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This is true Liberty, when Free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES.

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Literature.

WANTED—ST. PATRICK.

I.
When Irish hills were fair and green,
And Irish fields were white with daisies,
And harvests, golden and serene,
Slept in the lay summer hazes;
When birds went singing through the land,
Their grand old songs of knightly story,
And hearts were found in every hand,
And all was peace and love and glory;
'Twas in those happy, happy days
When every peasant lived in clover,
And in the pleasant woodland ways
One never met the begging rover;
When all was honest, large and true,
And naught was hollow or untrue—
'Twas in those days of golden hue
That Erin knew the great Saint Patrick.

II.
He came among the rustic rude
With shining robes and splendid crozier,
And swayed the listening multitude
As breezes sway the beds of osier,
He preached the love of Man for Man,
And moved the unlettered Celt with wonder,
'Till through the simple crowd there ran
A murmur like repeated thunder.
He preached the great Incarnate Word,
By rock and ruin, hill and hollow,
'Till warring princes dropt the sword,
And left the fields of blood to follow;
For never yet did bardic song,
Though graced with harp and poet's diction,
With such strange charm enchain the throng
As that sad tale of Crucifixion.

III.
Though fair the Isle and brave the men,
Yet still a blight the land infested;
Green vipers darted through each glen,
And snakes within the woodland nested;
And mid the banks where violets blew,
And on the slopes where bloomed the primrose,
Lurked spotted toads of loathsome hue,
And coiling, poisonous serpents grim rose,
St. Patrick said: "The reptile race
Are types of human degradation;
From other ills I've cleansed the place,
And now of these I'll rid the nation."
He waved his crozier o'er his head,
And lo! each venomous thing took motion,
And toads and snakes and vipers fled
In terror to the circling ocean.

IV.
Why is Saint Patrick dead? or why
Does he not seek this soil to aid us?
To wave his mystic crook on high,
And rout the vermin that degrade us?
Our land is fertile, broad and fair,
And should be fairer yet and broader;
But noxious reptiles taint the air,
And poison peace and law and order.
For murder stalks along each street,
And theft goes lurking through our alleys—
What reptiles worse do travellers meet
On India's hills, on Java's valleys,
And when we see this gambling host,
That 'mongst us practice this and that trick,
One knows not which would serve us most—
The Goddess Justice or Saint Patrick.

RETURN OF SPRING.

God shield ye, heralds of the Spring,
Ye faithful swallows, fleet of wing,
Hoops, cuckoos, nightingales,
Turtles, and every wilder bird,
That make your hundred chirping heard
Through the green woods and daisies.

God shield ye, Easter daisies all,
Fair roses, buds, and blossoms small,
And ye whom erst the gore
Of Ajax and Narcissus did print,
Ye wild thyme, anise, balm and mint,
I welcome ye once more.

God shield ye, bright embroider'd train
Of butterflies, that on the plain,
Of each sweet herblet sip;
And ye, new swarms of bees, that go
Where the pink flowers and yellow grow,
To kiss them with your lip.

A hundred thousand times I call
A hearty welcome on ye all;
This season how I love—
This merry din on every shore—
For winds and storms, whose sullen roar
Forbade my steps to rove.

THE HEADSMAN OF STRASBOURG.

BY MISS PARDOE.

(Continued.)

"I have now told you all, *monseigneur*. You know every detail of the mysterious and tragical history with which my conscience was so over-burdened that I could no longer sustain its weight alone. If I have offended against the law, I must submit to pay the penalty of my crime; but, should you feel that I only yielded to an insurmountable necessity, suffer me to hope that I may not forfeit the protection and favour which I have for so many years struggled to merit by counterbalancing the hateful duties of my office, by deeds of charity towards my fellow creatures."

"And what said M. Diedrich?" gasped out Josephine, upon whom the dramatic effect given to the narrative by the manner of the Emperor had produced so strong an impression that she could not conceal her emotion; "surely he could condemn the unhappy man?"

"M. Diedrich," replied Napoleon, "had listened with an interest equal to your own to the revelations of the headsman; but when the latter drew the money from his bosom and held it towards him, he became alarmed. It had at once been evident to him that the suspicion of the man was a correct one; and that the individual who had been put to death was no common victim. Instigated, therefore, by this conviction, and by no means indifferent to the threat that any recipient of the formidable secret should share the fate of him who revealed it, he refused to risk the responsibility of accepting such a charge; and desired that not only the money should be retained by its present owner, but also that he

should not divulge to any one the fact of his having mentioned its existence to himself."

"Be it as you will, *monseigneur*," said his visitor; "I shall, in that case, expend it in masses for the victim who fell by my hand, and in alms to the poor. It is only by doing so that I can regain peace of mind and conscience." He then signed the deposition that he had made, and withdrew.

"M. Diedrich was no sooner alone than he placed this extraordinary document under cover, and despatched it by a courier to the Baron de Breteuil, who was at that time Prime Minister. A fortnight elapsed ere he received any reply; but at the end of that time a packet was delivered to him by the Governor of Strasbourg, which contained these words: 'Sir, I have submitted to His Majesty the communication which you addressed to me, and I have been honoured by the commands of the King, to express his desire that the person in question shall retain the amount which was bestowed on him; and to inform you that he will receive a second sum of the same value, provided he maintain perfect silence on all that has occurred.'"

"But"—commenced the Empress.
Napoleon smiled.

"Well?" he said, interrogatively.

"But"—repeated Josephine; "we are not surely to infer that the King?"

"Madame," interposed Napoleon, impressively, "I am about to conclude my tale, and perhaps to give you the key to it. Such events as that which I have just related are more common in the history of courts than the uninitiated would apprehend; and, unfortunately, the fact is never known until the evil is beyond remedy."

"Good heavens, Bonaparte! Why do you tell us such horrid stories, and compel us to believe them?" exclaimed the agitated Josephine. "Are you endeavouring to frighten us to death?"

"Are you frightened, Pauline?" asked the Emperor, turning towards the fairest and frailest of his sisters, the Princess Borghese; "I am, as you hear, relating the history—or rather the ultimate fate—of a beautiful, a very beautiful woman."

"Why do you appeal to me, Napoleon?" was the rejoinder. "Your vanity as a *conteur* is really insatiable. You have beheaded your heroine, so there is an end of the affair; for no one can take the slightest interest in a parcel of barbarians who could murder a beautiful woman in cold blood."

"Nevertheless, and with due reference to your opinion, I will finish my story," said the Emperor with one of his most sarcastic smiles. "The Duke of Wurtemberg married a second wife nine years after the death of the first, and during my campaign in Italy. The successor of Caroline of Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel was Charlotte Augusta Matilda, Princess Royal of England, and daughter of George III. He was at that period only Prince Royal, but succeeded his father on the 19th December, 1797."

"Wurtemberg had hitherto made common cause with the Germanic Empire against France. The new sovereign was, however, no sooner in possession of the throne than he hastened to conclude a peace; and opened a correspondence for that purpose with me, which was carried on until my departure for Egypt. I am not about to digress into politics, so do not look alarmed, Josephine—*Je reviens a mes moutons*."

"The first wife of the Duke of Wurtemberg had been both beautiful and intellectual, but she was, nevertheless, not perfect; and whispers soon became rife at court that she had looked with marked favour upon a certain handsome young page, who, presuming upon her protection, took the liberty of attempting to leave the country without the sanction of his sovereign. The motive of his thus seeking to absent himself at a time when his vanity and his ambition may be supposed to have been alike gratified, was never known; though it was afterwards surmised that his courage did not altogether equal his personal advantages; and he was apprehensive of the results of an affair so delicate and dangerous as that in which he found himself involved. Be this as it might, this much at least is certain, that he had already reached the frontier, and had nearly completed his supper, when a peach was placed before him on a plate of curious old china, beneath which he found a small scroll of paper, whereon were written the words: 'Return or tremble!'"

"He returned."

"Scarcely, however, had he regained the capital, when he saw upon his dressing-table a magnificent vase of cut and coloured glass; and while in the act of examining this new bauble, and wondering whence it could have come, a second scroll, similar to the first, dropped at his feet, which being unrolled, he found to contain a new warning. On this occasion it bore the injunction, 'Depart or tremble!'"

"Vacillating between these two opposite commands, the young man resolved to explain the mysterious circumstance to his royal mistress: to explain to her the peril in which he stood, and to solicit her advice. Its nature may be surmised by the fact that the youth made no further attempt to leave the court."

"Rumour asserts that, about this time, a prince—we will not guess at his identity—paid a visit to the father of the audacious page, and laid before him sundry letters, papers and love tokens, tending to implicate the wife of the one, and the son of the other; and that when the miserable parent had read them from end to end, his visitor said sternly: 'Pronounce the sentence of the culprit.' The lips of the wretched father quivered spasmodically, but he could not articulate a syllable; and, meanwhile, the clear cold eye of the outraged husband remained fixed upon him."

"They were standing beside the wide hearth, upon which blazed a huge fire of pine-wood; and at length the modern Brutus grasped with trembling fingers one of the hand-irons which chanced to be within his reach, and traced in the ashes several letters. The word thus written commenced with a D, and was terminated by an h. The sentence was tacitly pronounced. The prince bent for a few seconds over the ill-formed characters—for the muscles of the writer had proved less firm than his purpose—and then with a cold bend of the head, he strode from the room and left the house."

"A council was convened, at which were assembled all the principal personages of the state, and several relatives of the princess. The condemnatory documents were produced and read; and as they were conclusive of the guilt of both parties, each individual present was invited to pronounce sentence on the accused. The first who replied to the appeal declared for divorce; but a near kinsman of the erring wife vehemently opposed what he affirmed to be an ill-judged and dangerous act of lenity. 'Her death alone,' he exclaimed, 'can save the honour of the prince. There is no other alternative.' His opinion was adopted; and the council had no sooner broken up than the same individual who had endeavoured to

save the life of the guilty woman hastened to apprise her of the fate with which she was menaced, and to entreat that she would save herself by flight; offering at the same time to assist her evasion that very night, if she would solemnly pledge herself never again to see the rash young man by whose imprudence she had been compromised, and to remain during the remainder of her life a self-constituted prisoner in a castle in Scotland, where he could ensure her a refuge."

"As she rejected both these conditions with haughty displeasure, the interview was abruptly terminated by her chivalrous visitor; who, although he had been willing to risk his own life in order to save that of his fair but frail mistress, could not contemplate without disgust her steady perseverance in vice, even under circumstances so threatening as those by which she was surrounded. 'Pardon me, madame,' he said coldly as he prepared to leave the room; 'I intruded myself in the hope of rendering service to a repentant woman, but I have no help to offer to one who glories in her sin.' Unhappily for herself she did not recall him."

"The room occupied by the page was situated on the higher story of the palace, at the termination of a long gallery, which was repeated on every floor to the foundation of the building. It was necessary that he should traverse this gallery in order to gain a back staircase by which he was accustomed to reach the private apartments of the princess; and his destruction was consequently easy. On each floor, and precisely on the same spot, four boards were removed, thus forming a wide opening, which terminated only above the chamber of his royal mistress. The upper gallery into which his own room opened, was never lighted; an arrangement which had hitherto been a subject of congratulation to both parties, as it rendered his movements less likely to excite observation; and one upon which they had frequently congratulated themselves. He had, therefore, been long accustomed to grope his way in the darkness; and—thus much premised—you may readily anticipate the sequel. The wretched page, unsuspecting of the fate which impended over him, and so familiar with his path that he needed no lamp to guide his footsteps, sprang across the threshold of his chamber without one misgiving as the last sounds of life died away in the corridors of the palace, and the deep silence of midnight settled over its dim halls and passages—three bounds, and his foot met no resistance—down, down, headlong, from floor to floor, fell the bold and ambitious boy who had dared to raise his eyes to the wife of his sovereign—down, down, until he met with one slight obstacle in his descent, so slight that it failed beneath his weight, and only served to render his suffering more acute. The planks which formed the ceiling of the princess's apartment had not been removed, lest the circumstance might attract her notice and thus excite her suspicions; but they were so skillfully sawn through that they hung merely by a few fibres; and he had therefore no sooner struck upon them than they yielded beneath the sudden pressure, and the blooming page, with his blue eyes, his cloud of sunny hair, his ruddy lips, and his graceful limbs, fell a shapeless and sanguinated mass at the feet of the royal lady who was awaiting him."

"A cry of horror burst from all the auditors of the Emperor, and his self-gratulation at the effect which his narrative had produced was visible."

"Not a voice was raised to urge him to proceed with his tale, but each of the party looked earnestly towards him. Napoleon perfectly understood the silent and agitated appeal. He slowly buried his finger and thumb in his snuff-box, inhaled "the fragrant weed" with epicurean deliberation, and then, resuming his habitual attitude, he pursued his narration. "The scene must have been a frightful one when Mary Stuart vainly sought to screen Rizzio from the daggers of his assassins, and saw the skirts of her robe dabbled in his blood; but that was mere melodrama to the spectacle of Caroline of Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel gazing down upon the mummified mass of what had so lately been the peerless person of her lover. No doubt that her first impulse must have been to fling herself upon his body; to clasp him, crushed and disfigured as he was, to the heart which had enshrined him as its idol; but even passion is not omnipotent, for we are all more or less human and self-centred. Well is it for us that we are so perpetually satisfied with the surface of things; that we do not seek to look deeper; let us retain our illusions whilst we can."

"In this case the illusion lasted no longer; what Caroline had loved was the brilliant beauty, and the faultless proportions of the unhappy boy whom she had lured to his destruction—and what remained of these? A shapeless and gory heap, at which her woman-courage shrank appalled. That thus it must have been is certain; for the gorgeous apartment, whose echoes had long been awakened only by tenderness and sighs of passion, now resounded with wild shrieks and bursts of unearthly laughter; while her women, attracted by the cries of their mistress, rushed to her assistance, ignorant of the catastrophe which awaited them."

"The princess was borne to her bed insensible. The screams of her attendants aroused the other inmates of the palace, and the greatest consternation prevailed. The accident appeared so inexplicable that even horror was partially swallowed up in astonishment; and although there were a few among the spectators who looked gloomily upon each other, like men disposed to seek a deeper and darker solution of the mystery than they cared to acknowledge. There was, however, one individual of more nerve and presence of mind than those about him, who undertook to explain the cause of the frightful tragedy by asserting that, beyond all doubt, the dry rot had destroyed the timbers of the palace; and, in accordance with this opinion, all the galleries on that side of the building were closed, on the pretext that they were too dangerous for use until the flooring had been relaid."

"The public were satisfied with this explanation—let us not quarrel with their credulity."

(To be concluded in our next)

UNCOMMON GOOD EATING.

Nothing is more variable than national diet, except it be national appetite. An Italian is content with a handful of bread and grapes, but an Esquimaux will devour twenty pounds of flesh in a day; a Hindu picks up a few spoonfuls of rice between sunrise and sunset; and a Russian Tartar will eat, in the twenty-four hours, forty pounds of meat. Nay, a Tartar mentioned by Captain Cochrane in his Travels, consumed in that time the hind quarters of a large ox, twenty pounds of fat, and a proportionate quantity of melted butter for drink; and three of the same tribe—the Yakuti—think nothing of polishing off a reindeer at a meal. In London and New York the average consumption of meat is half a pound to each person daily; in Paris it is one-sixth of a pound, with a lower fraction still; for the villages and country; yet the Irishman's bone and muscle are elaborated from potatoes, not from flesh; and the brawny Highlander builds up his huge members from porridge, kail, and whisky. So that meat is not absolutely essential even to

North-men; when, by a little unconscious chemistry they supply efficient substitutes, tailing off by units the various properties concentrated in honest beef and mutton.

Food is very unequally distributed among us. There is the poor man, who can never give his children a hearty meal; and there is the rich man, gorged with unimaginable luxuries: on the one side Lazarus, with a hunger never sated; on the other Dives, who, between the ages of ten and twenty, consumes forty wagon-loads of superfluous meat and drink, at the cost of seven thousand pounds, according to the calculation of Sidney Smith.

But even more varied than amount is kind. There is no limit to the odd dainties affected by different people. The New Brunswickers find a special charm in the mouffe, or loose nose of the moose deer. Sharks' fins and fish-maws, unbatched ducks and chickens, sea slugs and birds' nests, are all prized by the omnivorous Chinese. The Esquimaux revels in the foreign luxury of a purser's candle; and the Abyssinian intoxicates himself with raw meat and warm blood, which is as intoxicating in their way as ardent spirits. Paris has lately gone mad about horse-flesh; and, in the Exhibition of eighteen hundred and fifty-one a Monsieur Brocchieri showed and sold delicious cakes, patties, and bonbons of bullocks' blood; rivaling the famed marrons glacés, or baptismal dragees, of the confiserie of the Boulevards. This seems to us almost the triumph of the art."

Meat biscuits, made in Texas for the use of the American navy, were also exhibited. They are like light-coloured sugar-cakes in appearance. One pound of meat biscuit contains rather more nutriment than five pounds of ordinary meat. Portable soup is another matter of culinary condensation, wherein nutritive power is out of all proportion to bulk; and pemmican, so well known to Arctic voyagers, is again a condensation of solid meat finely ground; then mixed with sugar, fat, and currants. The Siamese dry elephants' flesh, as Germans hang their beef and pork. Cuba feeds her slaves on dried meat imported in enormous quantities from Buenos Ayres and the United States; and, all through America, the trade in this article is brisk and lucrative, extending even to Europe: which imports and consumes a goodly quantity to her share."

The extreme north presents, perhaps, the oddest specimens of luxuries in food. Blubber, the unrummaged food of reindeer, serving as an accompanying salad; whales' skin, cut into cubes, black as ebony, and tasting like cocoa-nut; whales' gum, with the bone adhering, not unlike cream cheese in flavour, and called Tusk sugar—these were some of the chief dishes at a Tusk banquet; while, at a feast given by some respectable Greenlanders, were half-raw and putrid seals' flesh, putrid whales' tail, preserved crow-berries mixed with reindeer's chyle, and preserved crow-berries mixed with train-oil. Walrus is good eating. It is like coarse beef; and walrus liver raw is a dish on which to grow poetical. Frozen seal is excellent as a stand-by in travelling; and putrid seal, which has been buried under the grass all the summer, is a winter's special charm. The reindeer's maw is made into a dish called nerukak, or the eatable, and sent about, as presents of game or fruit might be with us. The entrails of the roven, mixed with fresh train-oil and berries, make another favourite dish; and the Greenlanders' winter preserves are cake-berries, angelica, and eggs in every stage of incubatory progress, flung all together into a sack of seal skin, which is then filled up with train-oil. An Esquimaux will eat his sledge—when it is made of dried salmon sewn between two skins; the cross pieces being reindeer-bones. This is not so marvellous as it seems to be: it is not quite like feeding off a one-horse chaise or clarence with C. springs; but it must be a curious sight to see a party turn out, and make a meal of their carriage. Reindeer is the great delight of the Esquimaux—when he can get it; and frozen reindeer, eaten raw, is better, to his taste, than all the royal venison ever cooked for royal feasts."

Keeping for awhile among the cetacea, we find that the manatus, or sea-calf, give a white delicate flesh, like young pork; a lean or fibrous part like very red beef; and fat which is like hog's lard, with an exceptional portion lying between the entrails and the skin, like almond oil in taste, and an excellent substitute for butter. The tail is the tit-bit, and is covered with a fat of firmer consistence and more delicate flavour than that on the body. But the manatus is too human to be pleasant. "It appears horrible," says Mr. Lund Simmons in his Curiosities of Food, "to chew and swallow the flesh of an animal which holds its young (it has never more than one at a litter) to its breast—which is formed exactly like that of a woman—with paws resembling human hands." The tongue of the sea-hou (phoca jubata) is preferred by some to ox tongue; and the heart is said to be equal to roast calf's heart. The walrus has a tongue, a heart, and a liver, all serviceable and palatable, though we think the meat coarse and strong; the female sea bear is like lamb, and its cub the very counterpart of roast pig. Seal flesh we think strong and oily; but we have already taken the Greenlanders' opinion on it. The black skin of the whale, too, we have tasted, and found its ebony cubes with the cocoa flavour simply delicious, but its coarse red flesh like inferior meat. Porpoise, or sea-pug, is not to be despised by British sailors suffering from salt junk and scurvy; but it is not much sought after now, though in the days when peacocks in their pride, swans, and herons were at English tables, porpoises, or sea-pigs, had their place of honour as well. All sea things have the recommendable quality of being highly iodised. This is one of the virtues of cod-liver oil; one of the reasons why sea-side air is good for the scrofulous and consumptive; and almost the sole benefit to be found in the Iceland moss, once so famous as a specific against consumption. Isinglass has also a fishy origin. The court plaster of the chemist's shop is isinglass and balsam spread on silk. Cavare is the dried roe or salted spawn of fish; the black, which is the best, comes from the sturgeon, the red is from the mullet and the carp. Botargo is a kind of caviare made from the spawn of the red mullet, and of great esteem in Sicily; the roe of the pollock makes commendable bread, and the roe of the methy (Eotha maculosa) can be baked into biscuits, which are used in the four countries as tea-bread."

In Beloochistan the cattle are fed on a compound of dates and dried-fish; the inhabitants living almost entirely on fish; and we here, in England, find hundreds of pounds of sprats and other fish upon our fields to fertilise the land, poison the air, and deprive some hungry thousands of a dinner. The Atlantic tunny is like veal, but drier and firmer; and the sturgeon, so prized by Greece and Rome, is also of the veal type; that is, like flesh without blood. The sharp-nosed sturgeon is like beef, very coarse, rank, unsavoury. The shark is dry and acid. Havana is the only place where shark is openly sold in the market, and the Chinese are the only people who ascribe any specially invigorating virtues to the fins and tail."

The Gold Coast negroes are all fond of sharks; as they are of hippopotami and alligators, and the Polynesians surfen themselves to indigestion and disease by their love of sharks' flesh, quite raw."

Scotland, and some other northern countries, eat the pickled shark and the dog-fish. The conger-eel, dried and grated, thickens soup in catholic countries, and is a Jersey dainty, tasting like veal. In Cornwall they make conger-eels, as they do everything else, into pies. The Chinooks dry a little fish—something like a sardine—then burn it as a candle; and the scales of the delicious and delicate callipevi make exceedingly beautiful ornaments."

Other people beside the Gold Coast negroes feed on and take pleasure in reptiles. We ourselves eat one of the tribe when we devour calipash and calipee. But though we revel in turtle, we keep an adverse countenance to tortoise; yet, half the soup eaten by travellers in Italy and Sicily is made of land tortoise, boiled down to its essence. In Trinidad, and other of the West India islands, land tortoises are in much repute; the eggs of the close tortoise (testudo clausa) are held a supreme