

SECOND SERIES

TO RICHARD BENTLEY, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

You tell me that “a generous and enlightened Public” has given a favourable reception to those extracts from our family papers, which, at your suggestion, were laid before it some two years since; — and you hint, with all possible delicacy, that a second volume might not be altogether unacceptable at a period of the year when “auld warld stories” are more especially in request. — With all my heart — the old oak chest is not yet empty; in addition to which, I have recently laid my hand upon a long MS. correspondence of my great uncle, Sir Peregrine Ingoldsby, a cadet of the family, who somehow contrived to attract the notice of George the Second, and received from his “honour-giving hand” the *acolade* of knighthood. To this last named source I am indebted for several of the accompanying histories, while my inestimable friend Simpkinson has bent all the powers of his mighty mind to the task. From Father John’s stores I have drawn largely. Our “Honourable” friend Sucklethumbkin — by the way, he has been beating our covers lately, when he shot a woodcock, and one of the Governor’s pointers — gives a graphic account of the Operatic “row” in which he was heretofore so conspicuous; while even Mrs. Barney Maguire (*née Mademoiselle Pauline*), whose horror of Mrs. Botherby’s cap has no jot diminished, furnishes me with the opening Legend of the series from the *historiettes* of her own *belle France*.

Why will you not run down to Tappington this Christmas? — We have been rather busy of late in carrying into execution the enclosure of Swingfield Minnis under the auspices of my Lord Radnor, and Her Majesty’s visit to the neighbourhood has kept us quite alive: the Prince in one of his rides pulled up at the end of the avenue, and, as A—— told Sucklethumbkin, was much taken with the picturesque appearance of our old gable ends. Unluckily we were all at Canterbury that morning, or proud indeed should we have been to offer his Royal Highness the humble hospitalities of the Hall — and then — fancy Mrs. Botherby’s — “My Gracious!” By the way, the old lady tells me you left your nightcap here on your last visit; it is laid up in lavender for you; — come and reclaim it. The Yule log will burn bright as ever in the cedar room. Bin No. 6 is still one liquid ruby — the old October yet smiles like mantling amber, in utter disdain of that vile concoction of camomile which you so pseudonymously dignify with the title of “Bitter Ale.” — Make a start, then:— pitch printers’ ink to old Harry — and come and spend a fortnight with

Yours, till the crack of doom,
THOMAS INGOLDSBY.

Tappington Everard,
Dec. 16th, 1842.

THE BLACK MOUSQUETAIRE: A LEGEND OF FRANCE.

François Xavier Auguste was a gay Mousquetaire,
 The Pride of the Camp, the delight of the Fair:
 He'd a mien so *distingué*, and so *debonnaire*,
 And shrugg'd with a grace so *recherché* and rare,
 And he twirl'd his moustache with so charming an air,
 — His moustaches I should say, because he'd a pair, —
 And, in short, shew'd so much of the true *sçavoir faire*,
 All the ladies in Paris were wont to declare,
 That could any one draw
 Them from Dian's strict law,
 Into what Mrs. Ramsbottom calls a "Fox Paw,"
 It would be François Xavier Auguste de St. Foix.

Now, I'm sorry to say,
 At that time of day,
 The Court of Versailles was a little too gay;
 The Courtiers were all much addicted to Play,
 To Bourdeaux, Chambertin, Frontignac, St. Peray,
 Lafitte, Chateau Margaux, And Sillery (a cargo
 On which John Bull sensibly (?) lays an embargo),
 While Louis Quatorze
 Kept about him, in scores,
 What the Noblesse, in courtesy, term'd his "Jane Shores,"
 — They were call'd by a much coarser name out of doors. —
 This, we all must admit, in
 A King's not befitting!
 For such courses, when followed by persons of quality,
 Are apt to detract on the score of morality.

François Xavier Auguste acted much like the rest of them,
 Dress'd, drank, and fought, and *chassée'd* with the best of them;
 Took his *œil de perdrix*
 Till he scarcely could see,
 He would then sally out in the streets for a "spree;"
 His rapier he'd draw,
 Pink a *Bourgeois*,
 (A word which the English translate "Johnny Raw,")
 For your thorough French Courtier, whenever the fit he's in,
 Thinks it prime fun to astonish a citizen;
 And, perhaps it's no wonder that this kind of scrapes,
 In a nation which Voltaire, in one of his japes,
 Defines "an amalgam of Tigers and Apes,"
 Should be merely considered as "Little Escapes."
 But I'm sorry to add,
 Things are almost as bad
 A great deal nearer home, and that similar pranks

Amongst young men who move in the very first ranks,
Are by no means confined to the land of the Franks.

Be this as it will,
In the general, still,
Though blame him we must,
It is really but just
To our lively young friend, François Xavier Auguste,
To say, that howe'er
Well known his faults were,
At his Bacchanal parties he always drank fair,
And, when gambling his worst, always play'd on the square,
So that, being much more of pigeon than rook, he
Lost large sums at faro (a game like "Blind Hookey"),
And continued to lose,
And to give I O U's,
Till he lost e'en the credit he had with the Jews;
And, a parallel if I may venture to draw
Between François Xavier Auguste de St. Foix,
And his namesake, a still more distinguished François,
Who wrote to his "*sœur*"⁴

From Pavia, "*Mon Cœur*,
I have lost all I had in the world *fors l'honneur*."

So St. Foix might have wrote
No dissimilar note,
"*Vive la bagatelle! — toujours gai — idem semper —*
I've lost all I had in the world but — my temper!"
From the very beginning,
Indeed, of his sinning,
His air was so cheerful, his manners so winning,
That once he prevailed — or his friends coin the tale for him —
On the bailiff who "nabbed" him, himself to "go bail" for him.

Well — we know in these cases
Your "Crabs" and "Deuce Aces"
Are wont to promote frequent changes of places;
Town doctors, indeed, are most apt to declare
That there's nothing so good as the pure "country air,"
Whenever exhaustion of person, or purse, in
An invalid cramps him, and sets him a-cursing:

⁴ Mrs. Ingoldsby, who is deeply read in Robertson, informs me that this is a mistake; that the lady to whom this memorable *billet* was delivered by the hands of Pennalosa, was the unfortunate monarch's mamma, and not his sister. I would gladly rectify the error, but, then — what am I to do for a rhyme? — On the whole, I fear I must content myself, like Talleyrand, with admitting that "it is worse than a fault — it's a blunder!" for which enormity — as honest old Pepys says when he records having kissed his cookmaid — "I humbly beg pardon of Heaven, and Mrs. Ingoldsby!"

A habit, I'm very much grieved at divulging,
 François Xavier Auguste was too prone to indulge in.
 But what could be done?
 It's clear as the sun,
 That, though nothing's more easy than say "Cut and run!"
 Yet a Guardsman can't live without some sort of fun —
 E'en I or you,
 If we'd nothing to do,
 Should soon find ourselves looking remarkably blue.
 And, since no one denies
 What's so plain to all eyes,
 It won't, I am sure, create any surprise
 That reflections like these half reduced to despair
 François Xavier Auguste, the gay Black Mousquetaire.

Patience par force! He considered, of course,
 But in vain — he could hit on no sort of resource —
 Love? — Liquor? — Law? — Loo?
 They would each of them do,
 There's excitement enough in all four, but in none he
 Could hope to get on *sans l'argent* — *i.e.* money.
 Love? — no; — ladies like little *cadeaux* from a suitor.
 Liquor? — no, — that won't do, when reduced to "the Pewter." —
 Then Law? — 'tis the same; It's a very fine game,
 But the fees and delays of "the Courts" are a shame,
 As Lord Brougham says himself — who's a very great name,
 Though the TIMES made it clear he was perfectly lost in his
 Classic attempt at translating Demosthenes,
 And don't know his "particles." —
 Who wrote the articles,
 Shewing his Greek up so, is not known very well;
 Many thought Barnes, others Mitchell, — some Merivale;
 But it's scarce worth debate,
 Because from the date
 Of my tale one conclusion we safely may draw,
 Viz.: 'twas not François Xavier Auguste de St. Foix!
 Loo? — no; — that he had tried;
 'Twas, in fact, his weak side,
 But required more than any a purse well supplied.
 "Love? — Liquor? — Law? — Loo? No! 'tis all the same story.
 Stay! I have it — *Ma foi!* (that's 'Odd's Bob's!) there is GLORY!
 Away with dull care! *Vive le Roi! Vive la Guerre!*
Peste! I'd almost forgot I'm a Black Mousquetaire!
 When a man is like me, *Sans six sous, sans souci,*
 A bankrupt in purse,
 And in character worse,
 With a shocking bad hat, and his credit at Zero,
 What on earth can he hope to become, — but a Hero?
 What a famous thought this is!

I'll go as Ulysses
Of old did — like him I'll see manners, and know countries;†
Cut Paris, — and gaming, — and throats in the Low Countries."

So said, and so done — he arranged his affairs,
And was off like a shot to his Black Mousquetaires.

Now it happen'd just then That Field-Marshal Turenne
Was a good deal in want of "some active young men,"
To fill up the gaps
Which, through sundry mishaps,
Had been made in his ranks by a certain "Great Condé,"
A General unrivall'd — at least in his own day —
Whose valour was such,
That he did not care much
If he fought with the French, — or the Spaniards, — or Dutch, —
A fact which has stamped him a rather "Cool hand,"
Being nearly related to *Louis le Grand*.
It had been all the same had that King been his brother;
He fought sometimes with one, and sometimes with another;
For war, so exciting,
He took such delight in,
He did not care whom he fought, so he *was* fighting.
And, as I've just said, had amused himself then
By tickling the tail of Field-Marshal Turenne;
Since which, the Field-Marshal's most pressing concern
Was to tickle some other Chief's tail in his turn.

What a fine thing a battle is! — not one of those
Which one saw at the late Mr. Andrew Ducrow's,
Where a dozen of scene-shifters, drawn up in rows,
Would a dozen more scene-shifters boldly oppose,
Taking great care their blows
Did not injure their foes,
And alike, save in colour and cut of their clothes,
Which were varied, to give more effect to "*Tableaux*,"
While Stickney the Great
Flung the gauntlet to Fate,
And made us all tremble, so gallantly did he come
On to encounter bold General Widdicombe —
But a real, good fight, like Pultowa, or Lützen,
(Which Gustavus the great ended all his disputes in,)
Or that which Suwarrow engaged without boots in,
Or Dettingen, Fontenoy, Blenheim, or Minden,
Or the one Mr. Campbell describes, Hohenlinden,
Where "the sun was low,"

† Qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes.
Who viewed men's manners, Londons, Yorks, and Derbys.

The ground all over snow,
 And dark as mid-winter the swift Iser's flow, —
 Till its colour was alter'd by General Moreau;
 While the big drum was heard in the dead of the night,
 Which rattled the Bard out of bed in a fright,
 And he ran up the steeple to look at the fight.
 'Twas in just such another one,
 (Names only bother one —
 Dutch ones, indeed, are sufficient to smother one —)
 In the Netherlands somewhere —
 I cannot say where —
 Suffice it that there
La Fortune de guerre
 Gave a cast of her calling to our Mousquetaire.
 One fine morning, in short, François Xavier Auguste,
 After making some scores of his foes "bite the dust,"
 Got a mouthful himself of the very same crust;
 And though, as the Bard says, "No law is more just
 Than for *Necis artifices*" — so they call'd fiery
 Soldados at Rome, — "*arte suâ perire*,"
 Yet Fate did not draw
 This poetical law
 To its fullest extent in the case of St. Foix.
 His Good Genius most probably found out some flaw,
 And diverted the shot
 From some deadlier spot
 To a bone which, I think, to the best of my memory, 's
 Call'd by Professional men the "*os femoris*;"
 And the ball being one of those named from its shape,
 And some fancied resemblance it bears to the grape,
 St. Foix went down,
 With a groan and a frown,
 And a hole in his small-clothes the size of a crown. —
 — Stagger'd a bit
 By this "palpable hit,"
 He turn'd on his face, and went off in a fit!

Yes! — a Battle's a very fine thing while you're fighting,
 These same Ups-and-Downs are so very exciting.

But a sombre sight is a Battle-field
 To the sad survivor's sorrowing eye,
 Where those, who scorn'd to fly or yield,
 In one promiscuous carnage lie;
 When the cannon's roar
 Is heard no more,
 And the thick dun smoke has roll'd away,
 And the victor comes for a last survey
 Of the well-fought field of yesterday!

No triumphs flush that haughty brow, —
No proud exulting look is there, —
His eagle glance is humbled now,
As, earth-ward bent, in anxious care
It seeks the form whose stalwart pride
But yester-morn was by his side!

And there it lies! — on yonder bank
Of corses, which themselves had breath
But yester-morn — now cold and dank
With other dews than those of death!
Powerless as it had ne'er been born
The hand that clasp'd his — yester-morn!

And there are widows wand'ring there,
That roam the blood-besprinkled plain,
And listen in their dumb despair
For sounds they ne'er may hear again!
One word, however faint and low, —
Ay, e'en a groan, — were music now!

And this is Glory! — Fame! —
But, pshaw!
Miss Muse, you're growing sentimental;
Besides, such things *we* never saw;
In fact, they're merely Continental.
And then your Ladyship forgets
Some widows came for epaulettes.

So go back to your canter; for one, I declare,
Is now fumbling about our capsized Mousquetaire,
A beetle-brow'd hag,
With a knife and a bag,
And an old tatter'd bonnet which, thrown back, discloses
The ginger complexion, and one of those noses
Peculiar to females named Levy and Moses,
Such as nervous folks still, when they come in their way, shun,
Old vixen-faced tramps of the Hebrew persuasion.

You remember, I trust,
François Xavier Auguste,
Had uncommon fine limbs, and a very fine bust.
Now there's something — I cannot tell what it may be —
About good-looking gentlemen turn'd twenty-three,
Above all when laid up with a wound in the knee,
Which affects female hearts, in no common degree,
With emotions in which many feelings combine,
Very easy to fancy, though hard to define;

Ugly or pretty,
 Stupid or witty,
 Young or old, they experience, in country or city,
 What's clearly not Love — yet it's warmer than Pity —
 And some such a feeling, no doubt, 'tis that stays
 The hand you may see that old Jezebel raise,
 Arm'd with the blade,
 So oft used in her trade,
 The horrible calling e'en now she is plying,
 Despoiling the dead, and despatching the dying!
 For these “nimble Conveyancers,” after such battles,
 Regarding as *treasure trove* all goods and chattels,
 Think nought, in “perusing and settling” the titles,
 So safe as six inches of steel in the vitals.

Now don't make a joke of
 That feeling I spoke of;
 For, as sure as you're born, that same feeling, — whate'er
 It may be, — saves the life of the young Mousquetaire! —
 The knife, that was levell'd erewhile at his throat,
 Is employ'd now in ripping the lace from his coat,
 And from what, I suppose, I must call his *culotte*;
 And his pockets, no doubt,
 Being turned inside out,
 That his *mouchoir* and gloves may be put “up the spout,”
 (For of coin, you may well conceive, all she can do
 Fails to ferret out even a single *écu*;) —
 As a muscular Giant would handle an elf,
 The virago at last lifts the soldier himself,
 And, like a She-Samson, at length lays him down
 In a hospital form'd in the neighbouring town!
 I am not very sure,
 But I think 'twas Namur;
 And there she now leaves him, expecting a cure.

CANTO II

I abominate physic — I care not who knows
 That there's nothing on earth I detest like “a dose” —
 That yellowish-green-looking fluid, whose hue
 I consider extremely unpleasant to view,
 With its sickly appearance, that trenches so near
 On what Homer defines the complexion of Fear;
Χλωρον δεος, I mean,
 A nasty pale green,
 Though for want of some word that may better avail,
 I presume, our translators have rendered it “pale;”
 For consider the cheeks

Of those “well-booted Greeks,”
Their Egyptian descent was a question of weeks;
Their complexion, of course, like a half-decayed leek’s;
And you’ll see in an instant the thing that I mean in it,
A Greek face in a funk had a good deal of green in it.
I repeat, I abominate physic; but then,
If folks *will* go campaigning about with such men
As the Great Prince de Condé, and Marshal Turenne,
They may fairly expect
To be now and then check’d
By a bullet, or sabre-cut. Then their best solace is
Found, I admit, in green potions, and boluses;
So, of course, I don’t blame
St. Foix, wounded and lame,
If he swallowed a decent *quant. suff.* of the same;
Though I’m told, in such cases, it’s not the French plan
To pour in their drastics as fast as they can,
The practice of many an English *Savan*,
But to let off a man
With a little *ptisanne*.
And gently to chafe the *patella* (knee-pan).

“Oh, woman!” Sir Walter observes, “when the brow
’s wrung with pain, what a minist’ring Angel art thou!”
Thou’rt a “minist’ring Angel” in no less degree,
I can boldly assert, when the pain’s in the knee;
And medical friction
Is, past contradiction,
Much better performed by a She than a He.
A fact which, indeed, comes within my own knowledge,
For I well recollect, when a youngster at College,
And, therefore, can quote
A surgeon of note,
Mr. Grosvenor of Oxford, who not only wrote
On the subject a very fine treatise, but, still as his
Patients came in, certain soft-handed Phyllises
Were at once set to work on their legs, arms, and backs,
And rubbed out their complaints in a couple of cracks. —
Now, they say,
To this day,
When sick people can’t pay
On the Continent, many of this kind of nurses
Attend, without any demand on their purses;
And these females, some old, others still in their teens,
Some call “Sisters of Charity,” others “Beguines.”
They don’t take the vows; but, half-Nun and half-Lay,
Attend you; and when you’ve got better, they say,
“You’re exceedingly welcome! There’s nothing to pay.
Our task is now done.

You are able to run.
We never take money; we cure you for fun!"
Then they drop you a court'sy, and wish you good day,
And go off to cure somebody else the same way.
— A great many of these, at the date of my tale,
In Namur walked the hospitals, workhouse, and jail.

Among them was one,
A most sweet Demi-nun.
Her cheek pensive and pale; tresses bright as the Sun, —
Not carroty — no; though you'd fancy you saw burn
Such locks as the Greeks lov'd, which moderns call auburn.
These were partially seen through the veil which they wore all;
Her teeth were of pearl, and her lips were of coral;
Her eyelashes silken; her eyes, fine large blue ones,
Were sapphires (I don't call these similes new ones;
But, in metaphors, freely confess I've a leaning
To such, new or old, as convey best one's meaning). —
Then, for figure? In faith it was downright barbarity
To muffle a form
Might an anchorite warm
In the fusty stuff gown of a *Sœur de la Charité*;
And no poet could fancy, no painter could draw
One more perfect in all points, more free from a flaw,
Than her's who now sits by the couch of St. Foix,
Chafing there,
With such care,
And so dove-like an air,
His leg, till her delicate fingers are charr'd
With the Steer's opodeldoc, joint-oil, and goulard;
— Their Dutch appellations are really too hard
To be brought into verse by a transmarine Bard. —

Now you'll see,
And agree,
I am certain, with me,
When a young man's laid up with a wound in his knee:
And a Lady sits there,
On a rush-bottom'd chair,
To hand him the mixtures his doctors prepare,
And a bit of lump-sugar to make matters square;
Above all, when the Lady's remarkably fair,
And the wounded young man is a gay Mousquetaire,
It's a ticklish affair, you may swear, for the pair,
And may lead on to mischief before they're aware.

I really don't think, spite of what friends would call his
"Penchant for liaisons," and graver men "follies,"
(For my own part, I think planting thorns on their pillows,

And leaving poor maidens to weep and wear willows,
Is not to be classed among mere peccadillos,) His "*faults*," I should say — I don't think François Xavier Entertain'd any thoughts of improper behaviour Tow'rds his nurse, or that once to induce her to sin he meant While superintending his draughts and his liniment. But, as he grew stout,
And was getting about,
Thoughts came into his head that had better been out;
While Cupid's an urchin
We know deserves birching,
He's so prone to delude folks, and leave them the lurch in.
'Twas doubtless his doing
That absolute ruin
Was the end of all poor dear Therèse's shampooing.—
'Tis a subject I don't like to dwell on: but such
Things will happen — ay, e'en 'mongst the phlegmatic Dutch.

"When Woman," as Goldsmith declares, "stoops to folly,
And finds out too late that false man can betray,"
She is apt to look dismal, and grow "melan-choly,"
And, in short, to be anything rather than gay.

He goes on to remark that "to punish her lover,
Wring his bosom, and draw the tear into his eye,
There is but one method" which he can discover
That's likely to answer — that one is "to die!"

He's wrong — the wan and withering cheek;
The thin lips, pale, and drawn apart;
The dim yet tearless eyes, that speak
The misery of the breaking heart;

The wasted form, th' enfeebled tone
That whispering mocks the pitying ear;
Th' imploring glances heaven-ward thrown,
As heedless, helpless, hopeless here;

These wring the false one's heart enough,
If "made of penetrable stuff."
And poor Therèse
Thus pines and decays,
Till, stung with remorse, St. Foix takes a post-chaise,
With, for "wheelers," two bays,
And, for "leaders," two greys,
And soon reaches France, by the help of relays,
Flying shabbily off from the sight of his victim,
And driving as fast as if Old Nick had kick'd him.

She, poor sinner,
 Grows thinner and thinner,
 Leaves off eating breakfast, and luncheon, and dinner,
 Till you'd really suppose she could have nothing in her. —
 One evening — 'twas just as the clock struck eleven —
 They saw she'd been sinking fast ever since seven, —
 She breath'd one deep sigh, threw one look up to Heaven,
 And all was o'er! — Poor Therèse was no more—
 She was gone! — the last breath that she managed to draw
 Escaped in one half-utter'd word — 'twas "St. Foix!"

* * * * *

Who can fly from himself? Bitter cares, when you feel 'em,
 Are not cured by travel — as Horace says, "*Cœlum
 Non animum mutant qui currunt trans mare!*"
 It's climate, not mind, that by roaming men vary —
 Remorse for temptation to which you have yielded, is
 A shadow you can't sell as Peter Schlemil did his;
 It haunts you for ever — in bed and at board, —
 Ay, e'en in your dreams.
 And you can't find, it seems,
 Any proof that a guilty man ever yet snored!
 It is much if he slumbers at all, which but few,
 — François Xavier Auguste was an instance — can do.
 Indeed, from the time
 He committed the crime
 Which cut off poor Sister Therèse in her prime,
 He was not the same man that he had been — his plan
 Was quite changed — in wild freaks he no more led the van;
 He'd scarce sleep a wink in
 A week; but sit thinking,
 From company shrinking —
 He quite gave up drinking.
 At the mess-table, too, where now seldom he came,
 Fish, *fricassée*, *fricandeau*, *potage*, or game,
Dindon aux truffes, or *turbot à la crème*,
 No! — he still shook his head, — it was always the same,
 Still he never complained that the cook was to blame!
 'Twas his appetite fail'd him — no matter how rare
 And *recherché* the dish, how delicious the fare, —
 What he used to like best he no longer could bear;
 But he'd there sit and stare
 With an air of despair:
 Took no care, but would wear
 Boots that wanted repair;
 Such a shirt too! you'd think he'd no linen to spare.
 He omitted to shave; — he neglected his hair,
 And looked more like a Guy than a gay Mousquetaire.

One thing, above all, most excited remark:
In the evening he seldom sat long after dark.
Not that then, as of yore, he'd go out for "a lark"
With his friends; but when they,
After taking *cafe*,
Would have broiled bones and kidneys brought in on a tray,
— Which I own I consider a very good way,
If a man's not dyspeptic, to wind up the day —
No persuasion on earth could induce him to stay;
But he'd take up his candlestick, just nod his head
By way of "Good evening!" and walk off to bed.
Yet even when there he seem'd no better off,
For he'd wheeze, and he'd sneeze, and he'd hem! and he cough;
And they'd hear him all night,
Sometimes, sobbing outright,
While his valet, who often endeavour'd to peep,
Declared that "his master was never asleep!
But would sigh, and would groan, slap his forehead, and weep;
That about ten o'clock
His door he would lock,
And then never would open it, let who would knock! —
He had heard him," he said,
"Sometimes jump out of bed,
And talk as if speaking to one who was dead!
He'd groan and he'd moan,
In so piteous a tone,
Begging some one or other to let him alone,
That it really would soften the heart of a stone
To hear him exclaim so, and call upon Heaven;
Then — The bother began always *just at eleven!*"

François Xavier Auguste, as I've told you before,
I believe, was a popular man in his *_corps_*,
And his comrades, not one
Of whom knew of the Nun,
Now began to consult what was best to be done.
Count Cordon Bleu
And the Sieur de la Roue
Confess'd they did *not* know at all what to do:
But the Chevalier Hippolyte Hector Achille
Alphonso Stanislaus Emile de Grandville
Made a fervent appeal
To the zeal they must feel
For their friend, so distinguished an officer, 's weal.
"The first thing," he said, "was to find out the matter
That bored their poor friend so, and caused all this clatter —
Mort de ma vie!"
— Here he took some rapee—

“Be the cause what it may, he shall tell it to me!” —
 He was right, sure enough — in a couple of days
 He worms out the whole story of Sister Therèse,
 Now entomb’d, poor dear soul! in some Dutch *Père la Chaise*.
 — “But the worst thing of all,” François Xavier declares,
 “Is, whenever I’ve taken my candle up-stairs,
 There’s Therèse sitting there — upon one of those chairs!
 Such a frown, too, she wears,
 And so frightfully glares,
 That I’m really prevented from saying my pray’rs,
 While an odour, — the very reverse of perfume, —
 More like rhubarb or senna, — pervades the whole room!”

Hector Achille
 Stanislaus Emile,
 When he heard him talk so felt an odd sort of feel;
 Not that *he* cared for Ghosts — he was far too genteel;
 Still a queerish sensation came on when he saw
 Him, whom, for fun,
 They’d, by way of a pun
 On his person and principles, nick-named *Sans Foi*,
 — A man whom they had, you see,
 Mark’d as a Sadducee, —
 In his horns, all at once, so completely to draw,
 And to talk of a Ghost with such manifest awe! —
 It excited the Chevalier Grandville’s surprise;
 He shrugg’d up his shoulders, he turn’d up his eyes,
 And he thought with himself that he could not do less
 Than lay the whole matter before the whole Mess.

Repetition’s detestable;—
 So, as you’re best able,
 Paint to yourself the effect at the Mess-table—
 How the bold Brigadiers
 Prick’d up their ears,
 And received the account, some with fears, some with sneers;
 How the Sieur de la Roue
 Said to Count Cordon Bleu,
 “*Ma foi — c’est bien drôle* — Monseigneur, what say you?” —
 How Count Cordon Bleu
 Declared he “thought so too;” —
 How the Colonel affirm’d that “the case was quite new;” —
 How the Captains and Majors
 Began to lay wagers
 How far the Ghost part of the story was true; —
 How, at last, when asked, “What was the best thing to do?”
 Everybody was silent, — for nobody knew! —
 And how, in the end, they said, “No one could deal
 With the matter so well, from his prudence and zeal,

As the Gentleman who was the first to reveal
This strange story — viz. Hippolyte Hector Achille
Alphonse Stanislaus Emile de Grandville!”

I need scarcely relate The plans, little and great,
Which came into the Chevalier Hippolyte’s pate
To rescue his friend from his terrible foes,
Those mischievous Imps, whom the world, I suppose,
From extravagant notions respecting their hue
Has strangely agreed to denominate “Blue,”
Inasmuch as his schemes were of no more avail
Than those he had, early in life, found to fail,
When he strove to lay salt on some little bird’s tail.
In vain did he try
With strong waters to ply
His friend, on the ground that he never could spy
Such a thing as a Ghost, with a drop in his eye;
St. Foix never would drink now unless he was dry;
Besides, what the vulgar call “sucking the monkey”
Has much less effect on a man when he’s funky.
In vain did he strive to detain him at table
Till his “dark hour” was over — he never was able,
Save once, when at Mess,
With that sort of address
Which the British call “Humbug,” and Frenchmen “*Finesse*,”
(It’s “Blarney” in Irish — I don’t know the Scotch,)
He fell to admiring his friend’s English watch.
He examined the face,
And the back of the case,
And the young Lady’s portrait there, done on enamel, he
“Saw by the likeness was one of the family;”
Cried “*Superbe! — Magnifique!*”
(With his tongue in his cheek) —
Then he open’d the case, just to take a peep in it, and
Seized the occasion to pop back the minute-hand.
With a demi-*congé*, and a shrug, and grin, he
Returns the *bijou* and — *c’est une affaire finie* —
“I’ve done him,” thinks he, “now I’ll wager a guinea!”

It happen’d that day
They were all very gay,
’Twas the *Grand Monarque*’s birthday — that is, ’twas St. Louis’s,
Which in Catholic countries, of course, they would view as his —
So when Hippolyte saw
Him about to withdraw,
He cried, “Come — that won’t do, my fine fellow, St. Foix, —
Give us five minutes longer and drink *Vive le Roi*.”

François Xavier Auguste,

Without any mistrust
 Of the trick that was play'd, drew his watch from his fob,
 Just glanced at the hour, then agreed to "hob-nob,"
 Fill'd a bumper, and rose
 With "*Messieurs*, I propose" —
 He paused — his blanch'd lips fail'd to utter the toast!
 'Twas *eleven!* — he thought it half-past ten at most —
 Ev'ry limb, nerve, and muscle grew stiff as a post, —
 His jaw dropp'd — his eyes
 Swell'd to twice their own size —
 And he stood as a pointer would stand — at a Ghost!
 — Then shriek'd, as he fell on the floor like a stone.
 "Ah! Sister Therèse! now — do let me alone!"

* * * * *

It's amazing by sheer perseverance what men do, —
 As waters wear stone by the "*Sæpe cadendo*,"
 If they stick to Lord Somebody's motto, "*Agendo!*"
 Was it not Robert Bruce? — I declare I've forgot,
 But I think it was Robert — you'll find it in Scott —
 Who, when cursing Dame Fortune, was taught by a Spider,
 "She's sure to come round, if you will but abide her."
 Then another great Rob,
 Called "White-headed Bob,"
 Whom I once saw receive such a thump on the "nob"
 From a fist which might almost an elephant brain,
 That I really believed, at the first, he was slain,
 For he lay like a log on his back, on the plain,
 Till a gentleman present, accustomed to *train*,
 Drew out a small lancet, and open'd a vein
 Just below his left eye, which relieving the pain,
 He stood up, like a trump, with an air of disdain,
 While his "backer" was fain,
 — For he could not refrain —
 (He was dress'd in pea-green, with a pin and gold chain,
 And I think I heard somebody call him "Squire Hayne,")
 To whisper *ten words* one should always retain,
 — "TAKE A SUCK AT THE LEMON, AND AT HIM AGAIN!!!" —
 A hint ne'er surpassed, though thus spoken at random,
 Since Teucer's apostrophe — *Nil desperandum!* —
 — Grandville acted on it, and order'd his Tandem.
 He had heard St Foix say, That no very great way
 From Namur was a snug little town call'd Grandpré,
 Near which, a few miles from the banks of the Maese,
 Dwelt a pretty twin-sister of poor dear Therèse,
 Of the same age, of course, the same father, same mother,
 And as like to Therèse as one pea to another;
 She liv'd with her Mamma,

Having lost her Papa,
Late of contraband *schnaps* an unlicensed distiller,
And her name was Des Moulins (in English, Miss Miller).

Now, though Hippolyte Hector
Could hardly expect her
To feel much regard for her sister's "protector,"
When she'd seen him so shamefully leave and neglect her;
Still, he very well knew
In this world there are few
But are ready much Christian forgiveness to shew,
For other folk's wrongs — if well paid so to do —
And he'd seen to what acts "*Res angustæ*" compel *beaux*
And *belles*, whose affairs have once got out at elbows,
With the magic effect of a handful of crowns
Upon people whose pockets boast nothing but "browns;"
A few *francs* well applied
He'd no doubt would decide
Miss Agnes des Moulins to jump up and ride
As far as head-quarters, next day, by his side;
For the distance was nothing, to speak by comparison,
To the town where the Mousquetaires now lay in garrison;
Then he thought, by the aid
Of a veil, and gown made
Like those worn by the lady his friend had betray'd,
They might dress up
Miss Agnes so like to the Shade,
Which he fancied he saw, of that poor injured maid,
Come each night, with her pale face, his guilt to upbraid;
That if once introduced to his room, thus array'd,
And then unmask'd as soon as she'd long enough stay'd,
'Twould be no very difficult task to persuade
Him the whole was a scurvy trick, cleverly play'd,
Out of spite and revenge, by a mischievous jade!

With respect to the scheme — though I do not call that a gem —
Still I've known soldiers adopt a worse stratagem,
And that, too, among the decided approvers
Of General Sir David Dundas's "Manœuvres."
There's a proverb, however, I've always thought clever,
Which my Grandmother never was tired of repeating,
"The proof of the Pudding is found in the eating!"
We shall see, in the sequel, how Hector Achille
Had mix'd up the suet and plums for *his* meal.

The night had set in; — 'twas a dark and a gloomy one; —
Off went St. Foix to his chamber; a roomy one,
Five stories high,
The first floor from the sky,

And lofty enough to afford great facility
 For playing a game, with the youthful nobility
 Of “crack *corps*” a deal in Request, when they’re feeling,
 In dull country quarters, *ennui* on them stealing;
 A wet wafer’s applied
 To a sixpence’s side,
 Then it’s spun with the thumb up to stick on the ceiling;
 Intellectual amusement, which custom allows old troops,—
 I’ve seen it here practised at home by our Household troops.
 He’d a table, and bed,
 And three chairs; and all’s said. —
 A bachelor’s barrack, where’er you discern it, you’re
 Sure to find not overburthen’d with furniture.

François Xavier Auguste lock’d and bolted his door
 With just the same caution he’d practised before;
 Little he knew
 That the Count Cordon Bleu,
 With Hector Achille, and the Sieur de la Roue,
 Had been up there before him, and drawn ev’ry screw!

And now comes the moment — the watches and clocks
 All point to *eleven!* — the bolts and the locks
 Give way — and the party turn out their bag-fox! —
 With step noiseless and light,
 Though half in a fright,
 “A cup in her left hand, a draught in her right,”
 In her robe long and black, and her veil long and white,
 Ma’amselle Agnes des Moulins walks in as a Sprite! —
 She approaches the bed
 With the same silent tread
 Just as though she had been at least half a year dead!
 Then seating herself on the “rush-bottom’d chair,”
 Throws a cold stony glance on the Black Mousquetaire.

If you’re one of the “play-going public,” kind reader,
 And not a Moravian or rigid Seceder,
 You’ve seen Mr. Kean,
 I mean in that scene
 Of Macbeth, — by some thought the crack one of the piece,
 Which has been so well painted by Mr. M’Clise, —
 When he wants, after having stood up to say grace,
 To sit down to his haggis, and can’t find a place;
 You remember his stare
 At the high-back’d arm-chair,
 Where the Ghost sits that nobody else knows is there,
 And how, after saying “What man dares I dare!”
 He proceeds to declare
 He should not so much care

If it came in the shape of a “tiger” or “bear,”
But he don’t like its shaking its long gory hair!

While the obstinate Ghost, as determined to brave him,
With a horrible grin,
Sits, and cocks up his chin,
Just as though he was asking the tyrant to shave him.
And Lenox and Rosse
Seem quite at a loss
If they ought to go on with their sheep’s head and sauce;
And Lady Macbeth looks uncommonly cross,
And says in a huff
It’s all “Proper stuff!” —
All this you’ll have seen,
Reader, often enough;
So, perhaps ‘twill assist you in forming some notion
Of what must have been François Xavier’s emotion,
If you fancy what troubled Macbeth to be *doubled*_,
And, instead of one Banquo to stare in his face
Without “speculation,” suppose he’d *a brace!*

I wish I’d poor Fuseli’s pencil, who ne’er I believe
was succeeded in painting the terrible,
Or that of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was so adroit
in depicting it —*vide* his piece
Descriptive of Cardinal Beaufort’s decease,
Where that prelate is lying
Decidedly dying,
With the King and his *suite*,
Standing just at his feet,
And his hands, as Dame Quickly says, fumbling the sheet;
While, close at his ear, with the air of a scorner,
“Busy, meddling,” Old Nick’s grinning up in the corner.
But painting’s an art I confess I am raw in,
The fact is, I never took lessons in drawing:
Had I done so, instead
Of the lines you have read,
I’d have giv’n you a sketch should have fill’d you with dread;
François Xavier Auguste squatting up in his bed,
His hands widely spread,
His complexion like lead,
Ev’ry hair that he has standing up on his head,
As when, Agnes des Moulins first catching his view,
Now right, and now left, rapid glances he threw,
Then shriek’d with a wild and unearthly halloo,
Mon Dieu! v’la deux!
BY THE POPE THERE ARE TWO!!!”

He fell back — one long aspiration he drew.
In flew De la Roue,
And Count Cordon Bleu,
Pommade, Pomme-de-terre, and the rest of their crew.
He stirr'd not, — he spoke not, — he none of them knew!
And Achille cried “Odzooks!
I fear, by his looks,
Our friend, François Xavier, has popp'd off the hooks!”

'Twas too true! *Malheureux!*
It was done! — he had ended his earthly career, —
He had gone off at once with a flea in his ear;
— The Black Mousquetaire was as dead as Small-beer!!



L'ENVOYE

A moral more in point I scarce could hope
Than this, from Mr. Alexander Pope.

If ever chance should bring some Cornet gay,
And pious Maid, — as, possibly, it may, —
From Knightsbridge Barracks, and the shades serene
Of Clapham Rise, as far as Kensal Green;
O'er some pale marble when they join their heads
To kiss the falling tears each other sheds;
Oh! may they pause! — and think, in silent awe,
He, that he reads the words, “*Ci gît St. Foix!*” —
She, that the tombstone which her eye surveys
Bears this sad line, — “*Hic jacet Sœur Therèse!*” —
Then shall they sigh, and weep, and murmuring say,
“Oh! may we never play such tricks as they!” —
And if at such a time some Bard there be,
Some sober Bard, addicted much to tea
And sentimental song — like Ingoldsby —
If such there be—who sings and sips so well,
Let him this sad, this tender story tell!
Warn'd by the tale, the gentle pair shall boast,
“I've 'scaped the Broken Heart!” — “and I the Ghost!!”