

Noctes Ambrosianæ.

No. X.

A FRAGMENT.

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ODOHERTY.

Chorus then.—Buller, awake, man.—Chorus, all of you, I say.

Chorus of Contributors.

So triumph to the Tories, and woe to the Whigs,
 And to all other foes of the nation ;
 Let us be through thick and thin caring nothing for the prigs
 Who prate about conciliation.

DE MULLION.

Bravo, Odoherly, Bravissimo !—that is decidedly one of your very best effusions.

ODOHERTY.

No blarney to me, *mon ami*. I have taken my degrees in that celebrated university. In candour, however, and equity, I am bound to say, that I do think it a pretty fairish song, as songs go now-a-days.

NORTH.

Why, it must be admitted, that there is an awful quantity of bad songs vented just now.

TICKLER.

It must be the case as long as they issue in such shoals ; the bad must bear a huge proportion to the good at all times ; for they are just the off-throwings of the ephemeral buoyancy of spirit of the day ; and as actual buoyancy of spirit generally breeds nonsense, and affectation of it is always stupidity, you must e'en be content with your three grains of wheat in a bushel of chaff.

NORTH.

Yes, yes—they must be from their very nature ephemeral. Which of all our songs—I don't mean particularly those of the present company—but of all the songs now written and composed by all the song-writers now extant—will be alive a hundred years hence ?

ODOHERTY.

Just as many as are now alive of those written and composed, as you most technically phrase it, a hundred years since.

TICKLER.

And that is but poor harvest indeed. Look over any of the song-books that contain the ditties of our grandmothers or great-grandmothers, and you will scarcely ever turn up a song familiar to anybody but professed readers.

ODOHERTY.

More's the pity. By all that's laughable, the reflection saddens me. " Pills to purge Melancholy," has become a melancholious book in itself. You read page after page, puzzling yourself to make out the possibility—how any human mouth could by any device have got through the melodies—the uncouth melodies—

BULLER.

You know Tom D'Urféy's plan ? He used to take a country dance, the more intricate the better ; for, as you see by his dedication, he prided himself on that kind of legerdemain, and then put words to it as well as he could.

ODOHERTY.

I know—I know—but I was saying that it is an unpleasant sort of feeling you have about you, when you peruse, like a groping student, songs that you are sure made palace and pot-house ring with jollity and fun in the days of

merry King Charles, and warmed the gallantry of the grenadiers of Britain at the siege of Namur, under hooked-nose Oldglorious, or of

Our countrymen in Flanders
A hundred years ago,
When they fought like Alexanders
Beneath the great Marlboro'.

NORTH.

Ay, "the odour's fled." They are like uncorked soda-water. Honest Tom D'Urféy, I think I see him now in my mind's eye, Horatio, holding his song-book with a tipsy gravity, and trolling forth—

Joy to great Cæsar,
Long life and pleasure,

with old Rowley leaning on his shoulder, partly out of that jocular familiarity, which endeared him to the people in spite of all his rascalities, and partly to keep himself steady, humming the bass.

BULLER.

Have you seen Dr Kitchener's book?

NORTH.

I have, and a good, jovial, loyal book it is. The Doctor is, by all accounts, a famous fellow—great in cookery, medicine, music, poetry, and optics, on which he has published a treatise.

ODOHERTY.

I esteem the Doctor.

NORTH.

The devil you do!—after cutting him up so abominably in my Magazine, in an article, you know, inserted while I was in Glasgow, without my knowledge.

ODOHERTY.

Why are you always reminding a man of his evil-doings? Consider that I have been white-washed by the Insolvent Court since, and let all my sins go with that white-washing. To cut the matter short, I had a most excellent Cookery-book written, founded on the principles practised in the 99th mess, and was going to treat with Longman's folks about it, when Kitchener came out, and pre-occupied the market. You need not wonder, therefore, at my tickling up the worthy Doctor, who himself enjoyed the fun, being a loyal fellow to the back-bone; a Tory tough and true. We are now the best friends in the world.

MULLION.

Well, let that pass—What song-writer of our days, think you, will live? Moore?

NORTH.

Moore! No, he has not the stamina in him at all. His verses are elegant, pretty, glittering, anything you please in that line; but they have defects which will not allow them to get down to posterity. For instance, the querulous politics, on your local affairs, Odoherly, which make them now so popular with a very large class of your countrymen, are mere matters of the day, which will die with the day; for I hope you do not intend to be always fighting in Ireland?

ODOHERTY.

I do not know how that will be—better fighting than stagnating; but, at all events, I hope we will change the grounds somewhat—I hate monotony; I trust that my worthy countrymen will get some new matter of tumult for the next generation.

NORTH.

It is probable that they will—and then, you know, Moore's—"Oh! breathe not his name," "Erin, the tear," &c. &c. will be just as forgotten as any of the things in Hogg's Jacobite relics.

TICKLER.

Which will ever stand, or rather fall, as a memento of the utter periahability of all party song-writing.

NORTH.

And then there's Moore's accursed fancy for showing off learning, and his botany, and zoology, and meteorology, and mythology.

ODOHERTY.

O ay, and the mixed metaphor, and the downright nonsense—the song you quoted just now could be finely amended.

NORTH.

What song?

ODOHERTY.

“Erin, the smile, and the tear in thine eyes, blend like the rainbow,” &c. Now, that is a washy, watery comparison for my hard-drinking country—I lay £5 that a jug of punch would be a more accurate and truly philosophical emblem; as thus. There's the Protestant part of the population inferior in quantity, superior in strength, apt to get at the head, evidently the whisky of the compound. The Roman Catholics, greater in physical proportions, but infinitely weaker, and usually very hot, are shadowed forth by the water. The Orangemen, as their name implies, are the fruit, which some palates think too sour, and therefore reject, while others think that it alone gives grateful flavour to the whole.

MULLION.

And what's the sugar?

ODOHERTY.

Why, the conciliators dropped in among us to sweeten our acidity—and you know some think that they have supplied with too liberal a hand,—very much at the risk of turning the stomachs of the company.

NORTH.

A hopeful illustration—but in truth, Odoherly, your whole conversation is redolent of nothing but drink.

ODOHERTY.

I am like Tom Moore's First Angel—the gentleman without a name, and admire computation, not exactly “the juice of Earth,” however, as Tom calls it, that being, I take it, ditch-water.

MULLION.

You never saw the song Tom intended for this drunken angel of his after his fall?

ODOHERTY.

Not I—parade it—Is it not in the poem?

MULLION.

No, Denman, who is Moore's doer of late, cut it out, just as he cut up the Fables. I have a copy, however, which I shall sing.

Song of a Fallen Angel over a Bowl of Rum-punch. By T. M. Esq.

Heap on more coal there,
 And keep the glass moving,
 The frost nips my nose,
 Though my heart glows with loving.
 Here's the dear creature,
 No skylights—a bumper;
 He who leaves heeltaps
 I vote him a mumper.
 With hey cow rumble O,
 Whack! populorum,
 Merrily, merry men,
 Push round the jorum.

What are Heaven's pleasures
 That so very sweet are?
 Singing from psalters,
 In long or short metre.

Planked on a wet cloud
Without any breeches,
Just like the Celtic,
Met to make speeches.
With hey cow rumble, &c.

Wide is the difference,
My own boozing bullies,
Here the round punch-bowl,
Heap'd to the full is.
Then if some wise one
Thinks that up "yonder"
Is pleasant as we are,
Why—he's in a blunder.
With hey cow rumble, &c.

NORTH.

A very hopeful and well-behaved angel, by my word.

MULLION.

Enough of Moore. . Campbell —

NORTH.

Has written one song, which I hope will live as long as "the flag of Old England waves lordly in pride,"—that is, I hope, for ever. I mean the Mariners of England.

TICKLER.

A glorious song indeed! But Campbell has disgraced himself by a shabby song, in the New Monthly, about the Spaniards. It is not fit for a gentleman like Campbell to fall into the filthy slang of the blackguards of the press, and write low stuff about Prince Hilt, or to call the grand old stainless flag of France, (which *he* knows—the blackguards do not—is linked with so many splendid recollections) the "White emblem of white liver."

DR MULLION.

Some of Sir Walter's songs will certainly live.

NORTH.

Perhaps—those in his Poems and his Novels, if they are his; but I do not recollect anything particular of any other; and, in point of fact, you never do hear them sung by anybody. Bishop, by the way, has very poorly set County Guy, very poorly indeed.

ODOHERTY.

I like Bishop, a worthy pleasant fellow; but, somehow or other, I think his music generally but compilation,—a bar from this body and a bar from that body—curiously indented and dovetailed, I admit, but still only joinery and cabinet-making.

NORTH.

Nobody has said a word about Byron.

TICKLER.

Dead as Harry the Eighth, and it is a pity. Heavens! who can think that the author of Childe Harold, and Manfred, and Don Juan, should have sunk to what he is now, a scribbler in a dirty magazine, and a patron of the Hunts! It, however, speaks volumes in favour of the morality of the country, after all, when we find, that even genius, such as his, must sink, if it dares oppose what we are still determined to call religion and loyalty.

ODOHERTY, (*handing the Island to North.*)

I have brought down Christian. Would you wish to look at it?

BULLER.

Does it sell?

ODOHERTY.

Not at all, though the third edition is advertised. I was told at Longman's, that they had not disposed of a hundred. It would have had a better chance with Murray; but he and his lordship have broken, after a furious quarrel. The correspondence between them is said to be curious.

BULLER.

Of course we shall have an awful libel on Joannes de Moravia in due time.

ODOHERTY.

I hope so, from the bottom of my soul; for then Murray will take vengeance in turn. I had rather than a tenpenny, and that cash, that we *could* print Byron's Critique on the Pot of Basil.

TICKLER.

Faugh, don't mention it.

NORTH.

Christian, I see, is a poor thing, with a good bit here and there in it, but not the least originality. He is the old hero—the Lara, the Conrad, the fellow of whom his lordship found the germ in Miss Lee's Krutzner, transported to Botany Bay, or thereabouts, where, instead of mosques, and kiosks, and tambourgis, and phingaris, we are entertained with Toobonai, and Boolootoo, Mooa, Figi, Hooni, Licoo, Guatoo, Goostrumfoo, *et omne quod* endeth in oo. And the womankind are the old womankind, not a bit the worse for the wear.

TICKLER.

Yes, and you have the same amazing industry in transferring Bligh's Narrative, that he has shewn so often before. But the introduction—and indeed some other passages, remind us of the better days of Byron.—Listen,

“ The morning watch was come ; the vessel lay
Her course, and gently made her liquid way ;
The cloven billow flash'd from off her prow,
In furrows form'd by that majestic plough ;
The waters with their worlds were all before ;
Behind, the South Sea's many an islet shore.
The quiet night, now dappling, 'gan to wane,
Dividing darkness from the dawning main ;
The dolphins, not unconscious of the day,
Swam high, as eager of the coming ray ;
The stars from broader beams began to creep,
And lift their shining eye-lids from the deep ;
The sail resumed its lately shadow'd white,
And the wind flutter'd with a fresh'ning flight ;
The purple ocean owns the coming sun,
But ere he break—a deed is to be done.”

ODOHERTY.

Very toploftical, to be sure. Commend me to the panegyric on what our friend Fogarty (from whom his lordship appears to have taken the idea) calls “ Tobacco, lord of plants.”

But here the herald of the self-same mouth
Came breathing o'er the aromatic south,
Not like a “ bed of violets” on the gale,
But such as wafts its cloud o'er grog or ale,
Borne from a short frail pipe, which yet had blown
Its gentle odours over either zone,
And puff'd where'er winds rise or waters roll,
Had wafted smoke from Portsmouth to the Pole,
Opposed its vapour as the lightning flashed,
And reeked, 'midst mountain-billows unabash'd,
To Æolus a constant sacrifice,
Through every change of all the varying skies.
And what was he who bore it? I may err,
But deem him sailor or philosopher.
Sublime tobacco! which from east to west
Cheers the tar's labour or the Turkman's rest ;
Which on the Moslem's ottoman divides
His hours, and rivals opium and his brides ;

Magnificent in Stamboul, but less grand,
 Though not less loved, in Wapping or the Strand ;
 Divine in hoo-kas, glorious in a pipe,
 When tipp'd with amber, mellow, rich, and ripe,
 Like other charmers, wooing the cares
 More dazzlingly when daring in full dress ;
 Yet thy true lovers more admire by far
 Thy naked beauties—Give me a cigar !

And as we are talking of it, do hand us over that paper of Cotton's best, until I blow a cloud.

NORTH.

Why, Odoherly, you have scarcely brought us any news from London.

ODOHERTY.

How could you expect blood from a turnip? There's no news there. Parliament was just spinning down, when I quitted the city, as drowsily as a tetotum—nothing doing in the *monde littéraire*—the Haymarket gay, to be sure, and our friend Terry, drollest of actors, as he is among the worthiest of men, making the populace laugh—but I brought you down a special article on London, from a friend of mine, which will tell you everything tellable, so you need not pump me.

DR MULLION.

Did you see any of the gentlemen of the press?

ODOHERTY.

Saw the whole goodly army of martyrs in full array ; just as stupendously dull as ever, and, unless I mistake, more *vicious*, to speak as a jockey among the lower orders, than varmint. When I knew the body first, they were a fine hard-drinking pudding-headed race, who just got through their balaam as fast as their fingers would let them—spouted at the Eccentrics—regaled themselves with cheese and porter, and occasionally, when the funds were good, with Hollands and water, not caring a single sixpence for politics, or thinking themselves at all primed up with the opinions they were advocating—and there are still some of that good old school surviving, with two or three of whom I got misty one night at Offley's—but, sir, the Cockney portion of them have been horribly altered for the worse.

NORTH.

How?

ODOHERTY.

The poor creatures actually have set up to have opinions of their own—the idiots—and to have personal quarrels, and animosities, and principles, and fiddle-de-dee.

TICKLER.

Mighty audacious. Can't they eat their victuals when they get them in peace.

NORTH.

The newspaper press is unquestionably becoming very base. What a hideous, a detestable attack, some of the Whig and Radical papers made on John Bull !

ODOHERTY.

Well, do the press-gang itself justice ! There was almost a universal outcry at that brutal business even among themselves. It was abominable. John, however, put it down like a man.

NORTH.

Well now, had the unfortunate Beaconites, which we still have thrown in our faces, though heaven knows their worst crime was stupidity—done anything approaching that in atrocity, what an uproar would have been raised by the whole Whig party !

TICKLER.

And deservedly, for they would have been base assassins ; but the Whigs may do anything—the basest as well as the most malignant of people.

ODDHERTY, (*sings.*)
 Rail no more, Tories, rail no more ;
 Whigs are but asses ever,
 On land, on wave, on sea, on shore,
 All rascals of white liver.
 Then rail not so,
 But let them go,
 And be you blithe and bonny,
 Converting sounds of wrath and woe
 Into hey Ninny ! notiny.

2.

Sing merry ditties, and no mo
 Of lumps so dull and heavy ;
 The heads of Whigs were ever so,
 Since summer first was leavy.
 Then rail not so, &c.

There's a touch Shakesperian for you, in the twinkling of a bed-post.

NORTH.

You are not drinking anything, Tickler.

TICKLER.

I cannot say I like your wine. It is souring on my stomach.

NORTH.

Cannot you get spirits then. I'll concoct a jug.

TICKLER, (*sings.*)

So be it.

Drink to me only from a jug,
 And I will pledge in mine ;
 So fill my glass with whisky punch,
 And I'll not look for wine.
 The thirst that in my throat doth rise
 Doth ask a drink divine ;
 But might I of Jove's nectar sip,
 That honour I'd resign.

The second verse is not worth parodying. Aye, this is something like. Your health, Mr Editor.

NORTH.

Mr Tickler, I have the pleasure of drinking your very good health. Apropos, has not Boone published a poem on things in general ?

ODDHERTY.

I saw one in a certain place, sadly mutilated, and have read only two pages. It is a puff on Mr Canning.

TICKLER.

Very superfluous, therefore. It is, moreover, a good joke to see the great man of the Council of Ten, the essence of gravity, thinking to flatter the wily Antijacobin by his balaam.

NORTH.

Canning must have laughed at the idea, in his sleeve, I mean—for a minister can never laugh otherwise.

BULLER.

I suppose he addressed the book,

O Boone, ne te
 Frustrere.

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