

STONE TALK

(ΑΙΘΟΦΩΝΗΜΑ):

BEING SOME OF THE
MARVELLOUS SAYINGS OF A PETRAL PORTION OF
FLEET STREET, LONDON,

TO ONE
DOCTOR POLYGLOTT, PH.D.,

BY

FRANK BAKER, D.O.N.

“Tolle, Lege.”—*St. Augustine.*

LONDON :
ROBERT HARDWICKE, 192, PICCADILLY.

1865.

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TEMPLE BAR.

DEDICATION.

TO MY OLD FRIEND
THE AUTHOR OF "THE GENTLE LIFE"
THESE LINES,
UNGENTLE AND UNGENTEEL,
ARE
REGRETFULLY DEDICATED,
HE BEING ONE
WHO, IN A SPIRITLESS AND CHARACTERLESS AGE,
HAS ENDEAVOURED,
HOWEVER UNSUCCESSFULLY OR SUCCESSFULLY,
TO INSTIL
SPIRIT AND CHARACTER.



STONE TALK

(ΑΙΘΟΦΩΝΗΜΑ).

— oo —

QUOTH Charley Wode, “Friend Polyglott,
Come, canny mon, and take your pot-
Luck at my house; we’ll have a chat
’Bout India, Indians, and all that!”

Done! not that I enjoy his tales,
Like M’Quhae’s snakes with ’ternal tales
(Though better than old John-Bull stories
Of Whigs defunct and buried Tories),
Yet there’s a charm within his wine
That masters stronger minds than mine,
And at his den you sometimes meet
With curry fit for man to eat—
With Tokay neat and Bordeaux good,
And Port unknowing of log-wood.

10

Reader, would’st read how much we ate
Of *entrées*, *entremets*, et cæt.?
No? Pass we on then. I’ll but state,
For six good hours *en tête-à-tête*,
Like old sheep and young bull, we sat,
Striving in wine, smoking cheroots,

20

Dr. Polyglott, Ph.D., drinks with a certain No-shire squire,
--

Talking of Lowrys, Reids, and Chutes,
And other sun-baked Indian *croûtes*,
Bummelows, Bungalows, and Banchoots.

Eight was the zero of stagnation;
At nine began some conversation,
At twelve a dash of disputation,
Peppered with slight inebriation;
At two I rose, about to wend
My ways, when, lo! my No-shire friend
Sank slowly down in sight of Port.

30

I 'gan to whistle *Il s'endort*:
Mon oiseau jaune est endormi—
Charley's as fou' as fou' can be.
I feared to see the creature led
Or carried to the nuptial bed:
And, Heavens! might *SHE* not be near,
In cap, curl-papers, and night-gear?
I rang the bell—all slept—'twas late—
Took hat, and softly ganged my gait.

Now, let me tell you, reader, 'tisin't
Corporeal exercise most pleasant,
When raw night-air, than pea-soup thicker,
Adds fuel to the flames of liquor,
Without a guide to steer your feet
Through "mazy error" of square and street,
And in the morning find you've strayed
Into the station's "pendant shade."*
Still roamed on I till reached a door
Whence streamed the light in ruddy shower,
And band proclaiming ball was there.
'Twas three a.m.; I'd time to spare;

40

whom he
leaves in liquor;

50

wanders
about,

* “With mazy error under pendant shades.”—F. B. *Paradise Lost*.

So, standing ’mid the vulgar crowd,
I watched the fair, the great, the proud
That hustled in, when glad surprise
Awaited these my languid eyes.

The pink silk hood Her head was on
Did make a sweet comparison
With brow as pure, as clear, as bright
As Boreal dawn on Polar night,
With lips whose crimson strove to hide
Gems all unknown to Oman’s tide,*
With eyes as myosotis blue,
With cheeks of peachy down and hue,
And locks whose semi-liquid gold
Over the ivory shoulders rolled.

Not “low” her dress, yet cunning eye
’Neath gauzy texture could descry
Two silvery orbs, that rose and fell
With Midland Sea’s voluptuous swell,
Intoxicating to the brain
As flowers that breathe from Persian plain,†
Whereon to rest one moment brief
Were worth a life of pain and grief;
And, though fast closed in iron cage—
Venetian padlock of the age—
The poetry of motion told
Of all by envious flounce and fold
Concealed: each step of nameless grace
Taught glowing Fancy’s glance to trace

and beholds a
beauty.

60

70

A falling waist, on whose soft round
No lacing wrinkle might be found

80

Dr. Polyglott, Ph.D., incontinently falls in love,
--

* The Persian Gulf, which produces the finest pearls.—F. B.

† The wild Narcissus, whose scent is believed to be highly aphrodisiac.—F. B.

(Nor waspish elegance affright
Thorwaldsen's or Canova's sight),
And rising hips and migniard feet—
Ankle for Dian's buskin meet—
Gastroenemius——

Cease, Muse! to tell

The things my mem'ry holds too well.

I bowed before the Thing Divine
As pilgrim sighting holy shrine,
And straight my 'chanted spirit soared
To dizzy regions late explored
By Mister Hume—A.B.—C.D.*—all
The rout yclept spiritual.

90

A church of emeralds I see!
An altar-tower lit brilliantly;
A steeple, too, the pave inlaid
With richest tints of light and shade;
A "deal of purple," arched pews;
And all the "blacks" methinks are
"blues."

Now throngs the murex-robèd crowd,
A-chanting anthems long and loud,
And children, garbed in purest white,
Kneel with wreathed heads before the
light.

100

I, too, am there, with "Thing Divine,"

Bending before the marble shrine,
While spirit-parson's sleepy drone
Maketh me hers and her my own.

When sudden on my raptured sight
Falls deadly and discharming blight—

* "From Matter to Spirit." By C. D. With a Preface by A. B. London: Longmans. 1863.—F. B.

Such blight as Eurus loves to fling 110
O'er gladsome crop in genial spring.
Fast by the side of "Thing Divine,"
By spirit-parson fresh made mine,
In apparition grim—I saw
The middle-aged British mother-in-law!!!

when he sees a mother-in-law,

* * * * *

The pink silk hood her head was on
Did make a *triste* comparison
With blossomed brow and green-grey eyes,
And cheeks bespread with vinous dyes,
And mouth and nose—all, all, in fine, 120
Caricature of 'Thing Divine.'

Full low the Doppelgänger's dress*
Of moire and tulle, in last distress
To decorate the massive charms
Displayed to manhood's shrinking arms;
Large loom'd her waist 'spite pinching stays,
As man-o'-war in by-gone days;
And, ah! her feet were broader far
Than beauty's heel in Mullingar.
Circular all from toe to head, 130
Pond'rous of framework, as if bred
On streaky loin and juicy steak;

And, when she walked, she seemed to shake
With elephantine tread the ground.†
Sternly, grimly, she gazed around,
Terribly calm, in much flesh strong,
Upon the junior, lighter throng,

* A person's "double," not inappropriately applied to one's wife's mother.—F. B.

† I have read something like this in "Our Old Home," by Nat. Hawthorne. London: Smith and Elder. 1863.
—F. B.

And loudly whispered, "Who's that feller?"
"Come! none of this, Louise, I tell yer!"
And "Thing Divine" averted head,
And I, heart-broken, turned and fled.

140

And, flying, 'scaped my soul once more;
But not this time, as erst, to soar
Into Tranceland: deep down it fell,
Like pebble dropped in Car'sbrooke* well,
Till reached a place whose fit compare
Was furnished lodgings 'bout Mayfair—
In dire September's atmosphere,
When Town is desert, dismal, drear—
With box-like hall, a ladder stair,
Small windows cheating rooms of air,
With comforts comfortless that find
Such favour in the island mind
Bestuffed, and nicknack babery o'er,
Of London blacks a copious store,
Whilst legibly on the tight-fit
"Respectability" was writ.

150

And last appeared on that dread stage
That mother-in-law of middle age,

He then be- holds a Vision of Judgment,

Whose stony glare had strength to say,

160

“Here lord am I! who dare me nay?”

While voices dread rang in mine ear,

“Wretch! thy eternal home is here:

Though dire the doom, ’tis e’en too

good

For one that dines and drinks with Wode!”

My heart was ice, my head swam round,

I sank aniented on the ground.

and faints.

* In the Isle of Wight: the learned in words derive it from Wight-gara-byrig.—F. B.

Stunned by the fall, awhile I lay

Awaiting th’ advent of the day,

Or pervent of a cab; but, no,

170

Nor day would come nor cab would go

By; so, with m’ elbows on my knees,

I, blessing, sat, and groaned in glees,

When sudden from the stony earth

Gruff accents checked my dreary mirth:

“Man! I’m a stone in London streets!

What clod of clay be you that sits

O’ top o’ me with that broad base

Of yours offending nose and face?”

I felt as if a corking-pin

180

Were thrust my os coccygis in;

But, being, when in wineity,

Addicted to divinity,

Thus, musing, sat: “And so the stones

Vocabulate in human tones!

Sermons in stones—*sermo*, *sermonis*—

I see the drift! some speech in stone is,

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., is ad-
dressed by a
stone,

and moralizes,

A power occult and hidden deep,
As spark within the flint asleep.”
Another bellow made me bound
Giddily from the angry ground.

190

I rubbed my eyes, as well I might,
For mortal orbs ne'er saw such sight
Up and adown the lengthy street,
For tardy progress called the Fleet,

when a wondrous spectacle
is seen.

The pave was quick with human heads
And faces, whites, blacks, browns, and reds,
All, all alive—all packed and stowed
Like th' umbrellas of rain-wet crowd.

So travellers tell at Afric court,

200

Where scores of men are slain for sport,
On clean-cut necks pates ranged in row
Out of the earth appear to grow,*
Or as Cabrera loved to place
His captives buried to the face,
And cracked their skulls with sportive bowls.

“Pol,” having
sat upon a live
stone,

Amid that mob of checks and jowls
In infinite variety

But only one attracted me.

A very Hindu face was his

210

I rose from off; a tawny phiz,
Eyes almond-shaped and opaline,
Parrot-beaked nose, brow high and lean,
Clearly the high-caste Aryan,
Maxillaries Turanian;
A lipless mouth and lanky hair,
Vanishing chin *en Robespierre*,
Mustachio thin and beard as spare,
With careless scrutinizing leer,

thus
describes him;

And phantom of a vicious sneer: 220
Mixture of Duesse and Finesse
Was his physiognomy I guess.

Vexed by my stare, the thing uncouth
Wriggled its nose, puckered its mouth.
Cried I, "Are ye a stone or man?
Who buried ye alive like Pan-
dit, or the Jogeas that expose
To canine insult reverend nose?"†
The only answer was a scowl,
With a prolonged and angry growl,

asks him who
he is,

230

* "Dahomey and the Dahomans," by Commander Forbes, R.N. Also "Trade and Travels in the Gulf of Guinea," by Dr. Smith.—F. B.

† Major Moor's "Hindoo Pantheon" will explain the meaning of these vivo-sepultures.—F. B.

Which seemed, methought, at length to take
The form of words. "For Brahma's sake!"
Cried I, "if you must speak, speak out!
Pray what are you, and what about?"
He groaned and muttered, "B'r sire at Mecca*—
Headstone of Yakub bin Rebecca†—
Too bad! too bad!—ah! ah!—some day
Pay off old scores. Stare?—well you may!"

and receives a
dark reply.

I quaked, the wretch, 'twas very clear,
If called in witness to appear 240
Against me, probably would try
To work me some foul injury;
And thus, to soothe his vicious rage,
I tried the Hebrew's counsel sage,
Called him the Temple's corner-stone,
Sphinx, Memnon, and Serapion;

Diana of th' Ephesians' joy,
And so forth.

Still, cold, careless, coy,
He held his peace and sometimes grumbled,
And, in strange tongues, some hard words
mumbled;

250

But, by soft speech, the world-wise say,
From hearts of stone wrath melts away.
At length the face began to smile,
And laughed outright to see a tile
Hurled down upon the trottoir way
By some tom-cat in am'rous play.
The ghastly cachinnation o'er,
I found him milder than before;

At length, by
flattery, the
Stone is molli-
fied,

* The Black Stone at Mecca, believed by the Arabs to be a bit of the visible heavens fallen on earth.—F. B.

† The Rabbins assign high rank in the petral kingdom to Jacob's pillow-stone on the night of vision.—F. B.

And, though his words were somewhat coarse,
As there was sense in his discourse
I've ventured, Reader, hat to fling
High up in book-craft's bruising ring,
Peel me, shake hands, set to my task,
And in fair field no favour ask.

260

(Lapis loquitur.)
"Alas and oh! oh and alas!
How times and manners come and pass!
Time was (before the Jew Peter,
Quixote-like, rode down Jupiter
And Company on keen and canty
Apocalypsean Rosinante,
With back well hunched and lance at rest

and speaks out
his grievances
modern day.

270

In search of fame and eke of grist,
Which saintly sinner e'er deems best
Himself to grind, himself digest,
Not leave to stones) mankind has gone
Many a mile to buss a stone;
But now you are so clever grown,
You know so much before unknown,
There's not a boy would kiss the Pope's
Petrels* for all his key-bunch opes, 280
Or burn one tallow to as good a
Pebble as e'er satin Pagoda:
You look on holy Salagram
As if it were a silly sham;
You stick cigars in god Buddh's fists;
You hang your hats on Venus' wrists;
You dare to say of serpent stone
'Tis but a bit of rotten bone;'

* Alluding, I suppose, to the petrous portion of the human bone.—F. B.

You scribble Brown on Odin's breast,
You break Egeria's nose in jest. 290
Oh you Saxon Iconoclasts!
Enjoy your sport whilst th' epoch lasts;
Those stones (like damns) have had their
day,
You deem: we'll have one more I say.
This eve I heard a Savoy lad
(Alas! poor Burk!) telling a cad,
His friend, 'I've drunk a pot o' beer
Off an Apollo Belvidere;'
The other scalpel-meat forgot

Not to remark as off he shot 300
How great a thing had 'gone to pot;'—
I only hope next time he gorges
Dinner, it may be at St. George's."

Here I broke in. "How comes it th' art
So manly a stone in brain and heart,
With mortal language, human passions,
Knowledge of manners, customs, fashions?
How comes——"

I stopped: an ugly sneer
Made him far uglier appear;
He held me with that angry frown, 310
And looked me up and stared me down;
Then thus:

"Doth darkling bat's eye scan
The Pyramid's stupendous plan?
And may your molish ken extend
To Nature's far, mysterious end?
You breathe and move, you see and hear,
Smile, touch, and feel, love, hope and fear,
From which you're pleased to predicate
A category animate
Anent yourselves, and this you lend 320
To things that with your nature blend.
But pray, what sage hath yet been able
To separate brute from vegetable?
And who the difference hath shown
'Twixt lowest plant and highest stone?
Your kingdoms trine* make matters worse:
Such mappings-out are wisdom's curse.
Vainly division may diverse:
All are but One—One Universe.

The Stone
becomes very
Spinoza-like
and Pantheis-
tical, and

The essence of existing things, 330
The germ from which world-matter springs,
All links in that eternal chain
That girds the sky, the earth, the main,
Whose nicest consequence between
Nor joint nor gap was ever seen;
And Life—'tis but a ray of one
Creation's vivifying sun,
The Ens that is, was, and shall be,
Through time untimed—eternity!"

"Indeed," gaped I; "how very strange! 340
Nought new they say 'neath sun's wide range!"†

"No quoting, sir," cried he, "old saws,
Of blundering th' effectual cause,
Drowning Stupidity's own straws;
'Nought new beneath the sun!' a fact
Of th' order fairly termed Abstract.
While things be new to me and thee,
What need care we how old they be?"
He asked, and then, in accent strong,
Trolled in mine ear the following song:— 350

ends with the
tale of his me-
tamorphosis.

* Viz., animal, vegetable, mineral.—F. B.

† "No, nor under the grandson!" quoth George Selwyn.—F. B.

SONG.

(1)

"When last I was a Brahman man
My ardent fancy ever ran
From earth's dull scene, Time's weary round,
To realms eternal—heavenly ground;

(2)

“And where by day my footstep trod
I felt the presence of a god:
Blue Krishna frolicked o’er the plain,
Varuna* skimmed the purple main,

(3)

“Gay Indra† spanned the crystal air,
And Shiva braided Durga’s hair
Where golden Meru‡ raises high
His front to face the sapphire sky; 360

(4)

“And nightly in my blissful dreams
I sat by Ganga’s holy streams,
Where Swarga’s§ gate wide open lay
And Narga decked with lurid day.

(5)

“But, ah! one thought escaped my mind:
I had no reck of kith or kind!
This drew upon me from above
The wrath of Kama, God of Love. 370

* *Ouranos*, originally nightly heaven, and presently, by analogy of the aqueous and the atmospheric, God of the Ocean.—F. B.

† Iris, the rainbow.—F. B.

‡ The Hindu Olympus—F. B.

§ Swarga is one of the Hindu heavens, Narga one of the hells.—F. B.

(6)

“I loved—yes, I! Ah, let me tell
The fatal charms by which I fell!
Her form the tam’risk’s waving shoot,
Her breast the cocoa’s youngling fruit;

(7)

“Her eyes were jetty, jet her hair,
O’ershading face like lotus fair;
Her lips were rubies, guarding flowers

Of jasmine dewed with vernal showers.

(8)

“And yet this goddess drew her birth
From vilest refuse of the earth. 380
A Pariah’s widow!—better die
Than ’dure such shame! at first thought I.

(9)

“But Kama drew his shaft of flame
Up to the head with fatal aim;
The deadly weapon through me flew,
Diffusing venom dire and new.

(10)

“It boots not more; you see me now
The victim of a broken vow:
Pass’d from the funeral pile, I found
Myself a stone beneath the ground. 390

(11)

Dread change! sad fate! to line the street—
A thing for tramp of boorish feet!
How can I cease to grunt and groan,
A Brahman once, and now a stone?

(12)

“But ever and anon my tongue
With more than mortal strength is strung;
Then must I tell, however coy,
All that befel Ram Mohun Roy.”*

He stopped. I listened to him, sore posed
To see the Ram thus metamorphosed. 400
At length it took effect that song,
Though many a trill made ’t deadly long,
And yet, despite that length, it stole
Into my heart; a tear would roll
Adown my cheek in bitterness.

I, too, my bygones must confess.

DIRGE.

“I also swore to love a face
And form where beauty strove with grace,
And raven hair, black varnished blue,
A brow that robbed the cygnet’s hue,
Orbs that beshamed the fawnlet’s eyne,
And lips like rose-buds damp with rain.
Ah! where is she? ah! where are they—
The charms that stole my heart away?”

410

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., “reci-
procates.”

“She’s fatten’d like a feather bed,
Her cheeks with beefy hue are red,
Her eyes are tarnished, and her nose
Affection for high diet shows;

* N.B.—Must not be confounded with the modern Bengali philosopher of that name.—F. B.

The voice like music wont to flow
Is now a kind of vaccine low.
Cupid, and all ye gods above,
Is this the thing I used to love?”

420

“Pass on,” cried he, in angry tone,
“And leave we womankind alone.
’Twas my own fault. But, man, you see,
I’ve not thrown off humanity
When mem’ry pangs me on to hate
Reminders of my human state.
Yet so wills Fate. This era o’er,

The Stone re-
sumes the sub-
ject, with his
future hopes,

I shall become a grass or flower 430
(The state which every noodle knows is
Classic'ly termed Metempsychosis,
Which sticklers for Latinization
Prefer to call Soul-transmigration),
And, rising through each gradual term,
Reanimate me in the worm,
And, passing him, ascend again
Into the beast that roams the plain,
Till, from the cow, that high'st degree,
I claim once more Brahminity, 440
When, haply 'scaping all temptation,
I win the crown—Annihilation.
Meanwhile, I cannot see why we
Of you and yours despised should be.
The pride of princes hoists them high,
Paupers like poets* smite the sky!
We both are sons of mother Earth;
But I'm a scion of antique birth,

meanwhile
supporting the
superiority of
stone to clay
(or man),

* As Horace says, "Sublimi feriam sidera vertice."—F. B.

Whilst you, as all your sages say,
Are little clods of red-brown clay,* 450
Mere Pleistocene accumulations
That never learned your proper stations.
At least two thousand years ago
They cut me for a stone, I know,
By slow degrees and weary; an
Operation Cæsarian
Tore me from old Dame Portland's flank,
Here to be ranged with lengthy rank

Of brotherhood, upon whose head
You things of mud are meant to tread. 460
But man hath taught himself to deem
Cream of creation—happy dream!
An ancient people said that we
Stones once renewed humanity,
Prayed by Deucalion and his wife
From mineral to mammalian life.
Anatomists, they say, have shown
Petrosity in human bone;
And well I know we still are part
Of human head and manly heart. 470
But, though, methinks, the metal lead
Have cut us out of human head
(Phenomenon which came to pass
When human sponce got ‘front of brass’),
Your hearts remain ours ever; still
They do us nought but work our ill.
By Pyrrha! but you are unwise
To treat all apologues as lies,
And not attempt to recognise
The moral which the tale implies.” 480

* Adamical theory.—F. B.

“Two thousand years, you say, are gone
Since first you found yourself a stone.
I wish you kindly would relate
Th’ adventures of your petral state.
I long to know the career all

Of such intelligent mineral.”

“One talks,” said he, in softer tone,

“Willingly self not I alone;

And, could we stones confabulate,

The Fleet would be in blockade state.

490

But, since you wish to hear my tale,

List till the marvel waxeth stale.

As old Ram Mohun Roy from me

Man hears not for a century.

No syllable of by-gone deed

From these my lips may now proceed;

A stone of stones am I, and all

My talk must be petrifical:

Th’ antiquity of family

Confers upon me high degree,—

500

Stone *versus* mud and mire and clay,

Ashes and dust, and live decay.

I teach the past—the future, too,

’Tis mine to spread for human view—

For ‘old experience doth attain

To something of prophetic strain.’

Ombharbhuvawara!”*

At the long word

The heads sank down as if interred;

No sight was seen, no sound was heard,

Save the Policeman on his beat,

510

Drowsily lounging down the street.

* The essence of the Vedas.—F. B.

So melt in morning’s bright’ning hours

The Fay Morgana’s mirage bowers;

and, yielding to
“Pol.’s” re-
quest, speaks,
not as the
Ram, but as a
stone.

So, as the Arab thinks to gain
The Brazen City's magic plain,
Where towers and walls were seen to stand,
He finds a field of burning sand.

“Some million centuries or so*—

I won't swear to an age or two—
Have sped since, starting from my trance,
I burst the ocean's hot expanse,
And, scrutinising round me, threw
Wild looks upon the novel view.
Pray where were you at that dread time,
When, cradled in my bed of lime,
Delivered by Earth's seismic throes,
I to this world first showed my nose?

Why, *in essentiá*—a logical
Lie meaning you were not at all.

'Tis true; e'en I can't recollect
When atomies did first collect,
Compelled to general glomeration
By inorganic gravitation;
Nor was it gi'n to me to see
Those nuclei of nebulae
Whence suns and stars and satellites
Sprang like th' innumerable mites
Which haunt a Stilton cheese;—'tis true
These things are known to us by you.

Another epoch passed away
Of centrifuge-attraction sway;

520

530

540

The Stone's
history phy-
sical;

* Thus here the “Vestiges of Creation” are fully confirmed by modern revelation. But we live in an age of great discoveries.—F. B.

When the Frigories did contract
Diffused mass to globe compact.
I am too young to call to mind
When primal crust began to bind
Earth's cooling surface, when the sea
Put forth zoophytic progeny,
When land appeared in sandstone steeps
And fishes swam the shrinking deeps,
When giant forests strove to rise 550
And sweet lymph fell from milder skies.

Nor knew I even what was meant
By organic law 'Development'—
How, from the Monad's starting point,
Began a chain whose latest joint
Ever put forth another link,
Till matter learned to speak and think;
How, 'scaped from the primeval sea,
Grass became herb, herb shrub, shrub tree;
How fishes crawled to birds, and these 560
To beasts (like you) by slow degrees.

My infant intellect began
T' act when the archetypes of man,
Dawn of a still advancing day,
Apes, sported o'er the marl and clay.

 "'Tis very little that we owe
To th' Indian Archipelago,
Where I am told sprang you men, a
Branch breed of the Quadrumana.
Ah, what a sight were you when first 570
By freak of matter Adam* burst

Through Simian womb! Scant then man's prate
Of human nature's high estate.

wherein he abuses man- kind,

* Meaning not the Genesetic Adam, but the first human “produce of aggregation and fit apposition of matter.”—F. B.

Yet, though his limbs with pile were
rough,

And though his tail was long enough
(You smile, reformed orang-utang!
Have I not seen th’ appendage hang
About your ends, till wear and tear
Curtailed the terminating hair?

Type of the subtype Simiadæ! 580

King of the genus Chimpanzee!
There! feel the place! ’tis even now
In loco if not in *statu quo*),
Th’ apesses treated with disdain—
Half-handed thing with double brain,
With brow protruding all before,
Trachea formed to squeak and roar,
With shortened arms and thumbless feet,
Circular paunch, and rounded seat;
That chattered with such couthless sound,
And walked, not crawled, upon the ground.

590

Such your forefather. Yet, when he
Was grown to lusty puberty,
Superior ingenuity
Taught him with score of apes to mate,
And thus his kind to propagate.
Nor ever dreamed the creature in
Polygamy to spy a sin.
Certes, in those days, abnormal cause
Affected propagation’s laws;

600

deriving man
from monads
and monkeys.

For even he, your sire, amazed,
On his distorted offspring gazed,
Self-asking when the things would cease
To stalk like cranes and gab like geese.
Now you have tales enough to hide
Your origin and salve your pride
(E'en as the bastard Romans say
Their founders' mother was *not* 'gay')—
How man hath soul, and brute instinct,
Making th' identical distinct;
How human gab was heavenly gift,
And not at first a clumsy shift
T' express by varying sounds the vain
Ideas that haunt idiotic brain;
How language dropped right from the skies,
Pali or Hebrew (each tribe tries
To prove its own the primal speech);
How deigned the Lord himself to teach
The proper names of things to man:
Wonderful wisdom! precious plan!"

610

Seeing his wrath, I thought it best
To yield, and in mild tone suggest,
"True, Petrus! true; 'tis evident
Socrates knew development.*
So Moses, if I read him right,
Made his first man hermaphrodite,†
And learned Moslem scribes indite
Long list of kings pre-Adamite;
And note we not in Hebrew tongue
Ramash is an old snake or a long-
tailed ape?‡ and so the Hanuman§
Of Ind may equal any man——"

620

630

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., at-
tempts to
soothe him by
a show of
learning,

* Supposed to be foreshadowed in the Platonic doctrine of the “archetypes existing previous to the world.”—F. B.

† Amply commented upon by the pious Mme. de Bourignon, by Mirabeau (Erot. Bib.), and by Lawrence, Lectures on Physiology, p. 168.—F. B.

‡ This is the opinion of the learned Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist, in his Polyglottal Commentary, which wants nothing but an elementary knowledge of language.—F. B.

§ The Hindu Monkey-god.—F. B.

“Thanks for your etymologies,
Which, garnished with analogies,
Are mines of error. Pray don’t quote
Hebrew to me; of old I know’t
To be a lingo you admire,
Because it claims origin higher,
More mystic, than its Arab sire;
Yet ’tis a pauper dialect,
Scant, clumsy, rude, such as select
Nations once civilized to speak
As modern Maniotes maim old Greek.*

640

and is grossly
insulted in the
matters of Ana-
logy, Etymo-
logy, and
Hebrew.

“Enough of this! How times are changed
Since all the tribes of Tellus ranged
Their own domains, so joyful when
Our mother Earth was clear of men!”
With a portentous Burleigh shake
Of head, he paused awhile to take
A breathing time, and thus pursued
The subject in his bitterest mood:

650

“Now, man! suppose the glove once
more
Had some convulsion as of yore—
Enough to exterminate the pest

The Stone ex-
ults over the
coming dis-
appearance of
man from
earth,

Of nature and to spare the rest—
What a glad scene my mental eye
Through the dark future doth espy!
 “See granite, mica, gneiss, and talc
In spiritual voices talk:

* Les Juifs firent donc, de l’histoire et de la fable moderne, ce que leurs fripiers font de leurs vieux habits: ils les retournent et les vendent comme neufs le plus chèrement qu’ils peuvent.”—Voltaire, Dictionnaire Philosophique, Art. “Abraham,” Section II.—F. B.

‘By the Tamim!* friend Adamantus, 660
Those wretched worms no longer want us.
Can’t you, oh! can’t you recollect
How oft your brilliancy hath deckt
The mummied breast of ancient maid,
Whom every stout Hibernian blade
Compared with you? So hard! so pure!
So bright!—what is she now? Manure!’

 “See oaks and elms, and thorns, and trees,
All chattering in the evening breeze:
‘We’re rid of men, the spiteful brutes,— 670
Who now dare cut our harmless throats?
Friend Quercus, recollect how oft
You said the things were very soft
To boast their hearts of oak! O Lud!
The little vermin spawned of mud!
The flimsy, frail, unlasting wretches,
Hollow as canes, short-lived as vetches!’

 “See, horses, asses, elephants,
All hurry to their ancient haunts,
Whilst each unto his neighbour says, 680
‘Four-footed dear! what jolly days

Compared with those when wicked man
Claimed as his right our hides to tan.
With all their airs and graces, pray,
By great Borak!† say what were they?
Asses with curtailed ears—a sign
Most manifest of wrath Divine!’

“Thus general nature, blessing, raises
Its myriad voice in grateful praises.”

* Urim and Thummim vulgarly called, the Jewish stone oracle.—F. B.

† The miraculous quadruped that carried Mahomet to heaven.—F. B.

He groaned and looked most lachry-

mose

690

As he ran o’er earth’s present woes,

Then, hemming twice or thrice with

might,

These words threw out to darksome night:

ODE.

“Alas that life should come to this!

O for those days—those days of bliss

Amid the happy stones that fill

The precincts of my natal hill!

Delightful spot

Of shadowy glen and silvery rill,

Where soft winds blow, sweet birdies

thrill

700

The senses with unarty trill.

Ah, ne’er forgot

That place where ’twas my joy of old

and mourns
the day when
he was an in-
nocent child-
stone.

To watch bright Morn her charms unfold
And evening suns rain showers of gold;

And still I lay

Whilst deepening shadows closed around,
To silence hushing harsher sound,
Till, rising o'er the tufted mound,

Poured the moon's ray.

710

Far from the haunts of hateful men,
Not shackled in this iron den,
Ever, shall ever come again

That happy day?

Ah, no! my soul is callous, cold,
Recast in the rough world's hard mould:
Vice and sin's bitter streams have rolled

O'er my dark heart,

Whose innocency's charm is gone—

Fled for ever, for aye undone:

720

Gone——”

“By the stones! the lyre sublime
Of Orpheus sang to walls sans lime!
What sentiments! Ungodly thief,
Wouldst steal away all man's belief
In man? Wouldst impiously destroy
Rational hope of heavenly joy?
Wouldst, like the wicked boy at play,
With every throw some poor thing slay?
Pause, O profane! Draw thou not near!——”

“Prate to your purl, bpreach your
beer;

730

I have had enough, thou human mole!
Of Jeremiad and Carmagnole:

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., fires up
at this general
denunciation
of his kind.

I, fellow, am a mineral,
And not a lying animal.”

“Hem!” quoth I; “quit the theme
awhile

Since it appears to stir your bile:

’Tis very evident you yield

No willing ear to Chesterfield.

But, touching falsehood, tell me, pray,

Do stones ne’er lie—is’t this you say?

Take Pharaoh’s case: we know that he

Died sputt’ring in the Suez sea;

And yet some fibbing Pyramid stones

Venture t’ assert his flesh and bones

Were pickled, dried, and laid in salt

In all the Pharaohs’ family vault;

Not to quote certain bits of brick

And plaster, with the which a wick-

ed ‘Resident’* hath tried to show a

Grave error in the flood of Noah,

And Daniel’s beasts hath dared to call,

Like all his book, apochryphal

By means of certain funny form

Of Scripture known as ‘cuneiform.’”

“Your wits, man, are again at fault;

Or, rather, seem disguised in malt:

We tell the lie involuntary—

That is, what *you* put on *we* carry.

Who ever saw epitaph true?

But epitaphs are writ by you.

E’en so Empedocles’ pet birds

Twittered in lies their master’s words;

And, as for Pharaoh, I was not

The Stone
replies by a vile
insinuation,

740

And “Pol.”
asks if men
never lie.

750

The Stone
argues that
stones are more
truthful than
men.

760

In Egypt at the time to note
Facts as they were, not as you wrote;
Yet would I rather, by your leave,
In stones than in your books believe.”

“Facts, Stone, are stubborn things, ’tis said!”
“‘Facts stubborn things?’ thou leather-head!
Facts are chameleons, whose tint
Varies with every accident:
Each, prism-like, hath three obvious sides,†
And facets ten or more besides.
Events are like the sunny light
On mirrors falling clear and bright
Through windows of a varied hue,
Now yellow seen, now red, now blue.

770

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., quotes
the proverb,
“Facts are
stubborn
things.”

which the
Stone dis-
proves.

* This, I presume, alludes to a learned and gallant knight long resident at Bagdad.—F. B.

† Meaning, I suppose, the right, the wrong, and the mixed.—F. B.

Those mirrors are the minds no vice
Obscures and dyes no prejudice;
And yet, however lucid, they
Must, in some measure, stain the ray,
And, in transmitting, must refract—
I mean distort—the beam and fact,
Because its pure effulgence pours
Thro’ Matter’s dark or darkened doors.
All other minds your common sense
(If to such rarity you’ve pretence)
Tells t’ you that, intentionally
Or not, they err most commonly.
Facts, figures, and statistics claim
For hardest lying highest fame.”

780

790

I laughed, and, forthwith raising thick-
 Soled boot, administered a kick,
 Asking if he considered
 That kick a fact. His brow waxed red
 (M sometimes *salon-savan* has
 The grace to do when proved an ass),
 And thus he cried, “Thou hast a style
 Of argument that stirs the bile:
 The venerable *ad captandum*
 Quibbles and quirks thrown out at random
 Against the high intelligent mind
 Of unbreech’d boy or small-girl-kind.*
 Sir, you confound the physical
 and moral worlds,—the actual
 And known with the unknown,—the tried
 With the untried: this I deride

800

“Pol.” at-
 tempts to prove
 fact after the
 fashion of a
 modern divine,
 and is rebuked.

* So the Rev. Sydney Smith proved at dinner to a sceptical Frenchman the existence of a deity by asking if the pie made itself—a style of argument much admired by Lady Holland, *Minor*.—F. B.

As merest folly. You deduce
 From this a formula to use
 In that creation: there’s your wrong,
 Wherein you stand so stiff and strong.”

810

“What, then, you mean to say, you ruth-
 less wretch, there’s no such thing as truth?”

“Truth, sir, ’s a lady strangely made,
 As centaur, Pan, merman or maid;
 In general, a Protean dame
 Never for two brief hours the same—
 Now throned in heaven, first of all
 Spirits hyper-angelical;

Dr. Polyglott,
 Ph.D., ex-
 citedly asks
 concerning
 “Truth,” and
 is answered.

Now driven by sheer destitution 820
To lend herself to prostitution;
And mainly, though good soul at heart,
A 'heathen in the carnal part'*—
That is to say, she can't resist,
Temptation when lewd men insist."

"This I deny!——"

"Well, well, the proof

Of pudding is its eating—oaf!
Your mind is like the oyster-shells
They use, as old Tavernier tells,
For windows in the East. But these 830
Remarks are but *par parenthèse*.
Another illustration take:
If, at this hour, an aged rake
Should pass, he'd swear you're sitting here
Waiting till friendly wife appear.
Such is *his* fact: the doctors, mind,
In sickness an excuse would find,

* Even as the great Pope says:—

"A sad, good Christian she at heart,
A very heathen in the carnal part."—F. B.

While No. o of letter E
Deems you as great a prig as he;
And I, e'en I, who see you're drunk 840
As new-made cornet or old punk,
Can't, for the life of me, divine
If you're disguised in beer or wine."

"Now you impugn physical fact!"

"No, sir! I merely show how act

Men's inner men. I but object
To views of 'facts' which e'er affect
Fact to the viewer, not the thing
Itself. This is the source whence spring
Those doubts and blunderings that show 850
Now little humans truly know.
Why need I prove that each man's thought
Is each man's fact, to others nought?
Yet, mark me, no one dubitates
Himself, or owns *he* errs. He rates
Against his fellows' folly, they
At his; and both are right, I say.
How many a noted fact of old
Was a known lie when first 'twas
told?"

"Basta!" cried I, "thou minor prophet, 860
Thy tenets yield nor joy nor profit.
A better faith you cannot give;
So leave me in my own to live!"
"Just as you like, 'tis you that
proses
Of truth and Adam, facts and Moses;
And, as for metaphysics, Lord
Help the old fool that coined the
word!

Back to my tale:
When ancient Brut*
(The grandson of that pious put
Who, with his sire and wife and boy,
So bravely ran from burning Troy,
Doomed to toil, travel, and intrigue
By Juno and the Fates in league)

870

The Stone's
history (poli-
tical).

Had ploughed the seas in devious path,
 A toy to adverse Neptune's wrath,
 He landed in this isle, deposed
 His household gods, and, somewhat posed
 To give his huts appropriate name,
 Selected 'Troynovant,' which same [880
 Means, in old French, New Troy.† He died
 (As most men do), and gratified
 His heirs with an inheritance
 Of wold and waste in wide expanse.
 Some forty generations went
 Ere great king Lud matured th' intent
 To fence about his timber town
 (Now 'august chamber of the crown')
 With a stone wall. By 's high command
 We all appeared—a goodly band,
 Not by the power of fiddle drawn, 890
 But borne on Britons' arms of brawn.
 Commenced my political
 Education (as it you call)
 When barbarous Cassibelan
 Before the conquering Roman ran,

* So the French are descended from Hector, and the Bretons from Tubal.—F. B.

† It is truly gratifying to find out all our old legends so historically valuable: the text should effectually gag all those "shallow infidels" whose notion of History is a mixture of Doubt and Denial.—F. B.

And ended with fat George—when Fate,
 In pity of my lowly state,
 To this my place promoted me—
 My present standing, sir, you see.

“Now mark me when I tell where I 900

First heard the thing men call a lie—
An arrant lie. Didst ever see a
Trustworthy account of Boadicea?”

“Why, not precisely; but, as far
As Markham* goes, I’ve read the war
That noble woman waged (in car
With scythes) against the pack of boast-
ful dogs that seized our cliff-bound coast,
Dared slay our Druids, slaver, spit on
The freckled face of freeborn Briton,
Nor feared audacious tricks to try on
That noble beast the British Lion.”

“What! are ye paid to do jaw-work,
Like Sheridan or wordy Burke?
No? Then do give the Deuce his dues
When there’s no object to refuse
Justice. Plautinus, as I live,
Was not one half the bandit Clive,
Hastings, Dalhousie, or Napier
Were, each within his proper sphere.

Rome had no high philanthropic
Maxims forbidding her to pick
Quarrels or pretexts when her cash
Ran low: she dealt no high-flown trash
’Nent ‘principles,’ which, in your creed,
Gipsying life appear to lead:
Sent for when wanted, and, when not,
Sans ceremony told to trot.

* Mrs. Markham’s “History of England.”—F. B.

Rome had no faith that inculcates

The Stone’s
history (moral
and political)
in the days of
Boadicea;

910

920

preferring the
policy of Pagan
Rome to Great
Britain;

Philanthropy to foreign states,
Making her fraternize (don't snigger!)
With red-skin, tawny-face, and nigger.
Philanthropy, so pure and bright,
Makes pagan Hindu Christian knight.
(Kneel down, Sir Jung Bahadoor; vow,
By the five products of the cow,*
To do thy knight's *devoir*, and be
Flower of Christian chivalry:

Sing, '**Dieß iræ, dieß illa**
Solbet Balneum in fabillâ.'

That day of philanthropic wrath
To dust and ashes turned the Bath!)
Old Rome, sir, had no Exeter Hall,
Where ye, loud shepherds, meet to bawl
Politico-religion
To long-eared flocks that urge ye on:
Rome's crown and staff were helm and sword,
Armed with which tools her robber horde
Went forth, unrecking right and wrong,
To spare the weak, debel the strong.†
It ever was Rome's general rule
To rob the rich, to strip the fool.
And so do you. But *she* forgot
To plunder subjects; *you* do not.
Lastly, she robbed her fellow-men
Like warrior—you like highwaymen.
She scorned to harm a fallen foe;
You sit upon his breast and show

930

940

* Milk, curds, butter, and the two egesta, which are holy things.—F. B.

† "Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos."—F. B.

Your teeth, till, faint with fear and pain,
He lets his bag and baggage be ta'en. 960

The end, of course, was all the same;
But *she* won fame and *you* win shame.
Thieves of the world, that spoil wholesale
And plunder on the largest scale!

Who so unblushed ye that you dare
To all the globe your crime declare?
Boast of your drum-beat circling earth
With—sorry sound!—its martial mirth?

Boast that your bit of bunting brands
So many scores of stolen strands— 970

Stains with its blood the Orient seas,
And taints the Occidental breeze—
Like some ill-omened goblin haunts
Creation's Edens? Such your vaunts?
Your 'brave kind of expressions'?* Most
Christian country, this your boast?"

“Have you no proofs?” cried I——

“Yes! clear,”

Said he, “as e'er met eye or ear.
Look at th' unfortunate Chinese,
Who lost their Sycee and their teas 980

Because they showed some odium
To Fanqui's† filthy opium;
See India, once so happy, now
In scale of nations sunk so low—
That lovely land to which were given
The choicest blessings under heaven,
Till ravening Saxon, like simoom,
With fire and sword brought death and doom,

accusing Eng- land of land- stealing.

* Bacon. —F. B.

† Foreign devil, as the Celestials appropriately term the outer barbarians. —F. B.

And, lo! a wretched starv'ling brood
From horse-dung picks disgusting food;* 990
Whilst, in the Commons, India's name
Clears every bench to England's shame.
Of old, the Red Man in the West,
How different his lot, how blest,
How happy in his wigwam home!
By Saxon's poisonous pox and rum
Now what a vile and ruined race!
A few years more its every trace
Will vanish clear from Earth's fair face,
Except in books and by-gone tales 1000
Of squaws, scalps, tomahawks, and trails.
Witness th' old Turk, Mahomet Ali,
Whom Malcolm† stuffed with many a lie,
Striving in vain to make him deem
You links 'twixt men and seraphim;
Yet scarce ten years had 'lapsed before
You tried to seize his little store
Of piastres, that the East might 'count
You plunderers Lord Paramount,
And kiss the hand outstretched to burk 1010
Incipient feud 'twixt Turk and Turk.
Had the Hawaiian known his fate,
A hundred Cooks had slaked his hate,‡
Each child had murd'rous hand imbrued
In circumnavigating blood.
O'er far Tasmania's sounding shore

Of aborigines a score

* Which, if we may believe travellers, is often the case—F. B.

† Sir John Malcolm, Governor of Bombay. —F. B.

‡ Capt. Cook, the circumnavigator, was murdered for pulling down a hut that was under “taboo.”—F. B.

Now wanders (where, some years ago,
A hundred thousand souls could show),
Australian-like, exterminate 1020

By your corrosive sublimate.

And now again your tricks you try

On Japanese and Maori:

Because they choose to live in peace,

Nor lend a ready back to fleece,

You arm yourselves with fire and steel

Their towns to burn, their lands to steal,

High raising the ennobling cry

Of Cotton and Christianity;

And, armed with these, each man of sense 1030

Ascribes his course to Providence,

Favouring your pre-eminence,

And purposing to occupy

The globe with Anglo-Saxon fry—

One marvels how! one wonders why!

Man, Rome might come to Britain's school

And own herself a bungling fool!

“Return we to this theme anon:

I'll now enlighten you upon

The subject of my lie; you'll call 1040

It, perhaps, unintentional.

“Came Boadicea in her chariot

(With scythes), between Susan and Harriet

(Who had been kissed), tastily decked
In woad with theatrical effect,
T' harangue her blustering ruffian
Tricoloured crew barbarian.

BOADICEA'S SPEECH.

“Britons! there stands the impious band
That came from far Italian land,
From rich Rome's palaces and domes, 1050
To lord it o'er our hide-made homes:
Their skins are dark, while yours are fair;
They wear the toga, you go bare.
Are these the reasons why they dare
Doom us to slavery—to despair?
Cursed by the Druids' God be he
That toils the free-born man t' unfree!
And, oh! may that foul nation claim
Eternal heritage of shame
That comes, in strength of arms, to seek 1060
Dominion o'er the weak! O speak!
Ye Britons, can you bear to see
The first-fruits of their works in me,—
The once proud mother, happy wife,
Now widowed, tainted, sick of life?
Shall woman's jewel and man's boast
Fall to yon vile invading host?
In Britons' veins, while life-drops flow,
Shall Britons stoop to slavery? No!
Now bare the brand and stretch the spear, 1070
To fight for all to mortal dear;
And every blow shall show the charm

The Stone then
recites Boa-
dicea's speech,

That nerves, that guides, the freeman's arm!

* * * *

A sullen murmur, low at first,
Into the deafening slogan burst,
And rose on high the stormy cry
Of 'On to death or victory!'

* * * *

I learnt the goodly lesson there
That patriot prate's worth weight of air;
They eat their words as if nutrition
Resulted from the deglutition.
Lord, how they swore to smash and slay
The foe, then turned and ran away
Helter-skelter, all quicker than
Your Sepoys in Afghanistan.

1080

and tells how
he heard his
first lie;

Now patriots wisely bare no swords,
But draw with might the vocal chords,
And in heroic tantrums e'er rage
For pay and pension and peerage.
Wouldst see thy patriots cut and run? —
Cut but their pence, the work is done!
Soldiers and sailors have one case:
Only for Dative care an ace;
The Ablative of their declension
Is fighting *sine* pay and pension.

1090

lashing out at
modern
patriotism,

“But honour? ——”

“Honour, fool! ne'er shut

honour,

The gaping mouth of sabre-cut;
Nor will e'en eighteenpence a-day
The loss of arm or leg defray.

A score of Smiths at Waterloo

1100

All proved themselves good men and true:

Some fought and 'scaped, some fought and fell;
Yet who the difference now can tell
'Twixt glorious Jack and glorious Bill?
Few heads in this day glory addles
With empty praise—five-shilling medals,
Of which you've grown so liberal
(Though once so stingy*) that they're all
But worthless, since each private owns
A bag of browns or silver crowns
Whose very weight 's enough to try
The mettle of your chivalry.

glory,

1110

and medals.

* Witness the Peninsula and Burmah.—F. B.

Who cares to bear the thorax rib on
Two inches of a rainbow ribbon,
Unless they be the tapes that dub
Captain C.B., not meant for cub
Officer, *vulgò* called a sub?
And even these are now grown cheap
Since gained by squatting 'hind a heap
Of stuff where commissariat cattle
Are sheltered from the rage of battle.”*

1120

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., much
admires the
Stone's learn-
ing.

Again I marvelled at his store
Of politic and national lore——
“Man, you forget my age, my sense,
My memory, my experience,
My study of the crowd that meets
Eternally in London streets,
The herd of male and female talkers,
M.P.'s, directors, priests, street-walkers,
Mercators, students, politicians,

1130

The Stone
explains his
education;

Men mid-wives, actors, peers, physicians,
Judges, preachers, soldiers, literary
Bards and *bas-bleus*, loquacious very;
To be brief, every specimen
Of microcosm, women and men
Talking, laughing, roaring, ranting,
Prosing, rhyming, praying, canting,
Proving, arguing, recanting,
Lying, cheating, blessing, damning,
Flatt'ring, quizzing, showing, shamming, 1140
Conning, learning, pumping, cramming
One another (what else God knows!)
Over my triturated nose.

* This practice probably dates from Sir Charles Napier's battle of Meeanee.—F. B.

But my main source of information
Is mystical confabulation,
With similar forms and kindred souls
Which human hands for human soles
Have drilled to keep their ranks and show
Their noses, red-coat-like, in row:
I mean the stones, which, when your eyes 1150
Were ope'd, appeared like heads to rise.

 “A goodly *confrèrie* we are,
Gathered together from afar:
That granite fellow five rows off,
Ah, he's the Stone to laugh and scoff
At men, and, when he's in the mood,
You'll hear him swearing by the rood
He's a twin brother to the Stone
The Scottish kings scratched on at Scone;*

shows his
companions;
viz.,

a Scotch stone,

And oft he sneers; in tones forlorn,
‘Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn
Thy banished peace, thy laurels torn,’†
And bitterly declares no wonder
That men prefer the pound to pund, or
That sterling silver crowns weigh down
Th’ uneasy head-dress called a crown.
Yon marble chap once stood as high as
The topmost moon of St. Sophia’s!
You’ve read, I s’pose, what fuss they
made

1160

a Turkish
stone,

About the farce they called Crusade?”
“Yes! cursorily——”

1170

* The Lea Fail, or “Fatal Stone,” stolen from Tara by Feargus of Scotland, and stolen from Scone Abbey by Edward I.; it is placed in Westminster, and is still used for good omen.—F. B.

† From the patriotic Smollett.—F. B.

“Well, man! well,
Your Pinnock’s catechism will tell
How, when men failed, boys went to try
Their hand against the heatheny;
And faith the heathen treated ’em
Better by far than Christendom.
One young Crusader with a Turk
Lived, till beard grew, exempt from work;
But, when his face its beauty mourned,*
Finding himself hard used and scorned,
He took ’t to heart and straight levanted,
And, as he naturally wanted
To show some trophy, bore a bit
Of stone, picked up from offal pit,

1180

Home to his friends, swore 'twas the rock
On which St. Peter stood the shock
Of Hell-gates. All believed of course,
And worshipped it and him—a curse
On human fickleness! Now see
How trampled and how low lies he! 1190
Yonder Red Sandstone (with the spittle
Upon his patient brow), how little
You yester-things can guess how great
The honours of his former state.
Fellow! indulge me with thy ear—
I wish not other Stones to hear.
When mighty Enoch planned to keep
Intact from flame and the great deep
That invaluable mystery
Procataclysmal masonry, 1200

and, lastly,
Enoch's stone.

* A conceit of an Oriental poet, who, referring to the growth of his beard, declared that his face was putting on mourning for the loss of its beauty.—F. B.

He graved it on two pillars—one
Copper or brass, the other stone.
That stone was of the column's base,
And bore inscribed upon his face
Th' ineffable symbols A. S. S.
When the Flood came, his front was rolled or
Dashed against a brother boulder:
Now 'tis his solace to declaim
Against th' event that marred his fame—
With fifty-parson-power damn 1210
The waves that spoiled his trinogram;
While folks upon his old head walk

As if he were but upstart chalk.
How are the mighty fallen! 'oons!
Now ye despise e'en Enoch's stones!
Were I no Stone, but modern bard,
With my description 'twould go hard,
But duly introduced you to
Every thing that meets your view:
Not being such, I merely say what
Is wanted, and what's not I say not."

1220

 "Stone! you've most sillily digressed,
Wand'ring about from East to West.
I wish to speak of Rome; you'll own
'Twas but a Pagan brood, whose crown
Was of this world."

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., returns to
the subject
of Pagan Rome.

 He gave a look
Like gloomy Pitt, or cynic Tooke,
And thus resumed: "I never knew
That Pagan Rome offended you;
I always thought that Christian Rome
Was your great eyesore: have not some
Declared they deem Stamboul's sultan
A king more likely to attain
The heavenly crown than any Pope?
You contradictory mites that hope
To conquer worlds by brother love,
Yet in your inner hearts approve
Of solemn Christian curses thrown
Against the creed that bare your own,
Of periodic anathemas

1230

The Stone
defends it
against Great
Britain;

Which, to the ear of sense, but seem as
The railings of a shrewish maid
And curses on her mother's head.

1240

Say, why d'ye strive to prove before
The world you come from scarlet w—
Of Babylon, to whose broad base
Seven hills afford but sitting place?

And own ye no predestination
When volleying your execration
Against th' unhappy Count whom chance

1250

excuses the
Pope Pio
Nono, *alias*
Count Mastai,

Drew from Spain, Italy, or France?
In India born, he would have bowed
To Vishnu, or, mid Shiva's crowd,
Yemen had taught to love and fear
One Allah and his Prophet dear:

In Scotland raised, he would have bow'd
'Fore 'minister,' not stone and wood;
While Afric rude had made his mind

by predestina-
tion, and

In every bush a God to find.

[1260

Chance birth, chance teaching—these decide
The faiths wherewith men feed their pride;
And, once on childhood's plastic mind
The trace deep cut, you seldom find
Effaceable, unless the brain
Be either wanting or insane.

But what care you for brain or head,
Ye stiff-necked herd, well paid and fed.
And clothed by human ignorance?

"bangs"
the new lights.

What reck ye eke of choice or chance,
Ye new-light saints, whose dear delight
Is envy, hatred, malice, spite—

1270

Is sending a whole world to hell
By troops and squadrons mixed pell-mell,
Except yourselves? If heaven be
Filled with th' insensate company

Of those whose only title to 't
Is that of being a human brute
With a big boss of veneration
And no Causality, I say shun
Such Paradise—a *cul-de-sac* 1280

Appropriate to the groaning pack.
Pray, why should ye exclude the ass
And dog from future happiness
Beside destroying all their pleasure
Here? O injustice beyond measure!" [no

“Ah! Stone, Stone, stop!—those brutes have
Reason or soul; their actions show——”

“Reason? A soul? Ay, ay, a store
Of misconceived and useless lore
Of dark, hard, dull great words to close
Man's eyes and lead him by the nose. 1290

What is a soul but life derived
From life's Eternal Fount deprived
Of power to gain its upward source
Or leave unbid the prison-corse?

Your cerebral machinery

Is Reason—Mind. Chicanery

Tells you the gift is one distinct

From that it gravely dubs Instinct.

Words! words! A similar spirit reigns 1300

In human and in bestial brains:

In that it sits on jewelled throne,

In this on block of roughest stone;

Still is it One,—for ever One.

The life ye please to term your souls

Through matter's ev'ry atom rolls—

From mote that swims the sun's gay beam

The Stone then
identifies reason
and instinct,

atheistically or
pantheistically.

To the vast might of ocean stream;
And man's——”

“Why, you're an atheist!

Or, what's the same, a Pantheist—
Worshipping all the world because
Such giant faith hath grandest flaws!
Humility is all you want—
Bow and believe!”

1310

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., bids
him “bow and
believe.”

Said he, “I can't!

Quit we the theme: it never fails
To lead from words to teeth and nails
And mighty fistings to convince
One's ‘doxy' is of creeds the prince.
The Baculine strong argument
Was all that Moses' rod-myth meant—
Its pith a parable to teach
Expediency, not safe to preach
That the true arm ecclesiastic
Is a wonder-working stake or a stick.”

1320

He replies he
can't, explain-
ing the pith
of Moses' rod.

“Well, modern Memnon!* still you'll grant

That we can boast (the Romans can't)
Of an Emancipation Bill,
Which, charity-wise, veils many an ill-
deed: philanthropic Wilberforce——”

“Yes! yes!” cried he; “yes! yes! of
course!——”

1330

“Pol.” objects
our philan-
thropists.

* The celebrated speaking statue of Egypt.—F. B.

“What, then, hard-head! darest thou despise
Our Howards, Godwins, Owens, Frys?”

“No! They were stars sufficient bright

Each for its tiny sphere of light;
But their small glitter largely looms
Because of the surrounding glooms.
What say the wise mid rustic men?
'One swallow makes no summer:' when
Appears a throng of screaming swifts,
The peasant knows the season shifts.

1340

The Stone casts
in his teeth our
shopkeeperish-
ness,

A country so commercial could
Not be unselfish, an it would.
A land of traders ne'er can hope
Truly t' enact the philanthrope.
Still its ambition's highest range
Is what for good affects exchange:
Did China sink beneath the seas,
What would result? Demand for teas!
Unhappy Malwa starving dies—

1350

Opium, of course, must have a rise!
And Gallic revolutions get
Fame for affecting bobinet.

“Futurity shall tell the tale
of what befel in Tezeen's vale,
By Kabul's hills, whose ice-winds rave
O'er the bleached bones of many a brave—
O'er some ten thousand corpses strewed
Upon the snow, with red gore dewed.

Was this tragedy fittest scene
T' enable painted mime to glean
Pence from the pockets of the scum
Of town by 'Sail'em Alick'em'?'*

1360

our making
money of every
national dis-
aster,

* Alluding to the minor theatres, which reproduced Lady Sale's Capture. Enter two Moslems: quoth one, "Sail'em Alick'em!" (Assalamo Alaykum); responds the other, "Alick'em Sail'em!" (W'alaykum us Salàm).—F. B.

“Where ‘fabulous Hydaspes’ rolls
His real wave, a freight of souls
(Some fifteen thousand Sikhs) was hurled
Into th’ abyss of ‘other world.’

The wholesale massacre created
A little stir; that soon abated
Of course: who cares for distant blacks,
Die they by ones, die they by lacs?

1370

The grand sensation of the time
Was a small county-Norfolk crime.
On this your people’s fancy fed
With pleasing horror as they read
Detailed details: see, all the crush
Of Sikhdom’s hardly worth a ‘Rush!’
Such your philanthropy! In English
Another compound hath more relish—

and thinking of
Rush more
than of 15,000
Sikhs.

Th’ intelligible philo-pelf,

Or veritable philo-self

1380

Faith you have all the perfidy
And all the fury of the sea!”*

“A man convinced against his will
Is of the same opinion still,”

Cried I in wrath; “you, Stone, reflect!

Think ye I cannot e’en detect

The cause that set this storm a-brewing
And started off your tongue a-shrewing.

You vainly ape man’s dignity,

And, therein sadly failing, try,

1390

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., accuses
the Stone of
envying man

Radical-like, to bring us down
T' a proper standard—viz., your own—

* So says M. Emile de Girardin.—F. B.

As Procrustes, first Radical,
To his own size cut down the tall—
A practical Pantisocrat;
But there the simile falls flat,
For the same thief un-Radically
Increased the small, to make them tally.
Thy arguments are raw and rare
As those of new-laid Baccalare,
The sleeve-frocked sons of Alma Mater
(Abandoned mother! where's the Pater?),
The full-grown calf of old Camford
(Or 'Isis' bower'—'what's in a word?'),
That holds no earthly joy so dear
As wrangling o'er his wine and beer,
Till right seem wrong, wrong right
appear,

1400

and of wrangling like a
Camford boy,

Till white be black, and black be white,
Till one is three, three one are hight;
For he can take one side or t'other,
In front and rear the foe to bother:
So th' Amphisbæne, of whom 'tis said
Now head is rump, now rump is head."

1410

ending with
the Amphis-
bæne.

“Well wrangled, man! your eloquence,
However, smacks of virulence,
And 's strong in simile, not sense
(That of the Amphisbæn' is pretty,
But far too Millerish to be witty).

The Stone
cautions him
against the
Amphisbæne

Methinks you weren't just quite the
kind

Of lad to Mother Camford's mind: 1420

Did she prescribe *in rus* t' ye
That ye must rail so cross and crusty?
Or gave a *nunc dimitto* 'cause
You broke her more than Median laws?
Against her I'll back the city-
Effluvian University*

and supports
Camford
against Lon-
don.

For impudence of London sparrows,
And shallow noisiness that harrows
My every feeling. Quit the theme!
It jars me like a drayman's team." 1430

“Quit we it, then: I wish to try
The fortunes of one more query,
Since you so quibbled off my last.
Say! is the age of Slavery past
From Britain? do we hunt and chain
The sons of Abel or of Cain?
Say! have we not full right to gibe
That contradictory New World tribe
'Whose fustian flag of Freedom waves
In mock'ry o'er a land of slaves?'"†

Dr. Plyglott,
Ph.D., harps
on the Eman-
cipation glories
of England,
and gibes the
United States.

“Why, Spartan-like, I must reply: 1440

You talk so long and wordily,
Before your speech's tail appear,
Its head slips through mine other ear.
You men of glass should not begin
Stone-throwing at your New World kin:
There slaves are but their servants; here
Your servants are the slaves 'tis clear.”

The Stone
advises glass-
dwellers not to
throw stones

“Slaves? and to whom?”

“To social life—

As dire a shrew as any wife! — 1450
To Circumstance! to want inbred
Of food and meat and roof and bed!
To rank, ‘gentility,’ and pride,
And twenty other lords beside.

points to the
white slave,

* Poor old Stinkamaree.—F. B.

† From some English poet; we forget his name.—F. B.

What is the genus Governess?
The *dame de compagnie*? I guess,*
The veriest slaveys of their kind,
Tho’ you be to the fact stone-blind.

“Trace we a class that has not money
For purchasing of matrimony, 1460
Your cooks and maids must starve to
marry;
So footman John, or Master Harry,
(Your son), becomes a sire or not
As chance directs. The mother’s lot
Is pleasant! Virtue shows the gate,
and Hunger drives to sadder state
(Hence the infanticides that grace
The purlieus of your dwelling-place,
Th’ exposures and barbarities
That seem to rend all human ties), 1470
Till, when all foul resources fail,
She dies in Magdalen or jail;
Whence—useful still—her remnant goes
Where practised porter right well knows—
T’ expose before the tyro’s eye,

With crimson size, each artery;
And, when he's learned to cut and maim,
The pauper-corpse no friends will claim.
The scalpel's work when past and done,
They shovel pieces, not of one, 1480
But half-a-dozen subjects dead—
One arm, three legs, and dubious head—
That, ere the mass begin to fester,
The priest may pray for 'this our sister.'”

* Quoth Wordsworth (this “guess” is not Yankee):—“He was a lovely youth; I guess.”—F. B.

“’Tis but one class!”

“How many die

Blaspheming foodless Liberty?
Britain declares she's free; go, test her
Truth in the dread dens of Manchester!
Go, and with Freedom's boastings, cram
The ravening maw of Birmingham! 1490
On Galway's hills perhaps you'll find
Mouths to support you—When they've dined!

“Fair sir, your wealthy vanities
Have frozen human charities
Within your breasts; as icebrook's steel,
Your hardened hearts forget to feel
for any but yourselves. I saw
Last night a starv'ling seized by law
Because he dared to beg for bread
'O where is Charity?' cried I. 'Where?'” 1500
The next Stone echo'd,* “Here, sir! here!”
“None of your sneering, gaby; I
Fear no *levator labii*.”

“Our theory is good, at least,
In segregating man and beast——”
“Theory? Stop!” cried he; “don’t prate
Of theory to me. I hate
To see th’ interminate duello
’Twixt theory and practice, fellow!
I do not mean to test and try
The moral grounds of slavery;
But your ideas sound far too good,
Methinks, for human flesh and blood.
Sir! all your patriarchs had slaves;
Your holy prophets, too, had slaves;

1510

and shows anti-slavery to be mere humbug;
--

* Echo has, it is true, had of late very hard work, like the albatross and the travelling schoolmaster.—F. B.

Your early Christian saints had slaves;
Your Lord-anointed kings had slaves.
They all were wrong: you right, ye knaves!
Since one-idea’d Wilberforce
Preached others deaf, talked himself hoarse,
From John Bull’s purse to loose the string,
And make you do a foolish thing.”

[1520

“Foolish—and why?”
“Because ’twas mere
Quixotic fancy to appear
Serving a tit-bit of romance,
Dished up with facts of eloquence—
Culled for a ‘Senate’s’ taste, and sorted
For minds that love the Great Distorted,
Whereon to waste your tears and coins,
When every rule of right enjoins

1530

Charity to begin at home.
But, when can homely horror come
Near the wild, distant, gloomy tales
Of blacks bepacked like cotton bales,
Sold like cattle, lashed till raw
By nankeen'd whites in hats of straw?
This for your theory: now attend!
I'll try your practice—this the end
To which I make my theories tend.

[1540

“Sir! when your cruisers plough the seas,
Now freeing slaves, now stealing teas
(Spending some million pounds a-year
In way John Bull e'er holds most
dear—

Namely, the silly ostentation
Of being such a liberal nation—
As if commissioned from on high
Finger to thrust in every pie,
Yet laughing loudly when ye see a
Neighbour contending for 'idea,'
Although, methinks, ideas are
Than bales of cotton manlier far)
A slaver caught, do they restore
The captive to his native shore?
No, no! the negro's kept and fed
Till, for some £7 10. per head,
A skipper tender ship to take a
Cargo of free men to Jamaica,
Or other colonies that pay
For labour hired so much a day.

1550

Surely 'tis queer humanity
To transport *sine crimine*—

1560

opining that
charity should
begin at home,

and that, as
it is, captured
slaves are not
liberated, but
transported.

To banish all your free men! Whew!
A most eccentric race are you
Islanders; as the Germans dream,
You all so many islands seem
Cut off from rest of human kind
By the fierce Channel's 'billows blind.'*

*'Whose fustian flag of Freedom waves
In mock'ry o'er a land of slaves!!!'*

Yes, tinkling rhymers! well you sing, 1570
Alliterating little string.

How easy 'tis with writer's art
To make of bad the better part!
Proving how words and jingle find
Easy approach to human mind.

Come, Southron, hear my tongue profer
A Rowland for their Oliver:
'The meteor flag that blazes o'er
Free slaves on many a stolen shore.'"

* With which the Arab imagination filled the Atlantic.—F. B.

I threatened him with prosecution; 1580

He seemed to court such persecution:
Like old "professor,"* ne'er content
Till by main force to heaven sent;
Or modern patriot whose strong reason
Succumbs before charms of safe treason;
For still he sang, and louder sang,
With a most classic "Secesh" twang,
*"The meteor flag that blazes o'er
Free slaves on many a stolen shore."*

Then, with abundant jeer and gibe, 1590

He thus pursued his diatribe:

“Your slave-walks, sir, you’re pleased to call
‘Colonies’—change of name, that’s all;
And, when for ‘slave’ one ‘pauper’ reads,
There’s scanty difference ’twixt the breeds.
Mr. Legree, in Maryland,
Lashes his own with sparing hand;
Your fine East-Indian magistrate
To freemen deals far harder fate.

Oft have I heard of women stripped,†
Lashed to a tree, and fairly whipped
(List, shade of Haynau!) with the thong
Of cat-o’-nine-tail, sharp and long,
Laid by the Briton on her back.
’Tis true the wretch’s skin was black,
And epidermis dark, you see,
Somewhat like raiment seems to be.
Three dozen lashes! As descends
The manly blow, each hard knot sends

1600

The Stone
points to
India,

where women
were, till lately,
flogged,

* Of the days of martyrdom—not to be confounded with the modern sense of the expression.—F. B.

† It has not, we believe, taken place since 1849.—F. B.

A burning pang through all her frame,
Yet mild compared with outraged shame.
The first half-score, when duly plied,
Raise lengthy wheals from side to side;
And each fresh stripe, like molten lead,
Removes the strips of flesh that shed
Large blood-drops on the stones below,
Who blush them red.”

1610

“But is it true?”*

“I’ve said, sir, we leave lies to you.
Dreadful, you cry?

I would contrast

Another scene with that just past.
See the embattled hosts that stand
Upon the plains of Persian land;
Why points the gun, why bared the brand
Quiv’ring in every soldier’s hand?
Two brothers meet, in impious strife,
To fight for prize of crown and life;
And one shall fall a clay-cold thing
That one may sit a scepter’d king.
The lines are formed, the standard reared,
Yet not a soul as yet hath dared
To break that stirring pause, whose spell
The lawless men all feel so well.

1620

and to more
modest Persia.

1630

“But whence those female sobs and wails?
Who come, in Burkas† wrapped and veils,
Hurrying ’twixt the hosts to try
If love or hate hath mastery?
Their prayers, their tears are all in vain!
Vainly in shrieks their voices strain!

* The scene referred to happened in a province of Western India. The woman was very insubordinate—still!
—F. B.

† Mantillas covering the face.—F. B.

It is not on the battle-plain
That woman’s hest is heard. Again
They try, again they fail; at last,
As mist before the Eastern blast,
Melts the sanguinary horde—

1640

The spear is lowered, sheath'd the
sword,
The horseman springs from saddle-bow,
And tears, not blood, begin to flow:
Even the brothers must embrace
Before the mothers threat'ning face—
E'en they that hated for a crown
For smiling look change angry frown. 1650

“What might of miracle had power
Man's heart to melt in such an hour?
Will ye believe it? Civilized set!
The empty sound of female threat,
The royal matron in despair
Offering to stranger eye to bare
The bosom whence existence drew
The twain that led that barbarous crew?*

These are the Turks for whom ye pray,
The heathen these for whom you pay 1660
A missionary mob to preach
Faith, Hope, and Charity—t' unteach
More modest men t' immure the fair—
Inculcate the true English stare,
Produce the brazen, reckless air
Which so distinguish women here.
Europe, the Moslems greet your plan
Of propagating courtesan-

deriding the
former's claim
to superiority
and mission-
ing.

* This romantic incident took place, exactly as described, after the death of Fattah Alee Shah, King of Persia, when two of his sons prepared to fight for the succession.—F. B.

ship and dispensing to their breed
Strong waters and a 'purer creed.' 1670

“The civilizer aye delights
In neophytes, converts, proselytes:
Stir not an inch the graceless heathen
To bid their brother men to Heaven.

“This world is Heaven or is Hell
As you abuse or use it well,
And, in the graceless heathen’s sight,
Whatever is, is good, is right:
You’d make good better, and, of course,

You very oft’ make matters worse; 1680

And, since you fail so signally,
I need not ask the reason why
You wish the world to be as bad.

The Hindu, you affirm, ’s a sad
Heathen, and yet, as such, he’s good.

The savage Moslem sheds men’s blood,
Marries four wives, and, what is worse,
Keeps concubines, allows divorce:
Still he is a righteous Mussulman.

The Parsee tricks his brother man 1690

And half adores his Ahriman,*
Yet’s a good Guebre. So the Jew—
In fact, all to their faiths are true,
And in them good, save, Christians, you!†

“And now, sir, as I’ve answered all
Interrogations, great and small
(Kindly remove your long thick leg),
I, in my turn, presume to beg

The Stone
defends the
heathen
against Dr.
Polyglott,
Ph.D.,

and calls for an
explanation of
the national
thirst;

* The evil principle opposed to Hormuzd in the dualism of Old Persia.—F. B.

† Πας ἀγαθος ἢ ἀγαθος · ἔθνικος καὶ πας χριστιανος ἢ χριστιανος κακος.—F. B.

Enlightment on a point which sore
Puzzles my brains each day the more. 1700
Tantalus-like are all you cursed
With an eternal raging thirst——”

“Dog-stone!” cried I, “intoxication
Is the pet vice of Northern nation;
Danes, Swedes, and Germans drink, while French
And Southron men prefer to wench
And eke to gamble——”

He pursued

Queries indelicate and rude:
“D’ye worship swine, like Taheitans,
And hog your minds like ponies’ manes? 1710

Else why go pigging all about
The streets and stations, in and out
Of houses, reeling, fighting, sing-
ing, weeping, laughing, puking, wring-
ing hands, until your presence shocks
The feelings of the stones and stocks?
Britannia, rise from off the edge
Of oval shield, and take the pledge!”

The question made me rather pensive;
I faintly muttered ’twas offensive— 1720
That drunkenness is now confined
To snobs—obnoxious to be fined——

“And is it true you spend your nights,”
Asked he, “in viewing godless sights
Of women in flesh-coloured tights,
Whose only art is, as you know,
What’s better hidden all to show?
I’m told ’tis deemed the best of taste
To hug and paw strange woman’s waist,

of balls and theatres;

Calling it fashion, custom, and 1730
The pleasures of a civilized land.
Like men less cynic, why not pay
Women to sing and dance and play?
Again, I hear no trade more thrives
Than accoucheurs and men mid-wives.
Can it be true you have no schools
Where *sages femmes* learn to litter fools?"

of men mid-
wives;

“Stone, we have reasons—there’s a chance——”
“Of what in England not in France?
Unless, perhaps, your women’s stays* 1740
And waspy waists you love to praise.
Produce the risk: why not reduce
The whalebone, and the tags disuse?
The Chinese cramp in swathes and shoes
The growth of dainty maiden’s toes,
Thinking that, next to woman’s tongue,
Gadding from home leads most to wrong.

But these corsets? Haply they’re placed
To keep your gentlewomen chaste?
As crinoline and farthingale, 1750

Which no hot amorist dare assail.
But, no, methinks ’tis polished ‘taste’
That teaches you to bind the waist.
Ask all your painters, statuaries,
Which finds more favour in their eyes—
The full luxuriant contour
Which Nature sketched in happier hour,
Or this pinched wretch, encased, enrolled

of wasp-waists;

Like rotten mummy in its fold
Of linen swaddlings? I prefer 1760
A camel-load of flesh to her—

Th' obesest Mooress that e'er trod
Of Atlas hills the verdant sod,

* Under which obsolete name he apparently alludes to the secret armour worn by the sex under the dress.—
F. B.

Larding their earth. I' faith, I'd rather
See Hottentots berigged in leather.

“Pity that Nature, when she drew
Out plans and estimates for you,
Forgot to beg your vanities,
To save her some inanities.
Could poor Archeus* ever guess
You'd bare your facial ugliness,
And daily shave your cheeks as clean
As virgins, to improve your mien?
Whilst some cut landscape in the hair,
Their whiskers nurture, chins mow bare,
Of malar pile leave but a strip,
Rob of its honours th' upper lip,
Leaving the chops and teeth to catch
Complaints, denuded of their thatch!

1770

of shaving;

Dame Nature bade your *chevelure* flow
Adown your shoulders: again no
Says Madame Mode to silly throng—
'I'm right! old Gammer's clearly wrong!
Clip one part shortish, t'other long
(As Frenchman poodles shaves and shapes
A la lion—*i. e.*, like apes),
Part it behind, like terrier's back,
Bethatch the front like wheaten stack,
The corners twist towards your eyes,

1780

of hair-
hogging;

Correct with stiff'ning, oil, and dyes.' 1790
Now from the barber's chair arise—
A thing gorillas would despise!
'Beast!' Adam† cries, 'what madness docks
The "clust'ring hyacinthine locks"

* The living and all-pervading principle of creation.—F. B.

† Milton's Adam—not he of the "Vestiges."—F. B.

I left t' ye for a heritage?
What, you abortion, made you cage
Your members in that habit, shocking
Your head in pot but fit to cook in?
Was it th' Old Serpent made you pack
Your toes in bags of leather black?
Stick bits of ore and coloured stones
Round etiolated finger-bones?
Come, Eva, look; full sure these loons
Have been intriguing with baboons!"

and of dress
generally,

This was too much, "Ruffian", cried I,
"You beg the question you decry.
Our men and women dress and town
For mere externals. Bow ye down
Before the master-charm of mind—
Our women's training—education——"

1800

to the disgust
of Dr. Poly-
glott, Ph.D.

"There, stop," cried he, "your declamation!
And first of begging questions, sir.
When angry passions dullards stir
The first tone of Eristike (ἐριστικη),
Pitched in a very testy key,
Is, sir, 'You beg the question.' Logic,
Per se, is e'er amphibologic,

1810

The Stone de-
nies the fitness
of women's
education.

But, *petitio principii*,

Hath finger deep in every pie—

A figure ultra-Judēan,

1820

As his goose-quill, who penned ye an

Address to Wat* and Laureate Ode;

But this by way of episode.

As for your training boast, I am

Sore tempted t', *ad modestiam*,

Argument, but that Aldrich took

No heed of that in all his book

* Wat Tyler, we presume.—F. B.

(And wisely, for 'twould, in this age,

Be formula the most unsage:

The very boys and girls would cry

1830

Shame on the man of modesty).

This reading, writing, ciphering, strumming,

Use of the globes and art of humming,

Or shrieking, dignified as music,

That makes me, if it don't make *you*, sick;

Practice in entering a carriage,

Largest ideas of love and marriage,

Some twenty several sorts of dances

(Saltation market-price enhances),

The science of disposing dress

1840

To set forth charms, hide ugliness;

A thousand rules for choosing hats,

A proper taste in men's cravats,

The art to show the *brodequin's* top

And yet before mid-leg to stop;

To deal with tradesmen all unknown

To parents till the bills are blown,
 Or when, upon the marriage day,
 The 'happy man' is called to pay;
 A connoisseurship of champagne, 1850
 Slang words, and horses, dogs, and men;
 A high aspire to take the chair
 In club meant only for the fair;
 How to distinguish stones from paste,
 And eke to pawn them; how to waste
 Time on plays, novels, and romances,
 Before the glass to practise glances—
 Now soft and sweet, now hard, distressing,
 Careless, encouraging, repressing—
 And similar feminine arts to net 1860
 The foolish fish that like the bait:
 Is this your boasted way to show
 The young idea how to go?
 By Jove! you lavish too much care
 In training of a Bayadère!
 But t'other day I heard Miss A.
 Unto Miss B., her 'crony,' say,
 'I hate your pale-faced things, and own
 To liking a nice sailor brown.'
 The little minx, though hardly ten, 1870
 Pronounces on the points of men:
 At twenty, think ye, will the nice
 Brown sailor but her eye entice?"
 "Nonsense, my Lithy, girls are gay
 In moral races, sages say;*
 But they reform when passed the church,

And leave their lovers in the lurch.
Our boast is home, and ever stranger,
Except a Signor or Bushranger,
Who knows our life, must e'er confess
Our hearths are rich in happiness.
Must I suppose this all a dream
Unreal as the Seráb's stream†—
Existentless as lights that seem
Before ophthalmic eyes to gleam?"

1880

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., sup-
ports the
virtue of the
married she-
Bull.

“In this rich mine of humbug strain
There runs of fact a slender vein.
There's far less happiness than pride
In crying up one's own fireside:
'Tis mostly done when known the hearer
Holds ball and opera much dearer—
Prefers, as Frenchman does, to sit
Out evenings in th' *estaminet*.

1890

The Stone
retorts;

* Rousseau.—F. B.

† In Persian, the mirage.—F. B.

Your 'happy hearth' is oft a hell
Where Temper, Spite, and Disgust dwell,
And Ennui sheds her baleful gloom,
Making the place a living tomb;
Till your son, dog-sick, flies it, and
To swindling turns a ready hand,
And your poor daughter, tired of life,
Prefers to be a lackey's wife.
'The homes of Merry England'—zounds!
I hate to hear the well-worn sounds,
Your parrot-poets, pie-poetesses—

1900

calls happy
home a hell;

Humbugs!—emit. Come now, confess, is
Not the fire-side, where reign immense
Felicity and innocence,
More often far a perfect Cape
Of Storms than Hope? But, mark me, ape,
Your kind's belief in things affords

1910

The strangest contrast to their words:
You know the place is stormy, thus
You call it Hopeful. And what fuss
You make when self-compelled to roam
From British boast, the 'happy home'!
'Tis then the sturdy Saxon grows
Watery as a sea cow's nose,
And maunders like a sick girl o'er
That commonplace his native 'shore.'

Home is the sole abode of bliss;
Tourist, the exile comfortless;
His heart's the loadstone, home the pole—
Thought streams, home sea to which they roll.

1920

O canting nonsense! Why the deuce
Don't they go home? What is the use
Of this lip-stuff when they might prove
By marching back that home they love?

“But see, this exile, when returned
To all for which his sick heart yearned,
Growls, grumbles, damns, until once more
Escaped from dearest native shore,
Self-banished as he was before:
Ahasuerus-like,* he starts
Once more for hateful 'foreign parts.'”

1930

“Yet, my Lithophonist, our wives,
Without whom Briton never thrives;

shows how
gladly we flee;

Our dear domestic better parts,
Whose truthful, faithful, loving hearts
Are our prime boast; whose constancy
It 'riles' the outer world to see;
Upon whose bosom man may find
Console from Fate, howe'er unkind;
Who, like the Suttees, burn to burn,
And mingle dust in husband's urn——”

1940

and, when
Dr. Polyglott
Ph.D., reite-
rates his
assertion,

He rolled his head and winked his eyes
In most ill-bred irreverent guise,
And thus proceeded: “Now don't eat
Abominations† in the street.
Your girls brought up to show their faces
At chapels, 'sights,' and bathing-places,
Pic-nics and archery meetings, where
Liquor abounds, sobriety's rare;
Who deem a ball and ball-room dress
The *ne plus ultra* of happiness;
For *bal masqué* would give their ears;
Who learn each actor's name and years,
And every scandalous anecdote
In town or country ken by rote;

1950

shows how
girls are
brought up for
the marriage
market;

* The Wandering Jew—F. B.

† A common Orientalism, meaning “don't talk nonsense.”—F. B.

Who know whate'er their mothers know
In mind, perhaps in physique too;
Who quizzically send a friend
To Paris till her waist is thinned:
Such pretty, polking, flirting fools,
That graduate in Folly's schools,

1960

The shortest cuts to sin and crime
Beknown to man in modern time;
Taught from the earliest age to try
Their little hands at coquetry,
To break men's hearts ere Nature lend
Specific* remedy to mend

1970

The fractured member; trained to trace
Love-letters with *aplomb* and grace;
The sing'd young lady, wide awake,
Resolved Mamma's advice to take,
No shame to know, to feel no fear
In hunting rent-roll or a peer;
Who limit wedlock's full extent
To diamonds and settlement;
Who views the matrimonial mart
With stony eye and callous heart,

1980

Trots out from her paternal stall
As nag for sale by Tattersall,
To highest bidder is knocked down
Like any slave in Stamboul town,
And swears to honour, love, obey,
The while her heart has gone astray
With some old flame, who bides his day;
The girl whom modish parent teaches
To win and wear marital breeches

* Query, "Generic"? The Stone, however, has become so rabid that he is indifferent to the use of adjectives.
—F. B.

By studies physiological,

1990

As they their 'natural history' call,
Of Balzac, Kahn, Feydeau, and Walker,*

To turn half-addled brains, and talk her
 Into believing all the scribble
 Wherewith their flimsy goose-quills dribble;
 Strong-minded spinsters who prefer
 The 'Spital's tainted atmosphere
 And Fame to path of hiding life;†
 Your patriot girls to whom the strife
 Of brigandism and Secesh 2000
 Serves their embryo thoughts t' enmesh;
 The advocates of 'women's rights';
 Abolitionists whom most delights
 To ape the mad Lucretia Mott,‡
 And all the politician lot,
 Or those that 'go for' Education,
 Or those that build on 'Emigration':
 Such make good wives, such make life sweet
 As hours in Newgate or the Fleet.
 Immortal Gods, my better friend 2010
 From such abhorrent fate defend!

"Did'st ever hear of Pica's name—
 A noted noble Roman dame?
 Yes! Then you know of her 'tis told
 She ne'er saw man, or young or old,
 After her nuptials. Once among
 Her friends a gossip said how strong
 Smelt Mister Pica's breath of wine.
 The poor dame marvelled, and, in fine,

contrasting them with Pica;

* The author of a certain book called "Woman."—F. B.

† "Fallentis semita vitæ."—F. B.

‡ Notorious anti-slavery lady in the once United States.—F. B.

Declared that all *must* smell the same!
I tell the tale as told by fame.
And now you have to shift your course
By Court of Probate and Divorce,
Cast loose the tie fast tied by Fate,
Let either wretch unyoke its mate—
Condition’lly that th’ whole foul tale
Defile the once pure homestead’s pale—
Teach every little miss to see
What Mistress A. with Mr. B.

2020

instancing
Sir Cresswell
Cresswell’s
court,

Was apt to do—teach every boy
Sometime the like delight t’ enjoy,
And o’er society to throw
Of lust and crime the hellish glow.

2030

“Of your fair studies the result,
See hare-brained Hall stand up t’ insult
The sense, the ‘spirit of the age’
By lectures on concubinage.

Another case: see high-born dame
Lend her fair self to the foul shame

and various
vile scandals.

Of confarreation with a black,
The lord of many a dirty lac.
'Twas legal, for the blackamoor
Paid fullest price for his amour;
The lady swore to love, obey,
And honour her dark popinjay.
Yet scarce six months had lapsed
before,

2040

Un-Desdemona-like, she tore
The tie asunder, on the plea
Of the poor Moor’s insanity.

This, braver than Tyndaridæ,

2050

Helped by two well-feed, pompous men
That proved the lord *non compos mentis*,
by one bolder deed of strife
Settled Othello's hash for life.
And now, his occupation gone,
He walks the Continent alone,
Ne'er to recross the British main
Or to his own return again."

"But, Petrus, our paternal love——"
"That kicks you out of doors to rove,
Without an extra hour's delay,
Over the sea and far away,
Only praying you never may
Homewards stray for many a day——"

"Man, are you sporting with your ills?
The rugged ruffian on the hills
Of barbarous Belochistan,
Give him his due, doth all he can
To keep his child at home; for him
He risks with pleasure life and limb,
Robs, murders, fights, and all to feed
The young 'uns, his four spouses breed."

"They're savages."

"Of course! If not,
The door would be the youngers' lot.
Look at the foreign marts and fairs,
Where you exhort your sons and heirs
As any other trading wares:
Banish the hapless half-grown boy
(The father's hope! the mother's joy!)
From all he loves, from all in life
That makes life sweet, to bitter strife——"

2060

2070

2080

Dr. Polyglott
Ph.D., in-
stances the
warm paternal
affection of
John Bull.

The Stone
replies deri-
sively,

On a grand tour in search of Fortune—
With stony-fisted jade, Misfortune;
Drive him, when barely breeched, to reap
A golden harvest from the deep;
'Neath polar latitudes to freeze,
Or broil upon the torrid seas,
Or to the haunts so blithe and
 merry

Of small-pox, plague, and Berri-Berri,
Where Ague guards her native coast,
And Yellow Jack still rules the roast:
How few will e'er return! and, when
They do, you barely call them men—
Old, haggard, wasted, broken, gone
In mind and body. Yet each one
A score or two in 's day have seen
Retire, clime-slaughtered, from the scene—
Die on the straw, alone, like dog—
Die with split throat, like fatted hog—
In some huge trench, with general

2090

 heap

2100

Of corpses, seek a long last sleep,
Or find a watery grave—which is
To find no grave at all, I wis.
Are windows not sufficient high?
Is rope so dear, no charcoal nigh?
Then take a penknife, boy, let out
At once your sire's sad gift.

 I doubt

You deem me rugged stuff, my good
Sir, all unused to melting mood;
Yet sometimes tales will meet my

ear

2110

That e'en from stones demand a tear.
Listen. The dying soldier leaves
Ind's sultry shores; dying, he cleaves
To the one hope, the only prayer,
Once more to breathe his natal air.
Where gentlewomen most appear
Perniciously 'bemused with beer,'*

quoting
bad cases,

The bad land left, mind-tonic lends
Delusive strength, his brow unbends,
His eye is clearer, and his tread

2120

Falls on the deck inspirited.
A fortnight gone, the fit hath passed
Away; he feels how firm and fast
Hurrying to the dark dread goal:
The grip of Death is on his soul.
He leaves the poop; at meals his
chair

Is empty, though still standing there;
And all forget him, save, perchance,
When, through the open door, a glance
Detects a gasping skeleton,

2130

Reclined, half dressed, the couchlet on
Under the open port. At last
'Tis whispered he is sinking fast.
Some few seek out his berth, to cheer
The spirit 'parting to its drear,
Dark exploration; but he lies
Motionless, wordless, hardly tries
The mind to struggle; his eyes glaze
And fix on vacancy their gaze;

Drops down his jaw, as though its weight

2140

Were grievous to his weakly plight.
 Where is the parent's—sister's care?
 The relative, the friend; ah! where?
 Indeed they are all wanted here.
 The strangers shudder; even they,
 However kindly, will not stay

* Sir Ronald Martin's "Influence of Tropical Climates," etc., p. 174.—F. B.

To stare at Death, especially
 As Doctor says 'tis uselessly.
 And yet at times a curious head,
 Inthrust, asks if the poor man's dead. 2150
 The last thro' is a silent one:
 S * * * ll's sad earthly race is run.

 "The event made known, some hurry down
 To see the body; others own
 They'd rather not. The new 'step' all
 Discuss, save anatomical
 Galen, preferring to deliver a
 Discourse upon the corpse's viscera;
 The ladies, sighing with each breath
 'In midst of life we are in death,' 2160
 Dress and sit down to dine—to eat
 And drink sad thoughts, to reverie sweet.
 At sunset hour, well packed and hitched,
 By sail-maker close tacked and stitched
 (The last run through *its* nose for luck),
 Comes forth a canvas bag. In duck
 The passengers in coarser gear;
 The 'gallant tars' are met to hear
 A kind of prayer. Bill whispers Jack,

'Bo, twig the skipper rigg'd in black.' 2170

On grating out-thrust at the lee
Gangway, and covered jauntily
With Union Flag, so placed its feet
Clear standing end of the fore sheet,
What *was* man lies. The captain reads,
And purser acts as clerk when needs.
'To the deep!' (then the signal). Heave!
The long bag slides, and fluttering wave
The bunting's ends. Hearken, a splashing!

ending in a
"watery
grave."

Look, a thin line of brine-foam dashing 2180

Against, behind the ship! Adieu,
S * * * ll; adieu, brave heart and true.

 "Who killed S * * * ll? 'Tis strange to tell,
'Twas she that bare him killed S * * * ll.

In her opinion younger sons
Were born to die 'neath Indian suns.
His pride repelled him from his home,
A home where none would cry 'Well come!'

Till nearing death revived the will
To see that home, to bid farewell 2190

And sleep in peace—that killed S * * * ll."

 Of his rude speech the latter part
Woke a soft echo in my heart.

 "Alas! I also had a friend,
By India brought t' untimely end.

A fatal land that was to me:
It wrecked my hopes eternally.
In earliest youth, ere love began
To feel the passions of the man,
I loved a maid——"

“What! number two?”

2200

“No! number one, and virgin too.—

I loved a maid: how deep that love
The long course of a life may prove.
What hours of happiness they were,
Passed in that dearest presence, ere
Harsh poverty and cursed pride
Combined to drive me from her side,
And sent me forth to win a name,
The trinket wealth, the bauble fame!

Years toiled I on in vain, in vain;

2210

At last I saw that face again.

Ay me! it looked on me no more

As it was wont to do of yore.

Her soul was not as ’twas before,

Unlearned in life’s heart-numbing lore:

The lesson had been told and read,

Till heart owned all the rule of head.

Ah, fatal change! can words express

That moment’s utter bitterness,

When she ’fore whom I bent the knee

2220

As man doth to divinity

Sank to a common thing of earth,

Vile as the dust that gave it birth—

When she whose single hair to save

I gladly would have sought the grave,

Because I could not pay the price,

Made me her Mammon’s sacrifice?

Away, vain thought!

Alone, forlorn,

Through sad and barren life I mourn;

And, as to wretches sometimes haps,

2230

This being
Indian, revives
the senti-
mentalisms of
Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D.

Nor might of Change, nor Time's long
lapse,

From my sick heart can e'er remove
The memory of that early love."

Pensive he looked—methought a streak
Glistened adown his tawny cheek;
He pleased to praise my constancy,
But seethed to do so doubtfully,
And recommended anodynes
Of beers and brandies, ales and wines.

[2240

Pricked me the sneer: "'Twas thought of old
That stones permuted lead to gold:
The wrong deductions of your head
Seem to debase all gold to lead."

"Ah! I suppose that was a myth;
And yet, good sir, it hath its pith,
The ancient Oriental tale.
Even in these days sages veil,
You know, in th' East a curious store
Of abstract truths, 'Alektá' lore,
'Neath quirk and fable. And, I'm told,
There are some stones that still make gold,
In Europe too. So please attend
To a short anecdote, the end
Of which shall prove the myth, and show
Th' interpretation. *Allons, Clio.*"*

2250

* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *

"Petrus, although I like your wit,
The illustration's quite unfit

Whereat the Stone
recom-
mended liquor.

They spar.

For publication, altho' none
Could doubt the wisdom of a stone."

"By Salagram!" the cynic muttered,
"A word of sense Macaque has uttered!"

2260

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., talks of
publishing;

Then I resumed: "Since you approve
Of publication, please remove
One obstacle I sadly fear:
Your words will vex the polish'd ear,
Startle the fair, to men appear
Against me as an evidence
Of irreligion and prurience."

of delicacy;

"Man, all the Satiristic race,
From Wolcot up to old Horace,
With naked fists hit straight and hard,
And nought for Fashion's mufflers cared;

2270

* Here I have omitted much, because it is far too Oriental for Occidental ears.—L. B.

Bravely like men their parts they played,
And even called a spade 'a spade,'
Not 'agricultural implement;'
And, if a canteen girl they meant,
They called her 'canteen girl.' Dare thou
To do the same with dauntless brow?
Truth, sir, is nude: perish the hand
That buttons round her waist the band
Of green-silk breeches,* to induce
The thoughts to guess its wanton use.
Search ye the world, you'll ever find
The nice a very nasty mind;
And of one proverb e'er be sure,
'To the pure everything is pure,'

2280

of calling a
spade "a
spade."

Of men known as geologists
That strive to pierce Auld Lang Syne's mists
By means of us, sir, placed before
Their eyes to make them see the more."

These words encouraged me to do 't,
To incur the wrath of many a brute
Eager to vent his criticism
On free or feeble witticism.

2320

"Humboldt achieved an athanasia
Of fifty years by Central Asia;
Why can't I thrive—at least I'll try—
For section of a century,
On you and your lithophony?
When Brahmans fill up many a tome
With chippings of the letters 'O'M.'*
I, honest man, may pass my time
Awhile with hammering at 'I'm,'
Which, put through all categories
And cases that from *Ego* rise,
Mystifications, and what not,
From Isis down to Polyglott,

2330

* A very mystic word, the "essence of Vedas."—F. B.

Would, you may swear, wipe every nose
From Humboldt's up to Didymos."*

He mused a little and pursued:
"Man, do whate'er t'you seemeth good;
But, mind, what bile the critics vent,
That you must eat and rest content:
I cannot aid you, and, if able,
Would not—a quiet life's my *faible*."

2340

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., resolves
to "do it,"

despite all
reviewers,
critics, *et hoc
genus omne*.

Again he paused, once more took thought,
 And thus resumed: "Indeed, you ought,
 Bohemians of the scribbling rout,
 To call the critic rabble out,
 Old and new grievances to settle
 In a decisive general battle.
 Scene—Hyde Park; hour—the break of day,
 T' afford ye time to maim and slay;
 Arms—rulers, folio, and steel pen. 2350
Miséricorde for light men;
 Ready to scour the glorious field,
 Scissors and paste, and foolscap shield.
 See, there they stand, arrayed and keen,
 Squares linked by lines, great guns between;†
 The staff round General Sam Surly,
 On their best hobbies urging, hurl a
 Shower of shouts; mark well his air,
 Almost half saint and quite half bear.
 Now he harangues, now brow-beats, prays 2360
 In six-foot word and six-yard phrase,
 Concluding with a benison
 Each bloodier critic's hand upon.

The Stone
 visionizes a
 battle of
 authors and
 critics.

* — Chalkenteros, who wrote 4000 books.—F. B.

† The wretch is describing the tactics of the battle of the Pyramids.—F. B.

Lag ye behind! no, by Jove, no!
 Your eyes flash fire, your bosoms glow
 With all the hero. Look ye now,
 Field-Marshal Byr'n on hobby horse,
 And Keats and Burns, than whom none worse
 Hated yon impious host, prepare

Strategic arts with choicest care. 2370
Little harangue ye need, I swear.
But *laissez-aller*—go in and win—
The hardship is to hold ye in.
Spirits of all the brave! look down
(Or up) at these far braver. Flown
The signal, charges—note, ye Nine—
En échelon the Author-line.
They near the foe and straight begin
The wreck of nose, the rent of skin,
Rupture of sponce and eke of shin. 2380
‘Up, Bards, and at ’em! Now the day
Is ours, is ours—hoorray! hoorray!
Thump, valiants, thump! kick, heroes, kick!
Belabour, bite, butt, slash, curse, stick
Your stylet up t’ its very hilt
In their short ribs. Of coat and kilt
Strip forms obscene—the war-cry shout,
‘St. Liber, ho!’ Each pen choose out,
For sure destruction, him he hates
With writer-rage no vengeance sates. 2390
The field is strewn with many a pair
Locked in a horrid hug; the air
Resounds with war, the green sward bears
Hillocks of head and whisker hairs!
Muse, Muse, though scanty shame remain
To woman in these days, retain
Thy thoughts so feeble, words so vain!
Never, never, since old Troy fell
(Or fell not, ‘Gibbon *versus* Gell’)
Was ever battle fought so well. 2400
No fiery Arab ever hewed

Down Kafir dogs in ranks bestrewed
On crimson plain with half the will
As gars ye slaughter critics spill
The Readers’* blood, Reviewers kill.
I only hope some Homer may
Embalm your dust in deathless lay.”

“You’re in the regions of Romance;
Kindly return. Ere I commence
The work, indulge me with a hint
About the kind of thing to print.
Shall I prefix a face in wood
Or steel cut out, showing my mood,
Romantical Byronic sneer
Round th’ oval region, and a tear
Trembling outside the *canthi*; or
Would you prefer the style of Yor-
ick—index laid on writhèd nose,
And cunning leer ’neath thick-set brows,
And bulging forehead one foot high;
Or Rab’lais, with expression sly,
And grinning mouth——”

2410

2420

Cried he, “Restrain

Thy jaw. A satirist, and vain
Of hair and grin and brow! Repent
In dust and Bengal blue th’ intent
To foist upon the world your looks.
The Public’s tired of buying books

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., pro-
poses a portrait
to his volume.

The Stone
derides this
vanity,

* Namely, the publisher’s Readers, not the readers of this revelation.—F. B.

Half-a-crown dearer to be shown
Whether the author’s blond or brown;

Now every volume seems to groan 2430

'Neath weight of costard, and to moan

'Caput apri defero,

Quis sit bibliopolo'—

Big Bore's head I offer, O!

Thanks to Messrs. Blank and Co."

"Punning! a stone!" "Yes, sir, a man
Never omits a pun that can;
But, where he can't, why, then, to mock it,
His envy dubs punster 'Pickpocket.'

"Genius, man, never will endure 2440
Communism—of that be sure."

"But I'm no genius."

"You should try,

Then, t' ape its singularity—
Originality they call 't —
So shall your readers be at fault;
For few are they, or young or old,
Know well gilt brass from purest gold;
And, when some simple *savan* tries
To pluck the bandage from their eyes,
'Tis ten to one they sneer, and quote
Something about a beam and mote.

As for your forehead, this the rule—

A large-brow'd fool is twice a fool.

I happened once to know a huge-
scone'd individual called F * * *—

So tall his cranium, broad his brain-
pan, Gall and Combe had sworn 'tis plain

As Donovan's mouth he wore a mind

To influence and rule his kind:

The calvary deserved to bear a 2460

2450

and ridicules
even a phreno-
logic sketch,

In muddy Thames or anywhere 2490
Else—is the horrid degradation
Of the Hetæra's incalcation.
O what potato heels and toes!
How dread her stamp as on she goes,
Wolf-like, upon the human tracks,
Hurls horrid oaths and foul jests cracks
In ghastly mirth, as the Death's head
Grinning before Egyptian 'spread;'
Wafting of gin th' infernal stench
Till e'en Cotytto's ghost would blench; 2500
For ne'er, I ween, had met its eyes
Such ultra-Thracian mysteries!
By all the virtues Britons claim,
By all your sense of human shame,
Have you, I ask, no means to stop
The growth of such a poison crop—
To curb a scandal makes your name
Now and hereafter most infame?
I hear it said, were you to cull
From every city every trull 2510
Of abominablest infamy,
And loose them here their chance to try,
No two of them could e'er excel
One of these candidates for hell.
Remain ye idle, careless mute,
While such foul scenes and sights pollute
Innocency's sanctuaries—
Your children's opening minds and eyes;
Or fondly deem ye such things are
To them unknown, unheard of? Far 2520
Front this, I may with safety say,

Rare is the brat in present day
That learns not with his penny trumpet
The name and nature of a strumpet—
That can't, all sage, discriminate
Betwixt the verb to fornicate,
And with a just discrimen see
The difference of adultery.

'Tis said fruits prove the parent tree
Or sound or else unsound to be.

2530

To judge from spec'mens of your fruit,
The tree must be a Upas shoot,
Within whose ring of poison gloom
Rank Sin and Death luxuriant bloom—
Disease that leaves to far off time
The dreadful legacy of crime;
That, on your children's guiltless heads,
Vials of Heavenly vengeance sheds;
That saps your race's vigour, and
Spreads like a plague o'er every land.

2540

O falsest of false modesty!
Pharisaic hypocrisy!
These crying horrors to ignore,
Nor stretch one hand to salve the
sore!

O silly shame, to you confined,
Unto all vice unkindly kind,
Britannia, wake, turn on the gas,
And, with thy trident, to the 'Cas;
Then wend thy melancholic way
Adown the Market named of Hay,
Into the thick night-houses stray,
And end them, like a good old soul,

2550

With Cider Cellar and Coal Hole.”

I thought awhile, and thus replied:
“Let your immoral peoples hide
Such scenes with cloak of privacy:
We British English like to see
Them, as in evidence they show
Our mental frame hath power to throw
Out on the surface its foul humours
As healthy constitution’s tumours.”

2560

whom Dr.
Polyglott,
Ph.D., defends
on the usual
grounds.

“Man,” said he, gruffly, “pray go try
On softer souls your sophistry;
Let pamphleteering priest deceive,
Newspaper-spelling fool believe;
Let all the Commons, all the Lords,
Lend amplest credit to such words:
Me one sage sentence fully suits,
‘Good trees are they that bear good fruits.’
Your Knowledge-apple is a mess
Of most infragant rottenness;
And, for its core, I’ve mainly found
Inside and outside correspond.

2570

The Stone
replies fiercely
that “trees are
known by their
fruits,”

When I see nought but simony,
Souls bought and sold for sly money,
A mercantile affair their ‘cure,’
I know such things can’t long endure.
Your Churchmen, puffed with pomp and pride,
Claiming this world, the next beside,
Recall me not the mighty dead,
Whose humble state their tenets spread.
Not such th’ old moralists that strove
By wordless works of love to prove
The faiths for which they lived and died,

2580

and that the
Church’s pride
alienates it from
its origin.

In death by living glorified.

Whoe'er could boast two coats was told

One should be worn, the other sold.

How many coats, d'ye think, contains

Yon bishop's lackey's room?—yet feigns

That bishop he to Paul succeeds.

2590

Where tall trees fall spring noxious weeds!

The marrow of the thing may be

Piety or impiety;

But, when I judge of works, my eyes

Th' outside, not th' inside, scrutinize.”

“At any rate, our streets by day

Are pure enough, say what you may.”

“Sir, if your streets are bad by night,

By day they are as vicious quite.

I speak not of the swell-mob crew

2600

In every lane that meet the view—

Pickpockets, flashmen, and garotters

That ruffle up and down your trottoirs.

Another deeper case I meant.

There's not a snob or Sunday gent

That 'sports' not some foul sentiment;

Each shop-boy's a La Rochefoucault,

Each cabman deals in Attic salt;

E'en the Bœotian drayman swears

Far-fetched oaths with witty airs.

2610

The bottle-washing boys that carry

Pills and draughts for apothecary

Instance how well *canaille* know

To ape their betters and to show

Their reading in Life's folio.

Your higher classes, as they term

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., declares
that the streets
are pure by
day.

The Stone
declares they
are not,

Themselves, are quite as bad. I'm firm
In this my statement. As a sample,
The quoted may be deemed proof ample.

SENT. I.*

“A promise, like a pie-crust, 's meant
For breaking, when convenient.’

2620

cites proofs,

* N.B.—Not borrowed from “The Dirty Little Snob,” by Mr. Chas. Mackay, whose latest good news to us is “Rot, poor old pen! die, hapless bard!”—F. B.

SENT. II.

“Tell her the truth? You precious flat!
To woman lies are tit for tat.’

SENT. III.

“Society's essence, I opine,
Is a good feed with better wine.
The feast of reason and the flow
Of soul, you know, 's all “*rococo*.””

SENT. IV.

“The real value of a friend
Is just what he will give or lend.’

SENT. V.

“My tailor's waxing violent,
And, when I venture to indent
On the governor, like Polar bear
The old put growls me deaf, I swear.
Hail Continent and misanthropy!
Demme, good sir, the desert for me!’

2630

SENT. VI.

“I marry Sal; her brothers are
Ordered out to this Indian war—
One croaks with fever, t’other’s shot;
And so the coin’s my charmer’s lot.’

SENT. VII.

“Two things are sweet in polished life— 2640
A friend’s old wine and younger wife;
And two things mort’ly I detest—
An honest woman and a priest.’

SENT. VIII.

“Lord, man, you’d laugh your larynx hoarse
To see him pick the spavin’d horse.
He asked me if I’d sell the other;
“Gad, sir,” said I, “I’d sell my mother,
But she’s so old there’s none would buy
her.”
“Ah, trot her out,” cried he; “we’ll try her.””

SENT. IX.

“I’m not quite ass enough to cry 2650
Because my elder brothers die.
Three ’twixt me and the property;
Faith, they’ve no time to lose, say I.’

SENT. X.

“A precious dolt the chap must be
That dies for, bah! L. O. V. E.;
The which, transposed, upon my soul,

Denote a nobler thing—"La Vole."**

SENT. XI.

"I say, that precious Yahoo, Mister * * *,
Wanted to fight about—his sister!

SENT. XII.

"While I've a cooter in my purse 2660
I'll take no woman for better or
worse;
Till turned of fifty, then, of course,
Your wife's a good and unpaid nurse.'

*At *Ecarté*, I presume.—F. B.

SENT. XIII.

"The old girl's forty, but she's money.
I'm two-and-twenty: 'twill be funny
To see me, as John Little said,
Liquorish in my grandam's bed!

SENT. XIV.

"When the old bird hops off the perch,
Then, Poll, my pet, we'll go to church.
(*Aside*) She *is* uncommon mild— 2670
A girl *without* coin and *with* child.'

"Can I contain my wrath! why should
I do so even if I could?
You Cains that walk the London streets,
Ye little 'Devil's-hypocrites'
Lucifers of the shop and till!

and waxes very wrathful.

Machiavels of the oven and mill!
Petroniuses and Talleyrands
Of livery stables and errands!
Gentlemen into 'gent' cut down! 2680
Small *bourgeoisie* to Borgias grown!
Are Reason, Sense, and Virtue flown
So far away ye dare not own
To an acquaintance with the name
Of Goodness without blush of shame?
Did ye act out each nauseous boast,
I'd think ye all a mission host
Sent by Sathanas' 'hest to levy
Of volunteers an ardent bevy.
But, no! small things, I know ye

quake 2690

Privately at the lie ye spake
So bravely to your friends; and why?—
To prove your wit, your manhood? Fie!
“An hour ago I said, Sir, we
Stones look towards futurity——”
“Enjoy the 'is;' no one e'er saw
The 'will be,' or the 'was' re-saw;
And, though some German swears the present
Is not, I say th' idea's pleasant.”

“Your 'sentiment'! your dainty bit 2700
Of quibbling, verbal grammar wit!
Your galimatias! would you close
My mouth for ever?”

Fearing to lose
His latest words, rebuked, I sat
Listening,

“Futurity, I state,

When we shall come t' our own again,
Again assert our ancient reign,
And sit upon the throne we once
So proudly held—the human sconce.
In days of yore we stones (and faggots)
Were used to purge of Schism's maggots
And Doubts the brains that dared to breed
Question of catechism or creed.

The Stone
looks into
futuraity;

Still, it is said, in distant lands
We are strong weapons in the hands
Of priests, who, knowing well that *edo*
Is properest terminal of *credo*,
Are by their mundane interests led
T' insinuate into human head
By stones what argument can't teach.

2710

2720

“Europe, the recipe's in thy reach—
Simple, yet sure, Thus it is: Bind
The unconvinced one's hands behind;
Then bring your mob, with stones and clods,
To vindicate insulted gods.
The light work done, smash in his skull,
And break his backbone with the full
Force of your argumental State
Machine for righting sceptic pate:

advises
intolerance,

He'll feel its force, and, lest his fate
Some softer soul commiserate,
Tell him that Allah the Raheem*
Made stones to smite lips that blaspheme
His name. If all this reason fail,
Him with the same strong proof assail.

2730

“But your wise folk in Europe now
Think the Creator strong enow

To settle his own quarrels—fear
To crop the Deist's nose or ear—
Are too enlightened, or too good, 2740
To shed the blatant Atheist's blood
You cut him dead; but, as his throat
Is safe, he careth not a groat.

“And see, th' adulterer, he thrives
With you like cat with ninety lives:
In Jews' and Moslems' dispensation
We soon cut short his avocation.

There the amour detected led
Directly to a stone-cracked head;
Your brighter souls prefer to see 2750
Him settled by some pert Q. C.—
Some Buz-fuz Bovell, Edwin James,
Or other talking thing that shames
The name of Themis. You would damage
His '*bons*' and not his bones; you rummage

punishment of adultery,

* One of the Moslems' names for the Supreme Being, meaning “The Merciful.”—F. B.

His chest and eke his case to find
Food for enlightened Public's mind,
Institute Probate and Divorce
Courts to inflame the evil worse,
Each fact least decent joy to trace, 2760
And, with delicious detail, grace
Tale of a 'charming crim. con. case.'
Lotharios who have funds to pay
At that same game here safely play.
'Tis only paupers can't afford
Part in their neighbour's bed and board.

‘Come, Fan, with me, and be my love,
And we will o’er Ausonia rove,
Where no stiff prude shall sneer and say
Sweet Fan’s a naughty *divorcée*.’” 2770

“Stone, outrag’d Honour——”

“Good sir, ofttest

Inflicts the penalty the softest;
And, in such cases, very great is
The chance of getting off clean gratis.
For Honour, in her quiet way,
Stifles the-ugly *exposé*;
And few now fight, while fewer fall
By pistols only wanting ball,
Save youngest hands, who’re sometimes found
Wounded—in mind—upon the ground. 2780

The herd will aye prefer relief
For cornute pain, connubial grief,
And broken heart and woe intense
By bank-note plaster, salve of pence.
The man who pockets his disgrace
Never, methinks, should show his face
Without his ticket, duly worn
Suspended to his dexter horn.

(not damages),

Yet so ’tis not: Society
Treats him as well as you or me; 2790
And, if he’s rich, pray who’ll refuse
Once more to let him pick and choose?

“Faith, sir, in Britain there’s a price,
A tariff for each sin and vice
Not difficult to calculate;
Although the values fluctuate.
Crime, also, hath its market rate,

impartial
justice,

Though grown exorbitant of late.
It is a goodly sight to see
Astræa in nineteenth century, 2800
In robes of solemn black berigged,
With a huge horse-hair wig befigged,
Bagging poor Peter's Pence, and crying
'Ho! Dispensations! who's for buying?'
But, when unmoneyed criminals steal,
Or forge, or kill, stern fingers feel
The edge of her avenging steel,
Which, were the culprit rich, would lie
In scabbard cased eternally,
And be to all, save common fellow, 2810
Nothing but 'leather and prunella.'
When ducal hands cut common throat——”

“The duke must hang——”

“Yes, sir, but note

The gap 'twixt fictions of the law
And facts nor you nor I e'er saw.
Dukes have an easy saving clause;
Lawyer hath pouch—indictment flaws.
The grandee drives away on bail—
The pauper's carried straight to jail.
Soldier's habitual drunkenness 2820
Is a trimestrial excess;
Among the captains met to try
The private for debauchery,
How many, if the truth they'd speak,
Would own to 'freshness' once a week?”

“Station and rank must be upheld,
And wealth should make a man be bailed.”

“The 'must' and 'should' I cannot see;

It is your shame such things should be.

For, mark me, sir, in this fair land

2830

No sin is hated, crime is banned,

Like poverty: here to be poor

Is to be vile. The wide world o'er

'Tis a misfortune—here a worse

Than any sublunary curse.

Rich Vice trips out in laced chemise,

less avarice,

Poor Virtue shakes her cold-chapped knees;

Chastity hath nor shoon nor hose,

And Honour swabs a snivelling nose.

[2840

And why? D'ye ask? Because you've sold

Your souls for filthy Mammon's gold.

Long since from pest'lent Guinea's plains

Came the 'vile yellow slave'* that reigns

Supreme o'er England's coasts and chains

Its thirty million sovereigns,

Of whom few souls would not adore

The golden calf to 'bone' its ore.

'Tis only when it's lead you're strong

In love of right, in hate of wrong.

You're very dotards in your lust

2850

Of lucre, madmen in your trust

To acre-might. Some South Sea scheme,

* From poor John Leyden's pathetic "Ode to an Indian Gold Coin."—F. B.

Some art of turning coin to steam,

Some project wild as drunkard's dream

Starts up each century, and drives

Britannia raving mad. So strives

The cunning maniac to conceal

His dread complaint. Would you reveal
The horrid malady, and goad
Into a fiend what seemed a toad? 2860

With wizard wand of words that part
He hideth with his studied art.
But touch, and see his passions rise!
Mark all the demon in his eyes!
With you the latest wand appeared
In Engine shape; you forthwith reared,
Acteon-like, a bestial front,
With crowns of branching antlers on't.
What Dian, Circe, Moon, had might
To work such marvel? What fierce sprite, 2870

Tell me, what Hecate-taught hag
Thus metamorphosed man to stag,
Sending him forth in modern days,
Nebuchadnezzar-like, to graze
Where'er a Railway king might lead—
Like Schwein-König of comic Head*—
King Hudson, who could e'en permute,
As royal Lab,† mankind to brute!
Till, after brief but brilliant sway,
He sank t' a thing as low as they. 2880

The fit hath passed, yet still remain
Its traces burnt in many a brain—

* See "Bubbles from the Brunnens of Nassau," by Sir Francis Head, Bart.—F. B.

† A celebrated enchantress in the "Arabian Nights."—F. B.

To be expelled when Furies send
Another and more frantic fiend;
And even now ye're hardly sane,

But sad with unforgotten pain—
Many a loser sick and sore
With ruin's potent Hellebore;
While, in the few, fixed melancholy
Hath ta'en the place of frantic folly, 2890
Let me prescribe a cure which all
Will join in owning radical—
The real *Font de la Jouvence*,
Which can bring back your better sense,
The only dose for certain health—
Namely, disgorging th' over wealth,
Th' ungodly fill with which your claws
Have crammed and rammed your ravening
maws.

and disgorging
over wealth.

Render, I say.”

“Stone, Chartist ‘chaff’
Calls for the flail of Special's staff. 2900
Like Quaker Bright, wouldst parcel out
Our nobles' lands to rabble rout?
Wouldst, like the bagman Cobden, see all
Perfections in one *beau idéal*—
The dis-United States—and plan
For John the fate of Jonathan,
Manifest fate of Uncle Sam,
Whom wiser men call Uncle Sham?”

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., objects,
and even
threatens.

“Man, I've an honest petrification;
Little I feel for petty faction 2910
Of patriots paid so much a day
To march with flags and run away.
And, what is more, I would not barter
Bond Pennsylvanian for Big Charter,
Your liberalo-politic creed,

Whereupon
the Stone
actually abuses
Magna Charta,

Calf-skin Tables of Runnymede—
To Lackland sense and wit baronial
Most creditable testimonial

(The which enables every stark ass
To have and hold his proper carcass,

2920

And eke demand a baker's dozen
Of jurymen the law to cozen,

The benefit of which appears

In Lion Range from negro peers).*

Of all the barons meeting there

How many read or wrote? They were

Dext'rous at pulling nose with grace

Their mutton fists could mar a face

As well as mighty Mahmud's mace,†

And, with one buffet, breast-plate batter

2930

As flat as farmer's pewter platter;

Their mighty draughts of beer and mead

Could flood the fields of Runnymede:

Strong men-at-arms, they had stiff seats

On steed, were proud of jousting feats—

Not as your 'silken barons' play,

With long cracked poles at mock tourney

(Like hodded cocks on soft green sward),

A tableau-vivant tilting-yard,

Passage of arms to scaramouch

2940

The deeds of Ashby de la Zouche;‡

Not like Smith's knights, whose arms

adorn

The tournament of Smith's Cremorne,

* Alluding, perhaps, to the quasi-infernal Sierra Leone.—F. B.

† The conqueror of Somnauth.—F. B.

‡ For which see “Ivanhoe.”—F. B.

Where the object of the fray appears
Only t’ avoid the shock of spears.
Their lances, sir, were strong, were sharp,
More than their wits: on this I harp,
Because your age finds greater charms
In their dull wisdom than their arms.
To copy all they said—not did—
Sir, I would bid your people rid
Themselves of all the ills they suffer,
And not a patched-up armistice offer
Upon such terms as cheaper bread
Or votes at £5 5. a head.

2950

and lapses into
treasonable
talk.

Ages to come mankind shall quote
The Great Napoleon’s Code: he wrote
From dictate of superior sense,
Not extracts from the impotence
Which Pepin might have penned, or great
Carolus scratching scurfy pate.*
Ye Chartist wormkins, pull up roots
Of wrongs, and thus you’ll kill the shoots;
But——”

2960

“Stop!” cried I; “hast lost thy reason?
Ruffian, thy words are rank high treason.
I, too, a’ ‘Special.’”

Dr. Polyglott,
Ph.D., would
restrain him,

“Ass!” said he;
“Choose other subject; what made ye
Provoke me to it?” I could hear
Him muttering to himself—“A year
Or ten, perhaps—trampled upon—
Starved—Lords and Commons, all dupe

2970

on!—

* “Charlemagne, being dull at his pen, was in the habit of looking to the ceiling for words and of scratching his head to urge his thoughts.” (*Old Chronicle*).—F. B.

Pikes, bludgeons—William Tell, Jack Cade—
Horseguards and Foot—a barricade—
Sulphuric acid—Specials to pot—
As fou, but not so brisk as Lot——”

The last allusion was too much
For me t’ endure. “Wretch!” cried I, “such
Insinuations loudly call
For treatment in Correction Hall.”

“You mean the station?”

[2980

“Yes, of course.”

but cannot.

“Then will I tell you something worse.”

I sat as one spell-bound to see
His grimy grin of vicious glee.
“Stones, as I oft to you have said,
Ere this have broken human head;
And soon it may be ours again
To test the strength of human brain.

“Behold our proper paradise—Paris.
How gentle, gay, polite—how far is
Our Paris from an insurrection?
You’d say, ‘From this to Resurrection!’
You’re wrong. A dinner’s countermanded.
The weather’s sultry; they’ve demanded
Reasons: the only answer given
Is something touching anti-Heaven.
Two fellows hap to meet: one swears
C’est un peu fort; his friend declares

2990

The Stone
looks forward
to a London
barricade
match,

C'est infâme, that evil days
Are on the *Français et Françaises*.
A third man thinks it won't 'draw length' 3000
Before Parisians show their strength.
A fourth opines—if e'er, 'tis now—
That brave men ought their strength to show,
And counsels all '*poltrons*' to go
Somewhere. A fifth says present is
The best of opportunities,
And, being an ancient *militaire*,
Offers to manage the affair;
While some old *chef* of barricades
His tactics 'fore the crowd parades, 3010
Sans further *parlez-vous*, they rush
Into the next gun-shop, and push
The owner out of house and hall
To show the People's might—that's all—
And kiss his daughter or his wife
To give the thing a spice of life.
This first step ta'en, they congregate,
Dozens and scores, in frantic state.
Not one has time to think or doubt,
Or ask or see what he's about— 3020
Boys bad as men, and women first
Of plagues, as usual, and the worst.
A sea of blood, o'er whose fierce tide
Satan himself might gloat with pride,
In one *quart d'heure*—tables, chairs,
Beds, wardrobes, boxes, strips of stairs;
And we, sir, placed on planks in layers."

 ("Thank God, from Paris streets stone all's
Gone!——")

“Yes, but they’ve left it in the walls!)

Proclaim *Messieurs* ‘No thoroughfare.’ 3030

Now, armed by magic, some prepare
Flanking defences from the windows;
Some dance, drink, sing, curse, try what *din* does
T’ excite their enemies to fight.

Faith, ’tis a spirit-stirring sight!
Clashes the tocsin, rolls the drum
Loud notes above the savage hum,
Whose key-note is the *Sacré nom*
‘Allahu’* of Gallic Christendom;

Blares the loud trump, and woman’s shriek 3040

Inflames the brave and nerves the weak.
Now all’s still as the tomb: the mound
One mounts, to hear the measured sound
Of ironed hoofs and gaitered feet
Slowly defiling up the street.
No ‘*obus*’? *À merveille!* Clear
These warriors know nought of war!

* * * * *

“A pause, a brief, long-seeming pause,
Broken in time—a shot the cause,
Th’ effect an empty saddle. ‘*Vive* 3050

La Charte!’† Now, patriots, give
‘Pepper’ as well as tongue! prepare
Rifle and knife with anxious care!
Climb the *banquette*—on t’other side
Pour in a ceaseless fiery tide!
A feu d’enfer that mows them down
Like grass before the practised clown.
Ye flankers, fire! women, vitriol throw
Upon the fated *troupe* below! [3060

describing one at
Paris.

Splash face and arms with gore; 'twill show—
Well—hero-like: *O qu'il est beau!*
You die? *Eh bien!* your friends will mourn,
And give, perhaps, a plaster urn
Where Paris plants her choicest bays—
In pretty, trashy *Père la Chaise*.
Your brother falls: a *rien!*—drive
Your blade through slaves that run to live!

* “Allah he!” (is Allah!) the Moslem war-cry—F. B.

† Which, if memory serves me, was usually pronounced “La Chatte.”—F. B.

They charge; *bah!* Let them near you; keep
Your fire awhile. Now roll your heap
Of stones from every window-sill! 3070
Cold iron hurl, hot water spill!
Fill your barrels, men, fill, re-fill!
Taunt, howl, or else they'll bolt before
You've tasted half enough of gore—
Before your hero-boy or wife
Gash e'en one throat with rusty knife!

* * * * *

Ah, what a pity! Shame, O shame!
Those well-trained cocks show scanty game.
They stand—they run! Let showers of
stones,
Parting volleys of shots and groans, 3080
Avenge the execrable crime
Of trifling with your dinner-time.
“A pretty sight this seems to be,
Succedaneous to th' *Agapæ*;
You've admirably learn'd to smother

Your charity to one another.

‘See how these Christians love’ *was* true;

‘See how they hate’ *is* true of you.”

“Ah, they are French——”

“Yes, sir, they are,

These Gallicans, a very mar-

3090

tial member of the creed you can’t

But own to be most militant.

Slavish Islam can boast but one

Revolution, some ages gone

(When slain their caliph hight Usman

For meddling with their Alcoran).

But, this in brackets, d’ye suppose

That only France these passions knows?

No; by my origin! we stones

Ere long shall dance on English bones,

3100

Or *Citoyen Crapaud* despatch

Some million brother-men to teach

Stiff Lord *Jean Boule* grace to dance

With Miss *Liberté*, fresh from France.

Then some small hero Joinville

Or Cavaignac the Second will,

Under his huge mustachio, sneer

‘*En avant*, tugs; to *gloire* ye steer!

Go it, *mes braves*! the landing’s clear—

Thank God! no coast-defences here.

3110

March, *enfants* of *vin ordinaire*,

Against the *bifteck* and the *bière*;

Advance, sour wine, against flat swipes—

Sans culotte versus cotton wipes.”

The dreadful thought hard froze my tongue;

I sat in reverie deep and long.

Then came another burst of glee,
And, with a jerk, thus he: "Sir, see,
Paris is settled; view a scene
Methinks may more incite your spleen. 3120

"Behold yon lovely land outspread
Like emeralds strewn on sapphire bed;
Its bound the narrow waving band
Of silvery cliff and golden sand:
That lovely region decked and drest
In bounteous Nature's brightest, best;
The land where Zephyr loves to roam
Thro' flowery hort and fruity grove,
Where Phœbus sheds his latest ray
As loth to leave a scene so gay. 3130
Is't not an earthly paradise?"

"Now sit up, fellow; use your eyes,
And look and mark, with wondering stare,
The pretty scene that's passing there."*

In truth, his leer had mesmerized me:
My sudden power of sight surprised me.

"Mind ye yon city shining fair
In the translucent morning air;
Whose skirts descend on either side
To th' edges of the subject tide, 3140
Upon whose heaving bosom ride
Three navies, each a nation's pride.
The sea's blue depths that seem to lave
The buildings based upon the wave;
The land's green length, where objects all
Into a picture seem to fall;
Whilst, round about, o'er land and deep
Eternal quiet seems to sleep.

He viciously
enables Dr.
Polyglott,
Ph.D., to
Cumming-ize
the Crimea.

Is't not too fair for ye to gaze
Upon except on holidays? 3150

“A curious contrast, now you see
Two hosts contend for victory—
This stretching o'er the distant hills,
Whilst that the goodly city fills.
They meet as lines of pismires—fall
By thousands 'fore a battered wall;
Whilst trumpet bray and cannon roar
Are answered by the groaning shore,
And puffs of fetid smoke soar high,
Staining the amethystine sky; 3160
And, swifter than the fiery leven,
Man's guardian angel speeds to heaven,
While tortured shriek and dying yell
Are borne on demons' wings to hell.

* Verily this beats Mother Shipton and Rob. Nixon and Dr. Cumming—Prophets or Prophetasters.—F. B.

“The line divides; the right half, which is
Conspicuous for madder breeches,
Presses like flock of hunted sheep
Towards yon town so grim and steep:
O'er ditch and stream and crest and wall
They jump and swarm, they rise and fall, 3170
With *vives* and '*crés* and cheers and cries
Like thunderings in autumnal skies;
A few defenders, brave in vain,
Slashed, stifled, stabbed, and shot, are slain,
Till every foot of ground is mud
With tears and brains and bones and blood.
Yet, 'faith, it is a grim delight.

The French Malakoff- victory;

To see the little devils fight.

They turn the guns against the town,

Batter each strongest bulwark down.

3180

Charge, *grédins*, charge! On, *crétins*, on!

Sevastopol is lost and won.

“Now mark the line sinister that’s

In red coatees and Albert hats—

That host of sickly, war-worn men

Despatched against yon iron den

By chief who, seated far—too far!—

Through his specs darkly views the war,

Hidden behind a hilly rise

Where wicked bullet never flies;

3190

And round about the ‘brilliant staff’

All have their silly *mot* and laugh—

The delicate diminutives!—

About men’s perilled limbs and lives.

Without reserves, supports, or aught

(The idler red-coat host hath sought

Each man a place to view the fray)

That slender column works its way.

“Now neared the trench! a thrilling
shout!

All tumble in and scramble out,

3200

And, spite of bayonet and ball,

They jumble o’er the earthen wall,

Another charge and all is won—

Already the defenders run.

What means this check? Why halt they here,

Stricken by sudden panic fear?

Why slink these warriors aside

Their ostrich heads from death to hide?

and the English
Redan-defeat.

Have Britons learned to hark-away
And live to fight another day? 3210

In vain their captains, stark and brave,
Push, urge, and scold, smite, curse, and rave;
They will not face that fiery flood
That sweeps them back in brother-blood.

Advance, supports, reserves, and save
Your honour front a craven's grave,
And win and wear the glorious
Bronze Cross yclept Victorious!

Supports, reserves—ah, where are they?
Dispersed like wanton boys at play! 3220

Where's the great Chief-Commander—where?
Lurking in honourable lair?

Arise, Sir James! arise and see
The fate of England's chivalry!

* * * * *

“The cause of this I'll now describe:
'Tis meet to move a cynic's gibe.

Far in the north, where suns are cold,
Where ice is water, snow is mould,
Dwelt in those dreary lands a 'Ba'ar,'

Horrid of mien, of hunger rare, 3230
Wont by his roar to spread a fear

'Mid minor brutelets far and near.

One day he formed the fell design

Upon a neighbouring bird to dine;

But Cock and Bull cried, 'Bear, forbear;

That bird to all our peace is dear:

Sometime he must be some one's prey,

But now let Turkey 'joy his day.'

For all reply they hear a growl

The Stone explains what will cause these “Cumming” things,

And certain innuendos foul, 3240
Proceeding from a host of Bears
That into Turkey's message tears,
And inopine converts a brood
Of likely poult to lawless food.
The bird, tho' somewhat stiff with age,
Ruffles his plume with noble rage,
And flies with's softy beak and claw
At the vile breaker of the law,
Till tetchy Cock-a-doodle and
The Bull, who e'er must have a hand 3250
In every pie of rich inside,
Rescue and comfort have supplied.
(They summon even the Sardine,
Done in Cassiteridean tin.)
Ensues a pretty scrimmage, till
The Bear of baiting hath his fill.
With grimly grins and groans of pain,
He wends, head backwards, to his den,
Which nature, art, and toil immense
Had made a marvel of defence. 3260
The Turkey, by his luck 'scaped gobbling,
Waddles to glory proudly wobbling;
And Cock, with all his little *poules*,
And Bull, with all his junior Bulls,
Hasten to waste, in Justice' name,
Beargarden Lodge with steel and flame.
 "But one Spread-Eagle, 'Death-in-Life,'
Aideth the Bear in's mortal strife,
And by his wily art lays low
Some twenty thousand of the foe. 3270
Comes the beginning of the end

E'en 'Death-in-Life' may not defend:
He warns the Bears, who, waxing savage,
Their den beloved spoil, tear, and ravage,
And then depart in surly pride
Unto their stronghold's other side;
Where, sitting safe, they take a sight
At Cock and Bull's behungered plight,
Who sit at meat with saddened mien
'Fore potted cat and coffee green.

3280

“But soon the Bull and Cockadoodle
Resolved that both had played the noodle,
And daily, as at meat they sat,
'Fore coffee green and potted cat,
They yearned to think on brats and wives,
How hastily they'd sold their lives,
Adorned a tale, pointed a moral
By meddling in another's quarrel;
For which unauthorized interpose
Both oft had wiped cruorish nose.

3290

This done, they both devised manœuvre
To make the evil time run over;
And, having vainly tried again
A mastery o'er the Bear to gain,
They packed the Turkey and his brood
Back to his home of painted wood,
And winked while Bruin in his rage
Tore down a corner of the cage.

This deed politic duly done,
As all had lost, and none had won,
As none could buck or boast that he
Had gained superiority,

3300

They all decreed fierce war to cease
And hail return of smiling peace,
To love once more with heart and soul
And drown their difference in the bowl.
Soon said, quick done; they drank, and then
Each warrior sought his distant den,
While Bruin whispered, 'Heartkins, mum,
'We'll bide our time; 'twill surely come.'

3310

 "A hundred thousand men and more
Stained the Crimean soil with gore;
A hundred thousand souls had died
To gratify two despots' pride.
Ah, man! it is a treat to see
Thy human inhumanity."

 He ceased, and rang within mine ear
His words significantly drear;
And, while I tried to seek relief
From vision of our national grief,
Out broke, in sad and wailing tone
And doleful dumps, the following moan:

3320

MOAN.

"Mourn, Britain, mourn the sad decay
Of honour in thine elder day.
The children of thy younger age,
That race so brave, if not so sage,
 Ah, where are they?
Those knights so *débonnaire* and gay,
So fiery in the fight and fray,
That never knew the word of fear,
Brought up from milk on beef and beer,

3330

and moans over modern English de- generacy.
--

Ah, where are they?
Like other things, they've passed away,
And for their spirits churchmen pray;
Their sword-blades stain the walls with rust,
Their war-steeds, like themselves, are dust:

Ah, gone are they.
A poor and puny race to-day
In vain to take their place essay—
A dwarf'd, degenerate progeny, 3340
Reared on dry toast and twice-drunk tea:
Ah, sad decay!

“Ah, sad decay! see Bruin once more
Rageth far fiercer than before.
As Turkeys may not gorge his maw,
On Poles he plants his heavy paw;
He rules their realm by fines and fetters;
He robs their brats, and eke their letters;
He drives their youth to swell his host;
He racks their rents, t' uphold his boast 3350
Of being th' incarnate principle
Of rule ye call despotal;
And, when they offer to object,
Their lives and fortunes rack'd and wreck'd,
He fills their towns with venal spies;
T' hunt down each nobler soul he tries,
Most rigorous martial law proclaims,
Be-knouts their men, be-rates their dames,
Sending them forth, a dreary way,
To Tobolsk, in Siberia; 3360
Fines, harries, bans, and confiscates
The friends of Freedom, whom he hates

He then enters
upon the case
of Poland,

With all the wrath of tyrant ire,
As squire loathes poacher, poacher squire.

“Ye Whigs, ye Liberals, that be
Infleshed Illiberality,
That e’en to use the Liberal name
Should flush your checks with blush of shame,
What did ye when the generous cry
Of Christendom was heard on high?

3370

“Of course the Jack of Britain sees
The Euxine and the Baltic seas—
Not led by men from whom the go
Hath gone some score of years ago,
Not boasting knight of Netherby
In place where *he* should never be,
Nor John de Bedford (name of fear!),
Nor Pecksniff Glad. to Grundy dear,
Nor wanting bomb-ketch, light craft—all,
In fact, that was effectual—

3380

Not with a broadside of popgun,
But cupolas, by Coles begun;
Not manned by tailor, potboy, clown—
Refuse of bog, and eke of town;
But, from the first to last, complete,
As Britain pays to fight her fleet.

“Ah, no! So powerful, so grand
The lecturing of this freeborn land,
What erring ruler dare gainsay
Nor see the folly of his way?

3390

Blate, Britain! blate, till Russia, all
Penitent—constitutional—
From Poland’s limbs shall strike the chain,
‘Peccavi’ cry with might and main,

and abuses the so-called Liberals,
--

And rush to learn the A B C

Of ten-pun vote and liberty.

“Yes, look ye! ‘Sarah’* grips the pen

And Europe ’gins to sneer again—

Sneer with a concentrated spite

To see the Briton Britain blight. 3400

No Solon he to talk or think,

But ‘pear’ at goosequill stained with ink.

And what writes he?

Some wretched trash,

Grotius and Bible all in hash,

With stern dictate and feint of threat

And league for armed coercion met—

Three allied powers’ (all the scoff

Of single-handed Gortschakoff)

Vapid outcries and maunder’d pleading

For the poor land whose corpse lies

bleeding, 3410

All ending with the *arrière-goût*

‘Go in and win: who’ll fight for you?’

“Then th’ all unreasonable Tartar,

Though caught, will not be daunted,

laughter

And equal scribbling art opposing

To all the foeman thinks most posing;

And, daunting all with fell-fanged grin,

He hugs his victim tighter in,

While Dogberry, hast’ning tail to show,

Takes note of him and lets him go†— 3420

Like bully Pistol, e’en must seek

A private *coigne* to eat his leek.

“Sarah”
especially.

* Surely the irreverend wretch of a Stone cannot allude to the motto of the ducal family of——?—F. B.

† I cannot pass over this misquotation. In the original Dogberry says, “Take no note of him, but let him go.”—F. B.

“Behold a brother-nation stand
Embattled on its mother-land—
This half for empire fights, the other,
That won't call Sambo man and brother,
For Freedom strikes: the twain appeal
To the old parent, who should feel
Bowels of pity yearn to see
The fury of his progeny.
A word in time had stayed the flood
That drenched the land in tears and blood.
'Tis money-loving cowardice,
'Tis slavish silence to be nice
When men's lives in the balance sway:
Outspeak it, men, come what come may.
But no! we wait what France may say.
France, being troubled with a throe
Abortive, called a Mexico,
For once sits deeply, deadly dumb;
So mumbles Bull with toothless gum,
'Oyez! ye great Confederates,
And Oyez! ye great Federal States:
Great are ye both! Considering this,
Considering that, and all that is
To be considered, I'm content
To call ye both belligerent,
To keep a strict neutrality,
Which means look out. for self, ye see.

3430

3440

Bella debella belle! Belly

3450

He waxes
pathetic about
the dis-United
States war,

Will make ye soon knock off, I tell ye;
Meanwhile, fight on till all is red,
And grind your bones to make my bread.’

“Turn t’other way: see yonder Dane,
His realm invaded, cities ta’en,
His people plundered, soldiers slain
By those twin gaunt and grisly forms
That daunt the steed in Russian storms.

Weary of wrangle in their lairs

O’er the dry bones of State affairs,

3460

Fearing a general mutiny

In the whole horde both far and nigh,

Luck-burgh and High-toll (such their
names)

Set forth to see the world in flames—

Bravely pick out the smallest prey

And crack his crown.

And where are they

That should defend?—the ‘Cabinet

Of all the Talents’—Premier Threat,

Secundus Sneer, and Grundy Glad.,

Inevitable Stick?*

’Tis sad!

3470

Again they all sit down to write,

When other men would stand and fight.

They fire off—Armstrongs? Whitworths?—

No!

But protocol and plenipo!

Pushed to the last, they dare propose

Of Conference the normal dose;

And now behold how all this ends—

The Lord defend me from my friends!

* * * * *

Certes, the last half-century
Hath sent us queerish things to see. 3480
When the great Uncle's subtle Nephew
Delivered Europe—rose to save you

and ends with
general abuse
of John Bull.

* Can he mean the great No-shire statesman with whom Dr. Polyglott dined?—F. B.

From Cossack and Republican—
Who mostly thwarted's every plan?
Grundy and Stiggins! Thou and Thou!!
That was a glorious pow-wow! *
What tricks ye played in Church and State!
What jinks ye flung infuriate!
Court, pulpit, press, and public, all
Lunatico-maniacal: 3490
Such mania as say'th th' old tradition
The gods make courier to perdition.
And thus Napoleon rose. Abuse
First taught fair France her scion's use:
'See, *l'Anglais* hates him!—why? 'tis
clear

The Stone
shows that
England made
Nap. III.

No more Napoleons wanted here:
Le petit homme is Heaven sent,
And he shall sit our President!
"I' sooth, it was a contrast—You
Versus the man of 'Fifty-two, 3500
And You kow-towing all before
The self-same man of 'Fifty-four.
'Tis true *that* was a candidate,
And *this* had won imperial state;
Whilst your rank-worship casts you prone

All the world o'er before a throne,
And from all 'Things of Pagod sway,'
With brazen Front and feet of Clay,
Turning with mien sufficient bold,
You lowly buss the toe of gold. 3510

“Thus rose Napoleon III.: again
Imperialism took the rein.

* A council amongst the savage aborigines of North America.—F. B.

Poor Johnny Bull down louted low
'Fore Gallic cockrel's clarion crow,
And warned his female sharp to put her
Alarm-bells up at every shutter,
Whilst he went forth to guard his store
Of steel-traps and spring-guns galore.
'Who knows,' cries he, 'what treachery?
That “beastly bird” may cunning be. 3520

L'Empire c'est la paix: a word
For Peace may substitute the Sword.
While fields are pocked with armed heel,
While ports are stocked with iron keel,
While Cherbourg, bold as Spurgeon, shows
To general Europe upturned nose,*
Who knows what is the fellow's plan
Against a “Merchant and a Man”?
My constitution's strong and free
When not assailed by enemy; 3530
But man, when danger groweth near,
Must think of all that man holds dear,
Prize wife and children, friends, renown,
Protestantism, Peerage, Crown.

Bide we our time—he'll go his way;
I'll run, to fight another day.'
And so the rude and rampant roar,
Erst wont to echo Europe o'er,
Subsided to the piteous whine
Of second childhood genuine,

3540

* It is wrong thus to allude to that reverend gentleman; but the friends of Mr. S—— surely ought not to have left him standing, in the shape of a plaster-of-Paris bust, in the Crystal Palace, looking, with cock-nose and snarling lip, at those high-bred gentlemen Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin as if he were a potboy offering to fight either of them for a pint o' porter.—J. B.

And all the beasts of field and fell
Cried 'Farewell, Johnny Bull! Farewell!'

 'But Bull of Bull-lings had a brood
Full fierce of fight and hot of blood,
Sturdy young louts who more than once
To odds had dealt a broken scone.
They ranked themselves in troop and
 squad,

And learned to stand and eke to prod,
To turn, to wheel about, and show
A 'fended front to every foe:

3550

Their Bull's Run o'er was t'other way;
And some had nearly died (they say)
For want of enemy to slay.

 'When Bull-lings heard their sire's decree,
T' ignobly guard his property,
They made a mighty 'many' and
Thus unto hint preferred demand:

 'Thee, great Papa, we praise,' they said,
'Yet wherefore hide that dear old head?
If weight of hours and honours press thee,

3560

The Bull-ings are made to fall foul of Mr. Bull, their sire,

If stricture, rheum, gout, stone, oppress thee,
O take thy rest! Speak thou the word,
And we go forth a ready herd,
To sweep from off our pasture's face
Of hostile animals every trace—
Cocks, Eagles with Two Heads or One,
Dragons and Bears, Lions and Sun.
Right soon the beasts obscure shall see
The British Beef's supremacy.
We'll dip the world in English ale, 3570
Make Kickshaw and Beaujolais pale,
And send to Vaterland undear
Sausage, Sauer-kraut, and Lagerbier.
Bellow the word!

But Bull was old,
And Bull was stupid; Bull was cold;
Bull, like a certain widow, 'd seen
Far better times than these, I ween.

“My sons,’ he gently ’gan to low,
‘We all must reap the thing we sow.
I planted storms in my hot youth, 3580
And now I gather cyclones. ’Sooth
To say, my sin hath found me out.’

“Papa! no cant!”

‘Hush, rebel rout,
Time was when to Borussia none
Without my leave could bang a gun,
Civis Romanus sum could save
The veriest miscreant from the grave,
And a roast Protestant set fire,
Like Helen's rape, t' a whole empire.
'Twas then three mighty specs I made, 3590

And threw all peoples in the shade:
I shipped old Afric's West Coast clean
Of negro and of niggerine—
Five hundred million guineas there
Were brought me by my negro ware;
Next India came below my heel,
And voided gold 'neath fire and steel,
Till I could hardly stir a foot
For weight of land and blood and
loot;

And, lastly, cotton made me roll
In gold and notes, until my soul
Is made of money——

3600

‘But, Pa, your fleet?——’

about his fleet,

‘My little dears, is tight and neat;
Wanting, 'tis true, officers, men,
And the right gun: but still, what then?
Each Bull is fit, you know, ye dogs,
To meet and eat a dozen Frogs.
Hip! hip! hurrah!’

army,

‘But, Pa, your army?——’

“Let not that nauseous theme alarm ye.
'Tis, somehow, hard to raise recruits,
Who cry for rank and pay (the brutes!),
And yet I beat, on Belgian plain,
The Frenchman, and will do 't again;
At Alma we were not behind;*
In India all went well, I find.
Hip! hip! hurrah!’

3610

‘Your colonies?——’

and colonies.

“‘Oh, let them slide;’ Bull 'gan to wheeze
And cough aloud; ‘Ionians go

To Athens or to Jericho;
 Thou Caffre-fighting Cape, aroynt;
 Maori-slaying Zealand, avaunt; 3620
 African pest-house, gang your gait;
 Take Canada you, Fourth Estate!
 And, e'en if India parts, you'll find
 I've left her nothing but the rind.⁷
 The Bull-lings blushed, each shook his head—
 'No luck till poor Papa is dead.'
 And Europe scoffs at English Moll,
 From rising Sun to setting Sol.

* * * * *

Alas and oh! oh and alas!
 How *Tempora* and *Mores* pass! 3630
 Time was—but now once more the doom
 Striketh me silent as the tomb;

The Stone re-opens his Lament *ab initio*,

* Kinglake says English won Alma, Todleben says French. Who can hesitate which to believe?—F. B.

A cold clutch grips my heart around,
 My ear grows deaf, my tongue is bound——
 “Place me on Shakespeare's sandstone Cliff,
 Where nought save donkey-boys and I
 Can hear our mutual groan and sniff;
 Thence, swan-like, let me take fly:
 A Land of Slaves shall ne'er be mine—
 I'll wend me somewhere on the Rhine.” 3640

when Fate dumbs him.

His last words are, “I'll go to Germany.”

I could no more. “Police! Po-li-ce!”
 I shouted. “Ruffian, in a trice
 The station-house shall hold your tongue,
 And Johnny Bull shall see you hung,
 Meagher'd, Bedlam'd, or sent to try an-

Dr. Polyglott, Ph.D., who can stand it no more,

other attempt with Rex O'Brien;
Where, in thought, and thought only, you
Are Fingal's rock—he Brian Boru.”*
And off I ran full hard, while he
Giggled a sneering “Hi! hi! hi!”
And, looking round, methought a dead-
light played above his pestilent head,
Which made me faster run from th' evil—
Perhaps Ram Mohun was the Devil.

3650

I gazed around. Day slothful broke
Through hanging veils of coaly smoke;
Rose in her russet cloak the Dawn,
As if her silks were out of pawn;
And every sparrow seem'd to say,
“Drat it! another rainy day!”
Th' inspector heard my hurried tale,
And threatened me with fine or jail
For hoaxing the detective force.
Seeing the matter might be worse,

3660

complains
to the Police,

is laughed at,
and

* Brian the Brave, king of Munster, killed at Clontarf A.D. 1014.—F. B.

Back I returned to mark the place
Where lay that pagan Stone, in case
A future reference were required.
I searched all round about, till tired
Of scrutinizing every stone
Except the one my thoughts were on.
Yet there, I'm certain, stood the house
Of the old wife and junior spouse;*
Here lived Miss B., and there Miss A.:
'Twas vain; I sighed, and went away

3670

goes to bed
sober.

To bed—sober.

* Omitted in page 75.—F. B.

THE END.

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