

The Leisure Hour.

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The Fall of the House of Usher.

BY EDGAR A. POE.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations, in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered idealist threw a sulphurous lustre over all. His long improved digressions will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly, because I shuddered knowing not why—these paintings (which I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me at least—in the circumstances then surrounding me—there arose out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvass, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever, yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain recessary points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch, or other artificial source of light was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid facility of his improvisations could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes, as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not infrequently accompanied himself with rhymed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it, as he gave it, because, in the under or mytic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness on the part of Usher, of the uttering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace," ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:

In the greenest of our valleys,
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion—
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow;
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago)
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A winged odor went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tuned law,
Round about a throne, where sitting
(Porphyrogene)
In state his glory will befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all, with pearl and ruby glowing,
Was the fair palace door;
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him, desolate)
And, round about his home, the glory
That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entomb'd.

And travellers now within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows, see
Spectral forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While, like a rapid ghostly river,
Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more.

I will remember that suggestions arising from this ballad, led us into a train of thought wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention not so much on account of its novelty, (for other men* have thought thus,) as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentence of all vegetable things. But, in his disordered fancy, the idea had assumed a mere daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganicization. I lack words to express the full extent, or the earnest abandon of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentence had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collection of these stones—in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around—above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence—the evidence of the scintilla—was to be seen, he said, (and I here started as he spoke,) in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent, yet impetuous and terrible influence which for centuries had moulded the destinies of his family, and which made him what I now saw him—what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books—the books which, for years, had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the *Ververt et Charteirois* of Gresset; the *Belphégor* of Machiavelli; the *Heaven and Hell* of Swedenborg; the *Saberranean Voyage* of Nicholas Kimm by Holberg; the *Chromany* of Robert Fion, of Jean D'Indagine, and of De la Chambre; the *Journey into the Blue Distance* of Tieck; and the *City of the Sun* of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorium*, by the Dominican Emeric de Girone; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Ethiopians, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic—the manual of a forgotten church—the *Vigiliae Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesiae Maguntinae*.

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when, one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight, (previously to its final interment,) in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding, was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural, precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of admission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used, apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon-keep, and, in later days, as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been, also, similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound, as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon trestles within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unopened lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, dividing, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead—for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death.

* Watson, Dr. Percival, Spallanzani, and especially the Bishop of Landaff—See *Chemical Essays*, vol. v.

We replaced and screwed down the lid, and, having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue—but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitious.

TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.

An Arab Horse.

A Bedouin, named Jabel, possessed a mare of great celebrity. Hassan Pasha, then Governor of Damascus, wished to buy the animal, and repeatedly made the owner the most liberal offers, which Jabel steadily refused. The Pasha then had recourse to threats, but with no better success. At length, one Gafar, a Bedouin of another tribe, presented himself to the pasha, and asked what he would give the man who should make him the mare of Jabel's mare? "I will fill his horse's nose-bag with gold," replied Hassan. The result of this interview having gone abroad, Jabel became more watchful than ever, and always secured his mare at night with an iron chain, one end of which was fastened to her hind fetlock, whilst the other, after passing through the tent cloth, was attached to a picket driven in the ground under the tent that served himself and his wife for a bed. But one midnight, Gafar crept silently into the tent, and succeeded in loosening the chain. Just before starting off with his prize, he caught up Jabel's lance, and poking him with the butt-end, cried out, "I am Gafar; I have stolen your noble mare, and will give you notice in time." This warning was in accordance with the customs of the desert, for to rob a hostile tribe is considered an honorable exploit, and the man who accomplishes it is desirous of all the glory that may flow from the deed. Poor Jabel, when he heard the words, rushed out of the tent and gave the alarm; then mounting his brother's mare, accompanied by some of the tribe, he pursued the robber for four hours. The brother's mare was of the same stock as Jabel's, but was not equal to her; nevertheless, he out-stripped those of all the other pursuers, and was even on the point of overtaking the robber, when Jabel shouted to him, "Pitoh her right ear and give a touch of the heel." Gafar did so, and away went the mare like lightning, speedily rendering further pursuit hopeless. The pinch in the ear and the touch with the heel were the secret signs by which Jabel had been used to urge his mare to the utmost speed. Jabel's companions were amazed and indignant at his strange conduct. "O thou father of a jackass," they cried, "thou hast enabled the thief to rob thee of thy jewel." But he silenced their upbraids by saying, "I would rather lose her than sully her reputation. Would you have me suffer it to be said among the tribes that another mare had proved faster than mine? I have, at least, this comfort left me, that I can say she never met with her match."—*J. S. Rarey's Art of Horse taming.*

Influence of Female Society.

It is better for you to pass an evening once or twice in a lady's drawing-room, even though the conversation is slow, and you know the girl's song by heart, than in a club, tavern, or the pit of a theatre. All amusements of youth to which virtuous women are not admitted, rely on it, are deleterious in their nature. All men who avoid female society have dull perceptions, and are stupid, or have gross tastes, and revolt against what is pure. Your club swaggers, who are sucking the butts of billiard cues all night, call female society insipid. Poetry is insipid to a yokel; beauty has no charms for a blind man; music does not please a poor beast who does not know one time from another; and as a true epicure is hardly ever tired of water snobby and brown bread, butter, I protest I can sit for a whole night talking to a well regulated, kindly woman, about her girl coming out, or her boy at Eton, and like the evening's entertainment. One of the great benefits a man may derive from women's society is, that he is bound to be respectful to them. The habit is of great good to your moral man, depend upon it. Our education makes of us the most eminently selfish men in the world. We fight for ourselves, we push for ourselves, we jawn for ourselves, we light our pipes, and say we won't go out; we prefer ourselves, and our ease; and the greatest good that comes to a man from a woman's society is, that he has to think of somebody besides himself, somebody to whom he is bound to be constantly attentive and respectful.—*Theobald.*

From the Scottish Guardian. The Pass of Death.

It was a narrow pass,
Watered with human tears,
For death has kept the outer gate
Almost six thousand years.
And the ceaseless tread of a world's feet
Was ever in my ears—
Throning, jostling, hurrying by,
As if they were only born to die.

A stately king drew near,
This narrow pass to tread,
Around him hung a gorgeous robe,
And a crown was on his head;
But death, with a look of withering scorn,
Arrested him and said,
"In humbler dress must the king draw near,
For the crown and the purple are useless here."

Next came a man of wealth,
And his eye was proud and bold,
And he bore in his hand a lengthy scroll,
Telling of sums untold;
But death, who careth not for rank,
Careth as little for gold—
"Here that scroll I cannot allow,
For the gold of the rich is powerless now."

Another followed fast,
And a book was in his hand,
Filled with the flashes of burning thought,
That are known in many a land;
But the child of genius failed to hear
Death's pitiless demand—
"Here that book cannot enter with thee,
For the bright flash of genius is nothing to me."

Next came a maiden fair,
With that eye so deeply bright,
That stiv' within you strange sweet care,
Should you meet on a summer night;
But death, ere the gentle maid passed thro',
Snatched away its light—
"Beauty is power in the world," he said,
"But what can it do in the Pass of Death!"

A youth of sickly mien,
Followed in thoughtful mood,
Whose heart was filled with love to God
And the early brotherhood;
Death felt he could not quench the heart
That lived for others' good—
"I own," cried he, "the power of love,
I must let it pass to the realms above!"

From the Pittsburg Morning Post. The Fate of Genius.

A few years since we met the gifted, but wayward, Sumner Lincoln Fairfield. The unfortunate and wretched child of song was at that time travelling to the South, with a view to the improvement of his health. He was accompanied by his son, a remarkably bright and beautiful youth of ten or twelve years of age. In a conversation with the poet, we remarked that the lad seemed to possess genius, and gave promise of a distinction and usefulness. With a deep, heartfelt sigh, the unhappy father replied, "I fear your words are too true. The boy has fine parts, but I would rather he were an idiot than genius. As an idiot, he would be obscure and comparatively happy; as a genius, he would be envied, hated, eccentric, and wretched. It is, to most parents, flattering to be told that their offspring is gifted, but I would rather see my poor boy in his grave than know that he is the possessor of that fatal thing called genius." A few weeks after, in looking over a paper published in New Orleans, we saw the announcement of the death of poor Fairfield. The unfortunate and brilliant man died in misery and want in the very prime of life, and was, we believe, buried at the expense of his friend and schoolfellow, George D. Prentice, Esq., of the Louisville Journal. Fairfield was a man of fine education and splendid poetic endowments, but misfortune marked him for his own, and now, far from his native hills, he lies in an obscure corner, with no hand to scatter flowers upon his grave, and no eye to behold the silent tear of his memory.

Thus it is too often with men of genius.—Proud, sensitive and aspiring, they become sour and chagrined, avoid their fellows, and frequently die in want and misery. It is said that between his fortieth and sixtieth year, Sir Walter Scott realized by the productions of his pen at least half a million of money.—Then followed a terrible reverse, and the panic of 1826 came, leaving the great magician in debt to the amount of one hundred and thirty thousand pounds! The gentle and genial old man labored hard to relieve himself from his embarrassments. His productions yielded him during six years some eighty thousand dollars a year, but his health failed and at last he perished in a giant-like effort to satisfy his creditors.

John Keats,
"Who sparkled, was exhaled, and went to Heaven,"
lived long enough to dazzle the world with his genius, and then died from the effects of poison, administered by a heartless viperish reviewer.

The fate of Chatterton, the "marvellous boy who perished in his pride"—is also too well known. Prigally endowed, with wonderful inventive powers, a daring fancy, and an intellect as brilliant as it was original and rigorous, he experienced cruel neglect, suffered from hunger, and finally, in a moment of despair, perished by his own hand. Thus passed away one whose youthful productions have made his home immortal, and whose more mature efforts would doubtless have ranked him second only to him who "first exhausted worlds, and then invented new." His biography tells us that he was buried without ceremony, among paupers, in Shoe Lane, his identity could with difficulty be established when the fact was known.

In his "Lives of the Poets" William Howitt says: "By one of those acts which neither science or curiosity can excuse, the skull of Pope is now in the private collection of a physiologist! The manner in which it was obtained is said to have been this: on some occasion of alteration in the church, or burial of some one in the same spot, the coffin of Pope was disinterred and opened to see the state of his remains; that by a bribe to the sexton of the time, possession of the skull was obtained for a night, and another skull returned instead of it. I have heard that fifty pounds were paid to manage and carry through this transaction. Be that as it may, the skull of Pope figures in a private museum."
There's a fame for you, aspiring, verse-writing reader. Think of it! The skull of the author of the *Essay on Criticism*, and translator of the *Iliad* of Homer, is now in the private collection of a phrenologist. The skull of the companion of Bolingbroke, Halifax, Addison and Mary Montague, is in a private museum. "The palace where a god might dwell," say, did dwell, is now the property of a mountebank, and vulgar eyes gaze at, and filthy hands toss about, that which was the dome of thought, the seat of learning, wit and poetry. Verily, in this there is much to console the admirers of the logical, polished, pungent and poetic Pope.

The woes of genius meet us at every turn. Byron, Burns, Hemans, McLean, Poe and others rise up before us, and their faults, sufferings and misfortunes claim and receive our pity and our tears.

Rather than endure what Chatterton and Keats endured, suffer what Hemans and Shelley suffered, and die as Burns and Byron died, would it not be better to watch flocks through life and die as did the hind who thought the world was bounded by his native hills?

An Egyptian Prince's Harem.

One of the largest rooms we entered had some fourteen or sixteen medallions along the wall, with Ismail Pasha's initials traced in diamonds upon each. The letters appeared from eight to ten inches high! Every thing was in the same style. It would be impossible to detail the gorgeousness of all we saw. Every room had different hangings, but all of the richest silk, and in keeping with the rest of the furniture. In some there were soft and beautiful carpets, and in others the floor was of inlaid marble. In many there were elegant fountains, and the ceilings in all were of polished wood, arranged in mosaics, or exhibiting the grain in beautiful combinations. When the gentlemen were scarcely locked out, at which they grumbled not a little, Ismail Pasha's wives and attendant ladies were introduced, and we were conducted into one of these apartments. The two princesses are Circassians. They were bought as slaves when only fourteen or fifteen years old. They are both under twenty, and one of them is very lovely. Large, dark, soft, melting eyes, shaded by long black eyelashes, a well-formed nose and mouth, teeth of pearly whiteness, and an exquisite complexion, perfectly realized all we had ever conceived of a Circassian beauty; the other princess was younger, and her features were equally faultless, but she lacked the sparkling animation of the elder. Hers was a sad, tho' far from uncommon, history. She had two lovely children, and had but them both in one night—no rare occurrence in a Turkish harem, but she had never recovered from the shock; she is, we were told, the favorite with Ismail, for the time being, I suppose, but neither of the wives seemed jealous of the other. Sweet meats made by the ladies of the harem, were first handed round, and pipes and coffee followed. The music in this harem, though deafening and discordant, was infinitely superior to any we had heard in Egypt. There was a greater variety of musical instruments; there were three flat "kanones," or dulcimers, more agreeable to look at than to listen to; they were made of veneered walnut-wood, inlaid with mother-of-pearl; there were also some "loodes," or lutes; this has been for many centuries, the instrument most commonly used by the best Arab musicians. Its name (the original signification of which is "wood") with the "el" prefixed to it, is the source whence are derived the terms *luteo* in Italian, *luth* in French, *lute* in English, etc. There was also a hautboy, a tambourine, and a *tarrabukka*. Four girls about ten years of age, and another about six, dressed like a boy in scarlet clothes, were made to dance for at least two hours. I thought the poor children would have dropped from exhaustion, for it requires no small degree of physical force to keep up the shaking of the limbs which seems to constitute the chief part of an Eastern dance. Their last performance was to turn over and over on their hands like a wheel, the one dressed as a boy going head over heels. These latter evolutions delighted the princesses very much. Many of the slaves were old and ugly; and among the younger there was only one who had the least pretensions to good looks, and she in consequence enjoyed a share of Ismail Pasha's affections.—*Travels in Egypt, by a lady.*

Mr. Spurgeon at Belfast.

Mr. Spurgeon made his first appearance in Ireland on the 11th of August, in one of the Presbyterian churches at Belfast. His audience is described as being numerous and respectable; but to judge from the tone of the local journals, his success as a preacher has not, so far, been complete. The Northern *Whig* concludes a notice of his sermon, which is reported at some length, in these terms: "We cannot deny that Mr. Spurgeon is a remarkable man, and we do not wish to deny that he has elements of power and forcible ex-

pression which command the attention of his audience, and of which many more revered divines may envy him the possession.—The means, however, by which he has attained his celebrity are questionable, and, without harshness, we may be permitted to suspect that this world has full as much to do with Mr. Spurgeon's ministrations as the next. From pulpits discourses such as his we cannot hope for any real or lasting benefits to society, or to the cause of Christianity.—The functions of the Apostle are in him too much overlaid with the antics of the mountebank to be productive of any permanent impression. The brilliant passages in his sermons and the bursts of eloquence to which he occasionally gives utterance, are sadly marred by dramatized scenes of vulgar irreverence; and, if last night's discourse be assumed as a fair sample, the thoughts of self intrude too constantly to impress the congregation with any belief in the absolute sincerity of the preacher's declarations. We are bound, therefore, to repeat, that in our opinion Spurgeonism is an extravagance.—We should rejoice, indeed, to see among certain sections of the clergy an awakening to the comprehension of their true functions as Gospel ministers. A revival among our modern preachers is sadly wanted, but Spurgeonism will not do. Such a style of pulpit preaching would, in the end, be demoralizing to society, and damaging to the progress of pure religious truth. Every excitement produces reaction, and if everybody were to go in for Spurgeonism, the reaction would be terrible."

A Woman's Revenge.

"Once upon a time," she went on, sitting her muslin, and shaking her golden hair, "an officer in the Guards was traveling by the express night train to Southampton. In the same first-class carriage there was a lady, very young and very handsome, and I am afraid that before they reached Winchester there were no other persons in the carriage) she permitted this bold young guardsman to imprint one kiss—she gave and she allowed no more—upon her gloved hand. It was a fresh, a caprice, a bit of fun—just like the kiss which the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire gave a sweep, when Mr. Fox was being elected for Westminster. But she made him take a solemn oath that he would never reveal what had taken place. It fell out that our guardsman, about six months afterwards, did, in the smoking-room of his club in St. James's-street, break his oath, and, with the boastful, lying qualities common to men, gave the story, with some additions perfectly and wantonly false. A fortnight afterwards, he had an invitation to stay a week with a distant relative of his—an old admiral, who lived in a charming villa on the banks of the river Itchen, close to Southampton. He had never seen this relative before, but some family matter had to be arranged, and he went down. He was received with the most cordial hospitality especially by the admiral's wife, who was very young and very handsome, and who, by the merest chance in the world, turned out to be the identical lady with whom he had travelled, per night express train, from London to Southampton. She gave him her hand, ungloried this time, smiled upon him very sweetly, and just before dinner drew him on one side, and, with a sweeter smile than ever, told him, in a discreet whisper, that if he would come round at twelve o'clock that night to a certain window at the back of the house, overlooking the river, only separated from its brink by a narrow footway, she had something very important, and perhaps pleasant, to communicate to him. He came punctually at the appointed time. The moon was shining very brightly. The window was opened; and a lady in a night-dress beckoned a tall and handsome cavalier (as the novelists say) to advance to her. "And she let him in through the window. By Jove, what a plucky one!" She said this.—Captain Darrell, you are a liar and a traitor." She did this—she put a pistol to his head, right in the centre of his forehead, between his curling locks which parted in the middle; and she blew his brains out, and Captain Darrell fell into the river Itchen, and was found there next day; very wet and very dead."—*Buddington Peerage.*

The Oracles of God.

It is a matter of congratulation that the Bible has passed triumphantly through the ordeal of verbal criticism. English infidels of the last century raised a premature pean over the discovery and publication of so many various readings. They imagined that the popular mind would be rudely and thoroughly shaken, that Christianity would be placed in imminent peril of extinction, and that the Church would be dispersed and ashamed at the sight of the tattered shreds of its *Magna Charta*. But the result has blasted all their hopes, and the Oracles of God are found to have been preserved in immaculate integrity. The storm which shook, as the oak only loosens the earth around its roots, and its violence enables the tree to strike its roots deeper into the soil. So it is that Scripture has gloriously surmounted every trial. There gathers around it a dense cloud of witnesses; from the ruins of Nineveh and the valley of the Nile; from the slabs and bas-reliefs of Sennacherib and the tombs and monuments of Pharaoh; from the rolls of Chaldee paraphrase and Syrian versionists; from the cells and dusty labors of scholars and antiquarians. Our present Bibles are undisturbed by the lapse of ages.—These Oracles, written amid such strange diversity of time, place and condition—among the sands and cliffs of Arabia, the fields

and hills of Palestine, in the palace of Babylon and in the dungeons of Rome—have come down to us in such unimpaired fullness and accuracy, that we are placed as advantageously toward them as the generation which gazed upon the book of the law, or those crowds which hung on the lips of Jesus as he recited a parable on the shores of the Galilean Lake, or those Churches which received from Paul or Peter one of their epistles of warning exposition.—Yes! the river of life, which issues out from beneath the throne of God and of the Lamb, may, as it flows through so many countries, sometimes bear with it the earthly evidences of its checkered progress; but the great volume of its water has neither been dimmed in its transparency, nor bereft of its healing virtue.

[North British Review.]

Lawyer vs. Lawyer.

The Belton Independent (Texas) gives the following racy letter from a lawyer of its town, who has been favored with an offer of a cheap recommendation to patronage, which he has nevertheless felt constrained to decline. The letter is as follows:

Georgetown, June 3, 1853.

JOHN LIVINGSTON, Esq.—*My Dear John*—Yours came safely to hand. With a trembling hand, and a beating heart, I seized the letter, thinking from its size that I had been singled out by the majority of the New York merchants as the most proper person to "put through" on the "lightning line," not only the Georgetown merchants, but those in all the surrounding counties, and visions of a "pile" realized by 10 per cent, floated through my mind, tinged with all the gorgeous hues of six rainbows; but alas! "sic transit gloria mundi." Upon opening it, I found nothing but your most flattering attempt to do me out of ten dollars. You tell me that my name has been inserted for my county in your Catalogue of Lawyers in Texas and elsewhere.

By whose authority John, was this done? Our acquaintance, I don't think, would justify this liberty on your part, and did I not believe that it was done purely with the desire alone of advancing my interest, I should feel disposed to resent the liberty. I feel flattered, John, at this mark of your esteem and confidence, and would have felt more so had you not sent the very same letter to all my acquaintances among the bar. I don't understand this my dear fellow. Now, suppose, John, that I should send you \$10, and the balance of the profession here should do the same; think of the delicate situation in which you would be placed.—\$10 or seven of us, all paying to be inserted in your Catalogue of Lawyers, as the most reliable lawyer in Georgetown, Williamson county, Texas. How could you choose between us? You have made the same promise to all of us; and the place is too small to afford but one "reliable lawyer." It won't do, John. The thing can't be explained in any other way, but that you are trying to "jeremy Diddle" us out of ten dollars each. It is a poor compliment to our sense to think you can "do it to us" in this style. Why, the little boys here all see through this; 'tis as plain as the old "gandmother's trick," John.

Cannot, or could you not, devise some slicker method of putting us through? something that we could not see through? You say that ten dollars will be my "just proportion of the expense of publishing and circulating said catalogue." You are mistaken, John—the said catalogue publishers have fooled you—you have the names of about eight or ten thousand "reliable lawyers" in the United States, and at ten dollars a head, John, it would look to a blind man if there was money enough to publish the lives of Gen. Washington, Tom. Thumb, Fred Douglass, the Angel Gabriel, and yourself, John, all bound in calf, and have enough left beside to "licker all around." You see we have studied arithmetic here, John, and have cut our eye-teeth besides. We don't blame you, John, for trying to take us in, for, although you know us well enough to vex us for to any man who has important business to attend to, and will, for ten dollars—commend us as the "most and only reliable lawyer in Georgetown," yet, John, you don't know us (this is private, however), or you never would have attempted to Simon Suggs us in this way. I believe I am capable, and hope I am honest, but John, you do not know the fact to be so, and, therefore, according to Polly, when you say so, you lie, John.

You say in your postscript that if you can't do me for ten dollars I may "go in lemons" to the amount of five. Thank you—small favors thoughtfully received—larger ones in proportion. I believe I will pass the first round and see how the game goes.

In conclusion, John, allow me to request you to take my name out of your book, John. I had as lief be published almost in a horse-trail list as to appear in your book, for we all understand it here, and when a man's name is seen there, we know he has bought the privilege, and as we know the price, we think but little of a ten dollar reputation, and less of a man who prizes it enough to buy it. I consider myself injured, John, by the first insertion and if it is continued, shall be compelled to resort to legal process to have it stopped—consider myself slandered, and think less of every man whose name appears in your catalogue if done with his authority. I would, before I close, advise you always to send a postage stamp to pay postage with, did I not know it was not a "part of your system" to do so. No news. Turn-as-dell at present as your attempt to swindle me.

In conclusion, allow me to subscribe myself, my dear John. Yours truly, A. H. CHALMERS.