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L. P. Boney

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Our Inalienable Birthrights—Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

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Miscellany.

Going to the Races.

A memorable day was the third day of last June to Mary and Henrietta Cox, two young daughters of Simon Cox, the carpenter of Aberrleigh, for it was the first day of Assot races, and the first time of their going to that celebrated union of sport and fashion. There is no pleasure so great in the eyes of our country damsels as to go to Assot. In the first place, it is when open alike to rich and poor, elegant as an opera, and merry as a fair; in the second, this village of Aberrleigh is situated about fourteen miles from the course, just within distance, almost out of distance, so that there is commonly enough of suspense and difficulty—the slight difficulty, the short suspense, which add such zest to pleasure.

All people love Assot races; but our country lasses love them above all. It is their favorite wedding jaunt, for half our young couples are married in the race week, and one or two matches have seemed to me to get up purposely for the occasion; and of all the attentions that can be offered by a lover, a drive to the races is most irresistible. In short, so congenial is that gay scene to love, that it is a moot point which of the numerous, the courtships that conclude there in the shape of brilliant excursions, or those which begin on that favored spot in the shape of parties of pleasure; and the delicate experiment called "popping the question," is as often put in practice on the very course itself, that when Robert Hewett, the young farmer at the Holt, asked Master Cox's permission to escort his daughter, the blacksmith and the shoemaker, looked on this mark of rustic gallantry as the precursor of a declaration in form; and all the village cried out on Hotta Cox's extreme good luck, Hetta being supposed, and with some reason, to be the chief object of his attention.

Robert Hewett was a young farmer of the old school, honest, frugal and industrious; thrifty, thriving, and likely to thrive; one of a fine yeomanly spirit, not ashamed of his station, and fond of following the habits of his forefathers, sowing his own corn, driving his own team, and occasionally ploughing his own land. As proud, perhaps, of his blunt speech and homely ways as some of his brother farmers were of their superior refinement and gentility, and nothing could exceed the scorn with which Robert Hewett, in his market cart, drawn by his good horse Dobbin, would look down on one neighbor on his hunter, and another in his gig. To the full as proud as any of them was Robert, but in a different way, and perhaps a safer. He picked himself, like a good Englishman, on wearing a smock frock, smoking his pipe, and hating foreigners; to our intercourse with whom he was wont to ascribe all the airs and graces, the new fashions, and the effeminacy which annoyed him in his own countrymen. He hated the French, he detested dandies, and he abhorred fine ladies, fine ways, and finery of any sort.

Henrietta Cox was a pretty girl of seventeen, and had passed the greater part of her life with an aunt in the next town, who had been a lady's maid in her youth, and had retired thither on a small annuity. To this aunt, who had been dead about a twelvemonth, she was indebted for her name, rather too fine for common wear—a large wardrobe, pretty much in the same predicament; an abundant stock of superfine notions, some skill in manta-making and millinery, and a legacy of a hundred pounds to be paid on her wedding day. Her beauty was quite in the style of a wax doll; blue eyes flaxen hair, delicate features, much resembling that sweet pea which is known by the name of the painted lady. Very pretty she was certainly, with all her airs and graces; and very pretty in spite of her airs and graces, did Robert Hewett think her; and here, who delights in contrasts, and has an especial pleasure in overestimating the lords of the creation, was beginning to make strange havoc in the stout yeoman's heart. His operations, too, found a very unostentatious coadjutor in old Mrs. Hewett, who, taking alarm at her son's frequent visits to the carpenter's shop, unwarily expressed a hope, that if her son did intend to marry one of the Coxes, he would have nothing to do with the fine lady, but would choose Mary, the elder sister, a dark-haired, pleasant looking young woman of two-and-twenty, who kept the house as clean as a palace, and was the boast of the village for industry and good humor. Now this unlooked-for caution gave Robert, who loved his mother, but did not choose to be managed by her, an additional motive for his lurking preference; by piquing his self-will; and to which the little damsel herself, in the absence of other admirers, took visible pleasure in his admiration; so that affairs seemed drawing to a crisis, and the party to Assot appeared likely to end like other jaunts to the same place, in a wedding. It is true that the invitation which had been readily and gratefully accepted by her sister, had been received by Miss Hetta with some little demur. "Going to the races was delightful; but to ride in a cart behind Dobbin was odious. Could not Mr. Hewett hire a phaeton, or borrow a gig? However, as her sister seemed to wish it, she might perhaps go, if she could find no better conveyance." And with this concession the lasses were contented; the more especially as the destined ferry was in active preparation. Flowers, farfollows, and friffery, of all descriptions, enough to stock a milliner's shop, did Hetta produce for the adornment of her fair person; and Robert looked on in silence, sometimes thinking how pretty she would look; sometimes how soon he would put an end to such nonsense when once they were married; and sometimes how odd a figure he and Dobbin should cut by the side of so much beauty and fashion.

Neither Dobbin nor his master were fated to be so honored. The evening before the races there happened to be a revel at Whitley Wood; thither Hetta repaired; and there she had the

ill fortune to be introduced to Monsieur Auguste, a young Frenchman, who had lately hired a room at B., where he vendued eau de Cologne, and French toys, and essences, and did himself the honor, as his bills expressed, to cut the hair and the curls of the nobility and gentry of the town and neighborhood. Monsieur was, with tremendous whiskers, who looked at once fierce and foppish, was curled and perfumed in a manner that did honor to his double profession, and wore gold rings in his ears and on his fingers, a huge bunch of seals at his side, and a gaudy brooch at his bosom. Small chance had Robert Hewett against such a rival, especially when, smitten with her beauty, or her hundred pounds, he devoted himself to Hetta's service, made fine speeches in most bewitching broken English, braved for her sake the barbarities of a country dance, and promised to initiate her into the mysteries of the waltz and the quadrille; and, finally, requested the honor to conduct her in a cabriolet, the next day, to Assot races. Small chances had our poor farmer against such a Monsieur.

The morning arrived, gloomy, showery and cold, and at the appointed hour, up drove the punctual Robert in a new market cart, painted blue with red wheels, and his heavy but handsome horse Dobbin (who was indeed upon occasion the fore horse of the team), as sleek and shining as good feed and good dressing could make him. Up drove Robert, with his little sister (a child of eleven years old, who was to form one of the party) sitting at his side; while quietly punctual, at Master Cox's door, stood the sisters ready dressed; Mary in a dark gown, a handsome shawl, and a pretty straw bonnet, with a cloth cloak hanging on her arm; Hetta in a flutter of gauze and ribbons, pink and green, and yellow and blue, looking like a parrot tulip, or a milliner's doll, or like anything under the sun but an English country girl. Robert looked at her and then at Mary, who was vainly endeavoring to persuade her to put on, or at least, to take a cloak, and thought for once, without indignation, of his mother's advice; he got out, however, and was preparing to assist them into the cart, when suddenly, to the astonishment of everybody but Hetta, for she had said nothing at home of her encounter with the revel, Monsieur Auguste made his appearance in a hired gig of the most miserable description, drawn by an equally miserable jade, alighted at the house, and claimed Mademoiselle's promise to do him the honor to accompany him in his cabriolet. The consternation was general. Mary remonstrated with her sister mildly but earnestly. Master Cox swore she should not go; but Hetta was resolute; and farmer Hewett, whose first impulse had been to drive the Frenchman, changed his purpose when he saw how willingly she was to be carried off. "Let her go," said he; "Monsieur is welcome to her company; for my part, I think they will match. It would be a pity to part them." And, quickly lifting Mary into the cart, he drove off at peace with his daughter, to judge from his weight, appeared incapable, and to which that illustrious steed was very little accustomed.

In the meanwhile, Hetta was endeavoring to introduce her new beau to her father, and to reconcile him to her change of escort; and the standers by, consisting of half the men and boys in the village, were criticising the Frenchman's equipage. "I could shake the old chaise to pieces with one jerk, it's so ramshackle," cried Ned Jones, Master Cox's foreman. "The wheel will come to pieces long before they get to Assot," added Sam, the apprentice. "The old horse has a sprain in the off fore leg, that's what makes him so lame," said Will Ford, the blacksmith. "And he has been down with the month. Look at his knees!" rejoined Jim, the carter. "He's blind of an eye," exclaimed one urchin. "He shines," cried another. "The reins are rotten," observed Dick, the colmareaker. "The Frenchman can't drive," remarked Jack, the driver, coming up to join the crew. "He'd nearly as possible run foul of my pigs." "He'll certainly overturn her, poor thing," cried one kind friend, as, overcome by her importunities, her father at length consented to her departure. "The chaise will break down," said another. "Break! he'll break her neck," added a third. "They'll be drenched to the skin in this shower," exclaimed a fourth; and amidst these consoling predictions the happy couple departed.

Robert and Mary, on their side, proceeded for some time in almost total silence—Robert too angry for speech, and Mary feeling herself, however innocent, involved in the consequences of her sister's delinquency; so that little passed beyond Anne Hewitt's delighted remarks on the beauty of the country, and the hedge-rows, bright with the young leaves of the oak, and gay with the peary thorn blossoms and the delicate briar roses.

Anne and Mary enjoyed the races much—they saw the line of carriages, nine deep—more carriages than they thought ever were built; and the people—more people than they thought the whole world could hold; had a confused view of the horses, and a distinct one of the riders' jackets; and Anne, whose notions on the subject of racing had been rather puzzled, so far enlarged her knowledge and improved her mind as to comprehend that yellow, crimson, green and blue, in short, all the colors of the rainbow, were trying which should come first to the winning post; they saw Punch, a puppet show, several peep-shows, and the dancing dogs; admired the matchless display of beauty and elegance when the weather allowed the ladies to walk up and down the course; were amused at the bustle and hurry-scurry, when a sudden shower drove them in the shelter of their carriages. In short, they had seen everything and everybody, except Hetta and her beau, and nothing but the wanting to Mary's gratification; but the assurance of her sister's safety; for Mary had that prime qualification for a sight-seer, the habit of thinking much on what she came to see, and little of herself. She made light of all inconveniences, covered little Anne (a delicate child) with her own cloak during the showers, and contrived, in spite of

Robert's gallant attention to his guest, that Anne should have the best place under the umbrella, and the most tempting portion of the provisions; so that our farmer by no means wanting in moral taste, was charmed with her cheerfulness, her good humor, and the total absence of vanity and selfishness; and when, on ascending the cart to return, he caught a glimpse of a pretty foot and ankle, and saw how much exercise and pleasure had heightened her complexion, and brightened her hazel eyes, he could not help thinking to himself, "my mother was right. She's ten times handsomer than her sister, and has twenty times more sense; and besides she does not like Frenchmen."

But where could Hetta be?—what had become of poor Hetta? This question, which had passed so heavily on Mary's mind during the races, became still more painful as they proceeded on their road home, which, leading through cross country lanes, far away from the general throng of the visitors, left more leisure for her affectionate fears. They had driven about two miles, and Robert was endeavoring to comfort her with hopes that their horse's lameness had forced them back again, and that her sister would be found safe at Aberrleigh, when a sudden turn in the lane discovered a disabled gig, without a horse or driver, in the middle of the road, and a woman seated on a bank by the side of a ditch—a miserable object, tattered, dirty, shivering, drenched, and crying as if her heart would break. Was it—could it be Hetta? Yes—Hetta it was. All the misfortunes that had been severely predicted at their outset had befallen the unfortunate pair. Before they had travelled three miles, their wretched horse had fallen lame in his near fore leg, and had lost the off hind shoe, which, as the blacksmith of the place had gone to the races and nobody seemed willing to put himself out of the way to oblige a Frenchman, had nearly stopped them at the beginning of their expedition. At last, however, they met with a man who undertook to shoe their steed, and whose want of skill added a prick to their other calamities; then Monsieur Auguste broke a shaft of the cabriolet by driving against a post, the setting and bandaging of which broken limb made another delay; then came a pelting shower, during which they were obliged to stand under a tree; then they lost their way, and owing to the people of whom Monsieur inquired not understanding his English, and Monsieur not understanding theirs, went full five miles round about; when they arrived at the Chequers public house, which no effort could induce their horse to pass, so there they stopped for some time, and then, when they were getting along as well as could be expected of a horse with three lame legs and a French driver, a wagon came against them, carried away their wheel, threw Monsieur Auguste into the hedge, and lodged Miss Henrietta in the ditch; so now the babe was gone to the next village for assistance, and the bells were waiting his return on the bank; and poor Hetta was evidently tired of her fine lover and the manifold misadventures which his unskilful gallantry had brought upon her, and accepted very thankfully the offer which Anne and Mary made, and Robert did not oppose, of taking her into the cart, and leaving a line written in pencil, on a leaf of Mary's pocket-book, to inform Monsieur of her safety. Heartily glad was poor Hetta to find herself behind the good steed Dobbin, under cover of her sister's warm cloak, piped and comforted, and in a fair way to get home. Heartily glad would she have been, too, to have found herself reinstated in the good graces of her old admirer. But of that she saw no sign. Indeed, the good yeoman took some pains to show that, although he bore no malice, his courtship was over. He goes, however, oftener than ever to the carpenter's shop; and the gossip of Aberrleigh say that this jaunt to Assot will give his proper and usual castro—a merry wedding; that Robert Hewett will be the happy bridegroom, but that Hetta Cox will not be the bride.

We soon came to some domed-shaped heaps rising above the level of the ice. They were of mud, bound together with grass and flags, and were hardened by the frost. Within each of these rounded heaps Old Foxey knew there were at least half a dozen muskrats—perhaps three times that number—lying snug and warm and huddled together.

Since there appeared no hole or entrance, the question was how to get at the animals inside. Simply by digging until the inside should be laid open, thought I. This of itself would be no slight labor. The roof and sides as my companion informed me, were three feet in thickness; and the tough mud was frozen to the hardness and consistency of a fire brick. But after getting through this shell, where should we find the inmates? Why, most likely, we should not find them at all after all this labor. So said my companion, telling me in a rather tone that there were subterranean, or rather subaqueous passages, by which the muskrats would be certain to make off under the ice long before he had penetrated near them.

I was quite puzzled to know how he should proceed. Not so Old Foxey. He well knew what he was about, and pitching his traps down by one of the 'houses,' commenced operations. The one he had selected stood out in the lake, some distance from its edge. It was built entirely upon the ice; and, as the hunter well knew, there was a hole in the floor by which the animals could get into the water at will—how then was he to prevent them from escaping by the hole, while we remove the covering or roof? This was what puzzled me. I watched his movements with interest.

Instead of digging into the house, he commenced cutting a hole in the ice with his ice-chisel about two feet from the edge of the mud. That being accomplished, he cut another, and another, until four holes were piced, forming the corners of a square, and embracing the house of the muskrat within.

Leaving this house, he then proceeded to pierce a similar set of houses around another that also stood out on the open lake. After that he went to a third one, and this and then a fourth were prepared in a similar manner. He now returned to the first, this time taking care to tread lightly upon the ice and make as little stir as possible. Having arrived there, he took out from his bag a square mat made of twisted deer thongs, and not much bigger than a blanket. This in a most ingenious manner he passed under the ice, until its four corners appeared opposite the four holes; where, drawing them through, he made all fast and 'tant' by a line stretching from one corner to the other.

His manner of passing the net under the ice I have pronounced ingenious. It was accomplished by raising a line from hole to hole, by means of the long slender pole already mentioned. The pole, inserted through one of the holes, conducted the line, and was itself conducted by means of two forked sticks that guided it, and pushed it along to the other holes. The line being attached to the corners of the net made it an easy matter to draw the latter into its position.

All the details of this curious operation were performed with a noiseless address which showed 'Old Foxey' was no novice at 'rat-catching.' The net being now quite taut along the lower surface of the ice, most of course completely cover the 'Hole' in the floor. It followed, therefore, that if the muskrats were 'at home,' they were now 'in the trap.'

My companion assured me that they would be found inside. The reason why he had not used the net on the first cutting the holes, was to give any member of the family that had been frightened out, a chance of returning; and this he knew they would certainly do, as these creatures cannot remain very long under the water.

He soon satisfied me of the truth of his statement. In a few minutes, by means of the ice-chisel and pick-axe, we had pierced the crust of the dome; and there, apparently half asleep, became dazzled and blinded by the sudden influx of light—were no less than eight full grown muskrats!

Almost before I could count them, Old Foxey had transferred the whole party, one after the other, with his long spear.

We now proceeded to another of the houses, at which the holes had been cut. There my companion went through a similar series of operations; and was rewarded by a capture of six more 'rats.'

On opening a fourth, a singular scene met our eyes. There was but one muskrat alive, and that one seemed to be nearly famished to death. Its body was wasted to mere skin and bone; and the animal had evidently been a long time without food. Beside him lay the naked skeletons of several small animals that I at once saw were those of the muskrat. A glance at the bottom of the nest explains all.

The hole, which in the other houses had passed through the ice, and which we found quite open, in this one was frozen up. The animals had neglected keeping it open, until the ice had got too thick for them to break through; and then, impelled by the cravings of hunger, they had preyed upon each other, until only one, the strongest, survived.

I found upon counting the skeletons, that no less than eleven had tenanted this ice-bound prison.

The Indian assured me that in seasons of very severe frost such an occurrence is not rare. At such times the ice forms so rapidly, that the animals—perhaps not having occasion to go out, for some hours—and themselves frozen in; and are compelled to perish of hunger, or devour one another!

It was now near night—for we had not reached the lake until late in the day—and my companion proposed that we should leave further operations until the following morning. Of course I assented to the proposal, and we partook ourselves to some pine-trees that grew on high banks near the shore, where we had descended to pass the night.

There we kindled a roaring fire of pine-knots; but we had grown very hungry, and I soon found that of the provisions I had brought, and upon which I had already dined, there remained but a scanty fragment for supper. This did not trouble my companion, who skinned several of the 'rats,' gave them a slight warming over the fire, and then ate them up with as much gout as if they had been partridges. I was hungry, but not hungry enough for that, so I sat watching him with some astonishment, and not without a slight feeling of disgust.

It was a beautiful moonlight night, one of the clearest I ever remember. There was a little snow upon the ground, just enough to cover it; and up against the white side of the hills could be traced the pyramidal outlines of the pines, with their regular gradations of dark needle-clothed branches. They rose on all sides around the lake, looking like ships with furled sails and yards square-set.

I was in a reverie of admiration, when I was suddenly aroused by a confused noise, that resembled the howling and baying of hounds. I turned an enquiring look upon my companion.

"Wolves!" he replied, unconcernedly, chawing away at his 'roast rat.' The howling sounded nearer and nearer; and then there was a rattling among dead trees, and quickly repeated "crunch, crunch," as of the hoofs of some animal breaking through frozen snow. The next moment a deer dashed past in full run, and took to the ice. It was a large buck of the 'Caribou' or reindeer species (*Cervus tarandus*), and I could see that he was smoking with heat, and almost run down.

He had hardly passed the spot, when the howl again broke out in a continued strain, and a string of forms appeared from the branches. They were about a dozen in all; and they were going at full speed like a pack of hounds on the view. Their long muzzles, erect ears, and huge gaunt bodies, were outlined plainly against the snowy ground. I saw that they were wolves. They were white wolves, and of the largest species.

I had suddenly sprang to my feet, not with the intention of saving the deer, but of assisting in its capture; and for this purpose I seized the spear, and ran out. I heard my companion, as I thought, shouting some caution after me; but I was too instant upon the chase to pay any attention to what he said. I had at the moment a distinct perception of hunger, and an indistinct idea of roasting venison for supper.

As I got down to the shore, I saw that the wolves had overtaken the deer, and dragged it down upon the ice. The poor creature made but poor running on the slippery track, sprawling at every bound; while the sharp claws of its pursuers enabled them to gallop over the ice like cats. The deer had, no doubt, mistaken the ice for water, which these creatures very often do, and thus became an easy prey to wolves, dogs, and hunters.

I run on, thinking that I would soon scatter the wolves, and rob them of their prey. In a few moments I was in their midst, brandishing my spear; but to my surprise, as well as terror, I saw that, instead of relinquishing the deer, several of them still held on it, while the rest surrounded me with open jaws, and eyes glancing like coals of fire.

I shouted and fought desperately, thrusting the spear first at one and then at another; but the wolves only became more bold and fierce, incensed by the wolves I was inflicting.

For several minutes I continued this unexpected conflict. I was growing quite excited; and a sense of terrible dread coming over me, had almost paralyzed me, when the tall dark form of the Indian, hurrying over the ice, gave me new courage; and I plied the spear with all my remaining strength, until several of my assailants lay pierced upon the ice. The others, now seeing the proximity of my companion with his huge ice-chisel, and frightened, moreover, by his wild Indian yell, turned tail and scampered off.

Three of them, however, had uttered their last howl, and the deer was found close by—already half devoured.

There was enough left, however, to make a good supper for both myself and my companion; who, although he had already picked the bones of three muskrats, made a fresh attack upon the venison, eating of it as though he had not tasted food for a fortnight.

"When I Grow up to be a Man!"

Well my lad, what then? Do you expect more liberty to do as you please, or more power to do what is right? If the former, it would be better for the world and infinitely better for yourself that you should never 'grow up to be a man.' The mere enjoyment of a larger liberty will only bring disastrous results in your mental and moral constitution. You will be surely engulfed in the vortex of dissipation and wrong, and be left at the close of life, a wreck on the shore of the great ocean of eternity waiting for the wave that shall sweep you to retribution. Man has something else to do, than to follow up his own desires, and that you will find out most certainly "when you grow up to be a man." You ought to learn it now.

When I grow up to be a man! Do you know what the responsibilities of manhood are? We fear not. There are many young men—of middle life, too—who are in the midst of the very action of their responsibilities and they do not feel their obligation. They are living for themselves, and throwing away duties and responsibilities in the wanton and wicked torpidity of idleness, or in the giddy chase for pleasures. Do you wish to grow up like them? Alas, there is a fearful account to be given at the end of such a life—a fearful retribution to be expected. God has given to them manhood with its powers for beneficent purposes. No man can live to himself and escape the responsibility.—Man must do something in the world for its benefit. They must work and add something to its productive industry, either directly by bodily labor, or indirectly by the exercise of their mental powers. If the health inherited or expected from parents does not require the work of the body it will furnish no excuse for the

neglect of doing something for the benefit of the world in which our Creator has placed us. Let young men reflect on this remark. There are many who are drones in society—buzzing about in a lazy pursuit of selfish pleasure, doing nothing to add to the honey of the hive—from such, an account will be demanded of the work of life ill-done—of life itself frittered away in trifles! It is a serious thing to "grow up to be a man."

When I grow up to be a man! A man!—What a being! How noble—how excellent! What a destiny there is before him! Born to be one of a struggling mass of human beings of his own day and generation—to work and labor through the scene of probation here—and then rise to the dignity and employment of angels hereafter! It is a great and glorious thing to be a man! How much more great he who shall control the destinies of the generation, who shall be pointed out as a blessing to those around him, who shall have made his mark on the whole human race by the benefits he had conferred upon them! All cannot attain this high place, it is true, but all can reach after it. Our Maker has placed us in different circumstances and given us sufficient powers and opportunities—He will reckon with his creatures "according to what a man hath, and not according to what a man hath not." There is no idleness in His kingdom. Idleness is sin. Are you ready for all this, my lad, "when you are grown up to be a man?"

When I grow up to be a man! The time will come soon enough my boy; do not hasten its approach by wishing. It will come—fraught with its responsibilities. The careless playfulness of childhood will be over soon enough, without shaking the sands of Time's hour-glass to bury them through. Enjoy the hours of amusement now while you can. Manhood has labors—'from morn to dewy eve.' They press upon him at all hours and form his constant day. His moments of relaxation are few and far between; 'often but the accidental dipping of his rod in the honor of the rock as he is hurrying on to battle. The period of rest is not in this world.

CATARACTS OF THE NILE.—The banks of the Nile are often picturesque and beautiful; and the eastern side, to the Arabian Gulf, is bounded by high mountainous ranges, composed of granite, porphyry, and marble, of the greatest variety of colors. Lofty granite rocks, embrace the green and fertile valley of Darja, a narrow cañon resented from the surrounding desolation. Pre-eminent in beauty amid the numerous islands which stud the river with their emerald verdure, is the "Garden of the Tropics," called by the Egyptians the "Island of Flowers." Within the space of a mile in length and a quarter in breadth, it presents a fertility equal to the finest part of Egypt. It is three miles above the Island of Elephantine, and the most remarkable feature in the scenery is caused by the Nile dashing through the wild confusion of granite rocks, with which its bed for many miles is thickly strewn. The noise of the cataracts formed by the river, which boils and foams amid a thousand rocks, is heard at a distance of three miles. The stream, forcing its way through the impenetrable islets situated near this spot, is tossed about in every direction, forming numberless little cascades, and presents to the traveler's eye a scene of peculiar grandeur and effect. The noise resembles that of a tempestuous ocean beating on a rocky shore.

NAPOLEON.—Napier, in his history of the Peninsula war, makes the following excellent just remark on Napoleon:—"Self had no place in his policy save as his personal glory was identified with France and her future prosperity. Never before did the world see a man soaring so high and devoid of all selfish ambition. Let those who, honestly seeking truth, doubt this, study Napoleon carefully; let them read the record of his second abdication, published by his brother Lucien, that stern republican who refused kingdoms at the price of his principles, and they will doubt no longer."

This is from a British writer who studied the affairs of the times in which Napoleon flourished, with more than ordinary fidelity and intelligence; and who, withal, is as regular a specimen of John Bull, as ever put pen to paper.

Variety.

Swiss Courting.

When a girl is arrived at a marriageable age, the young men of the village assemble by consent on a given night at the gallery of the chalet in which the fair one resides. This creates no manner of surprise in the minds of her parents, who not only wink at the practice, but are never better pleased than when the charms of their daughters attract the greatest number of admirers. Their arrival is soon announced by sundy taps at the different windows. After the family in the house has been raised and dressed (for the scene usually takes place at midnight, when they have all retired to rest), the window of the room prepared for the occasion, in which the girl is first alone, is opened. Then a parley commences, of a rather boisterous description; each young man urges his suit with all the elegance and art of which he is possessed. The fair one hesitates, doubts, asks questions, but gives no decision. She then invites the party to partake of a repast of cakes and kirsch-wasser, to partake of the repast on the balcony. In which is prepared for the occasion, the strong water of the cherry forms a prominent feature in the proceedings of the night.

After having regaled themselves for some time, during which, and through the window she has made use of all the witchery of woman's art, she feigns a desire to get rid of them all, and will sometimes call her parents to accomplish this object. The youths, however are not to be

put off; for, according to the custom of the country, they have come there for the express purpose of compelling her, on that night, there and then, to make up her mind, and to declare the object of her choice.

At length, after a further parley, her heart is touched, or at least she pretends it is, by the favored swain. After certain preliminaries between the girl and her parents, her lover is admitted through the window, where the affianced is signed and sealed, but not delivered, in the presence of both father and mother. By the consent of all parties, the ceremony is not to extend beyond a couple of hours, when, after a second jollification with the kirsch-wasser, they all retire—the happy man to bless his stars, but the rejected to console themselves with the hope that at the next tournament of love making they may succeed better. In general, the girl's decision is taken or given good part by all, and is regarded as decisive.—*Heathman's Switzerland.*

An Exacting Husband.

Wycherly, the comedian, married a girl of eighteen, when he was verging on eighty.—Shortly after, Providence was pleased, in its mercy to the young woman, to call the old man to another and a better world. But ere he took his final departure from this, he summoned his young wife to his bedside and announced to her that he was dying; whereupon she went weeping. Wycherly lifted himself up in the bed, and gazing with tender emotion on his weeping wife, said—

"My dearest love, I have a solemn promise to exact from you before I quit your side forever here below. Will you assure me my wishes will be attended by you, however great the sacrifice you will be called on to make?"

Horrid ideas of suitors of poor Indian widows being called on to expire on funeral pyres, with the bodies of their deceased lords and masters, flashed across the brain of the poor woman.— With convulsive effort and desperate resolution, she gasped out an assurance that his commands, however dreadful they might be, should be obeyed.

Then Wycherly, with a ghastly smile, said in a low solemn voice:—

"My beloved wife, the parting request I have to make of you is—when I am gone (he then pointed to his deceased lord and masters, whom he pointed to with a ghastly grin)—when I am no longer a heavy burden and a tie on you—(Oh, for Heaven's sake!)" howled Mrs. W., "what am I to do?"—I command you my dear young wife—"yes, y-e-s," sobbed Mrs. W.—"on pain of incurring my malediction—(y-e-s, dear, dear, groaned the horror-stricken wife)—never to marry an old man again!"

Mrs. Wycherly dried her eyes, and, in the most fervent manner, promised that she never would—and the faithful woman kept her word for life.

A DUTCHMAN ABOARD.—"Hello, friend, can you tell me the way to Reading?"

"O, yaw, I could tell you so better as nobody. You must first turn the barn round de pritch over and brook up stream, den de last house you come to is my proder Hans's big barn; dat ish de biggest barn on dish road; it ish eighteen feet wide and eighteen beak again. My proder Hans thought to thatch it mit shingles, but he sold dem, and shingled mit straw, and clapboard it mit rails; after you go by my proder Hans's big barn, de next house you come to ish a haystack of corn stalks built mit straw; but you must not stop dere too. Den you take the road on your shoulder, and go down as far as de pritch, den you turn right again. Ven you is coming back, you come by a house dat stands right back alongside of a little yellow gate. He runs and says 'pow, wow, wow!' tells a little piece out of your leg, den he runs and shumps into an empty pig-pen dat has four sheep in it. Den you look away down de hill down dere in de swamp dere and sees a blue white house painted red, mit two front doors on de back side; well, there ish where my proder Hans live, and he would tell you so better than I could I don't know."

WEAR A SHAWL.—The Brooklyn Eagle thinks that shawls should be worn by the masculine gender for the following rhyming reasons:

"If you want to be in fashion, wear a shawl; if to ladies an attraction, wear a shawl; if to sheep and cows a terror, or like shanghai is full feather, or even range upon the heather, wear a shawl; if your lips are badly mounded, wear a shawl; if your eyes are red and sore, wear a shawl; if you're courting some fine lassie in it, in your shawl. It's like charity on pins, and hides a multitude of sins—although it causes grins—does your shawl. If you wish to be a dandy, wear a shawl. In a word it is a most useful article—and may wrap your feet, head, knees, make a seat, a blanket, a bed, a pillow, a waip-rascal, or a Scotch plaid of your shawl!"

I happened to get into conversation with a young fishman, who wished to claim for his Emerald Isle the honor of being the birth-place of certainly more than two-thirds of the great men that ever lived, and adorned the world with their brilliant minds, or started it by their wonderful deeds.

The contention was rather spirited, in the course of which I alluded to a paragraph in Mooney's History of Ireland, wherein it says that Napoleon was of Irish descent.

With a resentful look, and an indignant toss of the head, he replied—

"Well, what of that! There's a good many Frenchmen Irish."—CHARLES FRANK.

We have read some queer church-yard inscriptions in our day, but none, for simplicity, equal to the following, recently discovered by some Old Mortality in Jersey—

"He was one of 'em"
Well, he was!"

APPROPOS DE BOTTES.—Italy has often been compared to a boot—and it is a boot, we should say, that would almost give its soul, if it could only see the last of Austria.—Punch.