

The Club Room.

By Horace Demonde, Esquire.

NO. I.

Quidquid sum ego, quamvis

Infra Lucillæcenum ingeniumque; tamen me
Cum magnis vixisse invita fatebitur usque
Invidia.

HORACE.

There is a certain class of people, in every city, who will not consent to admit a stranger into their society, whatever may be his appearance or pretensions, until they have minutely inquired into his fortune, family, &c. "Is he any body?" which, being interpreted, means, Has he money enough to do as we do? is always the preliminary question: and upon the solution of this, depends the sort of company with which he must expect to associate. Others there are, who require no other passport to their civilities, than a fashionable appearance, and polite deportment; taking it for granted, *ab exteriori*, that all the requisite qualifications are to be found within, to merit their good opinion. There is yet another class, not so fastidious as the former, nor so liberal as the latter; who, though they readily meet the advances of any body towards an acquaintance, are actuated more by a desire to gratify their own inquisitive temper, than by the impulse of hospitality or charity.

As I am about to come before my readers in the questionable character of a stranger; and am desirous of having my claims to notice recognised by every class; I hold it my duty to tell them, candidly, all that it is, at present, necessary for them to know, concerning myself; trusting to time and my own merits, for an admission, hereafter, into their familiar circles. In the first place, with respect to money; I am not, like *Umidius*, so rich, that I can measure my gold by the foot. Nor am I, on the contrary, so poor and sordid, as never to dress better than my servant.

I am neither so much a miser as to think it necessary to watch all night lest thieves and incendiaries should pillage my house before the morning, nor so ignorant a prodigal, as not to know the use and value of money.

I cannot, like the rich man, who lived at Athens, when the crowd laugh at me abroad, applaud myself at home, by contemplating the full bags that smile upon me from my iron chest; but, I have enough notwithstanding to enable me to look at those who have more, without envy, and at those who have less, with charity; well assured of this consolatory truth—

*Milla frumenti tui trivertis area centum;
Non tuis hoc capiet venter plus quam mens.*

In the second place, with respect to external attractions: the tastes of mankind, are so various, that perfection itself would hardly be recognized as such, by every body; and vanity will be supposed to have a share in every man's description of himself. No one is absolutely hideous in his own eyes, however offensive he may be to the sight of others; and the world may consider him a monster of deformity, who thinks himself an Apollo Belvidere. How shall I expect then to gain credit for candour in a portrait of myself? The eloquence of silence shall speak for me.

What curiosity may further seek to know concerning me, shall in good time, be faithfully imparted; and, as much may be gathered of one's character, from a knowledge of his associates, I shall now endeavour to make my readers acquainted with the company which I am in the habit of frequenting.

There is not a Club in town of which I am not a member; and of all, save one, an honorary member—a mark of distinction which must not be forgotten by those who look upon the *vox populi* to be the *vox dei*, or who, in other words, consider popular favor, an undeniable evidence of merit. The Clubs differ no less in the objects of their institution, than in the variety of character composing them. Both shall, hereafter, be made known, so far as our rules of secrecy will permit me to divulge them. My present remarks shall be confined to the delineation of that one of which, as above hinted, I am only an ordinary member.

There is a sort of churlish selfishness generally displayed in the formation of Clubs and Societies, which has always appeared to me to be unnatural, and inconsistent with the great principle of our creation; and which tends more than any thing else to curtail their duration, to diminish the sphere of their usefulness, and finally to bring them into neglect and contempt. I mean, in the exclusion of females. The Club of Freemasons must, however, be exempted from this charge of churlishness; for though they also refuse to admit the ladies, their apology for doing so is, at once, an evidence of their honorable motives, and the highest compliment which can be paid to the excluded sex. They are fearful lest the dazzling attractions of Grace and Beauty might win them from the task of duty; and that however

they profess to be superior to the influence of all the other passions, they would be compelled to

"Bend the knee to Love,

And make obeisance to his mighty shrine"

But it may be doubted whether any of the other clubs could furnish so good an excuse for their want of gallantry. Convinced that some possible good, and no probable evil would result from a combination with the "softer sex," I determined to set about the establishment of a Club upon more liberal principles; and success, even beyond my hopes, has hitherto crowned my efforts.

My first application was made to a lady well known in all the fashionable circles, and perfectly at home among the Literati—dreaded as much by the former, for the point and spirit of her satire, as she is admired and courted by the latter, for the vigour of her intellect and the brilliancy of her wit. She heard my proposition without interruption, while a smile of mingled pride and pleasure played upon her lip and danced in her eye, which seemed to say: "at last then you acknowledge that there was more arrogance than justice in Adam's account of his fair helpmate:

"For well I understand, in the prime end
Of nature her th' inferior, in the mind
And inward faculties, which most excel."

My dear Madam, said I, correctly interpreting the expression of her countenance, you surely will not include me in this severe, though silent censure of our sex; you know that though I profess to admire Milton more than all other Poets, yet in this glaring instance of his want of courtesy, which could have been the effect of that unfortunate "drop serene" which blotted out one of his senses, I do not defend him. "Well sir," (said the lady) "I must at least acknowledge your politeness, if I do not give credit to your sincerity; and since you seem to have fixed your heart upon having this Androgynal Club, on certain conditions, you may count upon my co-operation: These conditions are—1st, that there shall be a plurality of ladies;—2d, that all the officers of the Club, except the Secretary, shall be females; & lastly, that you consent to receive into it neither old Maids, nor old Bachelors."

To the two first conditions it was not possible to offer an objection; but foreseeing that it would be difficult to carry my design into execution, if I suffered myself to be so restricted in the choice of members, I was compelled to beg a reconsideration of the last; which, after a pretty warm argument, was at length modified, by mutual concession, as to admit a definite number of each of the proscribed characters. Having so far succeeded in my first attempt, it was not unreasonable to hope, that no obstacle would intervene to impede my further progress. But alas! the vanity of mortal hopes! It was not until scouting the town, day after day, for more than a month; and preferring my solicitations to more than an hundred persons, that I, at last, found two gentlemen willing to lend themselves to my scheme. One of these is an old Bachelor in his sixtieth year, with all the "vanity of youthful blood" still glowing in his heart and countenance; but with a sweet expression of benevolence beaming from the latter which inspires respect in all who look upon it, and excites surprise that such a man should have lived to such an age, in a state of single blessedness. He has been, in his youth, a great roamer; has seen many nations, speaks the language of several, and is familiar with the customs and manners of all. Nothing gives him greater delight, than to speak of his travels; but, unlike other travellers, he never makes himself the hero of his story; nor ever obtrudes his anecdotes upon the company, unsolicited. He possesses, moreover, one rare, excellent quality: he knows how to listen, as well as to talk. To ensure the concurrence of such a man, was abundant reward for all the fruitless labour of previous search. At the moment of my visit to him, he was engaged in conversation with a foreigner, of prepossessing appearance and accomplished manners; who, with the characteristic politeness of the nation of which he was a native, would have retired at my approach, under the supposition that mine was a visit of business; but he was prevented by my old friend, who introduced us to each other in a manner which at once dispelled the coldness of formality, and brought us to the familiarity of long acquaintance.

My scheme was no sooner unfolded, than it was warmly espoused by the *Esquire*, (a title by which my friend Apodemus Singleton is general distinguished; who, turning to the foreigner, exclaimed, "*mon ami*, this is the very thing for you! No possible means could be devised better calculated to initiate you into all the ways of town; and furnish you with a clue to the mysteries of society, by which you cannot fail to get at once into best company. *Allons donc! il faut vous joindre a notre coterie!*" Very little persuasion, on my part, was wanting, to render the argument of the *Squire* successful; and thus having, as

the *Chevalier* would have expressed it, "fait d'une pierre deux coups," I took my leave, well pleased with the result of my visit.

According to the first article of my conditions with the Lady, it was now necessary that she should have engaged, at least, four of her own sex, in order to a complete constitution of the Club; and upon enquiry I found that she had performed her part, with the most scrupulous good faith. Indeed it is due to the ladies to observe, that they much more rarely fail to fulfil a promise, than do the gentlemen; particularly when pleasure, amusement, or mischief may be expected to reward its performance. All now that remained for me to do, to arrive at the consummation of my design, was to procure a convention of our members; for which a favourable opportunity presented itself, in the following note:

TO HORACE DEMONDE, ESQ.

Wednesday Morning.

"SIR,—The ladies of our association, who are no less anxious than myself for the success of your laudable endeavours, have promised to spend the evening with me, to-morrow. If you have no better engagement, and can prevail upon your friends to accompany you, I shall give orders to be at home to no other visitors during the evening; and we may quietly settle preliminaries over a dish of Imperial.

I am Sir, your friend,

SOPHIA

"N. B. Put Lord Byron in your pocket."

It will easily be imagined that such an invitation was not neglected. True to the appointed hour, the *Squire* and his friend the *Chevalier* dressed for conquest, were impatiently awaiting my arrival, to be conducted to the *Rendezvous*.

From the Electric Repository.

Bohan Upas, or Poison Tree of Java.

At a late meeting of the Royal Society, the translation of a paper by M. Delille was read, describing the real nature and properties of the celebrated Bohan Upas, or poison tree of Java. The author, a French physician, and a member of the National Institute of Egypt, transmitted this paper from the East Indies to the Royal Society by an English lady. The botanical account of the plant in question, he received from one of the French naturalists who accompanied Captain Baudin, and who resided some time in Java, where he visited the interior of the country, and with much difficulty prevailed on the natives to show him the different poison plants, which they carefully conceal, for the purpose of using them in war. Hence the many fabulous accounts that have been circulated respecting the fatal influence of the Upas; which in the language of the Javanese signifies vegetable poison, and is applied only to the use of the Bohan Tree, and another plant with a twisted stem. The former is a large tree, which the writer considers as a new genus; the latter, yielding an equally powerful poison, is of the woodbine family. The Upas, or juice is extracted by an incision made in the bark with a knife, and being carefully collected, is preserved by the natives to be employed in their wars. As to its diffusing noxious effluvia in the atmosphere, and destroying vegetation to a considerable distance around it, the absurdity of these stories is sufficiently exposed by the fact, that the climbing species requires the support of other plants to attain its usual growth. Dr. Delille made several experiments with the Upas on dogs and cats. An incision was made in the thigh of a dog, into which were dropped eight grains of the juice. The dog soon began to vomit, and continued vomiting at intervals till he became convulsed, and died in 20 minutes. Six grains were put into the thigh of another, which was seized with the same symptoms and died in fifteen minutes. A cat was treated in like manner, but the effects were more powerful and speedy; she expired in a few minutes. All these animals died howling and in great agony. The author also made several experiments on the effects of this poison when applied internally. A grain and a half being introduced into the stomach of a dog, produced only a slight purging. To another were given four grains, which in about four hours produced the same effect, together with vomiting, and the dog died in the course of half a day. On examining the bodies of these animals after death, no very extraordinary appearances were discovered; the ventricles of the heart were full of blood, and some slight traces of inflammation appeared in the stomach; but the derangement was not so great as might have been expected from such a violent and sudden death. From this circumstance the author concluded, that the absorbents had transmitted the poison to the nerves of the stomach, and that this peculiar species of vegetable poison acts exclusively on the nerves.

A fire broke out in Fly Market-street, New-York, on the 11th inst. and consumed eight buildings, principally of wood, when it was got under,

FOREIGN NEWS.

LONDON, May 10.

Monday morning, in consequence of the advance in the price of bread, several groups of the manufacturing poor assembled at different parts of Bridport, complaining of the grievance, added to their want of employ from the present stagnation of trade. Their numbers increasing, one of the most active bore a quarter loaf through the streets on a pole. This drew together a great number of men, women and children, who soon proceeded to acts of violence, demolishing the windows of the principal millers and bakers, and taking from the brewery of Messrs Grundy three hogsheads of beer, which they drew in triumph to the middle of the town. The riot act was then read, but several hundred more having joined the mob, it was evident that nothing but the most prompt measures could prevent the dangerous consequences, likely to follow, and which were happily prevented by the exertions of some of the principal inhabitants, who rushed among the mob, destroyed the beer, seized the ringleaders, and in a very short time dispersed upwards of 2000, committing the former to prison.

Bath Journal.

The Ceylon, armed enflute, cap A. P. Hamilton, arrived at Portsmouth on Saturday night from S Helena. Bonaparte remained silent, in consequence of Adm. Cochrane insisting upon his being accompanied in his rides by a British officer.

The Prince Regent has, in a general order reprimanded in several terms Sir R. Wilson and Capt. Hutchinson, for the part which they took in aiding M. Lavalette in escaping from his prison in France.

Gen. Chatrand has been shot in France, pursuant to the sentence of a Court-martial, for joining in the rebellion in march 1845.

A letter from Marseilles, May 18 says there was an insurrection at Tunis the beginning of that month.

The insurgents killed the Bey, and offered the crown to his brother, who refused it. On this they seized five stout corsairs and put to sea, carrying off several of the principal people. It was supposed they had sailed for Constantinople.

Lady Hester Stanhope, niece and companion of the late Wm. Pitt, (according to the French papers,) is now at the head of those tribes, of Boudouin Arabs in Egypt. She had been an extensive traveller, in company with Bruce, lately tried at Paris, and from a feeble timid woman, has become a strong and courageous Amazon. Her followers look at her as a superior being; & she declares she will never forsake them.

CHARLESTON, July 20.

FROM SOUTH AMERICA.

We learn from Capt. Mathea, of the British schooner St. Ursula, arrived here on Wednesday from the W. Indies, that on the 27th of June last he was in Carabona, on the Spanish Main, about 12 leagues south east of Margaritta, where he saw and conversed with Gen. Bolivar, the leader of the South American patriot army. Gen. B. informed him that he had about 5000 men under his command, well armed and disciplined, that his force was rapidly increasing—and that nearly all the effective men in the vicinity were joining his standard. Gen. B. was waiting the arrival of Gen. Marino, his second in command, who was shortly expected from Guera, with an augmentation of 500 men to his force which had been recruited in that neighbourhood; when