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George R. Alexander.

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Abbotsford & Sir Walter Scott

Cakes, Leeks, puddings & Potatoes

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A BORDER RAID.

ST MARY'S LOCH—YARROW—ETTRICK—ABBOTSFORD—DRYBURGH ABBEY.

And here the Ettrick Shepherd strayed,
Wrapt in his ample mountain plaid,
And here the thrilling music made
That floats among his glens and hills,
And this still air with Echo fills.
The Shepherd's monument looks down
Upon the scenes he made his own:
St Mary's Loch gleams calm and bright
As when it met his raptured sight;
The careless herds, unconscious, browse
Along the still and lonely *Lowes;*
And Ettrick's stream yet bears along
The music of the Shepherd's song.
Was it on yonder green hill-side,
With emerald valleys stretching wide,
Lighted by many a weird-like gleam,
He dreamed Kilmeny's wondrous dream?
Enough! though Altrive's humble cot,
Nestling in yon sequestered spot,
Received the poet's latest breath,
He passed away, but not to death;
While rivers run, clouds fleck the sky,
Enough! the Shepherd cannot die!

Though all to sight and memory dear,
Our wanderings may not linger here:
Pilgrims from other lands we come,
To seek the mighty Minstrel's tomb—
Gaze on the scenes he loved so well,
Transfigured 'neath his magic spell—
To stand, with teeming memories stored,
Within the halls of Abbotsford.
Therefore we trace, in joy and sorrow,
The stream and dowie den's o' Yarrow,
Till with him Ettrick blends her song,
And, borne in wedded joy along,
They haste, with glinting careless speed,
To lose themselves in silver Tweed.
Methought that greener seemed the sod!
Which Scott and Wordsworth once had trod,
When, guided by the Wizard's hand,
He sought that old romantic land,
And heard wild lay and legend pour
From the Magician's boundless store.
And Yarrow's bank the bonnier blows,
And Yarrow's stream the brighter flows,
For over all the scene is thrown
A flush of glory not its own,
And Wordsworth's name is linked for ever
With Yarrow braes, and Yarrow's river!

Past blooming holm and birken shaw,
Past "sweet Bowhill" and Philiphaugh,
And past the cairn of Tushilaw,
Past hoary Newark's castled steep,
Where grim and grisly secrets sleep,
We sweep, with many a curving, down
Through Selkirk's quaint and scattered town,
Where stands "the Sheriff's" monument—
Scott writ in every lineament.
If Selkirk little else may tell,
Her generous sons did wise and well
To grave, in native-sculptured stone,
The memory of the Minstrel gone,
Who trod her streets in bygone years,
And died amid a nation's tears.

But near, still nearer draws the shrine
That guides these wandering steps of mine;
Past bosky woods, Tweed glancing through,
The castled turrets rise to view;
And here, above, below, around,
Our feet are on enchanted ground—
We stand, with teeming memories stored,
Within the halls of Abbotsford!
What wonder if my bosom swelled
When first that wonder I beheld;
That there escaped the unbidden sigh,
Or that the warm dew dimmed my eye?
This, the charmed palace of a king,
Round which immortal memories cling—
A king whose rule shall never cease
While yon fair river flows in peace—
Had been to me a hallowed spot,
Linked with the deathless name of SCOTT.
And it was here he called to light
Another world so fair and bright,
And peopled fancy's solitude
With all that mighty multitude,
The grave, the gay, the high, the low,
With scenes of mirth and scenes of woe,
With beauty, valour, pomp and power,
To live for aye—not life's brief hour—
That, unconfined by place or time,
Are denizens of every clime;
So that ofttimes to me it seems
That *these* are true, *we* only dreams.
And here was closed the noble Life
That fell in no ignoble strife;
He saved, and triumphed in the fall,
His honour, manhood, fame—his all!
List! while your footsteps linger here,
Tweed's gentle ripple, low and clear,
That soothed the dying Poet's ear,
And feel how sad, how true it seems
The world and all it holds are dreams;
But still beneath the autumn sky
Flows on that deathless lullaby!
And from afar the Nations come
To gaze upon the Minstrel's home,
Albeit to this, all breathe amen—
His home is in the hearts of men.
Thou great Republic of the West,
Whose sons, the bravest and the best,

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"CAKES"

‘Cakes, Leeks, Puddings, and Potatoes’

A LECTURE ON THE

Nationalities of the United Kingdom.

By GEORGE SETON, Advocate,
M.A. OXON. ETC.

EDINBURGH
EDMONSTON AND DOUGLAS.
1864.

'Hear, Land o' Cakes, and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groat's,
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede you tent it:
A chiel's amang you taking notes,
And, faith, he'll prent it.'

THE following Lecture was originally delivered to the inmates of George Heriot's Hospital, about two years ago. Since that time it has been more than once repeated to popular audiences, in different parts of Scotland; and its publication must be chiefly attributed to the favourable reception which it has invariably experienced.

The Author is indebted to a valued friend of threescore and ten, on the other side of the Tweed, for the characteristic sketches in water-colours from which the Illustrations have been reduced—the Highlander being an adaptation of one of MacIan's clansmen. These sketches were kindly prepared for the purpose of being exhibited at the delivery of the Lecture on one of the occasions above referred to.

EDINBURGH, 10*th October* 1864.

'Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!

. . . .

Oh, Caledonia! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band
That knits me to thy rugged strand!'

'Abode of native chiefs, of bards the theme,
Here princely Penrhyn soars above the stream,
And phœnix-like, in rising splendour drest,
Shows on its wide domain a regal crest:
Here Cambria opes her tome of other days,
And, with maternal pride, the page displays—
Dwells on the glorious list, and loves to trace
From Britain's genuine kings—her noblest race.'

'England, with all thy faults, I love thee still—
My country! and, while yet a nook is left,
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrained to love thee. Though thy clime
Be fickle, and thy year most part deformed
With dripping rains, or withered by a frost,
I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies,
And fields without a flower, for warmer France
With all her vines; nor for Ausonia's groves
Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bowers.'

'Erin, my country! though sad and forsaken,
In dreams I revisit thy sea-beaten shore;
But alas! in a far foreign land I awaken,
And sigh for the friends who can meet me no more.

. . . .

Yet all its sad recollections suppressing,
One dying wish my lone bosom can draw;
Erin, an exile bequeaths thee his blessing,
Land of my forefathers—Erin go Bragh!
Buried and cold, when my heart stills its motion,
Green be thy fields, sweetest isle of the ocean,
And thy harp-striking bards sing aloud with devotion,
Erin mavourneen, Erin go Bragh!'

'*Cakes*, *Leeks*, *Puddings*, *and Potatoes*.'

THE mysterious words which compose the title of this Lecture have long formed the subject of a bumper at the annual dinner on 'George Heriot's Day.' They are intended to represent the four constituent portions of the United Kingdom, viz., Scotland, Wales, England, and Ireland; and my object on the present occasion is to say a few words respecting some of the more striking characteristics of the inhabitants of these formerly distinct, but now happily united countries. Each of the four is made up of districts or counties, and each district or county is, of

course, made up of clans and families. Now, the most careless observer must have remarked that many families, as well as counties, are distinguished by certain characteristics, not only physical, but also intellectual and moral. This is undoubtedly the case on the south side of the Tweed, where many of the great historical 'Houses' have long been characterized by remarkable peculiarities, and where the inhabitants of different counties are still, in various respects, essentially distinct. Thus, although all rejoicing in the proud appellation of 'Englishman,' the London Cockney, the York*sheer* yeoman, and the *Zum*ersetshire peasant present several very distinctive features. In Ireland, again, the inhabitants of the north and south are far from similar; while Scotland furnishes numerous examples of my proposition, both in the case of families and counties, to a few of which I shall here refer.

In his *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*, Mr. Robert Chambers gives several instances of

the former, chiefly supplied to him, as he himself once informed me, by a very competent authority—Sir Walter Scott. Among others he specifies, with illustrative comments, the 'gallant Grahams,' the 'gay Gordons,' the 'lightsome Lindsays,' the 'haughty Hamiltons,' the 'handsome Hays,' the 'saucy Scotts,' the 'muckle-moued Murrays,' the 'wild Macraws,' the 'greedy Campbells,' and the 'dirty Dalrymples.' Even in my own experience, I have occasionally met with very striking examples of some of these characteristics. Mr. Hannay, in one of his *Essays from the Quarterly Review,* comments upon the same peculiarities, and alludes to the 'Hamilton chin' as being well known to the curious in portraits, to the witchcraft tendencies of the Ruthvens, and to the fair women of the Drummonds. In his interesting notice of the House of Douglas, the same writer also refers to the phrase 'doughty Douglas,' as being not a mere unmeaning alliteration, but as admirably ex-

pressive of the 'pluck' and manhood of the race which produced so many distinguished heroes.

In like manner, in the case of certain localities, special characteristics are frequently associated with the inhabitants. Thus, the people of Lothian and Berwickshire are flatteringly described as 'Loudon *louts*, Merse *brutes*, and Lammermuir *whaups*;' the inhabitants of the three great commercial towns of the west, as 'Glasgow people, Greenock folk, and Paisley bodies;' the natives of the Carse of Gowrie, in Perthshire, as the 'carles of the Carse;' and the male population of Kincardineshire, as the 'merry men o' the Mearns.' Again, while some of the inhabitants of the 'kingdom' of Fife are considered to be slightly subject to *lunar* influences, as indicated by the term 'Fifeish,' the legal gentlemen of the capital of Angus are not very enviably characterized as the 'drunken writers of Forfar.' In allusion to this unfortunate reproach, at a public meeting held

several years ago with reference to the proposed drainage of a lake in the neighbourhood of that town, the late Earl of Strathmore said that he believed the cheapest method of draining the loch would be to throw a few hogsheads of good whisky into the water, and set the *drunken writers* of Forfar to drink it up! The same idea appears to have been present to Professor Aytoun's mind when he composed his amusing ballad entitled 'The Massacre of the Macpherson,' in which the following passage occurs :—

> 'Fhairshon had a son,
> Who married Noah's daughter,
> And nearly spoiled ta Flood,
> By trinking up ta water.
>
> Which he would have done,
> I at least pelieve it,
> Had ta mixture been
> Only half Glenlivat.'

Spalding the annalist frequently speaks of the 'brave toun' of Aberdeen, which is also referred to in the ballad of the 'Battle of

Harlaw.' Independently of their *bravery*, the Aberdonians have long been celebrated for their extra sagacity and shrewdness ; and, without venturing to allege that they are in the habit of looking after the 'main chance' more zealously than Scotchmen in general, there can be no doubt that they are fully 'longer-headed' than the majority of their countrymen. An English lawyer expressed to Lord Elibank an opinion that, at the Union, the law of England should have been extended all over Scotland. 'I cannot say how that might have answered our purpose,' said Lord Patrick, who was never at a loss for an appropriate reply ; 'but it would scarce have suited *yours*, since by this time the Aberdeen advocates (or attorneys) would have possessed themselves of all the business in Westminster Hall.'

Again, with respect to physical characteristics, even in these days of extended intercourse and increased intermarriage, various parts of the kingdom present very dissimilar

aspects. The marked difference of appearance between the Highlanders and Lowlanders must be familiar to the most casual observer; and the same remark applies, with equal force, to the inhabitants of the rural districts on the one hand, and the sea-board population on the other. Every one must have been struck by the fine physical appearance of both the men and the women of many of the fishing villages on the east coast of Scotland; and as a single example, I cannot do better than point to a settlement in the immediate neighbourhood of Edinburgh, viz., Newhaven. I am disposed to think, moreover, that a decided intellectual difference is, in a general way, discernible in the different races which make up the population of our country. Morally, there can be no doubt that very striking differences exist in the various districts of Scotland; in some cases, more remarkable and unaccountable than those which present themselves when we compare the country at large with other

nations. A friend of my own, now a learned professor in the University of Edinburgh, has long seriously averred that the Celt is 'an animal incapable of civilisation;' but I certainly do not incline to take quite so extreme a view. Sir Walter Scott remarked that 'if the Scotch Highlanders were really descended in the main from the Irish blood, it seemed to him the most curious and difficult problem in the world to account for the startling contrasts in so many points of their character, temper, and demeanour.' 'How is it,' he added, 'that our solemn, proud, dignified Celt, with a soul so alive to what is elevating and even elegant in poetry and feeling, is so super-eminently dull as respects all the lighter play of fancy? The Highlander never understands wit or humour; Paddy, despite all his misery and privations, overflows with both.' The Highlander's indolence and aversion to labour — in plain English, his lazy habits—are well known to the Southrons, and are sometimes explained

as the result of his ludicrous dignity and self-importance—features which present themselves in all grades of the Gaelic population. 'The stately step of a piper,' is a proverb in Scotland,[1] which reminds me of an anecdote of a certain noble Lord when in attendance upon the Queen at Balmoral, a few years ago. Having been commissioned by a friend to procure a performer on the melodious pipes, he applied to Her Majesty's piper—a fine stalwart Highlander—and on being asked what kind of article was required, his Lordship said in reply, 'Just such another as yourself.' The consequential Celt readily exclaimed, with more than the wonted humour, 'There are plenty o' lords like yoursel', but very few sic pipers as me!'

When we consider the vastly different circumstances—political, moral, and religious—under which the various countries of the

[1] 'The Peon (or Indian henchman) is generally a fine handsome fellow, and as consequential as a Highland piper.'—Colonel Campbell's *Indian Journal*, p. 137.

world are placed, we need not be surprised to discover many striking peculiarities in their respective national characters. To borrow the language of a writer in the *Quarterly Review*:[1] 'However difficult it may be to account philosophically for what is called *national character*—to explain precisely in what it consists, or how exactly it is formed —no one will venture to deny that there is such a thing; some secret influence of climate and soil, combining with the still more inexplicable peculiarities of the races of men, and which seems to a considerable degree independent even of education or individual qualities. The *steady English*, the *wary Scotch*, the *testy Welsh*, the *volatile French*, the *phlegmatic Dutch*, the *artistic Italian*, the *solemn Spaniard*,—all these are people crowded into so small a space of the earth's surface as some twenty degrees of latitude and longitude, and having most of the essen-

[1] Vol. lxxv. p. 289.

tial circumstances of social influence common to all, yet are each marked with a national stamp, indelible in natives, and still frequently distinguishable for two or three generations in families that have migrated into other countries. Ireland is certainly no exception to this general law of nationality; and it cannot, we think, be denied, that with a great many admirable and estimable qualities, the Irish people have been, from all time, remarked for a certain confusion of ideas, combined with a peculiar susceptibility, and, so to say, *pugnacity* of temper, which is emphatically distinguished as the *Irish character*.' Doubtless in all ages and in every clime, human nature exhibits many common features, but in its modes of thought and action almost every nation on the face of the globe presents numerous remarkable characteristics. Dissimilarity in language, government, religion, education, law, climate, soil, dress, occupations, and amusements, must necessarily be productive of dissimilarity in general cha-

racter. Even in certain matters of comparatively rare occurrence, striking differences are occasionally found to exist. Thus, the influence of national habits upon the methods of *suicide* by poisoning and otherwise has been referred to by a recent writer; and other instances of minor social peculiarities might easily be adduced. The following passage from Lewes' *Life of Goethe* is probably not very far from the truth in its estimate, from a certain point of view, of the three greatest modern nations:—'A Frenchman, an Englishman, and a German were commissioned to give the world the benefit of their views on that interesting animal, the camel. Away goes the Frenchman to the *Jardin des Plantes*, spends an hour there in rapid investigation, returns and writes a *feuilleton*, in which there is no phrase which the Academy can blame, but also no phrase which adds to the general knowledge. He is perfectly satisfied, however, and says, *Le voilà, le chameau!* The Englishman packs up his tea-

caddy and a magazine of comforts, pitches his tent in the East, remains there studying the camel in his habits, and returns with a thick volume of facts, arranged without order, expounded without philosophy, but serving as valuable materials for all who come after him. The German, despising the frivolity of the Frenchman, and the unphilosophical matter-of-factness of the Englishman, retires to his study, there *to construct the idea of a camel from out of the depths of his moral consciousness.* And he is still at it.'

In making a few remarks on the more prominent characteristics of the component parts of the United Kingdom, I do not intend to dispose of them separately—in distinct pictures. I shall rather endeavour to elucidate some of the more salient points of difference, by way of contrast and comparison; and I shall not fail to introduce the sentiments of various well-known writers, in confirmation of many of the opinions which I venture to express. Like those of

most of my hearers, my opportunities of actual observation have been much more extensive in the case of Scotland than in the case of either England or Ireland; and on that account I shall naturally devote the larger portion of my lecture to this side of the Tweed. But independently of other sources of information, a residence of between four and five years in England, and a tour through the greater part of the Emerald Isle, enable me to approach two of the other branches of my subject with a certain amount of knowledge derived from personal observation.

Although upwards of 150 years have passed away since the union of England and Scotland, and more than half a century since Ireland became an integral portion of the Kingdom; and although, upon the whole, the three countries work harmoniously together for the promotion of British interests, there can be no doubt that marked differences in the character of their

respective inhabitants are still very apparent. The vast dissimilarity of the circumstances under which the two Unions were effected are probably not sufficiently borne in mind, at least on the other side of the Tweed; and I suspect that our English neighbours are not fully alive to the important benefits which result from the recollection of Scotland's independence. Speaking of the siege of Orleans, Dr. Arnold truly observes that it is 'one of the turning-points in the history of nations. Had the English dominion in France been established, no man can tell what might have been the consequence to England, which would probably have become an appendage to France. So little does the prosperity of a people depend on success in war, that two of the greatest defeats we ever had have been two of our greatest blessings—Orleans and Bannockburn. It is curious, too, that in Edward the Second's reign, the victory over the Irish proved our curse, as our defeat by the Scots

turned out a blessing. Had the Irish remained independent, they might afterwards have been united to us as Scotland was; and had Scotland been reduced to subjection, it would have been another curse to us like Ireland.' 'Bannockburn,' he used to say, 'ought to be celebrated by Englishmen as a national festival, and Athunree lamented as a national judgment.'

Our long-standing quarrel with England was so doggedly maintained by the Scots, that the border village round which many a struggle took place as a piece of doubtful property in the days of Edward I., is a piece of doubtful property still, and has, in royal proclamations and Acts of Parliament, a special clause assigned to it, as the 'town called Berwick-upon-Tweed.'[1]

[1] Speaking of the struggle of the Scots for independence during the three hundred years' war, Mr. Burton says:—'There are some less reasonable ethnological theories afloat in the world, than that we may to some extent attribute to this long struggle the national characteristics which make the Scots appear a dry, hard, stern, unamiable,

Perhaps one of the most prominent features of distinction in the three countries is exhibited in their religious peculiarities ; and although, in the case of England and Scotland at least, these peculiarities are entirely independent of *essentials*, many striking points of contrast unquestionably present themselves on both sides of the Tweed. On the one hand, too much prominence appears to be assigned to the sensuous and emotional—

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practical people, with little capacity for cheerful enjoyments or susceptibility to the lighter and more transient excitements. Perhaps the original nature of the people, and the work they had to do, may have reacted on each other, leaving these characteristics deepened and hardened in the end. That the people had a nature susceptible to the deeper enthusiasm, the character of the struggle itself sufficiently tells. And in the tragedies and bereavements that it caused, the devotion it demanded, and the deep love for home and country to which it testified, we may, perhaps, attribute a certain sweetness and plaintive tenderness in the lyrical literature of the country, a vein of gentleness and beauty running through her rugged nature, like the lovely agates which nestle in the hollows of the black trap rocks, or the purple amethysts that sparkle in her granite corries.' —*The Scot Abroad*, vol. i. p. 226.

the feelings and the heart; while on the other, the spiritual and intellectual—the understanding and the head—are too exclusively considered. If, in their devotional exercises, our English neighbours place too little weight upon the sermon, the Scotch are undoubtedly inclined to place too much—to say nothing of their tendency to avoid every approach to the outward display of reverence. It must, however, be acknowledged that, in their forms of worship, some of our countrymen are at length beginning to exhibit both good taste and catholicity of spirit by adopting a few of John Bull's commendable observances, without abandoning any peculiarities of their own which are worthy of being retained. But what, let me ask, is the grand practical result? My inquiry is not, what were England and Scotland in days gone by, but what are they *now* in the matter of morals and religion? With all their faults, our southern neighbours have not been in the habit of sounding a trumpet

to proclaim their moral and religious superiority. But what of many of ourselves? Granted that some of the recent statistical comparisons may have been based on fallacious ground, and that Scotland is not, after all, so much worse than other countries in the matter of morals—in drunkenness, licentiousness, and other heinous sins—is she any better? and will she continue to assume the attitude of virtuous propriety, and exclaim to each of her poor sisters among the nations, with a mixture of pity and self-gratulation, 'Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou!' Precious, indeed, are her privileges, but how has she used them? Great, and probably well deserved, her ancestral religious fame; but has she not long been living upon *credit*, and like the weak-minded individual who was always pointing to his pedigree, may she not, perhaps unconsciously, resemble the potato, of which the best part is underground?

In Ireland, again, the religious condition

of the people is of the most unsatisfactory kind. Into the special causes and circumstances of the 'situation,' I do not mean to enter. Suffice it to observe, that if, in this portion of the kingdom, the minister is frequently under the control and authority of his flock—in Ireland, a naturally fine and vigorous people are entirely subject to the domination of a powerfully-united priesthood, whose *infallible* head, as you are all well aware, is a certain old gentleman on the shores of the Mediterranean — whom our friend *Punch* sometimes invests with feminine habiliments — now exhibiting unequivocal symptoms of decay.

As to education—another vast subject—what shall I say? In this matter, also, I fear my countrymen have held their heads rather high. Doubtless, our parish and burgh schools, to say nothing of other educational institutions, have proved of the highest value, and have greatly raised the intellectual character of the humbler and

middle classes ; but is mere *knowledge* the grand aim of education ? Again, I ask, are the men of the North better Christians than many others who have not enjoyed such great advantages ? Are they more amiable in their tempers, and more consistent in their lives ? It must, however, be acknowledged that, in point of general intelligence, the Scottish population occupies a very creditable position, and that their love of learning is productive of many beneficial results. We all know what sacrifices are sometimes made, in comparatively humble life, with the view of procuring a superior education for a child of promise, and not unfrequently these sacrifices are nobly crowned. Such honourable ambition must necessarily call forth our admiration, even when the results are not altogether satisfactory. The frequent destiny of the objects of the sacrifices in question is the pulpit, and in numerous instances that responsible position is worthily filled. But it cannot be denied that, under such circum-

stances, the sudden transition from a very humble rank is not the best antecedent for a preacher of the gospel in these latter days. Doubtless our Lord's apostles were very lowly and uncultivated men, but it does not necessarily follow that these are the most suitable qualifications for the Christian minister of the nineteenth century. Second only to personal piety and a consistent life must be placed a knowledge of the world and an accomplished mind; and in these stirring days of intellectual advancement and perplexing controversies, such qualities are absolutely essential.

The neglected cultivation of the *higher* branches of learning has long been laid to the charge of our countrymen, and is probably as apparent at the present day as at any former time. Speaking of the Scotch, Dr. Johnson said, 'Their learning is like bread in a besieged town, every man gets a *mouthful*, but no man gets a *bellyful*. There is a *diffusion* of learning (he added)—a certain

portion of it widely and thinly spread.' This state of things was candidly acknowledged at the opening of the Edinburgh Academy, in the year 1824, by one of Scotland's greatest sons—I mean Sir Walter Scott—who, in referring to the reproach in question, thus expressed himself: 'Sturdy Scotsman as I am, I am not more attached to Scotland than to truth.' In these utilitarian days, moreover, there is an unquestionable tendency to swallow up the poetical in the practical, and to extinguish all that savours of beauty or sentiment, by giving an unqualified preference to bare, bald matter of fact. Surely we have all a sufficient supply of that highly favoured element in the daily business of life! and I trust the day is far distant in which the cultivation of the imagination will be entirely superseded by scientific manuals and hand-books of useful knowledge.

Probably in proportion to her population, Scotland contributes a tolerably fair quota

to the interests of general literature and scientific research;[1] but in certain fields she has long been notoriously deficient, and of these perhaps the most remarkable is theology. It has been truly said that her theological opinions 'have been always derived from others; only the intensity with which they have been held is her own. Patrick Hamilton was the pupil of Luther. Knox taught what he had learned of Calvin. Melville's doctrine was the fruit of Beza's learned

[1] *The Influence of National Character on English Literature*, by the Rev. James Byrne, forms the first of a recently published series of Lectures delivered in Dublin during 1863. After referring to the Germanic origin of the English and Lowland Scotch, and to the Celtic origin of the Irish, the Welsh, and the Highlanders, the author characterizes the thought of the German and Celtic nations as *slow* and *quick* respectively; the national mind being in some cases *outer*, and in others *inner*, in its character. 'The English mind,' he says, 'may still be described as slow and outer, the Scotch slow, more inner and more forcible, the Irish quick and inner.' In noticing some of the principal characteristics of the Irish mind, he refers to the *eloquence* of Burke and Curran, to the acute *speculation* of Berkeley, and to the *wit and fancy* of Swift, Goldsmith, and Moore.

prelections. The earlier English Puritans infected Rutherford with his unctuous style, and poured into Gray and Binning the very sap of their doctrine; while Boston got his covenants from Witsius and the Dutch.'[1] The superior assiduity of the Scottish clergy in the discharge of their important functions has been frequently asserted, and perhaps, speaking generally, they are fairly entitled to the character thus assigned to them; but their scholastic inferiority certainly cannot be disputed. Our Scotch divines may be counted on the fingers; on the fingers, indeed, of a single hand! How different in the case of England! What a host of illustrious names crowd into the mind; men no less great than good, whose invaluable productions, in support of both doctrinal and practical religion, will continue to exercise an unbounded influence to the end of time!

The comparative advantages of the Scotch

[1] *North British Review*, vol. xxxv. p. 274.

and English systems of University education have been frequently canvassed. In alluding to that subject, Dr. Arnold remarks that 'the friendships of an English public school and University can rarely be formed on the Scotch system; but, on the other hand, the domestic affections are more cherished. Jeffrey said that all nations remarked the want of filial affection in sons towards their fathers in England; the looking upon them as harsh and niggardly, and the want of entire love and confidence towards them was peculiarly English; and he attributed it to the estrangement from home, and the habits of expense which are at once generated by our system of education. . . . Assuredly this is true in some measure, and is an evil arising out of our system of education which had never struck me before. . . . On the other hand, in the most favourable cases, there can be no comparison between what Oxford and Cambridge can do for a man, and what he can gain at Edinburgh. Nor,

indeed, is the comparison quite fair, because we rarely leave the University till a year or two later than is the case in Scotland, and in *the most favourable cases*, a year between twenty-one and twenty-two is of incalculable benefit.' With regard to the Scottish Universities, however, considering the peculiarities in their constitution, and the objects which they are supposed to have in view, the most enthusiastic admirer of the English system will probably not hesitate to acknowledge that they have long been the means of conferring very important benefits on large numbers of our countrymen.

It would appear that there is a greater tendency in the Scotch than in the English mind to cultivate various kinds of knowledge. While such a course is unquestionably attended by many beneficial results, it must be admitted that it is apt to prevent the production of that highly accomplished class of men—either in the liberal professions or in ordinary trades—who are only called into

existence when the whole mind is bent, with undivided attention, on the complete mastery of one special branch of knowledge. The great engineer, James Watt of Birmingham, told Sir Walter Scott that, 'though hundreds probably of his northern countrymen had sought employment at his establishment, he never could get one of them to become a *first-rate* artisan. Many of them (he said) were too good for that, and rose to be valuable clerks and book-keepers; but those incapable of this sort of advancement had always the same insuperable aversion to toiling so long at any one point of mechanism, as to gain the highest wages among the workmen.'

Hugh Miller was very much impressed with 'the immense extent of *range* across the intellectual scale' in the English character. 'There is an order of English mind,' he says, 'to which Scotland has not attained. Our first men stand in the second rank, not a foot-breadth behind the foremost of

England's second-rank men; but there is a front rank of British intellect in which there stands no Scotchman. . . . Scotland has produced no Shakspeare; Burns and Sir Walter Scott united would fall short of the stature of the giant of Avon. Of Milton we have not even a representative. . . . Bacon is as exclusively unique as Milton, and as exclusively English; and though the grandfather of Newton was a Scotchman, we have certainly no Scotch Sir Isaac.' He endeavours, in some degree, to account for such a result by the circumstance of all the first-class men of England having appeared when 'the grinding persecutions of the Stuarts repressed Scottish energy,' and he refers to the fact of the English philosophers and *literati* of the eighteenth century being of a greatly lower intellectual stature than their predecessors. He also points, with pardonable pride, to Adam Smith, David Hume, James Watt, Robertson, Smollett, Thomson, and Burns. 'To use a

homely but expressive Scotticism,' he continues, 'Scotland seems to have lost her *bairn-time* of the giants; but in the after bairn-time of merely tall men, her children were quite as tall as any of their contemporaries.' With regard to the English commonalty, however, the same writer is very decidedly of opinion that 'their minds lie much more profoundly asleep than those of the people of Scotland, . . . whose reflective habits have set their stamp on the national countenance.'

In a little volume on the subject of *Our Coal Fields*, by 'a traveller underground,' published in the year 1853, we find an interesting contrast between Scotch and English colliers, which is certainly very much in favour of the former. 'Many of the Scotch,' the writer observes, 'read such books as Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, and are fond of discussing the subjects he treats of. They also read the lives of statesmen, and books of history; besides works on logic, and some-

times mathematics. . . . They scorn to read the penny and twopenny publications current in other places.[1] . . . The reason that the Union is so strong in some parts of Scotland, as in Lanarkshire, is because in the latter place the pitmen are one-third Irish, and others are the worst of the Scotch from other counties. I have always found that a bad Scotchman is a very bad fellow; a true example of the proverb, that *the corruption of the best things leads to the worst.* A bad Scotchman vinegarizes white wine. His natural keenness is turned into low cunning, and his propensity to selfishness is converted into the most engrossing self-seeking and indulgence. Much the same may be said of the Irish character; nothing can be finer than the original and genuine Irish character, and nothing much worse than its corruption and degradation. . . . The Scotch-

[1] See also the concluding portion of an interesting article entitled 'Bibliomania,' in a recent number of the *North British Review.*

women, too, who in their own country are anything but cleanly, begin to keep their cottages cleaner after they cross the Border, and by degrees they keep them as clean as the English women. And it has been observed that if they remain, the first generation after their fathers came, wish to keep everything clean about them. They are generally very saving, and lay out the overplus of their earnings in books or furniture, or put it in a savings' bank or benefit society.'

The remarkable want of curiosity on the part of the English has been frequently noticed as forming a very striking contrast to the inquisitive element among the Scotch, more particularly the Highlanders. While the Englishman is ready, on the shortest notice, to give you the fullest particulars about himself and all his friends and relatives, and cares very little to obtain the same kind of information in return ; the Scot, on the other hand, overwhelms you with questions, and turns off every query directed

against himself by proposing another, instead of giving a reply.[1]

Apropos to this national peculiarity, a bet was once made in London, that by a single question proposed to an Englishman, a Scotchman, and an Irishman, a characteristic reply would be elicited from each of them. Three representative labourers were accordingly called in, and separately interrogated: 'What will you take to run round Russell Square stripped to the shirt?' While the Englishman unhesitatingly answered, 'A pint of porter,' the humorous response of the Irishman was, 'A mighty great cold!' The man of the North, however, instead of condescending upon any definite 'consideration,' cautiously replied, with an eye to a good bargain, 'What will your honour gie me?'

I have often been very much struck with the greater difficulty which is generally ex-

[1] For an amusing instance of this 'sword and buckler play,' see Appendix, No. I.

perienced in making the acquaintance of a Scotchman than that of an Englishman, in every rank of life. However sound and genuine my own countrymen may prove when you manage to get through their complicated incrustation, it must be acknowledged that the operation is most laborious, and is sometimes carried on under the most discouraging circumstances. John Bull, on the other hand, and, to a still greater degree, the son of 'ould Ireland,' is comparatively free and open-hearted, and without any introductory thrusts and parries, you are on good terms with either in the course of a few minutes. If, however, up to a certain point, an Englishman is more frank and communicative than the native of Scotland, beyond that point the Scot is probably at least quite equal to John Bull; and what, in the first instance, is unquestionably very unpleasant in the shape of canniness and reserve, ultimately gives way to the warmest and most enduring friendship.

As to the comparative physical characteristics of the English and the Scotch—a very delicate subject—some observers are inclined to give the preference, in the case of the women, to our southern neighbours; and while, on this side of the Tweed, we generally flatter ourselves that pretty faces and shapely figures are far from rare, there can be no doubt that the frequency of good looks is a very striking peculiarity among the female population of England. In the case of the men, however, both in point of mere external appearance and actual strength, the superiority is certainly not on the side of England. From a series of careful experiments with the dynamometer, Professor Forbes ascertained that the average strength of the full-grown Scot exceeds that of the full-grown Englishman by about *one-twentieth*—a difference not very great indeed, but probably quite sufficient (as has been said) to turn the scale in a hand-to-hand engagement, with an equal amount of skill and *pluck* on both sides.

Most people seem to think that, in point of intelligence, the rural population of the three kingdoms are considerably behind the inhabitants of the towns, and in particular the English (as well as the Irish) labourer is regarded as occupying a very low position in the social scale. Independently of other sources of instruction, the denizen of the town is in constant contact with his fellows, and is thus supposed to make daily additions to his stock of knowledge through the medium of mere conversation. An accomplished writer of our own day, however, who has paid much attention to the condition of the rural poor of England, is of opinion that the English rustic is greatly under-rated. 'My own experience,' he says, 'is only of the peasantry in the southern counties (those of the northern are thought by many to be much superior), but from what little I have seen, I have certainly formed a very favourable opinion of the possibilities arising from the character of our rural poor. It is true

there is often an appearance of stolidity about them, especially amongst the men, but this is only an outer crust of insensibility, an induration which nature kindly creates to harden them for what is too frequently a very hard lot. Their occupation, as Adam Smith observes, is better calculated than that of the mechanic to cultivate the intellectual powers. The changing seasons, the variety in the state of the materials upon which the rustic has to work, the many objects he has to accomplish, all tend to make him a more intelligent and thoughtful man than one whose labours are confined to the perfection of a single mechanical process. If the rustic, then, is inferior to the mechanic, this inferiority must result from other circumstances than the difference in their respective callings.'[1] All honour to the spade and the mattock! What would this country be without them? To say nothing

[1] *Friends in Council*, First Series, ii. 15.

of our fields and our gardens, it is sufficient to point to our roads, our canals, and our railways, as evidence of the industry of the patient sons of toil. And we know, also, what can be made of them by those who, like Miss Marsh and others, take the trouble to try the experiment, and who adopt the proper means of penetrating that rough exterior, beneath which there beats many an honest heart.

A striking feature in the national character of the Scotch is their love of country, which is also exhibited by the 'bleak Swiss,' and the inhabitants of other mountainous regions:—

> 'Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
> And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms;
> And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
> Clings close and closer to the mother's breast—
> So the loud torrent and the whirlwind's roar
> But bind him to his native mountains more.'

If the sentiment in question is perceptible among our countrymen at home, it is certainly still more apparent in the case of

those—an innumerable host—who hie to foreign climes with the fixed purpose of returning, at some future time, to end their days in their beloved fatherland. The ubiquity of Scotchmen almost amounts to a proverb. In every corner of the globe, it is alleged that three things are always to be found—a Scot, a rat, and a razor. Why the last-mentioned article, I am unable to explain; and in these days of beards, something of more frequent occurrence ought surely to be substituted! India, Australia, Canada, and every other British colony, contain thousands of our countrymen in all spheres of employment; while in France, Russia, Germany, and elsewhere, they are far from rare. In England, again, and particularly in the metropolis, they are to be met with at every turn.[1] Scotch farmers, Scotch

[1] It appears, however, from the Report on the last English Census, that 'the tendency of the Scotch to go to London is less than the tendency of the people of any other part of Great Britain, except Lancashire and Cheshire.'

gardeners, Scotch gamekeepers, Scotch bailiffs (or, as we should say in Scotland, grieves), Scotch bakers, Scotch booksellers, Scotch bankers, and Scotch doctors, are in peculiar favour. No Cabinet is complete without its quota of Scotch members; and, as we shall afterwards more particularly notice, no British war is ever conducted without Scotch generals. Even as English bishops, our countrymen are by no means uncommon; and not very long ago it was pretty confidently asserted that a native of Edinburgh (the present excellent Bishop of

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Of the 20,066,224 inhabitants of England and Wales in 1861, 601,634 were natives of Ireland, and 169,202 natives of Scotland—only about one-fourth of the latter being in the three metropolitan counties. Of the 3,062,294 inhabitants of Scotland, at the same date, 204,003 proved to be Irish, 54,920 English, and 1,112 Welsh. The proportion of Irish was greatest in the counties of Renfrew, Lanark, Wigton, and Dumbarton; while the English were most numerous in the counties of Berwick, Roxburgh, Dumfries, and Edinburgh. So large an interchange of emigration must eventually be productive of very considerable modifications in the national characteristics under consideration.

London) was to be elevated to the vacant see of Canterbury. In connexion with his contemplated advancement, and in reference to the subterranean roadways of London, the following lines, spoken in an epilogue by Richard Burbage at the Globe Theatre in 1601, found their way into the public prints :—

> 'A Scot our king? The limping State
> That day must need a crutch.
> What next? In time a Scot will prate
> As Primate of our Church.
> When such shall be, why, then you'll see
> That day it will be found
> The Saxon down, through London town,
> Shall burrow under ground.'

I have already referred to Dr. Johnson's estimate of Scottish learning, and it is well known that the great moralist said several other pretty severe things about Scotland. Thus, in allusion to the national passion for emigration, he asserted that 'the best prospect a Scotchman ever sees is the high-road to England.' Again, while he compared the impudence of an Irishman to 'the impudence

of a fly that buzzes about you, and you put it away, but it returns again, and still flutters and teazes,' he pronounced the impudence of a Scotchman to be 'the impudence of a *leech*, that fixes and sucks your blood.' When Dr. Barnard, the Bishop of Killaloe, expressed to the Doctor an apprehension that, if he should visit Ireland, he might treat the people of that country more unfavourably than he had treated the Scotch, he answered: 'Sir, you have no reason to be afraid of me. The Irish are not in a conspiracy to cheat the world by false representations of the merits of their countrymen!' In justification of his description of our country as it really was, he said to his friend Mr. Windham of Norfolk: 'None of us would be offended if a foreigner who has travelled here should say that vines and olives do not grow in England.' As to his supposed prejudice against the Scotch (which his biographer ascribed to their own intense nationality), he remarked to the same gentleman: 'When I find a

Scotchman to whom an Englishman is as a Scotchman, that Scotchman shall be as an Englishman to me.' Finally, I must not omit the celebrated definition, in his *Dictionary*, of the word *Oats:* 'The food of horses in England, and of men in Scotland;' to which the spirited Lord Elibank made rather a happy rejoinder: 'Yes, indeed,' he replied, 'and where will you find such horses and such men?'[1]

The hospitality of the Scotch is one of their most laudable characteristics, and in rather strange contrast to their well-known reluctance to part with hard cash, in which respect, as Sir Walter confesses, 'John Bull has the better of Sawney.' 'I have seen a laird,' he says, 'after giving us more champagne and claret than we cared to drink, look pale at the idea of paying a crown in charity.' In most country houses, in former times, the practice of locking the dining-

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[1] See Appendix, No. II.

room door was frequently resorted to; and no stranger was allowed by the servants to *walk* to bed, so that it might never be said, to the disparagement of their master's hospitality, that any guest reached his couch otherwise than by being carried. Great, however, as Scotch hospitality has always been, the author of *Waverley* came to the conclusion that it fell short of that of the Irish. Writing from Edgeworthstown in the year 1825, he says: 'It is impossible to conceive the extent of this virtue in all classes; I don't think even our Scottish hospitality can match that of Ireland. Everything seems to give way to the desire to accommodate a stranger; and I really believe the story of the Irish harper, who condemned his harp to the flames for want of firewood to cook a guest's supper.'

The gregariousness of the Scotch is another remarkable peculiarity. 'Your Grace kens we Scotch are clannish bodies,' says Mrs. Glass, in *The Heart of Midlothian*, to

the Duke of Argyle. 'So much the better for us,' replies the Duke, 'and the worse for those who meddle with us.' 'Perhaps,' Sir Walter remarks in the same work, 'one ought to be actually a Scotchman to conceive how ardently, under all distinctions of rank and situation, the Scotch feel the mutual connexion with each other as natives of the same country.'

The paltry ambition of Scotch lairds—if not of Scotchmen generally—to appear greater and grander than they really are, has long been a very common failing. Besides in other ways, this weakness is strikingly exhibited in the extravagant magnitude of their mansion-houses, altogether out of proportion to the value of their estates, which are thus, not unfrequently, much encumbered. A good story is told of a small Highland laird, who contemplated the erection of a magnificent castle on a very limited territory, with reference to which one of his neighbours humorously remarked, 'I

wonder on whose ground —— intends to encroach, when he carries his plans into execution.' This pitiable love of show is, of course, accompanied by a vast amount of discomfort, to which our more sensible English neighbours are utter strangers. The snug and cheerful mansion which accommodates an English gentleman with a sure rental of £10,000 a year would be regarded as insufficient by many a Scotch laird with an uncertain income of as many hundreds. Unfortunately, the same tendency is discernible among our professional and commercial classes, who too frequently sacrifice real enjoyment to mere external display. In his letters from Scotland, written about the year 1730, Captain Burt refers to the ludicrous misapplication of terms on the part of the Scotch, with the view of acquiring importance. 'A pedling shopkeeper,' he says, 'that sells a pennyworth of thread, is a *merchant;* the person who is sent for that thread has received a *commission;* and bringing it to the

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sender is making *report.* A bill to let you know there is a single room to be let is called a *placard;* the doors are *ports;* an enclosed field of two acres is a *park;* and the wife of a laird of fifteen pounds a year is a *lady*, and treated with your *ladyship.*'

A few words on national costumes. Our worthy friend John Bull cannot be associated with any very distinctive habiliment—at least in these modern times—the broad-brimmed hat and top-boots being now a matter of history, and only emblematically figured in the pages of *Punch.* The same comic authority endorses the universal opinion of Englishmen, that every Scotchman wears the kilt; and in a comparatively recent number, a certain noble Duke, of whom Scotland has just reason to feel proud, was ludicrously represented flourishing a claymore in the chequered garb of the Gael.[1] In the summer of 1862, I happened to meet

[1] I fear my pictorial illustration of 'Cakes' will be regarded as a perpetuation of this popular error.

two gentlemen from the south of England in the Highlands of Aberdeenshire, where they expected to see the entire population disporting themselves in philabegs; and they appeared to be heartily amused when I told them, in perfect sincerity, that the kilt—originally invented, by the way (according to a learned antiquary), by the tailor of General Wade about 140 years ago—was now chiefly worn by *their own* countrymen! But what of poor Paddy's costume? I shall never forget the comical appearance of many an Irish labourer digging his potatoes in the *remains* of a dress-coat, with very pointed swallow-tails, and only retaining an approach to its original shape by the aid of countless patches of every colour and quality,—'red, black, yellow, green; cloth, velveteen, corduroy, fustian,—the complete image of a tattered coverlid, originally made on purpose of particularly small patches; no shirt, and almost no breeches.' 'You are constantly afraid,' says Sir Walter Scott, 'that some

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knot or loop will give way, and place the individual before you in all the primitive simplicity of Paradise,' reminding us of the wardrobe of Jenny Sutton, of whom Morris sweetly sings :—

> 'One single pin at night let loose
> The robes which veiled her beauty.'

Personal experience led the same writer to conclude that, like their poverty, the wit and humour of the Irish was not exaggerated. 'I gave a fellow a shilling,' he says, 'on some occasion when sixpence was the fee. "Remember you owe me sixpence, Pat." "May your honour live till I pay you!"' 'While a Scotchman,' he continues, 'is thinking about the term-day, or if easy on that subject, about hell in the next world; while an Englishman is making a little hell in the present, because his muffin is not well roasted; Pat's mind is always turned to fun and ridicule. They are terribly excitable, to be sure, and will murder you on slight suspicion, and find out next day that it was all a mistake,

and that it was not yourself they meant to kill, at all at all.' In allusion to some of these national characteristics, it has been said, with a mixture of truth and paradox, that an Englishman is never happy but when he is *miserable;* a Scotchman never at home but when he is *abroad;*[1] and an Irishman never at peace but when he is *fighting*. Again, the economical habits of our countrymen are amusingly referred to in the following anecdote, which also embraces a comparative estimate of the English and Irish character. When a celebrated Scottish nobleman was ambassador at the Court of France, the King, being anxious to learn the character of our nation—*tria juncta in uno*—inquired how an Englishman would be found after a hard-fought battle. 'Sleeping away the fatigues of the day,' replied the ambassador. 'Very prudently,' rejoined his Majesty. 'And the Irishman?' 'Drinking away the fatigues

[1] See p. 39, *supra.*

of the day,' was the answer. 'Good,' said the monarch; 'and now,' he continued, 'your own countryman, the bonny Scot?' 'Why, your Majesty, I ken Sandy's humour; he'd be just darning his stockings, and thinking of the siller he would save.'

It has been repeatedly alleged by Sydney Smith and other writers that the Scotch are greatly deficient in that humour in which the English, as well as the Irish, unquestionably excel.[1] In allusion to that deficiency, the following announcement appeared about two years ago in the columns of *Punch*:—

[1] 'A student at one of our military academies had copied a drawing of a scene in Venice, and in copying the title, had spelt the name of the city *Vennice.* The drawing-master put his pen through the superfluous letter, observing, "Don't you know, sir, there is but one *hen* in Venice?" on which the youth burst out laughing. On being asked what he was laughing about, he replied he was thinking *how uncommonly scarce eggs must be there.* The master, in wrath, reported him to the colonel in command, a Scotchman. He, on hearing the disrespectful reply, without in the least perceiving the point of the joke, observed, "An' a varra naatural observaation, too."'—DEAN ALFORD'S '*Queen's English.*'

'*Wonder of Wonders.*—We rejoice in being able to record the fact of a Scotchman having made a joke. Some one was advocating the new theory that the best way to treat certain criminals would be to whip them, when our friend from the North exclaimed, "Richt, mon; the best dessert would be whipped creaminals!"' The groundlessness of the allegation, however, is fully established by Dean Ramsay in his amusing *Reminiscences;*[1] and even in very recent times, when the genuine originality of more simple manners has been gradually giving way to the excessive propriety and the painful uniformity of what is complacently termed an 'enlightened' age, we have numerous examples of undoubted humorists on this side of the Tweed. Most of us are familiar with some of the many happy sayings of Macnab of

[1] See also the *Autobiography of Dr. Alexander Carlyle*, p. 222, and Lord Neaves' 'Address on Punishment and Reformation,' in the *Transactions of the Social Science Association for* 1863, p. 88.

Macnab, the Laird of Logan, Harry Erskine, John Clerk, and Patrick Robertson; and still more recently, with those of Lord Cockburn, Sheriff Logan, Lord Neaves, and Dr. John Brown. The Parliament House, in particular, has long been celebrated for its fun and humour, and if time permitted, I could easily recount many a good joke and pungent witticism that have made its venerable walls ring again with laughter. To say nothing of our old songs and ballads, we have abundant evidence of a thorough appreciation of the ludicrous in the writings of Dunbar and Sir David Lindsay, and in later times, in those of Smollett, Galt, Scott, and Christopher North. But probably the dry, pawky humour of old Scotland is nowhere more admirably represented than in the poetry of Burns, as, for example, in the dialogue of the 'Twa Dogs,' the 'Address to the Deil,' and the matchless composition of 'Tam o' Shanter.'

Among our English neighbours, there can

be no doubt that a very remarkable sense of humour is a prevailing characteristic, by means of which, as has been truly said, they very 'easily see the absurdity which lurks in any extreme proposition.' This peculiar capacity, however, is no doubt also intimately connected with their practical and straightforward character, and their well-known aversion to anything approaching to what has been maliciously described as 'Scotch metaphysics.' I have already referred to the wit and humour of the Irish. In many of their best anecdotes, the point is frequently supposed to constitute a blunder or *bull*, while in reality it turns upon a stroke of fine natural humour. Sydney Smith defines a bull to be 'an apparent congruity and real incongruity of ideas suddenly discovered. And if this account of bulls (he continues) be just, they are the very reverse of wit; for as wit discovers real relations that are not apparent, bulls admit apparent relations that are not real.' Be this as it may, it

cannot be denied that many of Paddy's sayings exhibit a certain characteristic quaintness which assuredly cannot be surpassed on this side of the Irish Channel. How inimitable, for example, the description of his cold reception by an old friend: 'I saw Pat Ryan t'other side of the way. I thought it was Pat, and Pat thought it was me; and when I came up it was neither of us.'

If it cannot be disputed that, in common with both English and Irish, the Scotch are no strangers to wit and humour, it must, I think, be freely acknowledged that a large number of our countrymen exhibit a sullen, distant, *dour* uncourteousness of manner, which is very far from being either creditable to themselves or pleasant to those who are favoured with its display. I do not refer to mere reserve towards strangers, for which the English, as well as the Scotch, are, to a certain extent, distinguished, but to something of a more positive, and therefore more objectionable, character. Dr. Johnson freely

censures this reserve in the case of his own countrymen. 'Two men of any other nation,' he says, 'who are shown into a room together, at a house where they are both visitors, will immediately find some conversation. But two Englishmen will probably go each to a different window, and remain in obstinate silence. As yet (he adds) we do not understand the common rights of humanity.' A story is told of a young Oxonian, after having been upset from his skiff into the waters of the Isis, lustily exclaiming for help to another member of the University who chanced to be strolling along the banks of the river, and who coolly informed him that it was out of his power to render any assistance, as he did not enjoy the honour of having been *introduced* to him! The same characteristic appears to be as largely exhibited by the English in foreign lands as in their own country; and on the continent of Europe it is frequently commented on by the more lively inhabi-

tants of sunnier climes. A Scotchman, on the other hand, appears to be more cosmopolitan than John Bull when he leaves his native land ; and, in all probability, the difference may be accounted for by the circumstance of our countrymen having a greater tendency to wander over the face of the globe, and thus rub off some of the more palpable peculiarities which necessarily result from our insular situation. They can generally accommodate themselves, moreover, without much difficulty, to the circumstances of their position ; and where an Englishman would freely indulge his propensity to *grumble*, in consequence of meeting with something not quite in accordance with his ordinary experience,[1] a Scotchman

[1] 'His bluff speech, his hearty and unreasonable likes and dislikes, his hatred of craft and injustice, his tenderness, his roughness, his swift anger and gruff pity, his pugnacity, his pride, his broad assurance that his ways are the only right ways, his contempt for abstractions, his exaltation of the solidities over the elegancies of life, these and a score of other characteristics identify William Cobbett with John Bull.'—CHAMBERS's *Book of Days*, i. 345.

would be disposed to exhibit the most profound indifference. That innate spirit of independence, amounting almost to separatism, which so largely prevails among our southern neighbours, constitutes one of their most remarkable characteristics. In referring to this feature, Hume remarks that 'of any people in the universe, the English have the least of a national character, unless this very singularity may pass for such.' The Englishman's house is his castle, and he glories in this peculiarity; while the Scotchman, to use the language of Hugh Miller, 'is much more mixed up, through the force of his sympathies, with the community to which he belongs.' The 'leading journal' is perpetually harping upon the *Provincialism* of the Scotch; but with all our faults and failings, I have yet to learn that anything so intensely vulgar and contemptible as the *Cockneyism* of the Londoners, is to be found to the north of the Tweed.

The uncourteousness of manner, however,

on the part of the Scotch, to which I have already referred, is a much more serious blemish than mere coldness and reserve, and unfortunately it sometimes very nearly approaches to positive rudeness and incivility. I am sorry to admit that I have very frequently observed this undesirable peculiarity among Scottish tradesmen, whose boasted education and intelligence ought to produce a very different result. Some enthusiastic admirers of the Scotch will probably attribute the fault in question to *independence* and *self-respect;* but in this world of ours where different ranks and conditions are indispensable to the very existence of society, there are other virtues which require to be cultivated—virtues, moreover, of a more self-denying kind.

The author of a little work entitled *Edinburgh and its Society in* 1838, who (somewhat questionably) passes himself off for a German, thus expresses himself :—' I find, from long observation, that the Scots are a

calculating people; but in casting up their accounts, and forming an estimate of others, they are very apt, from an excess of caution, to outwit themselves. When residing abroad, they are the most amiable people imaginable—open, candid, communicative, and accommodating. Their society is courted everywhere, and they are overwhelmed with hospitality and kindness. At home, in their own country, they appear in quite different colours, and are close, reserved, taciturn, and austere. The men move on a pivot directed to objects of selfishness and personal aggrandizement, and seldom do anything without a motive,—the ladies never. It is really astonishing that a people so extremely discerning and acute should put so little value on what is called *mannerism*, or a desire to please and to oblige, when it is of such essential benefit in the commerce of life. If the dispensing of this sweetener of our existence *cost anything*, the non-compliance with it in *Scotland* might be accounted for;

but Lord Chesterfield says "Le Galbanum ne coute rien." . . . The lower classes in Scotland,' he continues, 'are strongly characterized by a certain kind of cunning and dissimulation, and are constantly trying to over-reach one another in the commerce of life. They seem entirely destitute of that disinterested, manly feeling which distinguishes their southern neighbours; and how often have I seen, in the streets of Modern Athens, a poor helpless individual overpowered and maltreated by numbers, without one standing forth in his defence, or manifesting the least feeling of commiseration for him! It is because the people look only to *themselves*. You see in all directions benches wantonly destroyed, trees broken down, monuments disfigured and defaced, gardens robbed of their plants and flowers by the people, because all these do not belong to them. They think they have a right in a free country to plunder, rob, and destroy, and to give vent to these lawless

and degrading propensities. . . . That they have many difficulties to contend against, and many hardships to bear, as must be the case in every country, I am not disposed to deny; but I assert, without the least fear of contradiction, that there is more done by the industrious and wealthy to ameliorate their condition, and to lead them to habits of sobriety, industry, and good management, than in any nation under the sun; and I have yet to learn that the people are sensible of and grateful for these benevolent demonstrations.' Assuredly, these are hard words; but I grieve to be compelled to acknowledge that they contain a very large amount of truth. It has often struck me as being remarkably strange that our long and intimate connexion with France should not have left some slight traces of the politeness and refinement for which that country is so justly celebrated. Unfortunately, the influence of the old alliance can only be detected in our language, our law, and our architec-

ture, and perhaps also in a few of our social and scholastic arrangements.[1]

One of the most intelligent and accomplished master tradesmen that I ever had the privilege of meeting — who employs several hundred workmen in the Scottish metropolis, besides having a large branch establishment in London—told me, not very long ago (in confirmation of James Watt's statement), that his best hands, both here and in England, were not Scotch but English ; and moreover, he entirely concurred with me in the opinion which I had formed regarding the want of courtesy and respect among Scottish artisans. I could mention many instances of this from my own personal experience, even within the last few years ; and I venture to believe that I do not exaggerate the defect in question from any unreasonable ideas as to what is right and proper. In addition to this unfortunate

[1] See an interesting chapter on this subject in the first volume of Mr. Burton's recent work, *The Scot Abroad.*

blemish, there is a sluggishness of thought and a want of ordinary consideration which are very frequently exhibited by many of our countrymen. Instances, I am sorry to say, crowd into my mind. I shall trouble you with only two, by way of illustration.

On the occasion to which I have already referred, when I happened to be spending a short time at the Castleton of Braemar, an old Irish admiral, in the course of a geological ramble among the mountains, was lost for upwards of two whole days and nights, just as I was leaving the locality. The enlightened natives of the district, including guides, gamekeepers, etc., who were thoroughly familiar with every corrie in that magnificent neighbourhood, instead of forthwith scouring the country-side in search of him, hardly left their cottage doors. They talked enough about 'the puir shentleman,' but *did* nothing; and but for the active and intelligent exertions of the parish minister and a few of his most intimate friends, the

bones of the worthy admiral would now have been bleaching among the mountains. Let me not fail to mention what *he* did, in return for the energy of the Highlanders! Besides an immediate gift of £15, he bound himself to contribute £10 a year to the poor of the parish, as a mark of gratitude for his deliverance.

Again, not many months ago, I chanced to be leaving our National Museum of Antiquities at four o'clock, just as the doors were being locked in accordance with the usual practice. At the outer gate I met with some friends, accompanied by an English clergyman and his wife, who were anxious to see the Museum; and as they had to leave Edinburgh the following morning, they were very much disappointed to find that they were too late. As an office-bearer in the Society of Antiquaries, I undertook to ask the liveried attendant, who acts as guardian of the Royal Institution, whether the strangers might not, under the

circumstances, be allowed to take a hurried run through the Museum. With an ungracious grumble he assented to the proposal, murmuring something about his dinner-hour. 'Only a Scotchman could have done such a thing!' was my sorrowful confession to my friends, as they paced breathlessly about among the relics of bygone ages.

I have no wish to attach too much importance to the cultivation of courtesy and politeness, but any Scotchman who has visited France, or even England or Ireland, must, I think, have been struck by the vast inferiority of his own countrymen in the matter in question. The quaint old motto adopted by Winchester, one of the largest public schools in England, 'Manners makyth man,' might, with propriety, be inscribed over the portals of our 'seminaries of useful learning.'

Another unenviable characteristic of the Scotch—already incidentally referred to—is

their destructiveness, which, among a comparatively well educated people, has always appeared to me more unaccountable than any of their other blemishes. In towns, it usually exhibits itself in the shape of injury to public buildings; while in the country, trees and shrubs are the most frequent objects of molestation. With reference to the latter phase, it has been argued by some that the exclusiveness of our lords and lairds is the cause of the characteristic in question, and that greater liberality would produce a very different result. Possibly there may be something in this assertion, but I know of more than one instance where extreme liberality on the part of landed proprietors has only been rewarded by the most wanton mischief; and not many years ago I happened to observe, within the beautiful grounds of one of my oldest and most generous friends in the neighbourhood of a northern county town, a series of notices to the effect that, in consequence of the injuries inflicted on the

trees and shrubs, the privilege of free access, long enjoyed by the public, had been reluctantly withdrawn.

The dirty and slovenly habits of the Scotch present a very marked contrast to those of our English neighbours. This, however, is a matter that has so often been referred to that it must now, I should think, be pretty well impressed on the minds of the most indifferent; and it is consoling to find that our extended intercourse with England already promises to be productive of greater cleanliness. We all know the proverb which associates that characteristic with *godliness;* and if we have received too much credit for the latter, the former, most assuredly, has not been more censured than was necessary. Poor Paddy, too, has not much to boast of on the score of tidiness; but, in his case, the blemish appears to be much more excusable than among ourselves. Both in Scotland and Ireland, however, a more liberal use of pure water might certainly be made by a

large number of our countrymen, with much advantage both to themselves and others.

With all his faults, the native of Scotland is honourably distinguished by certain striking characteristics, to some of which I have already alluded. It would be easy to enlarge upon the bright side of the picture by the enumeration of his other good qualities, but most of these appear to have been pretty freely proclaimed. In positions of trust and responsibility, for example, the Scot can rarely be surpassed; and for steady, dogged attention to duty, he is celebrated all over the world. But perhaps the most remarkable feature in the Scottish character is that well-known capacity for military service, in which we have probably never been excelled. No one, I think, will venture to deny that our countrymen have always most nobly assisted in upholding the honour of the United Kingdom on the field of battle. Need I remind you of the Scots Greys at Waterloo, or of the Highlanders on the

heights of Alma and amid the atrocities of Lucknow? The undaunted bravery of our ancestors, who maintained the independence of old Scotland in the days of Wallace and of Bruce, has been gloriously represented by their descendants in more recent times.

> 'Who hath not glowed above the page where fame
> Hath fixed high Caledon's unconquered name;
> The mountain-land which spurned the Roman chain,
> And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane,
> Whose bright claymore and hardihood of hand
> No foe could tame—no tyrant could command?
> That race is gone; but still their children breathe,
> And glory crowns them with redoubled wreath:
> O'er Gael and Saxon mingling banners shine,
> And, England! add their stubborn strength to thine.
> The blood which flowed with Wallace flows as free,
> But now 'tis only shed for fame and thee!'

And if those brave soldiers who have so honourably supported the military fame of our country are worthy of our highest admiration, not less so are their brave and illustrious *leaders*, whose deeds will go down to the latest ages. Sir John Moore, Sir David Baird, Sir Archibald Campbell, Sir Charles Napier, Sir James Outram, Lord

Clyde, Sir Hugh Rose, Sir Hope Grant, and a host of other familiar names at once occur to the mind; and in a single family—the 'gallant Grahams,'—we have, within a comparatively short period, the great Montrose, the renowned Claverhouse, and the brave Lord Lynedoch. Ireland, too, as well as England, has furnished many a distinguished hero; but the fame of the latter country is more especially associated in our minds with our wooden walls. With the Scottish soldier and the English sailor to vindicate her honour, why need our common country ever fear the threats of foreign foes?

> 'Ye mariners of England!
>   That guard our native seas;
> Whose flag has braved a thousand years
>   The battle and the breeze!
> Your glorious standard launch again
>   To match another foe!
>   And sweep through the deep,
>   While the stormy tempests blow;
>   While the battle rages loud and long,
>   And the stormy tempests blow.'

Mr. Kingsley attributes the manly vigour

of the English to the influence of the north-east wind, with which we are painfully familiar in the metropolis of Scotland. He thus concludes one of his spirited odes:—

> 'Let the luscious south wind
> Breathe in lovers' sighs,
> While the lazy gallants
> Bask in ladies' eyes.
> What does he but soften
> Heart alike and pen?
> 'Tis the hard, grey weather
> Breeds hard Englishmen.
> What's the soft south-wester?
> 'Tis the ladies' breeze,
> Bringing home their true-loves
> Out of all the seas;
> But the black north-easter,
> Through the snow-storm hurled,
> Drives our English hearts of oak
> Seaward round the world.
> Come as came our fathers,
> Heralded by thee,
> Conquering from the eastward,
> Lords by land and sea.
> Come, and strong within us
> Stir the Vikings' blood,
> Bracing brain and sinew;
> Blow, thou wind of God!'

This allusion to east wind reminds me of

a characteristic anecdote recorded by Dean Ramsay in his *Reminiscences*. In the course of a conversation with a shepherd near Bonally, among the Pentlands, the late Lord Rutherfurd was complaining bitterly of the misty weather which prevented him from enjoying his visit to the country, and expressed his wonder how or for what purpose there should have been such a thing created as east wind. The shepherd, a tall, grim figure, turned sharp round upon him : 'What ails you at the mist, sir; it wats the sod, it slockens the yowes, and'—adding with much solemnity—'it's God's wull;' and turned away with lofty indignation.

My limits, of course, prevent me from touching upon many other interesting points of contrast in the characteristics of the three kingdoms. Some of those which I have selected are, no doubt, gradually becoming less apparent than formerly, in consequence of the steady amalgamation of the different races, and the progressive assimila-

tion which is the necessary result; but many a long year will pass away before all these national distinctions are entirely obliterated. Possibly, I may be thought by some to have been rather too severe in my strictures on the weaknesses of my own countrymen, but, like Sir Walter Scott, I prefer truth to Scotland; and we have been well-nigh ruined by the flattery of other nations and the vanity of ourselves. We have all heard enough of Scotland's intelligence, of her morality, and of her religion; and it is full time to expose the other side of the shield. Of course, I have no sympathy with many of the criticisms of certain English journals, which appear to have peculiar pleasure in hitting at almost everything that is said or done on this side of the Tweed, not on account of the thing itself, but on account of its *locality*. Nor do I concur in many of Mr. Buckle's conclusions respecting our history and condition—our ignorance and superstition, our disloyalty and treachery,

and the detestable tyranny of our church. But there are some matters in respect to which the Scotch have been grossly over-praised, as well as others with reference to which they have not been sufficiently censured. A few of these I have endeavoured to notice in the course of the preceding observations, and I sincerely believe that my statements are not too highly coloured.

In my comments on Cakes, Puddings, and Potatoes, the fourth constituent of my subject, viz., *Leeks*, has been entirely overlooked. The fact is, however, that I am not aware that the modern Welshman has any very distinctive national character, and unquestionably there is a much more marked distinction between the Highlanders and the Lowlanders in Scotland than between the English and the Welsh. In a passage which I quoted towards the commencement of my remarks, the term *testy* is applied to the inhabitants of Wales, and everybody is familiar with the well-known nursery rhyme,

which does not convey a very favourable impression regarding them—

> 'Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief,
> Taffy came to my house and stole a leg of beef.'

There can be no doubt, however, that the Welshman has his admirers, some of whom even go the length of asserting that he presents a pleasing embodiment of English pluck, Scotch prudence, and Irish humour. But according to the common estimate, 'Wild Wales' is a picturesque but uncultivated country, inhabited by a race of people barely within the pale of civilisation, who use a language almost entirely composed of consonants, and quite unpronounceable by ordinary tongues.

Upwards of twenty years ago, I enjoyed a charming tour of six weeks through the greater part of Wales, when I must confess my juvenile mind was not very agreeably impressed with respect to the character of the natives. They appeared to me intensely slow, stupid, and undemonstrative, exhibit-

"LEEKS"

ing several of the bad features of both the English and the Scotch, and not very many of the good ones. In certain parts of the country, every second person seemed to be a Methodist, and the women of that persuasion—many of whom were rather comely—certainly did not heighten the effect of their beauty by the use of men's hats. In approaching Aberystwith, a beautiful town on the coast of Cardiganshire, in a four-horse coach, we happened to meet a large cavalcade of male and female Methodists. One of the horses of the latter shied as we were passing, and made an unaccountable rush almost in front of one of our wheels, throwing the rider to the ground. The *gentlemen* of the party pulled up in the most leisurely manner possible, and coolly looked on without ever condescending to dismount, while some of the coach passengers acted the part of good Samaritans, and set the trembling female on her steed again. I only hope that this was not a specimen of *ordinary* Welsh gallantry.

It cannot be denied, however, that the inhabitants of Wales have long been most creditably distinguished for their loyalty and orderly deportment; and, notwithstanding the serious reproach in the couplet to which I have already referred, their comparative immunity from crime is a most praiseworthy feature in their character. It seems, moreover, to be generally considered that they are a pre-eminently religious people; and if, like many of our own countrymen, they are somewhat shrewd and cautious in their business transactions, they nevertheless appear to be fully entitled to the reputation which they have acquired for good faith and honesty of purpose.

We ought to bear in mind that it is now upwards of 320 years since the Welsh received the finishing-stroke to their independence by the Act 27 Henry VIII. c. 26 (1536), by which they were put upon the same footing, and made fellow-citizens with their English neighbours; and during that period

it cannot be doubted that many of their national characteristics must have been materially modified. For ages they had continued a brave and independent people, under their own princes and laws, and they were never entirely subjected to the Crown of England till the reign of Edward I., when Llewellyn ap Gryffith, Prince of Wales, lost both his life and his dominions. The better to reconcile the Welsh to a foreign yoke, the English monarch sent his Queen to Carnarvon, where she was delivered of a Prince, afterwards Edward II.; and ever since that time, as everybody knows, the eldest son of the Sovereign has usually been created Prince of Wales, and as such enjoys certain revenues from that portion of the Kingdom.

A few words in conclusion. While I should indeed be grieved to meet with a Cake, a Pudding, or a Potato who professed indifference to 'his own, his native land,' at the same time, it is by no means desirable for any of us to feel too strongly

on the subject. Great as we now undoubtedly are as a united nation, we must not rest satisfied with our fame; still less ought we to shut our eyes to our failings. Vast benefits are unquestionably to be derived by us from our intercourse with other countries. Much, indeed, may be learned on both sides, but unfortunately how much more apt is human nature to copy the bad than the good! The tendency to magnify national distinctions, and to overlook those grand points of similarity which almost everywhere present themselves, ought to be strenuously resisted. A living author remarks that 'in contemplating different nations, the traveller learns that their differences are very great, and yet how small when compared with their resemblances. That intensity of dislike which arises at these small differences, and which even the most philosophical minds are apt at times to feel, is a great proof of the tyrannous nature of the human heart, which would have

every other creature cut out exactly after its own pattern.'[1]

I cannot resist another quotation from the journal of Dr. Arnold, in which he manfully acknowledges some of our national deficiencies :—'Foreigners' (he writes) 'say that our insular situation cramps and narrows our minds; and this is not mere nonsense either. If we were not physically a very active people, our disunion from the Continent would make us pretty nearly as bad as the Chinese. As it is, we are so distinct in habits and in feelings, owing originally in great measure to our insular situation, that I remember observing, in 1815, that the English stood alone amidst all the nations assembled at Paris, and that even our fellow-subjects, the Hanoverians, could understand and sympathize with the French better than with us. Now it is very true that by our distinctness we have gained very much—more than foreigners can under-

[1] *Companions of my Solitude*, p. 219.

stand. A thorough English gentleman—Christian, manly, and enlightened—is more, I believe, than Guizot or Sismondi could comprehend; it is a finer specimen of human nature than any other country, I believe, could furnish. Still, it is not a perfect specimen by a great deal; and therefore it will not do to contemplate ourselves only, or, contenting ourselves with saying that we are better than others, scorn to amend our institutions by comparing them with those of other nations. Our travellers and our exquisites imitate the outside of foreign customs without discrimination, just as in the absurd fashion of not eating fish with a knife, borrowed from the French, who do it because they have no knives fit to use. But monkeyish imitation will do no good; what is wanted is a deep knowledge and sympathy with the European character and institutions, and then there would be a hope that we might each impart to the other that in which we are superior.'

Finally, I am thoroughly satisfied that the inhabitants of the once independent sections of our common country have much to learn from one another. There are good points in their respective peculiarities which ought to be cherished, and bad points which ought to be shunned; and thus a higher character may yet be formed than has hitherto been exhibited in any of the three kingdoms. The admixture of races is almost invariably productive of beneficial consequences, and such was undoubtedly the result of the Norman settlement, in the case of both England and Scotland. It is impossible for any one of us to forget our bygone national history, and probably the Scot has as much reason to be proud of the past as the native of either of the sister kingdoms. But let him not unnecessarily boast of his favourite events and eras, by the exhibition of silly and uncalled-for patriotism. Let him be secretly inspired by a recollection of what his brave ancestors both did and

suffered on the battle-field and at the stake. Let him, at the same time, frankly acknowledge that if England has gained unquestionable advantages from the Union, both Scotland and Ireland have gained many more. Let him unite his undoubted hardihood to the genuine manliness of the English and to the lively vigour of the sons of Erin; and, 'shoulder to shoulder,' let a combined effort be made to promote the cause of civil and religious liberty both at home and abroad, in order to maintain the honour of what we proudly designate *Great* Britain!

> 'United and happy, at Loyalty's shrine,
> May the Rose and the Thistle long flourish and twine
> Round a sprig of shilelah and Shamrock so green.'

APPENDIX.

No. I.

HIGHLAND INQUISITIVENESS.

THE following characteristic conversation is extracted from Macculloch's *Travels in the Western and Northern Highlands.* The scene of the dialogue is laid in Glen Ledmack, where the traveller meets a snuffy-looking native cutting grass with a pocket-knife, and asks,—'How far is it to Killin?'—'It's a fine day.' 'Ay, it's a fine day for your hay.'—'Ah! there's no muckle hay; this is an unco cauld glen.' 'I suppose this is the road to Killin?' (trying him on another tack.)—'That's an unco fat beast o' yours.' 'Yes; she is much too fat; she is just from grass.'—'Ah! it's a mere, I see; it's a gude beast to gang, I'se warran' you?' 'Yes, yes; it's a very good pony.'—'I selled just sic another at Doune fair five years by-past: I warran' ye, she's a Highland-bred beast?' 'I don't know; I bought her in Edinburgh'—'A-weel a-weel, mony sic like gangs to the Edinburgh market frae the Highlands.' 'Very likely; she seems to have Highland blood in her.'—'Ay, ay; would you be selling her?' 'No, I don't want to sell her; do you want to buy her?'—'Na! I was nae thinking o' that: has she had na a foal?' 'Not that I know of.'—'I had a good colt out of ours when I selled her. Ye're na ganging to Doune the year?' 'No, I am going to Killin, and want to know how far it is.'—'Ay, ye'll be gaing to the sacrament there the morn?' 'No, I don't belong to your kirk.'—'Ye'll be an Episcopalian, then?' 'Or a Roman Catholic!'—'Na, na; ye're nae Roman.' 'And so it is twelve miles to Killin?' (putting a leading question.)—'Na; it's nae just that.' 'It's ten, then, I suppose?'—'Ye'll be for cattle then for the Falkirk tryst?' 'No; I know nothing about cattle.'—'I thocht ye'd ha'e been just ane o' thae English drovers. Ye have nae siccan hills as this in your country?' 'No, not so high.'—'But ye'll ha'e bonny farms?' 'Yes, yes; very good lands.'—'Ye'll nae ha'e better farms than my Lord's at Dunira?' 'No, no; Lord Melville has very fine farms.'—'Now, there's a bonny bit land; there's nae three days in the year there's nae meat for beasts on it; and it's to let. Ye'll be for a farm hereawa?' 'No, I am just looking at the country.'—'And ye have nae business?' 'No.'—'Weel, that's the easiest way.' 'And this is the road to Killin?'—'Will ye tak' some nuts?' (producing a handful he had

just gathered.) 'No; I cannot crack them.'—'I suppose your teeth are failing. Ha'e ye ony snuff?' 'Yes, yes; here is a pinch for you.'—'Na, na; I'm unco heavy on the pipe, ye see; but I like a hair o' snuff; just a hair' (touching the snuff with the end of his little finger, apparently to prolong time, and save the answer about the road a little longer, as he seemed to fear there were no more questions to ask. The snuff, however, came just in time to allow him to recall his ideas, which the nuts were near dispersing). 'And ye'll be from the low country?'—'Yes; you may know I am an Englishman by my tongue.' 'Na; our ain gentry speak high English the now.'—'Well, well, I am an Englishman, at any rate.' 'And ye'll be staying in London?'—'Yes, yes.' 'I was ance at Smithfield mysel' wi' some beasts; it's an unco place, London. And what's your name? asking your pardon.' The name was given. 'There's a hantel o' that name i' the north. Yer father'll maybe be a Highlander?'—'Yes; that is the reason why I like the Highlanders.' 'Well (nearly thrown out), it's a bonny country now, but it's sair cauld here in the winter.'—'And so it is six miles to Killin?' 'Ay, they ca' it sax.'—'Scotch miles, I suppose?' 'Ay, ay; auld miles.'—'That is about twelve English?' 'Na, it'll no be abune ten short miles (here we got on so fast, that I began to think I should be dismissed at last), but I never see'd them measured. And ye'll ha'e left your family at Comrie?'—'No, I am alone.' 'They'll be in the south maybe?'—'No; I have no family.' 'And are ye no married?'—'No.' 'I'm thinking it's time.'—'So am I.' 'Weel, weel, ye'll ha'e the less fash.'—'Yes, much less than in finding the way to Killin.' 'O ay, ye'll excuse me; but we countra folks speers muckle questions.'—'Pretty well, I think.' 'Weel, weel, ye'll find it saft a bit in the hill; but ye maun haud wast, and it's nae abune ten mile. A gude day.'

No. II.

OUR BOLD PEASANTRY—SCOTCH *v.* ENGLISH.

(*From the Mark Lane Express.*)[1]

In all the practice of husbandry there is nowhere any more striking difference than between the English and the Scotch labourer; while it is amusing to notice how the employers of either will cite their own man as the champion of his order. It is, indeed, difficult to adjust the claims of the two, and no one but a second Solomon, as personified in a Chancellor of the Exchequer, could hit their several tastes so suitably when he gives beer to the one and whisky to the other. But still, so

[1] Apropos to the English Agricultural Society's Show at Newcastle, in July 1864.

essential a stimulant is not in either case so generally admitted. We have, to be sure, heard it declared at the London Club, that 'the labourer derives unquestionable benefit from a daily allowance of home-brewed beer, and that the man who can do the best day's work is the one accustomed to the use of it;' whereas in the bill of fare of the Scotchman no mention whatever is made of strong drink, but he appears the rather to live from one year's end to another on milk and oatmeal. In all the trials of strength and skill going on during this Royal week, the furrows to be ploughed, the engines to be worked, the cattle to be shown off, and so forth, it may be not impolitic to bear in mind a challenge, issued some years since by old Ebony:—'What makes our race-horses the best in the world may be expected to make our peasantry the best too. We offer you, therefore, a fair bet:—You shall take ten English ploughmen, and feed them with two pounds and a half of wheaten flour a day; and we shall take as many Scotch ploughmen, and feed them on the same weight of oatmeal a day—if they can eat so much, for that is doubtful—and we shall back our men against yours, for any sum you like. They shall walk, run, work, or fight you, if you like it, and they shall thrash you to your heart's content. We should like to convince you that Scotch parritch has some real solid metal in it. We back the oatcake and the porridge against all the wheaten messes in the world. We defy your home-made bread, your household bread, your baker's bread, your leaven bread, and your bread-Georges; your fancy bread, and your rasin bread; your baps, rolls, scones, muffins, crumpets, and cookies; your bricks and biscuits, balls and rusks; your bath-buns and your Sally-buns; your tea-cakes, and pan-cakes, and soda-cakes, and slim-cakes, and saffron-cakes; your plum-cakes, and currant-cakes, and sponge-cakes, and seed-cakes, and girdle-cakes, and singing-hinnies; your shortbread and currant-buns; and if there be any other names by which you designate your wheaten abominations, we defy and detest them all. We swear by the oatcake and the porridge, the substantial bannock and the brose.' This is certainly defiant enough, and one is almost inclined to regret that an evening in the Newcastle show-time has not been set apart for the due discussion of this momentous question. Say, for instance, that Professor Anderson opened the debate with an analysis of oatmeal, and a dissertation on its strengthening qualities, while Professor Voelcker followed with a tribute to the wholesome virtues of beef and beer. Shall Bloomfield be quite forgotten, even though a mightier man like Burns be cited? But still so it is. The evils of the bothy, or the acknowledged defects in the Scotch system of hiring, are as nothing when compared to the worth of an oatcake dietary. Every song over the Border is but a pæan set to the same tune, and in the new number of the *Journal of Agriculture*, the home-brewed argument is thus taken to task: 'We are not going to put the

question from a teetotal point of view, but we do think that such statements involve a considerable amount of fallacy ; and, in order to prove that such is the case, we need only point to the Scotch farm-labourer, who is a milk and not a beer drinker, to satisfy any one that the man who can do the best day's work is not the one accustomed to the use of beer. It is true that in some parts of Scotland a comparatively trifling allowance of small-beer is served out to farm-labourers during harvest, but that is considered more as a refreshing beverage than as the medium of conveying an extra amount of nutritive material into the body of the labourer. If the beer allowed to the English labourer was of a wholesome, light, pleasant nature, like Prestonpans beer, and looked upon merely as a beverage assisting the mastication of his dry bread and cheese, without placing any stress on its nutritive properties, real or supposed, there would be less to say against its use ; but we are convinced that the regular use of beer, such beer as English labourers drink, is to render them a set of dull, heavy-minded animals, neither so intelligent nor yet such continuously hard workers as the Scotch.' This, to be sure, is rather running away from the Southron's view of the case, because home-brewed should be 'wholesome and pleasant,' but the strain is still on the same string. The English labourer who lives in his own cottage, and eats bacon and drinks beer, is 'a dull-headed animal,' while the Scotchman, who is housed in a bothy, and fed upon meal and milk, is 'intelligent, hard-working,' and so on. A reel is, no doubt, incomparably superior as a mechanical movement to a country-dance, and most probably a man would walk, or run, or fight a deal better in a kilt than he could in a pair of breeches. But is there not some allowance—some adaptation to circumstances to be considered ? Are beer and bacon all so radically wrong, and bothies and bannocks so essentially good, as the economists declare ? Is the morality of the bothy generally of a higher order than that of the cottage, and what is it that we are to go for ? Shall we follow Mr. Gladstone's lead, and encourage a taste for whisky rather than home-brewed ? or shall we more charitably admit there may be reason in roasting eggs, and that an Englishman may gather his strength and sinew from beef and beer, a Scotchman from porridge, and an Irishman from potatoes ? But then the organ of the Highland Society is clearly not prepared to grant as much ; for while we are dull and heavy-headed, they are intelligent and industrious. Let us at once join issue with these saucy Scotch reviewers, and fight the battle out on the neutral ground of Newcastle—over, shall we say, a glass of steaming toddy, or a bottle of 'good Newcastle Port,' as Lord Eldon was wont to call it, 'the stronger the better.'

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