

## LITERARY EXAMINER

The *LITERARY EXAMINER* (which ran for 26 weekly numbers in the second half of 1823) was a Saturday little magazine that was inspired by Leigh Hunt and edited by his nephew Henry L. Hunt. It had features of a magazine, continuing Leigh Hunt's series of essays called "The Indicator" and containing both reviews and "Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose and Verse," but the only literary reviews that concern us here were all advance puffs for works published by John and Henry L. Hunt themselves — the nine cantos of *Don Juan* published in 1823 and the fourth number of the *Liberal*.

July 5 & 12, 1823

[Byron] *Don Juan*, VI-VIII (1823); *Literary Examiner*, July 5, 1823, pp. 6-12; July 12, 1823, pp. 23-27. The attacks on *Don Juan* had by this time been taken up by so large a portion of the press that the Hunts felt compelled to counter-attack in advance of the publication of the new cantos. Constitutional Society was — even according to the editors of the *Investigator* (q.v.), who were sympathetic to censorship of Byron — little more than a party tool of the Tories. Note the reviewer's contrast of Byron's satirical manner with Wordsworth's "Alice Fell" and "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" (p. 8), and the reminder (p. 25) of the rivalry between Byron and Wordsworth.

---

### REVIEW OF BOOKS.

*Don Juan. Cantos VI. VII. VIII.*

WE scarcely know of any thing more ludicrous, although of many more amusing, than a contemplation of the manner in which the vagaries of genius tend to the production of grave and fatiguing common-

August 2 & 9, 1823

August 16 & 23, 1823

[Byron] *Don Juan*, IX-XI (1823); *Literary Examiner*, Aug. 2, 1823, pp. 65-68; Aug. 9, 1823, pp. 81-85; Aug. 16, 1823, pp. 105-110; Aug. 23, 1823, pp. 120-123. Most of this lengthy appreciation is self-explanatory. On page 66 "Dr. and Cr." represent the "Debtor" and "Creditor" columns on a balance sheet of the period. The final paragraph (pp. 122-123) alludes to the threat of an injunction by the Lord Chancellor to stop publication of the cantos.

THE  
LITERARY EXAMINER.

No. V.—SATURDAY, AUGUST 2, 1823.

REVIEW OF BOOKS.

*Don Juan. Cantos IX. X. XI.*

WE observed in a note to our account of the three preceding Cantos of *Don Juan*, that several additional volumes would soon follow. We shall endeavour in our present and succeeding numbers to convey some notion of the first of them, consisting of the Cantos enumerated in our heading. The task is difficult, for in no previous portion of this indescribable production is the sarcasm more caustic, the wit more pungent and volatile, or the general taxing more uncircumscribed. In the course of these Cantos, too, the all-conquering Juan is brought to our own best of all possible countries, and introduced to the *haut ton* and *Blues* of London—a field altogether uncultivated by the Society for the Suppression of Vice, and therefore peculiarly demanding the attention of an inflexible and impartial moralist like the author of *Don Juan*. Moreover, if the physician be able, the benefit is always in proportion to the docility of the patient in respect to the prescription; and notwithstanding the doubts of the Chancellor, and the pious deprecation of various less eminent personages, there is much reason to fear, that people of quality swallow doses of *Don Juan* with more avidity than religious tracts, or even Mr. Irving's sermons.

All the world knows by this time\* that the termination of Canto VIII. left *Don Juan* in his way to St. Petersburg, with the dispatches of Suwarrow, announcing the storm and capture of Ismail. As every

\* This is a great grievance, considering the variety of disinterested and candid criticism which is elicited by every succeeding publication. One Aristarchus discovers, that "all the attic fire is fled," owing doubtless to the predilection of his Lordship (the Lord cannot be altogether got over) for low company! A second laments so injurious an application of fine powers; and recommends the poet, in respect to sentiment and subject, to follow the lead of Mrs. Hemans! A third is shocked by a singular sort of compound rhymes, never having discovered any thing of the kind in *Hudibras*!—and ALL protesting against so much licence, and, in a kind of chorus, *Mother Cole-ing* on the subject, with uplifted hands and eyes, supply copious extracts! Is it not in the *Siege of Belgrade*, that an old hypocritical Turkish Cadi thus soliloquises over a supper table, to which he had found his way uninvited?—

*Uscak.* Oh, the Christian dogs!—eat pork!

(Dangling a slice of ham on a fork and swallowing it)  
And drink wine too!

(Holding up the bottle, and tipping off a bumper.)

That son of drollery, Suett, used to represent this Turkish vice-suppressor with infinite humour, but after all with lessunction and gravity than the devout and critical scribes, to whom we have been especially alluding.

VOL. I.

5

## 66 THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

body in this philosophical age has studied the laws which govern the association of ideas, no surprise will be experienced when we add that Canto IX. commences with an address to the Duke of Wellington. The Muse is by no means in a good humour with his Grace, who it must be confessed is in rather higher favour with the governors than the governed of every country—and with Mars (some say *Fortune*) than with Apollo. A part of the poet's opinion is expressed thus:—

Though Britain owes (and pays you too) so much,  
Yet Europe doubtless owes you greatly more:  
You have repaired Legitimacy's crutch,  
A prop not quite so certain as before:  
The Spanish, and the French, as well as Dutch,  
Have seen, and felt, how strongly you restore;  
And Waterloo has made the world your debtor—  
(I wish your bards would sing it rather better.)

A somewhat too great an anxiety to keep a profitable Dr. and Cr. account with his country, is also mentioned:—

Great men have always scorned great recompenses:  
Epaminondas saved his Thebes, and died,  
Not leaving even his funeral expenses:  
George Washington had thanks and nought beside,  
Except the all cloudless Glory (which few men's is)  
To free his country: Pitt too had his pride,  
And as a high-soul'd Minister of State is  
Renow'd for ruining Great Britain gratis.  
Never had mortal man such opportunity,  
Except Napoleon, or abused it more:  
You might have freed fall'n Europe from the Unity  
Of Tyrants, and been blest from shore to shore;  
And now—what is your fame?

The answer is summed up in the following couplet:—

You *did* great things; but not being *great* in mind,  
Have left *undone* the *greatest*—and mankind.

Nine or ten stanzas follow in the way of digression, upon Life, and Death, and Doubt, and Existence, which not being very extractable we shall pass over, with the exception of two, which bespeak their author and nobody else:—

Oh! ye immortal Gods! what is theology?  
Oh! thou too mortal Man! what is philanthropy?  
Oh! World, which was and is, what is Cosmogony?  
Some people have accused me of Misanthropy;  
And yet I know no more than the mahogany  
That forms this desk, of what they mean;—*Lykanthrop*  
I comprehend, for without transformation  
Men become wolves on any slight occasion.  
But I, the mildest, meekest of mankind,  
Like Moses, or Melancthon, who have ne'er  
Done any thing exceedingly unkind,—  
And (though I could not now and then forbear  
Following the bent of body or of mind)  
Have always had a tendency to spare,—  
Why do they call me misanthrope? Because  
*They hate me, not I them:*—And here we'll pause.

We now take up Don Juan, who proceeds to St. Petersburg, certainly not by the nearest road; a fact which induces the author thus to correct himself:—

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

67

But I am apt to grow too metaphysical:  
"The time is out of joint,"—and so am I;  
I quite forget this poem's merely quizzical,  
And deviate into matters rather dry.  
I ne'er decide what I shall say, and this I call  
Much too poetical: Men should know why  
They write, and for what end; but, note or text,  
I never know the word which will come next.

Juan however finally reaches "that pleasant capital of painted snows," and proceeds to court:—

Suppose him in a handsome uniform;  
A scarlet coat, black facings, a long plume  
Waving, like sails new shivered in a storm,  
Over a cocked hat, in a crowded room,  
And brilliant breeches, bright as a Cairn Gorme,  
Of yellow cassimere we may presume,  
White stockings drawn uncurdled as new milk  
O'er limbs whose symmetry set off the silk.

His presentation at court, and the manner in which the Empress received the good news of which he was bearer, are in excellent keeping:—

Catherine, I say, was very glad to see  
The handsome herald, on whose plumage sat  
Victory; and, pausing as she saw him kneel  
With his dispatch, forgot to break the seal.  
Then recollecting the whole Empress, nor  
Forgetting quite the woman (which composed  
At least three parts of this great whole) she tore  
The letter open with an air which posed  
The Court, that watched each look her visage wore,  
Until a Royal smile at length disclosed  
Fair weather for the day. Though rather spacious,  
Her face was noble, her eyes fine, mouth gracious.  
Great joy was her's, or rather joys; the first  
Was a ta'en city—thirty thousand slain.  
Glory and triumph o'er her aspect burst,  
As an East Indian Sunrise on the main.  
These quenched a moment her Ambition's thirst—  
So Arab Deserts drink in Summer's rain:  
In vain!—As fall the dews on quenchless sands,  
Blood only serves to wash Ambition's hands!  
Her next amusement was more fanciful;  
She smiled at mad Suwarrow's rhymes, who threw  
Into a Russian couplet rather dull  
The whole gazette of thousands whom he slew.  
Her third was feminine enough to annul  
The shudder which runs naturally through  
Our veins, when things called Sovereigns think it best  
To kill, and Generals turn it into jest.

The important result of this interview is pleasantly related in the following extract:—

Her Majesty looked down, the Youth looked up—  
And so they fell in love:—She with his face,  
His grace, his God-knows-what: for Cupid's cup  
With the first draught intoxicates apace,  
A quintessential laudanum or "black drop,"  
Which makes one drunk at once, without the base  
Expedient of full bumpers; for the eye  
In love drinks all life's fountains (save tears) dry.

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

He, on the other hand, if not in love,  
 Fell into that no less imperious passion,  
 Self-love—which, when some sort of Thing above  
 Ourselves, a singer, dancer, much in fashion,  
 Or duchess, princess, Empress, “deigns to prove.”  
 (’Tis Pope’s phrase) a great longing, tho’ a rash one,  
 For one especial person out of many,  
 Makes us believe ourselves as good as any.

The whole Court melted into one wide whisper,  
 And all lips were applied unto all ears!  
 The elder ladies wrinkles curled much crisper  
 As they beheld; the younger cast some leers  
 On one another, and each lovely lipper  
 Smiled as she talked the matter o’er; but tears  
 Of rival-ship rose in each clouded eye  
 Of all the standing army who stood by.

All this ends in the formal appointment of Don Juan to a “high official situation,” with which intimation, Canto IX. concludes.

*The Orlando Furioso. Translated into English Verse, with Notes.*  
 By William Stewart Rose.

Italian Literature is re-assuming in Great Britain the predominance which it bore previously to the invasion of the French School, and the almost total reversal of English taste that followed the “Happy Restoration.” From Chaucer down to Milton the Italian Muses indisputably took the lead in the literary associations of Englishmen; and it is only necessary to study Spenser, and all our older dramatists, not excepting Shakespear himself, to be satisfied that we followed modern Italy even more than Greece or Rome. The long reign and truly Gallic ascendancy of Louis XIV, the Emperor Alexander of his day in respect to the monarchical principle and legitimacy, naturally made French literary ideas prevail in a country, whose kings and ministers were his pensioners. We scarcely need add, that French conquest universally implies impoverishment, whether it be over national prosperity or national intellect; and such it proved in England. We are by no means satisfied, that the prevalence of any national school is desirable; but it cannot be denied that in getting beyond the frigid pale of French criticism, and returning to our own more native culture, we seem materially to have recovered our decayed relish of the leading Italian originals. Secondary causes have no doubt assisted this result, especially the reopening of the continent after so long an interdiction; but whether it be a natural revival or the hot-bed growth of temporary circumstances, Italian classics were never more diligently cultivated than at this moment. Two obvious consequences have arisen from this; an innumerable quantity of English composition upon the model of the Italian; and an ambition to produce competent versions of Italian originals. It was not in the nature of things that Hoole should remain the English gentleman-usher of Ariosto for ever, or that with Italian quotation eternally on our lips, we should not aim at translations more worthy of the genius of the country which produced, and of the poetical character of that which adopted.

Among the great Italian originals, Ariosto has undoubtedly fared the worst in the important article of English translation; for in reference

THE  
 LITERARY EXAMINER.

No. VI.—SATURDAY, AUGUST 9, 1823.

REVIEW OF BOOKS.

*Don Juan. Cantos IX. X. XI.*

(Continued.)

THE poet commences Canto X. with a digression upon gravitation, which diverges as usual into a great variety of incidental handling, including a very pleasant allusion to the old fracas with the Edinburgh Review. We quote the conclusion, which is very beautiful; and will be felt to the core by every heart north of Tweed:—

And all our little feuds, at least all *mine*,  
 Dear Jeffery, once my most redoubted foe,  
 (As far as rhyme and criticism combine  
 To make such puppets of us things below)  
 Are over. Here’s a health to “Auld Lang Syne!”  
 I do not know you, and may never know  
 Your face,—but you have acted on the whole  
 Most nobly, and I own it from my soul.

And when I use the phrase of “Auld Lang Syne!”  
 ’Tis not addressed to you—the more’s the pity  
 For me, for I would rather take my wine  
 With you, than aught (save Scott) in your proud city.  
 But somehow,—it may seem a schoolboy’s whine,  
 And yet I seek not to be grand nor witty,  
 But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred  
 A whole one, and my heart flies to my head,—

As “Auld Lang Syne” brings Scotland, one and all,  
 Scotch plaids, Scotch smocks, the blue hills, and clear streams,  
 The Dee, the Don, Balgounie’s Brig’s black wall,\*  
 All my boy feelings, all my gentler dreams  
 Of what I *then dreamt*, clothed in their own pall,  
 Like Banquo’s offspring;—floating past me seems  
 My childhood in this childishness of mine:  
 I care not—’tis a glimpse of “Auld Lang Syne.”

\* The brig of Don, near the “auld town” of Aberdeen, with its one arch and its black deep salmon stream below, is in my memory as yesterday. I still remember, though perhaps I may misquote the awful proverb which made me pause to cross it, and yet lean over it with a childish delight, being an only son, at least by the mother’s side. The saying as recollected by me was this, but I have never heard or seen it since I was nine years of age:—

“Brig of Balgounie, black’s your we’  
 “Wi’ a wife’s ae son, and a mear’s ae fool,  
 “Dean ye shall fa’!”—

VOL. I.

6

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

And though, as you remember, in a fit  
Of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and curly,  
I railed at Scots to show my wrath and wit,  
Which must be owned was sensitive and surly,  
Yet 'tis in vain such vallies to permit,  
They cannot quench young feelings fresh and early :  
I "scatched, not killed" the Scotchman in my blood,  
And love the laud of "mountain and of flood."

Returning to Don Juan, we find him in great favour, and fulfilling his high destinies in the legitimately regulated establishment of Catharine, with infinite eclat. The following is pleasant :—

He wrote to Spain :—and all his near relations,  
Perceiving he was in a handsome way  
Of getting on himself, and finding stations  
For cousins also, answered the same day.  
Several prepared themselves for emigrations ;  
And, eating ices, were o'erheard to say,  
That with the addition of a slight pelisse,  
Madrid's and Moscow's climes were of a piece.

Donna Inez, the prudent and pious mother of Juan, eminently preserves the devout ingenuousness and decorum, which the reader will recollect are made her prominent characteristics :—

"She also recommended him to God,  
"And no less to God's Son, as well as Mother ;  
"Warned him against Greek-worship, which looks odd  
"In Catholic eyes ; but told him too to smother  
"Outward dislike, which don't look well abroad ;  
"Informed him that he had a little brother  
"Born in a second wedlock ; and above  
"All, praised the Empress's maternal love.  
"She could not too much give her approbation  
"Unto an Empress, who preferred young men  
"Whose age, and, what was better still, whose nation  
"And climate, stopped all scandal (now and then) :—  
"At home, it might have given her some vexation ;  
"But where thermometers sunk down to ten,  
"Or five, or one, or zero, she could never  
"Believe that virtue thawed before the river."  
Oh! for a *forty-parson power* to chaunt  
Thy praise; Hypocrisy!

The narrative proceeds: poor Juan falls sick, and

Low were the whispers, manifold the rumours :  
Some said he had been poisoned by Potemkin ;  
Others talked learnedly of certain tumours,  
Exhaustion, or disorders of the same kin ;  
Some said 'twas a concoction of the humours,  
Which with the blood too readily will claim kin ;  
Others again were ready to maintain,  
" 'Twas only the fatigue of last campaign."

But here is one prescription out of many :—  
"Sodæ-Sulphat. ʒ. vi. ʒ. s. Mannæ optim.  
"Aq. fervent. F. ʒ. iis. ʒij. Tinct. Sennæ  
"Haustus" (And here the surgeon came and cupped him)  
"R. Pulv. Com. gr. iiii. Ipecacuanhæ"  
(With more beside if Juan had not stopped 'em)  
"Bolus Potassæ Sulphuret sumendus,  
"Et Haustus ter in die capiendus."

This is the way physicians mend or end us,  
Secundum artem: but although we sneer

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

In health—when ill, we call them to attend us,  
Without the least propensity to jeer :  
While that "hiatus maxime defendus,"  
To be filled up by spade or mattock, 's near,  
Instead of gliding graciously down Lethe,  
We tease mild Baillie, or soft Abernethy.

The youthful minion however gradually recovers; but as the physicians prescribe travel in milder climates, with great consideration his imperial mistress determines to send him on a mission. Fortunately—

There was just then a kind of a discussion,  
A sort of treaty or negociation  
Between the British cabinet and Russian,  
Maintained with all the due prevarication  
With which great states such things are apt to push on ;  
Something about the Baltic's navigation,  
Hides, train-oil, tallow, and the rights of Thetis,  
Which Britons deem their "uti possidetis."

Juan accordingly sets out for Great Britain in the high style of a Russian favourite, accompanied by the little Leila, who, we suspect, is to be something extraordinary in the sequel :—

Poor little thing! She was as fair as docile,  
And with that gentle, serious character,  
As rare in living beings, as a fossil  
Man, 'midst thy mouldy Mammoths, "grand Cuvier!"  
Ill fitted with her ignorance to jostle  
With this o'erwhelming world, where all must err :  
But she was yet but ten years old, and therefore  
Was tranquil, though she knew not why or wherefore.

Don Juan loved her, and she loved him, as  
Nor brother, father, sister, daughter love.  
I cannot tell exactly what it was ;  
He was not yet quite old enough to prove  
Parental feelings, and the other class,  
Called brotherly affection, could not move  
His bosom,—for he never had a sister :  
Ah! if he had, how much he would have missed her!

We shall omit the description of the journey, and suppose our traveller on his passage from Helvoetsluys, watching for the white cliffs of Albion :—

At length they rose, like a white wall along  
The blue sea's border; and Don Juan felt—  
What even young strangers feel a little strong  
At the first sight of Albion's chalky belt—  
A kind of pride that he should be among  
Those haughty shop-keepers, who sternly dealt  
Their goods and edicts out from pole to pole,  
And made the very billows pay them toll.

We are of opinion, that many an English heart beats in unison with that of the indignant poet, when he alludes to the suppressed feelings of hatred and resentment, which agitate the bosom of hopelessly enslaved millions, all over the continent, when they reflect on the political part enacted by Great Britain on the fall of Napoleon. The following stanzas are powerful :—

Ales! could She but fully, truly, know  
How her great name is now throughout abhorred ;  
How eager all the earth is for the blow  
Which shall lay bare her bosom to the sword ;

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

How all the nations deem her their worst foe,  
That worse than *worst of foes*, the once adored  
False friend, who held out freedom to mankind,  
And now would chain them, to the very mind;—  
Would she be proud, or boast herself the free,  
Who is but first of slaves? The nations are  
In prison,—but the jailor, what is he?  
No less a victim to the bolt and bar.  
Is the poor privilege to turn the key  
Upon the captive, freedom? He 's as far  
From the enjoyment of the earth and air  
Who watches o'er the chain, as they who wear.

Juan, "though careless, young, and magnifique," stares a little at  
Dover charges, but concludes that

—Doubtless as the air, though seldom sunny,  
Is *free*, the respiration's worth the money.

The peep at Canterbury Cathedral suggests the following character-  
istic reflection:—

They saw at Canterbury the Cathedral;  
Black Edward's helm, and Becket's bloody stone,  
Were pointed out as usual by the Bedral,  
In the same quaint, uninterested tone:  
There's glory again for you, gentle reader! All  
Ends in a rusty casque, and dubious bone  
Half-solved into those sodas or magnesias,  
Which form that bitter draught, the human species.

They proceed towards the metropolis:—

On, on! through meadows, managed like a garden,  
A Paradise of hops and high production;  
For after years of travel by a bard in  
Countries of greater heat but lesser suction,  
A green field is a sight which makes him pardon  
The absence of that more sublime construction,  
Which mixes up vines, olives, precipices,  
Glaciers, volcanos, oranges, and ices.  
And when I think upon a pot of beer—  
But I won't weep!—and so drive on, postilions!

Juan at length reaches Shooter's Hill, and is favoured with a view  
of London; on which the poet pauses, and speculates upon a renewal  
of old acquaintance with his "gentle countrymen," to whom he is  
determined to tell truths, although they will not receive them as such,  
"because they are so." In short he will be to them a male Mrs. Fry,  
or something still better, for in the following stanzas he seems to hint,  
that in the usual style of volunteer vice-suppressing, the benevolent lady  
in question is too exclusive in her attentions:—

Oh, Mrs. Fry! Why go to Newgate? Why  
Preach to poor rogues? And wherefore not begin  
With C—It—n, or with other houses? Try  
Your hand at hardened and Imperial sin.  
To mend the people's an absurdity,  
A jargon, a mere philanthropic din,  
Unless you make their betters better:—Fye!  
I thought you had more religion, Mrs. Fry.  
Teach them the decencies of good threescore;  
Cure them of tours, Hussar and Highland dresses;  
Tell them that youth once gone returns no more;  
That hired huzzas redeem no land's distresses;  
Tell them Sir W—ll—m C—t—s is a bore—

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

And so on—"but you won't," continues the poet despairingly;—then  
— by and bye *l'U* prattle  
Like Roland's horn in Roncesvalles' battle.  
And with this significant intimation Canto X. concludes.  
(To be continued.)

## FRENCH COURT ETIQUETTE.

There is something exceedingly pleasant in the contemplation of the  
etiquette of courts and sovereigns; commencing at the eastern despot,  
who plainly calls himself lord of the sun and moon, to the more  
delicate but scarcely less assuming pretensions of the rulers of Europe,  
who are, or have been, most absolute in their authority. None of these,  
however, furnish half so much amusement to the curious observer as the  
court of France. It is impossible to read of the eternal struggle of the  
princesses of the blood and of the upper nobility of France for pre-  
cedence and stools (*tabourets*) without a tendency to smile;—or to  
reflect upon the host of lovers and husbands engaged in their quarrels  
without blessing ourselves. The French memoirs abound with these  
important feuds, which have frequently occupied more of the attention  
of the Grand Monarque than the welfare of the great body of his  
subjects. Louis XIV. was particularly formal in such matters, and the  
display of mock dignity was always in exact proportion to the real  
littleness of the occasion. One of the facts which always struck us  
forcibly, in reference to these affairs, is the total disconnexion of pride  
of birth and pretension with any innate loftiness of mind. Ladies  
would fiercely contend on points of etiquette, who in morals, and even  
in what common sense might deem equivalent points to those reserved,  
would debase themselves without scruple. We have been particularly  
led into these reflections by happening some time ago, to take up the  
Memoirs of Anne of Austria, by Madame de Motteville, and running  
over the mortifications of poor Henrietta of Bourbon, daughter of  
Gaston duke of Orleans, brother of Louis XIII. king of France, subse-  
quently styled Mademoiselle de Montpensier. The early life of this  
poor lady was an eternal squabble about brass nails, rolled stockings,  
train-bearers, and other affairs of equal importance; yet, led by pas-  
sion, she finally stooped to real debasements, to which less captious  
dignity would never have reconciled itself. As an amusing instance of  
the importance of these nonentities in France at one time, take the  
following narrative of a pretty feminine altercation at a state funeral,  
in which the lady we have been speaking of was a principal performer:

"The Queen (Anne of Austria) was willing to pay to the memory of  
this illustrious princess (the Queen of Spain) who was her sister-in-law  
on both sides, what was due to her quality as a daughter of France.  
A funeral service was therefore performed for her, according to custom,  
with all the magnificence proper for so great a princess. In occasions  
of *this nature* (funerals) it often happens that ranks of precedency in  
France, when they are not settled, produce great quarrels. Mademoi-  
selle (d'Orleans) in quality of a king of France's grand-daughter,  
pretended there was a great deal of distinction to be made between her  
and Madame the Princess (of Conde); on the other hand, the Duke  
d'Enghien, son of the latter (*the great Conde*) being willing to support

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

105

bishop, whom he was anxious to exalt. Pope added, that "the parish squire talked of *the drunken Dean*."

Brentford, as Sir Hugh Evans would have said, "hath strange reputations." It was celebrated in the wars of the King and Parliament. The "two kings" of it are renowned in the Rehearsal. A poet, who lived at Richmond, records it as "a town of mud;"\* and a king, who lived at Kew, chose it for his prospect from the other side of the river. At Hammersmith Richardson had a country box. He used to bring unexpected nosegays from his garden there to his printing-office in the city, in order to tempt his compositors to be early at their work.

Kensington is eminent for the heaviest part of the gossiping history of courts; but there are one or two literary anecdotes connected with it, which I cannot refer to for want of books. There is a poem on the Gardens by Tickell. I believe Kent first displayed his genius in improving them. There was once some inconvenience, perhaps, in walking in them at late hours; but all the rest of the time it was as it should be. Now, for "satyrs and sylvan boys," they have beadles, who take care that you cultivate nature with propriety, and remind you at every turn of the Board of Green Cloth. Who can dine on the grass with beadles looking at them? Eating their veal-pie under favour, and merry by authority?

\* Castle of Indolence, the last stanza.

"Ev'n so, through Brentford town, a town of mud,  
An herd of bristly swine is prick'd along," &c.

Gay records

— Brentford's tedious town,  
For dirty streets, and white-legg'd chickens known.  
[To be concluded next week.]

## REVIEW OF BOOKS.

*Don Juan. Cantos IX. X. XI.*  
[Continued.]

In our last Number, we carried our observations upon this forthcoming publication to the close of the tenth Canto, and we are now about to enter on the eleventh, with an increasing perception of the difficulty of our task. In no preceding division is the noble author more himself, and less any body else; and all the variety of his moods, but especially the mood sarcastic, are exhibited with singular versatility and piquancy. The ease and felicity of Lord Byron's transitions from "grave to gay, from lively to severe," are without example; only as it was observed of the "Allegro" of Milton, that it was the mirth of a melancholy man, so it may be asserted of the humour of Lord Byron, that it is uniformly tinged with the hue of his Poco-curantish philosophy. Even when dwelling on the Loves and the Graces,—the pure and genuine breathings of early and unsophisticated attachment,—the noblest and least interested of human impulses, the concealed lancet will dart from the barrel of his quill, and in the midst of all manner of smilingness and complacency, as accurately breathe a given vein as Sir Ashley Cooper himself. In the direct manner of inculcating the sombre conclusion of Solomon, that all is vanity, Lord Byron may be

106

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

equalled, but where is he who can so readily and playfully detect the *anguis in herbâ*—the snake in the grass—the serpent beneath the flowers—the universal condition of being—the taint of the earthly in all below the moon? It is however a fearful privilege, being necessarily alarming to fraud and hypocrisy in all its ramifications; and hence the pious horror of bigotted authority, and the solemn farce of the Dugdale appeal—that most finished illustration of jesuitical Equity since the days of Blaise Pascal. Never was common sense more rudely assailed, common honesty more openly trodden down, and the real as distinguished from the avowed object of an asserted law more completely exposed. Happily, in the present instance, it will prove nugatory; and impotent must be the press, and puerile the intellect of the country, if it can long avail in any other. But this is not the object before us; leaving it therefore to the sweeping consequences of universal contempt, we proceed with the more light and entertaining duties of our office.

Canto XI. opens with a brief dissertation on the ideal system of Bishop Berkeley, which, with his usual condensation of thought and expression, the poet identifies with "Universal Egotism"—a happy definition; and with "*All ourselves*," a biting one. But take the passage:—

When Bishop Berkeley said "there was no matter,"  
And proved it—'twas no matter what he said:

They say his system 'tis in vain to batter,  
Too subtle for the ariest human head;  
And yet who can believe it? I would shatter  
Gladly all matters down to stone or lead,  
Or adamant, to find the World a spirit,  
And wear my head, denying that I wear it.

What a sublime discovery 'twas to make the  
Universe universal Egotism,

That's all ideal,—*all ourselves*; I'll stake the  
World (be it what you will) that *that's* no schism.  
Oh, Doubt!—if thou be'st doubt, for which some take thee,  
But which I doubt extremely—thou sole prism  
Of the Truth's rays, spoil not my draught of spirit!  
Heaven's brandy, though our brain can hardly bear it.

With Heaven's brandy, however, the poet wishes to dispense awhile, having grown rather phthisical of late, and finding his orthodoxy increase with his illness. He supplies indeed a scale of the operation; but it will more advance our task to proceed with the history of Don Juan, who alights from his carriage on Shooter's Hill, in order to take a view of London. Allowing the chaise to proceed, he walks on behind it, wrapt up in a contemplation of English greatness, and in ecstasies of admiration at English liberty. The passage is so original, especially for the happy use of rhetorical figure, *antithesis*, we must perforce supply it:—

"And here," he cried, "is Freedom's chosen station;  
"Here peals the people's voice, nor can entomb it  
"Racks, prisons, inquisitions; resurrection  
"Awaits it, each new meeting or election.  
"Here are chaste wives, pure lives; here people pay  
"But what they please; and if that things be dear,  
" 'Tis only that they love to throw away  
"Their cash, to show how much they have a-year.  
"Here laws are all inviolate; none lay

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

107

"Traps for the traveller; every highway's clear:  
"Here——" he was interrupted by a knife,  
With, "Damn your eyes! your money or your life!"

These "freeborn sounds" proceed from four footpads, who had seen Juan loiter behind the carriage. Our Don did not comprehend their language, but found other matters intelligible enough:—

Juan yet quickly understood their gesture,  
And being somewhat choleric and sudden,  
Drew forth a pocket-pistol from his vesture,  
And fired it into one assailant's pudding—  
Who fell, as rolls an ox o'er in his pasture,  
And roared out, as he writhed his native mud in,  
Unto his nearest follower or henchman,  
"Oh Jack! I'm floor'd by that ere bloody Frenchman!"

The comrades of the wounded man run away; but Juan's humanity will not allow him to be abandoned on the road; and here we have a touch of mastery of no common kind. It is scarcely possible to convey a more striking combination of corrupt and factitious with genuine nature than the following passage furnishes:—

But ere they could perform this pious duty,  
The dying man cried, "Hold! I've got my gruel!  
"Oh! for a glass of *mar!*—We've miss'd our booty—  
"Let me die where I am!" And as the fuel  
Of life shrunk in his heart, and thick and sooty  
The drops fell from his death-wound, and he drew ill  
His breath,—he from his swelling throat untied  
A kerchief, crying "Give Sal that!"—and died.

This accident renders Juan meditative; and in allusion to the termination of the hero of the road, Lord Byron displays another accomplishment:—

He from the world had cut off a great man,  
Who in his time had made heroic bustle.  
Who in a row like Tom could lead the van,  
Booze in the ken, or at the spellken hustle?  
Who queer a flat? Who (spite of Bow-street's ban)  
On the high toby-spice so flash the muzzle?  
Who on a lark, with black-eyed Sal (his blowing)  
So prime, so swell, so nutty, and so knowing?  
But Tom's no more—and so no more of Tom.

We omit the entrance of Juan into town by lamplight, his passage over Westminster-bridge, and by way of Charing Cross, Pall Mall, and St. James's-street, to his hotel in Piccadilly, which are very pleasantly sketched; as also the presentation of his ministerial credentials. Suffice it to say, that his previous adventures and *bonnes fortunes* with the comprehensive Catherine, having been industriously whispered, prepare a certain eclat for him, and he is very well received both at court and by office. The following stanzas, we are fearful, will produce no small consternation among a set of personages whose ideas of their own importance are not always in strict accordance with those of other people:—

Besides the Ministers and underlings,  
Who must be courteous to the accredited  
Diplomatists of rather wavering kings,  
Until their royal riddle's fully read,  
The very clerks,—those somewhat dirty springs  
Of office, or the House of Office, fed  
By foul corruption into streams,—even they  
Were hardly rude enough to earn their pay:

108

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

And insolence no doubt is what they are  
Employed for, since it is their daily labour,  
In the dear offices of peace or war;  
And should you doubt, pray ask of your next neighbour,  
When for a passport, or some other bar  
To freedom, he applied (a grief and a bore)  
If he found not this spawn of tax-born riches,  
Like lap-dogs, the least civil sons of b——a.

Juan's reception by the beau monde is highly flattering; and, as usual, his good fortune with the sex is unequivocal:—

Fair virgins blushed upon him; wedded dames  
Bloomed also in less transitory hues;  
For both commodities dwell by the Thames,  
The painting and the painted; youth, ceruse,  
Against his heart preferred their usual claims,  
Such as no gentleman can quite refuse;  
Daughters admired his dress, and pious mothers  
Enquired his income, and if he had brothers.

The following stanza and note will convey information to some of our readers at all events. How little did the young and pretty heiress, to whom Lord Byron is indebted for his special illumination on this subject, foresee that her sage communication would be preserved in a stanza of Don Juan, like a fly in amber! We shudder at the passage in which the poet observes, that he could quote both drapery and wearers. What a feast for the *John Bull*, if given, and their fathers, husbands, brothers, or second cousins should happen to be Whigs!—

The milliners who furnish "drapery Misses" \*  
Throughout the season, upon speculation  
Of payment ere the honeymoon's last kisses  
Have waned into a crescent's coruscation,  
Thought such an opportunity as this is,  
Of a rich foreigner's initiation,  
Not to be overlooked,—and gave such credit,  
That future bridegrooms swore, and sighed, and paid it.

The *Blues*, on whom, for some reason or other, the noble poet seems always disposed to look *blue*, also crowd round the fashionable stranger:—

The Blues, that tender tribe, who sigh o'er sonnets,  
And with the pages of the last Review  
Line the interior of their heads or bonnets,  
Advanced in all their azure's highest hue:  
They talked bad French of Spanish, and upon its  
Late authors asked him for a hint or two;  
And which was softest, Russian or Castilian?  
And whether in his travels he saw Ilion?

Juan, who, like most gentlemen of his class, was not immensely profound, is somewhat perplexed by these learned queries, but gets

\* "Drapery Misses."—This term is probably any thing now but a *mystery*. It was however almost so to me when I first returned from the East in 1811—1812. It means a pretty, a highborn, a fashionable young female, well instructed by her friends, and furnished by her milliner with a wardrobe upon credit, to be repaid, when *married*, by the *husband*. The riddle was first read to me by a young and pretty heiress, on my praising the "drapery" of an "unlocked" but "pretty virginites" (like Mrs. Ann Page) of the *then* day, which has now been some years yesterday:—she assured me that the thing was common in London; and as her own thousands, and blooming looks, and rich simplicity of array, put any suspicion in her own case out of the question, I confess I gave some credit to the allegation. If necessary, authorities might be cited, in which case I could quote both "drapery" and the wearers. Let us hope, however, that it is now obsolete.



## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

109

through his difficulties as many a hero of the same school has done before him:—

Juan, who was a little superficial,  
And not in literature a great Drawcansir,  
Examined by this learned and especial  
Jury of matrons, scarce new what to answer:  
His duties warlike, loving, or official,  
His steady application as a dancer,  
Had kept him from the brink of Hippocrene,  
Which now he found was blue instead of green.  
However, he replied at hazard, with  
A modest confidence and calm assurance,  
Which lent his learned lucubrations pith,  
And passed for arguments of good endurance.  
That prodigy, Miss Araminta Smith,  
(Who at sixteen translated "Hercules Furens"  
Into as furious English) with her best look,  
Set down his sayings in her common-place book.

Our captivating Don, however, is acquainted with several languages; which does much for him; only he is no poet, which in the estimation of the ladies is all that is wanted to render him sublime; besides

Lady Fitz-Frisky, and Miss Mævia Mannish,  
Both longed extremely to be sung in Spanish.

Juan is however admitted to all the coteries, and gets some knowledge of the ten thousand living authors; and

Also the eighty "greatest living poets,"  
As every paltry magazine can show *it's*.

The "greatest living poet," Lord Byron observes, is precisely in the situation of the champion of the fist:—

In twice five years "the greatest living poet,"  
Like to the champion in the fisty ring,  
Is called on to support his claim, or show it,  
Although 'tis an imaginary thing.  
Even I,—albeit I'm sure I did not know it,  
Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be king,—  
Was reckoned, a considerable time,  
The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme.

The subsequent parallel is still more happy:—

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero  
My Leipsic, and my Mont Saint Jean seems Cain:  
"La Belle Alliance" of dunces down at zero,  
Now that the Lion's fall'n, may rise again:  
But I will fall at least as fell my hero;  
Nor reign at all, or as a monarch reign;  
Or to some lonely isle of Jailors go,  
With tarucoat Southey for my turnkey Lowe.

Whether Lord Byron is performing Napoleon to Southey's Sir Hudson or not, we will not determine; but of this we are sure, that in comparison with himself no assignable successor can at this moment be any thing more than a Louis XVIII. to a Bonaparte. *La Belle Alliance* is no doubt active to make it appear otherwise, and its mercenaries retail their miserable jokes and pointless darts (*sine ictu*) with persevering and lamentable imbecility. These gentry should recollect that the lion was not kicked by asses until on the point of expiring, and that a Canto of Don Juan will at any time lay them prostrate by the score. To be candid, their mode of procedure looks as if they themselves thought so, for they exhibit nothing but a sort of impotent demonstration, like the soldiers of a Chinese fort, mentioned

110

## THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

in Lord Anson's Voyage, who in order to keep up a warlike appearance paraded the ramparts with *wooden guns*. Peace be with them, it is sure to attend their readers, if not the most wakeful of mankind.

We find Canto XI. too fruitful for the limits of our publication: we shall therefore conclude our remarks upon it next week.

*Memoir of John Aikin, M. D. By Lucy Aikin.*

Dr. Aikin was one of the few authors by profession, who after running a lengthened career, had no occasion to look behind him with uneasiness or regret. Calm in conduct and steady in principle, the sober and even tenor of his moral and literary character, was perfectly correspondent; and what is not always the case, he seemed thoroughly imbued himself with the spirit of his own favourite axiom,—the propriety of submitting every thing to "the decision of reason." We apprehend, that it is in the rank of the more educated and liberal dissenters that this mental constitution is likely to be formed, and, with certain exceptions, this constant appeal to reason to be more assiduously cultivated, at least we have been generally led to conceive so by the result. Solid and generally scientific attainment, with a diligent culture of the reasoning powers, as opposed to mere philology, and the attainment of an excursive and imaginative spirit, seems to distinguish the thorough bred scholastic dissenter from the mass of the people who are less distinctively educated. This is partly in their favour and partly not. In the critical and investigative departments they usually excel, in the bold, the soaring, and the inventive, seldom; and in lofty flights of imagination still seldomer. In point of fact, they are not often allowed to feed on the literary *pabulum* of this mental tendency until a relish for it is in a great degree superseded; and with the exception of a few of the leading classics, scholastically communicated, instead of coming to the great fathers of poetical inspiration, with a gay, youthful and disengaged frame of mind, they are usually sealed books to them, until preoccupation has shut out their influence for ever. So much as to our grand distinction; and if necessary it would be easy to refer to social and political causes for many more. This however is not our intention; our sole object being to refer to an intellectual species, of which as an individual we think the late Dr. Aikin formed a very favourable example.

The Memoir before us exhibits all the Aikin good sense, with what we are obliged to regard as its frequent concomitant—a something of dryness—too literally a mere memoir to be entertaining; and too destitute of incident to excite curiosity. The life of the professional literary man of the assiduous and laborious class, can scarcely be otherwise; and such was Dr. Aikin. Independent of the history of his productions, we are chiefly interested by his conscientious and honourable maintenance of his public principles, at a time when social comfort and worldly prosperity were both in jeopardy wherever this independence was manifested. In this point of view, the calm and unostentatious life of Dr. Aikin merits the attention of all men, as his services to general literature claim the respect of the scholar and general inquirer in particular. These services, it will be seen by a list of his numerous works inserted in the introduction to these volumes, were chiefly critical and biographical; the first correct and elegant, rather than profound;

Dear N., I know I cannot delight you more than by repeating the praises of another friend:—so richly in this respect has heaven compensated me, for a thousand evils, in things of which even death cannot deprive me.

P. S.—Among other suburban dwellers about London, I have omitted to mention in the course of this article, that Sir Thomas More lived at Chelsea; that Thomas Moore hummed a short time at Hornsey; and that Coleridge resides at Highgate, a “stroller with a book.”

## REVIEW OF BOOKS.

### *Don Juan. Cantos IX. X. XI.*

[Concluded.]

WE ended our observations last week with the Noble Author's allusion to his Buonapartean deposition from the poetical supremacy of the day. He thus descants upon the similar vicissitudes of others, and the species of interregnum at present existing:—

Sir Walter reigned before me; Moore and Campbell  
Before and after; but now grow more holy,  
The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble,  
With poets almost clergymen, or wholly.

A formidable number of asterisks, accounting for the omission of a stanza and a half, follow, leaving us in an awful state of doubt in respect to these reverend contenders for the poetical diadem, which doubtless cannot be otherwise than exceedingly afflicting to Messrs. Millman and Croly. Various opinions are then mentioned:—

Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway;  
And Wordsworth hath supporters, two or three;  
And that deep-mouthed Bæotian, “Savage Landor,”  
Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander.

The Poet proceeds to speak of the minor fry of pretenders, but thinks little of them:

———— I should rate but low  
Their chances;—they're too numerous, like the thirty  
Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals waxed but dirty.

There is something exceedingly happy and forcible in the following simile. Who cannot recognise at first glance the Prætorian bands alluded to?—the hired assailants of every person and thing unshackled and independent; yet greedy, mutinous, and insolent, if not amply rewarded out of the spoil. As to the Author of *Don Juan* trying conclusions with them, no one can doubt the result of such a struggle in the field of intellect; but Lord Byron, or any one else, will never be able to encounter them in *any* field; it is not their business to fight openly; they are guerillas and bushfighters almost to a man. We need not point out the felicity with which the Poet has described the demure and unconscious simplicity of his Muse:—

This is the literary *lower* Empire,  
Where the Prætorian bands take up the matter;—  
A “dreadful trade,” like his who “gathers samphire,”  
The insolent soldiery to soothe and flatter,

With the same feelings as you'd coax a vampire.  
Now, were I once at home, and in good satire,  
I'd try conclusions with those Janizaries,  
And show them *what* an intellectual war is.

I think I know a trick or two, would turn  
Their flanks;—but it is hardly worth my while  
With such small gear to give myself concern:  
Indeed I've not the necessary bile;  
My natural temper's really aught but stern,  
And even my Muse's worst reproof's a smile;  
And then she drops a brief and modern curt'sey,  
And glides away, assured she never hurts ye.

The fashionable life of Juan is thus detailed:—

His morns he passed in business—which dissected,  
Was, like all business, a laborious nothing,  
That leads to lassitude, the most infected  
And Centaur Nessus garb of mortal clothing,  
And on our sofas makes us lie dejected,  
And talk in tender horrors of our loathing  
All kinds of toil, save for our country's good—  
Which grows no better, though 'tis time it should.

His afternoons he passed in visits, luncheons,  
Lounging, and boxing; and the twilight hour  
In riding round those vegetable punchoons  
Called “Parks,” where there is neither fruit nor flower  
Enough to gratify a bee's slight munchings;  
But after all, it is the only “bower”  
(In Moore's phrase) where the fashionable fair  
Can form a slight acquaintance with fresh air.

The dress, the dinner, and the crowded rout follow; and we cannot omit a short description of the circumstances attendant upon the latter, the occurrence of which in the last possible stage of inconvenience is said to produce extreme exultation in fashionable and high-born bosoms of the feminine gender:—

There stands the Noble Hostess, nor shall sink  
With the three-thousandth curt'sey; there the Waltz,  
The only dance which teaches girls to think,  
Makes one in love even with its very faults.  
Saloon, room, hall o'erflow beyond their brink,  
And long the latest of arrivals halts,  
'Midst royal dukes and dames condemned to climb,  
And gain an inch of staircase at a time.

The matrimonial and other speculation attendant upon fashionable intercourse is subsequently adverted to; but as we cannot afford a taste of everything, we hasten to the following caustic summary of the life and death of British young noblemen. There is wormwood in the ingredients, but is there not also truth?

They are young, but know not youth—it is anticipated;  
Handsome but wasted, rich without a sou;  
Their vigour in a thousand arms is dissipated;  
Their cash comes *from*, their wealth goes *to* a Jew;  
Both senates see their nightly votes participated  
Between the tyrant's and the tribunes' crew;  
And having voted, dined, drank, gamed, and whored,  
The family vault receives another lord.

The Poet then proceeds to moralize with great emphasis upon the transitory nature of earthly existence. He does not however ask, in the usual style of lackadaisical grandiloquence, what is become of defunct

empires, or of Babylon and Nineveh: the world of *eight years past* is alone reverted to:—

Where is Napoleon the Grand? God knows:  
Where little Castlereagh? The devil can tell:  
Where Grattan, Curran, Sheridan, all those  
Who bound the bar or senate in their spell?  
Where is the unhappy Queen, with all her woes?  
And where the Daughter, whom the Isles loved well?  
Where are those martyred Saints, the Five per Cents?  
And where—oh where the devil are the Rents!  
Where's Brummel? Dished. Where's Long Pole Wellesley? Diddled.  
Where's Whitbread? Romilly? Where's George the Third?  
Where is his will? (That's not so soon unriddled.)  
And where is "Fum" the Fourth, our "royal bird"?

We cannot give the whole of these pleasant queries, but the following are very mischievously happy:—

Where are the Grenvilles? Turned as usual. Where  
My friends the Whigs? Exactly where they were.

Nor the following:—

Some die, some fly, some languish on the Continent,  
Because the times have hardly left them *one* tenant.

Even "change is more changeable," exclaims the poet, pathetically:

Nought's permanent among the human race,  
Except the Whigs *not* getting into place.

Which of course is a climax. The poet proceeds in this moralizing strain to the end of the Canto, in the course of which he informs us that he has much more to relate of the adventures of Don Juan in this our "moral country":—

What Juan saw and underwent, shall be  
My topic, with of course the due restriction  
Which is required by proper courtesy;  
And recollect the work is only fiction,  
And that I sing of neither mine nor me,  
Though every scribe, in some slight turn of diction,  
Will hint allusions never *meant*. Ne'er doubt  
*This*—when I speak, I *don't* hint, but *speaks out*.

What those adventures are, however,

Is yet within the unread events of time.  
Thus far, go forth, thou Lay! which I will back  
Against the same given quantity of rhyme,  
For being as much the subject of attack  
As ever yet was any work sublime,  
By those who love to say that white is black.  
So much the better!—I may stand alone,  
But would not change my free thoughts for a throne.

So much for the Cantos of Don Juan which are about to appear, and to supply, like the Greek fire, the example of a flame which only burns the more clearly and fiercely for the dirty water that is thrown upon it. Scientifically speaking, we are told that there is much inflammability in water, and that it is rather by force than by humidity that a stream of it from an engine extinguishes a fire—in a word, that the fire is *dashed out*. We suspect that it is owing to a deep consideration of this theory, that a Learned Lord proceeds. Perceiving that the illumination of the press only burns the more brightly in consequence of the wretched tools or engines employed to keep it down, his Lordship is adopting the

*Injunction*, or *dashing-out* system. It will scarcely however be endured even so long as its introducer is likely to live; and when gathered to his fathers, how certainly that and much more of the same kind will follow him, is apparent to all men. In fact, this political and legal leviathan is like the single nail which is said once to have arrested the launch of a first-rate man of war. Every body shrugged up their shoulders at *such* an obstacle—an obstacle however it was, and when extracted, the magnificent fabric, thus insignificantly impeded, pursued calmly and majestically its destined course.

*Popular Tales and Romances of the Northern Nations. In Three Vols.*

"These tales," says the compiler of the present collection, "do not pretend to be a picture of human nature and human manners; they are either imitations of early traditions, or the traditions themselves, amplified by some modern writers, and must be judged of in reference to such origin. Stories of this nature form an important feature in the literature of the Germans, who seem to be the authenticated historians of Satan in all his varieties of name and attribute."

The foregoing brace of sentences in a few words so clearly conveys the extent of the expectation to be formed of these volumes, that we have quoted them to save a more circuitous explanation. If any way to be amended, it is in the mention of the early traditions themselves, of which we apprehend there are *none* that are not materially altered or amplified. The application of literature to the rude traditions of past times, is uniformly discernible; and although in some respects necessary to modern literary taste, we are not sure that the more direct source of interest is thereby improved. A comparative reality generally attends the ruder original notions, which are usually spiritualized away by the intrusions of more disciplined imaginations, and thus lose in a more absorbing power what they gain in fancy. We make this remark because we think it is in this respect the English reader will experience some disappointment. There are only one or two of these stories which chain down attention, although several of them dally agreeably enough in a species of mongrel fantasticality, peculiarly congenial to the Germans, who have parcelled out the province of ultra romance into a variety of departments, of the nice distinction between which the readers of other nations have but little conception. The following additional quotation from the Preface to these translations will serve to illustrate our meaning:—

"It must however be allowed that, with the Germans, fancy has had too much sway, for it has seldom been under the guidance of sound taste; and the consequence is, that the multitude of their original fictions is disgraced by the most barbarous absurdities. The same may, in some measure, be said of their modern romance, but at the same time the reader cannot fail to be delighted with the variety and richness of its inventions, *diablerie* with the Germans being as inexhaustible as the fairyism of the Eastern world. Sometimes it is presented to us under its most terrific forms; at others it appears, as in Musäus, under a light veil of irony, in a tone half jest, half earnest, and that is, indeed, its most beautiful form. Few tales are more pleasing than the Spectre Barber, one of the happiest illustrations of this class of writing, where a playful fancy sports with a fiction, that was at no distant time the delight and terror of the peasant's fireside. La Motte Fouqué, on the contrary, is altogether a magician of darkness, who loves to treat the wild and impossible as serious matters, but who always endeavours to draw from them some moral conclusions. Veit Weber, another great name of romance, builds his tales on the