

of haste; they say that the house was hardly ready for the reception of the party, who were put into new rooms where the walls were scarcely dry; a strange method of trying the effect of whitewashing upon the marchioness of A—

The utter obscurity and incomprehensibility of this paragraph constitute its merits. Not one reader in a thousand can guess the name of this Marchioness of A—who was treated in so singular and apparently cruel a manner, nor fathom the reasons which induced the celebrated baronet and his lady to put her into damp rooms—but there lies the charm. The mystery is as good as an enigma to those who are removed from the circles of ton, and, as nobody is acquainted with the marchioness, it is open to every body to put their own construction upon the business, so that the uninitiated, who know nothing, may safely affect to be in the secret. There is some art in these things in spite of their absurdity.

PLEASANTRIES OF THE LAW.

SOME of our law phrases are exceedingly ridiculous. The following is a report of the substance of a petition to the Master of the Rolls, heard on Friday last.

This was a petition from an infant praying that his allowance might be increased from 200*l.* to 300*l.* a year—that he might be allowed to travel on the Continent for two years—and that a travelling tutor might be appointed. The petitioner stated, that the infant was nineteen years of age, and that he had been placed at Sandhurst college, but had no intention of leading a military life. I added, that he was equally averse to entering a university, and did not wish to qualify himself for any profession; he simply wished to travel.

The notion of an infant praying to be allowed to travel, expressing its abhorrence to a military life, its aversion to a university, and its objections to qualify for any profession, is absurd enough—but the absurdity is complete, when we are informed that this said infant, spoiled by its antipathies, is nineteen years of age!

HUMAN MONSTROSITIES.

THE ancients entertained a notion that Africa was always producing some new and strange thing; the scene is now changed—the most loathsome and disgusting sights with which the public are favoured are French. In Paris they have just now a girl with two heads who promises to prove a very valuable abortion when her father can obtain a licence to exhibit her. She is joined together at the hips, which is all that befits the reader to know; however, for those who would inquire more curiously, here is the information of M. DE ST. HILAIRE, a grand amateur of these mischievous and wanton freaks of nature.

Looking at them behind, the two vertebral columns are seen to continue in a manner very distinct from the *coxis* (the hip-bone), where it is confounded only in the lower part. There are two stomachs, and there is reason to believe, that the mixture of the digestive organs begins only in the small intestines. The rectum is evidently single, though we remark a sort of hollow cut which seems to show a tendency towards doubling.

What has all this to do out of the pages of a medical journal or lecture? We cannot request young ladies or gentlemen to be pleased to consider the coxis and vertebral columns of this unhappy little malformed wretch—it may be well for the surgeon to do so, and his investigations may be useful. There are in the world plenty of sights that people of good taste would neither see nor hear described, accounting it but depravity of the imagination to let it dwell with pleasure on ideas of deformity. Mental pleasure of this kind should be strongest, one would suppose, in those whose bodily tastes are of the grossest.

A BURNING SHAME.

It is a burning shame for M. CHABERT to call himself the Fire-King. There are instances on record, of the salamander properties existing in human beings, some of which are infinitely more wonderful than any of his feats—the prussic acid excepted. There we acknowledge his incomparable genius. Some anecdotes of a female, who did strange things several years ago in London, have lately found their way into the newspapers; but the following statement, related by A. G. BUSBEQUIUS, who went into Turkey as ambassador from the Imperial Court to SOLYMAN the Magnificent, in the year 1544, seems to surpass all previous or subsequent cases of physical resistance to the influence of heat. It is extracted from a work, entitled, *A Collection of Travels thro' various parts of the World*. Compiled and arranged by Mr. DERRICK. 2 vols. London, 1762.

Another Turkish pilgrim, who fell into Busbequius's company, was dressed in a long white habit, with flowing hair and a caisson; he dined with the ambassador, and afterwards went down stairs, where, taking up a huge stone, he therewith struck himself several times upon the breast, in a manner sufficiently severe to have felled an ox; yet he did not appear to feel it; he also held a red-hot piece of iron in his mouth, without being in the least injured. In this last, one of Busbequius's domestics pretending to emulate him, suffered severely for his folly; burning his hands and mouth in such a manner, that he was a long time under cure. Yet in this last trick there is nothing very surprising; it is practised, says our author, by many vagrants, who fortify their mouths against the effects of heat, with a certain chemical preparation; and our author had seen a juggler in Venice, wash his hands, thus counter-armed, in a platter of melted lead. This same fellow told many surprising stories of the power and sanctity of a certain prior of a monastery to which he belonged; such as, that he could spread his cloak upon the surface of a lake, and row up and down as if in a boat; also, that he would suffer himself to be bound fast to the body of a sheep, newly killed, and thrown into an oven, therein to remain until the beast was sufficiently baked; yet he would come forth unhurt.—Vol. 1. p. 191.

We do not require M. CHABERT to float over a lake on his cloak, for there he would be out of his element; but if he would establish his claim to supreme fire-fame, let him try the experiment of entering an oven on a sheep's back. The cooking of a thin steak is clearly a trifle compared with the whole body of an animal.

JENNY VERTPRE AND THE FRENCH POLICE.

THE association is disastrous. Who would expect to find the name of the charming JENNY VERTPRE in conjunction with that of the police? The fairy creature who glittered for a while on our stage, and left such a sweet remembrance in our minds;—yet we find by the following passage in the *Globe*, that even beauty and genius are but weak arguments with a French prefect.

A short time ago a young actress, Mademoiselle Jenny Vertpre, who was a great favourite last year in England, appeared at the Marseilles theatre in a piece, in the course of which she is asked by one of the characters if she has read the favourite novel of *Trilby*? The witty actress immediately asks, "And you—have you read the fine verses in *Waterloo*?"—Thus substituting the name of a clever poem against the Minister of War, De Bourmont, for that of some ordinary work usually given. The audience, it seems, caught the allusion with enthusiasm; but not so the prefect. The anger of this functionary prompted him, in the first instance, to arrest the actress for a contravention of the law, which prohibits actors and actresses from substituting language of their own for that of an author; but as, on reference to the author of the piece in question, it was found that he had previously authorised Mademoiselle Jenny Vertpre to substitute any name she chose, the prefect was compelled to abandon his proposed course of proceeding. Determined, however, not to allow the fair offender to escape altogether, he summoned her to attend at the prefecture to answer for her conduct. This summons the spirited actress refused to comply with, and the enraged prefect immediately sent to Paris for instructions, at the same time representing the affair as a political contrivance of the Marseillais to bring the ministry into contempt, of which Mdlle. Vertpre was the agent. What has been done with the lady we know not; but it would seem, from the arrival of the police spies, that the information of the prefect has not been received with indifference.

Of a verity, but there is mischief in that same Waterloo. The tenacity of the French authorities touching the royal family, and the powers that be, and all events in which they were or are involved, and all political satires, exhibits ground for the suspicion that they mistrust their hold upon public attachment. They seem to play a desperate game to secure their ascendancy; but such violent measures to enforce acquiescence generally produce revulsion. It has been observed that those countries in which there are volcanoes are seldom troubled with earthquakes. A free press, and the free expression of opinion, are the proper vents for safety—suppress them, and you tread over ground charged with the materials of convulsion. Poor JENNY VERTPRE! thou art, indeed, a delicate morsel for the appetite of that terrible monster, the prefect.

LITERATURE.

REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS.

Memoirs, Correspondence, and Private Papers of Thomas Jefferson, late President of the United States. Now first published from the Original MSS. Edited by Thomas Jefferson Randolph. 2 vols. London, 1829.

THE American War and the French Revolution were the two great events in the history of the last generation. Their results descend to us like a legacy of practical wisdom from our fathers. The personal memoirs of those who stood out prominently in those agitated periods must, therefore, be full of interest, particularly if they appear in the autobiographical form. Of all those whom accident or necessity forced into an active participation in the proceedings that brought one monarch to the scaffold, and broke up a part of the colonial power of another, there were few who commanded more attention in their day than the late President of the United States. Mr. JEFFERSON was distinguished by some eminent qualities of head and heart. He was cool, patient, and faithful. From the earliest date of his manhood he evinced a strong love of his country, which he never sacrificed to private ambition, or the temptations of office. His enthusiasm bore the characteristics of a permanent passion, seated in the depths of his nature. It never burst forth in a torrent of sudden zeal, or displayed its strength in the vulgar arts of popularity. On the contrary, it urged him on in secret, sustained him unostentatiously in public, and gave that undying impulse to all his acts that shed a light of earnestness and determination over his whole life. Trained in a school of politics where prejudice was frequently permitted to usurp the place of reason, he kept his steady way calmly amidst the elements of strife, and, unaffected by the temporary violence by which he was surrounded, he applied his judgment and philosophy to the examination of primary principles, apart from the extravagant theories of those who thought that the value of all legislative changes consisted in the establishment of extremes. Politics in JEFFERSON might be well said to be the science of human nature; not because there were not faults in his plans, but because he based his opinions upon extensive analogies, profound truths, and historical experience. He had no party but his country—no partisans but the people. Yet he administered nothing to the wild desires of the mob. He studied their interests, not their wishes. He pursued, frequently against the common voice, that line of action which he felt to be judicious, and at last obtained the triumph of his virtue in the unanimous and unsolicited suffrages of the public. It must be admitted that the United States did not contain, amidst their ardent millions, a single citizen who entertained a more inflexible enmity to the mother country: but then it was calmly, although perseveringly, expressed. His appeals against Great Britain were not invectives; and, except in the language of the celebrated declaration of independence, he has not left behind him a fragment of unnecessary wrath. His conduct in this respect is finely contrasted with that of his coadjutor in the early labours of emancipation, Mr. DICKINSON, who was one of those timid men who cast a shadow of indecision and weakness over their purposes. DICKINSON was for a half-way release from the rule of England, and trembled when a word of opprobrium was uttered—JEFFERSON was for a full and complete redemption, but uttered few words of bitterness. In the one there was a constant vibration—in the other an undeviating progression to the final end. JEFFERSON, unlike ADAMS, was not irritable—unlike PAINE, he did not seek to promote his objects through the instrumentality of an angry press—unlike FRANKLIN, his philosophy, less domestic but of a higher order, was not delivered in allegories—while he combined some of the greatest attributes of each tempered by knowledge and prudence. Few men possessed such opportunities for obtaining and accumulating political information, and it appears that he used them profitably.

His character is exhibited very unreservedly in these volumes. In England he felt, but did not resent, the coldness of the King and Queen, and, leaving a country where his new rights were treated with contempt, he desired, with polite *naïveté*, to know if he could render the British minister any service in Paris. Amidst the fearful scenes of the Revolution, we find him keeping, in the centre of the tragic group, his good name with all parties; neither lured by the glowing eloquence of MIRABEAU, nor melted by the sorrows of MARIE ANTOINETTE. Some of his letters on these affairs teem with homilies. Maxims for statesmen might be drawn from his correspondence, which is copious and replete with interest.

The memoir, printed from the original in his own handwriting, may be esteemed as an admirable specimen of notes of a public life. In style it is unambitious and simple, and the great object of the writer seems to have been to arrive at the development of his design by the shortest and most intelligible means. Throughout his brief narrative of the proceedings of Congress, he freely gives the opinions of all parties, and, with the argumentative spirit of HUME, exhibits the merits and demerits of both sides of every question. The correspondence spreads over a largerspace, and embraces a great variety of subjects. Jurisprudence, finance, local topics, and general principles are amply discussed by the President; and in this department of the work, to be followed hereafter by materials as yet unused, the whole of his experience is comprised. A few passages from the memoir are all we can at present extract.

Of Mr. MADISON he gives the following liberal character: Mr. Madison came into the House in 1776, a new member, and young; which circumstances, concurring with his extreme modesty, prevented his venturing himself in debate before his removal to the Council of State, in November '77. From thence he went to Congress, then consisting of few members. Trained in these successive schools, he acquired a habit of self-possession, which placed at ready command the rich resources of his luminous and discriminating mind, and of his extensive information, and rendered him the first of every assembly afterwards, of which he became a member. Never wandering from his subject into vain declamation, but pursuing it closely, in language pure, classical, and copious, soothing always the feelings of his adversaries by civilities and softness of expression, he rose to the eminent station which he held in the great National Convention of 1787; and in that of Virginia which followed, he sustained the new constitution in all its parts, bearing

off the palm against the logic of George Mason, and the fervid declamation of Mr. Henry. With these consummate powers were united a pure and spotless virtue, which no calumny has ever attempted to sully. Of the powers and polish of his pen, and of the wisdom of his administration in the highest office of the nation, I need say nothing. They have spoken, and will for ever speak, for themselves.

On the revision of the statute-laws, JEFFERSON desired to abolish the law of primogeniture, and to make real estate descendible in parcenary to the next of kin, as personal property was by the statute of distribution. This, of course, met some opposition; his answer to one of his opponents deserves to be recorded.

Mr. Pendleton wished to preserve the right of primogeniture, but seeing at once that that could not prevail, he proposed we should adopt the Hebrew principle, and give a double portion to the elder son. I observed, that if the elder son could eat twice as much, or do double work, it might be a natural evidence of his right to a double portion; but being on a par, in his powers and wants, with his brothers and sisters, he should be on a par also in the partition of the patrimony; and such was the decision of the other members.

Some of his amendments in the law are worthy of imitation—*ex. g.*

I thought it would be useful, also, in all new draughts, to reform the style of the later British statutes, and of our own acts of Assembly; which, from their verbosity, their endless tautologies, their involutions of case within case, and parenthesis within parenthesis, and their multiplied efforts at certainty, by *said*s and *aforsaid*s, by *ors* and *by ands*, to make them more plain, are really rendered more perplexed and incomprehensible, not only to common readers, but to the lawyers themselves.

Having at last completed the task of revision, behold into what a compact compass he brought the statutes at large. Another point worthy of imitation in the mother country.

We had in this work, brought so much of the common law as it was thought necessary to alter, all the British statutes from *Magna Charta* to the present day, and all the laws of Virginia, from the establishment of our legislature, in the 4th Jac. 1. to the present time, which we thought should be retained, within the compass of one hundred and twenty-six bills, making a printed folio of ninety pages only. Some bills were taken out, occasionally, from time to time, and passed; but the main body of the work was not entered on by the legislature, until after the general peace in 1785; when, by the unwearied exertions of Mr. Madison, in opposition to the endless quibbles, chicaneries, perversions, vexations, and delays of lawyers and demi-lawyers, most of the bills were passed by the legislature, with little alteration.

The scheme of republicanism he considered at last perfected by the abolition of certain laws that favoured the aristocracy, and the adoption of others that kept the tide of change and constant distribution for ever flowing among the people. He thus sums up his labours.

I considered four of these bills, passed or reported, as forming a system by which every fibre would be eradicated of ancient or future aristocracy; and a foundation laid for a government truly republican. The repeal of the laws of entail would prevent the accumulation and perpetuation of wealth, in select families, and preserve the soil of the country from being daily more and more absorbed in mortmain. The abolition of primogeniture, and equal partition of inheritances, removed the feudal and unnatural distinctions which made one member of every family rich, and all the rest poor, substituting equal partition, the best of all Agrarian laws. The restoration of the rights of conscience relieved the people from taxation for the support of a religion not theirs; for the establishment was truly of the religion of the rich, the dissenting sects being entirely composed of the less wealthy people; and these, by the bill for a general education, would be qualified to understand their rights; to maintain them, and to exercise with intelligence their parts in self-government; and all this would be effected, without the violation of a single natural right of any one individual citizen. To these, too, might be added, as a further security, the introduction of the trial by jury into the Chancery courts, which have already engulfed, and continue to engulf, so great a proportion of the jurisdiction over our property.

Small and apparently united as Congress was, yet it partook of the petty character of all young debating clubs. The rage for trifling away public time in personal display was amongst the first evils of the new representatives. How admirably he hits off the duties of legislators in the senate, in his pithy instances of the silent WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN.

Our body was little numerous, but very contentious. Day after day was wasted on the most unimportant questions. A member, one of those afflicted with the morbid rage of debate, of an ardent mind, prompt imagination, and copious flow of words, who heard with impatience any logic which was not his own, sitting near me on some occasion of a trifling but wordy debate, asked me how I could sit in silence, hearing so much false reasoning, which a word should refute? I observed to him, that to refute indeed was easy, but to silence impossible; that in measures brought forward by myself, I took the labouring oar, as was incumbent on me; but that, in general, I was willing to listen; that if every sound argument or objection was used by some one or other of the numerous debaters, it was enough; if not, I thought it sufficient to suggest the omission, without going into a repetition of what had been already said by others; that this was a waste and abuse of the time and patience of the House, which could not be justified. And I believe, that if the members of deliberate bodies were to observe this course generally, they would do in a day what takes them a week; and it is really more questionable than may at first be thought, whether Bonaparte's dumb legislature, which said nothing, and did much, may not be preferable to one which talks much, and does nothing. I served with General Washington in the legislature of Virginia, before the revolution, and during it with Dr. Franklin in Congress. I never heard either of them speak ten minutes at a time, nor to any but the main point, which was to decide the question. They laid their shoulders to the great points, knowing that the little ones would follow of themselves. If the present Congress errs in too much talking, how can it be otherwise, in a body to which the people send one hundred and fifty lawyers, whose trade it is to question every thing, yield nothing, and talk by the hour? That one hundred and fifty lawyers should do business together, ought not to be expected.

In our own time we have a minister who considers a speech above ten minutes' duration a work of supererogation.

With the following glance at the causes and conduct of the French Revolution, we conclude our notice. JEFFERSON was an eye witness of those events, and no mean judge of their effects.

The King was now become a passive machine in the hands of the National Assembly, and had he been left to himself, he would have willingly acquiesced in whatever they should devise as best for the nation. A wise constitution would have been formed, here-