gradually acquiring a habit of attending to the lighter relations of ideas in which wit consists? Punning grows upon everybody, and punning is the wit of words. I do not mean to say that it is so easy to acquire a habit of discovering new relations in *ideas* as in *words*, but the difficulty is not so much greater as to render it insuperable to habit. One man is unquestionably much better

calculated for it by nature than another; but association, which gradually makes a bad speaker a good one, might give a man wit who had it not, if any man chose to be so absurd as to sit down to acquire it.

"I have mentioned puns. They are, I believe, what I have denominated them—the wit of words. They are exactly the same to words which wit is to ideas, and consist in the sudden discovery of relations in language. A pun, to be perfect in its kind, should contain two distinct meanings; the one common and obvious, the other more remote; and in the notice which the mind takes of the relation between these two sets of words, and in the surprise which that relation excites, the pleasure of a pun consists. Miss Hamilton, in her book on Education, mentions the instance of a boy so very neglectful that he could never be brought to read the word *patriarchs*; but whenever he met with it he always pronounced it *partridges*. A friend of the writer observed to her that it could hardly be considered as a mere piece of negligence, for it appeared to him that the boy, in calling them partridges, was *making game* of the patriarchs. Now here are two distinct meanings contained in the same phrase: for to make game of the patriarchs is to laugh at them; or to make game of them is by a very extravagant and laughable sort of ignorance of words, to rank them among pheasants, partridges, and other such delicacies, which the law takes under its protection and calls game: and the whole pleasure derived from this pun consists in the sudden discovery that two such different meanings are referable to one form of expression. I have very little to say about puns; they are in very bad repute, and so they ought to be. The wit of language is so miserably inferior to the wit of

ideas that it is very deservedly driven out of good company. Sometimes, indeed, a pun makes its appearance which seems for a moment to redeem its species; but we must not be deceived by them: it is a radically bad race of wit. By unremitting persecution, it has been at last got under, and driven into cloisters —from whence it must never again be suffered to emerge into the light of the world. One invaluable blessing produced by the banishment of punning is an immediate reduction of the number of wits. It is a wit of so low an order, and in which some sort of progress is so easily made, that the number of those endowed with the gift of wit would be nearly equal to those endowed with the gift of speech. The condition of putting together ideas in order to be witty operates much in the same salutary manner as the condition of finding rhymes in poetry;—it reduces the number of performers to those who have vigour enough to overcome incipient difficulties, and make a sort of provision that that which need not be done at all should be done *well* whenever it *is* done."

This quotation from one of Sydney Smith's Speeches is characteristic of his style.

MRS. PARTINGTON

I do not mean to be disrespectful, but the attempt of the Lords to stop the progress of reform reminds me very forcibly of the great storm of Sidmouth, and of the conduct of the excellent Mrs. Partington on that occasion. In the winter of 1824 there set in a great flood upon that town—the tide rose to an incredible height—the waves rushed in upon the

houses—and everything was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime storm, Dame Partington, who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house with mop and pattens, trundling her mop, and squeezing out the seawater, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused; Mrs. Partington's spirit was up; but I need not tell you that the contest was unequal. The Atlantic Ocean beat Mrs. Partington. She was excellent at a slop or a puddle, but she should not have meddled with a tempest.—(From a Speech at Taunton in 1831.)

And we add the ever popular Recipe for a Salad.

SALAD

To make this condiment, your poet begs
The pounded yellow of two hard-boiled eggs.
Two boiled potatoes, passed through kitchen-sieve,
Smoothness and softness to the salad give.
Let onion atoms lurk within the bowl,
And, half-suspected, animate the whole.
Of mordant mustard add a single spoon,
Distrust the condiment that bites so soon;
But deem it not, thou man of herbs, a fault,
To add a double quantity of salt.
And, lastly, o'er the flavoured compound toss
A magic soup-spoon of anchovy sauce.
Oh, green and glorious! Oh, herbaceous treat!
'Twould tempt the dying anchorite to eat;
Back to the world he'd turn his fleeting soul,
And plunge his fingers in the salad bowl!
Serenely full, the epicure would say,
Fate cannot harm me, I have dined to-day!

Charles Lamb, beloved alike of the humorous and serious minded, disagrees with Sydney Smith regarding the pun.

His opinion,

"A pun is a noble thing *per se*. It is a sole digest of reflection; it is entire; it fills the mind; it is as perfect as a sonnet—better. It limps ashamed in the train and retinue of humour; it knows it should have an establishment of its own."

is shown in this instance.

Lamb was reserved among strangers. A friend, about to introduce him to a circle of new faces, said, "Now will you promise, *Lamb*, not to be as *sheepish* as usual?" Charles replied, with a rustic air, "I *wool*."

Such masterpieces as Lamb's *Dissertation Upon Roast Pig*, and his *Farewell to Tobacco* are too lengthy to quote. We give some of his shorter witty allusions.

Coleridge went to Germany, and left word to Lamb that if he wished any information on any subject, he might apply to him (i.e., by letter), so Lamb sent him the following abstruse propositions, to which, however, Coleridge did not deign an answer.

Whether God loves a dying angel better than a true man?

Whether the archangel Uriel *could* knowingly affirm an untruth, and whether, if he *could*, he *would*?

Whether the higher order of seraphim illuminati ever *sneeze*?

Whether an immortal and amenable soul may not come *to be damned at last*, and the man never suspect it beforehand?

GOOD ACTIONS.—The greatest pleasure I know is to do a good action by stealth, and to have it found out by accident.

PAYING FOR THINGS.—One cannot bear to pay for articles he used to get for nothing. When Adam laid out his first penny upon nonpareils at some stall in Mesopotamia, I think it went hard with him, reflecting upon his old goodly orchard, where he had so many for nothing.

NOTHING TO DO.—Positively the best thing a man can have to do is nothing, and, *next to that*, perhaps, good works.

Robert Southey, though one time Poet Laureate, is not to be too highly rated as a writer. His humorous poems are largely of the "jagged categorical" type, and are whimseys rather than wit.

Notwithstanding the aspersion even then cast upon the pun, he regards it as a legitimate vehicle.

THE TEN LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL

That the lost ten tribes of Israel may be found in London, is a discovery which any person may suppose he has made, when he walks for the first time from the city to Wapping. That the tribes of Judah and Benjamin nourish there is known to all mankind; and from them have sprung the Scripites, and the Omniumites, and the Threepercentites.

But it is not so well known that many other tribes noticed in the Old Testament are to be found in this

island of Great Britain.

There are the Hittites, who excel in one branch of gymnastics. And there are the Amorites, who are to be found in town and country; and there are the Gadites, who frequent watering-places, and take picturesque tours.

Among the Gadites I shall have some of my best readers, who being in good humour with themselves and with everything else, except on a rainy day, will even then be in good humour with me. There will be the Amorites in their company; and among the Amorites, too, there will be some who in the overflowing of their love, will have some liking to spare for the doctor and his faithful memorialist.

The poets, those especially who deal in erotics, lyrics, sentimentals, or sonnets, are the Ah-oh-ites.

The gentlemen who speculate in chapels are the Puhites.

The chief seat of the Simeonites is at Cambridge; but they are spread over the land. So are the Man-ass-ites, of whom the finest specimens are to be seen in St. James's Street, at the fashionable time of day for exhibiting the dress and the person upon the pavement.

The freemasons are of the family of the Jachinites.

The female Haggites are to be seen, in low life wheeling barrows, and in high life seated at card-tables.

The Shuhamites are the cordwainers.

The Teamanites attend the sales of the East India Company.

Sir James Mackintosh, and Sir James Scarlett, and

Sir James Graham belong to the Jim-nites.

Who are the Gazathites, if the people of London are not, where anything is to be seen? All of them are the Gettites when they can, all would be Havites if they could.

The journalists should be Geshurites, if they answered to their profession; instead of this they generally turn out to be Geshuwrongs.

There are, however, three tribes in England, not named in the Old Testament, who considerably outnumber all the rest. These are the High Vulgarites, who are the children of Rahank and Phashan, the Middle Vulgarites, who are the children of Mammon and Terade, and the Low Vulgarities, who are the children of Tahag, Rahag, and Bohobtay-il.

—From "*The Doctor*."

THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE

A well there is in the West country,
And a clearer one never was seen;
There is not a wife in the West country
But has heard of the Well of St. Keyne.

An oak and an elm tree stand beside,
And behind does an ash-tree grow,
And a willow from the bank above
Droops to the water below.

A traveller came to the Well of St. Keyne;
Pleasant it was to his eye,
For from cock-crow he had been travelling,
And there was not a cloud in the sky.

He drank of the water so cool and clear,
For thirsty and hot was he,
And he sat down upon the bank,
Under the willow-tree.

There came a man from the neighboring town

At the well to fill his pail,
On the well-side he rested it,
And bade the stranger hail.

"Now art thou a bachelor, stranger?" quoth he,
"For an if thou hast a wife,
The happiest draught thou hast drank this day
That ever thou didst in thy life.

"O has your good woman, if one you have,
In Cornwall ever been?
For an if she have, I'll venture my life
She has drunk of the Well of St. Keyne."

"I have left a good woman who never was here,"
The stranger he made reply;
"But that my draught should be better for that,
I pray you answer me why."

"St. Keyne," quoth the countryman, "many a time
Drank of this crystal well,
And before the angel summoned her
She laid on the water a spell.

"If the husband of this gifted well
Shall drink before his wife,
A happy man thenceforth is he,
For he shall be master for life.

"But if the wife should drink of it first,
Heaven help the husband then!"
The stranger stooped to the Well of St. Keyne,
And drank of the waters again.

"You drank of the well, I warrant, betimes?"
He to the countryman said.
But the countryman smiled as the stranger spake,
And sheepishly shook his head.

"I hastened, as soon as the wedding was done,
And left my wife in the porch.
But i' faith, she had been wiser than me,
For she took a bottle to church."

Theodore Hook, recorded as "a playwright, a punster and a practical joker," also gives a dissertation on puns and a bit of helpful advice.

"Personal deformities or constitutional calamities are always to be laid hold of. If anybody tells you that a dear friend has lost his sight, observe that it will make him more hospitable than ever, since now he would be glad *to see anybody*. If a clergyman breaks his leg, remark that he is no longer a clergyman, but a *lame man*. If a poet is seized with apoplexy, affect to disbelieve it, though you know it to be true, in order to say, 'Poeta nascitur non *fit*'; and then, to carry the joke one step farther, add that "it is not a *fit* subject for a jest." A man falling into a tan-pit you may call 'sinking in the *sublime*'; a climbing boy suffocated in a chimney meets with a *sootable* death; and a pretty girl having caught the small-pox is to be much *pitted*. On the subject of the ear and its defects, talk first of something in which a *cow sticks*, and end by telling the story of the man who, having taken great pains to explain something to his companion, at last got into a rage at his apparent stupidity, and exclaimed, 'Why, my dear sir, don't you comprehend? The thing is as plain as A B C.' 'I dare say it is,' said the other, 'but I am D E F.'

"It may be as well to give the beginner something of a notion of the use he may make of the most ordinary words, for the purposes of quibbleism.

"The loss of a hat is always *felt*; if you don't like sugar you may *lump* it; a glazier is a *panes*-taking man; candles are burnt because wick-ed things always come to *light*; a lady who takes you home from a party is kind in her *carriage*, and you say "nunc est *ridendum*" when you step into it; if it happens to be a chariot, she is a *charitable* person; birds'-nests and king-killing are synonymous, because they are *high trees on*; a Bill for building a bridge should be sanctioned by the Court of *Arches*,

as well as the House of *Piers*; when a man is dull, he goes to the sea-side to *Brighton*; a Cockney lover, when sentimental, should live in *Heigh Hoburn*; the greatest fibber is the man most to *re-lie* upon; a dean expecting a bishopric looks *for lawn*; a *sui*cide kills pigs, and not himself; a butcher is a gross man, but a fig-seller is a *grocer*; Joshua never had a father or mother, because he was the son of *Nun*; your grandmother and your great-grandmother were your *aunt's sisters*; a leg of mutton is better than heaven, because nothing is better than heaven, and a leg of mutton is better than nothing; races are matters of *course*; an ass can never be a horse, although he may be a *mayor*; the Venerable Bede was the mother of Pearl; a baker makes bread when he *kneads* it; a doctor cannot be a doctor all at once, because he comes to it by *degrees*; a man hanged at Newgate has taken a *drop* too much; the *bridle* day is that on which a man leads a woman to the halter. Never mind the aspirate; punning's all fair, as the archbishop said in the dream.

"Puns interrogatory are at times serviceable. You meet a man carrying a hare; ask him if it is his own *hare*, or a wig—there you stump him. Why is Parliament Street like a compendium? Because it goes to a *bridge*. Why is a man murdering his mother in a garret a worthy person? Because he is *above* committing a crime. Instances of this kind are innumerable. If you want to render your question particularly pointed, you are, after asking it once or twice, to say 'D'ye give it up?' Then favour your friends with the solution."

Richard Harris Barham, author of the *Ingoldsby Legends*, was an intimate friend of Hook.

Like many another true humorist he was of the clergy, being a minor canon of St. Paul's cathedral.

His delightful tales are too long to quote, and only some shorter pieces may be given.

Barham was among the first to raise parody to a recognized art.

A "TRUE AND ORIGINAL" VERSION

In the autumn of 1824, Captain Medwin having hinted that certain beautiful lines on the burial of Sir John Moore might have been the production of Lord Byron's muse, the late Mr. Sidney Taylor, somewhat indignantly, claimed them for their rightful owner, the Rev. Charles Wolfe. During the controversy a third claimant started up in the person of a *soi-disant* "Doctor Marshall," who turned out to be a Durham blacksmith, and *his* pretensions a hoax. It was then that a certain "Dr. Peppercorn" put forth his pretensions, to what he averred was the only "true and original" version, viz.—

Not a *sous* had he got,—not a guinea or note,
And he looked confoundedly flurried,
As he bolted away without paying his shot,
And the landlady after him hurried.

We saw him again at dead of night,
When home from the Club returning;
We twigged the Doctor beneath the light
Of the gas-lamp brilliantly burning.

All bare, and exposed to the midnight dews,
Reclined in the gutter we found him;
And he looked like a gentleman taking a snooze,
With his *Marshall* cloak around him.

"The Doctor's as drunk as the devil," we said,
And we managed a shutter to borrow;
We raised him, and sighed at the thought that his head
Would "consumedly ache" on the morrow.

We bore him home, and we put him to bed,
And we told his wife and his daughter
To give him, next morning a couple of red
Herrings, with soda water.—

Loudly they talked of his money that's gone,
And his Lady began to upbraid him;
But little he reck'd, so they let him snore on
'Neath the counterpane just as we laid him.

We tuck'd him in, and had hardly done
When, beneath the window calling,
We heard the rough voice of a son of a gun
Of a watchman "One o'clock!" bawling.

Slowly and sadly we all walked down
From his room in the uppermost story;
A rushlight we placed on the cold hearthstone,
And we left him alone in his glory.

RAISING THE DEVIL

A LEGEND OF CORNELIUS AGRIPPA

"And hast thou nerve enough?" he said,
That gray Old Man, above whose head
Unnumbered years had rolled,—
"And hast thou nerve to view," he cried,
"The incarnate Fiend that Heaven defied!
—Art thou indeed so bold?

"Say, canst thou, with unshrinking gaze,
Sustain, rash youth, the withering blaze
Of that unearthly eye,
That blasts where'er it lights,—the breath
That, like the Simoom, scatters death
On all that yet *can* die!

—"Darest thou confront that fearful form
That rides the whirlwind and the storm,
In wild unholy revel!
The terrors of that blasted brow,
Archangel's once,—though ruined now—
—Ay,—dar'st thou face THE DEVIL?"

"I dare!" the desperate youth replied,
And placed him by that Old Man's side,
In fierce and frantic glee,
Unblenched his cheek, and firm his limb:

—"No paltry juggling Fiend, but HIM,
—THE DEVIL! I fain would see!—

"In all his Gorgon terrors clad,
His worst, his fellest shape!" the Lad
Rejoined in reckless tone.—
—"Have then thy wish!" Agrippa said,
And sighed, and shook his hoary head,
With many a bitter groan.

He drew the Mystic circle's bound,
With skull and cross-bones fenced around;
He traced full many a sigil there;
He muttered many a backward pray'r,
That sounded like a curse—
"He comes!"—he cried with wild grimace,
"The fellest of Apollyon's race!"—
—Then in his startled pupil's face
He dashed—an EMPTY PURSE!!

Thomas De Quincey, one of the best of humorists wrote *Confessions of an Opium Eater*, with alas, all the necessary conditions to speak at first hand.

His clever essay, *Murder as a Fine Art*, we trust, was not founded on facts. This delightful bit of foolery, one of his many witty effusions, can be given only in part.

MURDER AS ONE OF THE FINE ARTS

The first murder is familiar to you all. As the inventor of murder, and the father of the art, Cain must have been a man of first-rate genius. All the Cains were men of genius. Tubal Cain invented tubes, I think, or some such thing. But, whatever might be the originality and genius of the artist, every art was then in its infancy, and the works must be criticised with the recollection of that fact. Even Tubal's work would probably be little approved at this day in Sheffield; and therefore of Cain (Cain senior, I mean) it is no disparagement to say, that his

performance was but so-so. Milton, however, is supposed to have thought differently. By his way of relating the case, it should seem to have been rather a pet murder with him, for he retouches it with an apparent anxiety for its picturesque effect:

> "Whereat he inly raged; and, as they talk'd,
> Smote him into the midriff with a stone
> That beat out life. He fell; and, deadly pale,
> Groan'd out his soul *with gushing blood effused*."

Upon this, Richardson the painter, who had an eye for effect, remarks as follows, in his *Notes on Paradise Lost*, p. 497: "It has been thought," says he, "that Cain beat—as the common saying is—the breath out of his brother's body with a great stone; Milton gives in to this, with the addition, however, of a large wound."

But it is time that I should say a few words about the principles of murder, not with a view to regulate your practice, but your judgment. As to old women, and the mob of newspaper readers, they are pleased with anything, provided it is bloody enough; but the mind of sensibility requires something more. *First*, then, let us speak of the kind of person who is adapted to the purpose of the murderer; *secondly*, of the place where; *thirdly*, of the time when, and other little circumstances.

As to the person, I suppose that it is evident that he ought to be a good man; because, if he were not, he might himself, by possibility, be contemplating murder at the very time; and such "diamond-cut-diamond" tussles, though pleasant enough when nothing better is stirring, are really not what a critic

can allow himself to call murders.

The subject chosen ought to be in good health: for it is absolutely barbarous to murder a sick person, who is usually quite unable to bear it. On this principle, no tailor ought to be chosen who is above twenty-five, for after that age he is sure to be dyspeptic. Or at least, if a man will hunt in that warren, he will of course think it his duty, on the old established equation, to murder some multiple of 9—say 18, 27, or 36. And here, in this benign attention to the comfort of sick people, you will observe the usual effect of a fine art to soften and refine the feelings. The world in general, gentlemen, are very bloody-minded; and all they want in a murder is a copious effusion of blood; gaudy display in this point is enough for *them*. But the enlightened connoisseur is more refined in his taste; and from our art, as from all the other liberal arts when thoroughly mastered, the result is, to humanise the heart.

A philosophic friend, well known for his philanthropy and general benignity, suggests that the subject chosen ought also to have a family of young children wholly dependent upon his exertions, by way of deepening the pathos. And, undoubtedly, this is a judicious caution. Yet I would not insist too keenly on such a condition. Severe good taste unquestionably suggests it; but still, where the man was otherwise unobjectionable in point of morals and health, I would not look with too curious a jealousy to a restriction which might have the effect of narrowing the artist's sphere.

So much for the person. As to the time, the place,

and the tools, I have many things to say, which at present I have no room for. The good sense of the practitioner has usually directed him to night and privacy. Yet there have not been wanting cases where this rule was departed from with excellent effect.

LORD BYRON, whose works are variously adjudged by the critics, owes much to the fact that he was possessed of a distinct and definite sense of humor.

It is that which saves many of his long and dull stretches of verse from utter unreadability.

His facile rhymes, apparently tossed off with little of or no effort, embody in the best possible manner his graceful fun.

The *ottava rima* of Don Juan, though often careless, even slovenly as to technical details, is surely the meter best fitted for the theme.

> Juan embarked—the ship got under way,
> The wind was fair, the water passing rough;
> A devil of a sea rolls in that bay,
> As I, who've crossed it oft, know well enough;
> And, standing upon deck, the dashing spray
> Flies in one's face, and makes it weather-tough;
> And there he stood to take, and take again,
> His first—perhaps his last—farewell of Spain.
>
> I can't but say it is an awkward sight
> To see one's native land receding through
> The growing waters; it unmans one quite,
> Especially when life is rather new.
> I recollect Great Britain's coast looks white,
> But almost every other country's blue,
> When gazing on them, mystified by distance,
> We enter on our nautical existence.
>
> So Juan stood, bewildered on the deck:

The wind sung, cordage strained, and sailors swore,
And the ship creaked, the town became a speck,
From which away so fair and fast they bore.
The best of remedies is a beef-steak
Against sea-sickness: try it, sir, before
You sneer, and I assure you this is true,
For I have found it answer—so may you.

"And oh! if e'er I should forget, I swear—
But that's impossible, and cannot be—
Sooner shall this blue ocean melt to air,
Sooner shall earth resolve itself to sea,
Than I resign thine image, oh, my fair!
Or think of anything excepting thee;
A mind diseased no remedy can physic."
(Here the ship gave a lurch and he grew sea-sick.)

"Sooner shall heaven kiss earth!" (Here he fell sicker.)
"Oh, Julia! what is every other woe?
(For God's sake let me have a glass of liquor;
Pedro, Battista, help me down below.)
Julia, my love! (you rascal, Pedro, quicker)
Oh, Julia! (this curst vessel pitches so)
Beloved Julia, hear me still beseeching!"
(Here he grew inarticulate with retching.)

He felt that chilling heaviness of heart,
Or rather stomach, which, alas! attends,
Beyond the best apothecary's art,
The loss of love, the treachery of friends,
Or death of those we dote on, when a part
Of us dies with them as each fond hope ends.
No doubt he would have been much more pathetic,
But the sea acted as a strong emetic.

AFTER SWIMMING THE HELLESPONT

If, in the month of dark December,
Leander, who was nightly wont
(What maid will not the tale remember?)
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont;

If, when the wint'ry tempest roar'd,
He sped to Hero nothing loath,
And thus of old thy current pour'd,

Fair Venus! how I pity both!

For *me*, degenerate, modern wretch,
Though in the genial month of May,
My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
And think I've done a feat to-day.

But since he crossed the rapid tide,
According to the doubtful story,
To woo—and—Lord knows what beside,
And swam for Love, as I for Glory;

'Twere hard to say who fared the best:
Sad mortals, thus the gods still plague you!
He lost his labour, I my jest;
For he was drowned, and I've the ague.

Thomas Hood, versatile alike in humorous or pathetic vein, was a prolific and successful punster. If the form could be forgiven anybody it must be condoned in his case. He also was apt at parody and often blended pathos and tragedy with his humorous work.

FAITHLESS NELLY GRAY

A PATHETIC BALLAD

Ben Battle was a soldier bold,
And used to war's alarms;
But a cannon-ball took off his legs,
So he laid down his arms!

Now, as they bore him off the field,
Said he, "Let others shoot,
For here I leave my second leg,
And the Forty-Second Foot!"

The army-surgeons made him limbs;
Said he, "they're only pegs:
But there's as wooden Members quite
As represent my legs!"

Now Ben he loved a pretty maid,
Her name was Nelly Gray;
So he went to pay her his devours,
When he devoured his pay!

But when he called on Nelly Gray,
  She made him quite a scoff;
And when she saw his wooden legs,
  Began to take them off!

"O, Nelly Gray! O, Nelly Gray!
  Is this your love so warm?
The love that loves a scarlet coat
  Should be more uniform!"

Said she, "I loved a soldier once,
  For he was blithe and brave;
But I will never have a man
  With both legs in the grave!

"Before you had those timber toes,
  Your love I did allow;
But then, you know, you stand upon
  Another footing now!"

"O, Nelly Gray! O, Nelly Gray!
  For all your jeering speeches;
At duty's call I left my legs,
  In Badajos's *breeches*!"

"Why then," said she, "you've lost the feet
  Of legs in war's alarms,
And now you cannot wear your shoes
  Upon your feats of arms!"

"O, false and fickle Nelly Gray!
  I know why you refuse:—
Though I've no feet—some other man
  Is standing in my shoes!

"I wish I ne'er had seen your face;
  But now, a long farewell!
For you will be my death;—alas!
  You will not be my *Nell*!"

Now when he went from Nelly Gray
  His heart so heavy got,
And life was such a burden grown,
  It made him take a knot!

So round his melancholy neck
  A rope he did entwine,
And, for his second time in life,

Enlisted in the Line.

One end he tied around a beam,
And then removed his pegs,
And, as his legs were off—of course
He soon was off his legs!

And there he hung, till he was dead
As any nail in town—
For though distress had cut him up,
It could not cut him down!

A dozen men sat on his corpse,
To find out why he died—
And they buried Ben in four cross-roads,
With a *stake* in his inside!

NO!

No sun—no moon!
No morn—no noon—
No dawn—no dusk—no proper time of day—
No sky—no earthly view—
No distance looking blue—
No road—no street—no "t'other side the way"—
No end to any Row—
No indications where the Crescents go—
No top to any steeple—
No recognitions of familiar people—
No courtesies for showing 'em—
No knowing 'em!
To travelling at all—no locomotion,
No inkling of the way—no notion—
No go—by land or ocean—
No mail—no post—
No news from any foreign coast—
No park—no ring—no afternoon gentility—
No company—no nobility—
No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,
No comfortable feel in any member—
No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees.
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds.
November!

The brothers James and Horace Smith, wrote what was in their day considered lively and amusing humor, but which seems a trifle dry to us. Their

greatest work was the *Rejected Addresses*, a series of parodies on the poets, such as Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, Scott, Moore and many others.

One of these, an imitation of Wordsworth's most simple style, succeeds in parodying his mawkish affectations of childish simplicity and nursery stammering.

THE BABY'S DÉBUT

[*Spoken in the character of Nancy Lake, a girl eight years of age, who is drawn upon the stage in a child's chaise by Samuel Hughes, her uncle's porter.*]

My brother Jack was nine in May,
And I was eight on New-Year's day;
  So in Kate Wilson's shop
Papa (he's my papa and Jack's)
Bought me, last week, a doll of wax,
  And brother Jack a top.

Jack's in the pouts, and this it is,—
He thinks mine came to more than his;
  So to my drawer he goes,
Takes out the doll, and, oh, my stars!
He pokes her head between the bars,
  And melts off half her nose!

Quite cross, a bit of string I beg,
And tie it to his peg-top's peg,
  And bang, with might and main,
Its head against the parlour-door:
Off flies the head, and hits the floor,
  And breaks a window-pane.

This made him cry with rage and spite:
Well, let him cry, it serves him right.
  A pretty thing, forsooth!
If he's to melt, all scalding hot,
Half my doll's nose, and I am not
  To draw his peg-top's tooth!

Aunt Hannah heard the window break,
And cried, "Oh naughty Nancy Lake,

Thus to distress your aunt:
No Drury-Lane for you to-day!"
And while papa said, "Pooh, she may!"
Mamma said, "No, she sha'n't!"

Well, after many a sad reproach,
They get into a hackney coach,
And trotted down the street.
I saw them go: one horse was blind,
The tails of both hung down behind,
Their shoes were on their feet.

The chaise in which poor brother Bill
Used to be drawn to Pentonville,
Stood in the lumber-room:
I wiped the dust from off the top,
While Molly mopp'd it with a mop,
And brush'd it with a broom.

My uncle's porter, Samuel Hughes,
Came in at six to black the shoes
(I always talk to Sam):
So what does he, but takes, and drags
Me in the chaise along the flags,
And leaves me where I am.

My father's walls are made of brick,
But not so tall, and not so thick
As these; and, goodness me!
My father's beams are made of wood,
But never, never half so good
As those that now I see.

What a large floor! 'tis like a town!
The carpet, when they lay it down,
Won't hide it, I'll be bound;
And there's a row of lamps!—my eye!
How they do blaze! I wonder why
They keep them on the ground.

At first I caught hold of the wing,
And kept away; but Mr. Thing-
um bob, the prompter man,
Gave with his hand my chaise a shove,
And said, "Go on, my pretty love;
Speak to 'em, little Nan.

"You've only got to curtsey, whisp-

er, hold your chin up, laugh, and lisp,
And then you're sure to take:
I've known the day when brats, not quite
Thirteen, got fifty pounds a night;
Then why not Nancy Lake?"

But while I'm speaking, where's papa?
And where's my aunt? and where's mamma?
Where's Jack? Oh, there they sit!
They smile, they nod; I'll go my ways,
And order round poor Billy's chaise,
To join them in the pit.

And now, good gentlefolks, I go
To join mamma, and see the show;
So, bidding you adieu,
I curtsey, like a pretty miss,
And if you'll blow to me a kiss,
I'll blow a kiss to you.

[*Blows a kiss, and exit.*

THE MILKMAID AND THE BANKER

A Milkmaid, with a pretty face,
Who lived at Acton,
Had a black cow, the ugliest in the place,
A crooked-backed one,
A beast as dangerous, too, as she was frightful,
Vicious and spiteful;
And so confirmed a truant that she bounded
Over the hedges daily and got pounded:
'Twas in vain to tie her with a tether,
For then both cow and cord eloped together.
Armed with an oaken bough—(what folly!
It should have been of thorn, or prickly holly),
Patty one day was driving home the beast,
Which had as usual slipped its anchor,
When on the road she met a certain Banker,
Who stopped to give his eyes a feast,
By gazing on her features crimsoned high
By a long cow-chase in July.

"Are you from Acton, pretty lass?" he cried;
"Yes"—with a courtesy she replied.
"Why, then, you know the laundress, Sally
Wrench?"
"Yes, she's my cousin, sir, and next-door
neighbor."

"That's lucky—I've a message for the wench
Which needs despatch, and you may save my
labor.
Give her this kiss, my dear, and say I sent it:
But mind, you owe me one—I've only lent it."
"She shall know," cried the girl, as she brandished
her bough,
"Of the loving intentions you bore me;
But since you're in haste for the kiss, you'll allow,
That you'd better run forward and give it my cow,
For she, at the rate she is scampering now,
Will reach Acton some minutes before me."

HORACE SMITH.

THE JESTER CONDEMNED TO DEATH

One of the Kings of Scanderoon,
A royal jester,
Had in his train a gross buffoon,
Who used to pester
The Court with tricks inopportune,
Venting on the highest folks his
Scurvy pleasantries and hoaxes.
It needs some sense to play the fool,
Which wholesome rule
Occurred not to our jackanapes,
Who consequently found his freaks
Lead to innumerable scrapes,
And quite as many kicks and tweaks,
Which only seemed to make him faster
Try the patience of his master.

Some sin, at last, beyond all measure,
Incurred the desperate displeasure
Of his serene and raging highness:
Whether he twitched his most revered
And sacred beard,
Or had intruded on the shyness
Of the seraglio, or let fly
An epigram at royalty,
None knows: his sin was an occult one,
But records tell us that the Sultan,
Meaning to terrify the knave,
Exclaimed, "'Tis time to stop that breath:
Thy doom is sealed, presumptuous slave!
Thou stand'st condemned to certain death:
Silence, base rebel! no replying!
But such is my indulgence still,

That, of my own free grace and will,
I leave to thee the mode of dying."

"Thy royal will be done—'tis just,"
Replied the wretch, and kissed the dust;
"Since, my last moments to assuage,
Your majesty's humane decree
Has deigned to leave the choice to me,
I'll die, so please you, of old age!"

HORACE SMITH.

It is to be regretted that the feminine writers of this period showed practically no evidence of humorous scintillation, but we have searched in vain through the writings of Ann and Jane Taylor, Mary Russell Mitford, Felicia Hemans and Letitia Elizabeth Landon,—finding only some unconscious humor, not at all intentional on the part of the authoresses, as they were then called.

William Maginn was also adept at parody, but his work was ephemeral.

The rollicking rhyme of the Irishman is among the most interesting of his poems.

THE IRISHMAN

There was a lady lived at Leith,
A lady very stylish, man,
And yet, in spite of all her teeth,
She fell in love with an Irishman,
A nasty, ugly Irishman,
A wild, tremendous Irishman,
A tearing, swearing, thumping, bumping, ranting, roaring Irishman.

His face was no ways beautiful,
For with small-pox 'twas scarred across,
And the shoulders of the ugly dog
Were almost double a yard across.
Oh, the lump of an Irishman,
The whisky-devouring Irishman,
The great he-rogue, with his wonderful brogue, the fighting, rioting Irishman!

One of his eyes was bottle-green,
And the other eye was out, my dear,
And the calves of his wicked-looking legs
Were more than two feet about, my dear.
Oh, the great big Irishman,
The rattling, battling Irishman,
The stamping, ramping, swaggering, staggering,
leathering swash of an Irishman!

He took so much of Lundy-foot
That he used to snort and snuffle, oh,
And in shape and size the fellow's neck
Was as bad as the neck of a buffalo.
Oh, the horrible Irishman,
The thundering, blundering Irishman,
The slashing, dashing, smashing, lashing,
thrashing, hashing Irishman!

His name was a terrible name indeed,
Being Timothy Thady Mulligan;
And whenever he emptied his tumbler of
punch,
He'd not rest till he'd filled it full again.
The boozing, bruising Irishman,
The 'toxicated Irishman,
The whisky, frisky, rummy, gummy, brandy, no-
dandy Irishman.

This was the lad the lady loved,
Like all the girls of quality;
And he broke the skulls of the men of Leith,
Just by the way of jollity.
Oh, the leathering Irishman,
The barbarous, savage Irishman!
The hearts of the maids and the gentlemen's heads
were bothered, I'm sure, by this Irishman.

Thomas Haynes Bayly, though not especially a humorist, showed the influence of a witty muse in his songs, which were numerous and popular.

She Wore a Wreath of Roses, *Oh, No, We Never Mention Her* and *Gaily the Troubadour Touched his Guitar* are among the best remembered.

He was the author of many bright bits of Society Verse, and wrote some deep and very real satire.

WHY DON'T THE MEN PROPOSE?

Why don't the men propose, mamma?
Why don't the men propose?
Each seems just coming to the point,
And then away he goes;
It is no fault of yours, mamma,
That everybody knows;
You *fête* the finest men in town,
Yet, oh! they won't propose.

I'm sure I've done my best, mamma,
To make a proper match;
For coronets and eldest sons,
I'm ever on the watch;
I've hopes when some *distingué* beau
A glance upon me throws;
But though he'll dance and smile and flirt,
Alas! he won't propose.

I've tried to win by languishing,
And dressing like a blue;
I've bought big books and talked of them
As if I'd read them through!
With hair cropp'd like a man I've felt
The heads of all the beaux;
But Spurzheim could not touch their hearts,
And oh! they won't propose.

I threw aside the books, and thought
That ignorance was bliss;
I felt convinced that men preferred
A simple sort of Miss;
And so I lisped out nought beyond
Plain "yesses" or plain "noes,"
And wore a sweet unmeaning smile;
Yet, oh! they won't propose.

Last night at Lady Ramble's rout
I heard Sir Henry Gale
Exclaim, "Now I *propose* again——"
I started, turning pale;
I really thought my time was come,
I blushed like any rose;
But oh! I found 'twas only at
Ecarté he'd propose.

And what is to be done, mamma?
Oh, what is to be done?

I really have no time to lose,
For I am thirty-one;
At balls I am too often left
Where spinsters sit in rows;
Why don't the men propose, mamma?
Why *won't* the men propose?

Frederick Marryat, oftener spoken of as Captain Marryat was among the most renowned writers of sea stories, and easily the most humorous of the authors who chose the sea for their fictional setting.

His books are well known in all households, and after Dickens there is probably no English novelist who has caused more real chuckles.

NAUTICAL TERMS

All the sailors were busy at work, and the first lieutenant cried out to the gunner, "Now, Mr. Dispart, if you are ready, we'll breech these guns."

"Now, my lads," said the first lieutenant, "we must slug (the part the breeches cover) more forward." As I never had heard of a gun having breeches, I was very curious to see what was going on, and went up close to the first lieutenant, who said to me, "Youngster, hand me that *monkey's tail*." I saw nothing like a *monkey's tail*, but I was so frightened that I snatched up the first thing that I saw, which was a short bar of iron, and it so happened that it was the very article which he wanted. When I gave it to him, the first lieutenant looked at me, and said, "So you know what a monkey's tail is already, do you? Now don't you ever sham stupid after that."

Thought I to myself, I'm very lucky, but if that's a monkey's tail, it's a very stiff one!

I resolved to learn the names of everything as fast

as I could, that I might be prepared, so I listened attentively to what was said; but I soon became quite confused, and despaired of remembering anything.

"How is this to be finished off, sir?" inquired a sailor of the boatswain.

"Why, I beg leave to hint to you, sir, in the most delicate manner in the world," replied the boatswain, "that it must be with a *double-wall*—and be damned to you—don't you know that yet? Captain of the foretop," said he, "up on your *horses*, and take your *stirrups* up three inches." "Aye, aye, sir." I looked and looked, but I could see no horses.

"Mr. Chucks," said the first lieutenant to the boatswain, "what blocks have we below—not on charge?"

"Let me see, sir. I've one *sister*, t'other we split in half the other day, and I think I have a couple of *monkeys* down in the store-room. I say, you Smith, pass that brace through the *bull's eye*, and take the *sheep-shank* out before you come down."

And then he asked the first lieutenant whether something should not be fitted with a *mouse* or only a *Turk's-head*—told him the *goose-neck* must be spread out by the armourer as soon as the forge was up. In short, what with *dead-eyes* and *shrouds*, *cats* and *cat-blocks*, *dolphins* and *dolphin-strikers, whips* and *puddings*, I was so puzzled with what I heard, that I was about to leave the deck in absolute despair.

"And, Mr. Chucks, recollect this afternoon that you *bleed* all the *buoys*."

Bleed the boys, thought I; what can that be for? At all events, the surgeon appears to be the proper person to perform that operation.

—Peter Simple.

Douglas Jerrold was an infant prodigy and later a noted playwright; beside being the author of the world famous Caudle lectures.

He was a celebrated wit and punster and though many epigrammatic sayings are wrongly attributed to him, yet he was the originator of as many more.

COLD MUTTON, PUDDING, PANCAKES

"What am I grumbling about, now? It's very well for you to ask that! I'm sure I'd better be out of the world than—there now, Mr Caudle; there you are again! I *shall* speak, sir. It isn't often I open my mouth, Heaven knows! But you like to hear nobody talk but yourself. You ought to have married a negro slave, and not any respectable woman.

"You're to go about the house looking like thunder all the day, and I'm not to say a word. Where do you think pudding's to come from every day? You show a nice example to your children, you do; complaining, and turning your nose up at a sweet piece of cold mutton, because there's no pudding! You go a nice way to make 'em extravagant—teach 'em nice lessons to begin the world with. Do you know what puddings cost; or do you think they fly in at the window?

"You hate cold mutton. The more shame for you, Mr. Caudle. I'm sure you've the stomach of a lord, you have. No, sir; I didn't choose to hash the mutton. It's very easy for you to say hash it; but *I* know what a joint loses in hashing: it's a day's dinner the less, if it's a bit. Yes, I dare say; other people may have puddings with cold mutton. No doubt of it; and other people become bankrupts. But if ever you get into

the *Gazette*, it sha'n't be *my* fault—no; I'll do my duty as a wife to you, Mr. Caudle; you shall never have it to say that it was *my* housekeeping that brought you to beggary. No; you may sulk at the cold meat—ha! I hope you'll never live to want such a piece of cold mutton as we had to-day! and you may threaten to go to a tavern to dine; but, with our present means, not a crumb of pudding do you get from me. You shall have nothing but the cold joint—nothing, as I'm a Christian sinner.

"Yes; there you are, throwing those fowls in my face again! I know you once brought home a pair of fowls; I know it; but you were mean enough to want to stop 'em out of my week's money! Oh, the selfishness—the shabbiness of men! They can go out and throw away pounds upon pounds with a pack of people who laugh at 'em afterward; but if it's anything wanted for their own homes, their poor wives may hunt for it. I wonder you don't blush to name those fowls again! I wouldn't be so little for the world, Mr. Caudle!

"What are you going to do? *Going to get up?* Don't make yourself ridiculous, Mr. Caudle; I can't say a word to you like any other wife, but you must threaten to get up. *Do* be ashamed of yourself.

"Puddings, indeed! Do you think I'm made of puddings? Didn't you have some boiled rice three weeks ago? Besides, is this the time of the year for puddings? It's all very well if I had money enough allowed me like any other wife to keep the house with; then, indeed, I might have preserves like any other woman; now, it's impossible; and it's cruel—yes, Mr. Caudle, cruel—of you to expect it.

"*Apples ar'n't so dear, are they?* I know what apples are, Mr. Caudle, without your telling me. But I

suppose you want something more than apples for dumplings? I suppose sugar costs something, doesn't it? And that's how it is. That's how one expense brings on another, and that's how people go to ruin.

"*Pancakes?* What's the use of your lying muttering there about pancakes? Don't you always have 'em once a year—every Shrove Tuesday? And what would any moderate, decent man want more?

"Pancakes, indeed! Pray, Mr. Caudle—no, it's no use your saying fine words to me to let you go to sleep; I sha'n't. Pray, do you know the price of eggs just now? There's not an egg you can trust to under seven and eight a shilling; well, you've only just to reckon up how many eggs—don't lie swearing there at the eggs in that manner, Mr. Caudle; unless you expect the bed to let you fall through. You call yourself a respectable tradesman, I suppose? Ha! I only wish people knew you as well as I do! Swearing at eggs, indeed! But I'm tired of this usage, Mr. Caudle; quite tired of it; and I don't care how soon it's ended!

"I'm sure I do nothing but work and labour, and think how to make the most of everything; and this is how I'm rewarded."

—*Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures.*

"Call that a kind man," said an actor of an absent acquaintance; "a man who is away from his family, and never sends them a farthing! Call that kindness!" "Yes, unremitting kindness," Jerrold replied.

Some member of "Our Club," hearing an air mentioned, exclaimed: "That always carries me away when I hear it." "Can nobody whistle it?" exclaimed Jerrold.

A friend said to Jerrold: “Have you heard about poor R—— [a lawyer]? His business is going to the devil.” Jerrold answered: “That’s all right: then he is sure to get it back again.”

If an earthquake were to engulf England to-morrow, the English would meet and dine somewhere just to celebrate the event.

Of a man who had pirated one of his jests, and who was described in his hearing as an honest fellow, he said, “Oh yes, you can trust him with untold jokes.”

Jerrold met Alfred Bunn one day in Piccadilly. Bunn stopped Jerrold, and said, “I suppose you’re strolling about, picking up character.” “Well, not exactly,” said Jerrold, “but there’s plenty lost hereabouts.”

Jerrold was seriously disappointed with a certain book written by one of his friends. This friend heard that he had expressed his disappointment. *Friend* (to Jerrold): “I heard you said it was the worst book I ever wrote.” *Jerrold*: “No, I didn’t. I said it was the worst book anybody ever wrote.”

Some one was talking with him about a gentleman as celebrated for the intensity as for the shortness of his friendships. “Yes,” said Jerrold, “his friendships are so warm, that he no sooner takes them up than he puts them down again.”

Thomas Moore, called the most successful Irishman of letters of the nineteenth century, early developed a taste for music and a talent for versification. To this add his native wit, and we have a humorist of no mean order.

He wrote epistles, odes, satires and songs with equal facility, and to these he added books of travel and biography and history.

His quick wit is shown in his lighter verse and epigrams.

NONSENSE

Good reader, if you e’er have seen,
  When Phœbus hastens to his pillow,
The mermaids with their tresses green
  Dancing upon the western billow;
    If you have seen at twilight dim,
    When the lone spirit’s vesper hymn
  Floats wild along the winding shore,
The fairy train their ringlets weave
  Glancing along the spangled green;—
    If you have seen all this, and more,
  God bless me! what a deal you’ve seen!

LYING

I do confess, in many a sigh,
My lips have breath’d you many a lie,
And who, with such delights in view,

Would lose them for a lie or two?

Nay—look not thus, with brow reproving:
Lies are, my dear, the soul of loving!
If half we tell the girls were true,
If half we swear to think and do,
Were aught but lying's bright illusion,
The world would be in strange confusion!
If ladies' eyes were, every one,
As lovers swear, a radiant sun,
Astronomy should leave the skies,
To learn her lore in ladies' eyes!
Oh no!—believe me, lovely girl,
When nature turns your teeth to pearl,
Your neck to snow, your eyes to fire,
Your yellow locks to golden wire,
Then, only then, can heaven decree,
That you should live for only me,
Or I for you, as night and morn,
We've swearing kiss'd, and kissing sworn.
And now, my gentle hints to clear,
For once, I'll tell you truth, my dear!
Whenever you may chance to meet
A loving youth, whose love is sweet,
Long as you're false and he believes you,
Long as you trust and he deceives you,
So long the blissful bond endures;
And while he lies, his heart is yours:
But, oh! you've wholly lost the youth
The instant that he tells you truth!

WHAT'S MY THOUGHT LIKE?

Quest.—Why is a Pump like Viscount
Castlereagh?
Answ.—Because it is a slender thing of wood,
That up and down its awkward arm doth sway,
And coolly spout, and spout, and spout away,
In one weak, washy, everlasting flood!

OF ALL THE MEN

Of all the men one meets about,
There's none like Jack—he's everywhere:
At church—park—auction—dinner—rout—
Go when and where you will, he's there.
Try the West End, he's at your back—
Meets you, like Eurus, in the East—

You're call'd upon for "How do, Jack?"
One hundred times a day, at least.
A friend of his one evening said,
As home he took his pensive way,
"Upon my soul, I fear Jack's dead—
I've seen him but three times to-day!"

ON TAKING A WIFE

"Come, come," said Tom's father, "at your time of life,
There's no longer excuse for thus playing the rake.—
It is time you should think, boy, of taking a wife."—
"Why, so it is, father,—whose wife shall I take?"

UPON BEING OBLIGED TO LEAVE A PLEASANT PARTY
FROM THE WANT OF A PAIR OF BREECHES TO DRESS FOR DINNER IN

Between Adam and me the great difference is,
Though a paradise each has been forced to resign,
That he never wore breeches till turn'd out of his,
While, for want of my breeches, I'm banish'd from mine.

Samuel Lover and Charles James Lever are two more versatile Irish authors, the latter being the most eminent of the Irish novelists.

Both wrote delightful light verse and many popular songs.

RORY O'MORE

Young Rory O'More courted young Kathleen Bawn.
He was bold as a hawk, and she soft as the dawn.
He wished in his heart pretty Kathleen to please,
And he thought the best way to do that was to tease.
"Now, Rory, be aisy," sweet Kathleen would cry,
Reproof on her lips, but a smile in her eye;
"With your tricks I don't know in troth what I'm about!
Faith! you've teased till I've put on my cloak inside out."

"Oh, jewel," says Rory, "that same is the way
You've thrated my heart for this many a day;
And 'tis plased that I am, and why not, to be sure,
For 'tis all for good luck," says bold Rory O'More.

"Indeed, then," says Kathleen, "don't think of the like,
For I half gave a promise to soothering Mike;
The ground that I walk on he loves, I'll be bound."
"Faith," says Rory, "I'd rather love you than the ground."
"Now, Rory, I'll cry if you don't let me go,
Sure, I dream every night that I'm hating you so."
"Oh!" says Rory, "that same I'm delighted to hear,
For dhrames always go by conthrairies, my dear;
Oh! jewel, keep dhraming that same till you die,
And bright morning will give dirty night the black lie.
And 'tis plased that I am, and why not, to be sure,
Since 'tis all for good luck," says bold Rory O'More.

"Arrah, Kathleen, my darlint, you've teased me enough,
And I've thrashed for your sake Dinny Grimes and
Jim Duff;
And I've made myself, drinking your health, quite
a baste,
So, I think, after that, I may talk to the praste."
Then Rory, the rogue, stole his arm round her neck,
So soft and so white, without freckle or speck!
And he looked in her eyes that were beaming with light;
And he kissed her sweet lips. Don't you think he
was right?
"Now, Rory, leave off, sir—you'll hug me no more
—
There's eight times to-day that you've kissed me before."
"Then here goes another," says he, "to make sure.
For there's luck in odd numbers," says Rory O'More.

SAMUEL LOVER.

LANTY LEARY

Lanty was in love, you see,
With lovely, lively Rosie Carey;

But her father can't agree
To give the girl to Lanty Leary.
Up to fun, "Away we'll run,"
Says she; "my father's so conthrairy.
Won't you follow me? Won't you follow me?"
"Faith, I will!" says Lanty Leary.

But her father died one day
(I hear 'twas not by dhrinkin' wather);
House and land and cash, they say,
He left by will to Rose his daughter;
House and land and cash to seize,
Away she cut so light and airy.
"Won't you follow me? Won't you follow me?"
"Faith, I will!" says Lanty Leary.

Rose, herself, was taken bad,
The fayver worse each day was growin';
"Lanty, dear," says she, "'tis sad,
To th' other world I'm surely goin'.
You can't survive my loss, I know,
Nor long remain in Tipperary.
Won't you follow me? Won't you follow me?"
"Faith, I won't!" says Lanty Leary.

SAMUEL LOVER.

WIDOW MALONE

Did you hear of the Widow Malone, ohone!
Who lived in the town of Athlone, ohone?
Oh! she melted the hearts of the swains in them parts,
So lovely the Widow Malone, ohone!
So lovely the Widow Malone.

Of lovers she had a full score, or more,
And fortunes they all had galore, in store;
From the minister down to the clerk of the crown,
All were courting the Widow Malone, ohone!
All were courting the Widow Malone.

But so modest was Mistress Malone, 'twas known,
That no one could see her alone, ohone!
Let them ogle and sigh, they could ne'er catch her eye,
So bashful the Widow Malone, ohone!
So bashful the Widow Malone.

Till one Mister O'Brien, from Clare—how quare!
It's little for blushing they care down there,
Put his arm round her waist—gave ten kisses at laste—
"Oh," says he, "you're my Molly Malone, my own!
Oh," says he, "you're my Molly Malone."

And the widow they all thought so shy, my eye!
Ne'er thought of a simper or sigh, for why?
"But, Lucius," says she, "since you've now made so free,
You may marry your Mary Malone, ohone!
You may marry your Mary Malone."

CHARLES LEVER.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed belongs to the small group of Londoners which also included Calverley and Locker-Lampson. At least one great critic considers Praed the greatest of this band, and so far as metric skill and finished execution are concerned, he may well be called so. Also, his taste is impeccable, and his society verse ranks among the best.

A SONG OF IMPOSSIBILITIES

Lady, I loved you all last year,
  How honestly and well—
Alas! would weary you to hear,
  And torture me to tell;
I raved beneath the midnight sky,
  I sang beneath the limes—
Orlando in my lunacy,
  And Petrarch in my rhymes.
But all is over! When the sun
  Dries up the boundless main,
When black is white, false-hearted one,
  I may be yours again!

When passion's early hopes and fears
  Are not derided things;
When truth is found in falling tears,
  Or faith in golden rings;
When the dark Fates that rule our way
  Instruct me where they hide
One woman that would ne'er betray,

One friend that never lied;
When summer shines without a cloud,
And bliss without a pain;
When worth is noticed in a crowd,
I may be yours again!

When science pours the light of day
Upon the lords of lands;
When Huskisson is heard to say
That Lethbridge understands;
When wrinkles work their way in youth,
Or Eldon's in a hurry;
When lawyers represent the truth,
Or Mr. Sumner Surrey;
When aldermen taste eloquence
Or bricklayers champagne;
When common law is common sense,
I may be yours again!

When Pole and Thornton honour cheques,
Or Mr. Const a rogue;
When Jericho's in Middlesex,
Or minuets in vogue;
When Highgate goes to Devonport,
Or fashion to Guildhall;
When argument is heard at Court,
Or Mr. Wynn at all;
When Sydney Smith forgets to jest,
Or farmers to complain;
When kings that are are not the best,
I may be yours again!

When peers from telling money shrink,
Or monks from telling lies;
When hydrogen begins to sink,
Or Grecian scrip to rise;
When German poets cease to dream,
Americans to guess;
When Freedom sheds her holy beam
On Negroes, and the Press;
When there is any fear of Rome,
Or any hope of Spain;
When Ireland is a happy home,
I may be yours again!

When you can cancel what has been,
Or alter what must be,
Or bring once more that vanished scene,

Those withered joys to me;
When you can tune the broken lute,
Or deck the blighted wreath,
Or rear the garden's richest fruit,
Upon a blasted heath;
When you can lure the wolf at bay
Back to his shattered chain,
To-day may then be yesterday—
I may be yours again!

William Makepeace Thackeray, combining all the highest mental and moral qualities in his work, adds thereto a delicate and subtle humor, never broad, but always forcible and original.

This permeates all his novels, which, of course, may not be quoted here, even in excerpts.

But Thackeray was equally happy in verse, and his contributions to London *Punch* are among the treasures of that journal's history.

LITTLE BILLEE

There were three sailors of Bristol City
Who took a boat and went to sea,
But first with beef and captain's biscuits,
And pickled pork they loaded she.

There was gorging Jack, and guzzling Jimmy,
And the youngest he was little Billee.
Now when they'd got as far as the Equator
They'd nothing left but one split pea.

Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy,
"I am extremely hungaree."
To gorging Jack says guzzling Jimmy,
"We've nothing left, us must eat we."

Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy,
"With one another we shouldn't agree!
There's little Bill, he's young and tender,
We're old and tough, so let's eat he."

"O Billy! we're going to kill and eat you,
So undo the button of your chemie."

When Bill received this information,
He used his pocket-handkerchie.

"First let me say my catechism,
Which my poor mother taught to me."
"Make haste! make haste!" says guzzling Jimmy,
While Jack pulled out his snicker-snee.

Then Bill went up to the main-top-gallant-mast,
And down he fell on his bended knee,
He scarce had come to the Twelfth Commandment
When up he jumps—"There's land I see!"

"Jerusalem and Madagascar,
And North and South Amerikee,
There's the British flag a-riding at anchor,
With Sir Admiral Napier, K. C. B."

So when they got aboard of the Admiral's,
He hanged fat Jack and flogged Jimmee,
But as for little Bill, he made him
The captain of a Seventy-three.

THE WOLFE NEW BALLAD OF JANE RONEY AND MARY BROWN

An igstrawnary tail I vill tell you this veek—
I stood in the Court of A'Beckett the Beak,
Vere Mrs. Jane Roney, a vidow, I see,
Who charged Mary Brown with a robbin' of she.

This Mary was pore and in misery once,
And she came to Mrs. Roney it's more than twelve monce
She adn't got no bed, nor no dinner, nor no tea,
And kind Mrs. Roney gave Mary all three.

Mrs. Roney kep Mary for ever so many veeks
(Her conduct disgusted the best of all Beax),
She kept her for nothink, as kind as could be,
Never thinking that this Mary was a traitor to she.

"Mrs. Roney, O Mrs. Roney, I feel very ill;
Will you jest step to the doctor's for to fetch me a pill?"
"That I will, my pore Mary," Mrs. Roney says she:
And she goes off to the doctor's as quickly as may be.

No sooner on this message Mrs. Roney was sped,
Than hup gits vicked Mary, and jumps out a bed;
She hopens all the trunks without never a key—
She bustes all the boxes, and vith them makes free.

Mrs. Roney's best linning gownds, petticoats, and close,
Her children's little coats and things, her boots and her hose,
She packed them, and she stole 'em, and avay vith them did flee
Mrs. Roney's situation—you may think vat it vould be!

Of Mary, ungrateful, who had served her this vay,
Mrs. Roney heard nothink for a long year and a day,
Till last Thursday, in Lambeth, ven whom should she see?
But this Mary, as had acted so ungrateful to she.

She was leaning on the helbo of a worthy young man;
They were going to be married, and were walkin' hand in hand;
And the church-bells was a ringing for Mary and he,
And the parson was ready, and a waitin' for his fee.

When up comes Mrs. Roney, and faces Mary Brown,
Who trembles, and castes her eyes upon the ground.
She calls a jolly pleaseman, it happens to be me;
I charge this young woman, Mr. Pleaseman, says she.

Mrs. Roney, o, Mrs. Roney, o, do let me go,
I acted most ungrateful I own, and I know,
But the marriage bell is ringin' and the ring you may see,
And this young man is a waitin' says Mary, says she.

I don't care three fardens for the parson and clark,
And the bell may keep ringing from noon day to dark.
Mary Brown, Mary Brown, you must come along

with me.
And I think this young man is lucky to be free.

So, in spite of the tears which bejewed Mary's
cheek,
I took that young gurl to A'Beckett the Beak;
That exlent justice demanded her plea—
But never a sullable said Mary said she.

On account of her conduck so base and so vile,
That wicked young gurl is committed for trile,
And if she's transpawted beyond the salt sea,
It's a proper reward for such willians as she.

Now, you young gurls of Southwark for Mary who
veep,
From pickin' and stealin' your 'ands you must keep,
Or it may be my dooty, as it was Thursday veek
To pull you all hup to A'Beckett the Beak.

WHEN MOONLIKE ORE THE HAZURE SEAS

When moonlike ore the hazure seas
In soft effulgence swells,
When silver jews and balmy breaze
Bend down the Lily's bells;
When calm and deap, the rosy sleap
Has lapt your soal in dreems,
R Hangeline! R lady mine!
Dost thou remember Jeames?

I mark thee in the Marble 'all,
Where England's loveliest shine—
I say the fairest of them hall
Is Lady Hangeline.
My soul, in desolate eclipse,
With recollection teems—
And then I hask, with weeping lips,
Dost thou remember Jeames?

Away! I may not tell thee hall
This soughring heart endures—
There is a lonely sperrit-call
That Sorrow never cures;
There is a little, little Star,
That still above me beams;
It is the Star of Hope—but ar!
Dost thou remember Jeames?

SORROWS OF WERTHER

Werther had a love for Charlotte
  Such as words could never utter.
Would you know how first he met her?
  She was cutting bread and butter.

Charlotte was a married lady,
  And a moral man was Werther,
And, for all the wealth of Indies,
  Would do nothing for to hurt her.

So he sighed and pined and ogled,
  And his passion boiled and bubbled,
Till he blew his silly brains out,
  And no more was by it troubled.

Charlotte, having seen his body
  Borne before her on a shutter,
Like a well-conducted person
  Went on cutting bread and butter.

Charles Dickens, in some senses the world's greatest humorist, is too much of a household word, to need either introduction or quotation.

Nor is it easy to quote from his books, which must be read in their entirety or in long instalments to get their message.

One short extract is given, from *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

MRS. GAMP'S APARTMENT

Mrs. Gamp's apartment in Kingsgate Street, High Holborn, wore, metaphorically speaking, a robe of state. It was swept and garnished for the reception of a visitor. That visitor was Betsy Prig; Mrs. Prig of Bartlemy's; or, as some said, Barklemy's; or, as some said, Bardlemy's; for by all these endearing and familiar appellations had the hospital of St. Bartholomew become a household word among the sisterhood which Betsy Prig adorned.

Mrs. Gamp's apartment was not a spacious one, but, to a contented mind, a closet is a palace; and the first-floor front at Mr. Sweedlepipe's may have been, in the imagination of Mrs. Gamp, a stately pile. If it were not exactly that to restless intellects, it at least comprised as much accommodation as any person not sanguine to insanity could have looked for in a room of its dimensions. For only keep the bedstead always in your mind, and you were safe. That was the grand secret. Remembering the bedstead, you might even stoop to look under the little round table for anything you had dropped, without hurting yourself much against the chest of drawers, or qualifying as a patient of St. Bartholomew by falling into the fire. Visitors were much assisted in their cautious efforts to preserve an unflagging recollection of this piece of furniture by its size, which was great. It was not a turn-up bedstead, nor yet a French bedstead, nor yet a four-post bedstead, but what is poetically called a tent; the sacking whereof was low and bulgy, insomuch that Mr. Gamp's box would not go under it, but stopped half way, in a manner which, while it did violence to the reason, likewise endangered the legs of a stranger. The frame, too, which would have supported the canopy and hangings, if there had been any, was ornamented with divers pippins carved in timber, which, on the slightest provocation, and frequently on none at all, came tumbling down, harassing the peaceful guest with inexplicable terrors. The bed itself was decorated with a patchwork quilt of great antiquity; and at the upper end, upon the side nearest to the door, hung a scanty curtain of blue check, which prevented the zephyrs that were abroad in Kingsgate Street from visiting Mrs. Gamp's head too roughly.

The chairs in Mrs. Gamp's apartment were extremely large and broad-backed, which was more than a sufficient reason for their being but two in number. They were both elbow-chairs of ancient mahogany, and were chiefly valuable for the slippery nature of their seats, which had been originally horsehair, but were now covered with a shiny substance of a bluish tint, from which the visitor began to slide away, with a dismayed countenance, immediately after sitting down. What Mrs. Gamp wanted in chairs she made up in band-boxes, of which she had a great collection, devoted to the reception of various miscellaneous valuables, which were not, however, as well protected as the good woman, by a pleasant fiction, seemed to think; for though every band-box had a carefully-closed lid, not one among them had a bottom, owing to which cause the property within was merely, as it were, extinguished. The chest of drawers having been originally made to stand upon the top of another chest, had a dwarfish, elfin look alone; but, in regard of security, it had a great advantage over the band-boxes, for as all the handles had been long ago pulled off, it was very difficult to get at its contents. This, indeed, was only to be done by one of two devices; either by tilting the whole structure forward until all the drawers fell out together, or by opening them singly with knives, like oysters.

Mrs. Gamp stored all her household matters in a little cupboard by the fireplace; beginning below the surface (as in nature) with the coals, and mounting gradually upwards to the spirits, which, from motives of delicacy, she kept in a teapot. The chimney-piece was ornamented with an almanac; it was also embellished with three profiles; one, in colors, of Mrs. Gamp herself in early life; one, in

bronze, of a lady in feathers, supposed to be Mrs. Harris, as she appeared when dressed for a ball; and one, in black, of Mr. Gamp deceased. The last was a full-length, in order that the likeness might be rendered more obvious and forcible, by the introduction of the wooden leg. A pair of bellows, a pair of pattens, a toasting-fork, a kettle, a spoon for the administration of medicine to the refractory, and lastly, Mrs. Gamp's umbrella, which, as something of great price and rarity, was displayed with particular ostentation, completed the decorations of the chimney-piece and adjacent wall.

William Edmonstoune Aytoun and Theodore Martin, two young men of brilliant brains, produced together the collection of burlesque and parodies known as *The Bon Gaultier Ballads*.

At this time, the middle of the eighteenth century, parody was greatly in vogue. The Ballads were whimsical, and as a whole, kindly. They were extremely popular, as much so as the Rejected Addresses, but today they seem dull and rather futile.

Another vogue of the day was Bathos, of which the following is a fair example.

THE HUSBAND'S PETITION

Come hither, my heart's darling,
  Come, sit upon my knee,
And listen, while I whisper
  A boon I ask of thee.
You need not pull my whiskers
  So amorously, my dove;
'T is something quite apart from
  The gentle cares of love.

I feel a bitter craving—
A dark and deep desire,
That glows beneath my bosom
Like coals of kindled fire.
The passion of the nightingale,
When singing to the rose,
Is feebler than the agony
That murders my repose!

Nay, dearest! do not doubt me,
Though madly thus I speak—
I feel thy arms about me,
Thy tresses on my cheek:
I know the sweet devotion
That links thy heart with mine,—
I know my soul's emotion
Is doubly felt by thine:

And deem not that a shadow
Hath fallen across my love:
No, sweet, my love is shadowless,
As yonder heaven above.
These little taper fingers—
Ah, Jane! how white they be!—
Can well supply the cruel want
That almost maddens me.

Thou wilt not sure deny me
My first and fond request;
I pray thee, by the memory
Of all we cherish best—
By all the dear remembrance
Of those delicious days,
When, hand in hand, we wandered
Along the summer braes:

By all we felt, unspoken,
When 'neath the early moon,
We sat beside the rivulet,
In the leafy month of June;
And by the broken whisper
That fell upon my ear,
More sweet than angel-music,
When first I woo'd thee, dear!

By that great vow which bound thee
For ever to my side,
And by the ring that made thee

My darling and my bride!
Thou wilt not fail nor falter,
But bend thee to the task—
A BOILED SHEEP'S-HEAD ON SUNDAY
Is all the boon I ask!

This extract is from a long poem, called:

THE LAY OF THE LOVELORN

PARODY ON TENNYSON'S "LOCKSLEY HALL"

Comrades, you may pass the rosy. With permission of the chair,
I shall leave you for a little, for I'd like to take the air

Whether 't was the sauce at dinner, or that glass of ginger beer,
Or these strong cheroots, I know not, but I feel a little queer.

Let me go. Now, Chuckster, blow me, 'pon my soul, this is too bad!
When you want me, ask the waiter, he knows where I'm to be had!

Whew! This is a great relief now! Let me but undo my stock,
Resting here beneath the porch, my nerves will steady like a rock.

In my ears I hear the singing of a lot of favorite tunes—
Bless my heart, how very odd! Why, surely there's a brace of moons!

See! the stars! how bright they twinkle, winking with a frosty glare,
Like my faithless cousin Amy when she drove me to despair.

O, my cousin, spider-hearted! Oh, my Amy! No, confound it!
I must wear the mournful willow,—all around my hat I've bound it.

Falser than the Bank of Fancy,—frailer than a shilling glove,

Puppet to a father's anger,—minion to a nabob's love!

Is it well to wish thee happy? Having known me, could you ever
Stoop to marry half a heart, and little more than half a liver?

Happy! Damme! Thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
Changing from the best of China to the commonest of clay.

As the husband is, the wife is,—he is stomach-plagued and old;
And his curry soups will make thy cheek the color of his gold.

When his feeble love is sated, he will hold thee surely then
Something lower than his hookah,—something less than his cayenne.

What is this? His eyes are pinky. Was't the claret? Oh, no, no,—
Bless your soul, it was the salmon,—salmon always makes him so.

Take him to thy dainty chamber—soothe him with thy lightest fancies,
He will understand thee, won't he?—pay thee with a lover's glances?

Louder than the loudest trumpet, harsh as harshest ophicleide,
Nasal respirations answer the endearments of his bride.

Sweet response, delightful music! Gaze upon thy noble charge
Till the spirit fill thy bosom that inspired the meek Laffarge.

Better thou wert dead before me,—better, better that I stood
Looking on thy murdered body, like the injured Daniel Good!

Better, thou and I were lying, cold and limber-stiff
and dead,
With a pan of burning charcoal underneath our
nuptial bed!

Cursed be the bank of England's notes, that tempt
the soul to sin!
Cursed be the want of acres,—doubly cursed the
want of tin!

Cursed be the marriage contract, that enslaved thy
soul to greed!
Cursed be the sallow lawyer, that prepared and
drew the deed!

Cursed be his foul apprentice, who the loathsome
fees did earn!
Cursed be the clerk and parson,—cursed be the
whole concern!

Charles Kingsley, a clergyman of attainments, possessed the same type of whimsical humor as the later and greater Lewis Carroll.

His *Water Babies* from which a short extract is given, is a classic in child literature.

THE PROFESSOR'S MALADY

They say that no one has ever yet seen a water-baby. For my part, I believe that the naturalists get dozens of them when they are out dredging, but they say nothing about them and throw them overboard again, for fear of spoiling their theories. But you see the professor was found out, as every one is in due time. A very terrible old fairy found the professor out. She felt his bumps, and cast his nativity, and took the lunars of him carefully inside and out; and so she knew what he would do as well as if she had seen it in a print book, as they say in the dear old west country. And he did it. And so he was found out beforehand, as everybody always is; and the old fairy

will find out the naturalists some day, and put them in the *Times*; and then on whose side will the laugh be?

So all the doctors in the country were called in to make a report on his case; and of course every one of them flatly contradicted the other: else what use is there in being men of science? But at last the majority agreed on a report, in the true medical language, one half bad Latin, the other half worse Greek, and the rest what might have been English, if they had only learned to write it. And this is the beginning thereof:

"The subanhypaposupernal anastomoses of peritomic diacellurite in the encephalo-digital region of the distinguished individual of whose symptomatic phenomena we had the melancholy honour (subsequent to a preliminary diagnostic inspection) of making an inspectorial diagnosis, presenting the interexclusively quadrilateral and antinomian diathesis known as Bumpsterhausen's blue follicles, we proceeded——"

But what they proceeded to do my lady never knew, for she was so frightened at the long words that she ran for her life, and locked herself into her bedroom, for fear of being squashed by the words and strangled by the sentence. A boa-constrictor, she said, was bad company enough; but what was a boa-constrictor made of paving-stones?

"It was quite shocking! What can they think is the matter with him?" said she to the old nurse.

"That his wit's just addled; maybe wi' unbelief and heathenry," quoth she.

"Then why can't they say so?"

And the heaven, and the sea, and the rocks and vales re-echoed, “Why, indeed?” But the doctors never heard them.

So she made Sir John write to the *Times* to command the chancellor of the exchequer for the time being to put a tax on long words:

A light tax on words over three syllables, which are necessary evils, like rats, but, like them, must be kept down judiciously.

A heavy tax on words over four syllables, as heterodoxy, spontaneity, spiritualism, spuriosity, etc.

And on words over five syllables (of which I hope no one will wish to see any examples), a totally prohibitory tax.

And a similar prohibitory tax on words derived from three or more languages at once, words derived from two languages, having become so common that there was no more hope of rooting out them than of rooting out peth-winds.

The chancellor of the exchequer, being a scholar and a man of sense, jumped at the notion, for he saw in it the one and only plan for abolishing Schedule D. But when he brought in his bill, most of the Irish members, and (I am sorry to say) some of the Scotch likewise, opposed it most strongly, on the ground that in a free country no man was bound either to understand himself or to let others understand him. So the bill fell through on the first reading, and the chancellor, being a philosopher, comforted himself with the thought that it was not the first time that a woman had hit off a grand idea, and the men turned up their stupid noses thereat.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, is conceded the gift of humor by some, but his other attributes so far outshine it that his amusing bits are hard to find. A moderately funny poem is:

THE GOOSE

I knew an old wife lean and poor,
Her rags scarce held together;
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,
He utter'd rhyme and reason,
"Here, take the goose, and keep you warm,
It is a stormy season."

She caught the white goose by the leg,
A goose—'twas no great matter.
The goose let fall a golden egg
With cackle and with clatter.

She dropt the goose, and caught the pelf,
And ran to tell her neighbours;
And bless'd herself, and cursed herself,
And rested from her labours.

And feeding high and living soft,
Grew plump and able-bodied;
Until the grave churchwarden doff'd,
The parson smirk'd and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,
She felt her heart grow prouder:
But, ah! the more the white goose laid
It clack'd and cackled louder.

It clutter'd here, it chuckled there;
It stirr'd the old wife's mettle;
She shifted in her elbow-chair,
And hurl'd the pan and kettle.

"A quinsy choke thy cursed note!"
Then wax'd her anger stronger.
"Go, take the goose, and wring her throat,
I will not bear it longer."

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the cat;
Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.
The goose flew this way and flew that,
And fill'd the house with clamour.

As head and heels upon the floor
They flounder'd all together,
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather:

He took the goose upon his arm,
He utter'd words of scorning;
"So keep you cold, or keep you warm,
It is a stormy morning."

The wild wind rang from park and plain,
And round the attics rumbled,
Till all the tables danced again,
And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,
The blast was hard and harder.
Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,
And a whirlwind cleared the larder.

And while on all sides breaking loose,
Her household fled the danger,
Quoth she, "The devil take the goose,
And God forget the stranger!"

Robert Browning, though scarcely to be called a humorous poet, had a fine wit and a quick and agile sense of whimsey.

His *Pied Piper of Hamelin*, written to amuse a sick child of Macready's, is a masterpiece of quiet humor. His satiric vein is shown in:

THE POPE AND THE NET

What, he on whom our voices unanimously ran,
Made Pope at our last Conclave? Full low his life began:
His father earned the daily bread as just a fisherman.

So much the more his boy minds book, gives proof

of mother-wit,
Becomes first Deacon, and then Priest, then Bishop: see him sit
No less than Cardinal ere long, while no one cries "Unfit!"

But some one smirks, some other smiles, jogs elbow and nods head;
Each wings at each: "I' faith, a rise! Saint Peter's net, instead
Of sword and keys, is come in vogue!" You think he blushes red?

Not he, of humble holy heart! "Unworthy me!" he sighs:
"From fisher's drudge to Church's prince—it is indeed a rise:
So, here's my way to keep the fact forever in my eyes!"

And straightway in his palace-hall, where commonly is set
Some coat-of-arms, some portraiture ancestral, lo, we met
His mean estate's reminder in his fisher-father's net!

Which step conciliates all and some, stops cavil in a trice:
"The humble holy heart that holds of new-born pride no spice!
He's just the saint to choose for Pope!" Each adds, "'Tis my advice."

So Pope he was: and when we flocked—its sacred slipper on—
To kiss his foot, we lifted eyes, alack, the thing was gone—
That guarantee of lowlihead,—eclipsed that star which shone!

Each eyed his fellow, one and all kept silence. I cried "Pish!
I'll make me spokesman for the rest, express the common wish.
Why, Father, is the net removed?" "Son, it hath caught the fish."

Frederick Locker-Lampson, though following in the footsteps of Praed, was a more famous writer of the rhymes known as Vers de Société.

There is no English equivalent for the French term, and attempts to coin one are usually failures. Society verse, Familiar Verse, Occasional verse,—each lacks somewhat of the real implication.

Locker-Lampson, himself a discerning and severe critic, instructs us that the rhymes should be short, graceful, refined and fanciful, not seldom distinguished by chastened sentiment, and often playful.

But, really, playfulness and light, bright humor are more a distinctive quality of Vers de Société than that dictum stipulates.

Wit is the keynote, fun the undercurrent of the best of the material so often collected under this name; and Locker-Lampson made the first and perhaps the best collection, under the title of *Lyra Elegantiarum*.

Typical of all that goes to make up the best form of Vers de Société is his poem,

MY MISTRESS'S BOOTS

They nearly strike me dumb,
And I tremble when they come
Pit-a-pat;
This palpitation means
These boots are Geraldine's—
Think of that!

Oh, where did hunter win
So delectable a skin
For her feet?
You lucky little kid,
You perished, so you did,
For my sweet!

The faëry stitching gleams
On the sides, and in the seams,
And it shows
The Pixies were the wags
Who tipt those funny tags
And these toes.

What soles to charm an elf!
Had Crusoe, sick of self,
Chanced to view
One printed near the tide,
Oh, how hard he would have tried
For the two!

For Gerry's debonair
And innocent, and fair
As a rose;
She's an angel in a frock,
With a fascinating cock
To her nose.

The simpletons who squeeze
Their extremities to please
Mandarins,
Would positively flinch
From venturing to pinch
Geraldine's.

Cinderella's *lefts and rights*,
To Geraldine's were frights;
And I trow,
The damsel, deftly shod,
Has dutifully trod
Until now.

Come, Gerry, since it suits
Such a pretty Puss (in Boots)
These to don;
Set this dainty hand awhile
On my shoulder, dear, and I'll
Put them on.

ON A SENSE OF HUMOUR

He cannot be complete in aught
Who is not humorously prone;
A man without a merry thought
Can hardly have a funny-bone.

SOME LADIES

Some ladies now make pretty songs,
  And some make pretty nurses;
Some men are great at righting wrongs
  And some at writing verses.

A TERRIBLE INFANT

I recollect a nurse call'd Ann,
  Who carried me about the grass,
And one fine day a fine young man
  Came up, and kiss'd the pretty lass.
She did not make the least objection!
    Thinks I, "*Aha!*
  When I can talk I'll tell Mamma"
—And that's my earliest recollection.

Charles Stuart Calverley is called the Prince of Parodists, but his genius deserves far higher praise than that.

His serious work is of a high order but it is for his humorous verse that he is most loved and praised.

His parodies while showing the best and finest burlesque qualities, are also poems in themselves, and are of an exquisite wit and a spontaneous humor rarely excelled.

One of the best is the ballad in which Rossetti's manner is parodied in very spirit.

BALLAD

PART I

The auld wife sat at her ivied door,
  (*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
A thing she had frequently done before;
  And her spectacles lay on her apron'd knees.

The piper he piped on the hilltop high,
  (*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
Till the cow said "I die," and the goose asked
"Why?"

And the dog said nothing, but search'd for fleas.

The farmer he strode through the square farmyard;
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
His last brew of ale was a trifle hard—
The connection of which the plot one sees.

The farmer's daughter hath frank blue eyes;
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
She hears the rooks caw in the windy skies.
As she sits at her lattice and shells her peas.

The farmer's daughter hath ripe red lips;
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
If you try to approach her, away she skips
Over tables and chairs with apparent ease.

The farmer's daughter hath soft brown hair;
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
And I met with a ballad, I can't say where,
Which wholly consisted of lines like these.

PART II

She sat with her hands 'neath her dimpled cheeks,
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
And spake not a word. While a lady speaks
There is hope, but she didn't even sneeze.

She sat, with her hands 'neath her crimson cheeks;
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
She gave up mending her father's breeks,
And let the cat roll in her new chemise.

She sat with her hands 'neath her burning cheeks,
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
And gazed at the piper for thirteen weeks;
Then she follow'd him o'er the misty leas.

Her sheep follow'd her, as their tails did them,
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
And this song is consider'd a perfect gem,
And as to the meaning, it's what you please.

Equally marvelous in its assured touch and utter lack of mere burlesque exaggeration is his parody of Browning.

THE COCK AND THE BULL

You see this pebble-stone? It's a thing I bought
Of a bit of a chit of a boy i' the mid o' the day.
I like to dock the smaller parts o' speech,
As we curtail the already cur-tail'd cur—
(You catch the paronomasia, play 'po' words?)
Did, rather, i' the pre-Landseerian days.
Well, to my muttons. I purchased the concern,
And clapt it i' my poke, having given for same
By way o' chop, swop, barter or exchange—
"Chop" was my snickering dandiprat's own term—
One shilling and fourpence, current coin o' the realm.
O-n-e one, and f-o-u-r four
Pence, one and fourpence—you are with me, sir?—
What hour it skills not: ten or eleven o' the clock,
One day (and what a roaring day it was
Go shop or sight-see—bar a spit o' rain!)
In February, eighteen, sixty-nine,
Alexandria Victoria, Fidei—
Hm—hm—how runs the jargon? being on the throne.
Such, sir, are all the facts, succinctly put,
The basis or substratum—what you will—
Of the impending eighty thousand lines.
"Not much in 'em either," quoth perhaps simple Hodge.
But there's a superstructure. Wait a bit.
Mark first the rationale of the thing:
Hear logic rivel and levigate the deed.
That shilling—and for matter o' that, the pence—
I had o' course upo' me—wi' me say—
(*Mecum's* the Latin, make a note o' that)
When I popp'd pen i' stand, scratch'd ear, wiped snout,
(Let everybody wipe his own himself)
Sniff'd—tch!—at snuff-box; tumbled up, teheed,
Haw-haw'd (not hee-haw'd, that's another guess thing),
Then fumbled at and stumbled out of, door.
I shoved the timber ope wi' my omoplat;
And *in vestibulo*, i' the lobby to wit
(Iacobi Facciolati's rendering, sir),
Donn'd galligaskins, antigropeloes,
And so forth; and, complete with hat and gloves,
One on and one a-dangle i' my hand,
And ombrifuge (Lord love you!), case o' rain,
I flopp'd forth, 'sbuddikins! on my own ten toes

(I do assure you there be ten of them),
And went clump-clumping up hill and down dale
To find myself o' the sudden i' front o' the boy.
But case I hadn't 'em on me, could I ha' bought
This sort-o'-kind-o'-what-you-might-call toy,
This pebble thing, o' the boy-thing? Q. E. D.
That's proven without aid from mumping Pope,
Sleek proporate or bloated Cardinal.
(Isn't it, old Fatchaps? You're in Euclid now.)
So, having the shilling—having i' fact a lot—
And pence and halfpence, ever so many o' them,
I purchased, as I think I said before,
The pebble (*lapis, lapidis,-di,-dem,-de*—
What nouns 'crease short i' the genitive, Fatchaps, eh?)
O' the boy, a bare-legg'd beggarly son of a gun,
For one and fourpence. Here we are again.
Now Law steps in, bigwigg'd, voluminous-jaw'd;
Investigates and re-investigates.
Was the transaction illegal? Law shakes head
Perpend, sir, all the bearings of the case.

At first the coin was mine, the chattel his.
But now (by virtue of the said exchange
And barter) *vice versa* all the coin,
Per juris operationem, vests
I' the boy and his assigns till ding o' doom;
(*In sæcula sæculo-o-o-rum*;
I think I hear the Abate mouth out that.)
To have and hold the same to him and them.
Confer some idiot on Conveyancing.

Whereas the pebble and every part thereof,
And all that appertaineth thereunto,
Quodcunque pertinet ad eam rem
(I fancy, sir, my Latin's rather pat),
Or shall, will, may, might, can, could, would or should
(*Subaudi cætera*—clap we to the close—
For what's the good of Law in a case o' the kind),
Is mine to all intents and purposes.
This settled, I resume the thread o' the tale.

Now for a touch o' the vendor's quality.
He says a gen'lman bought a pebble of him
(This pebble i' sooth, sir, which I hold i' my hand),
And paid for't, *like* a gen'lman, on the nail.
"Did I o'ercharge him a ha'penny? Devil a bit.

Fiddlepin's end! Get out, you blazing ass!
Gabble o' the goose. Don't bugaboo-baby *me*!
Go double or quits? Yah! tittup! what's the odds?"
There's the transaction view'd i' the vendor's light.

Next ask that dumpled hag, stood snuffling by,
With her three frowsy blowsy brats o' babes,
The scum o' the kennel, cream o' the filth-heap—
Faugh!
Aie, aie, aie, aie! οτοτοτοτοτοι
('Stead which we blurt out Hoighty toighty now),
And the baker and candlestickmaker, and Jack and
Jill,
Blear'd Goody this and queasy Gaffer that.
Ask the schoolmaster. Take schoolmaster first.

He saw a gentleman purchase of a lad
A stone, and pay for it *rite*, on the square,
And carry it off *per saltum*, jauntily,
Propria quae maribus, gentleman's property now
(Agreeably to the law explain'd above),
In proprium usum, for his private ends,
The boy he chuck'd a brown i' the air, and bit
I' the face the shilling; heaved a thumping stone
At a lean hen that ran cluck clucking by
(And hit her, dead as nail i' post o' door),
Then *abiit*—what's the Ciceronian phrase?—
Excessit, *evasit*, *erupit*—off slogs boy;
Off like bird, *avi similis*—you observed
The dative? Pretty i' the Mantuan!)—*Anglice*
Off in three flea skips. *Hactenus*, so far,
So good, *tam bene*. *Bene*, *satis*, *male*,—
Where was I with my trope 'bout one in a quag?
I did once hitch the syntax into verse:
Verbum personale, a verb personal,
Concordat—ay, "agrees," old Fatchaps—*cum*
Nominativo, with its nominative,
Genere, i' point o' gender, *numero*,
O' number, *et persona*, and person. *Ut*,
Instance: *Sol ruit*, down flops sun, *et*, and,
Montes umbrantur, out flounce mountains. Pah!
Excuse me, sir, I think I'm going mad.
You see the trick on 't though, and can yourself
Continue the discourse *ad libitum*.
It takes up about eighty thousand lines,
A thing imagination boggles at;
And might, odds-bobs, sir! in judicious hands,
Extend from here to Mesopotamy.

While the style of Jean Ingelow is thus genially made fun of.

LOVERS, AND A REFLECTION

In moss-prankt dells which the sunbeams flatter
(And heaven it knoweth what that may mean;
Meaning, however, is no great matter)
Where woods are a-tremble, with rifts atween;

Through God's own heather we wonned together,
I and my Willie (O love my love):
I need hardly remark it was glorious weather,
And flitterbats wavered alow, above:

Boats were curtseying, rising, bowing
(Boats in that climate are so polite),
And sands were a ribbon of green endowing,
And O the sun-dazzle on bark and bight!

Through the rare red heather we danced together,
(O love my Willie!) and smelt for flowers:
I must mention again it was glorious weather,
Rhymes are so scarce in this world of ours:—

By rises that flushed with their purple favors,
Through becks that brattled o'er grasses sheen,
We walked or waded, we two young shavers,
Thanking our stars we were both so green.

We journeyed in parallels, I and Willie,
In "fortunate parallels!" Butterflies,
Hid in weltering shadows of daffodilly
Or marjoram, kept making peacock's eyes:

Song-birds darted about, some inky
As coal, some snowy (I ween) as curds;
Or rosy as pinks, or as roses pinky—
They reck of no eerie To-come, those birds!

But they skim over bents which the mill-stream washes,
Or hang in the lift 'neath a white cloud's hem;
They need no parasols, no galoshes;
And good Mrs. Trimmer she feedeth them.

Then we thrid God's cowslips (as erst his heather)
That endowed the wan grass with their golden

blooms;
And snapt—(it was perfectly charming weather)—
Our fingers at Fate and her goddess-glooms:

And Willie 'gan sing—(O, his notes were fluty;
Wafts fluttered them out to the white-winged sea)—
Something made up of rhymes that have done much duty,
Rhymes (better to put it) of "ancientry":

Bowers of flowers encountered showers
In William's carol (O love my Willie!)
When he bade sorrow borrow from blithe To-morrow
I quite forget what—say a daffodilly:

A nest in a hollow, "with buds to follow,"
I think occurred next in his nimble strain;
And clay that was "kneaden" of course in Eden—
A rhyme most novel, I do maintain:

Mists, bones, the singer himself, love-stories,
And all least furlable things got "furled";
Not with any design to conceal their glories,
But simply and solely to rhyme with "world."

*****

O, if billows and pillows and hours and flowers,
And all the brave rhymes of an elder day,
Could be furled together this genial weather,
And carted, or carried on wafts away,
Nor ever again trotted out—ah me!
How much fewer volumes of verse there'd be!

ODE TO TOBACCO

Thou who, when fears attack,
Bid'st them avaunt, and Black
Care, at the horseman's back
Perching, unseatest;
Sweet when the morn is gray;
Sweet, when they've cleared away
Lunch; and at close of day
Possibly sweetest:

I have a liking old

For thee, though manifold
Stories, I know, are told,
Not to thy credit;
How one (or two at most)
Drops make a cat a ghost—
Useless, except to roast—
Doctors have said it:

How they who use fusees
All grow by slow degrees
Brainless as chimpanzees,
Meagre as lizards;
Go mad, and beat their wives;
Plunge (after shocking lives)
Razors and carving-knives
Into their gizzards.

Confound such knavish tricks!
Yet know I five or six
Smokers who freely mix
Still with their neighbors;
Jones—(who, I'm glad to say,
Asked leave of Mrs. J.)—
Daily absorbs a clay
After his labors.

Cats may have had their goose
Cooked by tobacco-juice;
Still why deny its use
Thoughtfully taken?
We're not as tabbies are:
Smith, take a fresh cigar!
Jones, the tobacco-jar!
Here's to thee, Bacon!

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson is better known as Lewis Carroll, though during his lifetime, the author of *Alice* was extremely careful to preserve a decided distinction between the College Don and the writer of nonsense.

Lewis Carroll was the first to produce coherent humor in the form of sheer nonsense, and his work, often imitated, has never been equaled.

Beside the *Alice* books he wrote several volumes

only a degree less wise and witty in the nonsense vein.

But few selections can be given.

JABBERWOCKY

(From *Through the Looking-Glass*)

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
  Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
  And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
  The jaws that bite, the claws that catch
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
  The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
  Long time the manxome foe he sought—
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
  And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
  The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
  And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
  The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
  He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
  Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
  He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
  Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
  And the mome raths outgrabe.

WAYS AND MEANS

I'll tell thee everything I can;
  There's little to relate.
I saw an aged aged man,
  A-sitting on a gate.
"Who are you, aged man?" I said,
  "And how is it you live?"

His answer trickled through my head
  Like water through a sieve.

He said, “I look for butterflies
  That sleep among the wheat:
I make them into mutton-pies,
  And sell them in the street.
I sell them unto men,” he said,
  “Who sail on stormy seas;
And that’s the way I get my bread—
  A trifle, if you please.”

But I was thinking of a plan
  To dye one’s whiskers green,
And always use so large a fan
  That they could not be seen.
So, having no reply to give
  To what the old man said,
I cried, “Come, tell me how you live!”
  And thumped him on the head.

His accents mild took up the tale;
  He said, “I go my ways
And when I find a mountain-rill
  I set it in a blaze;
And thence they make a stuff they call
  Rowland’s Macassar Oil—
Yet twopence-halfpenny is all
  They give me for my toil.”

But I was thinking of a way
  To feed oneself on batter,
And so go on from day to day
  Getting a little fatter.
I shook him well from side to side,
  Until his face was blue;
“Come, tell me how you live,” I cried,
  “And what it is you do!”

He said, “I hunt for haddock’s eyes
  Among the heather bright,
And work them into waistcoat-buttons
  In the silent night.
And these I do not sell for gold
  Or coin of silvery shine,
But for a copper halfpenny
  And that will purchase nine.

"I sometimes dig for buttered rolls,
Or set limed twigs for crabs;
I sometimes search the grassy knolls
For wheels of Hansom cabs.
And that's the way" (he gave a wink)
"By which I get my wealth—
And very gladly will I drink
Your Honor's noble health."

I heard him then, for I had just
Completed my design
To keep the Menai Bridge from rust
By boiling it in wine.
I thanked him much for telling me
The way he got his wealth,
But chiefly for his wish that he
Might drink my noble health.

And now if e'er by chance I put
My fingers into glue,
Or madly squeeze a right-hand foot
Into a left-hand shoe,
Or if I drop upon my toe
A very heavy weight,
I weep, for it reminds me so
Of that old man I used to know—
Whose look was mild, whose speech was slow,
Whose hair was whiter than the snow,
Whose face was very like a crow,
With eyes, like cinders, all aglow,
Who seemed distracted with his woe,
Who rocked his body to and fro,
And muttered mumblingly, and low,
As if his mouth were full of dough,
Who snorted like a buffalo—
That summer evening, long ago,
A-sitting on a gate.

SOME HALLUCINATIONS

He thought he saw an Elephant,
That practised on a fife:
He looked again, and found it was
A letter from his wife.
"At length I realize," he said,
"The bitterness of Life!"

He thought he saw a Buffalo

Upon the chimney-piece:
He looked again, and found it was
His Sister's Husband's Niece.
"Unless you leave this house," he said,
"I'll send for the Police!"

He thought he saw a Rattlesnake
That questioned him in Greek:
He looked again, and found it was
The Middle of Next Week.
"The one thing I regret," he said,
"Is that it cannot speak!"

He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk
Descending from the 'bus:
He looked again, and found it was
A Hippopotamus:
"If this should stay to dine," he said,
"There won't be much for us!"

Edward Lear, contemporary of Lewis Carroll, is the only peer of the great writer of nonsense.

Lear's nonsense is in different vein, but his verses are equally facile and felicitous and his prose quite as delightfully extravagant.

If Carroll's imagination was more exquisitely fanciful, Lear's had a broader scope, and both writers are masters of that peculiar combination of paradox and reasoning that makes for delightful surprise.

Lear was the first to make popular the style of stanza since called a Limerick, though the derivation of this name has never been satisfactorily determined.

There was an old man of Thermopylæ,
Who never did anything properly;
But they said: "If you choose
To boil eggs in your shoes,
You cannot remain in Thermopylæ."

There was an Old Man who said, "Hush!
I perceive a young bird in this bush!"

When they said, “Is it small?”
He replied, “Not at all;
It is four times as big as the bush!”

There was an Old Man who supposed
That the street door was partially closed;
But some very large Rats
Ate his coats and his hats,
While that futile Old Gentleman dozed.

There was an Old Man of Leghorn,
The smallest that ever was born;
But quickly snapt up he
Was once by a Puppy,
Who devoured that Old Man of Leghorn.

There was an Old Man of Kamschatka
Who possessed a remarkably fat Cur;
His gait and his waddle
Were held as a model
To all the fat dogs in Kamschatka.

THE TWO OLD BACHELORS

Two old Bachelors were living in one house
One caught a Muffin, the other caught a Mouse.
Said he who caught the Muffin to him who caught the Mouse,
“This happens just in time, for we’ve nothing in the house,
Save a tiny slice of lemon and a teaspoonful of honey,
And what to do for dinner,—since we haven’t any money?
And what can we expect if we haven’t any dinner
But to lose our teeth and eyelashes and keep on growing thinner?”

Said he who caught the Mouse to him who caught the Muffin,
“We might cook this little Mouse if we only had some Stuffin’!
If we had but Sage and Onions we could do extremely well,
But how to get that Stuffin’ it is difficult to tell!”

And then these two old Bachelors ran quickly to the town

And asked for Sage and Onions as they wandered
up and down;
They borrowed two large Onions, but no Sage was
to be found
In the Shops or in the Market or in all the Gardens
round.

But some one said, “A hill there is, a little to the
north,
And to its purpledicular top a narrow way leads
forth;
And there among the rugged rocks abides an
ancient Sage,—
An earnest Man, who reads all day a most
perplexing page.
Climb up and seize him by the toes,—all studious
as he sits,—
And pull him down, and chop him into endless
little bits!
Then mix him with your Onion (cut up likewise
into scraps),
And your Stuffin’ will be ready, and very good—
perhaps.”

And then these two old Bachelors, without loss of
time,
The nearly purpledicular crags at once began to
climb;
And at the top among the rocks, all seated in a
nook,
They saw that Sage a-reading of a most enormous
book.
“You earnest Sage!” aloud they cried, “your book
you’ve read enough in!
We wish to chop you into bits and mix you into
Stuffin’!”

But that old Sage looked calmly up, and with his
awful book
At those two Bachelors’ bald heads a certain aim
he took;
And over crag and precipice they rolled
promiscuous down,—
At once they rolled, and never stopped in lane or
field or town;
And when they reached their house, they found
(besides their want of Stuffin’)
The Mouse had fled—and previously had eaten up

the Muffin.

They left their home in silence by the once
convivial door;
And from that hour those Bachelors were never
heard of more.

Algernon Charles Swinburne, whose marvelous mastery of the lyric is well known, is not so noted as a humorist.

Yet his parodies are among the finest in the language. His day was the Golden Age of Parody, and the writers who achieved it were true poets and true wits.

This parody of Tennyson is alike a perfect mimicry of sound and sense.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM IN A NUTSHELL

One, who is not, we see: but one, whom we see
not, is;
Surely this is not that: but that is assuredly this.

What, and wherefore, and whence? for under is
over and under;
If thunder could be without lightning, lightning
could be without thunder.

Doubt is faith in the main: but faith, on the whole,
is doubt;
We cannot believe by proof: but could we believe
without?

Why, and whither, and how? for barley and rye are
not clover;
Neither are straight lines curves: yet over is under
and over.

Two and two may be four: but four and four are
not eight;
Fate and God may be twain: but God is the same
thing as fate.

Ask a man what he thinks, and get from a man

what he feels;
God, once caught in the fact, shews you a fair pair
of heels.

Body and spirit are twins: God only knows which is
which;
The soul squats down in the flesh, like a tinker
drunk in a ditch.

One and two are not one: but one and nothing is
two;
Truth can hardly be false, if falsehood cannot be
true.

Once the mastodon was: pterodactyls were
common as cocks;
Then the mammoth was God: now is He a prize ox.

Parallels all things are: yet many of these are
askew.
You are certainly I: but certainly I am not you.

Springs the rock from the plain, shoots the stream
from the rock;
Cocks exist for the hen: but hens exist for the cock.

God, whom we see not, is: and God, who is not, we
see;
Fiddle, we know, is diddle: and diddle, we take it,
is dee.

Swinburne's parody of his own work is beautifully done in

NEPHELIDIA

From the depth of the dreamy decline of the dawn
through a notable nimbus of nebulous
moonshine,
Pallid and pink as the palm of the flag-flower
that flickers with fear of the flies as they
float,
Are they looks of our lovers that lustrously lean
from a marvel of mystic miraculous
moonshine,
These that we feel in the blood of our blushes
that thicken and threaten with throbs
through the throat?

Thicken and thrill as a theatre thronged at appeal
of an actor's appalled agitation,
Fainter with fear of the fires of the future than
pale with the promise of pride in the past;
Flushed with the famishing fulness of fever that
reddens with radiance of rathe recreation,
Gaunt as the ghastliest of glimpses that gleam
through the gloom of the gloaming when
ghosts go aghast?
Nay, for the nick of the tick of the time is a
tremulous touch on the temples of terror,
Strained as the sinews yet strenuous with strife
of the dead who is dumb as the dust-heaps
of death;
Surely no soul is it, sweet as the spasm of erotic
emotional exquisite error,
Bathed in the balms of beatified bliss, beatific
itself by beatitude's breath.
Surely no spirit or sense of a soul that was soft to
the spirit and soul of our senses
Sweetens the stress of surprising suspicion that
sobs in the semblance and sound of a sigh;
Only this oracle opens Olympian, in mystical
moods and triangular tenses,—
"Life is the lust of a lamp for the light that is
dark till the dawn of the day when we die."
Mild is the mirk and monotonous music of
memory, melodiously mute as it may be,
While the hope in the heart of a hero is bruised
by the breach of men's rapiers, resigned to
the rod;
Made meek as a mother whose bosom-beats bound
with the bliss-bringing bulk of a balm-
breathing baby,
As they grope through the grave-yard of creeds,
under skies growing green at a groan for the
grimness of God.
Blank is the book of his bounty beholden of old,
and its binding is blacker than bluer:
Out of blue into black is the scheme of the skies,
and their dews are the wine of the
bloodshed of things:
Till the darkling desire of delight shall be free as a
fawn that is freed from the fangs that pursue
her,
Till the heart-beats of hell shall be hushed by a
hymn from the hunt that has harried the
kennel of kings.

Henry Austin Dobson, better known without his first name, was a skillful writer of beautiful *vers de société*.

He also wrote much in the French Forms and seemed to find them in no way trammeling.

ON A FAN

THAT BELONGED TO THE MARQUISE DE POMPADOUR

(Ballade)

Chicken-skin, delicate, white,
  Painted by Carlo Vanloo,
Loves in a riot of light,
  Roses and vaporous blue;
  Hark to the dainty *frou-frou*
Picture above, if you can,
  Eyes that could melt as the dew,—
This was the Pompadour's fan!

See how they rise at the sight,
  Thronging the *Œil de Bœuf* through,
Courtiers as butterflies bright,
  Beauties that Fragonard drew,
  Talon-rouge, falaba, queue,
Cardinal, duke,—to a man,
  Eager to sigh or to sue,—
This was the Pompadour's fan!

Ah, but things more than polite
  Hung on this toy, *voyez-vous*
Matters of state and of might,
  Things that great ministers do;
  Things that, maybe, overthrew
Those in whose brains they began;—
  Here was the sign and the cue,—
This was the Pompadour's fan!

Envoy

Where are the secrets it knew?
  Weavings of plot and of plan?
—But where is the Pompadour, too?
  This was the Pompadour's *fan*!

THE ROUNDEAU

You bid me try, Blue-eyes, to write
A Rondeau. What! forthwith?—tonight?
  Reflect? Some skill I have, 'tis true;
  But thirteen lines!—and rhymed on two!—
"Refrain," as well. Ah, hapless plight!
Still there are five lines—ranged aright.
These Gallic bonds, I feared, would fright
  My easy Muse. They did, till you—
                You bid me try!

That makes them eight.—The port's in sight;
'Tis all because your eyes are bright!
  Now just a pair to end in "oo,"—
  When maids command, what can't we do?
Behold! The Rondeau—tasteful, light—
                You bid me try!

Andrew Lang was perhaps the most versatile writer among English bookmen of his day. Verse or prose, religious research or translations, to each and all he gives his individual touch,—light, airy, humorous.

Fairies, Dreams and Ghosts are all his happy hunting ground, and he was one of the first to experiment with the old French Forms, in which he gave his own delightful fancy free play, while adhering strictly to the inflexible rules.

BALLAD OF THE PRIMITIVE JEST

I am an ancient Jest!
Paleolithic man
In his arboreal nest
The sparks of fun would fan;
My outline did he plan,
And laughed like one possessed,
'Twas thus my course began,
I am a Merry Jest.

I am an early Jest!
Man delved and built and span;
Then wandered South and West
The peoples Aryan,
I journeyed in their van;
The Semites, too, confessed,—

From Beersheba to Dan,—
I am a Merry Jest.

I am an ancient Jest,
Through all the human clan,
Red, black, white, free, oppressed,
Hilarious I ran!
I'm found in Lucian,
In Poggio, and the rest,
I'm dear to Moll and Nan!
I am a Merry Jest!

Prince, you may storm and ban—
Joe Millers *are* a pest,
Suppress me if you can!
I am a Merry Jest!

BALLADE OF LITERARY FAME

Oh, where are the endless Romances
Our grandmothers used to adore?
The knights with their helms and their lances,
Their shields and the favours they wore?
And the monks with their magical lore?
They have passed to Oblivion and *Nox*,
They have fled to the shadowy shore,—
They are all in the Fourpenny Box!

And where the poetical fancies
Our fathers rejoiced in, of yore?
The lyric's melodious expanses,
The epics in cantos a score,
They have been and are not: no more
Shall the shepherds drive silvery flocks,
Nor the ladies their languors deplore,—
They are all in the Fourpenny Box!

And the music! The songs and the dances?
The tunes that time may not restore?
And the tomes where Divinity prances?
And the pamphlets where heretics roar?
They have ceased to be even a bore,—
The Divine, and the Sceptic who mocks,—
They are "cropped," they are "foxed" to the core,
They are all in the Fourpenny Box!

Envoy

Suns beat on them; tempests downpour,

On the chest without cover or locks,
Where they lie by the Bookseller's door,—
They are *all* in the Fourpenny Box!

William Schwenck Gilbert began as a youth his humorous contributions to magazines, which included the immortal *Bab Ballads*.

Ten years later he joined forces with the composer, Arthur Sullivan, and the result of this collaboration was the well known series of operas of which *Trial By Jury* was the first.

Gilbert is second to none in humorous paradoxical thought and sprightly and clever versification. His themes, subtle and fantastic, are worked out with a serious absurdity as truly witty as it is charming.

THE MIGHTY MUST

Come mighty Must!
  Inevitable Shall!
In thee I trust.
  Time weaves my coronal!
Go mocking Is!
  Go disappointing Was!
That I am this
  Ye are the cursed cause!
Yet humble second shall be first,
    I ween;
And dead and buried be the curst
    Has Been!

Of weak Might Be!
  Oh, May, Might, Could, Would, Should!
How powerless ye
  For evil or for good!
In every sense
  Your moods I cheerless call,
Whate'er your tense
  Ye are imperfect, all!
Ye have deceived the trust I've shown
    In ye!
Away! The Mighty Must alone
    Shall be!

TO THE TERRESTRIAL GLOBE

By a Miserable Wretch.

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!
Through pathless realms of Space
Roll on!
What though I'm in a sorry case?
What though I cannot meet my bills?
What though I suffer toothache's ills?
What though I swallow countless pills?
Never *you* mind!
Roll on!

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!
Through seas of inky air,
Roll on!
It's true I have no shirts to wear;
It's true my butcher's bill is due;
It's true my prospects all look blue—
But don't let that unsettle you:
Never *you* mind!
Roll on!

(*It rolls on*).

GENTLE ALICE BROWN

It was a robber's daughter, and her name was Alice Brown,
Her father was the terror of a small Italian town;
Her mother was a foolish, weak, but amiable old thing;
But it isn't of her parents that I'm going for to sing.

As Alice was a-sitting at her window-sill one day
A beautiful young gentleman he chanced to pass that way;
She cast her eyes upon him, and he looked so good and true,
That she thought, "I could be happy with a gentleman like you!"

And every morning passed her house that cream of gentlemen;
She knew she might expect him at a quarter unto ten,
A sorter in the Custom House it was his daily road
(The Custom House was fifteen minutes' walk from her abode).

But Alice was a pious girl and knew it was not wise
To look at strange young sorters with expressive
purple eyes,
So she sought the village priest to whom her family
confessed—
The priest by whom their little sins were carefully
assessed.

"Oh holy father," Alice said, "'twould grieve you,
would it not?
To discover that I was a most disreputable lot!
Of all unhappy sinners I'm the most unhappy one!"
The padre said "Whatever have you been and gone
and done?"

"I have helped mamma to steal a little kiddy from
its dad,
I've assisted dear papa in cutting up a little lad.
I've planned a little burglary and forged a little
cheque,
And slain a little baby for the coral on its neck!"

The worthy pastor heaved a sigh, and dropped a
silent tear—
And said "You mustn't judge yourself too heavily,
my dear—
It's wrong to murder babies, little corals for to
fleece;
But sins like these one expiates at half-a-crown
apiece.

"Girls will be girls—you're very young and flighty
in your mind;
Old heads upon young shoulders we must not
expect to find:
We mustn't be too hard upon these little girlish
tricks—
Let's see—five crimes at half a crown—exactly
twelve-and six."

"Oh father," little Alice cried, "your kindness
makes me weep,
You do these little things for me so singularly
cheap—
Your thoughtful liberality I never can forget;
But, oh, there is another crime I haven't mentioned
yet!

"A pleasant-looking gentleman, with pretty purple
eyes,—
I've noticed at my window, as I've sat a-catching
flies;
He passes by it every day as certain as can be—
I blush to say I've winked at him, and he has
winked at me!"

"For shame," said Father Paul, "my erring
daughter! On my word
This is the most distressing news that I have ever
heard.
Why, naughty girl, your excellent papa has pledged
your hand
To a promising young robber, the lieutenant of his
band!

"This dreadful piece of news will pain your worthy
parents so!
They are the most remunerative customers I know;
For many, many years they've kept starvation from
my doors,
I never knew so criminal a family as yours!

"The common country folk in this insipid
neighbourhood
Have nothing to confess, they're so ridiculously
good;
And if you marry anyone respectable at all,
Why, you'll reform, and what will then become of
Father Paul?"

The worthy priest, he up and drew his cowl upon
his crown,
And started off in haste to tell the news to Robber
Brown;
To tell him how his daughter, who was now for
marriage fit,
Had winked upon a sorter, who reciprocated it.

Good Robber Brown he muffled up his anger pretty
well,
He said, "I have a notion, and that notion I will
tell;
I will nab this gay young sorter, terrify him into
fits,
And get my gentle wife to chop him into little bits.

"I've studied human nature, and I know a thing or two;
Though a girl may fondly love a living gent, as many do,
A feeling of disgust upon her senses there will fall
When she looks upon his body chopped
particularly small."

He traced that gallant sorter to a still suburban square;
He watched his opportunity and seized him unaware;
He took a life preserver and he hit him on the head,
And Mrs. Brown dissected him before she went to bed.

And pretty little Alice grew more settled in her mind,
She never more was guilty of a weakness of the kind,
Until at length good Robber Brown bestowed her
pretty hand
On the promising young robber, the lieutenant of
his band.

Francis C. Burnand, writer of many comedies and burlesques, was a long time editor of *Punch* and wrote much of his best work for that paper.

One of his most delightful songs, so successfully sung by the Vokes family is:

TRUE TO POLL

I'll sing you a song, not very long,
But the story somewhat new
Of William Kidd, who, whatever he did,
To his Poll was always true.
He sailed away in a galliant ship
From the port of old Bris*tol*,
And the last words he uttered,
As his hankercher he fluttered,
Were, "My heart is true to Poll."

His heart was true to Poll,
His heart was true to Poll.

It's no matter what you do
If your heart be only true:
And his heart *was* true to Poll.

'Twas a wreck. Willi*am*, on shore he swam,
And looked about for an inn;
When a noble savage lady, of a colour rather shady,
Came up with a kind of grin:
"Oh, marry *me*, and a king you'll be,
And in a palace loll;
Or we'll eat you willy-nilly."
So he gave his *hand*, did Billy,
But his *heart* was true to Poll.

Away a twelvemonth sped, and a happy life he led
As the King of the Kikeryboos;
His paint was red and yellar, and he used a big umbrella,
And he wore a pair of over-*shoes*!
He'd corals and knives, and twenty-six wives,
Whose beauties I cannot here extol;
One day they all revolted,
So he back to Bristol bolted,
For his *heart* was true to Poll.

His heart was true to Poll,
His heart was true to Poll.
It's no matter what you do,
If your heart be only true:
And his *heart* was true to Poll.

William Ernest Henley, though better known for his serious work, waxed humorous, especially when making excursions into the artificial verse forms.

VILLANELLE

Now ain't they utterly too-too
(She ses, my Missus mine, ses she)
Them flymy little bits of Blue.

Joe, just you kool 'em—nice and skew
Upon our old meogginee,
Now ain't they utterly too-too?

They're better than a pot'n' a screw,

They're equal to a Sunday spree,
Them flymy little bits of Blue!

Suppose I put 'em up the flue,
And booze the profits, Joe? Not me.
Now ain't they utterly too-too?

I do the 'Igh Art fake, I do.
Joe, I'm consummate; and I *see*
Them flymy little bits of Blue.

Which, Joe, is why I ses to you—
Æsthetic-like, and limp, and free—
Now *ain't* they utterly too-too,
Them flymy little bits of Blue?

Robert Louis Stevenson's humor consists in an extravagance and whimsicality of thought and expression and is usually subservient to a greater intent.

His delightful *Child's Verses* show quiet roguery and humorous conceits.

The lovely cow, all red and white,
I love with all my heart;
She gives me milk with all her might
To eat on apple tart.

The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

This original style of Juvenile verse, often imitated, has rarely been successful in the hands of lesser artists.

James Matthew Barrie, one of the finest English humorists, may not be quoted successfully because his work is only found in sustained stories or plays, and few brief extracts will bear separation from their contexts.

A short passage from *A Window in Thrums* will hint at the delightfulness of Barrie's humor.

A HUMOURIST ON HIS CALLING

Tammas put his foot on the pail.

"I tak no credit," he said modestly, on the evening, I remember, of Willie Pyatt's funeral, "in bein' able to speak wi' a sort o' faceelity on topics 'at I've made my ain."

"Aye," said T'nowhead, "but it's no faceelity o' speakin' 'at taks me. There's Davit Lunan 'at can speak like as if he had learned if aff a paper, an' yet I canna thole 'im."

"Davit," said Hendry, "doesna speak in a wy 'at a body can follow 'im. He doesna gae even on. Jess says he's juist like a man aye at the cross-roads, an' no sure o' his way. But the stock has words, an' no ilka body has that."

"If I was bidden to put Tammas's gift in a word," said T'nowhead, "I would say 'at he had a wy. That's what I would say."

"Weel, I suppose I have," Tammas admitted, "but, wy or no wy, I couldna put a point on my words if it wasna for my sense o' humour. Lads, humour's what gies the nip to speakin'."

"It's what maks ye a sarcesticist, Tammas," said Hendry; "but what I wonder at is yer sayin' the humorous things sae aisy-like. Some says ye mak them up aforehand, but I ken that's no true."

"No, only is't no true," said Tammas, "but it couldna be true. Them 'at says sic things, an' weel I ken you're meanin' Davit Lunan, hasna nae idea o' what humour is. It's a thing 'at spouts oot o' its ain accord. Some o' the maist humorous things I've ever said cam oot, as a body may say, by themselves."

“I suppose that’s the case,” said T’nowhead; “an’ yet it maun be you ’at brings them up?”

“There’s no nae doubt about its bein’ the case,” said Tammas; “for I’ve watched mysel’ often. There was a vera guid instance occurred sune after I married Easie. The earl’s son met me one day, aboot that time, i’ the Tenements, an’ he didna ken ’at Chirsty was deid, an’ I’d married again. ‘Well, Haggart,’ he says, in his frank wy, ‘and how is your wife?’ ‘She’s vera weel, sir,’ I maks answer, ‘but she’s no the ane you mean.’”

“Na, he meant Chirsty,” said Hendry.

“Is that a’ the story?” asked T’nowhead

Tammas had been looking at us queerly.

“There’s no nane o’ ye lauchin’,” he said, “but I can assure ye the earl’s son gaed east the toon lauchin’ like onything.”

“But what was’t he lauched at?”

“Ou,” said Tammas, “a humourist doesna tell whaur the humour comes in.”

“No, but when you said that, did ye mean it to be humourous?”

“Am no sayin’ I did, but as I’ve been tellin’ ye humour spouts oot by itsel’.”

“Aye, but do ye ken noo what the earl’s son gaed awa lauchin’ at?”

Tammas hesitated.

“I dinna exactly see’t,” he confessed, “but that’s no an oncommon thing. A humourist would often no ken ’at he was are if it wasna by the wy he maks other fowk lauch. A body canna be expeckit baith to

mak the joke an' to see't. Na, that would be doin' twa fowks' wark."

"Weel, that's reasonable enough, but I've often seen ye lauchin'," said Hendry, "lang afore other fowk lauched."

"Nae doubt," Tammas explained, "an' that's because humour has twa sides, juist like a penny piece. When I say a humorous thing mysel' I'm dependent on other fowk to tak note o' the humour o't, bein' mysel' taen up wi' the makkin' o't. Aye, but there's things I see an' hear at' maks me laucht, an' that's the other side o' humour."

"I never heard it put sae plain afore," said T'nowhead, "an', sal, am no nane sure but what am a humourist too."

"Na, na, no you, T'nowhead," said Tammas hotly.

Sir Owen Seaman, present editor of *Punch*, is also one of the finest parodists of all time. His humorous verse of all varieties is in the first rank.

A NOCTURNE AT DANIELI'S

(Suggested by Browning's *A Toccata of Galuppi's*.)

Caro mio, Pulcinello, kindly hear my wail of woe
Lifted from a noble structure—late Palazzo
Dandolo.

This is Venice, you will gather, which is full of
precious "stones,"
Tintorettos, picture-postcards, and remains of
Doges' bones.

Not of these am I complaining; they are mostly
seen by day,
And they only try your patience in an inoffensive

way.

But at night, when over Lido rises Dian (that's the moon),
And the vicious *vaporetti* cease to vex the still lagoon;

When the final *trovatore*, singing something old and cheap,
Hurls his *tremolo crescendo* full against my beauty sleep;

When I hear the Riva's loungers in debate beneath my bower
Summing up (about 1.30) certain questions of the hour;

Then across my nervous system falls the shrill mosquito's boom,
And it's "O, to be in England," where the may is on the bloom.

I admit the power of Music to inflate the savage breast—
There are songs devoid of language which are quite among the best;

But the present orchestration, with its poignant oboe part,
Is, in my obscure opinion, barely fit to rank as Art.

Will it solace me to-morrow, being hit in either eye,
To be told that this is nothing to the season in July?

Shall I go for help to Ruskin? Would it ease my pimply brow
If I found the doges suffered much as I am suffering now?

If identical probosces pinked the lovers who were bored
By the sentimental tinkling of Galuppi's clavichord?

That's from Browning (Robert Browning)—I have left his works at home,

And the poem I allude to isn't in the Tauchnitz tome;

But, if memory serves me rightly, he was very much concerned
At the thought that in the sequel Venice reaped what Venice earned.

Was he thinking of mosquitoes? Did he mean *their* poisoned crop?
Was it through ammonia tincture that "the kissing had to stop"?

As for later loves—for Venice never quite mislaid her spell—
Madame Sand and dear De Musset occupied my own hotel!

On the very floor below me, I have heard the patron say,
They were put in No. 13 (No. 36, to-day).

But they parted—"*elle et lui*" did—and it now occurs to me
That mosquitoes came between them in this "kingdom by the sea."

Poor dead lovers, and such brains, too! What am I that I should swear
When the creatures munch my forehead, taking more than I can spare?

Should I live to meet the morning, should the climate readjust
Any reparable fragments left upon my outer crust,

Why, at least I still am extant, and a dog that sees the sun
Has the pull of Danieli's den of "lions," dead and done.

Courage! I will keep my vigil on the balcony till day
Like a knight in full pyjamas who would rather run away.

Courage! let me ope the casement, let the shutters be withdrawn;

Let scirocco, breathing on me, check a tendency to yawn;
There's the sea! and—*Ecco l'alba!* Ha! (in other words) the Dawn!

TO JULIA UNDER LOCK AND KEY

(A form of betrothal gift in America is an anklet secured by a padlock, of which the other party keeps the key.)

When like a bud my Julia blows
In lattice-work of silken hose,
Pleasant I deem it is to note
How, 'neath the nimble petticoat,
Above her fairy shoe is set
The circumvolving zonulet.
And soothly for the lover's ear
A perfect bliss it is to hear
About her limb so lithe and lank
My Julia's ankle-bangle clank.
Not rudely tight, for 'twere a sin
To corrugate her dainty skin;
Nor yet so large that it might fare
Over her foot at unaware;
But fashioned nicely with a view
To let her airy stocking through:
So as, when Julia goes to bed,
Of all her gear disburdenèd,
This ring at least she shall not doff
Because she cannot take it off.
And since thereof I hold the key,
She may not taste of liberty,
Not though she suffer from the gout,
Unless I choose to let her out.

AT THE SIGN OF THE COCK

(FRENCH STYLE, 1898)

(*Being an Ode in further "Contribution to the Song of French History," dedicated, without malice or permission, to Mr. George Meredith*)

I

Rooster her sign,
Rooster her pugnant note, she struts
Evocative, amazon spurs aprick at heel;
Nid-nod the authentic stump
Of the once ensanguined comb vermeil as wine;
With conspuent doodle-doo
Hails breach o' the hectic dawn of yon New Year,
Last issue up to date
Of quiverful Fate
Evolved spontaneous; hails with tonant trump
The spiriting prime o' the clashed carillon-peal;
Ruffling her caudal plumes derisive of scuts;
Inconscient how she stalks an immarcessibly absurd
Bird.

II

Mark where her Equatorial Pioneer
Delirant on the tramp goes littoralwise.
His Flag at furl, portmanteaued; drains to the dregs
The penultimate brandy-bottle, coal-on-the-head-piece gift
Of who avenged the Old Sea-Rover's smirch.
Marchant he treads the all-along of inarable drift
On dubiously connivent legs,
The facile prey of predatory flies;
Panting for further; sworn to lurch
Empirical on to the Menelik-buffered, enhavened blue,
Rhyming—see Cantique I.—with doodle-doo.

III

Infuriate she kicked against Imperial fact;
Vulnant she felt
What pin-stab should have stained Another's pelt
Puncture her own Colonial lung-balloon,
Volant to nigh meridian. Whence rebuffed,
The perjured Scythian she lacked
At need's pinch, sick with spleen of the rudely cuffed
Below her breath she cursed; she cursed the hour
When on her spring for him the young Tyrannical broke
Amid the unhallowed wedlock's vodka-shower,
She passionate, he dispassionate; tricked
Her wits to eye-blind; borrowed the ready as for dower;

Till from the trance of that Hymettus-moon
She woke,
A nuptial-knotted derelict;
Pensioned with Rescripts other aid declined
By the plumped leech saturate urging Peace
In guise of heavy-armed Gospeller to men,
Tyrannical unto fraternal equal liberal, her. Not
she;
Not till Alsace her consanguineous find
What red deteutonising artillery
Shall shatter her beer-reek alien police
The just-now pluripollent; not till then.

IV

More pungent yet the esoteric pain
Squeezing her pliable vitals nourishes feud
Insanely grumous, grumously insane.
For lo!
Past common balmly on the Bordereau,
Churns she the skim o' the gutter's crust
With Anti-Judaic various carmagnole,
Whooped praise of the Anti-just;
Her boulevard brood
Gyratory in convolvements militant-mad;
Theatrical of faith in the Belliform,
Her Og,
Her Monstrous. Fled what force she had
To buckle the jaw-gape, wide agog
For the Preconcerted One,
The Anticipated, ripe to clinch the whole;
Queen-bee to hive the hither and thither volant
swarm.
Bides she his coming; adumbrates the new
Expurgatorial Divine,
Her final effulgent Avatar,
Postured outside a trampling mastodon
Black as her Baker's charger; towering; visibly
gorged
With blood of traitors. Knee-grip stiff,
Spine straightened, on he rides;
Embossed the Patriot's brow with hieroglyph
Of martial *dossiers*, nothing forged
About him save his armour. So she bides
Voicing his advent indeterminably far,
Rooster her sign,
Rooster her conspuent doodle-doo.

V

Behold her, pranked with spurs for bloody sport,
How she acclaims,
A crapulous chanticleer,
Breach of the hectic dawn of yon New Year.
Not yet her fill of rumours sucked;
Inebriate of honour; blushfully wroth;
Tireless to play her old primeval games;
Her plumage preened the yet unplucked
Like sails of a galleon, rudder hard amort
With crepitant mast
Fronting the hazard to dare of a dual blast
The intern and the extern, blizzards both.

Anthony C. Deane is also among the best of the modern parodists.

HERE IS THE TALE

(AFTER RUDYARD KIPLING)

Here is the tale—and you must make the most of it:
Here is the rhyme—ah, listen and attend:
Backwards—forwards—read it all and boast of it
If you are anything the wiser at the end!

Now Jack looked up—it was time to sup, and the bucket was yet to fill,
And Jack looked round for a space and frowned, then beckoned his sister Jill,
And twice he pulled his sister's hair, and thrice he smote her side;
"Ha' done, ha' done with your impudent fun—ha' done with your games!" she cried;
"You have made mud-pies of a marvellous size—finger and face are black,
You have trodden the Way of the Mire and Clay—now up and wash you, Jack!
Or else, or ever we reach our home, there waiteth an angry dame—
Well you know the weight of her blow—the supperless open shame!
Wash, if you will, on yonder hill—wash, if you will, at the spring,—
Or keep your dirt, to your certain hurt, and an imminent walloping!"

"You must wash—you must scrub—you must scrape!" growled Jack, "you must traffic with cans and pails,

Nor keep the spoil of the good brown soil in the
rim of your finger-nails!
The morning path you must tread to your bath—
you must wash ere the night descends,
And all for the cause of conventional laws and the
soapmakers' dividends!
But if 'tis sooth that our meal in truth depends on
our washing, Jill,
By the sacred right of our appetite—haste—haste
to the top of the hill!"

They have trodden the Way of the Mire and Clay,
they have toiled and travelled far,
They have climbed to the brow of the hill-top now,
where the bubbling fountains are,
They have taken the bucket and filled it up—yea,
filled it up to the brim;
But Jack he sneered at his sister Jill, and Jill she
jeered at him:
"What, blown already!" Jack cried out (and his was
a biting mirth!)
"You boast indeed of your wonderful speed—but
what is the boasting worth?
Now, if you can run as the antelope runs and if you
can turn like a hare,
Come, race me, Jill, to the foot of the hill—and
prove your boasting fair!"
"Race? What is a race" (and a mocking face had
Jill as she spake the word)
"Unless for a prize the runner tries? The truth
indeed ye heard,
For I can run as the antelope runs, and I can turn
like a hare:—
The first one down wins half-a-crown—and I will
race you there!"
"Yea, if for the lesson that you will learn (the
lesson of humbled pride)
The price you fix at two-and-six, it shall not be
denied;
Come, take your stand at my right hand, for here is
the mark we toe:
Now, are you ready, and are you steady? Gird up
your petticoats! Go!"

And Jill she ran like a winging bolt, a bolt from the
bow released,
But Jack like a stream of the lightning gleam, with
its pathway duly greased;

He ran down hill in front of Jill like a summer-
lightning flash—
Till he suddenly tripped on a stone, or slipped, and
fell to the earth with a crash.
Then straight did rise on his wondering eyes the
constellations fair,
Arcturus and the Pleiades, the Greater and Lesser
Bear,
The swirling rain of a comet's train he saw, as he
swiftly fell—
And Jill came tumbling after him with a loud
triumphant yell:
"You have won, you have won, the race is done!
And as for the wager laid—
You have fallen down with a broken crown—the
half-crown debt is paid!"

They have taken Jack to the room at the back
where the family medicines are,
And he lies in bed with a broken head in a halo of
vinegar;
While, in that Jill had laughed her fill as her
brother fell to earth,
She had felt the sting of a walloping—she hath
paid the price of her mirth!

Here is the tale—and now you have the whole of it,
Here is the story, well and wisely-planned,
Beauty—Duty—these make up the soul of it—
But, ah, my little readers, will you mark and
understand?

Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch, writing often over the pseudonym of Q, is most versatile and talented. He, too, loved to dally with the muse of Imitation.

DE TEA FABULA

Plain Language from Truthful James

Do I sleep? Do I dream?
Am I hoaxed by a scout?
Are things what they seem,
Or is Sophists about?
Is our το τι ηυ ειναι a failure, or is Robert
Browning played out?

Which expressions like these

May be fairly applied
By a party who sees
A Society skied
Upon tea that the Warden of Keble had biled with
legitimate pride.

'Twas November the third,
And I says to Bill Nye,
"Which it's true what I've heard:
If you're, so to speak, fly,
There's a chance of some tea and cheap culture,
the sort recommended as High."

Which I mentioned its name,
And he ups and remarks:
"If dress-coats is the game
And pow-wow in the Parks,
Then I'm nuts on Sordello and Hohenstiel-
Schwangau and similar Snarks."

Now the pride of Bill Nye
Cannot well be express'd;
For he wore a white tie
And a cut-away vest:
Says I, "Solomon's lilies ain't in it, and they was
reputed well dress'd."

But not far did we wend,
When we saw Pippa pass
On the arm of a friend
—Dr. Furnivall 't was,
And he wore in his hat two half-tickets for London,
return, second-class.

"Well," I thought, "this is odd."
But we came pretty quick
To a sort of a quad
That was all of red brick,
And I says to the porter,—"R. Browning: free
passes; and kindly look slick."

But says he, dripping tears
In his check handkerchief,
"That symposium's career's
Been regrettably brief,
For it went all its pile upon crumpets and busted
on gunpowder leaf!"

Then we tucked up the sleeves
Of our shirts (that were biled),
Which the reader perceives
That our feelings were riled,
And we went for that man till his mother had
doubted the traits of her child.

Which emotions like these
Must be freely indulged
By a party who sees
A Society bulged
On a reef the existence of which its prospectus had
never divulged.

But I ask,—Do I dream?
Has it gone up the spout?
Are things what they seem,
Or is Sophists about?
Is our τὸ τι ἦυ εἶναι a failure, or is Robert
Browning played out?

James Kenneth Stephen, like so many of the English minor poets, expresses his humorous vein best in parody.

Stephen's light verse belongs mostly to his undergraduate days.

A SONNET

Two voices are there: one is of the deep;
It learns the storm-cloud's thunderous melody,
Now roars, now murmurs with the changing sea,
Now bird-like pipes, now closes soft in sleep:
And one is of an old half-witted sheep
Which bleats articulate monotony.
And indicates that two and one are three,
That grass is green, lakes damp, and mountains steep:
And, Wordsworth, both are thine: at certain times
Forth from the heart of thy melodious rhymes,
The form and pressure of high thoughts will burst:
At other times—good Lord! I'd rather be
Quite unacquainted with the A B C
Than write such hopeless rubbish as thy worst.

A THOUGHT

If all the harm that women have done
Were put in a bundle and rolled into one,
    Earth would not hold it,
    The sky could not enfold it,
It could not be lighted nor warmed by the sun;
    Such masses of evil
    Would puzzle the devil,
And keep him in fuel while Time's wheels run.

But if all the harm that's been done by men
Were doubled, and doubled, and doubled again,
And melted and fused into vapour, and then
Were squared and raised to the power of ten,
There wouldn't be nearly enough, not near,
To keep a small girl for the tenth of a year.

THE MILLENNIUM

TO R. K.

As long I dwell on some stupendous
And tremendous (Heaven defend us!)
Monstr'-inform'-ingens-horrendous
Demoniaco-seraphic
Penman's latest piece of graphic.

ROBERT BROWNING.

Will there never come a season
  Which shall rid us from the curse
Of a prose which knows no reason
  And an unmelodious verse:
When the world shall cease to wonder
  At the genius of an Ass,
And a boy's eccentric blunder
  Shall not bring success to pass:

When mankind shall be delivered
  From the clash of magazines,
And the inkstand shall be shivered
  Into countless smithereens:
When there stands a muzzled stripling,
  Mute, beside a muzzled bore:
When the Rudyards cease from Kipling
  And the Haggards Ride no more?

SCHOOL

If there is a vile, pernicious,

Wicked and degraded rule,
Tending to debase the vicious,
And corrupt the harmless fool;
If there is a hateful habit
Making man a senseless tool,
With the feelings of a rabbit
And the wisdom of a mule;
It's the rule which inculcates,
It's the habit which dictates
The wrong and sinful practice of going into school.

If there's anything improving
To an erring sinner's state,
Which is useful in removing
All the ills of human fate;
If there's any glorious custom
Which our faults can dissipate,
And can casually thrust 'em
Out of sight and make us great;
It's the plan by which we shirk
Half our matu-ti-nal work,
The glorious institution of always being late.

Barry Pain, journalist and author, following the trend of the hour, produced this amusing set of parodies.

THE POETS AT TEA

1—(*Macaulay, who made it*)

Pour, varlet, pour the water,
The water steaming hot!
A spoonful for each man of us,
Another for the pot!
We shall not drink from amber,
Nor Capuan slave shall mix
For us the snows of Athos
With port at thirty-six;
Whiter than snow the crystals,
Grown sweet 'neath tropic fires,
More rich the herbs of China's field,
The pasture-lands more fragrance yield;
For ever let Britannia wield
The tea-pot of her sires!

2—(*Tennyson, who took it hot*)

I think that I am drawing to an end:
For on a sudden came a gasp for breath.
And stretching of the hands, and blinded eyes,
And a great darkness falling on my soul.
O Hallelujah!... Kindly pass the milk.

3—(*Swinburne, who let it get cold*)

As the sin that was sweet in the sinning
  Is foul in the ending thereof,
As the heat of the summer's beginning
  Is past in the winter of love:
O purity, painful and pleading!
  O coldness, ineffably gray!
Oh, hear us, our handmaid unheeding,
  And take it away!

4—(*Cowper, who thoroughly enjoyed it*)

The cosy fire is bright and gay,
The merry kettle boils away
    And hums a cheerful song.
I sing the saucer and the cup;
Pray, Mary, fill the tea-pot up,
    And do not make it strong.

5—(*Browning, who treated it allegorically*)

Tut! Bah! We take as another case—
  Pass the bills on the pills on the window-sill;
      notice the capsule
(A sick man's fancy, no doubt, but I place
  Reliance on trade-marks, Sir)—so perhaps you'll
Excuse the digression—this cup which I hold
  Light-poised—Bah, it's spilt in the bed!—well,
      let's on go—
Hold Bohea and sugar, Sir; if you were told
  The sugar was salt, would the Bohea be Congo?

6—(*Wordsworth, who gave it away*)

"Come, little cottage girl, you seem
  To want my cup of tea;
And will you take a little cream?
  Now tell the truth to me."

She had a rustic, woodland grin,
  Her cheek was soft as silk,
And she replied, "Sir, please put in

A little drop of milk."

"Why, what put milk into your head?
'Tis cream my cows supply";
And five times to the child I said,
"Why, pig-head, tell me, why?"

"You call me pig-head," she replied;
"My proper name is Ruth.
I called that milk"—she blushed with pride—
"You bade me speak the truth."

7—(*Poe, who got excited over it*)

Here's a mellow cup of tea, golden tea!
What a world of rapturous thought its fragrance
brings to me!
Oh, from out the silver cells
How it wells!
How it smells!
Keeping tune, tune, tune
To the tintinnabulation of the spoon.
And the kettle on the fire
Boils its spout off with desire,
With a desperate desire
And a crystalline endeavour
Now, now to sit, or never,
On the top of the pale-faced moon,
But he always came home to tea, tea, tea, tea, tea,
Tea to the n—th.

8—(*Rossetti, who took six cups of it*)

The lilies lie in my lady's bower
(O weary mother, drive the cows to roost),
They faintly droop for a little hour;
My lady's head droops like a flower.

She took the porcelain in her hand
(O weary mother, drive the cows to roost);
She poured; I drank at her command;
Drank deep, and now—you understand!
(O weary mother, drive the cows to roost.)

9—(*Burns, who liked it adulterated*)

Weel, gin ye speir, I'm no inclined,
Whusky or tay—to state my mind,
Fore ane or ither;

For, gin I tak the first, I'm fou,
And gin the next, I'm dull as you,
Mix a' thegither.

10—(*Walt Whitman, who didn't stay more than a minute*)

One cup for myself-hood,
Many for you. Allons, camerados, we will drink together,
O hand-in-hand! That tea-spoon, please, when you've done with it.
What butter-colour'd hair you've got. I don't want to be personal.
All right, then, you needn't. You're a stale-cadaver.
Eighteen-pence if the bottles are returned.
Allons, from all bat-eyed formula.

F. Anstey (pen name of J. B. Guthrie) wrote many novels and short skits as well as verses. Like many of his contemporaries he is especially happy in a parody vein.

SELECT PASSAGES FROM A COMING POET

Disenchantment

My Love has sicklied unto Loath,
And foul seems all that fair I fancied—
The lily's sheen's a leprous growth,
The very buttercups are rancid.

Abasement

With matted head a-dabble in the dust,
And eyes tear-sealèd in a saline crust
I lie all loathly in my rags and rust—
Yet learn that strange delight may lurk in self-disgust.

Stanza Written in Depression Near Dulwich

The lark soars up in the air;
The toad sits tight in his hole;
And I would I were certain which of the pair
Were the truer type of my soul!

To My Lady

Twine, lanken fingers, lily-lithe,
  Gleam, slanted eyes, all beryl-green,
Pout, blood-red lips that burst a-writhe,
  Then—kiss me, Lady Grisoline!

The Monster

Uprears the monster now his slobberous head,
  Its filamentous chaps her ankles brushing;
Her twice-five roseal toes are cramped in dread,
  Each maidly instep mauven-pink is flushing.

A Trumpet Blast

Pale Patricians, sunk in self-indulgence,
  Blink your blearèd eyes. Behold the Sun—
Burst proclaim in purpurate effulgence,
  Demos dawning, and the Darkness done!

Hilaire Belloc, in addition to wiser matters, wrote most amusing nonsense animal verses.

THE PYTHON

A python I should not advise,—
It needs a doctor for its eyes,
  And has the measles yearly.

However, if you feel inclined
To get one (to improve your mind,
  And not from fashion merely),
Allow no music near its cage;
And when it flies into a rage
  Chastise it most severely.

I had an Aunt in Yucatan
Who bought a Python from a man
  And kept it for a pet.
She died because she never knew
These simple little rules and few;—
  The snake is living yet.

THE BISON

The Bison is vain, and (I write it with pain)
  The Door-mat you see on his head
Is not, as some learned professors maintain,
The opulent growth of a genius' brain;

But is sewn on with needle and thread.

THE MICROBE

The Microbe is so very small
You cannot make him out at all,
But many sanguine people hope
To see him through a microscope.
His jointed tongue that lies beneath
A hundred curious rows of teeth;
His seven tufted tails with lots
Of lovely pink and purple spots
On each of which a pattern stands,
  Composed of forty separate bands;
    His eyebrows of a tender green;
      All these have never yet been seen—
        But Scientists, who ought to know,
          Assure us that they must be so....
            Oh! let us never, never doubt
              What nobody is sure about!

THE FROG

Be kind and tender to the Frog,
  And do not call him names,
As "Slimy-Skin," or "Polly-wog,"
  Or likewise, "Uncle James,"
Or "Gape-a-grin," or "Toad-gone-wrong,"
  Or "Billy-Bandy-knees";
The Frog is justly sensitive
  To epithets like these.

No animal will more repay,
  A treatment kind and fair,
At least, so lonely people say
Who keep a frog (and, by the way,
  They are extremely rare).

Gilbert K. Chesterton, England's great humorist of today, is cleverly gay in his French Forms.

A BALLADE OF SUICIDE

The gallows in my garden, people say,
Is new and neat and adequately tall.
I tie the noose on in a knowing way
As one that knots his necktie for a ball;

But just as all the neighbours—on the wall—
Are drawing a long breath to shout “Hurray!”
The strangest whim has seized me.... After all
I think I will not hang myself to-day.

To-morrow is the time I get my pay—
My uncle’s sword is hanging in the hall—
I see a little cloud all pink and grey—
Perhaps the rector’s mother will *not* call—
I fancy that I heard from Mr. Gall
That mushrooms could be cooked another way—
I never read the works of Juvenal—
I think I will not hang myself to-day.

The world will have another washing day;
The decadents decay; the pedants pall;
And H. G. Wells has found that children play,
And Bernard Shaw discovered that they squall;
Rationalists are growing rational—
And through thick woods one finds a stream astray,
So secret that the very sky seems small—
I think I will not hang myself to-day.

Envoi

Prince, I can hear the trump of Germinal,
The tumbrils toiling up the terrible way;
Even today your royal head may fall—
I think I will not hang myself to-day.

A BALLADE OF AN ANTI-PURITAN

They spoke of Progress spiring round,
Of Light and Mrs. Humphry Ward—
It is not true to say I frowned,
Or ran about the room and roared;
I might have simply sat and snored—
I rose politely in the club
And said, “I feel a little bored;
Will someone take me to a pub?”

The new world’s wisest did surround
Me; and it pains me to record
I did not think their views profound,
Or their conclusions well assured;
The simple life I can’t afford,
Besides, I do not like the grub—
I want a mash and sausage, “scored”—
Will someone take me to a pub?

I know where Men can still be found,
Anger and clamorous accord,
And virtues growing from the ground,
And fellowship of beer and board,
And song, that is a sturdy cord,
And hope, that is a hardy shrub,
And goodness, that is God's last word—
Will someone take me to a pub?

Envoi

Prince, Bayard would have smashed his sword
To see the sort of knights you dub—
Is that the last of them—O Lord!
Will someone take me to a pub?

FRENCH HUMOR

Voltaire, the assumed name of François Marie Arouet, was one of the most famous of French writers. Plays, fiction, criticism and letters are among his celebrated works.

We can quote but a short bit from his novel of *Candide*:

The tutor Pangloss was the oracle of the house, and little Candide listened to his lessons with all the ready faith natural to his age and disposition.

Pangloss used to teach the science of metaphysico-theologo-cosmologo-noodleology. He demonstrated most admirably that there is no effect without a cause, and that, in this best of all possible worlds, the castle of my lord baron was the most magnificent of castles, and my lady the best of all possible baronesses.

"It has been proved," said he, "that things cannot be otherwise than they are; for, everything being made for a certain end, the end for which everything is made is necessarily the best end. Observe how noses were made to carry spectacles, and spectacles we have accordingly. Our legs are clearly intended for shoes and stockings, so we have them. Stone has been formed to be hewn and dressed for building castles, so my lord has a very fine one, for it is meet that the greatest baron in the province should have the best accommodation. Pigs were made to be eaten, and we eat pork all the year round.

Consequently those who have asserted that all is well have said what is silly; they should have said of everything that is, that it is the best that could possibly be."

Candide listened attentively, and innocently believed all that he heard; for he thought Mlle. Cunégonde extremely beautiful, though he never had the boldness to tell her so. He felt convinced that, next to the happiness of being born Baron of Thundertentronckh, the second degree of happiness was to be Mlle. Cunégonde, the third to see her every day, and the fourth to hear Professor Pangloss, the greatest philosopher in the province, and therefore in all the world.

One day Mlle. Cunégonde, while taking a walk near the castle, in the little wood which was called the park, saw through the bushes Dr. Pangloss giving a lesson in experimental physics to her mother's chambermaid, a little brunette, very pretty and very willing to learn. As Mlle. Cunégonde had a great taste for science, she watched with breathless interest the repeated experiments that were carried on under her eyes; she clearly perceived that the doctor had sufficient reason for all he did; she saw the connection between causes and effects, and returned home much agitated, though very thoughtful, and filled with a yearning after scientific pursuits, for sharing in which she wished that young Candide might find sufficient reason in her, and that she might find the same in him.

She met Candide as she was on her way back to the castle, and blushed; the youth blushed likewise. She bade him good morning in a voice that struggled for utterance; and Candide answered her without well knowing what he was saying. Next day, as the

company were leaving the table after dinner, Cunégonde and Candide found themselves behind a screen. Cunégonde let fall her handkerchief; Candide picked it up; she innocently took hold of his hand, and the young man, as innocently, kissed hers with an ardor, a tenderness, and a grace quite peculiar; their lips met and their eyes sparkled. His lordship, the Baron of Thundertentronckh, happened to pass by the screen, and, seeing that particular instance of cause and effect, drove Candide out of the castle with vigorous kicks. Cunégonde swooned away, but, as soon as she recovered, my lady the baroness boxed her ears, and all was confusion and consternation in that most magnificent and most charming of all possible castles.

Marc Antoine Desaugiers was a Parisian song writer and author of vaudeville.

His wit was cynical and his versification of a facile sort.

THE ETERNAL YAWNER

Ah! well-a-day, in all the earth
  What can one do?
Where for amusement seek, or mirth?
Ah! well-a-day, in all the earth
  What can one do
To cease from yawning here below?

Of mortal man, what is the rôle?
  To bustle, eat, and labor ply;
  To plot, grow old, and then to die?
Not very lively this, or droll.
    Ah! well-a-day, etc.

No wonder in my mind begets
  The sun, which poets call sublime;
  Not this the first or second time
He rises, runs his race, and sets.
    Ah! well-a-day, etc.

To one dull course the seasons cling:
For full five thousand years we view
The summer following after spring,
And winter autumn's close pursue.
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

My watch (a friend of little use),
Whose hands their tedious circuit ply,
Tells me how slow the hours fly,
Not how I may my hours amuse.
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

I half the world have traveled o'er,
To see if men diversion found;
But everywhere, on every ground,
I saw what I had seen before.
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

In weariness which I abhorred,
Wishing to know how sped the great,
I dined with men of high estate,
And murmured as I left their board,
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

Wishing to see if, when in love,
Life some unworn amusement has,
Love I attempted, but alas!
Love in all climes the same doth prove.
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

Thus being, at this early age,
Of all things sick, both night and day,
In hopes to be more blithe and gay
I did in settled life engage.
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

The street where now my life I led,
By neighborhood my steps brought on
To th' Institute and Odéon,
Which every day I visited.
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

By writing this (hope quickly gone),
To cheer my spirits I essayed;
But yawned the while this song was made,
And now I sing it, still I yawn:
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

Pierre Jean de Béranger was one of France's greatest lyric poets. His versatility compassed songs of every sort from political to bacchanalian, from amatory to philosophical.

THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG LADIES

What! this Monsieur de Fénélon
The girls pretend to school!
Of Mass and needlework he prates;
Mama, he's but a fool.
Balls, concerts, and the piece just out,
Can teach us better far, no doubt:
Tra la la la, tra la la la,
Thus are young ladies taught, Mama!

Let others mind their work; I'll play,
Mama, the sweet duet,
That for my master's voice and mine
Is from Armida set.
If Rénaud felt love's burning flame,
I feel some shootings of the same:
Tra la la la, tra la la la,
Thus are young ladies taught, Mama!

Let others keep accounts; I'll dance,
Mama, an hour or two;
And from my master learn a step
Voluptuous and new.
At this long skirt my feet rebel;
To loop it up a bit were well.
Tra la la la, tra la la la,
Thus are young ladies taught, Mama!

Let others o'er my sister watch;
Mama, I'd rather trace—
I've wondrous talent—at the Louvre
The Apollo's matchless grace:
Throughout his figure what a charm!
'Tis naked, true—but that's no harm
Tra la la la, tra la la la,
Thus are young ladies taught, Mama!

Mama, I must be married soon,
Even fashion says no less;
Besides, there is an urgent cause,
I must, Mama, confess.

The world my situation sees—
But there they laugh at scrapes like these.
Tra la la la, tra la la la,
Thus are young ladies taught, Mama!

THE DEAD ALIVE

When a bore gets hold of me,
  Dull and overbearing,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as herring.
When the thrusts of pleasure glib
  In my sides are sticking,
Poking fun at every rib,
  I'm alive and kicking.

When a snob his £ s. d.
  Jingles in his breeches,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as ditches.
When a birthday's champagne-corks
  Round my ears are clicking,
Marking time with well-oil'd works,
  I'm alive and kicking.

Kings and their supremacy
  Occupy the table,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as Abel.
Talk about the age of wine
  (Bought by cash or ticking),
So you bring a sample fine,
  I'm alive and kicking.

When a trip to Muscovy
  Tempts a conquest glutton,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as mutton.
Match me with a tippling foe,
  See who first wants picking
From the dead man's field below,
  I'm alive and kicking.

When great scribes to poetry
  March, by notions big led,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as pig-lead.
When you start a careless song,

Not at grammar sticking,
Good to push the wine along.
I'm alive and kicking.

When a bigot, half-hours three,
Spouts in canting gloom's tones,
Be so kind as pray for me,
I'm as dead as tombstones.
When in cloisters underground,
Built of stone or bricking,
Orders of the screw you found,
I'm alive and kicking.

Bourbons back in France we see
(Sure we don't much need 'em),
Be so kind as pray for me,
I'm as dead as freedom.
Bess returns, and still our throats
Find us here a-slicking,
Sitting free without our coats—
I'm alive and kicking.

Forced to leave this company,
Bottle-wine and horn-ale,
Be so kind as pray for me,
I'm as dead as door-nail.
Pledging, though, a quick return,
Soon my anchor sticking
On the shore for which I yearn—
I'm alive and kicking.

A great name that ushers in the Nineteenth century is that of Honoré de Balzac, chief of the realistic school of French novelists. His humor is keen and is never lacking in his somewhat diversified writings.

From his well known *Contes Drolatiques* we give two stories.

A SLIGHT MISUNDERSTANDING

Louis XI had given the Abbey of Turpenay to a gentleman who, enjoying the revenue, had called himself M. de Turpenay. It happened that the king

being at Plessis-les-Tours, the real abbot, who was a monk, came and presented himself before the king, and presented a petition, remonstrating with him that, canonically and monastically, he was entitled to the abbey, and the usurping gentleman wronged him of his right, and therefore he called upon his Majesty to have justice done to him. Nodding his peruke, the king promised to render him contented. This monk, importunate as are all hooded animals, came often at the end of the king's meals, who, bored with the holy water of the convent, called friend Tristan and said to him, "Old fellow, there is here a Turpenay who annoys me; rid the world of him for me."

Tristan, taking a frock for a monk, or a monk for a frock, came to this gentleman, whom all the court called M. de Turpenay, and, having accosted him, managed to lead him on one side, then, taking him by the button-hole, gave him to understand that the king desired he should die. He tried to resist, supplicating and supplicating to escape, but in no way could he obtain a hearing. He was delicately strangled between the head and shoulders, so that he expired; and, three hours afterwards, Tristan told the king that he was despatched. It happened five days later, which is the space in which souls come back again, that the monk came into the room where the king was, and when he saw him he was much astonished. Tristan was present; the king called him, and whispered into his ear:

"You have not done what I told you to."

"Saving your Majesty, I have done it. Turpenay is dead."

"Eh? I meant this monk."

"I understood the gentleman!"

"What, it is done, then?"

"Yes, your Majesty."

"Very well, then"—turning toward the monk —"come here, monk." The monk approached. The king said to him, "Kneel down." The poor monk began to shiver in his shoes. But the king said to him, "Thank God that He has not willed that you should be executed as I had ordered. He who took your estates has been instead. God has done you justice. Go and pray to God for me, and don't stir out of your convent."

This proves the good-heartedness of Louis XI. He might very well have hanged the monk, the cause of the error. As for the aforesaid gentleman, it was given out that he had died in the king's service.

INNOCENCE

When Queen Catherine was princess royal, to make herself welcome to the king, her father-in-law, who at that time was very ill indeed, she presented him from time to time with Italian pictures, knowing that he liked them much, being a friend of Sire Raphael d'Urbino and of the Sires Primaticcio and Leonardo da Vinci, to whom he sent large sums of money. She obtained from her family a precious picture, painted by a Venetian named Titian (painter to the Emperor Charles, and in very high favor), in which there were portraits of Adam and Eve at the moment when God left them to wander about the terrestrial paradise. They were painted full height, in the costume of the period, in which it is difficult to make a mistake, because they were attired in their ignorance, and caparisoned with the divine grace which enveloped them—a difficult thing to execute

on account of the color, but one in which the said Sire Titian excelled. The picture was put into the room of the poor king, who was then ill with the disease of which he eventually died. It had a great success at the Court of France, where every one wished to see it; but no one was able to until after the king's death, since at his desire it was allowed to remain in his room as long as he lived.

One day Catherine took with her to the king's room her son Francis and little Margy, who began to talk at random, as children will. Now here, now there, these children had heard this picture of Adam and Eve spoken about, and had tormented their mother to take them to see it. Since the two little ones sometimes amused the old king, the princess royal complied with their request.

"You wished to see Adam and Eve, who were our first parents; there they are," said she.

Then she left them in great astonishment before Titian's picture, and seated herself by the bedside of the king, who delighted to watch the children.

"Which of the two is Adam?" said Francis, nudging his sister Margaret's elbow.

"You silly," replied she, "they would have to be dressed for one to know that!"

Louis Charles Alfred de Musset was a celebrated French poet and man of letters. Though he died in early middle age, he left many volumes of wise and witty writings.

THE SUPPER-PARTY OF THE THREE CAVALIERS

"Be silent, all of you!" cried Mimi. "I want to talk a little now. Since the magnificent M. Marcel does not care for fables, I am going to relate a true story, *et quorum pars magna fui.*"

"Do you speak Latin?" asked Eugène.

"As you perceive," Mlle. Pinson answered. "I have inherited that sentence from my uncle, who served under the great Napoleon, and who always repeated it before he gave us an account of a battle. If you don't know the meaning of the words, I'll teach you free of charge. They mean, 'I give you my word of honor.' Well, then, you are to know that one night last week I went with two of my friends, Blanchette and Rougette, to the Odéon theater——"

"Watch me cut the cake," interrupted Marcel.

"Cut ahead, but listen," Mlle. Pinson continued. "As I was saying, I went with Blanchette and Rougette to the Odéon to see a tragedy. Rougette, as you know, has just lost her grandmother, and has inherited four hundred francs. We had taken a box, opposite to which, in the pit, sat three students. These young men liked our looks, and, on the pretext that we were alone and unprotected, invited us to supper."

"Immediately?" asked Marcel. "That was gallant indeed. And you refused, I suppose?"

"By no means," said Mimi. "We accepted the invitation, and in the intermission, without waiting for the end of the play, we all went off to Viot's restaurant."

"With your cavaliers?"

"With our cavaliers. The leader, of course, began by telling us that he had nothing, but such little

obstacles did not disconcert us. We ordered everything we wanted. Rougette took pen and paper, and ordered a veritable marriage-feast: shrimps, an omelet with sugar, fritters, mussels, eggs with whipped cream—in fact, all the delicacies imaginable. To tell the truth, our young gentlemen pulled wry faces—— ”

“I have no doubt of it!” said Marcel.

“We didn’t care. When everything was brought in we began to act the part of great ladies. We approved of nothing, but found everything disgusting. Hardly was any dish brought in but we sent it out again. ‘Waiter, take this away; it’s intolerable; where did you get the horrible stuff?’ Our unknown gentlemen wanted to eat, but found it impossible. In a word, we supped as Sancho dined, and in our vigor nearly broke several dishes.”

“Nice conduct! And who was to pay for it all?”

“That is precisely the question that our three unknown gentlemen asked one another. To judge by what we overheard of their whispered conversation, one of them owned six francs, the second a good deal less, and the third had only his watch, which he generously pulled out of his pocket. So the three unfortunates went up to the cashier, intending to gain a delay of some sort. What answer do you suppose they received?”

“I imagine that you would be kept there, and your gentlemen sent to jail.”

“You are wrong,” said Mlle. Pinson. “Before going in Rougette had taken her precautions, and had paid for everything in advance. You can imagine the scene when Viot answered, ‘Gentlemen, everything is paid.’

Our three unknown gentlemen looked at us as never three dogs looked at three bishops, with pitiful stupefaction mixed with pure tenderness. But we, without seeming to notice anything unusual, went down-stairs and ordered a cab. ‘Dear Marquise,’ said Rougette to me, ‘we ought to take these gentlemen home.’ ‘Certainly, dear Countess,’ answered I. Our poor young gallants did not know what to say, they looked so sheepish. They wanted to get rid of our politeness, and asked not to be taken home, even refusing to give their address. No wonder, either, because they felt sure that they were having to do with great ladies, and they lived in Fish-Cat Street!”

The two students, the friends of Marcel, who, up to this time, had done nothing but smoke their pipes and drink in silence, appeared little pleased with this story. Their faces grew red, and they seemed to know as much about this unfortunate supper as Mimi herself, at whom they glanced restlessly. Marcel, laughing, said:

“Tell us who they were, Mlle. Mimi. Since it happened last week it does not matter.”

“Never!” cried the girl. “Play a trick on a man—yes. But ruin his career—never!”

“You are right,” said Eugène, “and are acting even more wisely than you yourself are aware of. There is not a single young fellow at college who has not some such mistake or folly behind him, and yet it is from among these very people that France draws her most distinguished men.”

“Yes,” said Marcel, “that’s true. There are peers of France who now dine at Flicoteau’s, but who once could not pay their bills. But,” he added, and winked, “haven’t you seen your unknown gentlemen

again?"

"What do you take us for?" answered Mlle. Pinson in a severe and almost offended tone. "You know Blanchette and Rougette, and do you suppose that I ——?"

"Very well," said Marcel, "don't be angry. But isn't this a nice state of affairs? Here are three giddy girls, who may not be able to pay their next day's dinner, and who throw away their money for the sake of mystifying three poor unoffending devils!"

"But why did they invite us to supper?" asked Mlle. Pinson.—"*Mimi Pinson.*"

Charles Paul de Kock was a novelist and dramatist. A short quotation from *A Much Worried Gentleman* shows the ubiquitous mother-in-law jest.

THÉOPHILE'S MOTHER-IN-LAW

"Son-in-law, you will offer me your arm; your wife will take her cousin's."

"Yes, mother-in-law."

"Furthermore, when we get to the caterer's for dinner, you must not whisper to your wife. People might suspect something unrefined."

"Yes, mother-in-law."

"Neither must you kiss her."

"Why, you object to me kissing my wife?"

"Before people, yes. It's very bad form. Haven't you time enough for it at home?"

"True."

"At table you will not sit next to your wife, but next to me."

"That's agreed."

"During the meal you will take care that no comic songs on your marriage are sung. Those who write them usually permit themselves indelicate jokes, so that the ladies are put out. That is the worst taste possible."

"I'll see that none are sung."

"You will dance only once with your wife during the evening. Understand me—only once."

"But, why, why?"

"Because it is proper to let the bride accept the invitations of relatives, friends, and strangers."

"But I didn't marry in order that my wife should dance with everybody except myself!"

"Do you wish to insinuate, son-in-law, that you can instruct me concerning the usages of polite society? You are beginning well."

"I assure you, mother-in-law, that I had no intention——"

"That will do. I accept your excuses. We now come to a more delicate matter, to—but, of course, you must understand me."

"I confess that I do not at all."

"Listen, son-in-law. Some newly married young men, on their wedding-night, when the ball is at its gayest, take the liberty of carrying off their wives, and disappearing with them about twelve o'clock."

"And you object to that?"

"Fie, sir, fie! If you were to be guilty of such a thing, I would make your wife sue for a divorce the day after your marriage."

"Be easy, then; I will not disappear. But when may I go away with my wife?"

"I shall take my daughter with me, and arrange an opportune time when the decencies of the situation may be observed."

"And who will take me?"

"You will go alone, but you will not go, understand me well, until there isn't a cat left at the ball."

"I shall be getting to bed very late, then. Some of the people will want square dances and country dances, and——"

"You will get to bed soon enough, son-in-law."

"But why all this, mother-in-law?"

"That will do, M. Tamponnet! It is not becoming that this conversation be prolonged."

Alexandre Dumas, the Elder, was a noted novelist and dramatist. His output was enormous, and the wit, though always discernible, was subordinate to matters of heroism, adventure and the like.

CHAPTER TOUCHING THE OLFACTORY ORGAN

Has it ever occurred to you, dear reader, how admirable an organ the nose is?

The nose; yes, the nose.

And how useful an article this very nose is to every creature which, as Ovid says, lifts its face to heaven?

Well, strange as it may seem, monstrous ingratitude that it is, no poet has yet thought of addressing an ode to the nose!

So it has been left to me, who am not a poet, or who, at least, claim to rank only after our greatest poets, to conceive such an idea.

Truly, the nose is unfortunate.

So many things have been invented for the eyes:

Songs and compliments and kaleidoscopes, pictures and scenery and spectacles.

And for the ears:

Ear-rings, of course, and *Robert the Devil*, *William Tell*, and *Fra Diavolo*, Stradivarius violins and Érard pianos and Sax trumpets.

And for the mouth:

Lent, plain cooking, *The Gastronomists' Calendar*, *The Gormand's Dictionary*. Soups of every kind have they made for it, from Russian broth to French cabbage-soup; dishes for it are connected with the reputations of the greatest men, from Soubise cutlets to Richelieu puddings; its lips have been compared to coral, its teeth to pearls, its breath to perfume. Before it have been set plumed peacocks and undrawn snipes; and, for the future, it has been promised whole roast larks.

But what has been invented for the nose?

Attar of roses and snuff.

You have not done well, oh, my masters the philanthropists; oh, my brothers the poets!

And yet how faithfully this limb——

“It is not a limb!” cry the scientists.

I beg your pardon, gentlemen, and retract. This appendage—Ah yes, I was saying with what touching fidelity this appendage has done service for you.

The eyes sleep, the mouth closes, the ears are deaf.

The nose is always on duty.

It watches over your repose and contributes to your health. Feet, hands, all other parts of the body are stupid. The hands are often caught in foolish acts; the feet stumble, and in their clumsiness allow the body to fall. And when they do, they get off free, and the poor nose is punished for their misdeeds.

How often do you not hear it said: “Mr. So-and-So has broken his nose.”

There have been a great many broken noses since the creation of the world.

Can any one give a single instance of a nose broken through any fault of its own?

No; but, nevertheless, the poor nose is always being scolded.

Well, it endures it all with angelic patience. True, it sometimes has the impertinence to snore. But where and when did you ever hear it complain?...

But let us forget for a moment the utility of the nose, and regard it only from the esthetic point of view.

A cedar of Lebanon, it tramples underfoot the

hyssop of the mustache; a central column, it provides a support for the double arch of the eyebrows. On its capital perches the eagle of thought. It is enwreathed with smiles. With what boldness did the nose of Ajax confront the storm when he said, “I will escape in spite of the gods.” With what courage did the nose of the great Condé—whose greatness really derived from his nose—with what courage did the nose of the great Condé enter before all others, before the great Condé himself, the entrenchments of the Spanish at Lens and Rocroy, where their conqueror boldly flourished the staff of command? With what assurance was Dugazon’s nose thrust before the public, that nose which knew how to wriggle in forty-two different ways, and each way funnier than the last?

No, I do not believe that the nose should be permitted to remain in the obscurity into which man’s ingratitude has hitherto forced it.

I suggest as one reason why the nose has submitted to this injustice the fact that Occidental noses are so small.

But the deuce is to pay if the noses of the West are the only noses.

There are the Oriental noses, which are very handsome noses.

Do you question the superiority of these noses to your own, gentlemen of Paris, of Vienna, of St. Petersburg?

In that case, my Viennese friends, go by the Danube; you Parisians, take the steamer; Petersburgers, the sledge; and say these simple words:

"To Georgia."

But I forewarn you of deep humiliation. Should you bring to Georgia one of the largest noses in Europe, at the gate of Tiflis they would gaze at you in astonishment and exclaim:

"What a pity that this gentleman has lost his nose on the way." ...

Ah, sweet Heaven! those beautiful Georgian noses! Robust noses, magnificent noses!

They are all shapes:

Round, fat, long, large.

There is every color:

White, pink, crimson, violet.

Some are set with rubies, others with pearls. I saw one set with turquoises.

In Georgia, Vakhtang IV abolished the fathom, the meter, and the yard, keeping only the nose.

Goods are measured off by the nose.

They say, "I bought seventeen noses of flannel for a dressing-gown, seven noses of cloth for a pair of breeches, a nose and a half of satin for a cravat."

Let us add, finally, that the Georgian ladies find this more convenient than European measures.

Théophile Gautier, poet, artist and novelist was identified with the romantic movement in French literature.

A charming art of description was his, as may be

seen in the story of the *Lap Dog*.

FANFRELUCHE

To write in praise of this marvelous lap-dog, one should pluck a quill from the wing of Love himself; the hands of the Graces alone would be light enough to trace his picture; nor would the touch of Latour be too soft.

His name was Fanfreluche, a pretty name for a dog, and one that he bore with honor.

Fanfreluche was no larger than his mistress's hand, and it is well known that the marquise has the smallest hand in the world; and yet he seemed larger to the eye, assuming almost the proportions of a small sheep, for he had silky hair a foot in length, and so fine and soft and lustrous that the tresses of Minette were a mere mop by contrast. When he presented his paw, and one pressed it a little, one was astonished to feel nothing at all. Fanfreluche was rather a ball of silk, from which two beautiful brown eyes and a little red nose glittered, than an actual dog. Such a dog could only have belonged to the mother of Love, who lost him in Cytherea, where the marquise, on one of her occasional visits, found him. Look for a moment at this fascinatingly exquisite face. Would not Roxalana herself have been jealous of that delicately tipped-up nose, divided in the middle by a little furrow just like Anne of Austria's?

What vivacity in that quick eye! And that double row of white teeth, no larger than grains of rice, which, at the least emotion, sparkled in all their brilliance—what duchess would not envy them? And this charming Fanfreluche, apart from his physical attractions, possessed a thousand social graces: he

danced the minuet with exquisite grace, knew how to give his paw and tell the hour, capered before the queen and great ladies of France, and distinguished his right paw from his left. And Fanfreluche was learned, and knew more than the members of the Academy. If he was not a member of that body it was because he did not desire it, thinking, no doubt, to shine rather by his absence. The abbé declared that he was as strong as a Turk in the dead languages, and that, if he did not talk, it was from pure malice and to vex his mistress.

Then, too, Fanfreluche had not the vivacity of common dogs. He was very dainty, and very hard to please. He absolutely refused to eat anything but little pies of calves' brains made especially for him; he would drink nothing but cream from a little Japanese saucer. Only when his mistress dined in town would he consent to nibble at the wing of a chicken, and to take sweets for dessert; but he did not grant this favor to every one, and one had to have an excellent cook to gain it. Fanfreluche had only one little fault. But who is perfect in this world? He loved cherries in brandy and Spanish snuff, of which he took a little pinch from time to time. But the latter is a weakness he shared with the Prince of Condé.

When he heard the cover of the general's golden snuff-box click, it was a treat to see him sit up on his little hind legs and brush the carpet with his silken tail; and, if the marquise was engrossed in the pleasures of whist, and did not watch him closely, he would jump on the abbé's lap, who fed him with brandied cherries. And Fanfreluche, whose head was not strong, would become as tipsy as a Swiss guard and two choristers, would perform the queerest little

tricks on the carpet, and become extraordinarily ferocious on the subject of the calves of the chevalier, who, to preserve what little was left of them, would draw up his legs on his chair. Then Fanfreluche was no longer a little dog, but a little lion, and the marquise alone could manage him. His picture would not be complete without mentioning the droll little naughtinesses that he was guilty of before being stowed away into his muff, and put to bed in his niche of rosewood, padded with white satin and edged with blue silk cord.

Henri Murger, a noted litterateur, wrote on themes both gloomy and merry. More than most, he ran the gamut from grave to gay, from lively to severe.

Among his best known works are his Bohemian Life Sketches. From the subjoined bit, it may be seen that boresome parties obtain in all times and nations.

AN EVENING RECEPTION

Toward the end of the month of December the messengers of Bidault's agency received for distribution about a hundred copies of a circular of which we certify the following to be a true and genuine copy:

Messieurs Rodolphe and Marcel request the honor of your company at a reception, on Christmas Eve, Saturday next. There is going to be some fun.

P. S. We only live once!

Program

I

7 P.M. The rooms will open: lively and animated conversation.

8 P.M. The ingenious authors of *The Mountain in Labor*, a comedy rejected by the Odéon, will take a turn round the rooms.

8.30 P.M. M. Alexandre Schaunard, the distinguished artist, will execute his Imitative Symphony for the piano, called *The Influence of Blue in Art*.

9 P.M. First reading of a memoir on the abolition of the penalty of tragedy.

9.30 P.M. M. Gustave Colline, hyperphysical philosopher, and M. Schaunard will commence a debate on comparative philosophy and metapolitics. In order to prevent any possible collision, the two disputants will be tied together.

10 P.M. M. Tristan, a literary man, will relate the story of his first love. M. Alexandre Schaunard will play a pianoforte accompaniment.

10.30 P.M. Second reading of the memoir on the abolition of the penalty of tragedy.

11 P.M. *The Story of a Cassowary Hunt*, by a foreign prince.

II

At midnight M. Marcel, historical painter, will make a white chalk drawing, with his eyes bandaged. Subject: The interview between Napoleon and Voltaire in the Champs Élysées. At the same time M. Rodolphe will improvise a parallel between the author of *Zaïre* and the author of *The Battle of Austerlitz*.

12.30 A.M. M. Gustave Colline, in modest undress, will give a revival of the athletic sports of the Fourth Olympiad.

1 A.M. Third reading of the memoir on the abolition of the penalty of tragedy, followed by a collection in aid of authors of tragedies likely to be thrown out of employment.

2 A.M. Sports and quadrilles, which will be kept up till morning.

6 A.M. Rise of the sun upon the scene. Final chorus.

The ventilators will be open during the whole of the reception.

N. B. Any person attempting to read or recite poetry will be immediately ejected from the rooms and taken into custody; you are also requested not to take away candle-ends.

Victor Marie Hugo, celebrated poet, novelist and dramatist, was a recognized leader of the Romantic school of Nineteenth century France.

Quotation from his works is hard to do in brief, but an amusing story is given from *Tales of a Grandfather*.

THE GOOD FLEA AND THE WICKED KING

Once upon a time there was a wicked king, who made his people very unhappy. Everybody detested

him, and those whom he had put in prison and beheaded would have liked to whip him. But how? He was the strongest, he was the master, he did not have to give account to any one, and when he was told his subjects were not content, he replied:

“Well, what of it? I don’t care a rap!” Which was an ugly answer.

As he continued to act like a king, and as every day he became a little more wicked than the day before, this set a certain little flea to thinking over the matter. It was a little bit of a flea, who was of no consequence at all, but full of good sentiments. This is not the nature of fleas in general; but this one had been very well brought up; it bit people with moderation, and only when it was very hungry.

“What if I were to bring the king to reason?” it said to itself. “It is not without danger. But no matter —I will try.”

That night the wicked king, after having done all sorts of naughty things during the day, was calmly going to sleep when he felt what seemed to be the prick of a pin.

“Bite!”

He growled, and turned over on the other side.

“Bite! Bite! Bite!”

“Who is it that bites me so?” cried the king in a terrible voice.

“It is I,” replied a very little voice.

“You? Who are you?”

“A little flea who wishes to correct you.”

“A flea? Just you wait! Just you wait, and you

shall see!”

And the king sprang from his bed, twisted his coverings, and shook the sheets, all of which was quite useless, for the good flea had hidden itself in the royal beard.

“Ah,” said the king, “it has gone now, and I shall be able to get a sound sleep.”

But scarcely had he laid his head on the pillow, when—

“Bite!”

“How? What? Again?”

“Bite! Bite!”

“You dare to return, you abominable little flea? Think for a moment what you are doing! You are no bigger than a grain of sand, and you dare to bite one of the greatest kings on earth!”

“Well, what of it? I don’t care a rap!” answered the flea in the very words of the king.

“Ah, if I only had you!”

“Yes, but you haven’t got me!”

The wicked king did not sleep all that night, and he arose the next morning in a killing ill humor. He resolved to destroy his enemy. By his orders, they cleaned the palace from top to bottom, and particularly his bedroom; his bed was made by ten old women very skilful in the art of catching fleas. But they caught nothing, for the good flea had hidden itself under the collar of the king’s coat.

That night, this frightful tyrant, who was dying for want of sleep, lay back on both his ears, though this is said to be very difficult. But he wished to sleep

double, and he knew no better way. I wish you may find a better. Scarcely had he put out his light, when he felt the flea on his neck.

“Bite! Bite!”

“Ah, zounds! What is this?”

“It is I—the flea of yesterday.”

“But what do you want, you rascal—you tiny pest?”

“I wish you to obey me, and to make your people happy.”

“Ho, there, my soldiers, my captain of the guard, my ministers, my generals! Everybody! The whole lot of you!”

The whole lot of them came in. The king was in a rage, which made everybody tremble. He found fault with all the servants of the palace. Everybody was in consternation. During this time the flea, quite calm, kept itself hid in the king’s nightcap.

The guards were doubled; laws and decrees were made; ordinances were published against all fleas; there were processions and public prayers to ask of Heaven the extermination of the flea, and sound sleep for the king. It was all of no avail. The wretched king could not lie down, even on the grass, without being attacked by his obstinate enemy, the good flea, who did not let him sleep a single minute.

“Bite! Bite!”

It would take too long to tell the many hard knocks the king gave himself in trying to crush the flea; he was covered with bruises and contusions. As he could not sleep, he wandered about like an uneasy spirit. He grew thinner. He would certainly

have died if, at last, he had not made up his mind to obey the good flea.

"I surrender," he said at last, when it began to bite him again. "I ask for quarter. I will do what you wish."

"So much the better. On that condition only shall you sleep," replied the flea.

"Thank you. What must I do?"

"Make your people happy!"

"I have never learned how. I do not know how ____"

"Nothing more easy: you have only to go away."

"Taking my treasures with me?"

"Without taking anything."

"But I shall die if I have no money," said the king.

"Well, what of it? I don't care!" replied the flea.

But the flea was not hard-hearted, and it let the king fill his pockets with money before he went away. And the people were able to be very happy by setting up a republic.

Alphonse Daudet, humorist and story writer, created the character of Tartarin, a gasconading humbug, and a satire on the typical character attributed to Southern France.

A bit from *Tartarin in the Alps* will show the type of humor.

WILLIAM TELL

The party of travelers now came to the Lake of Lucerne, with its dark waters overshadowed by high and menacing mountains. To their right they saw that Ruetli meadow where Melchthal, Fuerst, and Stauffacher had sworn the oath to deliver their country.

Tartarin, deeply moved, took off his cap, and even threw it into the air three times to render homage to the shades of the departed heroes. Some of the tourists mistook this for a salutation, and bowed in return. At last they reached Tell's Chapel. This chapel is situated at the edge of the lake, on the very rock upon which, during the storm, William Tell jumped from Gessler's boat. And it was a delicious emotion to Tartarin, while he followed the travelers along the lake, to tread this historic ground, to recall and revive the various scenes of this great drama, which he knew as well as his own biography.

For William Tell had always been his ideal man. When at Bézuquet's pharmacy the game of Preferences was being played, and each one wrote on his slip of paper the name of the poet, the tree, the odor, the hero, and the woman that he preferred to all others of their kind, one slip invariably bore this inscription:

"Favorite tree?—The baobab.

"Favorite odor?—Gunpowder.

"Favorite author?—Fenimore Cooper.

"Who would you like to have been?—William Tell."

And then everybody would exclaim, "That's Tartarin!"

Imagine, then, how happy he was, and how his

heart beat when he stood before the chapel commemorative of the gratitude of a whole nation. It seemed to him as if William Tell must come in person to open the door, still dripping from the waters of the lake, and holding in his hand his bolts and crossbow.

“Don’t come in here. I’m working. This is not the day on which tourists are allowed,” sounded a strong voice from the interior, reechoing against the walls.

“M. Astier-Réhu, of the French Academy!”

“Herr Professor Doctor Schwanthaler!”

“Tartarin of Tarascon!”

The painter, who was standing on a scaffolding within, stretched out half of his body clad in his working-blouse, and holding his palette in his hand.

“My pupil will come down and open the door for you, gentlemen,” he said in a respectful tone.

“I was sure of it; of course,” said Tartarin to himself, “I have only to mention my name.”

For all that, he had the good taste to fall into line and modestly enter the chapel behind the others.

The painter, a splendid fellow, with a magnificent golden head of an artist of the Renaissance, received his visitors on the wooden staircase which led to the temporary scaffolding from which the mural paintings were being done. All the frescos, representing scenes from Tell’s life, were complete, except the one in which the scene of the apple at Altorf was to be shown. Upon that the painter was now working....

“I find it all very characteristically done,” said the great Astier-Réhu.

And Schwanthaler, folding his arms, recited two of Schiller's verses, half of which was lost in his beard. Then the ladies delivered their opinions, and for some minutes one would have thought oneself in a confectioner's shop. "Beautiful!" they cried. "Lovely! Exquisite! Delicious!"

Suddenly came a voice, tearing the silence like a trumpet's blare:

"Badly shouldered, that blunderbuss, I tell you! He never held it in that way!"

Imagine the stupefaction of the painter when this tourist, stick in hand and bundle on his back, undertook to demonstrate to him as clearly as that two and two are four, that the position of Tell in the picture was incorrect.

"And I understand these matters, I would have you know!"

"And who are you?"

"Who am I?" said our Tarasconian hero, deeply astonished. And so it was not at his name that the door had opened. Drawing himself up, he answered, "Ask the panthers of Zaccar, or the lions of Atlas, and perhaps they will answer you."

Every one drew away from Tartarin in fright and consternation.

"But then," asked the painter, "in what respect is Tell's position incorrect?"

"Look at me!"

Falling back with a double step that made the planks creak, Tartarin, using his cane to represent the "blunderbuss," threw himself into position.

"Superb! He is right! Don't move!" cried the

painter. Then to his pupil:

"Quick, bring me paper and charcoal!"

GERMAN HUMOR

Christian F. Gellert, a German poet of the early Eighteenth century, was also a lecturer and professor of philosophy.

His literary fame rests upon his sacred songs and his fables. One of the latter we quote.

THE PATIENT CURED

A man long plagued with aches in joint and limb
Did all his neighbors recommended him,
But, despite that, could nowise gain
Deliverance from his pain.
An ancient dame, to whom he told his case,
Cut an oracular grimace,
And thus announced a magic remedy:
"You must," said she,
Mysteriously hissing in his ear,
And calling him "My dear,"
"Sit on a good man's grave at early light,
And with the dew fresh-fallen over night
Thrice bathe your hands, your knee-joints thrice:
'Twill cure you in a trice.
Remember her who gave you this advice."

The patient did just as the grandam said.
(What will not mortals do to be
Relieved of misery?)
He went right early to the burying-ground,
And on a tombstone—'twas the first he found—
These words, delighted, read:
"Stranger, what man he was who sleeps below,
This monument and epitaph may show.
The wonder of his time was he,
The pattern of most genuine piety;
And that thou all in a few words may'st learn,
Him church and school and town and country
mourn."

Here the poor cripple takes his seat,
And bathes his hands, his joints, his feet;
But all his labor's worse than vain:

It rather aggravates his pain.

With troubled mind he grasps his staff,
Turns from the good man's grave, and creeps
On to the next, where lowly sleeps
One honored by no epitaph.
Scarce had he touched the nameless stone,
When lo! each racking pain had flown;
His useless staff forgotten on the ground,
He leaves this holy grave, erect and sound.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "is there no line to tell
Who was this holy man that makes me well?"
Just then the sexton did appear,
Of him he asked, "Pray, who lies buried here?"
The sexton waited long, and seemed quite shy
Of making any sort of a reply.
"Well," he began at last with mournful sigh,
"The Lord forgive him, 'twas a man
Placed by all honest circles under ban;
Whom scarcely they allowed a decent grave;
Whose soul naught but a miracle might save;
A heretic, and, what is worse,
Wrote plays and verse!
In short, to speak my full conviction,
And without fear of contradiction,
He was an innovator and a scound—"
"No!" cried the man. "No, I'll be bound!
Not so, though all the world the lie repeat!
But that chap there, who sleeps hard by us,
Whom you and all the world call pious,
He was, for sure, a scoundrel and a cheat!"

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing was a celebrated German dramatist and critic. His collected works fill many volumes.

We quote a few of his Fables and Epigrams.

THE RAVEN

The raven remarked that the eagle sat thirty days upon her eggs. "That, undoubtedly," said she, "is the

reason why the young of the eagle are so all-seeing and strong. Good! I will do the same."

And, since then, the raven actually sits thirty days upon her eggs; but, as yet, she has hatched nothing but miserable ravens.—*Fables.*

THE DECORATED BOW

A man had an excellent bow of ebony, with which he shot very far and very sure, and which he valued at a great price. But once, after considering it attentively, he said:

"A little too rude still! Your only ornament is your polish. It is a pity! However, that can be remedied," thought he. "I will go and let a first-rate artist carve something on the bow."

He went, and the artist carved an entire hunting-scene upon the bow. And what more fitting for a bow than a hunting-scene?

The man was delighted. "You deserve this embellishment, my beloved bow." So saying, he wished to try it.

He drew the string. The bow broke!—*Fables.*

EPIGRAMS

From the grave where dead Gripeall, the miser, reposes,
What a villainous odor invades all our noses!
It can't be his *body* alone—in the hole
They have certainly buried the usurer's *soul.*

While Fell was reposing himself on the hay,
A reptile conceal'd bit his leg as he lay;
But all venom himself, of the wound he made light,

And got well, while the scorpion died of the bite.

So vile your grimace, and so croaking your speech,
One scarcely can tell if you're laughing or crying;
Were you fix'd on one's funeral sermon to preach,
The bare apprehension would keep one from dying.

Quoth gallant Fritz, "I ran away
To fight again another day."
The meaning of his speech is plain,
He only fled to fly again.

"How strange, a deaf wife to prefer!"
"True, but she's also dumb, good sir."

Rudolph Erich Raspe was a German author who was also an Archæologist of note.

His best known work is the celebrated *History of Baron Münchausen*.

A HORSE TIED TO A STEEPLE

I set off from Rome on a journey to Russia, in the midst of winter, from a just notion that frost and snow must of course improve the roads, which every traveler had described as uncommonly bad through the northern parts of Germany, Poland, Courland, and Livonia. I went on horseback, as the most convenient manner of traveling. I was but lightly

clothed, and of this I felt the inconvenience the more I advanced northeast. What must not a poor old man have suffered in that severe weather and climate, whom I saw on a bleak common in Poland, lying on the road, helpless, shivering, and hardly having wherewithal to cover his nakedness? I pitied the poor soul. Though I felt the severity of the atmosphere myself, I threw my mantle over him, and immediately I heard a voice from the heavens, blessing me for that piece of charity, saying:

"You will be rewarded, my son, for this in time."

I went on. Night and darkness overtook me. No village was to be seen. The country was covered with snow, and I was unacquainted with the road.

Tired out, I alighted, and fastened my horse to something like the pointed stump of a tree which appeared above the snow. For the sake of safety I placed my pistols under my arm, and laid down on the snow, where I slept so soundly that I did not open my eyes till full daylight. It is not easy to conceive my astonishment at finding myself in the midst of a village, lying in a churchyard. Nor was my horse to be seen; but I heard him soon after neigh somewhere above me. On looking upward, I beheld him hanging by his bridle to the weathercock of the steeple. Matters were now quite plain to me. The village had been covered with snow overnight; a sudden change in the weather had taken place; I had sunk down to the churchyard while asleep at the same rate as the snow had melted away; and what in the dark I had taken to be a stump of a little tree appearing above the snow, to which I had tied my horse, proved to have been the cross or weathercock of the steeple!

Without long consideration, I took one of my

pistols, shot the bridle in two, brought down the horse, and proceeded on my journey.—*Adventures of Baron Münchausen.*

A RATHER LARGE WHALE

I embarked at Portsmouth, in a first-rate English man-of-war of one hundred guns and fourteen hundred men, for North America. Nothing worth relating happened till we arrived within three hundred leagues of the river St. Lawrence, when the ship struck with amazing force against (as we supposed) a rock. However, upon heaving the lead, we could find no bottom, even with three hundred fathoms. What made this circumstance the more wonderful, and indeed beyond all comprehension, was, that the violence of the shock was such that we lost our rudder, broke our bowsprit in the middle, and split all our masts from top to bottom, two of which went by the board. A poor fellow, who was aloft furling the main-sheet, was flung at least three leagues from the ship; but he fortunately saved his life by laying hold of the tail of a large sea-gull, which brought him back and lodged him on the very spot whence he was thrown. Another proof of the violence of the shock was the force with which the people between decks were driven against the floors above them. My head particularly was pressed into my stomach, where it continued some months before it returned to its natural situation.

While we were all in a state of astonishment at the general and unaccountable confusion in which we were involved, the whole was suddenly explained by the appearance of a large whale, which had been basking, asleep, within sixteen feet of the surface of the water. This animal was so much displeased with

the disturbance which our ship had given him—for in our passage we had with our rudder scratched his nose—that he beat in all the gallery and part of the quarter-deck with his tail, and almost at the same instant took the main-sheet anchor, which was suspended, as it usually is, from the head, between his teeth, and ran away with the ship at least sixty leagues, at the rate of twelve leagues an hour, when, fortunately, the cable broke, and we lost both the whale and the anchor. However, upon our return to Europe, some months after, we found the same whale within a few leagues of the same spot, floating dead upon the water. It measured above half a mile in length. As we could take only a small quantity of such a monstrous animal on board, we got our boats out, and with much difficulty cut off his head, where, to our great joy, we found the anchor, and above forty fathoms of the cable, concealed on the left side of his mouth, just under his tongue. Perhaps this was the cause of his death, as that side of his tongue was much swelled with severe inflammation.

This was the only extraordinary circumstance that happened on this voyage. One part of our distress, however, I had like to have forgot. While the whale was running away with the ship she sprang a leak, and the water poured in so fast that all our pumps could not keep us from sinking. It was, however, my good fortune to discover it first. I found a large hole about a foot in diameter, and you will naturally suppose this circumstance gives me infinite pleasure, when I inform you that this noble vessel was preserved, with all its crew, by a most happy thought of mine. In short I sat down over it, and could have covered it had it been even larger. Nor will you be surprised at this when I inform you that I am descended from Dutch parents.

My situation, while I sat there, was rather cool, but the carpenter's art soon relieved me.

—Adventures of Baron Münchausen.

Matthias Claudius was another maker of Poetical Fables and Folk Songs.

THE HEN AND THE EGG

A famous hen's my story's theme,
Who ne'er was known to tire
Of laying eggs, but then she'd scream
So loud o'er every egg, 'twould seem
The house must be on fire.
A turkey-cock, who ruled the walk,
A wiser bird, and older,
Could bear't no more, so off did stalk
Right to the hen, and told her:
"Madam, that scream, I apprehend,
Does not affect the matter;
It surely helps the eggs no whit;
So, lay your egg—and done with it!
I pray you, madam, as a friend,
Cease that superfluous clatter.
You know not how't goes through my head!"
"Humph! Very likely!" madam said,
Then, proudly putting forth a leg:
"Uneducated barnyard fowl,
You know no more than any owl
The noble privilege and praise
Of authorship in modern days!
I'll tell you why I do it:
First, you perceive, I lay my egg,
And then—review it."

Friedrich von Schiller was among the most famous of Germany's writers. Poet, dramatist and historian he left numerous works of varied value.

His humor, like that of all his countrymen, is heavy and rather labored.

PEGASUS IN THE YOKE

Into a public fair—a cattle-fair, in short,
  Where other things are bought and sold—ah, sad
    to tell!
A hungry poet one day brought
  The Muse's Pegasus to sell.

Shrill neighed the hippogriff and clear,
  And pranced, and reared, displaying his proud
  frame,
Till all exclaimed in wonder, who stood near,
  "The noble, royal beast! But what a shame
His slender form by such a hateful pair
  Of wings is spoiled! He'd set off a fine post-team
    well."
"The race," say others, "would be rare;
But who's go posting through the air?"
  And lose his money no one will.
A farmer mustered courage, though, at length,
  "The wings, indeed," he says, "will be no profit;
  But them one might tie down, or crop them off;
  it
Then were a good horse for drawing—it has
strength.
I'll give you twenty pounds, sir, win or lose."
The seller, too delighted to refuse,
Cried out, "Agreed!" and eagerly the offer seized.
Hans with his bargain trudged off home, well
pleased.

The noble beast was harnessed in,
  But felt th' unwonted burden to be light,
  And off he set with appetite for flight,
And soon his wild careering would begin,
And hurled the cart in proudest rage
Over a precipice's edge.
  "Well done!" thought Hans. "We wisdom from
    experience borrow;
I'll trust the mad beast with no loads again.
  I've passengers to take to-morrow;
He shall be put in leader of the train.
By using him, two horses I shall spare;
He'll learn in time the collar, too, to bear."

They went on well awhile. The horse was fleet,
And quickened up the rest; and arrow-swift the
    carriage flies.
But now, what next? With look turned to the skies,

And unaccustomed with firm hoof the ground to beat,
He leaves the sure track of the wheels,
True to the stronger nature which he feels,
And runs through marsh and moor, o'er planted field and plain;
And the same fury seizes all the train.
No call will help, no bridle hold them in,
Till, to the mortal fright of all within,
The coach, well shaken and well smashed, brings up
In sad plight on a steep hill's top.

"This is not quite the thing! No, no!"
Says Hans, considering, with a frown.
"In this way I shall never make it go.
Let's see if 'twill not tame the wild-fire down,
To work him hard, and keep him low."
The trial's made. The beast, so fair and trim,
Before three days are gone looks gaunt and grim,
And to a shadow shrunk. "I have it! I have found it now!"
Cries Hans. "Come on, now. Yoke me him
Beside my strongest ox before the plow."

So said, so done. In droll procession now,
See ox and wingèd horse before the plow.
Unwilling steps the griffin, strains what little might
Of longing's left in him, to take his fond old flight.
In vain: deliberately steps his neighbor,
And Phœbus' high-souled steed must bend to his slow labor,
Till now, by long resistance spent his force,
His trembling limbs he can no longer trust,
And, bowed with shame, the noble, godlike horse
Falls to the ground, and rolls him in the dust.

"You cursèd beast!" Hans breaks out furious now,
And scolds and blusters, while he lays the blows on;
"You are too poor, then, even for the plow!
You rascal, so my ignorance to impose on!"

And while in this way angrily he goes on,
And swings the lash, behold! upon the way
A pleasant youth steps up so smart and gay.
A harp shakes ringing in his hand,
And through his glossy, parted hair

Winds glittering a golden band.
"Where now, friend, with that wondrous pair?"
From far off to the boor he spoke.
"The bird and ox together in that style?
I pray you, man, why, what a yoke!
But come, to try a little while,
Will you entrust your horse to me?
Look well: a wonder you shall see."

The hippogriff's unyoked, and with a smile
The youth springs lightsomely upon his back.
Scarce feels the beast the master's certain hand,
But gnashes at his wings' confining band,
And mounts, with lightning-look, the airy track.
No more the being that he was, but royally,
A spirit now, a god, up mounteth he;
Unfurls at once, as for their far storm-flight,
His splendid wings, and shoots to heaven with
fierce, wild neigh;
And ere the eye can follow him, away
He melts into the clear blue height.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the greatest name in German literature, is hardly to be classed among the humorists.

But a short extract from his Reynard the Fox is quoted.

"But I am rather bad in my inside.
By what I've eaten I am quite upset,
And nowise fitted for a journey yet."
"What was it?" asked Sir Bruin, quite prepared,
For Reynard had not thrown him off his guard.
"Ah," quoth the Fox, "what boots it to explain?
E'en your kind pity could not ease my pain.
Since flesh I have abjured, for my soul's weal,
I'm often sadly put to't for a meal.
I bear my wretched life as best I can;
A hermit fares not like an alderman.
But yesterday, as other viands failed,
I ate some honey—see how I am swelled!
Of that there's always to be had enough.
Would I had never touched the cursed stuff!
I ate it out of sheer necessity;
Physic is not so nauseous near to me."
"Honey!" exclaimed the Bear; "did you say honey!

Would I could any get for love or money!
How can you speak so ill of what's so good?
Honey has ever been my fav'rite food;
It is so wholesome, and so sweet and luscious,
I can't conceive how you can call it nauseous.
Do get me some o't, and you may depend
You'll make me evermore your steadfast friend."
"You're surely joking, uncle!" Reynard cried.
"No, on my sacred word!" the Bear replied;
"I'd not, though jokes as blackberries were rife,
Joke upon such a subject for my life."
"Well, you surprise me!" said the knavish beast.
"There's no accounting, certainly, for taste;
And one man's meat is oft another's poison.
I'll wager that you never set your eyes on
Such store of honey as you soon shall spy
At Gaffer Joiner's, who lives here hard by."
In fancy o'er the treat did Bruin gloat,
While his mouth fairly watered at the thought.
"Oh, take me, take me there, dear coz," quoth he,
"And I will ne'er forget your courtesy!
Oh, let me have a taste, if not my fill;
Do, cousin." Reynard grinned, and said, "I will.
Honey you shall not long time be without.
'Tis true just now I'm rather sore of foot;
But what of that? The love I bear to you
Shall make the road seem short, and easy too
Not one of all my kith or kin is there
Whom I so honor as th' illustrious Bear.
Come, then, and in return I know you'll say
A good word for me on the council day.
You shall have honey to your heart's content,
And wax, too, if your fancy's that way bent."
Whacks of a different sort the sly rogue meant.
Off starts the wily Fox, in merry trim,
And Bruin blindly follows after him.
"If you have luck," thought Reynard, with a titter,
"I guess you'll find our honey rather bitter."
When they at length reached Goodman Joiner's yard,
The joy that Bruin felt he might have spared.
But hope, it seems, by some eternal rule,
Beguiles the wisest as the merest fool.
'Twas ev'ning now, and Reynard knew, he said,
The goodman would be safe and sound in bed.
A good and skilful carpenter was he;
Within his yard there lay an old oak-tree,

Whose gnarled and knotted trunk he had to split.
A stout wedge had he driven into it;
The cleft gaped open a good three foot wide;
Toward this spot the crafty Reynard hied.
"Uncle," quoth he, "your steps this way direct;
You'll find more honey here than you suspect.
In at this fissure boldly thrust your pate;
But I beseech you to be moderate.
Remember, sweetest things the soonest cloy,
And temperance enhances every joy."
"What!" said the Bear, a shock'd look as he put on
Of self-restraint; "d'ye take me for a glutton?
With thanks I use the gifts of Providence,
But to abuse them count a grave offense."
And so Sir Bruin let himself be fooled—
As strength will be whene'er by craft 'tis ruled.
Into the cleft he thrust his greedy maw
Up to the ears, and either foremost paw.
Reynard drew near, and tugging might and main
Pulled forth the wedge, and the trunk closed again.
By head and foot was Bruin firmly caught,
Nor threats nor flatt'ry could avail him aught.
He howled, he raved, he struggled, and he tore,
Till the whole place re-echoed with his roar,
And Goodman Joiner, wakened by the rout,
Jumped up, much wond'ring what 'twas all about.
He seized his ax, that he might be prepared,
And danger, if it came, might find him on his guard.
Still howled the Bear, and struggled to get free
From the accursed grip of that cleft tree.
He strove and strained, but strained and strove in vain;
His mightiest efforts but increased his pain;
He thought he never should get loose again.
And Reynard thought the same, for his own part,
And wished it, too, devoutly from his heart
And as the joiner coming he espied,
Armed with his ax, the jesting ruffian cried:
"Uncle, what cheer? Is th' honey to your taste?
Don't eat too quick; there's no such need of haste.
The joiner's coming, and I make no question,
He brings you your dessert, to help digestion."
Then, deeming 'twas not longer safe to stay,
To Malepartus back he took his way.

Carl Arnold Kortum, a German poet, wrote a long

rigmarole of burlesque, called *The Jobsiad*. This was exceedingly popular and became a German classic. It is dull for the most part, but shows flashes of real drollery.

Contains the copy of a letter, which, among many others, the student Hieronimus did write to his parents:

Dear and Honored Parents,
I lately
Have suffered for want of money greatly;
Have the goodness, then, to send without fail,
A trifle or two by return of mail.

I want about twenty or thirty ducats;
For I have not at present a cent in my pockets;
Things are so tight with us this way,
Send me the money at once, I pray.

And everything is growing higher,
Lodging and washing, and lights and fire,
And incidental expenses every day—
Send me the ducats without delay.

You can hardly perceive the enormous expenses
The college imposes on all pretenses,
For text-books and lectures so much to pay—
I wish the ducats were on their way!

I devote to my studies unremitting attention—
One thing I must not forget to mention:
The thirty ducats, pray send them straight
For my purse is in a beggarly state.

Boots and shoes, and stockings and breeches,
Tailoring, washing, and extra stitches,
Pen, ink and paper, are all so dear,
I wish the thirty ducats were here!

The money—(I trust you will speedily send it!)
I promise faithfully to spend it;
Yes, dear parents, you never need fear,
I live very strictly and frugally here.

When other students revel and riot,

I steal away into perfect quiet,
And shut myself up with my books and light
In my study-chamber, till late at night.

Beyond the needful supply of my table,
I spare, dear parents, all I am able;
Take tea but rarely, and nothing more,
For spending money afflicts me sore.

Other students, who'd fain be called *mellow*,
Set me down for a niggardly fellow,
And say: there goes the *dig*, just look!
How like a parson he eyes his book!

With jibes and jokes they daily beset me,
But none of these things do I suffer to fret me;
I smile at all they can do or say—
Don't forget the ducats, I pray!

Ten hours each day I spend at the college,
Drinking at the fount of knowledge,
And when the lectures come to an end,
The rest in private study I spend.

The Professors express great gratification
Only they hope I will use moderation,
And not wear out in my studiis
Philosophicis et theologicis.

It would savor, dear parents, of self-laudation,
To enter on an enumeration
Of all my studies—in brief, there is none
More exemplary than your dear son.

My head seems ready to burst asunder,
Sometimes, with its learned load, and I wonder
Where so much knowledge is packed away:
(Apropos! don't forget the ducats, I pray!)

Yes, dearest parents, my devotion to study
Consumes the best strength of mind and body,
And generally even the night is spent
In meditation deep and intent.

In the pulpit soon I shall take my station
And try my hand at the preacher's vocation
Likewise I dispute in the college-hall
On learned subjects with one and all.

But don't forget to send me the ducats,
For I long so much to replenish my pockets;
The money one day shall be returned
In the shape of a son right wise and learn'd.

Then my *Privatissimum* (I've been thinking on it
For a long time—and in fact begun it)
Will cost me twenty Rix-dollars more,
Please send with the ducats I mentioned before.

I also, dear parents, inform you sadly,
I have torn my coat of late very badly,
So please enclose with the rest in your note
Twelve dollars to purchase a new coat.

New boots are also necessary,
Likewise my night-gown is ragged, very;
My hat and pantaloons, too, alas!
And the rest of my clothes are going to grass.

Now, as all these things are needed greatly,
Please enclose me four Louis d'ors separately,
Which, joined to the rest, perhaps will be
Enough for the present emergency.

My recent sickness you may not have heard of;
In fact, for some time, my life was despaired of,
But I haste to assure you, on my word,
That now my health is nearly restored.

The Medicus, for services rendered,
A bill of eighteen guilders has tendered,
And then the apothecary's will be,
In round numbers, about twenty-three.

Now that physician and apothecary
May get their dues, it is necessary
These forty-one guilders be added to the rest,
But, as to my health, don't be distressed.

The nurse would also have some compensation,
Who attended me in my critical situation,
I, therefore, think it would be best
To enclose seven guilders for her with the rest.

For citrons, jellies and things of that nature,
To sustain and strengthen the feeble creature,
The confectioner, too, has a small account,

Eight guilders is about the amount.

These various items of which I've made mention,
Demand immediate attention;
For order, to me, is very dear,
And I carefully from debts keep clear.

I also rely on your kind attention,
To forward the ducats of which I made mention
So soon as it can possibly be—
One more small item occurs to me:—

Two weeks ago I unluckily stumbled,
And down the length of the stairway tumbled,
As in at the college door I went,
Whereby my right arm almost double was bent.

The Chirurgus who attended on the occasion,
For his balsams, plasters and preparation
Of spirits, and other things needless to name,
Charges twelve dollars; please forward the same.

But, that your minds may be acquiescent,
I am, thank God, now convalescent;
Both shoulder and shin are in a very good way,
And I go to lecture every day.

My stomach is still in a feeble condition,
A circumstance owing, so thinks the physician,
To sitting so much, when I read and write,
And studying so long and so late at night.

He, therefore, earnestly advises
Burgundy wine, with nutmeg and spices,
And every morning, instead of tea,
For the stomach's sake, to drink sangaree.

Please send, agreeably to these advices,
Two pistoles for the wine and spices,
And be sure, dear parents, I only take
Such things as these for the stomach's sake.

Finally, a few small debts, amounting
To thirty or forty guilders (loose counting),
Be pleased, in your letter, without fail,
Dear parents, to enclose this bagatelle.

And could you, for sundries, send me twenty

Or a dozen Louis d'or (that would be plenty),
'Twould be a kindness seasonably done,
And very acceptable to your son.

This letter, dear parents, comes hoping to find you
In usual health—I beg to remind you
How much I am for money perplexed,
Please, therefore, to remit in your next.

Herewith I close my letter, repeating
To you and all my friendly greeting,
And subscribe myself, without further fuss,
Your obedient son,
HIERONIMUS.

I add in a postscript what I neglected
To say, beloved and highly respected
Parents, I beg most filially,
That you'll forward the money as soon as may be.

For I had, dear father (I say it weeping),
Fourteen French Crowns laid by in safe keeping
(As I thought) for a day of need—but the whole
An anonymous person yesterday stole:

I know you'll make good, unasked, each shilling,
Your innocent son has lost by this villain;
For a man so considerate must be aware
That I such a loss can nowise bear.

Meanwhile, I'll take care that, to-day or to-morrow,
Mr. Anonymous shall, to his sorrow
And your satisfaction, receive the reward
Of his graceless trick with the hempen cord.

Adelbert von Chamisso, German author and poet, came of an old French family. His principal work is in prose, *The Wonderful History of Peter Schlemihl*, the man who sold his shadow.

An amusing poem is in nonsense vein.

THE PIGTAIL

There lived a sage in days of yore,
And he a handsome pigtail wore;

But wondered much, and sorrowed more,
Because it hung behind him.

He mused upon this curious case,
And swore he'd change the pigtail's place,
And have it hanging at his face,
Not dangling there behind him.

Says he, "The mystery I've found;
I'll turn me round." He turned him round,
But still it hung behind him.

Then round, and round, and out, and in,
All day the puzzled sage did spin;
In vain—it mattered not a pin—
The pigtail hung behind him.

And right, and left, and round about,
And up, and down, and in, and out
He turned. But still the pigtail stout
Hung steadily behind him.

And though his efforts never slack,
And though he twist, and whirl, and tack,
Alas! still faithful to his back
The pigtail hangs behind him!

Wilhelm Müller, a lyric poet of promise, died young. Many of his songs were set to music by Schubert. His humorous verse was rollicking and popular.

THE DRUNKARD'S FANCY

Straight from the tavern door
I am come here;
Old road, how odd to me
Thou dost appear!
Right and left changing sides,
Rising and sunk;
Oh, I can plainly see,
Road, thou art drunk!

Oh, what a twisted face
Thou hast, oh, moon!
One eye shut, t'other eye
Wide as a spoon.

Who could have dreamed of this?
  Shame on thee, shame!
Thou hast been fuddling,
  Jolly old dame!

Look at the lamps again:
  See how they reel!
Nodding and flickering
  Round as they wheel.
Not one among them all
  Steady can go;
Look at the drunken lamps
  All in a row.

All in an uproar seem
  Great things and small;
I am the only one
  Sober at all.
But there's no safety here
  For sober men;
So I'll turn back to
  The tavern again.

The brothers, Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, wrote much in collaboration beside their well-known *Märchen* or *Fairy Tales*.

Their humor is of the heavier sort, but their versatile erudition found opportunities for witty conceits.

EXCERPT FROM CLEVER GRETHEL

One day her master said to her, "Grethel, I have invited some friends to dinner to-day; cook me some of your best chickens."

"That I will, master," she replied.

So she went out, and killed two of the best fowls and prepared them for roasting.

In the afternoon she placed them on the spit before the fire, and they were all ready, and beautifully hot and brown by the proper time, but

the visitors had not arrived. So she went to her master, and said, “The fowls will be quite spoiled if I keep them at the fire any longer. It will be a pity and a shame if they are not eaten soon!”

Then said her master, “I will go and fetch the visitors myself,” and away he went.

As soon as his back was turned Grethel put the spit with the birds on one side, and thought, “I have been standing by the fire so long that it has made me quite thirsty. Who knows when they will come? While I am waiting I may as well run into the cellar and have a little drop.” So she seized a jug, and said, “All right, Grethel, you shall have a good draft. Wine is so tempting!” she continued, “and it does not do to spoil your draft.” And she drank without stopping till the jug was empty.

After this she went into the kitchen, and placed the fowls again before the fire, basted them with butter, and rattled the spit round so furiously that they browned and frizzled with the heat. “They would never miss a little piece if they searched for it ever so carefully,” she said to herself. Then she dipped her finger in the dripping-pan to taste, and cried, “Oh, how nice these fowls are! It is a sin and a shame that there is no one here to eat them!”

She ran to the window to see if her master and the guests were coming; but she could see no one. So she went and stood again by the fowls, and thought, “The wing of that fowl is a little burned. I had better eat it out of the way.” She cut it off as she thought this, and ate it up, and it tasted so nice that when she had finished it she thought, “I must have the other. Master will never notice that anything is missing.”

After the two wings were eaten, Grethel again

went to look for her master, but there were no signs of his appearance.

“Who knows?” she said to herself; “perhaps the visitors are not coming at all, and they have kept my master to dinner, so he won’t be back. Hi, Grethel! there are lots of good things left for you; and that piece of fowl has made me thirsty. I must have another drink before I come back and eat up all these good things.”

So she went into the cellar, took a large draft of wine, and returning to the kitchen, sat down and ate the remainder of the fowl with great relish.

There was now only one fowl left, and as her master did not return, Grethel began to look at the other with longing eyes. At last she said, “Where one is, there the other must be; for the fowls belong to each other, and what is right for one is also fair and right for the other. I believe, too, I want some more to drink. It won’t hurt me.”

The last draft gave her courage. She came back to the kitchen and let the second fowl go after the first.

As she was enjoying the last morsel, home came her master.

“Make haste, Grethel!” he cried. “The guests will be here in a few minutes.”

“Yes, master,” she replied. “It will soon be all ready.”

Meanwhile the master saw that the cloth was laid and everything in order. So he took up the carving-knife with which he intended to carve the fowl, and went out to sharpen it on the stones in the passage.

While he was doing so, the guests arrived and

knocked gently and courteously at the house door. Grethel ran out to see who it was, and when she caught sight of the visitors she placed her finger on her lips, and whispered, “Hush! Hush! Go back again as quickly as you came! If my master should catch you it would be unfortunate. He did invite you to dinner this evening, but with no other intention than to cut off both the ears of each of you. Listen; you can hear him sharpening his knife.”

The guests heard the sound, and hastened as fast as they could down the steps, and were soon out of sight.

Grethel was not idle. She ran screaming to her master, and cried, “You have invited fine visitors, certainly!”

“Hi! Why, Grethel, what do you mean?”

“Oh!” she exclaimed, “they came here just now, and have taken my two beautiful fowls from the dish that I was going to bring up for dinner, and have run away with them.”

“What strange conduct!” said her master, who was so sorry to lose his nice dinner that he rushed out to follow the thieves. “If they had only left me one, or at least enough for my own dinner!” he cried, running after them. But the more he cried to them to stop the faster they ran; and when they saw him with the knife in his hand, and heard him say, “Only one! only one!”—he meant, if they had left him “only one fowl,” but they thought he spoke of “only one ear,” which he intended to cut off—they ran as if fire were burning around them, and were not satisfied till they found themselves safe at home with both ears untouched.

Friedrich Rückert was a prolific writer and left many volumes of his collected poems.

A scathing bit of satire is here quoted.

ARTIST AND PUBLIC

The dumb man asked the blind man:
"Canst do a favor, pray?
Could I the harper find, man?
Hast seen him pass to-day?
I take, myself, small pleasure
In harp-tones—almost none—
Yet much I'd like a measure
Played for my deaf young son."

The blind man quick made answer:
"I saw him pass my gate;
I'll send my lame young man, sir,
To overtake him straight."
At one look from his master,
Away the cripple ran,
And faster, ever faster,
He chased the harper-man.

The harper came, elated,
And straight to work he went;
His arms were amputated;
His toes to work he bent.
All hearts his playing captured;
The deaf man was all ear;
The blind man gazed, enraptured;
The dumb man shouted, "Hear!"

The lame boy fell to dancing,
And leaped with all his might;
The scene was so entrancing,
They stayed till late at night.
And when the concert ended,
The public, justly proud,
The artist's powers commended,
Who, deeply grateful, bowed.

Heinrich Heine, the celebrated lyric poet, rarely showed any humor in his poetry. But some of his prose works are broadly ludicrous, and his observations witty and cynical.

THE TOWN OF GÖTTINGEN

The town of Göttingen, famous by reason of its university and its sausages, belongs to the kingdom of Hanover, and contains 999 fire-stations, divers churches, a lying-in hospital, an observatory, an academic prison, a library, and an underground tavern—where the beer is excellent. The brook that flows past the town is called the Leine, and serves for bathing in summer; the water is very cold, and at some places the brook is so wide that one cannot jump across it without some exertion. The town is very handsome, and pleases me best when my back is turned to it. It must be very old, for I remember that when I matriculated (and was soon afterward rusticated), five years ago, it had the same gray, ancient appearance, and was as thoroughly provided, as it is now, with poodle dogs, dissertations, laundresses, anthologies, roast pigeon, Guelph decorations, pipe-bowls, court councilors, privy councilors and silly counts....

In general, the inhabitants of Göttingen may be divided into students, professors, Philistines, and cattle. The cattle class is numerically the strongest. To place on record here the names of all professors and students would take me too far afield, nor can I even, at this moment, remember the name of every student; while among the professors there are many who have as yet made none. The number of Philistines in Göttingen must be like that of the sands —or rather the mud—of the sea. Truly, when they appear in the morning with their dirty faces and their white bills at the gates of the academic court, one wonders how God could have had the heart to create such a pack of scoundrels!

More thorough information concerning Göttingen

is easily obtainable by reference to the “Topography” of the town, by K. F. H. Marx. Although I am under the deepest obligations to the author, who was my physician and did me many kindnesses, I cannot praise his work without reserve. I must blame him for not having opposed in terms sufficiently strong the heresy that the ladies of Göttingen have feet of spacious dimensions. I have been engaged for a long time upon a work which is to destroy this erroneous idea once and forever. For this purpose I have studied comparative anatomy, have made excerpts from the rarest books in the library, and have for hours and hours observed the feet of the passing ladies in Weender Street. In my learned treatise I intend to deal with the subject as follows:

1. Of Feet in General.
2. Of the Feet of the Ancients.
3. Of the Feet of Elephants.
4. Of the Feet of the Fair Inhabitants of Göttingen.
5. Summing up of Opinions delivered upon Feet in Göttingen Taverns.
6. Connection and Comparison of Feet with Calves, Knees, etc.
7. Facsimile Charts (if sheets of paper sufficiently large are obtainable) of Specimen Feet of Göttingen Ladies.

I am the most peaceable of mortals. My wishes are: A modest dwelling, a thatched roof, but a good bed, good fare, milk and butter (the latter very fresh), flowers at the window, and a few fine trees before my gate. And if the Lord would fill the cup of my happiness, He would let me live to see the day when six or seven of my enemies are hung on the

trees. With softened heart I would then forgive them all the evil they have done me. Yes, one must forgive one's enemies, but not before they are hung.

A. If I were of the race of Christ, I should boast of it, and not be ashamed.

B. So would I, if Christ were the only member of the race. But so many miserable scamps belong to it that one hesitates to acknowledge the relationship.

Gervinus, the literary historian, set himself the following problem: To repeat in a long and witless book what Heinrich Heine said in a short and witty one. He solved the problem.

De mortuis nil nisi bene. One should speak only evil of the living.

Heinrich Hoffman, a Frankfort doctor, wrote the popular tales for children about Struwelpeter, which are nursery classics in many languages. These stories have an added interest from the clever illustrations by their author.

Wilhelm Busch, also a comic artist, born near Hanover, is the creator of the Max and Maurice stories and pictures.

He was a well-known contributor to the *Fliegende Blätter*, the popular comic paper of Germany.

A distinct type of German humor is found in their Student Songs. These, oftener than not, are in praise of merrymaking and good cheer.

POPE AND SULTAN

The Pope he leads a happy life;
He fears not married care nor strife;
He drinks the best of Rhenish wine—
I would the Pope's gay lot were mine.

CHORUS

He drinks the best of Rhenish wine—
I would the Pope's gay lot were mine.

But then, all happy's not his life;
He has not maid nor blooming wife,
Nor child has he to raise his hope—
I would not wish to be the Pope.

The Sultan better pleases me;
His is a life of jollity;
His wives are many as his will—
I would the Sultan's throne then fill.

But even he's a wretched man;
He must obey his Alcoran;
And dares not drink one drop of wine—
I would not change his lot for mine.

So, then, I'll hold my lowly stand,
And live in German fatherland;
I'll kiss my maiden fair and fine,
And drink the best of Rhenish wine.

Whene'er my maiden kisses me,
I'll think that I the Sultan be;
And when my cheery glass I tope,
I'll fancy then I am the Pope.

CREDO

For the sole edification
Of this decent congregation,
Goodly people, by your grant
I will sing a holy chant,
I will sing a holy chant.

If the ditty sound but oddly,
'Twas a father, wise and godly,
Sang it so long ago.
Then sing as Martin Luther sang:
"Who loves not woman, wine, and song,
Remains a fool his whole life long!"

He, by custom patriarchal,
Loved to see the beaker sparkle;
And he thought the wine improved,
Tasted by the lips he loved,
By the kindly lips he loved.
Friends, I wish this custom pious
Duly were observed by us,
To combine love, song, wine,
And sing as Martin Luther sang,
As Doctor Martin Luther sang:
"Who loves not woman, wine and song,
Remains a fool his whole life long!"

Who refuses this our *Credo*,
And who will not sing as we do,
Were he holy as John Knox,
I'd pronounce him heterodox,
I'd pronounce him heterodox,
And from out this congregation,
With a solemn commination,
Banish quick the heretic,
Who'll not sing as Luther sang,
As Doctor Martin Luther sang:
"Who loves not woman, wine and song,
Remains a fool his whole life long!"

ITALIAN HUMOR

The humorists of Italy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are few and far between. Carlo Goldoni and Count Carlo Gozzi were both dramatists, the latter also a novelist, whose works show humor, but are not available for quotation.

Count Giacomo Leopardi, though himself a gloomy sort of person, left some satirical writings tinged with wit.

THE ACADEMY OF SYLLOGRAPHS

The Academy of Syllographs, hold that it would be in the highest degree expedient that men should retire as far as possible from the conduct of the business of the world, and should gradually give place to mechanical agency for the direction of human affairs. Accordingly, resolved to contribute as far as lies in its power to this consummation, it has determined to offer three prizes, to be awarded to the persons who shall invent the best examples of the three machines now to be described.

The scope and object of the first of these automata shall be to represent the person and discharge the functions of a friend who shall not calumniate or jeer at his absent associate; who shall not fail to take his part when he hears him censured or ridiculed; who shall not prefer a reputation for wit, and the applause of men, to his duty to friendship; who shall never, from love of gossip or mere ostentation of superior knowledge, divulge a secret committed to his keeping; who shall not abuse the intimacy or confidence of his fellow in order to supplant or

surpass him; who shall harbor no envy against his friend; who shall guard his interests and help to repair his losses, and shall be prompt to answer his call, and minister to his needs more substantially than by empty professions.

In the construction of this piece of mechanism it will be well to study, among other things, the treatise on friendship by Cicero, as well as that of Madame de Lambert. The Academy is of opinion that the manufacture of such a machine ought not to prove impracticable or even particularly difficult, for, besides the automata of Regiomontanus and Vaucanson, there was at one time exhibited in London a mechanical figure which drew portraits, and wrote to dictation; while there have been more than one example of such machines capable of playing at chess. Now, in the opinion of many philosophers human life is but a game; nay, some hold that it is more shallow and more frivolous than many other games, and that the principles of chess, for example, are more in accordance with reason, and that its various moves are more governed by wisdom, than are the actions of mankind; while we have it on the authority of Pindar that human action is no more substantial than the shadow of a dream; and this being so, the intelligence of an automaton ought to prove quite equal to the discharge of the functions which have just been described.

As to the power of speech, it seems unreasonable to doubt that men should have the power of communicating it to machines constructed by themselves, seeing that this may be said to have been established by sundry precedents, such, for example, as in the case of the statue of Memnon, and of the human head manufactured by Albertus Magnus,

which actually became so loquacious that Saint Thomas Aquinas, losing all patience with it, smashed it to pieces. Then, too, there was the instance of the parrot Ver-Vert, though it was a living creature; but if it could be taught to converse reasonably how much more may it be supposed that a machine devised by the mind of man, and constructed by his hands, should do as much; while it would have this advantage that it might be made less garrulous than this parrot, or the head of Albertus, and therefore it need not irritate its acquaintances and provoke them to smash it.

The inventor of the best example of such a machine shall be decorated with a gold medallion of four hundred sequins in weight, bearing on its face the images of Pylades and Orestes, and on the reverse the name of the successful competitor, surrounded by the legend, FIRST REALIZER OF THE FABLES OF ANTIQUITY.

The second machine called for by the Academy is to be an artificial steam man, so constructed and regulated as to perform virtuous and magnanimous actions. The Academy is of opinion that in the absence of all other adequate motive power to that end, the properties of steam might prove effective to inspire an automaton, and direct it to the attainment of virtue and true glory. The inventor who shall undertake the construction of such a machine should study the poets and the writers of romance, who will best guide him as to the qualities and functions most essential to such a piece of mechanism. The prize shall be a gold medal weighing four hundred and fifty sequins, bearing on its obverse a figure symbolical of the golden age, and on its reverse the name of the inventor.

The third automaton should be so constituted as to perform the duties of woman such as she was conceived by the Count Baldassar Castiglione, and described by him in his treatise entitled *The Courtier*, as well as by other writers in other works on the subject, which will be readily found, and which, as well as that of the count, will have to be carefully consulted and followed. The construction of a machine of this nature, too, ought not to appear impossible to the inventors of our time, when they reflect on the fact that in the most ancient times, and times destitute of science, Pygmalion was able to fabricate for himself, with his own hands, a wife of such rare gifts that she has never since been equaled down to the present day. The successful inventor of this machine shall be rewarded with a gold medal weighing five hundred sequins, bearing on one face the figure of the Arabian Phenix of Metastasio, couched on a tree of a European species, while its other side will bear the name of the inventor, with the title, INVENTOR OF FAITHFUL WOMEN AND OF CONJUGAL HAPPINESS.

Finally, the Academy has resolved that the funds necessary to defray the expenses incidental to this competition shall be supplemented by all that was found in the purse of Diogenes, its first secretary, together with one of the three golden asses which were the property of three of its former members—namely, Apuleius, Firenzuola, and Machiavelli, but which came into the possession of the Academy by the last wills and testaments of the aforementioned, as duly recorded in its minutes.

Antonio Ghislanzoni, an Italian journalist was possessed of a sort of humor that would be a credit to any nation. It is not far removed from the style of the early American jocularists.

Ghislanzoni was an opera singer, but, losing his voice, he quitted the stage, and founded a comic paper, *L'Uomo di Pietra.*

His paper on Musical Instruments is so entertaining we quote it all.

ON MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

The Clarinet

This instrument consists of a severe cold in the head, contained in a tube of yellow wood.

The clarinet was not invented by the Conservatory, but by Fate.

A chiropodist may be produced by study and hard work; but the clarinet-player is born, not made.

The citizen predestined to the clarinet has an intelligence which is almost obtuse up to the age of eighteen—a period of incubation, when he begins to feel in his nose the first thrills of his fatal vocation.

After that his intellect—limited even then—ceases its development altogether; but his nasal organ, in revenge, assumes colossal dimensions.

At twenty he buys his first clarinet for fourteen francs; and three months later his landlord gives him notice. At twenty-five he is admitted into the band of the National Guard.

He dies of a broken heart on finding that not one of his three sons shows the slightest inclination for the instrument through which he has blown all his

wits.

The Trombone

The man who plays on this instrument is always one who seeks oblivion in its society—oblivion of domestic troubles, or consolation for love betrayed.

The man who has held a metal tube in his mouth for six months finds himself proof against every illusion.

At the age of fifty he finds that, of all human passions and feelings, nothing is left him but an insatiable thirst.

Later on, if he wants to obtain the position of porter in a gentleman's house, or aspires to the hand of a woman with a delicate ear, he tries to lay aside his instrument, but the taste for loud notes and strong liquors only leaves him with life.

The Harmoniflute

This instrument, on account of the nature of its monotonous sounds and its tremendous plaintiveness, acts on the nerves of those who hear it, and predisposes to melancholy those who play it.

The harmoniflautist is usually tender and lymphatic of constitution, with blue eyes, and eats only white meats and farinaceous food.

If a man, he is called Oscar; those of the other sex are named Adelaide.

At home, he or she is in the habit of bringing out the instrument at dessert, and dinner being over, and the spirits of the family therefore more or less cheerfully disposed, will entertain the company with the "Miserere" in *Il Trovatore*, or some similar melody.

The harmoniflautist weeps easily. After practising on the instrument for fifteen years or so, he or she dissolves altogether, and is converted into a brook.

The Organ

This complicated and majestic instrument is of a clerical character, and destined, by its great volume of sound, to drown the flat singing of clergy and congregation in church.

The organist is usually a person sent into the world for the purpose of making a great noise without undue expenditure of strength, one who wants to blow harder than others without wearing out his own bellows.

At forty he becomes the intimate friend of the parish priest, and the most influential person connected with the church. By dint of repeating the same refrains every day at matins and vespers, he acquires a knowledge of Latin, and gets all the anthems, hymns, and masses by heart. At fifty he marries a devout spinster recommended by the priest.

He makes a kind and good-tempered husband, his only defect in that capacity being his habit of dreaming out loud on the eve of every church festival. On Easter Eve, for instance, he nearly always awakens his wife by intoning, with the full force of his lungs, *Resurrexit*. The good woman, thus abruptly aroused, never fails to answer him with the orthodox *Alleluia*.

At the age of sixty he becomes deaf, and then begins to think his own playing perfection. At seventy he usually dies of a broken heart, because the new priest, who knows not Joseph, instead of

asking him to dine at the principal table with the clergy and other church authorities, has relegated him to an inferior place, and the society of the sacristan and the grave-digger.

The Flute

The unhappy man who succumbs to the fascinations of this instrument is never one who has attained the full development of his intellectual faculties. He always has a pointed nose, marries a short-sighted woman, and dies run over by an omnibus.

The flute is the most deadly of all instruments. It requires a peculiar conformation and special culture of the thumb-nail, with a view to those holes which have to be only half closed.

The man who plays the flute frequently adds to his other infirmities a mania for keeping tame weasels, turtle-doves, or guinea-pigs.

The Violoncello

To play the 'cello, you require to have long, thin fingers; but it is still more indispensable to have very long hair falling over a greasy coat-collar.

In case of fire, the 'cellist who sees his wife and his 'cello in danger will save the latter first.

His greatest satisfaction, as a general thing, is that of "making the strings weep." Sometimes, indeed, he succeeds in making his wife and family do the same thing in consequence of a diet of excessive frugality. Sometimes, too, he contrives to make people laugh or yawn, but this, according to him, is the result of atmospheric influences.

He can express, through his loftily attuned strings, all possible griefs and sorrows, except those of his

audience and his creditors.

The Drum

An immense apparatus of wood and sheepskin, full of air and of sinister presages. In melodrama the roll of the drum serves to announce the arrival of a fatal personage, an agent of Destiny, in most cases an ill-used husband. Sometimes this funereal rumbling serves to describe silence—sometimes to indicate the depths of the operatic heroine's despair.

The drummer is a serious man, possessed with the sense of his high dramatic mission. He is able, however, to conceal his conscious pride, and sleep on his instrument when the rest of the orchestra is making all the noise it can. In such cases he commissions the nearest of his colleagues to awaken him at the proper moment.

On awaking, he seizes the two drumsticks and begins to beat; but, should his neighbor forget to rouse him, he prolongs his slumbers till the fall of the curtain. Then he shakes himself, perceives that the opera is over, and rubs his eyes. If it happens that the conductor reprimands him for his remissness at the *attack*, he shrugs his shoulders and replies, "Never mind, the tenor died, all the same. A roll of the drum, more or less, what difference would it have made?"

Edmondo de Amicis, soldier and writer of books of travel, often gives amusing descriptions of scenes or incidents.

TOOTH FOR TOOTH

An English merchant of Mogador was returning to the city on the evening of a market-day, at the moment when the gate by which he was entering was barred by a crowd of country people driving camels and asses. Although the Englishman called out as loud as he could, “Make way!” an old woman was struck by his horse and knocked down, falling with her face upon a stone. Ill fortune would have it that in the fall she broke her last two front teeth. She was stunned for an instant, and then rose convulsed with rage, and broke out into insults and ferocious maledictions, following the Englishman to his door. She then went before the governor, and demanded that in virtue of the law of talion he should order the English merchant’s two front teeth to be broken. The governor tried to pacify her, and advised her to pardon the injury; but she would listen to nothing, and he sent her away with a promise that she should have justice, hoping that when her anger should be exhausted she would herself desist from her pursuit. But, three days having passed, the old woman came back more furious than ever, demanded justice, and insisted that a formal sentence should be pronounced against the Christian.

“Remember,” said she to the governor, “thou didst promise me!”

“What!” responded the governor; “dost thou take me for a Christian, that I should be the slave of my word?”

Every day for a month the old woman, athirst for vengeance, presented herself at the door of the citadel, and yelled and cursed and made such a noise, that the governor, to be rid of her, was obliged to yield. He sent for the merchant, explained the case, the right which the law gave the woman, the

duty imposed upon himself, and begged him to put an end to the matter by allowing two of his teeth to be removed—any two, although in strict justice they should be two incisors. The Englishman refused absolutely to part with incisors, or eye-teeth, or molars; and the governor was obliged to send the old woman packing, ordering the guard not to let her put her foot in the palace again.

"Very well," said she, "since there are none but degenerate Mussulmans here, since justice is refused to a Mussulman woman against an infidel dog, I will go to the sultan, and we shall see whether the prince of the faithful will deny the law of the Prophet."

True to her determination, she started on her journey alone, with an amulet in her bosom, a stick in her hand, and a bag round her neck, and made on foot the hundred miles which separate Mogador from the sacred city of the empire. Arrived at Fez, she sought and obtained audience of the sultan, laid her case before him, and demanded the right accorded by the Koran, the application of the law of retaliation. The sultan exhorted her to forgive. She insisted. All the serious difficulties which opposed themselves to the satisfaction of her petition were laid before her. She remained inexorable. A sum of money was offered her, with which she could live in comfort for the rest of her days. She refused it.

"What do I want with your money?" said she; "I am old, and accustomed to live in poverty. What I want is the two teeth of the Christian. I want them; I demand them in the name of the Koran. The sultan, prince of the faithful, head of our religion, father of his subjects, cannot refuse justice to a true believer."

Her obstinacy put the sultan in a most embarrassing position. The law was formal, and her

right incontestable; and the ferment of the populace, stirred up by the woman's fanatical declamations, rendered refusal perilous. The sultan, who was Abd-er-Rahman, wrote to the English consul, asking as a favor that he would induce his countryman to allow two of his teeth to be broken. The merchant answered the consul that he would never consent. Then the sultan wrote again, saying that if he would consent he would grant him, in compensation, any commercial privilege that he chose to ask. This time, touched in his purse, the merchant yielded. The old woman left Fez, blessing the name of the pious Abd-er-Rahman, and went back to Mogador, where, in the presence of many people, the two teeth of the Nazarene were broken. When she saw them fall to the ground she gave a yell of triumph, and picked them up with a fierce joy. The merchant, thanks to the privileges accorded him, made in the two following years so handsome a fortune that he went back to England toothless, but happy.

SPANISH HUMOR

The only illustrious name of a writer of humor in Spain in the eighteenth century is that of the justly celebrated Thomas Yriarte.

He is best known to English readers through his Literary Fables, which have been frequently translated.

THE ASS AND THE FLUTE

You must know that this ditty,
This little romance,
Be it dull, be it witty,
Arose from mere chance.

Near a certain inclosure,
Not far from my manse,
An ass, with composure,
Was passing by chance.

As he went along prying,
With sober advance,
A shepherd's lute lying,
He found there by chance.

Our amateur started,
And eyed it askance,
Drew nearer, and snorted
Upon it by chance.

The breath of the brute, sir,
Drew music for once;
It entered the flute, sir,
And blew it by chance.

"Ah!" cried he, in wonder,
How comes this to pass?
Who will now dare to slander
The skill of an ass?

And asses in plenty
I see at a glance,

Who, one time in twenty,
Succeed by mere chance.

THE EGGS

Beyond the sunny Philippines
An island lies, whose name I do not know;
But that's of little consequence, if so
You understand that there they had no hens;
Till, by a happy chance, a traveler,
After a while, carried some poultry there.
Fast they increased as any one could wish;
Until fresh eggs became the common dish.
But all the natives ate them boiled—they say—
Because the stranger taught no other way.
At last the experiment by one was tried—
Sagacious man!—of having his eggs fried.
And, O! what boundless honors for his pains,
His fruitful and inventive fancy gains!
Another, now, to have them baked devised—
Most happy thought!—and still another, spiced.
Who ever thought eggs were so delicate!
Next, some one gave his friends an omelette:
"Ah!" all exclaimed, "what an ingenious feat!"
But scarce a year went by, an artiste shouts,
"I have it now—ye're all a pack of louts!—
With nice tomatoes all my eggs are stewed."
And the whole island thought the mode so good,
That they would so have cooked them to this day,
But that a stranger wandered out that way,
Another dish the gaping natives taught,
And showed them eggs cooked *à la Huguenot*.
Successive cooks thus proved their skill diverse;
But how shall I be able to rehearse
All of the new, delicious condiments
That luxury, from time to time, invents?
Soft, hard, and dropped, and now with sugar
sweet,
And now boiled up with milk, the eggs they eat;
In sherbet, in preserves; at last they tickle
Their palates fanciful with eggs in pickle.
All had their day—the last was still the best.
But a grave senior thus, one day, addressed
The epicures: "Boast, ninnies, if you will,
These countless prodigies of gastric skill—
But blessings on the man who brought the hens!"

Beyond the sunny Philippines

Our crowd of modern authors need not go
New-fangled modes of cooking eggs to show.

THE COUNTRY SQUIRE

A country squire, of greater wealth than wit
(For fools are often bless'd with fortune's smile),
Had built a splendid house, and furnish'd it
In splendid style.

"One thing is wanted," said a friend; "for, though
The rooms are fine, the furniture profuse,
You lack a library, dear sir, for show,
If not for use."

"'Tis true; but, zounds!" replied the squire with glee,
"The lumber-room in yonder northern wing
(I wonder I ne'er thought of it) will be
The very thing.

"I'll have it fitted up without delay
With shelves and presses of the newest mode
And rarest wood, befitting every way
A squire's abode.

"And when the whole is ready, I'll despatch
My coachman—a most knowing fellow—down,
To buy me, by admeasurement, a batch
Of books in town."

But ere the library was half supplied
With all its pomp of cabinet and shelf,
The booby Squire repented him, and cried,
Unto himself:—

"This room is much more roomy than I thought;
Ten thousand volumes hardly would suffice
To fill it, and would cost, however bought,
A plaguy price.

"Now, as I only want them for their looks,
It might, on second thoughts, be just as good,
And cost me next to nothing, if the books
Were made of wood.

"It shall be so. I'll give the shaven deal
A coat of paint—a colourable dress,
To look like calf or vellum and conceal
Its nakedness.

"And gilt and letter'd with the author's name,
Whatever is most excellent and rare
Shall be, or seem to be ('tis all the same)
Assembled
there."

The work was done; the simulated hoards
Of wit and wisdom round the chamber stood,
In bindings some; and some, of course, in *boards*,
Where all were
wood.

From bulky folios down to slender twelves,
The choicest tomes in many an even row,
Display'd their letter'd backs upon the shelves,
A goodly show.

With such a stock, which seemingly surpass'd
The best collection ever form'd in Spain,
What wonder if the owner grew at last
Supremely vain?

What wonder, as he paced from shelf to shelf,
And conn'd their titles, that the Squire began,
Despite his ignorance, to think himself
A learned man?

Let every amateur, who merely looks
To backs and bindings, take the hint and sell
His costly library; for painted books
Would serve as
well.

There were other Spaniards, doubtless, who possessed humor or wit, but the only available translations of their plays or stories are too long for quotation.

RUSSIAN HUMOR

A glance at Russia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries shows the great popularity of the Fable as a means of expressing the wit and wisdom of the philosophers.

The two greatest Fabulists were Ivan Chemnitzer or Khemnitzer and Ivan Kryloff.

Alexander Griboyedoff was a writer of comedies.

Ivan Chemnitzer

THE PHILOSOPHER

A certain rich man, who had heard it was an advantage to have been at school abroad, sent his son to study in foreign parts. The son, who was an utter fool, came back more stupid than ever, having been taught all sorts of elaborate explanations of the simplest things by a lot of academical windbags. He expressed himself only in scientific terms, so that no one understood him, and everyone became very tired of him.

One day, while walking along a road, and gazing at the sky in speculating upon some problem of the universe to which the answer had never been found (because there was none), the young man stepped over the edge of a deep ditch. His father, who chanced to be near by, ran to get a rope. The son, however, sitting at the bottom of the ditch, began to meditate on the cause of his fall. He concluded that *an earthquake had superinduced a momentary displacement of his corporeal axis, thus destroying his equilibrium, and, in obedience to the law of gravity as established by Newton, precipitating him downward until*

he encountered an immovable obstacle—namely, the bottom of the ditch.

When his father arrived with the rope, the following dialogue took place between them:

"I have brought a rope to pull you out with. There, now, hold on tight to that end, and don't let go while I pull."

"A rope? Please inform me what a rope is before you pull."

"A rope is a thing to get people out of ditches with, when they have fallen in and can't get out by themselves."

"But how is it that no mechanical device has been constructed for that purpose?"

"That would take time; but you will not have to wait until then. Now, then——"

"Time? Please explain first what you mean by time."

"Time is something that I am not going to waste on a fool like you. So you may stay where you are until I come back."

Upon which the man went off, and left his foolish son to himself.

Now, would it not be a good thing if all eloquent windbags were gathered together and thrown into the ditch, to keep him company? Yes, surely. Only it would take a much larger ditch than that to hold them.

—*The Fables.*

THE LION'S COUNCIL OF STATE

A Lion held a court for state affairs.
Why? That is not your business, sir—'twas theirs.
He called the elephants for councilors. Still
The council-board was incomplete,
And the king deemed it fit
With asses all the vacancies to fill.
Heaven help the state, for lo! the bench of asses
The bench of elephants by far surpasses.
"He was a fool, th' aforesaid king," you'll say;
"Better have kept those places vacant, surely,
Than to have filled 'em up so very poorly."

Oh, no, that's not the royal way;
Things have been done for ages thus, and we
Have a deep reverence for antiquity.
Naught worse, sir, than to be, or to appear,
Wiser and better than our fathers were!
The list must be complete, e'en though you make it
Complete with asses—for the lion saw
Such had through all the ages been the law.
He was no radical to break it;

"Besides," said he, "my elephants' good sense
Will soon my asses' ignorance diminish,
For wisdom has a mighty influence."
They made a pretty finish!
The asses' folly soon obtained the sway:
The elephants became as dull as they!

IVAN KRYLOV

THE SWAN, THE PIKE, AND THE CRAB

Whene'er companions don't agree,
  They work without accord;
And naught but trouble doth result,
  Although they all work hard.

One day a swan, a pike, a crab,
  Resolved a load to haul;
All three were harnessed to the cart,
  And pulled together all.
But though they pulled with all their might,
The cart-load on the bank stuck tight.
The swan pulled upward to the skies;
  The crab did backward crawl;
The pike made for the water straight—
  It proved no use at all!

Now, which of them was most to blame,
'Tis not for me to say;
But this I know: the load is there
Unto this very day.

THE MUSICIANS

The tricksy monkey, the goat, the ass, and bandy-legged Mishka, the bear, determined to play a quartet. They provided themselves with the necessary instruments—two fiddles, an alto, and a bass. Then they all settled down under a large tree, with the object of dazzling the world by their artistic performance. They fiddled away lustily for some time, but only succeeded in making a noise, and no music.

"Stop, my friends!" said the monkey, "this will not do; our music does not sound as it ought. It is plain that we are in the wrong positions. You, Mishka, take your bass and face the alto; I will go opposite the second fiddle. Then we shall play altogether differently, so that the very hills and forests will dance."

So they changed places, and began over again. But they produced only discords, as before.

"Wait a moment!" exclaimed the ass; "I know what the matter is. We must get in a row, and then we shall play in tune."

This advice was acted upon. The four animals placed themselves in a straight line, and struck up once more.

The quartet was as unmusical as ever. Then they stopped again, and began squabbling and wrangling about the proper positions to be taken. It happened that a nightingale came flying by that way, attracted

by their din. They begged the nightingale to solve their difficulty for them.

"Pray be so kind," they said, "as to stay a moment, so that we may get our quartet in order. We have music and we have instruments; only tell us how to place ourselves."

To which the nightingale replied:

"To be a musician, one must have a better ear and more intelligence than any of you. Place yourselves any way you like; it will make no difference. You will never become musicians."

Fedor Dostoevsky was a celebrated Russian novelist and journalist.

We quote a small extract, which, it may be, depends in part for its fun on its excellent English rendition of the German patter.

FROM KARLCHEN, THE CROCODILE

At this moment an appalling, I may even say supernatural, shriek suddenly shook the room. Not knowing what to think, I stood for a moment rooted to the spot; then, hearing Elyona Ivanovna shrieking, too, I turned hastily round; and what did I see! I saw —oh, heavens!—I saw the unhappy Ivan Matvyeich in the fearful jaws of the crocodile, seized across the middle, lifted horizontally in the air, and kicking despairingly. Then—a moment—and he was gone!

I cannot even attempt to describe the agitation of Elyona Ivanovna. After her first cry she stood for some time as petrified, and stared at the scene before

her, as if indifferently, though her eyes were starting out of her head; then she suddenly burst into a piercing shriek. I caught her by the hands. At this moment the keeper, who until now had also stood petrified with horror, clasped his hands, and raising his eyes to heaven cried aloud:

"Oh, my crocodile! Oh, mein allerliebstes Karlchen! Mutter! Mutter! Mutter!"

At this cry the back door opened, and "Mutter," a red-cheeked, untidy, elderly woman in a cap, rushed with a yell toward her son.

Then began an awful tumult. Elyona Ivanovna, beside herself, reiterated one single phrase, "Cut it! Cut it!" and rushed from the keeper to the "Mutter," and back to the keeper, imploring them (evidently in a fit of frenzy) to "cut" something or some one for some reason. Neither the keeper nor "Mutter" took any notice of either of us; they were hanging over the tank, and shrieking like stuck pigs.

"He is gone dead; he vill sogleich burst, because he von ganz official of der government eat up haf!" cried the keeper.

"Unser Karlchen, unser allerliebstes Karlchen wird sterben!" wailed the mother.

"Ve are orphans, vitout bread!" moaned the keeper.

"Cut it! Cut it! Cut it open!" screamed Elyona Ivanovna, hanging on to the German's coat.

"He did teaze ze crocodile! Vy your man teaze ze crocodile?" yelled the German, wriggling away. "You vill pay me if Karlchen wird bersten! Das war mein Sohn, das war mein einziger Sohn!"

"Cut it!" shrieked Elyona Ivanovna.

"How! You vill dat my crocodile shall be die? No, your man shall be die first, and denn my crocodile. Mein Vater show von crocodile, mein Grossvater show von crocodile, mein Sohn shall show von crocodile, and I shall show von crocodile. All ve shall show crocodile. I am ganz Europa famous, and you are not ganz Europa famous, and you do be me von fine pay shall!"

"Ja, ja!" agreed the woman savagely; "ve you not let out; fine ven Karlchen vill bersten."

"For that matter," I put in calmly, in the hope of getting Elyona Ivanovna home without further ado, "there's no use in cutting it open, for in all probability our dear Ivan Matvyeich is now soaring in the empyrean."

"My dear," remarked at this moment the voice of Ivan Matvyeich, with startling suddenness, "my advice, my dear, is to act through the bureau of police, for the German will not comprehend the truth without the assistance of the police."

These words, uttered with firmness and gravity, and expressing astonishing presence of mind, at first so much amazed us that we could not believe our ears. Of course, however, we instantly ran to the crocodile's tank and listened to the speech of the unfortunate captive with a mixture of reverence and distrust. His voice sounded muffled, thin, and even squeaky, as though coming from a long distance.

"Ivan Matvyeich, my dearest, are you alive?" lisped Elyona Ivanovna.

"Alive and well," answered Ivan Matvyeich; "and, thanks to the Almighty, swallowed whole without

injury. I am only disturbed by doubt as to how the superior authorities will regard this episode; for, after having taken a ticket to go abroad, to go into a crocodile instead is hardly sensible."

"Oh, my dear, don't worry about sense now; first of all we must somehow or other dig you out," interrupted Elyona Ivanovna.

"Tig!" cried the German. "I not vill let you to tig ze crocodile! Now shall bery mush Publikum be come, and I shall fifety copeck take, and Karlchen shall leave off to burst."

"Gott sei Dank!" added the mother.

"They are right," calmly remarked Ivan Matvyeich; "the economic principle before everything."

Nikolai Nekrasov wrote light verse of a whimsical trend.

A MORAL MAN

A strictly moral man have I been ever,
And never injured anybody—never.
I lent my friend a sum he could not pay;
I jogged his memory in a friendly way,
Then took the law of him th' affair to end;
The law to prison sent my worthy friend.
He died there—not a farthing for poor me!
I am not angry, though I've cause to be;
His debt that very moment I forgave,
And shed sad tears of sorrow o'er his grave.
A strictly moral man have I been ever,
And never injured anybody—never.

I sent a serf of mine to learn the dressing
Of meat. He learned it—a good cook's a blessing—
But strangely did neglect his occupation,

And gained a taste not suited to his station:
He liked to read, to reason, to discuss.
I, tired of scolding, without further fuss
Had the rogue flogged—all for the love of him.
He went and drowned himself—what a strange whim!
A strictly moral man have I been ever,
And never injured anybody—never.

My silly daughter fell in love, one day,
And with a tutor wished to run away.
I threatened curses, and pronounced my ban;
She yielded, and espoused a rich old man.
Their house was splendid, brimming o'er with wealth,
But suddenly the poor child lost her health,
And in a year consumption wrought her doom;
She left us mourning o'er her early tomb.
A strictly moral man have I been ever,
And never injured anybody—never.

Ivan Turgenieff, the celebrated novelist, wrote also delightfully witty *Poems in Prose*.

BENEFICENCE AND GRATITUDE

One day the Supreme Being took it into His head to give a great banquet in His azure palace.

All the virtues were invited. Men He did not ask—only ladies.

There was a large number of them, great and small. The lesser virtues were more agreeable and genial than the great ones; but they all appeared to be in good-humor, and chatted amiably together, as was only becoming for near relations and friends.

But the Supreme Being noticed two charming ladies who seemed to be totally unacquainted.

The Host gave one of the ladies His arm, and led

her up to the other.

"Beneficence!" He said, indicating the first.

"Gratitude!" He added, indicating the second.

Both the virtues were amazed beyond expression. Ever since the world had stood—and it had been standing a long time—this was the first time they had met.

PRAYER

Whatever a man prays for, he prays for a miracle. Every prayer reduces itself to this: "Great God, grant that twice two be not four."

Anton Chekov, writer of humorous stories, is also happy in epigrammatic wit.

PROVERBIAL WISDOM

The worst brandy is better than water.

The path to the law court is wide; the path away from it is narrow.

Even when drowning, a man wants company.

Cherish your wife as you would your salvation, and beat her as you would your coat.

A bad peace is superior to a good quarrel.

Spare the peasant your lash, but not his rubles.

Poverty is not a sin, but it's a great deal worse.

In a storm, pray to the Lord and keep on rowing as hard as you can.

A sparrow is small; still, it's a bird.

If your wife were a guitar, you could hang her up

after playing.

Casting about for other foreign countries that might offer bits of humor written in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, we come across this from a Polish author named Kajetan Wengierski.

THE DREAM-WIFE

Strangely 'wildered must I seem;
I was married—in a dream.
Oh, the ecstasy of bliss!
Brother, what a joy is this!
Think about it, and confess
'Tis a storm of happiness,
And the memory is to me
Sunbeams. But fifteen was she:
Cheeks of roses red and white;
Mouth like Davia's; eyes of light,
Fiery, round, of raven hue,
Swimming, but coquettish too;
Ivory teeth; lips fresh as dew;
Bosom beauteous; hand of down;
Fairy foot. She stood alone
In her graces. She was mine,
And I drank her charms divine.

*****

Yet, in early years our schemes
Are, alas! but shadowy dreams.
For a season they deceive,
Then our souls in darkness leave.
Oft the bowl the water bears,
But 'tis useless soon with years;
First it cracks, and then it leaks,
And at last—at last it breaks.
All things with beginning tend
To their melancholy end:
So her beauty fled.

*****

Then did anger, care, and malice
Mingle up their bitter chalice.
Riches like the whirlwind flew,
Honors, gifts, and friendships too;
And my lovely wife, so mild,
Fortune's frail and flattered child,
Spent our wealth, as if the day
Ne'er would dim or pass away;
And—oh, monstrous thought!—the fair
Scratched my eyes and tore my hair.
Naught but misery was our guest.
Then I sought the parish priest:
"Father, grant me a divorce.
Nay, you'll grant it me, of course;
Reasons many can be given—
Reasons both of earth and heaven."

"I know all you wish to say.
Have you wherewithal to pay?
Money is a thing, of course—
Money may obtain divorce."
"Reverend father, hear me, please ye—
'Tis not an affair so easy."
"Silence, child! Where money's needed,
Eloquence is superseded."
Then I talked of morals, but
The good father's ears were shut.
With a fierce and frowning look
Off he drove me—And I woke.

And lacking adequate translation for any more of the humorous literature of far away lands, we conclude this portion of our Outline with some Epigrams of the people of Hayti.

You can't catch a flea with one finger.

The snake that wants to live does not keep to the highroad.

You should never blame the owner of a goat for claiming it.

The ears do not weigh more than the head.

Wait till you are across the river before you call the alligator names.

If the tortoise that comes up from the bottom of the water tells you an alligator is blind, you may believe him.

A frog in want of a shirt will ask for a pair of drawers.

The ox never says “Thank you” to the pasture.

Joke with a monkey as much as you please, but don’t play with its tail.

What business have eggs dancing with stones?

If you insist on punishing an enemy, do not make him fetch water in a basket.

The wild hog knows what tree he is rubbing against.

Hang your knapsack where you can reach it.

The pumpkin vine does not yield calabashes.

Every jack-knife found on the highway will be lost on the highway.

All wood is wood, but deal is not cedar.

It is the frog’s own tongue that betrays him.

The spoon goes to the tray’s house, but the tray

never goes to the spoon's house.

If you want your eggs hatched, sit on them yourself.

AMERICAN HUMOR

There may have been previous mute, inglorious Miltons, but doubtless the first American to be recognized as a true humorist was Benjamin Franklin.

In fact, one of the foremost essayists of the present day opines that the reason Franklin was not called upon to write the Declaration of Independence was because he was too fond of his joke.

“They were acute,” our essayist remarks, “those leaders of the Continental Congress, and they knew that every man has the defect of his qualities, and that a humorist is likely to be lacking in reverence, and that the writer of the Declaration of Independence had a theme which demanded most reverential treatment.”

It is generally conceded that the Americans are a humorous nation, is even said that we have a way of living humorously, and are conscious of the fact.

Aside from the annual work known as *Poor Richard’s Almanack*, Franklin wrote much prose and verse of a witty character.

A letter of his gave rise to the well known saying, “He paid too much for his whistle.”

Part of the letter is here given.

“When I was a child of seven years old, my friends on a holiday filled my pocket with coppers. I went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children; and, being charmed with the sound of a *whistle* that I met by the way in the hands of another boy, I

voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one. I then came home, and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my *whistle*, but disturbing all the family. My brothers and sisters and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth; put me in mind what good things I might have bought with the rest of the money, and laughed at me so much for my folly, that I cried with vexation; and the reflection gave me more chagrin than the *whistle* gave me pleasure.

"This, however, was afterward of use to me, the impression continuing on my mind, so that often, when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, *Don't give too much for the whistle*; and I saved my money.

"As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who *gave too much for the whistle*.

"When I saw one too ambitious to court favor, sacrificing his time in attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, to attain it, I have said to myself, *This man gives too much for his whistle*.

"When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs and ruining them by that neglect, *He pays, indeed*, said I, *too much for his whistle*.

"If I knew a miser, who gave up any kind of a comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the joys of benevolent friendship, for the sake of accumulating wealth, *Poor man*, said I, *you pay too*

much for your whistle.

"When I met with a man of pleasure, sacrificing every laudable improvement of the mind, or of his fortune, to mere corporal sensations, and ruining his health in their pursuit, *Mistaken man*, said I, *you are providing pain for yourself instead of pleasure! you give too much for your whistle*.

"If I see one fond of appearance, or fine clothes, fine houses, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts, and ends his career in a prison, *Alas!* say I, *he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle*.

"When I see a beautiful, sweet-tempered girl married to an ill-natured brute of a husband, *What a pity*, say I, *that she should pay so much for a whistle*!

"In short, I conceive that great part of the miseries of mankind are brought upon them by the false estimates they have made of the value of things, and by their *giving too much for their whistles*.

"Yet I ought to have charity for these unhappy people, when I consider, that with all this wisdom of which I am boasting, there are certain things in the world so tempting, for example, the apples of King John, which happily are not to be bought; for if they were put up to sale by auction, I might very easily be led to ruin myself in the purchase, and find that I had once more given too much for the *whistle*.

"Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours, very sincerely and with unalterable affection."

B. FRANKLIN.

PAPER

Some wit of old—such wits of old there were—

Whose hints show'd meaning, whose allusions care,
By one brave stroke to mark all human kind,
Call'd clear blank paper every infant mind;
Where still, as opening sense her dictates wrote,
Fair virtue put a seal, or vice a blot.

The thought was happy, pertinent, and true;
Methinks a genius might the plan pursue.
I (can you pardon my presumption?) I—
No wit, no genius, yet for once will try.

Various the papers various wants produce,
The wants of fashion, elegance, and use.
Men are as various; and if right I scan,
Each sort of *paper* represents some man.

Pray note the fop—half powder and half lace—
Nice as a band-box were his dwelling-place:
He's the *gilt paper*, which apart you store,
And lock from vulgar hands in the 'scrutoire.

Mechanics, servants, farmers, and so forth,
Are *copy-paper*, of inferior worth;
Less prized, more useful, for your desk decreed,
Free to all pens, and prompt at every need.

The wretch, whom avarice bids to pinch and spare,
Starve, cheat, and pilfer, to enrich an heir,
Is coarse *brown paper!* such as pedlars choose
To wrap up wares, which better men will use.

Take next the miser's contrast, who destroys
Health, fame, and fortune, in a round of joys.
Will any paper match him? Yes, throughout,
He's true *sinking-paper*, past all doubt.

The retail politician's anxious thought
Deems *this* side always right, and *that* stark naught;
He foams with censure; with applause he raves—
A dupe to rumors, and a tool of knaves;
He'll want no type his weakness to proclaim,
While such a thing as *foolscap* has a name.

The hasty gentleman, whose blood runs high,
Who picks a quarrel, if you step awry,
Who can't a jest, or hint, or look endure:
What is he? What? *Touch-paper* to be sure.

What are our poets, take them as they fall,
Good, bad, rich, poor, much read, not read at all?
Them and their works in the same class you'll find;
They are the mere *waste-paper* of mankind.

Observe the maiden, innocently sweet,
She's fair *white-paper*, an unsullied sheet;
On which the happy man, whom fate ordains,
May write his *name*, and take her for his pains.

One instance more, and only one I'll bring;
'Tis the *great man* who scorns a little thing,
Whose thoughts, whose deeds, whose maxims are his own,
Form'd on the feelings of his heart alone:
True genuine *royal-paper* is his breast:
Of all the kinds most precious, purest, best.

Francis Hopkinson, a writer of miscellaneous essays, wrote "The Battle of the Keys," which was founded upon a real historic incident.

THE BATTLE OF THE KEYS

Gallants attend and hear a friend
  Trill forth harmonious ditty,
Strange things I'll tell which late befell
  In Philadelphia city.

'Twas early day, as poets say,
  Just when the sun was rising,
A soldier stood on a log of wood,
  And saw a thing surprising.

As in amaze he stood and gazed,
  The truth can't be denied, sir,
He spied a score of kegs or more
  Come floating down the tide, sir.

A sailor, too, in jerkin blue,
  This strange appearance viewing,
First damned his eyes, in great surprise,
  Then said, "Some mischief's brewing.

"These kegs, I'm told, the rebles hold,
  Packed up like pickled herring;
And they're come down to attack the town,

In this new way of ferrying."

The soldier flew, the sailor too,
And scared almost to death, sir,
Wore out their shoes, to spread the news,
And ran till out of breath, sir.

Now up and down throughout the town,
Most frantic scenes were acted;
And some ran here, and others there,
Like men almost distracted.

Some "fire" cried, which some denied,
But said the earth had quaked;
And girls and boys, with hideous noise,
Ran through the streets half-naked.

Sir William he, snug as a flea,
Lay all this time a-snoring,
Nor dreamed of harm as he lay warm,
In bed with Mrs. Loring.

Now in a fright he starts upright,
Awaked by such a clatter;
He rubs both eyes, and boldly cries,
"For God's sake, what's the matter?"

At his bedside he then espied,
Sir Erskine at command, sir,
Upon one foot he had one boot,
And th' other in his hand, sir.

"Arise, arise!" Sir Erskine cries,
"The rebels—more's the pity,
Without a boat are all afloat,
And ranged before the city.

"The motley crew, in vessels new,
With Satan for their guide, sir,
Packed up in bags, or wooden kegs,
Come driving down the tide, sir.

"Therefore prepare for bloody war,
The kegs must all be routed,
Or surely we despised shall be,
And British courage doubted."

The royal band now ready stand,

All ranged in dead array, sir,
With stomach stout to see it out,
And make a bloody day, sir.

The cannons roar from shore to shore,
The small arms make a rattle;
Since wars began I'm sure no man
E'er saw so strange a battle.

The rebel dales, the rebel vales,
With rebel trees surrounded,
The distant woods, the hills and floods,
With rebel echoes sounded.

The fish below swam to and fro,
Attacked from every quarter;
Why sure, thought they, the devil's to pay
'Mongst folks above the water.

The kegs, 'tis said, though strongly made
Of rebel staves and hoops, sir,
Could not oppose their powerful foes,
And conquering British troops, sir.

From morn to night these men of might
Displayed amazing courage;
And when the sun was fairly down,
Retired to sup their porridge.

A hundred men with each a pen,
Or more, upon my word, sir,
It is most true would be too few,
Their valor to record, sir.

Such feats did they perform that day,
Against these wicked kegs, sir,
That, years to come, if they get home,
They'll make their boasts and brags, sir.

—*Miscellaneous Essays and Occasional Writings.*

Elizabeth Graeme Ferguson, one of the earliest women writers of our country, like many of her contemporaries, kept the style and effect of English poetry. Her lines on the Country Parson, show a fine vein of satire.

THE COUNTRY PARSON

How happy is the country parson's lot!
Forgetting bishops, as by them forgot;
Tranquil of spirit, with an easy mind,
To all his vestry's votes he sits resigned:
Of manners gentle, and of temper even,
He jogs his flocks, with easy pace, to heaven.
In Greek and Latin, pious books he keeps;
And, while his clerk sings psalms, he—soundly sleeps.
His garden fronts the sun's sweet orient beams,
And fat church-wardens prompt his golden dreams.
The earliest fruit, in his fair orchard, blooms;
And cleanly pipes pour out tobacco's fumes.
From rustic bridegroom oft he takes the ring;
And hears the milkmaid plaintive ballads sing.
Back-gammon cheats whole winter nights away,
And Pilgrim's Progress helps a rainy day.

President John Quincy Adams so far relaxed from his political dignity as to write light verse.

TO SALLY

The man in righteousness arrayed,
A pure and blameless liver,
Needs not the keen Toledo blade,
Nor venom-freighted quiver.
What though he winds his toilsome way
O'er regions wild and weary—
Through Zara's burning desert stray,
Or Asia's jungles dreary:

What though he plough the billowy deep
By lunar light, or solar,
Meet the resistless Simoon's sweep,
Or iceberg circumpolar!
In bog or quagmire deep and dank
His foot shall never settle;
He mounts the summit of Mont Blanc,
Or Popocatapetl.

On Chimborazo's breathless height
He treads o'er burning lava;
Or snuffs the Bohan Upas blight,
The deathful plant of Java.
Through every peril he shall pass,
By Virtue's shield protected;
And still by Truth's unerring glass

His path shall be directed.

Else wherefore was it, Thursday last,
While strolling down the valley,
Defenceless, musing as I passed
A canzonet to Sally,
A wolf, with mouth-protruding snout,
Forth from the thicket bounded—
I clapped my hands and raised a shout—
He heard—and fled—confounded.

Tangier nor Tunis never bred
An animal more crabbed;
Nor Fez, dry-nurse of lions, fed
A monster half so rabid;
Nor Ararat so fierce a beast
Has seen since days of Noah;
Nor stronger, eager for a feast,
The fell constrictor boa.

Oh! place me where the solar beam
Has scorched all verdure vernal;
Or on the polar verge extreme,
Blocked up with ice eternal—
Still shall my voice's tender lays
Of love remain unbroken;
And still my charming Sally praise,
Sweet smiling and sweet spoken.

About this time, Clement C. Moore wrote the Christmas story which has since become a national classic.

A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through
the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,

Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below,
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;
"Now, *Dasher!* now, *Dancer!* now, *Prancer* and *Vixen!*
On, *Comet!* on, *Cupid!* on, *Dunder* and *Blitzen!*
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of Toys, and St. Nicholas too.
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a pedler just opening his pack.
His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly.
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a

jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night."

Washington Irving, though his work is besprinkled with humor cannot be quoted at length.

A bit of his gay verse is given.

A CERTAIN YOUNG LADY

There's a certain young lady,
Who's just in her heyday,
  And full of all mischief, I ween;
    So teasing! so pleasing!
    Capricious! delicious!
  And you know very well whom I mean.

With an eye dark as night,
Yet than noonday more bright,
  Was ever a black eye so keen?
    It can thrill with a glance,
    With a beam can entrance,
  And you know very well whom I mean.

With a stately step—such as
You'd expect in a duchess—
  And a brow might distinguish a queen,
    With a mighty proud air,
    That says "touch me who dare,"
  And you know very well whom I mean.

With a toss of the head
That strikes one quite dead,
  But a smile to revive one again;
    That toss so appalling!
    That smile so enthralling!
  And you know very well whom I mean.

Confound her! devil take her!—
A cruel heart-breaker—
  But hold! see that smile so serene.
    God love her! God bless her!

May nothing distress her!
You know very well whom I mean.

Heaven help the adorer
Who happens to bore her,
The lover who wakens her spleen;
But too blest for a sinner
Is he who shall win her,
And you know very well whom I mean.

William Cullen Bryant, like most of the New England poets, was not often humorous in his work. Perhaps the nearest he came to it was in his *Lines to a Mosquito*.

TO A MOSQUITO

Fair insect! that with threadlike legs spread out,
And blood-extracting bill and filmy wing,
Dost murmur, as thou slowly sail'st about,
In pitiless ears, full many a plaintive thing,
And tell how little our large veins should bleed,
Would we but yield them to thy bitter need?

Unwillingly, I own, and, what is worse,
Full angrily men harken to thy plaint;
Thou gettest many a brush and many a curse,
For saying thou art gaunt and starved and faint.
Even the old beggar, while he asks for food,
Would kill thee, hapless stranger, if he could.

I call thee stranger, for the town, I ween,
Has not the honor of so proud a birth—
Thou com'st from Jersey meadows, fresh and green,
The offspring of the gods, though born on earth;
For Titan was thy sire, and fair was she,
The ocean nymph that nursed thy infancy.

Beneath the rushes was thy cradle swung,
And when at length thy gauzy wings grew strong,
Abroad to gentle airs their folds were flung,
Rose in the sky, and bore thee soft along;
The south wind breathed to waft thee on thy way,
And danced and shone beneath the billowy bay.

Calm rose afar the city spires, and thence
Came the deep murmur of its throng of men,
And as its grateful odors met thy sense,
They seemed the perfumes of thy native fen.
Fair lay its crowded streets, and at the sight
Thy tiny song grew shriller with delight.

At length thy pinion fluttered in Broadway—
Ah, there were fairy steps, and white necks kissed
By wanton airs, and eyes whose killing ray
Shone through the snowy veils like stars through mist;
And fresh as morn, on many a cheek and chin,
Bloomed the bright blood through the transparent skin.

Sure these were sights to tempt an anchorite!
What! do I hear thy slender voice complain?
Thou wailest when I talk of beauty's light,
As if it brought the memory of pain.
Thou art a wayward being—well—come near,
And pour thy tale of sorrow in mine ear.

What say'st thou, slanderer! rouge makes thee sick?
And China Bloom at best is sorry food?
And Rowland's Kalydor, if laid on thick,
Poisons the thirsty wretch that bores for blood.
Go! 'Twas a just reward that met thy crime—
But shun the sacrilege another time.

That bloom was made to look at—not to touch;
To worship—not approach—that radiant white;
And well might sudden vengeance light on such
As dared, like thee, most impiously to bite.
Thou shouldst have gazed at distance and admired—
Murmur'd thy admiration and retired.

Thou'rt welcome to the town—but why come here
To bleed a brother poet, gaunt like thee?
Alas! the little blood I have is dear,
And thin will be the banquet drawn from me.
Look round—the pale-eyed sisters in my cell,
Thy old acquaintance, Song and Famine, dwell.

Try some plump alderman, and suck the blood

Enrich'd by gen'rous wine and costly meat;
On well-filled skins, sleek as thy native mud,
Fix thy light pump, and press thy freckled feet.
Go to the men for whom, in ocean's halls,
The oyster breeds and the green turtle sprawls.

There corks are drawn, and the red vintage flows,
To fill the swelling veins for thee, and now
The ruddy cheek, and now the ruddier nose
Shall tempt thee, as thou flittest round the brow;
And when the hour of sleep its quiet brings,
No angry hand shall rise to brush thy wings.

Fitz-Greene Halleck wrote much in collaboration with Joseph Rodman Drake, and it is often difficult to separate their work.

ODE TO FORTUNE

Fair lady with the bandaged eye!
I'll pardon all thy scurvy tricks,
So thou wilt cut me, and deny
Alike thy kisses and thy kicks:
I'm quite contented as I am,
Have cash to keep my duns at bay,
Can choose between beefsteaks and ham,
And drink Madeira every day.

My station is the middle rank,
My fortune—just a competence—
Ten thousand in the Franklin Bank,
And twenty in the six per cents;
No amorous chains my heart enthrall,
I neither borrow, lend, nor sell;
Fearless I roam the City Hall,
And bite my thumb at Sheriff Bell.

The horse that twice a week I ride
At Mother Dawson's eats his fill;
My books at Goodrich's abide,
My country-seat is Weehawk hill;
My morning lounge is Eastburn's shop,
At Poppleton's I take my lunch,
Niblo prepares my mutton-chop,
And Jennings makes my whiskey-punch.

When merry, I the hours amuse

By squibbing Bucktails, Guards, and Balls,
And when I'm troubled with the blues
Damn Clinton and abuse cards:
Then, Fortune, since I ask no prize,
At least preserve me from thy frown!
The man who don't attempt to rise
'Twere cruelty to tumble down.

Albert Gorton Greene also wrote in the manner of his English forebears, indeed, his *Old Grimes* is quite in line with Tom Hood or Goldsmith.

OLD CHIMES

Old Grimes is dead; that good old man
We never shall see more:
He used to wear a long, black coat,
All buttoned down before.

His heart was open as the day,
His feelings all were true;
His hair was some inclined to gray—
He wore it in a queue.

Whene'er he heard the voice of pain,
His breast with pity burn'd;
The large, round head upon his cane
From ivory was turn'd.

Kind words he ever had for all;
He knew no base design:
His eyes were dark and rather small,
His nose was aquiline.

He lived at peace with all mankind.
In friendship he was true:
His coat had pocket-holes behind,
His pantaloons were blue.

Unharm'd, the sin which earth pollutes
He pass'd securely o'er,
And never wore a pair of boots
For thirty years or more.

But good old Grimes is now at rest,
Nor fears misfortune's frown:
He wore a double-breasted vest—

The stripes ran up and down.

He modest merit sought to find,
And pay it its desert:
He had no malice in his mind,
No ruffles on his shirt.

His neighbors he did not abuse—
Was sociable and gay:
He wore large buckles on his shoes
And changed them every day.

His knowledge, hid from public gaze,
He did not bring to view,
Nor made a noise, town-meeting days,
As many people do.

His worldly goods he never threw
In trust to fortune's chances,
But lived (as all his brothers do)
In easy circumstances.

Thus undisturb'd by anxious cares,
His peaceful moments ran;
And everybody said he was
A fine old gentleman.

Ralph Waldo Emerson is seldom humorous or even in lighter vein. His Fable about the squirrel shows a graceful wit.

FABLE

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel,
And the former called the latter "Little Prig";
Bun replied,
"You are doubtless very big;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together,
To make up a year
And a sphere,
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.

I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track;
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut."

Nathaniel Parker Willis was a popular writer of society satire in both prose and verse.

LOVE IN A COTTAGE

They may talk of love in a cottage,
And bowers of trellised vine—
Of nature bewitchingly simple,
And milkmaids half-divine;
They may talk of the pleasure of sleeping
In the shade of a spreading tree,
And a walk in the fields at morning,
By the side of a footstep free!

But give me a sly flirtation
By the light of a chandelier—
With music to play in the pauses,
And nobody very near;
Or a seat on a silken sofa,
With a glass of pure old wine,
And mama too blind to discover
The small white hand in mine.

Your love in a cottage is hungry,
Your vine is a nest for flies—
Your milkmaid shocks the Graces,
And simplicity talks of pies!
You lie down to your shady slumber
And wake with a bug in your ear,
And your damsel that walks in the morning
Is shod like a mountaineer.

True love is at home on a carpet,
And mightily likes his ease—
And true love has an eye for a dinner,
And starves beneath shady trees.
His wing is the fan of a lady.
His foot's an invisible thing,
And his arrow is tipp'd with a jewel
And shot from a silver string.

Seba Smith, among the first to break away from English traditions, wrote over the pen name of Major Jack Downing. He was a pioneer in the matter of dialect writing and the first to poke fun at New England speech and manners.

Follows a part of his skit called

MY FIRST VISIT TO PORTLAND

After I had walked about three or four hours, I come along towards the upper end of the town, where I found there were stores and shops of all sorts and sizes. And I met a feller, and says I,—

"What place is this?"

"Why, this," says he, "is Huckler's Row."

"What!" says I, "are these the stores where the traders in Huckler's Row keep?"

And says he, "Yes."

"Well, then," says I to myself, "I have a pesky good mind to go in and have a try with one of these chaps, and see if they can twist my eye-teeth out. If they can get the best end of a bargain out of me, they can do what there ain't a man in our place can do; and I should just like to know what sort of stuff these 'ere Portland chaps are made of." So in I goes into the best-looking store among 'em. And I see some biscuit lying on the shelf, and says I,—

"Mister, how much do you ax apiece for them 'ere biscuits?"

"A cent apiece," says he.

"Well," says I, "I shan't give you that, but, if you've a mind to, I'll give you two cents for three of them, for I begin to feel a little as though I would

like to take a bite."

"Well," says he, "I wouldn't sell 'em to anybody else so, but, seeing it's you, I don't care if you take 'em."

I knew he lied, for he never seen me before in his life. Well, he handed down the biscuits, and I took 'em, and walked round the store awhile, to see what else he had to sell. At last says I,—

"Mister, have you got any good cider?"

Says he, "Yes, as good as ever ye see."

"Well," says I, "what do you ax a glass for it?"

"Two cents," says he.

"Well," says I, "seems to me I feel more dry than I do hungry now. Ain't you a mind to take these 'ere biscuits again and give me a glass of cider?" and says he:

"I don't care if I do."

So he took and laid 'em on the shelf again and poured out a glass of cider. I took the glass of cider and drinkt it down and, to tell you the truth about it, it was capital good cider Then says I:

"I guess it's about time for me to be a-going," and so I stept along toward the door; but he ups and says, says he:

"Stop, mister, I believe you haven't paid me for the cider.'

"Not paid you for the cider!" says I; "what do you mean by that? Didn't the biscuits that I give you just come to the cider?"

"Oh, ah, right!" says he.

So I started to go again, but before I had reached the door he says, says he:

"But stop, mister, you didn't pay me for the biscuit."

"What!" says I, "do you mean to impose upon me? Do you think I am going to pay you for the biscuits, and let you keep them, too? Ain't they there now on your shelf? What more do you want? I guess, sir, you don't whittle me in that way."

So I turned about and marched off and left the feller staring and scratching his head as tho' he was struck with a dunderment.

Howsomeever, I didn't want to cheat him, only jest to show 'em it wa'n't so easy a matter to pull my eye-teeth out; so I called in next day and paid him two cents.

And now humor began to creep into the newspapers, and it came about that American humorists, almost without exception, have been newspaper men.

Following Seba Smith's plan each author created a character, usually of homely type, and through him as a mouthpiece gave to the world his own wit and wisdom.

Mrs. Frances Miriam Whitcher wrote the Widow Bedott papers, and Frederick Swartout Cozzens the Sparrowgrass Papers, but best known today is the Mrs. Partington, the American Mrs. Malaprop, created by Benjamin Penhallow Shillaber.

AFTER A WEDDING

"I like to tend weddings," said Mrs. Partington, as she came back from a neighboring church where one had been celebrated, and hung up her shawl, and replaced the black bonnet in her long-preserved band-box. "I like to see young people come together with the promise to love, cherish, and nourish each other. But it is a solemn thing, is matrimony—a very solemn thing—where the pasture comes into the chancery, with his surplus on, and goes through with the cerement of making 'em man and wife. It ought to be husband and wife; for it ain't every husband that turns out a man. I declare I shall never forget how I felt when I had the nuptial ring put on to my finger, when Paul said, 'With my goods I thee endow.' He used to keep a dry-goods store then, and I thought he was going to give me all there was in it. I was young and simple, and didn't know till arterwards that it only meant one calico gound in a year. It is a lovely sight to see the young people plighting their trough, and coming up to consume their vows."

She bustled about and got tea ready, but abstractedly she put on the broken teapot, that had lain away unused since Paul was alive, and the teacups, mended with putty, and dark with age, as if the idea had conjured the ghost of past enjoyment to dwell for the moment in the home of present widowhood.

A young lady, who expected to be married on Thanksgiving night, wept copiously at her remarks, but kept on hemming the veil that was to adorn her brideship, and Ike sat pulling bristles out of the hearth-brush in expressive silence.

Yet not all the wits of the day were newspaper men, for Oliver Wendell Holmes left his essays and

novels now and then to give his native humor full play.

The "Deacon's Masterpiece," often called "The One Hoss Shay" is a classic, and many short poems are among our best witty verses, while Holmes' genial humor pervades his Breakfast Table books.

THE HEIGHT OF THE RIDICULOUS

I wrote some lines once on a time,
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

I called my servant, and he came;
How kind it was of him,
To mind a slender man like me,
He of the mighty limb!

"These to the printer," I exclaimed,
And, in my humorous way,
I added (as a trifling jest),
"There'll be the devil to pay."

He took the paper, and I watched,
And saw him peep within;
At the first line he read, his face
Was all upon the grin.

He read the next: the grin grew broad,
And shot from ear to ear;
He read the third: a chuckling noise
I now began to hear.

The fourth: he broke into a roar;
The fifth: his waistband split;
The sixth: he burst five buttons off,
And tumbled in a fit.

Ten days and nights, with sleepless eye,
I watched that wretched man,

And since, I never dare to write
As funny as I can.

ÆSTIVATION

In candent ire the solar splendor flames;
The foles, languescent, pend from arid rames;
His humid front the cive, anheling, wipes,
And dreams of erring on ventiferous ripes.

How dulce to vive occult to mortal eyes,
Dorm on the herb with none to supervise,
Carp the suave berries from the crescent vine,
And bibe the flow from longicaudate kine.

To me also, no verdurous visions come
Save you exiguous pool's confervascum,—
No concave vast repeats the tender hue
That laves my milk-jug with celestial blue.

Me wretched! Let me curr to quercine shades!
Effund your albid hausts, lactiferous maids!
Oh, might I vole to some umbrageous chump,—
Depart,—be off,—excede,—evade,—erump!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow is charged with the perpetration of certain nonsense verses. His authorship of these has been stoutly denied as well as positively asseverated.

The two poems in question are appended, and if Longfellow did write them they are in no wise to his discredit.

THERE WAS A LITTLE GIRL

There was a little girl,
And she had a little curl
Right in the middle of her forehead.
When she was good
She was very, very good,
And when she was bad she was horrid.

One day she went upstairs,
When her parents, unawares,
In the kitchen were occupied with meals

And she stood upon her head
In her little trundle-bed,
  And then began hooraying with her heels.

Her mother heard the noise,
And she thought it was the boys
  A-playing at a combat in the attic;
But when she climbed the stair,
And found Jemima there,
  She took and she did spank her most emphatic.

MR. FINNEY'S TURNIP

Mr. Finney had a turnip
  And it grew and it grew;
And it grew behind the barn,
  And that turnip did no harm.

There it grew and it grew
  Till it could grow no taller;
Then his daughter Lizzie picked it
  And put it in the cellar.

There it lay and it lay
  Till it began to rot;
And his daughter Susie took it
  And put it in the pot.

And they boiled it and boiled it
  As long as they were able,
And then his daughters took it
  And put it on the table.

Mr. Finney and his wife
  They sat down to sup;
And they ate and they ate
  And they ate that turnip up.

James Thomas Fields, an acknowledged humorist, wrote mostly homely narrative wit.

THE ALARMED SKIPPER

Many a long, long year ago,
  Nantucket skippers had a plan
Of finding out, though "lying low,"
  How near New York their schooners ran.

They greased the lead before it fell,
And then, by sounding through the night,
Knowing the soil that stuck, so well,
They always guessed their reckoning right.

A skipper gray, whose eyes were dim,
Could tell, by *tasting*, just the spot;
And so below he'd "dowse the glim,"—
After, of course, his "something hot."

Snug in his berth at eight o'clock
This ancient skipper might be found;
No matter how his craft would rock,
He slept,—for skippers' naps are sound!

The watch on deck would now and then
Run down and wake him, with the lead;
He'd up, and taste, and tell the men
How many miles they went ahead.

One night 'twas Jotham Marden's watch,
A curious wag,—the peddler's son,—
And so he mused (the wanton wretch),
"To-night I'll have a grain of fun.

"We're all a set of stupid fools
To think the skipper knows by *tasting*
What ground he's on: Nantucket schools
Don't teach such stuff, with all their basting!"

And so he took the well-greased lead
And rubbed it o'er a box of earth
That stood on deck,—a parsnip-bed,—
And then he sought the skipper's berth.

"Where are we now, sir? Please to taste."
The skipper yawned, put out his tongue,
Then oped his eyes in wondrous haste,
And then upon the floor he sprung!

The skipper stormed, and tore his hair,
Thrust on his boots, and roared to Marden,
"*Nantucket's sunk, and here we are*
Right over old Marm Hackett's garden!"

John Godfrey Saxe has been called the American Tom Hood. His verses are among our very best

humorous poems.

MY FAMILIAR

Again I hear that creaking step!—
He's rapping at the door!—
Too well I know the boding sound
That ushers in a bore.
I do not tremble when I meet
The stoutest of my foes,
But heaven defend me from the friend
Who comes,—but never goes!

He drops into my easy-chair
And asks about the news;
He peers into my manuscript,
And gives his candid views;
He tells me where he likes the line,
And where he's forced to grieve;
He takes the strangest liberties,—
But never takes his leave!

He reads my daily paper through
Before I've seen a word;
He scans the lyric (that I wrote)
And thinks it quite absurd;
He calmly smokes my last cigar,
And coolly asks for more;
He opens everything he sees—
Except the entry door!

He talks about his fragile health,
And tells me of his pains;
He suffers from a score of ills
Of which he ne'er complains;
And how he struggled once with death
To keep the fiend at bay;
On themes like those away he goes—
But never goes away!

He tells me of the carping words
Some shallow critic wrote;
And every precious paragraph
Familiarly can quote;
He thinks the writer did me wrong;
He'd like to run him through!
He says a thousand pleasant things—
But never says "Adieu!"

Whene'er he comes—that dreadful man—
Disguise it as I may,
I know that, like an autumn rain,
He'll last throughout the day.
In vain I speak of urgent tasks;
In vain I scowl and pout;
A frown is no extinguisher—
It does not put him out!

I mean to take the knocker off,
Put crape upon the door,
Or hint to John that I am gone
To stay a month or more.
I do not tremble when I meet
The stoutest of my foes,
But Heaven defend me from the friend
Who never, never goes!

Henry Wheeler Shaw, creator of the character of Josh Billings, was a philosopher and essayist as well as a funny man.

Doubtless his work has lived largely because of its amusing misspelling, but there is much wisdom to be found in his wit.

The following essays are given only in part.

TIGHT BOOTS

I would jist like to kno who the man waz who fust invented *tite boots*.

He must hav bin a narrow and kontrakted kuss.

If he still lives, i hope he haz repented ov hiz sin, or iz enjoying grate agony ov sum kind.

I hay bin in a grate menny tite spots in mi life, but generally could manage to make them average; but thare iz no sich thing az making a pair of tite boots average.

Enny man who kan wear a pair ov tite boots, and be humble, and penitent, and not indulge profane

literature, will make a good husband.

Oh! for the pen ov departed Wm. Shakspear, to write an anethema aginst tite boots, that would make anshunt Rome wake up, and howl agin az she did once before on a previous ockashun.

Oh! for the strength ov Herkules, to tare into shu strings all the tite boots ov creashun, and skatter them tew the 8 winds ov heaven.

Oh! for the buty ov Venus, tew make a bigg foot look hansum without a tite boot on it.

Oh! for the payshunce ov Job, the Apostle, to nuss a tite boot and bles it, and even pra for one a size smaller and more pinchfull.

Oh! for a pair of boots bigg enuff for the foot ov a mountain.

I have been led into the above assortment ov *Oh's!* from having in my posseshun, at this moment, a pair ov number nine boots, with a pair ov number eleven feet in them.

Mi feet are az uneasy az a dog's noze the fust time he wears a muzzle.

I think mi feet will eventually choke the boots to deth.

I liv in hopes they will.

I suppozed i had lived long enuff not to be phooled agin in this way, but i hav found out that an ounce ov vanity weighs more than a pound ov reazon, espeshily when a man mistakes a bigg foot for a small one.

Avoid tite boots, mi friend, az you would the grip of the devil; for menny a man haz cought for life a fust rate habit for swareing bi encouraging hiz feet to

hurt hiz boots.

I hav promised mi two feet, at least a dozen ov times during mi checkured life, that they never should be strangled agin, but i find them to-day az phull ov pain az the stummuk ake from a suddin attak ov tite boots.

But this iz solemly the last pair ov tite boots i will ever wear; i will hereafter wear boots az bigg az mi feet, if i have to go barefoot to do it.

I am too old and too respektable to be a phool enny more.

Eazy boots iz *one* of the luxurys ov life, but i forgit what the other luxury iz, but i don't kno az i care, provided i kan git rid ov this pair ov tite boots.

Enny man kan hav them for seven dollars, just half what they kost, and if they don't make his feet ake wuss than an angle worm in hot ashes, he needn't pay for them.

Methuseles iz the only man, that i kan kall to mind now who could hav afforded to hav wore tite boots, and enjoyed them, he had a grate deal ov waste time tew be miserable in but life now days, iz too short, and too full ov aktual bizzness to phool away enny ov it on tite boots.

Tite boots are an insult to enny man's understanding.

He who wears tite boots will hav too acknowledge the corn.

Tite boots hav no bowells or mersy, their insides are wrath and promiskious cussing.

Beware ov tite boots.—

A HEN

A hen is a darn phool, they was born so bi natur.

When natur undertakes tew make a phool, she hits the mark the fust time.

Most all the animile kritters hav instinkt, which is wuth more to them than reason would be, for instinkt don't make enny blunders.

If the animiles had reason, they would akt just as ridikilus as we men folks do.

But a hen don't seem tew hav even instinkt, and was made expressly for a phool.

I hav seen a hen fly out ov a good warm shelter, on the 15th ov January, when the snow was 3 foot high, and lite on the top ov a stun wall, and coolly set thare, and freeze tew deth.

Noboddy but a darn phool would do this, unless it was tew save a bet.

I hav saw a human being do similar things, but they did it tew win a bet.

To save a bet, is self-preservashun, and self-preservashun, is the fust law ov natur, so sez Blakstone, and he is the best judge ov law now living.

If i couldn't be Josh Billings, i would like, next in suit tew be Blakstone, and compoze sum law.

Not so far removed from the Josh Billings type of humor is the work of James Russell Lowell. His well known *Biglow Papers* exploit in perfection the back country New England politics as well as native character.

WHAT MR. ROBINSON THINKS

Guvener B. is a sensible man;
He stays to his home an' looks arter his folks;
He draws his furrer ez straight ez he can,
An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

My ain't it terrible? Wut shall we du?
We can't never choose him, o' course,—thet's flat;
Guess we shall hev to come round (don't you?)
An' go in fer thunder an' guns, an' all that;
Fer John P.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

Gineral C. is a dreffle smart man:
He's ben on all sides thet give places or pelf;
But consistency still was a part of his plan,—
He's ben true to *one* party,—an' thet is himself;—
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote fer Gineral C.

Gineral C. he goes in fer the war;
He don't vally principle more'n an old cud;
Wut did God make us raytional creeturs fer,
But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an' blood?
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote fer Gineral C.

We were gettin' on nicely up here to our village,
With good old idees o' wut's right an' wut ain't,
We kind o' thought Christ went agin' war an' pillage,
An' thet eppyletts worn't the best mark of a saint;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez this kind o' thing's an exploded idee.

The side of our country must ollers be took,
An' Presidunt Polk, you know, *he* is our country,
An' the angel thet writes all our sins in a book
Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the *per contry*!

An' John P.
Robinson he
Sez this is his view o' the thing to a T.

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argimunts lies;
Sez they're nothin' on airth but jest *fee*, *faw*, *fum*;
An' thet all this big talk of our destinies
Is half on it ign'ance, an' t'other half rum;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez it ain't no sech thing; an', of course, so must we.

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in his life
Thet th' Apostles rigged out in their swaller-tail coats,
An' marched round in front of a drum an' a fife,
To git some on 'em office, an' some on 'em votes;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez they didn't know everythin' down in Judee.

Wall, it's a marcy we've gut folks to tell us
The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters, I vow, —
God sends country lawyers, an' other wise fellers,
To start the world's team wen it gits in a slough;
Fer John P.
Robinson he
Sez the world'll go right, ef he hollers out Gee!

Phoebe Cary, though a hymn writer of repute, did some extremely clever parodies. This work of hers is little known.

I REMEMBER

I remember, I remember,
The house where I was wed,
And the little room from which that night
My smiling bride was led.
She didn't come a wink too soon,
Nor make too long a stay;
But now I often wish her folks
Had kept the girl away!

I remember, I remember,

Her dresses, red and white,
Her bonnets and her caps and cloaks,—
They cost an awful sight!
The “corner lot” on which I built,
And where my brother met
At first my wife, one washing-day,—
That man is single yet!

I remember, I remember,
Where I was used to court,
And thought that all of married life
Was just such pleasant sport:—
My spirit flew in feathers then,
No care was on my brow;
I scarce could wait to shut the gate,—
I’m not so anxious now!

I remember, I remember,
My dear one’s smile and sigh;
I used to think her tender heart
Was close against the sky.
It was a childish ignorance,
But now it soothes me not
To know I’m farther off from Heaven
Than when she wasn’t got!

“THERE’S A BOWER OF BEAN-VINES”

There’s a bower of bean-vines in Benjamin’s yard,
And the cabbages grow round it, planted for greens;
In the time of my childhood ’twas terribly hard
To bend down the bean-poles, and pick off the beans.

That bower and its products I never forget,
But oft, when my landlady presses me hard,
I think, are the cabbages growing there yet,
Are the bean-vines still bearing in Benjamin’s yard?

No, the bean-vines soon withered that once used to wave,
But some beans had been gathered, the last that hung on;
And a soup was distilled in a kettle, that gave
All the fragrance of summer when summer was

gone.

Thus memory draws from delight, ere it dies,
An essence that breathes of it awfully hard;
As thus good to my taste as 'twas then to my eyes,
Is that bower of bean-vines in Benjamin's yard.

JACOB

He dwelt among "Apartments let,"
About five stories high;
A man, I thought, that none would get,
And very few would try.

A boulder, by a larger stone
Half hidden in the mud,
Fair as a man when only one
Is in the neighborhood.

He lived unknown, and few could tell
When Jacob was not free;
But he has got a wife—and O!
The difference to me!

REUBEN

That very time I saw, (but thou couldst not),
Walking between the garden and the barn,
Reuben, all armed; a certain aim he took
At a young chicken, standing by a post,
And loosed his bullet smartly from his gun,
As he would kill a hundred thousand hens.
But I might see young Reuben's fiery shot
Lodged in the chaste board of the garden fence,
And the domesticated fowl passed on,
In henly meditation, bullet free.

Edward Everett Hale, George William Curtis, Richard Grant White and Donald G. Mitchell (Ik Marvel) wrote about this time, but their prose articles are too long to quote in full and not adapted to condensation.

Again the newspaper writers forge to the front and in George Horatio Derby we find "the Father of" the

new school of American humor. His sketches, over the name of John Phoenix, began to appear about the middle of the Nineteenth century and were later collected under the titles of Phoenixiana and Squibob Papers.

A fragment of one is given.

The dentist went to work, and in three days he invented an instrument which he was confident would pull anything. It was a combination of the lever, pulley, wheel and axle, inclined plane, wedge, and screw. The castings were made, and the machine put up in the office, over an iron chair rendered perfectly stationary by iron rods going down into the foundations of the granite building. In a week old Byles returned; he was clamped into the iron chair, the forceps connected with the machine attached firmly to the tooth, and Tushmaker, stationing himself in the rear, took hold of a lever four feet in length. He turned it slightly. Old Byles gave a groan and lifted his right leg. Another turn, another groan, and up went the leg again.

“What do you raise your leg for?” asked the Doctor.

“I can’t help it,” said the patient.

“Well,” rejoined Tushmaker, “that tooth is bound to come out now.”

He turned the lever clear round with a sudden jerk, and snapped old Byles’ head clean and clear from his shoulders, leaving a space of four inches between the severed parts!

They had a *post-mortem* examination—the roots of the tooth were found extending down the right side, through the right leg, and turning up in two prongs under the sole of the right foot!

"No wonder," said Tushmaker, "he raised his right leg."

The jury thought so, too, but they found the roots much decayed; and five surgeons swearing that mortification would have ensued in a few months, Tushmaker was clear on a verdict of "justifiable homicide."

He was a little shy of that instrument for some time afterward; but one day an old lady, feeble and flaccid, came in to have a tooth drawn, and thinking it would come out very easy Tushmaker concluded, just by way of variety, to try the machine. He did so, and at the first turn drew the old lady's skeleton completely and entirely from her body, leaving her a mass of quivering jelly in her chair! Tushmaker took her home in a pillow-case.

The woman lived-seven years after that, and they called her the "India-Rubber Woman." She had suffered terribly with the rheumatism, but after this occurrence never had a pain in her bones. The dentist kept them in a glass case. After this, the machine was sold to the contract or of the Boston Custom-House, and it was found that a child of three years of age could, by a single turn of the screw, raise a stone weighing twenty-three tons. Smaller ones were made on the same principle and sold to the keepers of hotels and restaurants. They were used for boning turkeys. There is no moral to this story whatever, and it is possible that the circumstances may have become slightly exaggerated. Of course, there can be no doubt of the

truth of the main incidents.

Charles Godfrey Leland, a humorist of Philadelphia, wrote almost entirely in a broken German dialect. His Hans Breitmann ballads are still among the famous examples of American humor.

BALLAD

Der noble Ritter Hugo
  Von Schwillensaufenstein
Rode out mit shpeer and helmet,
  Und he coom to de panks of de Rhine.

Und oop dere rose a meer maid,
  Vod hadn't got nodings on,
Und she say, "Oh, Ritter Hugo,
  Vhere you goes mit yourself alone?"

Und he says, "I rides in de creenwood
  Mit helmet und mit shpeer,
Till I cooms into em Gasthaus,
  Und dere I trinks some beer."

Und den outshpoke de maiden
  Vot hadn't got nodings on:
"I ton't dink mooch of beoplesh
  Dat goes mit demselfs alone.

"You'd petter coom down in de wasser,
  Vere dere's heaps of dings to see,
Und have a shplendid tinner
  Und drafel along mit me.

"Dere you sees de fisch a-schwimmin,
  Und you catches dem efery one"—
So sang dis wasser maiden
  Vot hadn't got nodings on.

"Dere ish drunks all full mit money
  In ships dat vent down of old;
Und you helpsh yourself, by dunder!
  To shimmerin crowns of gold.

"Shoost look at dese shpoons und vatches!
  Shoost see dese diamant rings!
Coom down und full your bockets,

Und I'll giss you like averydings.

"Vot you vantsh mit your schnapps und lager?
Coom down into der Rhine!
Der ish pottles der Kaiser Charlemagne
Vonce filled mit gold-red wine!"

Dat fetched him—he shtood all shpellpound;
She pooled his coat-tails down,
She drawed him oonder der wasser,
De maiden mit nodings on.

William Allen Butler is remembered chiefly by his long humorous poem of Miss Flora M'Flimsey, or, as it is entitled, *Nothing To Wear*.

Charles Graham Halpine wrote in an Irish brogue the adventures of Private Miles O'Reilly.

John T. Trowbridge and Charles Dudley Warner are among the famous Nineteenth Century writers but their works are not adapted to quotation.

Which brings us to Mark Twain.

Samuel Langhorne Clemens is too well known both by his works and by his life to need any word of comment. His whole career, as printer, pilot, lecturer and writer is an open and conned book to all.

Difficult indeed it is to quote from his volumes of fun, but we append a short extract from *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*.

... Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog, and well he might be, for fellers that had traveled and been everywheres all said he laid over any frog that ever *they* see.

Well, Smiley kep' the beast in a little lattice box, and he used to fetch him down-town sometimes and lay for a bet. One day a feller—a stranger in the camp, he was—come acrost him with his box, and says:

"What might it be that you've got in the box?"

And Smiley says, sorter indifferent-like, "It might be a parrot, or it might be a canary, maybe, but it ain't—it's only just a frog."

And the feller took it, and looked at it careful, and turned it round this way and that, and says, "H'm—so 'tis. Well what's *he* good for?"

"Well," Smiley says, easy and careless, "he's good enough for *one* thing, I should judge—he can outjump any frog in Calaveras County."

The feller took the box again, and took another long, particular look, and give it back to Smiley, and says, very deliberate, "Well," he says, "I don't see no p'ints about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."

"Maybe you don't," Smiley says. "Maybe you understand frogs and maybe you don't understand 'em; maybe you've had experience, and maybe you ain't only a amature, as it were. Anyways, I've got *my* opinion and I'll resk forty dollars that he can outjump any frog in Calaveras County."

And the feller studied a minute, and then says, kinder sad like, "Well, I'm only a stranger here, and I ain't got no frog; but if I had a frog I'd bet you."

And then Smiley says, “That’s all right—that’s all right—if you’ll hold my box a minute I’ll go and get you a frog.” And so the feller took the box, and put up his forty dollars along with Smiley’s, and set down to wait.

So he set there a good while thinking and thinking to himself, and then he got the frog out and prized his mouth open and took a teaspoon and filled him full of quail shot—filled him pretty near up to his chin—and set him on the floor. Smiley he went to the swamp and slopped around in the mud for a long time, and finally he ketched a frog, and fetched him in, and give him to this feller, and says:

“Now, if you’re ready, set him alongside of Dan’l, with his forepaws just even with Dan’l’s, and I’ll give the word.” Then he says, “One—two—three—*git*.” and him and the feller touched up the frogs from behind, and the new frog hopped off lively, but Dan’l give a heave, and hysted up his shoulders—so—like a Frenchman, but it warn’t no use—he couldn’t budge; he was planted as solid as a church, and he couldn’t no more stir than if he was anchored out. Smiley was a good deal surprised, and he was disgusted, too, but he didn’t have no idea what the matter was, of course.

The feller took the money and started away; and when he was going out at the door, he sorter jerked his thumb over his shoulder—so—at Dan’l, and says again, very deliberate, “Well,” he says, “*I* don’t see no p’ints about that frog that’s any better’n any other frog.”

Smiley he stood scratching his head and looking down at Dan’l a long time, and at last he says, “I do wonder what in the nation that frog throw’d off for—I wonder if there ain’t something the matter with

him—e 'pears to look mighty baggy, somehow." And he ketched Dan'l by the nap of the neck, and hefted him, and says, "Why blame my cats if he don't weight five pound!" and turned him upside down and he belched out a double handful of shot. And then he see how it was, and he was the maddest man—he set the frog down and took out after that feller, but he never ketched him.

James Bayard Taylor and Thomas Bailey Aldrich, friends and congenial spirits, both despised American Dialect poetry.

Their own work shows a facile wit and graceful fancy, but, with Edmund Clarence Stedman, they must be classed as writers of light verse rather than as humorists.

Taylor was good at parody, and in his *Echo Club*, thus burlesques the style of Aldrich.

PALABRAS GRANDIOSAS

After T—— B—— A——

I lay i' the bosom of the sun,
Under the roses dappled and dun.
I thought of the Sultan Gingerbeer,
In his palace beside the Bendemeer,
With his Afghan guards and his eunuchs blind,
And the harem that stretched for a league behind.
The tulips bent i' the summer breeze,
Under the broad chrysanthemum trees,
And the minstrel, playing his culverin,
Made for mine ears a merry din.

If I were the Sultan, and he were I,
Here i' the grass he should loafing lie,
And I should bestride my zebra steed,
And the ride of the hunt of the centipede;
While the pet of the harem, Dandeline,

Should fill me a crystal bucket of wine,
And the kislar aga, Up-to-Snuff,
Should wipe my mouth when I sighed "Enough!"
And the gay court-poet, Fearfulbore,
Should sit in the hall when the hunt was o'er,
And chant me songs of silvery tone,
Not from Hafiz, but—mine own!

Ah, wee sweet love, beside me here,
I am not the Sultan Gingerbeer,
Nor you the odalisque Dandeline,
Yet I am yourn, and you are mine!

David Ross Locke, who wrote over the name of Petroleum V. Nasby, was a humorist of the newspapers. He achieved no success until he began to misspell his words, when he at once leaped into popularity.

But the Prince of Misspellers, excepting always Josh Billings, was Artemus Ward, the pseudonym of Charles Farrar Browne.

The trick of misspelling and the use of excessive exaggeration were his stock in trade, added to a certain plaintiveness and abounding good humor.

Browne was the only one of this group of American humorists, whose work was read in England, and he lectured over there with pronounced success.

ON "FORTS"

Every man has got a Fort. It's sum men's fort to do one thing, and some other men's fort to do another, while there is numeris shiftliss critters goin' round loose whose fort is not to do nothin'.

Shakspeer rote good plase, but he wouldn't hav succeeded as a Washington coorespondent of a New York daily paper. He lacked the rekesit fancy and

imagginashun.

That's so!

Old George Washington's Fort was not to hev eny public man of the present day resemble him to eny alarmin extent. Whare bowts can George's ekal be found? I ask, & boldly answer no whares, or any whare else.

Old man Townsin's Fort was to maik Sassyperiller. "Goy to the world! anuther life saived!" (Cotashun from Townsin's advertisement.)

Cyrus Field's Fort is to lay a sub-machine telegraf under the boundin billers of the Oshun, and then have it Bust.

Spaldin's Fort is to maik Prepared Gloo, which mends every thing. Wonder ef it will mend a sinner's wickid waze. (Impromptoo goak.)

Zoary's Fort is to be a femaile circus feller.

My Fort is the grate moral show bizniss & ritin choice famerly literatoor for the noospapers. That's what's the matter with *me*.

&., &., &. So I mite go on to a indefinit extent.

Twict I've endevered to do things which thay wasn't my Fort. The fust time was when I undertuk to lick a owdashus cuss who cut a hole in my tent & krawld threw. Sez I, "My jentle Sir, go out or I shall fall on to you putty hevy." Sez he, "Wade in, Old wax figgers," whereupon I went for him, but he cawt me powerful on the bed & knockt me threw the tent into a cow pastur. He pursood the attach & flung me into a mud puddle. As I arose & rung out my drencht garmints I koncluded fitin wasn't my Fort. Ile now rize the kurtin upon Seen 2nd: It is rarely seldum

that I seek consolation in the Flowin Bole. But in a certain town in Injianny in the Faul of 18—, my orgin grinder got sick with the fever & died. I never felt so ashamed in my life, & I thowt I'd hist in a few swallers of suthin strengthnin. Konsequents was I histid in so much I dident zackly know whare bowts I was. I turned my livin wild beasts of Pray loose into the streets and spilt all my wax wurks. I then bet I cood play hoss. So I hitched myself to a Kanawl bote, there bein two other hosses hicht on also, one behind and anuther ahead of me. The driver hollerd for us to git up, and we did. But the hosses bein onused to sich a arrangemunt begun to kick & squeal and rair up. Konsequents was I fownd myself in the Kanawl with the other hosses, kickin & yellin like a tribe of Cusscaroorus savvijis. I was rescood, & as I was bein carrid to the tavern on a hemlock Bored I sed in a feeble voise, "Boys, playin hoss isn't my Fort."

Morul.—Never don't do nothin which isn't your Fort, for ef you do you'll find yourself splashin round in the Kanawl, figgeratively speakin.

Frank R. Stockton was a nobleman among the humorists.

His quiet and often subtle humor, his delightful style and his unique originality made all his stories a joy and some masterpieces. No quotations can be given, for any Stockton story must be read in its entirety. *The Lady and the Tiger* is doubtless the most celebrated one, but many others are even more clever and unusual.

Francis Bret Harte, famed for his short stories, also wrote humorous verse. *The Heathen Chinee* is a byword in all households, and *Truthful James* is nearly as well known.

THE SOCIETY UPON THE STANISLAUS

I reside at Table Mountain, and my name is
Truthful James;
I am not up to small deceit, or any sinful games;
And I'll tell in simple language what I know about
the row
That broke up our Society upon the Stanislow.

But first I would remark, that it is not a proper
plan
For any scientific gent to whale his fellow man,
And, if a member don't agree with his peculiar
whim,
To lay for that same member for to "put a head" on
him.

Now, nothing could be finer or more beautiful to
see
Than the first six months' proceedings of that same
society,
Till Brown of Calaveras brought a lot of fossil
bones
That he found within a tunnel near the tenement of
Jones.

Then Brown he read a paper, and he reconstructed
there,
From those same bones an animal that was
extremely rare,
And Jones then asked the chair for a suspension of
the rules
Till he could prove that those same bones was one
of his lost mules.

Then Brown he smiled a bitter smile, and said he
was at fault;
It seemed he had been trespassing on Jones's
family vault
He was a most sarcastic man, this quiet Mr. Brown,
And on several occasions he had cleaned out the
town.

Now, I hold it is not decent for a scientific gent
To say another is an ass—at least, to all intent;
Nor should the individual who happens to be meant
Reply by heaving rocks at him to any great extent.

Then Abner Dean of Angel's raised a point of order —when
A chunk of old red sandstone took him in the abdomen,
And he smiled a kind of sickly smile, and curled up on the floor,
And the subsequent proceedings interested him no more.

For, in less time than I write it, every member did engage
In a warfare with the remnants of a paleozoic age;
And the way they heaved those fossils in their anger was a sin,
Till the skull of an old mammoth caved the head of Thompson in.

And this is all I have to say of these improper games,
For I live at Table Mountain, and my name is Truthful James;
And I've told in simple language what I know about the row
That broke up our Society upon the Stanislow.

TO THE PLIOCENE SKULL

"Speak, O man less recent!
Fragmentary fossil!
Primal pioneer of pliocene formation,
Hid in lowest drifts below the earliest stratum
Of volcanic tufa!

"Older than the beasts, the oldest Palæotherium;
Older than the trees, the oldest Cryptogami;
Older than the hills, those infantile eruptions
Of earth's epidermis!

"Eo—Mio—Plio—Whatsoe'er the 'cene' was
That those vacant sockets filled with awe and wonder—
Whether shores Devonian or Silurian beaches—

Tell us thy strange story!

"Or has the professor slightly antedated
By some thousand years thy advent on this planet,
Giving thee an air that's somewhat better fitted
For cold-blooded creatures?

"Wert thou true spectator of that mighty forest
When above thy head the stately Sigillaria
Reared its columned trunks in that remote and distant
Carboniferous epoch?

"Tell us of that scene—the dim and watery woodland
Songless, silent, hushed, with never bird or insect;
Veiled with spreading fronds and screened with tall clubmosses,
Lycopodiacea,

When beside thee walked the solemn Plesiosaurus,
And around thee crept the festive Ichthyosaurus,
While from time to time above thee flew and circled
Cheerful Pterodactyls.

"Tell us of thy food—those half-marine refections,
Crinoids on the shell and brachipods *au naturel*—
Cuttle-fish to which the *pieuvre* of Victor Hugo
Seems a periwinkle.

"Speak, thou awful vestige of the earth's creation,
Solitary fragment of remains organic!
Tell the wondrous secret of thy past existence—
Speak! thou oldest primate!"

Even as I gazed, a thrill of the maxilla,
And a lateral movement of the condyloid process,
With post-pliocene sounds of healthy mastication,
Ground the teeth together.

And, from that imperfect dental exhibition,
Stained with expressed juices of the weed Nicotian,
Came these hollow accents, blent with softer murmurs
Of expectoration:

"Which my name is Bowers, and my crust was

busted
Falling down a shaft in Calaveras county,
But I'd take it kindly if you'd send the pieces
Home to old Missouri!"

Pioneering in the West marked a distinct epoch in American humor. Bret Harte owed his meteoric success largely to the fact of his utilizing the background of the Golden West. And so did Joaquin Miller, John Hay and Edward Rowland Sill.

The Pike County Ballads of John Hay were national favorites.

LITTLE BREECHES

I don't go much on religion,
I never ain't had no show;
But I've got a middlin' tight grip, sir,
On the handful o' things I know.
I don't pan out on the prophets
And free-will and that sort of thing—
But I b'lieve in God and the angels,
Ever sence one night last spring.

I come into town with some turnips,
And my little Gabe come along—
No four-year-old in the county
Could beat him for pretty and strong,
Peart and chipper and sassy,
Always ready to swear and fight—
And I'd larnt him to chaw terbacker
Jest to keep his milk-teeth white.

The snow come down like a blanket
As I passed by Taggart's store;
I went in for a jug of molasses
And left the team at the door.
They scared at something and started—
I heard one little squall,
And hell-to-split over the prairie
Went team, Little Breeches and all.

Hell-to-split over the prairie!
I was almost froze with skeer;
But we rousted up some torches,
And sarched for 'em far and near.

At last we struck horses and wagon,
  Snowed under a soft white mound,
Upsot, dead beat—but of little Gabe
  Nor hide nor hair was found.

And here all hope soured on me,
  Of my fellow-critter's aid—
I jest flopped down on my marrow-bones,
  Crotch-deep in the snow, and prayed.

*****

By this, the torches was played out,
  And me and Isrul Parr
Went off for some wood to a sheepfold
  That he said was somewhar thar.

We found it at last, and a little shed
  Where they shut up the lambs at night.
We looked in and seen them huddled thar,
  So warm and sleepy and white;
And THAR sot Little Breeches, and chirped,
  As peart as ever you see:
"I want a chaw of terbacker,
  And that's what's the matter of me."

How did he git thar? Angels.
  He could never have walked in that storm;
They jest scooped down and toted him
  To whar it was safe and warm.
And I think that saving a little child,
  And bringing him to his own,
Is a derned sight better business
  Then loafing around The Throne.

Joaquin Miller, whose true name was Cincinnatus Hiner Miller, was called the Poet of the Sierras.

He seldom wrote in humorous vein, but some of his verse must fall into that category.

THAT GENTLE MAN FROM BOSTON TOWN

AN IDYL OF OREGON

Two webfoot brothers loved a fair
  Young lady, rich and good to see;
And oh, her black abundant hair!

And oh, her wondrous witchery!
Her father kept a cattle farm,
These brothers kept her safe from harm:

From harm of cattle on the hill;
From thick-necked bulls loud bellowing
The livelong morning, loud and shrill,
And lashing sides like anything;
From roaring bulls that tossed the sand
And pawed the lilies from the land.

There came a third young man. He came
From far and famous Boston town.
He was not handsome, was not "game,"
But he could "cook a goose" as brown
As any man that set foot on
The sunlit shores of Oregon.

This Boston man he taught the school,
Taught gentleness and love alway,
Said love and kindness, as a rule,
Would ultimately "make it pay."
He was so gentle, kind, that he
Could make a noun and verb agree.

So when one day the brothers grew
All jealous and did strip to fight,
He gently stood between the two,
And meekly told them 'twas not right.
"I have a higher, better plan,"
Outspake this gentle Boston man.

"My plan is this: Forget this fray
About that lily hand of hers;
Go take your guns and hunt all day
High up yon lofty hill of firs,
And while you hunt, my loving doves,
Why, I will learn which one she loves."

The brothers sat the windy hill,
Their hair shone yellow, like spun gold,
Their rifles crossed their laps, but still
They sat and sighed and shook with cold.
Their hearts lay bleeding far below;
Above them gleamed white peaks of snow.

Their hounds lay couching, slim and neat;
A spotted circle in the grass.

The valley lay beneath their feet;
  They heard the wide-winged eagles pass.
The eagles cleft the clouds above;
Yet what could they but sigh and love?

“If I could die,” the elder sighed,
  “My dear young brother here might wed.”
“Oh, would to Heaven I had died!”
  The younger sighed, with bended head.
Then each looked each full in the face
And each sprang up and stood in place.

“If I could die,”—the elder spake,—
  “Die by your hand, the world would say
’Twas accident;—and for her sake,
  Dear brother, be it so, I pray.”
“Not that!” the younger nobly said;
Then tossed his gun and turned his head.

And fifty paces back he paced!
  And as he paced he drew the ball;
Then sudden stopped and wheeled and faced
  His brother to the death and fall!
Two shots rang wild upon the air!
But lo! the two stood harmless there!

An eagle poised high in the air;
  Far, far below the bellowing
Of bullocks ceased, and everywhere
  Vast silence sat all questioning.
The spotted hounds ran circling round
Their red, wet noses to the ground.

And now each brother came to know
  That each had drawn the deadly ball;
And for that fair girl far below
  Had sought in vain to silent fall.
And then the two did gladly “shake,”
And thus the elder bravely spake:

“Now let us run right hastily
  And tell the kind schoolmaster all!
Yea! yea! and if she choose not me,
  But all on you her favors fall,
This valiant scene, till all life ends,
Dear brother, binds us best of friends.”

The hounds sped down, a spotted line,

The bulls in tall, abundant grass,
Shook back their horns from bloom and vine,
And trumpeted to see them pass—
They loved so good, they loved so true,
These brothers scarce knew what to do.

They sought the kind schoolmaster out
As swift as sweeps the light of morn;
They could but love, they could not doubt
This man so gentle, "in a horn,"
They cried, "Now whose the lily hand—
That lady's of this webfoot land?"

They bowed before that big-nosed man,
That long-nosed man from Boston town;
They talked as only lovers can,
They talked, but he could only frown;
And still they talked, and still they plead;
It was as pleading with the dead.

At last this Boston man did speak—
"Her father has a thousand ceows,
An hundred bulls, all fat and sleek;
He also had this ample heouse."
The brothers' eyes stuck out thereat,
So far you might have hung your hat.

"I liked the looks of this big heouse—
My lovely boys, won't you come in?
Her father has a thousand ceows,
He also had a heap of tin.
The guirl? Of yes, the guirl, you see—
The guirl, just neow she married me."

Robert Henry Newell, a popular journalist and humorist, wrote over the name of Orpheus C. Kerr. His best known work is the Orpheus C. Kerr Papers, but as a parodist he gives us these burlesque National Hymns.

I

BY H—Y W. L-NGF—— W

Back in the years when Phlagstaff, the Dane, was monarch
Over the sea-ribb'd land of the fleet-footed Norsemen,

Once there went forth young Ursa to gaze at the heavens—
Ursa—the noblest of all the Vikings and horsemen.

Musing, he sat in his stirrups and viewed the horizon,
Where the Aurora lapt stars in a North-polar manner,
Wildly he started,—for there in the heavens before him
Flutter'd and flam'd the original Star Spangled Banner.

II

BY J-HN GR—NL—F WH—T—R

My Native Land, thy Puritanic stock
Still finds its roots firm-bound in Plymouth Rock,
And all thy sons unite in one grand wish—
To keep the virtues of Preservèd Fish.

Preservèd Fish, the Deacon stern and true,
Told our New England what her sons should do,
And if they swerve from loyalty and right,
Then the whole land is lost indeed in night.

III

BY DR. OL-V-R W-ND-L H-LMES

A diagnosis of our hist'ry proves
Our native land a land its native loves;
Its birth a deed obstetric without peer,
Its growth a source of wonder far and near.

To love it more behold how foreign shores
Sink into nothingness beside its stores;
Hyde Park at best—though counted ultra-grand—
The "Boston Common" of Victoria's land.

IV

BY R-LPH W-LDO EM-R—N

Source immaterial of material naught,
Focus of light infinitesimal,
Sum of all things by sleepless Nature wrought,
Of which the normal man is decimal.

Refract, in prism immortal, from thy stars
To the stars bent incipient on our flag,
The beam translucent, neutrifying death,
And raise to immortality the rag.

V

By W-LL—M C-LL-N B-Y-NT

The sun sinks softly to his Ev'ning Post,
The sun swells grandly to his morning crown;
Yet not a star our Flag of Heav'n has lost,
And not a sunset stripe with him goes down.

So thrones may fall, and from the dust of those
New thrones may rise, to totter like the last;
But still our Country's nobler planet glows
While the eternal stars of Heaven are fast.

VI

By N. P. W-LL-S

One hue of our Flag is taken
From the cheeks of my blushing Pet,
And its stars beat time and sparkle
Like the studs on her chemisette.

Its blue is the ocean shadow
That hides in her dreamy eyes,
It conquers all men, like her,
And still for a Union flies.

VII

BY TH-M-S B-IL-Y ALD—CH

The little brown squirrel hops in the corn,
The cricket quaintly sings,
The emerald pigeon nods his head,
And the shad in the river springs,
The dainty sunflow'r hangs its head
On the shore of the summer sea;
And better far that I were dead,
If Maud did not love me.

I love the squirrel that hops in the corn,
And the cricket that quaintly sings;
And the emerald pigeon that nods his head,
And the shad that gaily springs.
I love the dainty sunflow 'r, too.

And Maud with her snowy breast;
I love them all;—but I love—I love—
I love my country best.

Edward Rowland Sill, writing of the West for many years, wrote delightful humor on other subjects as well.

EVE's DAUGHTER

I waited in the little sunny room:
The cool breeze waved the window-lace at play,
The white rose on the porch was all in bloom,
And out upon the bay
I watched the wheeling sea-birds go and come.
"Such an old friend—she would not make me stay
While she bound up her hair." I turned, and lo,
Danæ in her shower! and fit to slay
All a man's hoarded prudence at a blow:
Gold hair, that streamed away
As round some nymph a sunlit fountain's flow.
"She would not make me wait!"—but well I know
She took a good half-hour to loose and lay
Those locks in dazzling disarrangement so!

Newspaper humor of this period included the *Danbury News Man*, *Peck's Bad Boy* and *Eli Perkins* (Melville D. Landon).

Charles E. Carryl, though his books are called Juveniles, wrote delicious nonsense, approaching nearer to Lewis Carroll than any other American writer.

THE WALLOPING WINDOW-BLIND

A capital ship for an ocean trip
Was the "Walloping Window-blind"—
No gale that blew dismayed her crew
Or troubled the captain's mind.
The man at the wheel was taught to feel
Contempt for the wildest blow,
And it often appeared, when the weather had cleared,

That he'd been in his bunk below.

The boatswain's mate was very sedate,
Yet fond of amusement, too;
And he played hop-scotch with the starboard watch,
While the captain tickled the crew.
And the gunner we had was apparently mad,
For he sat on the after rail,
And fired salutes with the captain's boots,
In the teeth of the booming gale.

The captain sat in a commodore's hat
And dined in a royal way
On toasted pigs and pickles and figs
And gummery bread each day.
But the cook was Dutch and behaved as such:
For the food he gave the crew
Was a number of tons of hot-cross buns
Chopped up with sugar and glue.

And we all felt ill as mariners will,
On a diet that's cheap and rude;
And we shivered and shook as we dipped the cook
In a tub of his gluesome food.
Then nautical pride we laid aside,
And we cast the vessel ashore
On the Gulliby Isles, where the Poohpooh smiles,
And the Anagazanders roar.

Composed of sand was that favored land,
And trimmed with cinnamon straws;
And pink and blue was the pleasing hue
Of the Tickletoeteaser's claws.
And we sat on the edge of a sandy ledge
And shot at the whistling bee;
And the Binnacle-bats wore water-proof hats
As they danced in the sounding sea.

On rubagub bark, from dawn to dark,
We fed, till we all had grown
Uncommonly shrunk,—when a Chinese junk
Came by from the torriby zone.
She was stubby and square, but we didn't much care,
And we cheerily put to sea;
And we left the crew of the junk to chew
The bark of the rubagub tree.

Robert Jones Burdette, known as the Burlington Hawkeye Man, was one of the prototypes of our present day newspaper columnists.

His witty verse and prose has lived, and he ranks with the humorists of our land.

WHAT WILL WE DO?

What will we do when the good days come—
When the prima donna's lips are dumb.
And the man who reads us his "little things"
Has lost his voice like the girl who sings;
When stilled is the breath of the cornet-man,
And the shrilling chords of the quartette clan;
When our neighbours' children have lost their drums—
Oh, what will we do when the good time comes?
Oh, what will we do in that good, blithe time,
When the tramp will work—oh, thing sublime!
And the scornful dame who stands on your feet
Will "Thank you, sir," for the proffered seat;
And the man you hire to work by the day,
Will allow you to do his work your way;
And the cook who trieth your appetite
Will steal no more than she thinks is right;
When the boy you hire will call you "Sir,"
Instead of "Say" and "Guverner";
When the funny man is humorsome—
How can we stand the millennium?

"*SOLDIER, REST!*"

A Russian sailed over the blue Black Sea
Just when the war was growing hot,
And he shouted, "I'm Tjalikavakeree—
Karindabrolikanavandorot—
Schipkadirova—
Ivandiszstova—
Sanilik—
Danilik—
Varagobhot!"

A Turk was standing upon the shore
Right where the terrible Russian crossed;
And he cried, "Bismillah! I'm Abd el Kor—
Bazaroukilgonautoskobrosk—

Getzinpravadi—
Kilgekosladji—
Grivido—
Blivido—
Jenikodosk!”

So they stood like brave men, long and well,
And they called each other their proper names,
Till the lockjaw seized them, and where they fell
They buried them both by the Irdosholames—
Kalatalustchuk—
Mischaribustchup—
Bulgari—
Dulgari—
Sagharimainz.

Marietta Holley wrote with shrewd observation and much homely common sense. Her books about Betsey Bobbet and Josiah Allen’s Wife were best sellers in the seventies or thereabouts.

Like many of her contemporaries for her fun she depended largely on misspelling.

Here Betsey interrupted me. “The deah editah of the *Augah* has no need to advise me to read Tuppah, for he is indeed my most favorite authar. You have devorhed him haven’t you, Josiah Allen’s wife?”

“Devoured who?” says I, in a tone pretty near as cold as a cold icicle.

“Mahtan Fahqueah Tuppah, that sweet authar,” says she.

“No, mam,” says I shortly; “I hain’t devoured Martin Farquhar Tupper, nor no other man. I hain’t a cannibal.”

“Oh, you understand me not; I meant, devorhed his sweet tender lines.”

"I hain't devoured his tenderlines, nor nothin' relatin' to him," and I made a motion to lay the paper down, but Betsey urged me to go on, and so I read:

GUSHINGS OF A TENDAH SOUL

"'Oh, let who will,
Oh, let who can,
Be tied onto
A horrid male man.'

"Thus said I ere
My tendah heart was touched;
Thus said I ere
My tendah feelings gushed.

"But oh, a change
Hath swept ore me,
As billows sweep
The 'deep blue sea.'

"A voice, a noble form
One day I saw;
An arrow flew,
My heart is nearly raw.

"His first pardner lies
Beneath the turf;
He is wondering now
In sorrow's briny surf.

"Two twins, the little
Death cherub creechahs,
Now wipe the teahs
From off his classic feachahs.

"Oh, sweet lot, worthy
Angel arisen,
To wipe teahs
From eyes like hisen."

"What think you of it?" says she, as I finished readin'.

I looked right at her 'most a minute with a

majestic look. In spite of her false curls and her new white ivory teeth, she is a humbly critter. I looked at her silently while she sot and twisted her long yellow bunnet-strings, and then I spoke out. “Hain’t the editor of the *Augur* a widower with a pair of twins?”

“Yes,” says she, with a happy look.

Then says I, “If the man hain’t a fool, he’ll think you are one.... There is a time for everything, and the time to hunt affinity is before you are married; married folks hain’t no right to hunt it,” says I sternly.

“We kindred soles soah above such petty feelin’s—we soah far above them.”

“I hain’t much of a soarer,” says I, “and I don’t pretend to be; and to tell you the truth,” says I, “I am glad I hain’t.” “The editah of the *Augah*,” says she, and she grasped the paper offen the stand and folded it up, and presented it at me like a spear, “the editah of this paper is a kindred sole; he appreciates me, he undahstands me, and will not our names in the pages of this very papah go down to posterety togathah?”

“Then,” says I, drove out of all patience with her, “I wish you was there now, both of you. I wish,” says I, lookin’ fixedly on her, “I wish you was both of you in posterity now.”

—My Opinions and Betsey Bobbet’s.

George Thomas Lanigan wrote clever verse, of which *The Akhoond of Swat* is among the best.

A THRENODY

“The Akhoond of Swat is dead,”—*London Papers of January 22, 1878*.

What, what, what,
What’s the news from Swat?

Sad news,
Bad news,
Cometh by cable led
Through the Indian Ocean's bed,
Through the Persian Gulf, the Red
Sea and the Med-
Iterranean: he's dead,—
The Akhoond is dead!

For the Akhoond I mourn.
Who wouldn't?
He strove to disregard the message stern,
But he Akhoondn't.

Dead, dead, dead;
(Sorrow, Swats!)
Swats wha hae wi' Akhoond bled,
Swats wham he hath often led
Onward to a gory bed,
Or to victory,
As the case might be,—
Sorrow, Swats!
Tears shed,
Shed tears like water,
Your great Akhoond is dead!
That's Swat's the matter!

Mourn, city of Swat,
Your great Akhoond is not,
But laid 'mid worms to rot,—
His mortal part alone: his soul was caught
(Because he was a good Akhoond)
Up to the bosom of Mahound.
Though earthly walls his frame surround
(Forever hallowed be the ground),
And sceptics mock the lowly mound
And say, "He's now of no Akhoond!"
His soul is in the skies,—
The azure skies that bend above his loved
metropolis of Swat;
He sees, with larger, other eyes,
Athwart all earthly mysteries;
He knows what's Swat.

Let Swat bury the great Akhoond
With a noise of mourning and of lamentation!
Let Swat bury the great Akhoond
With the noise of the mourning of the Swattish

nation!
Fallen is at length
Its tower of strength.
Its sun is dimmed ere it had nooned,
Dead lies the great Akhoond,
The great Akhoond of Swat,
Is not!

Lanigan also wrote Fables, which he signed G. Washington Æsop.

THE OSTRICH AND THE HEN

An Ostrich and a Hen chanced to occupy adjacent apartments, and the former complained loudly that her rest was disturbed by the cackling of her humble neighbor. “Why is it,” she finally asked the Hen, “that you make such an intolerable noise?” The Hen replied, “Because I have laid an egg.” “Oh, no,” said the Ostrich, with a superior smile, “it is because you are a Hen and don’t know any better.”

Moral.—The moral of the foregoing is not very clear, but it contains some reference to the Agitation for Female Suffrage.

THE KIND-HEARTED SHE-ELEPHANT

A kind-hearted She-Elephant, while walking through the Jungle where the Spicy Breezes blow soft o’er Ceylon’s Isle, heedlessly set foot upon a Partridge, which she crushed to death within a few inches of the Nest containing its Callow Brood. “Poor little things!” said the generous Mammoth. “I have been a Mother myself, and my affection shall atone for the Fatal Consequences of my neglect.” So saying, she sat down upon the Orphaned Birds.

Moral.—The above Teaches us What Home is Without a Mother; also, that it is not every Person

who should be entrusted with the Care of an Orphan Asylum.

James Jeffrey Roche wrote delightful verse, which is properly classed as *Vers de Société*, but which shows more wit than much of that type.

THE V-A-S-E

From the madding crowd they stand apart,
The maidens four and the Work of Art;

And none might tell, from sight alone,
In which had Culture ripest grown—

The Gotham Million, fair to see,
The Philadelphia Pedigree,

The Boston Mind of azure hue,
Or the soulful Soul from Kalamazoo—

For all loved Art in a seemly way,
With an earnest soul and a capital A.

*****

Long they worshiped; but no one broke
The sacred stillness, until up spoke

The Western one from the nameless place,
Who blushing said, “What a lovely vace!”

Over three faces a sad smile flew,
And they edged away from Kalamazoo.

But Gotham’s haughty soul was stirred
To crush the stranger with one small word.

Deftly hiding reproof in praise,
She cries, “’Tis, indeed, a lovely vaze!”

But brief her unworthy triumph when
The lofty one from the house of Penn,

With the consciousness of two grandpapas,
Exclaims, “It is quite a lovely vahs!”

And glances round with an anxious thrill,
Awaiting the word of Beacon Hill.

But the Boston maid smiles courteouslee,
And gently murmurs, “Oh, pardon me!

“I did not catch your remark, because
I was so entranced with that lovely vaws!”

Dies erit praegelida
Sinistra quum Bostonia.

A BOSTON LULLABY

Baby’s brain is tired of thinking
On the Wherefore and the Whence;
Baby’s precious eyes are blinking
With incipient somnolence.

Little hands are weary turning
Heavy leaves of lexicon;
Little nose is fretted learning
How to keep its glasses on.

Baby knows the laws of nature
Are beneficent and wise;
His medulla oblongata
Bids my darling close his eyes,

And his pneumogastrics tell him
Quietude is always best
When his little cerebellum
Needs recuperative rest.

Baby must have relaxation,
Let the world go wrong or right.
Sleep, my darling, leave Creation
To its chances for the night.

Joel Chandler Harris is in a class by himself. Although he wrote other things, he will always be remembered for the immortal Uncle Remus stories. *The Tar Baby* and *Brer Rabbit* are known and loved of

all American families. A short bit is given from:

THE SAD END OF BRER WOLF

"Bimeby, one day w'en Brer Rabbit wuz fixin' fer ter call on Miss Coon, he heered a monst'us fussen clatter up de big road, en 'mos' 'fo' he could fix his years fer ter lissen, Brer Wolf run in de do'. De little Rabbits dey went inter dere hole in de cellar, dey did, like blowin' out a cannle. Brer Wolf wuz far'ly kiver'd wid mud, en mighty nigh outer win'.

"'Oh, do pray save me, Brer Rabbit!' sez Brer Wolf, sezee. 'Do, please, Brer Rabbit! de dogs is atter me, en dey'll t'ar me up. Don't you year um comin'? Oh, do please save me Brer Rabbit! Hide me some'rs whar de dogs won't git me.'

"No quicker sed dan done.

"'Jump in dat big chist dar, Brer Wolf,' sez Brer Rabbit sezee; 'jump in dar en make yo'se'f at home.'

"In jump Brer Wolf, down come de lid, en inter de hasp went de hook, en dar Mr. Wolf wuz. Den Brer Rabbit went ter de lookin'-glass, he did, en wink at hisse'f, en den he draw'd de rockin'-cheer in front er de fier, he did, en tuck a big chaw terbarker."

"Tobacco, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy incredulously.

"Rabbit terbarker, honey. You know dis yer life ev'lastin' w'at Miss Sally puts 'mong de cloze in de trunk; well, dat's rabbit terbarker. Den Brer Rabbit sot dar long time, he did, turnin' his mine over en wukken' his thinkin' masheen. Bimeby he got up, en sorter stir 'roun'. Den Brer Wolf open up:

"'Is de dogs all gone, Brer Rabbit?'

"'Seem like I hear one un um smellin' roun' de chimbly cornder des now.'

"Den Brer Rabbit git de kittle en fill it full er water, en put it on de fier.

"'W'at you doin' now, Brer Rabbit?'

"'I'm fixin' fer ter make you a nice cup er tea, Brer Wolf.'

"Den Brer Rabbit went ter de cubberd, en git de gimlet, en commence for ter bo' little holes in de chist-lid.

"'W'at you doin' now, Brer Rabbit?'

"'I'm a-bo'in' little holes so you kin get bref, Brer Wolf.'

"Den Brer Rabbit went out en git some mo' wood, en fling it on de fier.

"'W'at you doin' now, Brer Rabbit?'

"'I'm a-chunkin' up de fier so you won't git cole, Brer Wolf.'

"Den Brer Rabbit went down inter de cellar en fotch out all his chilluns.

"'W'at you doin' now, Brer Rabbit?'

"'I'm a-tellin' my chilluns w'at a nice man you is, Brer Wolf.'

"En de chilluns, dey had ter put der han's on her moufs fer ter keep fum laffin'. Den Brer Rabbit he got de kittle en commenced fer to po' de hot water on de chist-lid.

"'W'at dat I hear, Brer Rabbit?'

"'You hear de win' a-blowin', Brer Wolf.'

"Den de water begin fer ter sif' thoo.

"'W'at dat I feel, Brer Rabbit?'

"'You feels de fleas a-bitin', Brer Wolf.'

"'Dey er bitin' mighty hard, Brer Rabbit.'

"'Tu'n over on de udder side, Brer Wolf.'

"'W'at dat I feel now, Brer Rabbit?'

"'Still you feels de fleas, Brer Wolf.'

"'Dey er eatin' me up, Brer Rabbit,' en dem wuz de las' words er Brer Wolf, kase de scaldin' water done de bizness.

"Den Brer Rabbit call in his nabers, he did, en dey hilt a reg'lar juberlee; en ef you go ter Brer Rabbit's house right now, I dunno but w'at you'll fine Brer Wolf's hide hangin' in de back-po'ch, en all bekaze he wuz so bizzy wid udder fo'kses doin's."

—*From Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings.*

Eugene Field, beside being the greatest of newspaper paragraphers was a versatile writer of all sorts, from Christmas Hymns to the most flippant themes.

His own personal charm imbued his work, and whether writing *Echoes of Horace* or appalling tales of *Little Willie*, he was always original and truly funny.

THE DINKEY-BIRD

In an ocean, 'way out yonder
(As all sapient people know),
Is the land of Wonder-Wander,
Whither children love to go;
It's their playing, romping, swinging,
That give great joy to me
While the Dinkey-Bird goes singing
In the Amfalula-tree!

There the gum-drops grow like cherries,
And taffy's thick as peas,—
Caramels you pick like berries
When, and where, and how you please:
Big red sugar-plums are clinging
To the cliffs beside that sea
Where the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the Amfalula-tree.

So when children shout and scamper
And make merry all the day,
When there's naught to put a damper
To the ardor of their play;
When I hear their laughter ringing,
Then I'm sure as sure can be
That the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the Amfalula-tree.

For the Dinkey-Bird's bravuras
And staccatos are so sweet—
His roulades, appogiaturas,
And robustos so complete,
That the youth of every nation—
Be they near or far away—
Have especial delectation
In that gladsome roundelay.

Their eyes grow bright and brighter,
Their lungs begin to crow,
Their hearts get light and lighter,
And their cheeks are all aglow;
For an echo cometh bringing
The news to all and me.
That the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the Amfalula-tree.

I'm sure you'd like to go there
To see your feathered friend—
And so many goodies grow there
You would like to comprehend!
Speed, little dreams, your winging
To that land across the sea
Where the Dinkey-Bird is singing
In the Amfalula-Tree!

THE LITTLE PEACH

A little peach in the orchard grew,
A little peach of emerald hue:
Warmed by the sun, and wet by the dew,
It grew.

One day, walking the orchard through,
That little peach dawned on the view
Of Johnny Jones and his sister Sue—
Those two.

Up at the peach a club they threw:
Down from the limb on which it grew,
Fell the little peach of emerald hue—
Too true!

John took a bite, and Sue took a chew,
And then the trouble began to brew,—
Trouble the doctor couldn't subdue,—
Paregoric too.

Under the turf where the daisies grew,
They planted John and his sister Sue;
And their little souls to the angels flew—
Boo-hoo!

But what of the peach of emerald hue,
Warmed by the sun, and wet by the dew?
Ah, well! its mission on earth is through—
Adieu!

GOOD JAMES AND NAUGHTY REGINALD

Once upon a Time there was a Bad boy whose Name was Reginald and there was a Good boy whose Name was James. Reginald would go Fishing when his Mamma told him Not to, and he Cut off the Cat's

Tail with the Bread Knife one Day, and then told Mamma the Baby had Driven it in with the Rolling Pin, which was a Lie. James was always Obedient, and when his Mamma told him not to Help an old Blind Man across the street or Go into a Dark Room where the Boogies were, he always Did What She said. That is why they Called him Good James. Well, by and by, along Came Christmas. Mamma said, You have been so Bad, my son Reginald, you will not Get any Presents from Santa Claus this Year; but you, my Son James, will get Oodles of Presents, because you have Been Good. Will you Believe it, Children, that Bad boy Reginald said he didn't Care a Darn and he Kicked three Feet of Veneering off the Piano just for Meanness. Poor James was so sorry for Reginald that he cried for Half an Hour after he Went to Bed that Night. Reginald lay wide Awake until he saw James was Asleep and then he Said if these people think they can Fool me, they are Mistaken. Just then Santa Claus came down the Chimney. He had lots of Pretty Toys in a Sack on his Back. Reginald shut his Eyes and Pretended to be Asleep. Then Santa Claus Said, Reginald is Bad and I will not Put any nice Things in his Stocking. But as for you, James, I will Fill your Stocking Plumb full of Toys, because You are Good. So Santa Claus went to Work and Put, Oh! heaps and Heaps of Goodies in James' stocking but not a Sign of a Thing in Reginald's stocking. And then he Laughed to himself and Said, I guess Reginald will be sorry to-morrow because he Was so Bad. As he said this he Crawled up the chimney and rode off in his Sleigh. Now you can Bet your Boots Reginald was no Spring Chicken. He just Got right Straight out of Bed and changed all those Toys and Truck from James' stocking into his own. Santa Claus will Have to Sit up all Night, said He, when he Expects to get away with

my Baggage. The next morning James got out of Bed and when He had Said his Prayers he Limped over to his Stocking, licking his chops and Carrying his Head as High as a Bull going through a Brush Fence. But when he found there was Nothing in his stocking and that Reginald's Stocking was as Full as Papa Is when he comes home Late from the Office, he Sat down on the Floor and began to Wonder why on Earth he had Been such a Good boy. Reginald spent a Happy Christmas and James was very Miserable. After all, Children, it Pays to be Bad, so Long as you Combine Intellect with Crime.

—From the Tribune Primer.

Edgar Wilson Nye, known commonly as Bill Nye, wrote in prose and also made a success on the lecture platform, as well as in his newspaper work.

THE GARDEN HOSE

It is now the proper time for the cross-eyed woman to fool with the garden hose. I have faced death in almost every form, and I do not know what fear is, but when a woman with one eye gazing into the zodiac and the other peering into the middle of next week, and wearing one of those floppy sun-bonnets, picks up the nozzle of the garden hose and turns on the full force of the institution, I fly wildly to the Mountains of Hepsidam.

Water won't hurt any one, of course, if care is used not to forget and drink any of it, but it is this horrible suspense and uncertainty about facing the nozzle of a garden hose in the hands of a cross-eyed woman that unnerves and paralyzes me.

Instantaneous death is nothing to me. I am as cool and collected where leaden rain and iron hail are

thickest as I would be in my own office writing the obituary of the man who steals my jokes. But I hate to be drowned slowly in my good clothes and on dry land, and have my dying gaze rest on a woman whose ravishing beauty would drive a narrow-gage mule into convulsions and make him hate himself t'death.

Richard Kendall Munkittrick wielded a graceful pen and his verses show an original wit.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

In letters large upon a frame,
That visitors might see,
The painter placed his humble name,
O'Callaghan McGee.

And from Beersheba unto Dan,
The critics with a nod
Exclaimed: "This painting Irishman
Adores his native sod.

"His stout heart's patriotic flame
There's naught on earth can quell
He takes no wild romantic name
To make his pictures sell!"

Then poets praised in sonnets neat
His stroke so bold and free;
No parlor wall was thought complete
That hadn't a McGee.

All patriots before McGee
Threw lavishly their gold;
His works in the Academy
Were very quickly sold.

His "Digging Clams at Barnegat,"
His "When the Morning Smiled,"
His "Seven Miles from Ararat,"
His "Portrait of a Child,"

Were purchased in a single day
And lauded as divine.

*****

That night as in his *atelier*
The artist sipped his wine,

And looked upon his gilded frames,
He grinned from ear to ear:
"They little think my *real* name's
V. Stuyvesant De Vere!"

Edward Waterman Townsend, varied the time-honored tradition of misspelling by introducing an example of Bowery slang. His *Chimmie Fadden* took a firm hold on the public notice and the vogue lasted for many years.

"Naw, I ain't stringin' ye. 'Is Whiskers is de loidy's fadder. Sure!

"'E comes ter me room wid der loidy, 'is Whiskers does, an' he says, says 'e, 'Is dis Chimmie Fadden?' says 'e.

"'Yer dead on,' says I.

"'Wot t'ell?' 'e says, turning to 'is daughter. 'Wot does de young man say?' 'e says.

"Den de loidy she kinder smiled—say, ye otter seed 'er smile. Say, it's outter sight. Dat's right. Well, she says: 'I t'ink I understan' Chimmie's langwudge,' she says. ''E means 'e's de kid youse lookin' fer. 'E's de very mug.'

"Dat's wot she says; somet'n like dat, only a felly can't just remember 'er langwudge.

"Den 'is Whiskers gives me a song an' dance 'bout

me bein' a brave young man fer t'umpin' der mug wot insulted 'is daughter, an' 'bout 'is heart bein' all broke dat 'is daughter should be doin' missioner work in de slums.

"I says, 'Wot tell'; but der loidy, she says, 'Chimmie,' says she, 'me fadder needs a footman,' she says, 'an' I taut you'd be de very mug fer de job,' says she. See?

"Say, I was all broke up, an' couldn't say nottin', fer 'is Whiskers was so solemn. See?

"'Wot's yer lay now?' says 'is Whiskers, or somet'n' like dat.

"Say, I could 'ave give 'im a string 'bout me bein' a hard-workin' boy, but I knowed der loidy was dead on ter me, so I only says, says I, 'Wot t'ell?' says I, like dat, 'Wot t'ell?' See?

"Den 'is Whiskers was kinder paralized like, an' 'e turns to 'is daughter an' 'e says—dese is 'is very words—'e says:

"Really, Fannie,' 'e says, 'really, Fannie, you must enterpret dis young man's langwudge.'

"Den she laffs an' says, says she:

"Chimmie is a good boy if 'e only had a chance,' she says.

"Den 'is Whiskers 'e says, 'I dare say,' like dat. See? 'I dare say.' See? Say, did ye ever 'ear words like dem? Say, I was fer tellin' 'is Whiskers ter git t'ell outter dat, only fer der loidy. See?

"Well, den we all give each odder a song an' dance, an' de end was I was took fer a footman. See? Tiger, ye say? Naw, dey don't call me no tiger.

"Say, wouldn't de gang on de Bow'ry be paralized if dey seed me in dis harness? Ain't it great? Sure! Wot am I doin'? Well, I'm doin' pretty well. I had ter t'ump a felly dey calls de butler de first night I was dere for callin' me a heathen. See? Say, dere's a kid in de house wot opens de front door when youse ring de bell, an' I win all 'is boodle de second night I was dere showin' 'im how ter play Crusoe. Say, it's a dead easy game, but de loidy she axed me not to bunco de farmers—dey's all farmers up in dat house, dead farmers—so I leaves 'em alone. 'Scuse me now, dat's me loidy comin' outter der shop. I opens de door of de carriage an' she says, 'Home, Chames.' Den I jumps on de box an' strings de driver. Say, 'e's a farmer, too. I'll tell you some more 'bout de game next time. So long."

—Chimmie Fadden.

Sam Walter Foss added to his misspelling a certain understanding of human nature and produced many mildly satirical verses.

A PHILOSOPHER

Zack Bumstead useter flosserfize
About the ocean and the skies,
An' gab an' gas f'um morn till noon
About the other side the moon;
An' 'bout the natur of the place
Ten miles beyend the end of space.
An' if his wife she'd ask the crank
If he wouldn't kinder try to yank
Hisself outdoors an' git some wood
To make her kitchen fire good,
So she c'd bake her beans an' pies,
He'd say, "I've gotter flosserfize."

An' then he'd set an' flosserfize
About the natur an' the size
Of angels' wings, an' think, and gawp,
An' wonder how they made 'em flop.

He'd calkerlate how long a skid
'Twould take to move the sun, he did;
An' if the skid wuz strong an' prime,
It couldn't be moved to supper-time.
An' w'en his wife 'd ask the lout
If he wouldn't kinder waltz about
An' take a rag an' shoo the flies,
He'd say, "I've gotter flosserfize."

An' then he'd set an' flosserfize
'Bout schemes for fencing in the skies,
Then lettin' out the lots to rent
So's he could make an honest cent.
An' if he'd find it pooty tough
To borry cash fer fencin' stuff.
An' if 'twere best to take his wealth
An' go to Europe for his health,
Or save his cash till he'd enough
To buy some more of fencin' stuff.
Then, if his wife she'd ask the gump
If he wouldn't kinder try to hump
Hisself to t'other side the door
So she c'd come an' sweep the floor,
He'd look at her with mournful eyes,
An' say, "I've gotter flosserfize."

An' so he'd set an' flosserfize
'Bout w'at it wuz held up the skies,
An' how God made this earthly ball
Jest simply out er nawthin' 'tall,
An' 'bout the natur, shape, an' form
Of nawthin' that He made it from.
Then, if his wife sh'd ask the freak
If he wouldn't kinder try to sneak
Out to the barn an' find some aigs,
He'd never move, nor lift his laigs,
He'd never stir, nor try to rise,
But say, "I've gotter flosserfize."

An' so he'd set an' flosserfize
About the earth an' sea an' skies,
An' scratch his head an' ask the cause
Of w'at there wuz before time wuz,
An' w'at the universe'd do
Bimeby w'en time had all got through;
An' jest how fur we'd have to climb
If we sh'd travel out er time,
An' if we'd need, w'en we got there

To keep our watches in repair.
Then, if his wife she'd ask the gawk
If he wouldn't kinder try to walk
To where she had the table spread
An' kinder git his stomach fed,
He'd leap for that 'ar kitchen door,
An' say, "W'y didn't you speak afore?"
An' w'en he'd got his supper et,
He'd set, an' set, an' set, an' set,
An' fold his arms an' shet his eyes,
An' set, an' set, an' flosserfize.

Finley Peter Dunne created the immortal Mr. Dooley about the time of the Spanish War.

The Irish dialect is perfect, the humor most droll and the wit quiet and clean-cut.

Among the best of the chapters is the one that burlesques the proceedings that took place at a celebrated murder trial of the day.

ON EXPERT TESTIMONY

"Annything new?" said Mr. Hennessy, who had been waiting patiently for Mr. Dooley to put down his newspaper.

"I've been r-readin' th' tistimony iv th' Lootgert case," said Mr. Dooley.

"What d'ye think iv it?"

"I think so," said Mr. Dooley.

"Think what?"

"How do I know?" said Mr. Dooley. "How do I know what I think? I'm no combination iv chemist, doctor, osteologist, polisman, an' sausage-maker, that I can give ye an opinion right off th' bat. A man needs to be all iv thim things to detarmine annything about a murdher trile in these days. This shows how intilligent our methods is, as Hogan says. A large

German man is charged with puttin' his wife away into a breakfas'-dish, an' he says he didn't do it. Th' question thin is, Did or did not Alphonse Lootgert stick Mrs. L. into a vat, an' rayjooce her to a quick lunch? Am I right?"

"Ye ar-re," said Mr. Hennessy.

"That's simple enough. What th' Coort ought to've done was to call him up, an' say: 'Lootgert, where's ye'er good woman?' If Lootgert cudden't tell, he ought to be hanged on gin'ral principles; f'r a man must keep his wife around th' house, an' whin she isn't there it shows he's a poor provider. But, if Lootgert says, 'I don't know where me wife is,' the Coort shud say:' Go out an' find her. If ye can't projooce her in a week, I'll fix ye.' An' let that be th' end iv it.

"But what do they do? They get Lootgert into coort an' stand him up befure a gang iv young rayporthers an' th' likes iv thim to make pitchers iv him. Thin they summon a jury composed iv poor tired, sleepy expressmen an' tailors an' clerks. Thin they call in a profissor from a college. 'Professor,' says th' lawyer f'r the State, 'I put it to ye if a wooden vat three hundherd an' sixty feet long, twenty-eight feet deep, an' sivinty-five feet wide, an' if three hundherd pounds iv caustic soda boiled, an' if the leg iv a guinea-pig, an' ye said yestherdah about bi-carbonate iv soda, an' if it washes up an' washes over, an' th' slimy, slippery stuff, an' if a false tooth or a lock iv hair or a jawbone or a goluf ball across th' cellar eleven feet nine inches—that is, two inches this way an' five gallons that?' 'I agree with ye intirely,' says th' profissor. I made lab'ratory experiments in an' ir'n basin, with bichloride iv gool, which I will call soup-stock, an' coal-tar, which I will

call ir'n filings. I mixed th' two over a hot fire, an' left in a cool place to harden. I thin packed it in ice, which I will call glue, an' rock-salt, which I will call fried eggs, an' obtained a dark queer solution that is a cure f'r freckles, which I will call antimony or doughnuts or annything I blamed please.'

"'But,' says th' lawyer f'r th' State, 'measurin' th' vat with gas—an' I lave it to ye whether this is not th' on'y fair test—an' supposin' that two feet acrost is akel to tin feet sideways, an' supposin' that a thick green an' hard substance, an' I daresay it wud; an' supposin' you may, takin' into account th' measuremints—twelve be eight—th' vat bein' wound with twine six inches fr'm th' handle an' a rub iv th' green, thin ar-re not human teeth often found in counthry sausage?' 'In th' winter,' says th' profissor. 'But th' sisymoid bone is sometimes seen in th' fut, sometimes worn as a watch-charm. I took two sisymoid bones, which I will call poker dice, an' shook thim together in a cylinder, which I will call Fido, poored in a can iv milk, which I will call gum arabic, took two pounds iv rough-on-rats, which I rayfuse to call; but th' raysult is th' same.' Question be th' Coort: 'Different?' Answer: 'Yis.' Th' Coort: 'Th' same.' Be Misther McEwen: 'Whose bones?' Answer: 'Yis.' Be Misther Vincent: 'Will ye go to th' divvle?' Answer: 'It dissolves th' hair.'

"Now what I want to know is where th' jury gets off. What has that collection iv pure-minded pathrites to larn fr'm this here polite discussion, where no wan is so crool as to ask what anny wan else means? Thank th' Lord, whin th' case is all over, the jury'll pitch th' tistimony out iv th' window, an' consider three questions: 'Did Lootgert look as though he'd kill his wife? Did his wife look as though

she ought so be kilt? Isn't it time we wint to supper?' An', howiver they answer, they'll be right, an' it'll make little diff'rence wan way or th' other. Th' German vote is too large an' ignorant annyhow."

George Ade, in the Biographical Dictionaries, is classed almost exclusively as a playwright, but to those who know and love his *Fables in Slang*,—and who does not?—he will always be a humorist.

His slang is all that slang should be, witty, trenchant, picturesque and used but once. His own rule for slang stipulates that it shall be impromptu, spontaneous and never repeated.

From his opera *The Sultan of Sulu*, we quote one song.

THE COCKTAIL

The cocktail is a pleasant drink,
It's mild and harmless—I don't think!
When you have one, you call for two—
And then you don't care what you do.

Last night I hoisted twenty-three
Of those arrangements into me;
My bosom heaved, I swelled with pride,
I was pickled, primed and ossified!

But R-E-M-O-R-S-E—
The water wagon is the place for me!
It is no time for mirth and laughter,
The cold, dark dawn of the Morning After!

THE FABLE OF THE CADDY WHO HURT HIS HEAD WHILE THINKING

One day a Caddy sat in the Long Grass near the

Ninth Hole and wondered if he had a Soul. His number was 27, and he almost had forgotten his Real Name.

As he sat and Meditated, two Players passed him. They were going the Long Round, and the Frenzy was upon them.

They followed the Gutta-Percha Balls with the intent swiftness of trained Bird-Dogs, and each talked feverishly of Brassy Lies, and getting past the Bunker, and Lofting to the Green, and Slicing into the Bramble—each telling his own Game to the Ambient Air, and ignoring what the other Fellow had to say.

As they did the St. Andrews Full Swing for eighty Yards apiece and then Followed Through with the usual Explanations of how it Happened, the Caddy looked at them and Reflected that they were much inferior to his Father.

His Father was too Serious a Man to get out in Mardi Gras Clothes and hammer a Ball from one Red flag to another.

His Father worked in a Lumber-Yard.

He was an Earnest Citizen, who seldom Smiled, and he knew all about the Silver Question and how J. Pierpont Morgan done up a Free People on the Bond Issue.

The Caddy wondered why it was that his Father, a really Great Man, had to shove Lumber all day and could seldom get one Dollar to rub against another, while these superficial Johnnies who played Golf all the Time had Money to Throw at the Birds. The more he Thought the more his Head ached.

MORAL.—*Don't try to Account for Anything.*

Will Carleton wrote many long narrative ballads, of a homely type. His *Betsey and I Are Out*, and *Over the Hills to the Poorhouse*, in their day were known to every household.

A shorter work is:

ELIPHALET CHAPIN'S WEDDING

'Twas when the leaves of Autumn were by tempest-fingers picked,
Eliphalet Chapin started to become a benedict;
With an ancient two-ox waggon to bring back his new-found goods,
He hawed and gee'd and floundered through some twenty miles o' woods;
With prematrimonial ardour he his hornèd steeds did press,
But Eliphalet's wedding journey didn't bristle with success.
Oh no,
Woe, woe!
With candour to digress,
Eliphalet's wedding journey didn't tremble with success.

He had not carried five miles his mouth-disputed face,
When his wedding garments parted in some inconvenient place;
He'd have given both his oxen to a wife that now was dead,
For her company two minutes with a needle and a thread.
But he pinned them up, with twinges of occasional distress,
Feeling that his wedding wouldn't be a carnival of dress:
"Haw, Buck!
Gee, Bright!
Derned pretty mess!"
No; Eliphalet was not strictly a spectacular success.

He had not gone a ten-mile when a wheel demurely broke,
A disunited family of felloe, hub, and spoke;
It joined, with flattering prospects, the Society of

Wrecks;
And he had to cut a sapling, and insert it 'neath the "ex."
So he ploughed the hills and valleys with that
Doric wheel and tire,
Feeling that his wedding journey was not all he could desire.
"Gee, Bright!
G'long, Buck!"
He shouted, hoarse with ire!
No; Eliphalet's wedding journey none in candour could admire!

He had not gone fifteen miles with extended face forlorn,
When Night lay down upon him hard, and kept him there till morn;
And when the daylight chuckled at the gloom within his mind,
One ox was "Strayed or Stolen," and the other hard to find.
So yoking Buck as usual, he assumed the part of Bright
(Constituting a menagerie diverting to the sight);
With "Haw, Buck!
Gee, Buck!
Sh'n't get there till night!"
No; Eliphalet's wedding journey was not one intense delight.

Now, when he drove his equipage up to his sweetheart's door,
The wedding guests had tired and gone, just half-an-hour before;
The preacher had from sickness an unprofitable call,
And had sent a voice proclaiming that he couldn't come at all;
The parents had been prejudiced by some one, more or less,
And the sire the bridegroom greeted with a different word from "bless."
"Blank your head,
You blank!" he said;
"We'll break this off, I guess!"
No; Eliphalet's wedding was not an unqualified success.

Now, when the bride saw him arrive, she shook her
crimson locks,
And vowed to goodness gracious she would never
wed an ox;
And with a vim deserving rather better social luck,
She eloped that day by daylight with a swarthy
Indian "buck,"
With the presents in the pockets of her woollen
wedding-dress;
And "Things ain't mostly with me," quoth
Eliphalet, "I confess,"
No—no;
As things go,
No fair mind 'twould impress,
That Eliphalet Chapin's wedding was an unalloyed
success.

Dr. William H. Drummond is best known humorously by his apt rendition of the French-Canadian dialect.

THE WRECK OF THE "JULIE PLANTE."

A Legend of Lake St. Peter.

On wan dark night on Lac Saint Pierre,
De win' she blow, blow, blow,
An' de crew of de wood scow "Julie Plante"
Got scar't, an' run below—
For de win' she blow lak hurricain,
Bimeby she blow some more,
An' de scow buss h'up on Lac Saint Pierre
Wan h'arpent from de shore.

De captinne walk h'on de fronte deck,
An' walk de hin' deck too—
He call de crew from h'up de 'ole
He call de cook h'also.
De crew she's name was Rosie,
She's come from Montreal,
Was chambre maid h'on lombaire barge,
H'on de Grande La Chine Canal.

De win' she's blow from nor'-eass-wess—
De sout' win' she's blow too,
W'en Rosie cry, "Mon cher captinne,
Mon cher, w'at I shall do?"
Den de captinne trow de big h'ankerre,

But steel de scow she dreef,
De crew he can't pass on de shore,
Becos he loss hees skeef.

De night was dark lak' wan black cat,
De wave run 'igh an' fas',
W'en de captinne tak' de poor Rosie
An' tie her to de mas'.
Den he h'also tak' de life preserve,
An' jomp h'off on de lak',
An' say, "Good-bye, ma Rosie dear,
I go drown for your sak'."

Nex' morning very h'early
Bout haf-pas' two—t'ree—four—
De captinne—scow—an' de poor Rosie
Was corpses on de shore.
For de win' she blow lak' hurricain,
Bimeby she blow some more,
An' de scow bus' h'up on Lac Saint Pierre,
Wan h'arpent from de shore.

MORAL

Now h'all good wood scow sailor man
Tak' warning by dat storm,
An' go an' marry some nice French girl
An' leev on one beeg farm.

De win' can blow lak hurricain
An' s'pose she blow some more,
You can't get drown on Lac St. Pierre
So long you stay on shore.

Ben King is responsible for at least two humorous jingles of wide popularity.

THE PESSIMIST

Nothing to do but work;
Nothing to eat but food;
Nothing to wear but clothes,
To keep one from going nude.

Nothing to breathe but air;
Quick as a flash 'tis gone;
Nowhere to fall but off;
Nowhere to stand but on.

Nothing to comb but hair;
  Nowhere to sleep but in bed;
Nothing to weep but tears;
  Nothing to bury but dead.

Nothing to sing but songs,
  Ah, well, alas! alack!
Nowhere to go but out;
  Nowhere to come but back.

Nothing to see but sights;
  Nothing to quench but thirst;
Nothing to have but what we've got;
  Thus thro' life we are cursed.

Nothing to strike but a gait;
  Everything moves that goes.
Nothing at all but common sense
  Can ever withstand these woes.

IF I SHOULD DIE TO-NIGHT

If I should die to-night,
And you should come to my cold corpse and say,
Weeping and heartsick o'er my lifeless clay—
If I should die to-night,
And you should come in deepest grief and wo—
And say, "Here's that ten dollars that I owe,"
I might arise in my large white cravat,
And say, "What's that?"

If I should die to-night,
And you should come to my cold corpse and kneel,
Clasping my bier to show the grief you feel,
I say, if I should die to-night,
And you should come to me, and there and then
Just even hint 'bout payin' me that ten,
I might arise the while,
But I'd drop dead again.

A humorous jingle that achieved immediate vogue is *Casey at the Bat*. The authorship has been questioned but consensus of research seems to ascribe it to Ernest Lawrence Thayer.

CASEY AT THE BAT

It looked extremely rocky for the Mudville nine
that day;
The score stood four to six, with just an inning left
to play;
And so, when Cooney died at first, and Burrows
did the same,
A pallor wreathed the features of the patrons of the
game.

A straggling few got up to go, leaving there the
rest,
With that hope which springs eternal within the
human breast;
For they thought if only Casey could get one
whack, at that
They'd put up even money, with Casey at the bat.

But Flynn preceded Casey, and so likewise did
Blake,
And the former was a pudding and the latter was a
fake;
So on that stricken multitude a death-like silence
sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey's
getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single to the wonderment of
all,
And the much-despised Blakie tore the cover off
the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and they saw what
had occurred,
There was Blakie safe on second, and Flynn a-
hugging third.

Then from the gladdened multitude went up a
joyous yell,
It bounded from the mountain-top, and rattled in
the dell;
It struck upon the hillside, and rebounded on the
flat;
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped
into his place,
There was pride in Casey's bearing, and a smile on
Casey's face;
And when responding to the cheers he lightly

doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey
at the bat.

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his
hands with dirt,
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped
them on his shirt;
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball
into his hip,
Defiance glanced in Casey's eye, a sneer curled
Casey's lip.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling
through the air,
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur
there;
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded
sped.
"That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one," the
umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went
up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and
distant shore;
"Kill him! kill the umpire!" shouted some one on
the stand.
And it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey
raised his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's
visage shone,
He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go
on;
He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the
spheroid flew,
But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said,
"Strike two."

"Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands, and the
echo answered, "Fraud!"
But the scornful look from Casey, and the audience
was awed;
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw
his muscles strain,
And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go
by again.

The sneer is gone from Casey's lips, his teeth are
clenched in hate,
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the
plate;
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he
lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's
blow.

Oh! somewhere in this favored land the sun is
shining bright,
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere
hearts are light;
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere
children shout,
But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has
struck out.

John Kendrick Bangs, one time Editor of *Puck*, of lamented memory, wrote tomes of humorous verse. As a pastime in tricky rhyming we quote:

MONA LISA

Mona Lisa, Mona Lisa,
Have you gone? Great Julius Cæsar!
Who's the Chap so bold and pinchey
Thus to swipe the great da Vinci,
Taking France's first Chef d'œuvre
Squarely from old Mr. Louvre,
Easy as some pocket-picker
Would remove our handkerchicker
As we ride in careless folly
On some gaily bounding trolley?

Mona Lisa, Mona Lisa,
Who's your Captor? Doubtless he's a
Crafty sort of treasure-seeker—
Ne'er a Turpin e'er was sleeker—
But, alas, if he can win you
Easily as I could chin you,
What is safe in all the nations
From his dreadful depredations?
He's the style of Chap, I'm thinkin'
Who will drive us all to drinkin'!

Mona Lisa, Mona Lisa,

Next he'll swipe the Tower of Pisa,
Pulling it from out its socket
For to hide it in his pocket;
Or perhaps he'll up and steal, O,
Madame Venus, late of Milo;
Or maybe while on the grab he
Will annex Westminster Abbey,
And elope with that distinguished
Heap of Ashes long extinguished.

Maybe too, O Mona Lisa,
He will come across the seas a—
Searching for the style of treasure
That we have in richest measure.
Sunset Cox's brazen statue,
Have a care lest he shall catch you
Or maybe he'll set his eye on
Hammerstein's, or the Flatiron,
Or some bit of White Wash done
By those lads at Washington—
Truly he's a crafty geezer,
Is your Captor, Mona Lisa!

Thomas L. Masson, humorous writer, and for many years editor of *Life*, has doubtless written more humor and books of humor than any one in the country.

THE KISS

"What other men have dared, I dare,"
He said. "I'm daring, too:
And tho' they told me to beware,
One kiss I'll take from you.

"Did I say one? Forgive me, dear;
That was a grave mistake,
For when I've taken one, I fear,
One hundred more I'll take.

"'Tis sweet one kiss from you to win,
But to stop there? Oh, no!
One kiss is only to begin;
There is no end, you know."

The maiden rose from where she sat
And gently raised her head:

"No man has ever talked like that—
You may begin," she said.

DESOLATION

Somewhat back from the village street
Stands the old fashioned country seat.
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar trees their shadows throw.
And there throughout the livelong day,
Jemima plays the pi-a-na.
Do, re, mi,
Mi, re, do.

In the front parlor there it stands,
And there Jemima plies her hands,
While her papa, beneath his cloak,
Mutters and groans: "This is no joke!"
And swears to himself and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass.
Do, re, mi,
Mi, re, do.

Through days of death and days of birth
She plays as if she owned the earth
Through every swift vicissitude
She drums as if it did her good,
And still she sits from morn till night
And plunks away with main and might
Do, re, mi,
Mi, re, do.

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted hospitality;
But that was many years before
Jemima dallied with the score.
When she began her daily plunk,
Into their graves the neighbors sunk.
Do, re, mi,
Mi, re, do.

To other worlds they've long since fled,
All thankful that they're safely dead.
They stood the racket while alive
Until Jemima rose at five.
And then they laid their burdens down,
And one and all they skipped the town.
Do, re, mi,

Mi, re, do.

Stephen Crane, a strange and often misunderstood genius, never waxed humorous in a broad sense. But the incisive, satirical wit of his lines can seldom be found bettered.

A man said to the universe,
"Sir, I exist!"
"However," replied the universe,
"The fact has not created in me
A sense of obligation."

Upon the road of my life,
Passed me many fair creatures,
Clothed all in white, and radiant;
To one, finally, I made speech:
"Who art thou?"
But she, like the others,
Kept cowled her face,
And answered in haste, anxiously,
"I am Good Deed, forsooth;
You have often seen me."

"Not uncowled," I made reply.
And with rash and strong hand,
Though she resisted,
I drew away the veil,
And gazed at the features of Vanity.
She, shamefaced, went on;
And after I had mused a time,
I said of myself, "Fool!"

"Think as I think," said a man,
"Or you are abominably wicked;
You are a toad."
And after I had thought of it,
I said, "I will, then, be a toad."

Charles Battell Loomis was a favorably known writer of humorous jingles, and he wielded a facile pen in parody.

JACK AND JILL

(*As Austin Dobson might have written it*)

Their pail they must fill
In a crystalline springlet,
Brave Jack and fair Jill.
Their pail they must fill
At the top of the hill,
Then she gives him a ringlet.
Their pail they must fill
In a crystalline springlet.

They stumbled and fell,
And poor Jack broke his forehead,
Oh, how he did yell!
They stumbled and fell,
And went down pell-mell—
By Jove! it was horrid.
They stumbled and fell,
And poor Jack broke his forehead.

(*As Swinburne might have written it*)

The shudd'ring sheet of rain athwart the trees!
The crashing kiss of lightning on the seas!
The moaning of the night wind on the wold,
That erstwhile was a gentle, murm'ring breeze!

On such a night as this went Jill and Jack
With strong and sturdy strides through dampness black
To find the hill's high top and water cold,
Then toiling through the town to bear it back.

The water drawn, they rest awhile. Sweet sips
Of nectar then for Jack from Jill's red lips,
And then with arms entwined they homeward go;
Till mid the mad mud's moistened mush Jack slips.

Sweet Heaven, draw a veil on this sad plight,
His crazèd cries and cranium cracked; the fright
Of gentle Jill, her wretchedness and wo!
Kind Phœbus, drive thy steeds and end this night!

(*As Walt Whitman might have written it*)

I celebrate the personality of Jack!
I love his dirty hands, his tangled hair, his locomotion blundering.
Each wart upon his hands I sing,
Pæans I chant to his hulking shoulder blades.

Also Jill!
Her I celebrate.
I, Walt, of unbridled thought and tongue,
Whoop her up!
What's the matter with Jill?
Oh, she's all right!
Who's all right?
Jill.

Her golden hair, her sun-struck face, her hard and reddened hands;
So, too, her feet, hefty, shambling.
I see them in the evening, when the sun empurples the horizon, and through the darkening forest aisles are heard the sounds of myriad creatures of the night.
I see them climb the steep ascent in quest of water for their mother.
Oh, speaking of her, I could celebrate the old lady if I had time.
She is simply immense!

But Jack and Jill are walking up the hill.
(I didn't mean that rhyme.)
I must watch them.
I love to watch their walk,
And wonder as I watch;
He, stoop-shouldered, clumsy, hide-bound,
Yet lusty,
Bearing his share of the 1-lb bucket as though it were a paperweight.
She, erect, standing, her head uplifting,
Holding, but bearing not the bucket.
They have reached the spring.
They have filled the bucket.
Have you heard the "Old Oaken Bucket"?
I will sing it:—

Of what countless patches is the bed-quilt of life composed!
Here is a piece of lace. A babe is born.
The father is happy, the mother is happy.
Next black crêpe. A beldame "shuffles off this mortal coil."
Now brocaded satin with orange blossoms,
Mendelssohn's "Wedding March," an old shoe missile,
A broken carriage window, the bride in the

Bellevue sleeping.
Here's a large piece of black cloth!
"Have you any last words to say?"
"No."
"Sheriff, do your work!"
Thus it is: from "grave to gay, from lively to severe."

I mourn the downfall of my Jack and Jill.
I see them descending, obstacles not heeding.
I see them pitching headlong, the water from the pail outpouring, a noise from leathern lungs out-belching.
The shadows of the night descend on Jack, recumbent, bellowing, his pate with gore besmeared.
I love his cowardice, because it is an attribute, just like
Job's patience or Solomon's wisdom, and I love attributes.
Whoop!!!

Guy Wetmore Carryl, son of Charles E. Carryl, possessed a lovable and whimsical nature and wielded an exceedingly clever pen, both in verse and prose. His untimely death robbed us of one of our most delightful young humorists.

HOW A GIRL WAS TOO RECKLESS OF GRAMMAR

Matilda Maud Mackenzie frankly hadn't any chin,
Her hands were rough, her feet she turned invariably in;
Her general form was German,
By which I mean that you
Her waist could not determine
Within a foot or two.
And not only did she stammer,
But she used the kind of grammar
That is called, for sake of euphony, askew.

From what I say about her, don't imagine I desire
A prejudice against this worthy creature to inspire.
She was willing, she was active,
She was sober, she was kind,
But she *never* looked attractive
And she *hadn't* any mind.

I knew her more than slightly,
And I treated her politely
When I met her, but of course I wasn't blind!

Matilda Maud Mackenzie had a habit that was droll,
She spent her morning seated on a rock or on a knoll,
And threw with much composure
A smallish rubber ball
At an inoffensive osier
By a little waterfall;
But Matilda's way of throwing
Was like other people's mowing,
And she never hit the willow-tree at all!

One day as Miss Mackenzie with uncommon ardour tried
To hit the mark, the missile flew exceptionally wide.
And, before her eyes astounded,
On a fallen maple's trunk
Ricochetted and rebounded
In the rivulet, and sunk!
Matilda, greatly frightened,
In her grammar unenlightened,
Remarked, "Well now I ast yer, who'd 'er thunk?"

But what a marvel followed! From the pool at once there rose
A frog, the sphere of rubber balanced deftly on his nose.
He beheld her fright and frenzy
And, her panic to dispel,
On his knee by Miss Mackenzie
He obsequiously fell.
With quite as much decorum
As a speaker in a forum
He started in his history to tell.

"Fair maid," he said, "I beg you do not hesitate or wince,
If you'll promise that you'll wed me, I'll at once become a prince;
For a fairy, old and vicious,
An enchantment round me spun!"
Then he looked up, unsuspicious,

And he saw what he had won,
And in terms of sad reproach, he
Made some comments, *sotto voce*,
(Which the publishers have bidden me to shun!)

Matilda Maud Mackenzie said, as if she meant to scold;
"I *never*! Why, you forward thing! Now, ain't you awful bold!"
Just a glance he paused to give her,
And his head was seen to clutch,
Then he darted to the river,
And he dived to beat the Dutch!
While the wrathful maiden panted
"I don't think he was enchanted!"
(And he really didn't look it overmuch!)

THE MORAL

In one's language one conservative should be;
Speech is silver and it never should be free!

Edwin Arlington Robinson, among the greatest of our later poets, has a fine wit, nowhere better shown than in:

MINIVER CHEEVY

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn,
Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;
He wept that he was ever born,
And he had reasons.

Miniver loved the days of old
When swords were bright and steeds were prancing;
The vision of a warrior bold
Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not,
And dreamed and rested from his labors;
He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot
And Priam's neighbors.

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
That made so many a name so fragrant;
He mourned Romance, now on the town,
And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici,
  Albeit he had never seen one;
He would have sinned incessantly
  Could he have been one.

Miniver cursed the commonplace,
  And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;
He missed the mediæval grace
  Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,
  But sore annoyed he was without it;
Miniver thought and thought and thought
  And thought about it.

Miniver Cheevy, born too late,
  Scratched his head and kept on thinking;
Miniver coughed, and called it fate,
  And kept on drinking.

TWO MEN

There be two men of all mankind
  That I should like to know about;
But search and question where I will,
  I cannot ever find them out.

Melchizedek he praised the Lord,
  And gave some wine to Abraham;
But who can tell what else he did
  Must be more learned than I am.

Ucalegon he lost his house
  When Agamemnon came to Troy;
But who can tell me who he was—
  I'll pray the gods to give him joy.

There be two men of all mankind
  That I'm forever thinking on;
They chase me everywhere I go,—
  Melchizedek, Ucalegon.

Arthur Guiterman, among the best of our present day humorous writers, never did anything better than this intensified bit of burlesque.

MAVRONE

ONE OF THOSE SAD IRISH POEMS, WITH NOTES

From Arranmore the weary miles I've come;
An' all the way I've heard
A Shrawn[2] that's kep' me silent, speechless, dumb,
Not sayin' any word.
An' was it then the Shrawn of Eire,[3] you'll say,
For him that died the death on Carrisbool?
It was not that; nor was it, by the way,
The Sons of Garnim[4] blitherin' their drool;
Nor was it any Crowdie of the Shee,[5]
Or Itt, or Himm, nor wail of Barryhoo[6]
For Barrywhich that stilled the tongue of me.
'Twas but my own heart cryin' out for you
Magraw![7] Bulleen, shinnanigan, Boru,
Aroon, Machree, Aboo![8]

ELEGY

The jackals prowl, the serpents hiss
In what was once Persepolis.
Proud Babylon is but a trace
Upon the desert's dusty face.
The topless towers of Ilium
Are ashes. Judah's harp is dumb.
The fleets of Nineveh and Tyre
Are down with Davy Jones, Esquire
And all the oligarchies, kings,
And potentates that ruled these things
Are gone! But cheer up; don't be sad;
Think what a lovely time they had!

Oliver Herford, born in England but living most of his life in America, has without doubt the most humorous soul in the world.

His art, which is pictorial as well as literary, is unique and of an intangible, indescribable nature.

As graceful of fancy as Spenser, as truly funny as Sir William Gilbert, he also possesses a deep philosophy and a perfect technique.

PHYLLIS LEE

Beside a Primrose 'broider'd Rill
Sat Phyllis Lee in Silken Dress
Whilst Lucius limn'd with loving skill
Her likeness, as a Shepherdess.
Yet tho' he strove with loving skill
His Brush refused to work his Will.

"Dear Maid, unless you close your Eyes
I cannot paint to-day," he said;
"Their Brightness shames the very Skies
And turns their Turquoise into Lead."
Quoth Phyllis, then, "To save the Skies
And speed your Brush, I'll shut my Eyes."

Now when her Eyes were closed, the Dear,
Not dreaming of such Treachery,
Felt a Soft Whisper in her Ear,
"Without the Light, how can one See?"
"If you are *sure* that none can see
I'll keep them shut," said Phyllis Lee.

SOME GEESE

Ev-er-y child who has the use
Of his sen-ses knows a goose.
See them un-der-neath the tree
Gath-er round the goose-girl's knee,
While she reads them by the hour
From the works of Scho-pen-hau-er.

How pa-tient-ly the geese at-tend!
But do they re-al-ly com-pre-hend
What Scho-pen-hau-er's driv-ing at?
Oh, not at all; but what of that?
Nei-ther do I; nei-ther does she;
And, for that mat-ter, nor does he.

THE CHIMPANZEE

Children, behold the Chimpanzee:
He sits on the ancestral tree
From which we sprang in ages gone.
I'm glad we sprang: had we held on,
We might, for aught that I can say,
Be horrid Chimpanzees to-day.

THE HEN

Alas! my Child, where is the Pen
That can do Justice to the Hen?
Like Royalty, She goes her way,
Laying foundations every day,
Though not for Public Buildings, yet
For Custard, Cake and Omelette.

Or if too Old for such a use
They have their Fling at some Abuse,
As when to Censure Plays Unfit
Upon the Stage they make a Hit,
Or at elections Seal the Fate
Of an Obnoxious Candidate.
No wonder, Child, we prize the Hen,
Whose Egg is Mightier than the Pen.

MARK TWAIN: A PIPE DREAM

Well I recall how first I met
  Mark Twain—an infant barely three
Rolling a tiny cigarette
  While cooing on his nurse's knee.

Since then in every sort of place
  I've met with Mark and heard him joke,
Yet how can I describe his face?
  I never saw it for the smoke.

At school he won a *smokership*,
  At Harvard College (Cambridge, Mass.)
His name was soon on every lip,
  They made him "*smoker*" of his class.

Who will forget his smoking bout
  With Mount Vesuvius—our cheers—
When Mount Vesuvius went out
  And didn't smoke again for years?

The news was flashed to England's King,
  Who begged Mark Twain to come and stay,
Offered him dukedoms—anything
  To smoke the London fog away.

But Mark was firm. "I bow," said he,
  "To no imperial command,
No ducal coronet for me,
  My smoke is for my native land!"

For Mark there waits a brighter crown!
  When Peter comes his card to read—
He'll take the sign "No Smoking" down,
  —Then Heaven will be Heaven indeed.

GOLD

  Some take their gold
  In minted mold,
And some in harps hereafter,
  But give me mine
  In tresses fine,
And keep the change in laughter!

AFTER HERRICK

SONG

Gather Kittens while you may,
  Time brings only Sorrow;
And the Kittens of To-day
  Will be Old Cats To-morrow.

THE PRODIGAL EGG

An egg of humble sphere
  By vain ambition stung,
Once left his mother dear
  When he was very young.

'Tis needless to dilate
  Upon a tale so sad;
The egg, I grieve to state,
  Grew very, very bad.

At last when old and blue,
  He wandered home, and then
They gently broke it to
  The loving mother hen.

She only said, in fun,
"I fear you're spoiled, my son!"

Frank Gelett Burgess, one time editor of *The Lark*, a short-lived humorous periodical, is at his best in the realms of sheer nonsense. His *Purple Cow* has a

nation-wide reputation and his humorous excursions into the French Forms are always marked by exact precision as to rule and law.

THE PURPLE COW

I never saw a Purple Cow,
  I never hope to see one;
But I can tell you, anyhow,
  I'd rather see than be one.

THE INVISIBLE BRIDGE

I'd Never Dare to Walk across
  A Bridge I Could Not See;
For Quite afraid of Falling off,
  I fear that I Should Be!

VILLANELLE OF THINGS AMUSING

These are the things that make me laugh—
  Life's a preposterous farce, say I!
And I've missed of too many jokes by half.

The high-heeled antics of colt and calf,
  The men who think they can act, and try—
These are the things that make me laugh.

The hard-boiled poses in photograph,
  The groom still wearing his wedding tie—
And I've missed of too many jokes by half!

These are the bubbles I gayly quaff
  With the rank conceit of the new-born fly—
These are the things that make me laugh!

For, Heaven help me! I needs must chaff,
  And people will tickle me till I die—
And I've missed of too many jokes by half!

So write me down in my epitaph
As one too fond of his health to cry—
These are the things that make me laugh,
And I've missed of too many jokes by half!

PSYCHOLOPHON

Supposed to be Translated from the Old Parsee

Twine then the rays
  Round her soft Theban tissues!
All will be as She says,
  When that dead past reissues.
Matters not what nor where,
  Hark, to the moon's dim cluster!
How was her heavy hair
  Lithe as a feather duster!
Matters not when nor whence;
  Flittertigibbet!
Sounds make the song, not sense,
  Thus I inhibit!

Carolyn Wells has written much humorous verse and prose. Her work has appeared in many of the periodicals and in book form.

THE IDIOT'S DELIGHT

A curious man of the human clan
  Is a man who fools himself;
Who thinks he can swing the Pierian spring
  Through a conduit of books on a shelf!
Who thinks if he pores in the old bookstores
  And browses among the rares,
He is fit to belong to the scholarly throng
  And gives himself scholarly airs.

He gasps as he speaks of his worn antiques—
  With emotion almost dumb!
Or he solemnly turns his Kilmarnock Burns
  With an awed and reverent thumb;
He'll scrimp to possess a Kelmscott Press,
  And hoard up his hard-earned wage
Till he saves the cost of a Paradise Lost
  With the right sort of title page.

If he has on his shelves some dumpy twelves,
  Of which he's a connoisseur,
The bibliophile, with a fatuous smile,
  Believes he's a littérateur!
Because he achieves incunabula leaves,
  On himself as a scholar he'll look;
Though I'm ready to bet no scholar *I've* met
  Has ever collected a book!

The difference, you see, in the viewpoint must be,

And it *is* a distinction nice;
A scholar will look at the worth of a book,
A collector will think of its price.
He nearly bursts with pride in his firsts;
And you can't get it into his dome
That he cannot affect his intellect
By buying a tattered tome!

A collector *may* have matter gray,
He *may* have wisdom, too;
As he may have a head of a carroty red
Or eyes of a chicory blue.
But he has these things by the grace of God;
Especially his good looks;
By Nature's laws, and *not* because
The things he collects are *books*!

And so I maintain there is no brain,
No genius or talent or mind,
Required to look for a certain book,
Or to struggle that book to find.
No collector reads his precious screeds,
He appraises his books by sight;
And I make claim that the blooming game
Is the idiot's delight!

THE MYSTERY

I can understand politics, civics and law,
Of national issues I have no great awe;
The theories of Einstein are simple to me,
And psychoanalysis mere A. B. C.
But there is one thing I can't get in my head—
Why *do* people marry the people they wed?

I can do mathematics, no matter how high;
And to me fourth dimension is easy as pie;
Most intricate problems I readily solve,
And I know why the nebular spirals revolve.
But on this baffling question no light has been shed;
Why *do* people marry the people they wed?

Long hours over Nietzsche I frequently spend,
I've all his philosophy at my tongue's end.
Of Freudian conclusions I haven't a doubt.
I've got human complexes all straightened out.
But on this deep problem I muse in my bed—

Why *do* people marry the people they wed?

I've studied up ancient religions and cults,
I've tried spiritism with curious results;
I know the Piltdown and Neanderthal man,
How big is Betelgeuse and how old is Ann;
But this I shall wonder about till I'm dead—
Why *do* people marry the people they wed?

WOMAN

Women are dear and women are queer
  Men call them, with a laugh,
The female of the species,
  Or a husband's better half.
They sing their praise in many ways,
  They flatter them—but, oh,
How little they know of Woman
  Who only women know!

Now women are pert and women will flirt,
  And they're catty and rude and vain;
And sometimes they're witty and sometimes
    they're pretty—
  And sometimes they're awfully plain.
But Woman is rare beyond compare,
  The poets tell us so;
How little they know of Woman
  Who only women know!

Women are petty and women are fretty,
  They try to hide their years;
They steadily nag and nervously rag,
  And frequently burst into tears.
But Woman is gracious, serene and calm,
  Above all tricks or arts,
Her sympathy's like a soothing balm
  To sad and sorrowing hearts.

Women are very perverse and contrary,
  They will contradict you flat;
Oh, women I'll call the devil and all,
  There's no denying that!
But Woman, oh, men, is beyond our ken,
  Too angelic for mortals below;
How little they know of Woman
  Who only women know!

A SYMPOSIUM OF POETS

Once upon a time a few of the greatest Poets of all ages gathered together for the purpose of discussing the merits of the Classic Poem:

> Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater,
> Had a wife and couldn't keep her,
> Put her in a Pumpkin shell,
> And there he kept her very well.

In many ways this historic narrative called forth admiration. One must admit Peter's great strength of character, his power of quick decision, and immediate achievement. Some hold that his inability to retain the lady's affection in the first place, argues a defect in his nature; but remembering the lady's youth and beauty (implied by the spirit of the whole poem), we can only reiterate our appreciation of the way he conquered circumstances, and proved himself master of his fate, and captain of his soul! Truly, the Pumpkin-Eaters must have been a forceful race, able to defend their rights and rule their people.

The Poets at their symposium unanimously felt that the style of the poem, though hardly to be called crude, was a little bare, and they took up with pleasure the somewhat arduous task of rewriting it.

Mr. Ed. Poe opined that there was lack of atmosphere, and that the facts of the narrative called for a more impressive setting. He therefore offered:

> The skies, they were ashen and sober,
> The lady was shivering with fear;
> Her shoulders were shud'ring with fear.
> On a dark night in dismal October,
> Of his most Matrimonial Year.
> It was hard by the cornfield of Auber,
> In the musty Mud Meadows of Weir,
> Down by the dank frog-pond of Auber,
> In the ghoul-haunted cornfield of Weir.

Now, his wife had a temper Satanic,
And when Peter roamed here with his Soul,
Through the corn with his conjugal Soul,
He spied a huge pumpkin Titanic,
And he popped her right in through a hole.
Then solemnly sealed up the hole.

And thus Peter Peter has kept her
Immured in Mausoleum gloom,
A moist, humid, damp sort of gloom.
And though there's no doubt he bewept her,
She is still in her yellow hued tomb,
Her unhallowed, Hallowe'en tomb
And ever since Peter side-stepped her,
He calls her his lost Lulalume,
His Pumpkin-entombed Lulalume.

This was received with acclaim, but many objected to the mortuary theory.

Mrs. Robert Browning was sure that Peter's love for his wife, though perhaps that of a primitive man, was of the true Portuguese stamp, and with this view composed the following pleasing Sonnet:

How do I keep thee? Let me count the ways.
I bar up every breadth and depth and height
My hands can reach, while feeling out of sight
For bolts that stick and hasps that will not raise.
I keep thee from the public's idle gaze,
I keep thee in, by sun or candle light.
I keep thee, rude, as women strive for Right.
I keep thee boldly, as they seek for praise,
I keep thee with more effort than I'd use
To keep a dry-goods shop or big hotel.
I keep thee with a power I seemed to lose
With that last cook. I'll keep thee down the well,
Or up the chimney-place! Or if I choose,
I shall but keep thee in a Pumpkin shell.

This was of course meritorious, though somewhat suggestive of the cave-men, who, we have never

been told, were Pumpkin Eaters.

Austin Dobson's version was really more ladylike:

BALLADE OF A PUMPKIN

Golden-skinned, delicate, bright,
  Wondrous of texture and hue,
Bathed in a soft, sunny light,
  Pearled with a silvery dew.
  Fair as a flower to the view,
Ripened by summer's soft heat,
  Basking beneath Heaven's blue,—
This is the Pumpkin of Pete.

Peter consumed day and night,
  Pumpkin in pie or in stew;
Hinted to Cook that she might
  Can it for winter use, too.
  Pumpkin croquettes, not a few,
Peter would happily eat;
  Knowing content would ensue,—
This is the Pumpkin of Pete.

Everything went along right,
  Just as all things ought to do;
Till Peter,—unfortunate wight,—
  Married a girl that he knew,
  Each day he had to pursue,
His runaway Bride down the street,—
  So her into prison he threw,—
This is the Pumpkin of Pete.

L'envoi

Lady, a sad lot, 'tis true,
  Staying your wandering feet;
But 'tis the best place for you,—
  This is the Pumpkin of Pete.

Like the other women present Dinah Craik felt the pathos of the situation, and gave vent to her feelings in this tender burst of song:

Could I come back to you Peter, Peter,
  From this old pumpkin that I hate;
I would be so tender, so loving, Peter,—

Peter, Peter, gracious and great.

You were not half worthy of me, Peter,
Not half worthy the like of I;
Now all men beside are not in it, Peter,—
Peter, Peter, I feel like a pie.

Stretch out your hand to me, Peter, Peter,
Let me out of this Pumpkin, do;
Peter, my beautiful Pumpkin Eater,
Peter, Peter, tender and true.

Mr. Hogg took his own graceful view of the matter, thus:

Lady of wandering,
Blithesome, meandering,
Sweet was thy flitting o'er moorland and lea;
Emblem of restlessness,
Blest be thy dwelling place,
Oh, to abide in the Pumpkin with thee.

Peter, though bland and good,
Never thee understood,
Or he had known how thy nature was free;
Goddess of fickleness,
Blest be thy dwelling place,
Oh, to abide in the Pumpkin with thee.

Mr. Kipling grasped at the occasion for a ballad in his best vein. The plot of the story aroused his old time enthusiasm, and he transplanted the pumpkin eater and his wife to the scenes of his earlier powers:

In a great big Mammoth pumpkin
Lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a wife of mine a-settin'
And I know she's mad at me.
For I hear her calling, "Peter!"
With a wild hysteric shout;
"Come you back, you Punkin Eater,—
Come you back and let me out!"
For she's in a punkin shell,
I have locked her in her cell;
But it really is a comfy, well-constructed punkin shell;

And there she'll have to dwell,
For she didn't treat me well,
So I put her in the punkin and I've kept her very well.

Algernon Swinburne was also in one of his early moods, and as a result he wove the story into this exquisite fabric of words:

IN THE PUMPKIN

Leave go my hands. Let me catch breath and see,
What is this confine either side of me?
Green pumpkin vines about me coil and crawl,
Seen sidelong, like a 'possum in a tree,—
Ah me, ah me, that pumpkins are so small!

Oh, my fair love, I charge thee, let me out;
From this gold lush encircling me about;
I turn and only meet a pumpkin wall.
The crescent moon shines slim,—but I am stout,—
Ah me, ah me, that pumpkins are so small!

Pumpkin seeds like cold sea blooms bring me dreams;
Ah, Pete,—too sweet to me,—my Pete, it seems
Love like a Pumpkin holds me in its thrall;
And overhead a writhen shadow gleams,—
Ah me, ah me, that pumpkins are so small!

This intense poesy thrilled the heavens, and it was with a sense of relief to their throbbing souls that they listened to Mr. Bret Harte's contribution:

Which I wish to remark,
That the lady was plain;
And for ways that are dark
And for tricks that are vain,
She had predilections peculiar,
And drove Peter nearly insane.

Far off, anywhere,
She wandered each day;
And though Peter would swear,
The lady would stray;
And whenever he thought he had got her,

She was sure to be rambling away.

Said Peter, “My Wife,
Hereafter you dwell
For the rest of your life
In a big Pumpkin Shell.”
He popped her in one that was handy,
And since then he’s kept her quite well.

Which is why I remark,
Though the lady was plain,
For ways that are dark
And tricks that are vain,
A husband is very peculiar,
And the same I am free to maintain.

Oscar Wilde in a poetic fervour and a lily-like kimono, recited with tremulous intensity this masterpiece of his own:

Oh, Peter! Pumpkin-fed and proud,
Ah me! ah me!
(Sweet squashes, mother!)
Thy woe knells like a stricken cloud;
(Ah me; ah me!
Hurroo, Hurree!)

Lo! vanisht like an anguisht wraith;
Ah me! ah me!
(Sweet squashes, mother!)
Wan hope a dolorous Musing saith;
(Ah me; ah me!
Dum diddle dee!)

Hist! dare we soar? The Pumpkin shell
Ah me! ah me!
(Sweet squashes, mother!)
(Fast and forever! Sooth, ’tis well.
(Ah me; ah me!
Faloodle dee!)

There was little to be said after this, so the meeting was closed with a solo by Lady Arthur Hill, using with a truly touching touch:

In the pumpkin, oh, my darling,

Think not bitterly of me;
Though I went away in silence,
Though I couldn't set you free.
For my heart was filled with longing,
For another piece of pie;
It was best to leave you there, dear,
Best for you and best for I.

Two of our most gentle and kindly humorists may not be quoted, because it would be a crime to separate their text and pictures.

Peter Newell and J. G. Francis have drawn some of the most delicately witty pictures and have written quatrains or Limericks to accompany them, but picture and text must be shown together, if at all.

For the same reason our cartoonists may not be touched upon.

Nor can we include any writers whose work did not appear before 1900.

The scope of this book is bounded by the twentieth century, and much as we should like to present the Columnists and the more recent versifiers, they must be left for a later chronicler.

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FOOTNOTES:

[1] For putting out the fire in a brasier or cooking-stove.

[2] A Shrawn is a pure Gaelic noise, something like a groan, more like a shriek, and most like a sigh of longing.

[3] Eire was daughter of Carne, King of Connaught. Her lover, Murdh of the Open Hand, was captured by Greatcoat Mackintosh, King of Ulster, on the plain of Carrisbool and made into soup. Eire's grief on this sad occasion has become proverbial.

[4] Garnim was second cousin to Manannan MacLir. His sons were always sad about something. There were twenty-two of them, and they were all unfortunate in love at the same time, just like a chorus at the opera. "Blitherin' their drool" is about the same as "dreeing their weird."

[5] The Shee (or "Sidhe," as I should properly spell it if you were not so ignorant) were, as everybody knows, the regular, stand-pat, organization fairies of Erin. The Crowdie was their annual convention, at which they made melancholy sounds. The Itt and Himm were the irregular, or insurgent, fairies. They *never* got any offices or patronage. See MacAlester, *Polity of the Sidhe of West Meath*, page 985.

[6] The Barryhoo is an ancient Celtic bird about the size of a Mavis, with lavender eyes and a black-crape tail. It continually mourns its mate (Barrywhich, feminine form), which has an hereditary predisposition to an early and tragic demise and invariably dies first.

[7] Magraw, a Gaelic term of endearment, often heard on the baseball fields of Donnybrook.

[8] These last six words are all that tradition has preserved of the original incantation by means of which Irish rats were rhymed to death. Thereby hangs a good Celtic tale, which I should be glad to tell you in this note; but the publishers say that being prosed to death is as bad as being rhymed to death, and that the readers won't stand for any more.

Transcriber's Notes:

1. Obvious printers', punctuation and spelling errors have been corrected silently.
2. Some hyphenated and non-hyphenated versions of the same words have been retained as in the original.
3. The heading hierarchy used follows the original publication and consequently in some chapters the h3 level has been skipped.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK AN OUTLINE OF HUMOR ***

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