

THE DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE BRAZILIANS.

No. I.

Chaque pays a ses coutumes, ses manières et ses lois.

MONTESQUIEU.

HE who in the end of the 18th century, says Rousseau, has brought himself to abandon all his early principles without discrimination, would probably have been a bigot in the days of the League—I just throw this out as a hint, because in this age of unlimited scepticism, the assertions of travellers are but too often exposed to ignorant and painful misconception. Not that the readers of a magazine look for any thing beyond a mere *distraction* in its pages; they take up the literary olla podrida, as a Dutchman does his *schnaps*, to wile away the tedious half-hour before dinner, or recur to it again on the following morning, to dispel the nausea produced by an interminable speech in the House on the preceding night from some member of the arch-agitator's tail, on the wrongs of "poor ould Ireland."

Equally indifferent are they to every thing connected with the writer of a book of tracts, for not one iota will they care whether I was driven to South America by the *res angusta domi*—the ambition to stand and be shot at, for one dollar a-day, in the cause of liberty and independence—the *auri sacra fames*, or in fact any other of those principles of human action that so justify the observation of the satirist:—

De tous les animaux qui s'élèvent d ans l'air;
Qui marchent sur la terre, ou nagent dans la mer.
De Paris au Perou, du Japon jusqu'à Rome,
Le plus sot animal, à mon avis, c'est l'homme.

One fine afternoon, in the year 1817, I found myself leaning over the ship's side, riding safely at anchor in the bay of All Saints, and gazing on one of the loveliest scenes in creation. Before me rose majestically in amphitheatre, the fair city of St. Salvador—the Moorish cupolas and the tall spires of the churches and convents shooting gracefully into the clear blue sky—the white walls of the houses so beautifully contrasting with the luxuriant vegetation and varied tints of the gardens with which they were intermingled. On my left stretched far into the bay the beautiful point of Monteserrate; its white sandy beach studded with villas and shaded by groves of beautiful palm and cocoa-

nut trees. Behind me was the vast expanse of the bay of All Saints, with its cluster of islands, that a Calypso might have chosen for her residence, and towards which a multitude of barks and canoes were seen wending their course. If we only cross the Channel that separates us from our Gallic neighbours, how strong is the impression produced on the mind by foreign scenery and manners; but how much more powerful is it when the physical aspects both of inanimate and animate nature are so different to what we have from infancy been accustomed to look upon. Long then, and enraptured, did I stand gazing on the lovely scene before me, when the gruff voice of the captain announced to me that it was time to go on shore.

As we pulled towards the landing-place, a near inspection soon taught me that, like faded beauty, a Brazilian city looked best at a distance. The wild discordant yells of negro population were to our untutored ears almost appalling, while a concatenation of horrid smells assailed our olfactory nerves, such as all the attar of the East, with the contents of all the Jose Maria Farenas *magasins* in Christendom to boot, would not have neutralised. Rapidly clearing the dark narrow streets of the Cedaile buexà, we began ascending a very steep hill to the upper town. On turning an abrupt angle of the rock, we came in front of the Casa da Misericordia (the house of mercy), before the gate of which were planted six poles bearing on their lofty summits as many negro heads. A crowd of people were gazing on these bloody relics of humanity with that self-same listless vacant stare which a sojourner in the East must have so often remarked in the groups of bearded Turks, while scanning the features of some rebel pacha, whose *pickled* head has just been placed in one of the fatal niches of the seraglio gate.

"Quem he esso (what is the meaning of this)?" I eagerly inquired of the serjeant who accompanied us.

"Senhor, nasa he nada." (Sir, 'tis nothing).

"Nothing! say you? Why they are human heads."

"Only those of revolted negroes."

"Chopped off I suppose to render their former fellows *plus raisonnables*, and placed before the Casa da Misericordia, to illustrate the meaning of the words."

"He *esso mesmo*, senhor (Just so, sir)," replied the fellow, with a ghastly grin.

By this time we had gained the Palace Square. The *Præd do Palacio* of Bahia literally contained all that gave

"Promise of gladness, peril of a grave."

One side contained the residence of the captain-general, a large spacious edifice; a second, the mint; a third, the senate-house and public prison; and the fourth, the courts of chancery. Our business was with the first. After ascending a lofty stair-case and traversing a spacious anti-room, filled with orderlies and *aid-de-camps*, we were ushered into a small cabinet, where, reclining on a sofa in a white robe de chambre, we found the captain-general of the province. His excellency received us with distinguished politeness, and detaining us for a few moments, while he repeatedly inquired the news from Europe, politely dismissed us with the hope that our residence in Bahia might prove agreeable. On regaining the square, I lingered there for some time; for it was the hour when a stranger has an opportunity of observing all the lights and shadows of Brazilian life. The grenadier company of the only European regiment in garrison were on duty at the palace. They were a remarkable fine body of men—well set up, neat in their appointments, with well bronzed martial countenances, on which the bivouacs had left many a trace; for they were part of the men who followed the immortal Wellington in one uninterrupted career of victory from the Tagus to the Adour.

The centre of the square was occupied by a group of inhabitants of another kind—soldiers of the church, monks of the orders of San Francisco and San Domingo. How picturesque their costume, how imposing their appearance! the large slouched hat of some, the shorn crown, and well-dressed hair of others; the bare neck, the pale ascetic countenance lightened up by an eye of fire, their long flowing robes and sandalled feet riveted my gaze. Near to them was a party of Corelians in their huge cocked-hats and antiquated cut coats. Mark their animated gesticulations, which so finely contrast with the calm and dignified manners of the churchmen. A negro girl, with a tray of sweetmeats on her head, invokes their blessing as she

passes, and carols joyously forth her cry of "*Doce fresca de Creio, doce de Araca*." What means that group of old women sitting beneath the piazza of the Camera—their wrinkled necks covered with charms and relics? Their haggish looks and tattered cloaks remind you of the witches in Macbeth. They are professed beggars, who entreat your charity in the name of the Lady of the Pillar, or of her of the Conception, or by the love of the five wounds of Jesus Christ (as *enreo chargas do Jesu Christo*). But let us turn to a more pleasing object: mark that palanquin just entering the square, with its curtains of scarlet and gold brocade, and its negro bearers in their gay liveries. One of the curtains is held back by a pretty mulatto-girl. How singularly wild and picturesque is her costume. Her neck and arms are encircled with a profusion of beads and chains of the purest gold; pendants of the same glittering metal adorn her ears; her turban is of the brightest scarlet hue; her African striped petticoat, confined at the hips, descends in ample folds to her naked feet, the badge of her condition—a slave. Over her polished shoulder is thrown a mantle, *à la romani*; it is of black velvet lined with blue, and beautifully contrasts with the snowy whiteness of her cambric chemisette. She trips gaily along, directing every now and then the attention of her mistress to some passing object; but the jealous folds of the dark mantilla conceal the features of the fair inmate of the palanquin from the public gaze, through the single aperture of which shines a lustrous dark eye, even as we sometimes see the evening star shining in solitary loveliness in the dark blue sky.

As she was borne along, every head was uncovered, a compliment she returned by a graceful wave of a small and delicately-formed hand. In the rear, mounted on a spirited barb, rode a gentleman, probably her husband. To an English eye, the trappings of the horse, and the garb of the rider, had a singular appearance: the high demi-pique saddle, and tiger skin housings of the former; the Moorish bridle, with its powerful silver bit; the semicircular stirrup-boxes, covered with plates of burnished silver, produced a picturesque effect; equally so was the appearance of the rider—the broad brimmed hat of the finest Chillian straw, the scarlet jacket of cotton cloth, the richly embroidered nankeen pantaloons, the boot à l'écuyer, armed at the heel with a ponderous Moorish spur, more calculated to kill a horse than urge it forward.

Suddenly the cries of the negro girls and the discordant hum of voices which prevailed, cease as if by magic. The tinkle of a small bell is heard; a solemn dirge floats mournfully on the evening breeze; immediately every head is uncovered, every knee is bent; the palace guard are turned out and present arms; the balconies of the neighbouring houses are filled with people holding lighted tapers, and chaunting the service of the dead. Even the captain-general and his staff appear and bend the knee—for the cause of this devotion was the host on its way to administer the extreme unction to a dying sinner.

There is, after all, something in the catholic religion that powerfully appeals to the imagination. With much that is liable to abuse, it contains much that is holy and good; and often in the solitary loneliness of a foreign land, when at the soft hour of evening the Ave Maria bell has tolled the—

“S’quilla di lontano
Che paia l’ giorno pianger che se muore,”

I have regretted that the indiscriminate zeal in our own country against catholicism has banished much that was calculated to bring religion more forcibly home to our bosoms.

Overcome with the heat, we now entered a café to regale ourselves with some pineapple punch, and the aromatic fragrance of a real Havanna. All its inmates rose as we entered; and when we prepared to depart, to our astonishment, we found that our refreshments had been paid for, a compliment that is frequently shown to strangers in the cafés of Brazil.

The moon was just rising in all the bright effulgence of a tropical clime, as we bent our steps towards the *Passeo publico*. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the site of this garden, commanding a view of one of the most spacious and beautiful bays in the world. It is laid out with considerable taste, and ornamented in the centre by a marble pyramid, to commemorate the arrival of King John the Sixth, who flying before the victorious arms of Napoleon, first set his foot on American ground in this spot. It was a lovely night; and yet, strange to relate, this public walk was as solitary as the desert. Not a sound burst upon the delicious stillness that prevailed, save the silvery note of the Ave Maria beetle, or the loud chirping of the cricket. The moon sailed high in the heaven, silvering with its rays the placid bosom of the bay that lay at our feet, still and unrudded as a mountain-lake; the magnificent constellations of the southern hemisphere shone brightly

in the dark blue firmament, while the lofty cocoa-nut trees fanned us with their graceful tops, wafting towards us the most delicious perfumes from the neighbouring lime and orange groves. How beautiful is nature within the tropics; and yet how deceitful, for fever and death ride on every gale.

We now thought of retracing our steps, although it was not yet ten o’clock. The streets of the city were silent as the grave. In passing a large mansion, the chords of a guitar were struck by a masterly hand, and, after a beautiful prelude, a female voice sang with impassioned tenderness the following *Modinha*:—

Despois que partio Jozeinho
Partes com elle o prazer
Amor que pode, nao quer valer
Nao ha remedio sinso morer.

At the period of my arrival in Brazil, society may be said to have been in a state of transition. To a philosophic observer this state of things was deeply interesting; it displayed human nature, such as it existed in Europe (allowing for those modifications produced by climate) centuries ago: for, hermetically sealed for three centuries from all intercourse with foreigners by the jealousy of the Portuguese government, society presented a species of civilisation such as existed in Portugal about a century after the discovery of America. Since the emigration of the royal family, European civilisation had in the cities on the coast already made deep inroads into the old system of manners and customs that prevailed. It was immediately visible in the style and architecture of the modern buildings, the gilded balconies and French windows of which contrasted singularly with heavy dark-latticed apertures of the old Brazilian houses. Again, it appeared in the costume of the people, the fashion and materials of which widely differed: some retaining the broad-brimmed hat and Spanish cloak, while others adopted the more modern European dress. However, the ancient system of manners still predominated: it was singularly instanced with regard to the treatment of the women, who were rarely seen abroad except at church, and kept at home in a state of almost Turkish seclusion: indeed that delicate intercourse between the two sexes which constitutes the charm of European society is to this day unknown in Brazil. The government of the country was of the purest despotism, but mitigated in its exercise by that indolent character that so distinguishes both Portuguese and Brazilian. With all their

deference for hereditary rank and titled honours, the most perfect political equality prevailed among the whites—the real and only distinction was the difference of cast and colour; but even here the broad line of demarcation which separated the white from the black and intermediate castes, was frequently overstepped by the possessor of great wealth, who, though physically as brown as a gipsy, was considered socially white—just as we see in Europe Jew bankers created barons de l'empire, and decorated with the order of the Holy Ghost.

Forma regina pecunia donat.

It is true the *mauvaises langues* of the *Branços legitimos* would style them *Branços desfurcados*, white-washed whites: nevertheless, they moved in the best circles of society, and ranked as whites. The intellectual condition of society will be gathered from the following facts:—The majestic Bahia, as it was styled on every occasion, contained seven monasteries, four convents, three *casas de recolhimentos* for divorcées, &c.; churches and chapels without end, and 100,000 inhabitants, who were so thoroughly emancipated from the rule of the schoolmaster, that one small bookseller's shop, one printing-press, and one paper half the size of a penny magazine, and edited by a priest, sufficed to supply their literary wants: true it is, that in the old Jesuit convent, there was a fine library, containing most of the best French and English authors; but then, in the whole city there was not half a dozen persons who understood those languages—the most popular works were the Lives of the Saints, and the History of Charlemagne and his doughty Paladins. Still the Bahianos were happy in their ignorance, and though unenlightened by a society for the diffusion of useful knowledge, their social condition was superior to that of many people occupying a more elevated point in the scale of civilisation than themselves.

A few days after my arrival, I received an invitation to a grand ball, given by an English gentleman, which was graced by all the rank, beauty, and fashion of the city, and afforded, therefore, a wide field for the study of national manners. There were present, I recollect, the captain-general and his staff, the officers of a Spanish corvette, the foreign consuls, and a long list of other magnificos and distingués. The arrival of each guest was announced by a loud flourish of trumpets, and followed by an introduction to the captain-general, who occupied an elevated

seat at the extremity of the ball-room. Although the persons assembled at this fête composed the élite of the society at Bahia, it was marked by some peculiarity of manners that forcibly struck me. The ladies were all ranged on one side the room, and left to themselves till the dancing commenced. One or two cavaliers, it is true, crossed over, and leaning over the chairs of some of the dark-eyed *senhoras*, were seen pouring soft things into their ears. Still it was an innovation considered by the majority of the company "more honoured in the breach than the observance."

Whether we must attribute it to the heat of the climate or to their sedentary life, I know not, but certain it is that female beauty in Brazil is an exotic. You in vain look for that surpassing loveliness, that exquisite "tournure," that witchery of manner which so distinguish the women of Spanish America. On the present occasion, the ladies were all dressed in the French fashion, but their dresses were badly put on, and from the absence of the corset, gave them an *air tout cheffonné*; they were, however, *coiffées* in the most exquisite taste, and their small feet and delicately turned ankles might have excited the envy of an Andalusian. At this time neither the graceful quadrille or the soft undulating waltz had been introduced into Brazil: the style of dance in fashion approached to the old English country dance, but more elaborately ornamental; the cavaliers attempted "*des tours de force*" that would have done honour to a coryphée of the French opera: a favourite evolution appeared to be to encircle their fair partners with their pocket handkerchiefs, who on their side endeavoured to escape from their fetters. Dancing was not the only amusement of the evening; very high play was going on in the card-rooms, and both sexes were seen trying their luck at the faro table, which displayed a glittering heap of doubloons.

In the course of the evening it was announced to the host that a small silver teapot, of exquisite workmanship, had most unaccountably disappeared; the fact is, that it had excited the admiration of an old mulatto colonel, belonging to the respectable class of white-washed whites, who, watching his opportunity, put it into his pocket. Fortunately for the success of his manœuvre, the tails of the uniform coats worn by the Brazilian staff were not the swallow-tailed abortions in which his present majesty of Prussia so delights, but were as ample as

those worn by Old Schewerin and other heroes of the seven years' war. The name of this old fellow was Nicholao, which by the English residents had been changed into the honourable sobriquet of Old Nic. Although his perceptions were in most instances tolerably acute, he was never able to comprehend the difference between "meum et tuum," a moral defect which was constantly leading to results most disagreeable to all those who had the honour of his acquaintance. On this occasion, the master of the house had no doubts whatever of the fate of his tea-pot, and therefore resolved to regain it by a *COUP DE MAIN*.

Accordingly when the colonel rose to depart, the protuberance in the posterior regions of his uniform coat convinced him that his suspicions were correct. Seizing the old gentleman therefore by the skirt of his coat, he exclaimed in a tone of great good humour "Quem he isso, senhor coronel. "What is this, colonel?" "Quem sora? "What can it be?" rejoined the colonel, with well-feigned surprise.

"Vamos a ver," (let us see) continued the Englishman.

"Pois nao?" (and why not?) repeated the Brazilian, drawing at the same time from his pocket the identical tea-pot, and exclaiming with the most imperturbable gravity, "Ave Maria Jesus! How absent I am! Positively I took it for my snuff-box;" and shuffled off as if nothing had occurred. This old hero, I learnt afterwards, was subject to frequent distractions of the kind, during one of which, only a few days before, he had conveniently mistaken a dozen pair of silk stockings for his gloves.

A few months previous to my arrival in Brazil a revolution had broken out in the province of Pernambuco, the object of which was to throw off the yoke of the mother country, and to establish a republican form of government. The revolt was speedily quelled by the energetic measures of the captain-general of Bahia, the Conde das Arcos, with a less effusion of blood than is sometimes spilt at an Irish row. Most of the ringleaders were at the time in the prisons of Bahia, and a Franciscan friar and two civilians, who had been despatched by the provisional government of Pernambuco to excite a corresponding movement in the province of Bahia, were under sentence of death. As no execution for a political offence had taken place for nearly a century, the event excited the most intense interest. On the morning that was to close the mortal

career of the prisoners, the bells of all the churches and convents tolled mournfully. At an early hour the garrison was under arms; the captain-general and all the government authorities, the different monastic orders, and other religious Irmandades were assembled in the Palace Square. At ten o'clock precisely the prisoners were led forth, and the procession commenced moving forward; the houses in the different streets through which it passed were hung with black, and at intervals chapels were erected, before which it halted, while prayers were offered up for the repose of the prisoners' souls.

It appeared by this display to be the intention of government to strike a salutary terror into the Brazilian population—vain hope: the poison had been instilled into the veins of the body politic, and the hour of separation between Portugal and her splendid colony was nigh—still the policy of the measure was good. The measured tread of the infantry—the iron clatter of the cavalry—the deep rumbling roll of the heavy guns, and the solemn peal of the muffled drums, in conjunction with the mournful dirge of the churchmen, produced certainly an impressive effect. The two civilians, overcome with the terrors of approaching death, were obliged to be supported by their confessors. Not so the friar—his carriage was erect, his pace firm and stately: with his arms folded on his bosom, and a countenance raised to Heaven, radiant with enthusiasm, he might have been taken for one of the early martyrs of our faith.

To give the Brazilians their due, they are a humane people, and singularly averse to scenes of blood; so that when the procession finally reached the place of execution, the fossé of one of the *Forts detachés* which defend Bahia on the land side, with the exception of a few foreigners, there were only present such of the natives whom duty imperiously called there.

The last ceremonies of the church over, the prisoners are placed on chairs; but the friar resolutely refused to have his eyes bandaged, which was complied with—a solemn silence prevails—all is ready. The firing party are moved up to within sixteen paces of their intended victims; at last the officer commanding the platoon removes the cigar from his mouth and gives the word—"fire!" The scene which followed almost baffles description; the two civilians, seated on either side of the padre, were knocked off their chairs severely wounded, while, shame

to relate, he escaped unhurt. With eyes flashing fire, he rose majestically, and drawing up his tall figure to its full height, looked proudly on his country's oppressors, and cried "Viva la patria!" So electric was the effect, that had the assemblage of people present been greater, there is no knowing what might have been the consequences produced upon the ardent temperament of Brazilians—but as it was, not even a cry of sympathy was heard. The victims were again placed on their chairs, while the soldiers reloaded their pieces—the second fire again brought down the two civilians; but the padre, though this time wounded, still rose and repeated as before his inspiring cry. An expression of horror was now vividly depicted on the countenances of all present, saving on that of the friar, and his was calm and unimpassioned as a statue. The platoon were

then ordered to advance within six paces of their victims to put an end to their sufferings—the fatal word was again given—again the friar rose; but this time the power of utterance was denied to him, and casting one look of withering scorn on his executioners, he fell dead on the mangled bodies of his two companions.

Et moriens dulcis reminiscitur Argos.

If report can be believed, the career of this Franciscan friar had been blackened by every crime that can disfigure humanity. But as it was the policy of the government unquestionably to defame his memory, it should induce us to give ear to it with caution; but if true—his end, as has been said of a more celebrated character, was as heroic as his life was infamous.

THE COAL CARRIER.

"I GIVE you just twenty-four hours," said an eccentric and arbitrary patron to his dependent, "to write me a tale growing out of the following words:—'*And so, my poor old man, you are still carrying coals!*' If you don't accomplish this task in the time specified, you may seek another home."

The youth was left alone in his little study to think of the bitter words which had been uttered. He clasped his hands tightly round his fair brow; tears started to his eyes, and he muttered—"Oh! that I had been born a helpless unconscious idiot, rather than with just sufficient talent to urge a satiated appetite to perpetual trials of my wretched skill. This world teems with transcendent abilities, yet nothing can suffice but the offerings of a poor tyro. I will shake myself clear of this."

He rose from his seat, and with steps which vacillated between quick and slow, resolute and nerveless, he reached the breakfast parlour of his task-master. "My lord," said he, "I find—I mean I know that I cannot accomplish this last trial of my poor skill, therefore,"—his eyes at that moment met those of a pretty, blue-eyed, flax-haired girl, about five years younger than himself. He paused, speedily averted his look, and continued—"therefore, unless your lordship will allow me twelve hours more, I cannot attempt what you desire."

His lordship drew himself up, and casting

into his face an expression which he intended for considerate condescension, said, "I never wish to be unreasonable, young man, and therefore I grant your request; but if (as I believe) you mean to earn a livelihood by the labour of the pen, you should learn to be more prompt."

The youth withdrew, scarcely turning his eyes on the young lady, Clara; but in that brief glance he read an anxiety that he should succeed. He returned to his study, took up a quill, made it slowly into a pen, wrote his text on a sheet of paper, read it a dozen times, threw down his pen, and equipping himself for a walk, suddenly left the house. He bent his steps to a corner of a street, known by the name of the Barrow Bridge, where he was sure to find a group of coal-carriers, with their little flat baskets and shovels, ready for a call. Having reached the place, he stood still, and examined each face before him. A little brisk woman made two or three steps in advance, as if expecting his orders; a dark gruff fellow asked where he should go to; and a pair of females both started up, for some were sitting on the cold stones, and said, "We gawn thegither, and carry in a cart for threepence."

"For three pence!" said he, emphatically, "and what will that do for two?"

"Get us our brikfast and somethin owr."

stooped down, as if the man was afraid or ashamed to look at him, who had raised him up—the arms too were bound; for he attempted to lift his hands, and they would not come higher than his breast—his legs, too, were so closely stuck together, that it was easy to see that they were tied also. For a minute or so, I could know by his gestures that the young man was speaking to him—he put out his left hand straight before him—he raised his right—it was clenched—he frequently struck it into the open palm of the left—he seemed to be telling over to the unfortunate wretch all the evils he was guilty of, and all the wrongs he had done—the other appeared either not to know what was said, or to be admitting its truth; for he often shook his head, in a wild manner, as the young man seemed to conclude every particular of his discourse. At last the young man stopped—he pointed to the blazing fields, to the lake, and then to the low clouds, which, from their colour, looked as if ready to catch the fire which was swallowing up every thing below. When the pinioned man saw the other point to the lake, again the same piercing shriek was uttered—even in the heat of the night, I felt frozen—a second cry was, I thought, coming upon me, when I saw a bright flash of steel pass beneath the head of the pinioned wretch—he tottered, and as he was doing so, the four men rushed forward—a kick was made by all—the body rose for an instant in the air—sprung slanting on, and then with a sullen, almost noiseless splash, sunk into the bottomless waters of the lake!

“I was stupified—I felt myself becoming sick—my eyes were dazzled, and there was a choking about my throat—it was as if my mouth was filled with turf-ashes, and that standing longer to look on such a scene would kill me. I began to tremble, and was just sinking down on the ground, when I saw the four men hurrying round by the lake. ‘They have seen me,’ thought I, ‘and it is better itself to be caught by a gauger, than be killed by such murdering villains.’ This notion gave me strength, and I give you my oath I never stopped till I was landed back safe in Dungarvon.

“Next day, there was no end to the talking about the burning of Neal Berry’s farm, and every one wondering what became of himself. From that time to this, he has never been seen or heard of; few inquired after him, because he was so hard on the poor, and less cared ever to see him again, because he had once in his life been an approver, hung three men, and thought to take away the life of a fourth—a very young gossoon, whom every body said himself was the first to teach mischief to; and that never was seen in the day-time since Neal Berry’s ‘informations’ banished him from the county Clare.

“For my own part, Phelim, nothing would ever persuade me but that it was the approver Neal Berry’s own murder I was by at, and that the young man he swore against was the very man who burned his farm first, and cut his throat afterwards, besides drowning him.”

THE DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE BRAZILIANS.

No. II.

Nil admirari prope res est una, Numici
Solaque que possit facere et servare beatum.

I HAVE sojourned in many lands, and “have taught me strange tongues.” In the course of an eventful and a wandering life, it has been at one time my lot to gallop across the Pampas with the *Bolas* whirling like lightning round my head, in pursuit of the flying ostrich; at another, to pursue with equal ardour in the race of life and death, the flying Royalist, on the llanos of Colombia or in the vallies of Chili, to the tune of *viva la patria*. Again, I have contemplated amid the Cyclopean ruins of Cuzco, the relics of

an extinct phasis of civilisation, and in the virgin forests of Brazil, our mother nature fresh as at the birth of time. I have felt the soft witchery of the dark-eyed maidens of Lima and St. Jago, and when, with a heart absolutely riddled like an old target by the fine practice of their eyes, I had taken the desperate resolution of throwing myself into the crater of *Cotopaxi*, I have—

Heu prisca fides!

Yes! I have actually found myself—*mais tel est l’homme, mesdames*, by the bright efful-

gence of a tropical moon, reclining on a mat at the foot of a stately palm, and supping, 'en partie fine,' on a jugged monkey, an olla of lizards and land crabs, or a fricassée de perquets, with a brown Indian belle, at the magnificent confluence of the *Tangurragua* and the *Ucayle*. This was very naughty, I admit, but since

Sans un petit brin d'amour,
On s'ennuye même à la Cour,

in the solitude of an American wilderness, this little distraction may, I think, be excused in one who at *that time* perhaps looked upon the fairest and best part of creation "*un peu trop en Mousquetaire*." So without dwelling upon this unfortunate chapter, I shall lead my fair readers to the banks of the Mississippi, where I shot alligators with the wild Kentuckians; and to the cabin of a New England skipper, where I have regaled myself over and over again with that *chef d'œuvre* of American gastronomy, pork and molasses, and which I pronounce, in defiance of all the Trollopes in existence, to be an exquisite dainty, worthy of a place in Careme's immortal work "*Le Cuisinier Pittoresque*." I could, but that I fear the recital would blench their fair cheeks, tell them how I shot a Canadian rapid, in which, after all, there is less real danger than in shooting a *montagne Russe* at Tivoli, with their slender waists encircled by the arm of a beau cavalier—

Il est plus dangereux de glisser
Sur le gazon que sur le glace.

But no more of that. After smoking with Bolivar, bivouacking with Paez and his Llaneros, helping San Martin to fill his empty pockets with Spanish dollars, and the hopeful Pedro to place on his still emptier head an imperial diadem—faith, I began to think I had seen quite enough of the two Americas, so I re-crossed the Atlantic, sported my yellow phiz in Rotten Row, lost the best part of my hard-earned doubloons at the Salon in Paris—then rushed like Hannibal across the Alps—played the Pygmalion before the Venus at Florence—Byronised by moonlight amid the ruins of the Coliseum, and was strongly pressed by a romantic old Frenchman of the larmoyant school, to drop a tear upon the tomb of Virgil. But I grew tired of this tobery, and marched northwards, just halting at Venice to convince myself that the stately Venetians were worthy of their high reputation, and then to forget them while contemplating the charms of the fair Kelnerinnen of Gratz. Klopstock must have had these pretty Styrians in his eye when, in his celebrated

sonnet, he says the charms of his country-women—

Ich heir ein Deutesches mädcher
Mein ang ist blau und sanft mein blick
Ich hab ein hertz das edil ist
Und stoltz und gut.

Again, these blue-eyed maidens were in their turn forgotten while treading a mazurka at Vienna with the bewitching Hungarians, or polonaising with the stately Poles. Then I maintained a thesis with the military pedants of Prussia upon the comparative merits of the "*ordre mince*" and the "*ordre profonde*;" but my most splendid effort was in Berlin, the improvisation of a new infantry chako, which elicited the admiration of royalty itself, who possesses certainly the most correct taste in such matters of any man in Europe. This success, by-the-bye, might have led on to fortune. But I was *blasé* with civilised life, and, like Jean Jacques, sighed for "*La Vie des Bois*;" so I again turned Guerilla, joined the wild Cossacks of the Don, and soon found myself skirmishing with the far-famed Turkish Delhis. By heavens! they were gallant foes. Methinks I see them now, issuing from the gates of Shumla, their horse-tails floating on the wind, and tossing their long lances high in air as they spurred madly into the plain. Mark how rapidly the deep column deploys into line—how wildly their war cry floats upon the breeze—

"Allah hu! Allah hu!"

Up to the sky with that wild halloo.

Onwards the gallant horsemen rush like the ruthless simoom of their native deserts, sweeping before them in their whirlwind charge the iron formations of their Russian foes, even as the last dried leaves of autumn are scattered by a northern wind. By the beard of the prophet, 'twas a gallant sight, and so I told, a few weeks afterwards, the Pasha of Scutari, who,

"Although the face of Mussulman,
Not oft betrays to lookers on
The mind within well skill'd to hide
All but unconquerable pride,"

fairly chuckled with delight at the recital, to the no small consternation of the attendant Karras, who were basking in the sunshine of his presence. Beyond, an "*Allah Acbar*," and so forth, the precise words used on this occasion by the gallant pasha, unacquainted as I am with the Turkish, I cannot repeat; but, as far as the genius of that language will admit of, my dragoman assured me that the outburst approached very closely to the celebrated

"Go it, Ned Codrington!"

Whether the head of my friend the pasha be

still upon his shoulders I profess to know not; the chances are, from the way these things are managed in Turkey, that it has long ago adorned the Seraglio gate. But this I do know, that the recollection of our last chebourque, apart other points in his creed very captivating to youthful imagination, have made a Moslem of me. Yes! my fair readers, a wandering life has taught me, that man, however modified by climate, religion, or government, is "au fond," essentially everywhere the same animal, equally prone to good or evil, as sufficient pains are taken to direct him in the ways of either. Thus do I never measure national manners and customs by comparison, but by their own inherent peculiarities—thus have I long ago assumed the *nil admirari* for my motto, and, like the philosopher of old, have learned to exclaim—

Ubique bene—ibi patria.
 And where indeed can a man dream away more sweetly his existence than in one of the pretty kiosks that line the banks of the Bosphorus, or stud the beautiful valley of Buyjudere?

The common sounds in the cities of Brazil, are the deep tolling of the matin and vesper bells—the roar of heavy ordnance, the hissing flight of rockets—the loud breathing of military bands, varied at the soft hour of evening by the beautiful Ave Marias, chanted by the assembled youth of both sexes, the tender Modinho that tells of broken hearts and unrequited love, or the more solemn *miserere*, that mournfully floating on the evening breeze, proclaims that some "poor child of clay has quitted earth's troubled waters for a purer spring."

Well, whether our boasted modern civilisation has improved the condition of man, or extended the sphere of his happiness, is, after all, a question of argument. But it will scarcely be denied that it has cast its glittering veil over much that was picturesque and beautiful in its national character and manners, imparting to the whole system of society the type of undeviating and monotonous uniformity, not more strongly contradistinguished from the more romantic though unintellectual ages it has succeeded, than is the gorgeous fretwork and elaborate chiseling of the gothic cathedral, from the plain white-washed walls of the modern conventicle.

Under the burning clime of the tropic no pale gradations from saffron hue to roseate morn proclaim the approach of day, the fiery orb bursts suddenly from the bosom of darkness, and light awakes the world.

How magnificent is the dawn of a tropical day—how delicious the freshness—how balmy the sweetness that succeeds to the noxious vapours and sickly exhalations of the night! A magic stillness pervades all nature, through which the peal of the holy matin bell falls with solemn effect on the ear. At its earliest summons, the fair Brazilian and her sable duenna, her slender form veiled by the ample folds of the jealous mantilla, may be seen hieing to offer up her morning orisons at the shrine of her favourite Madonna. The poor African quits his matted couch to resume his daily toil, carolling as he goes some ditty of his native Africa, that perchance brings back to his memory the days of former freedom.

The beautiful bay of the Rio de Janeiro is covered with barks and canoes, bearing to the imperial city the auriferous produce of the distant provinces of Minaes, Goyaz, and Matto Grosso, and the glittering diamonds of the Serra do frio. Again, the quays are piled with the merchandise of every clime—the rich productions of the Indian loom—the hardware of Birmingham—the cottons of Manchester—the silks and velvets of La belle France—the linens of Germany—the schiedam of Holland—and the wines of Spain and Portugal. How varied the aspect and garb of yon motley group of traders of all nations assembled before the door of the custom-house in the Rua Directa—the public functionaries in all the pride of place, with their huge cocked hats and long tailed coats, are seen with stately pace repairing to their several posts. Observe that haughty churchman on his way to the imperial chapel, as he leans back in his well padded *legé*, the right hand is brought up upon his breast to display the glittering signet ring. How finely his lofty bearing contrasts with the meek ascetic air of the mendicant friar, who is filling his wallet at the stalls of a group of market-women, to whom he presents to kiss a picture of his patron saint, receiving in return as a pious guerdon, from one a luscious pine-apple, from another a bunch of bananas, from a third a small box of *doce*, or a small copper coin—

"Foul superstition, by whatever name
 Thou art called, the churchman's good, the general
 bane."

But hark—the more than Babel confusion of tongues, the wild discordant cries of the Negro porters as they toil beneath their ponderous burdens, cease for an instant—the iron clatter of advancing cavalry breaks upon the ear. A sub-division of the German lancers of the guard is seen debouching from the Rua do

Ouvedor, followed by a crowd of mounted officers and attendants, and a phaeton and six driven by a dark young man. Proudly he stands erect, and as he sweeps beneath the arch of triumph into the Palace Square, a regal flourish of drums and trumpets, and a thousand *vivas*, proclaim that the imperial Pedro has quitted his beautiful retreat at São Christovão to mingle in the affairs of state.

The sun has now attained its meridian height, and the indolent Brazilian of every class courts the balmy pleasures of the siesta, leaving their deserted streets to dogs and foreigners. Between four and five, all again becomes life and animation, the roads leading to the beautiful fauxbourgs of Botta Fogo and Eugenio Velho are crowded with equipages and horsemen; picturesque groups of both sexes may be seen sitting under the verandahs of the pretty Quintas, enjoying the cool evening breeze. But at this hour it is the Praca do Palacio that presents the most varied and animated picture of Brazilian life. The cafés are crowded with smoking politicians, discoursing the events of the day—groups of the natives of the inland provinces are seen in earnest conversation with officers and soldiers of the guard—friars of every order—civilians of every grade—Indians and negroes—intermediate casts of every degree. Mark the leather-clad Sertanego of the northern provinces, how finely his armour-looking dress contrasts with the singularly wild and picturesque costume of the tall Paulesta, or the fierce Menheiro. Mark again well the haughty air, the curling mustachoe lip, the profusion of raven curls that escape from beneath the broad gray sombrero, the dark blue poncho, and the ponderous spur. They remind you of some dark creation of Murillo's pencil. What hideous specimens of humanity are those that suddenly strike the eye! Black bristling hair, skin of the darkest copper hue, a flat Tartar countenance, devoid of all expression, and horribly disfigured by barbarian caprice, for their under-lips are perforated and brought up over the tip of the nose by the insertion of a round piece of wood; while their ears, distended by the same process, hang down upon their shoulders—they are a party of *Botocado* Indians, gazing with savage wonderment upon the signs of civilised life.

But let us turn from the savage children of nature to you gilded balcony immediately opposite the palace. Reclining on a mat, sits a dark-eyed daughter of Brazil; at her feet you observe the guitar adorned with the

national cockade, on her left breast, the national cockade, with its stern device—*Independencia ou morte*.

“Yet are Brazil's daughters no race of Amazons.”

In the back ground are seen a party of slaves, who occasionally direct their young mistress's attention to something in the square below; but she heeds them not, her lustrous dark eye rests not on that holy friar, but on the martial figures of a party of foreign officers of the guard who are pacing beneath her window. Among them you will easily distinguish the swarthy Lusitanian, the blue-eyed German, the fiery Gaul, and the haughty Briton, disjointed fragments of the mighty hosts, when the setting of the sun of Napoleon, on the blood-stained field of Waterloo, had suddenly hurled from their sphere of action in Europe. How deeply impressed are their fine features, which that reckless daring character which the wild uncertainty of the camp so engenders!

But now sinks the sun,

“Not as in northern climes obscurely bright,
But in one blaze of living light.”

The hum of human voices ceases, all nature owns the solemn softness of the hour, while the pious Brazilian chants the beautiful vesper hymn, and invokes the protection of the Madonna through the dangers of approaching night.

So limited is the space which a monthly periodical can be supposed to allow to any one subject, that I must on this occasion confine my observations to a few salient points in the moral and social condition of the women of Brazil, a country which, in spite of all the obstacles it has still to overcome, is in a singular state of moral and physical development. I shall therefore pass over many minor, though interesting illustrations of the domestic life of the Brazilians, and at once endeavour to describe to my fair readers what is that flower in Brazil, which in every country on the face of the globe is so highly prized, before which the heart of youth begins to palpitate, which over manhood still exercises its influence when every thing else has lost its empire, and which brightens up with a smile of unavailing regret the wrinkled cheek of age. Beauty, a flower which in Brazil fades almost as soon as it is blown. In fact, a Brazilian is in the zenith of her beauty at the age of fourteen; but as she takes no pains to cultivate it by exercise, her close sedentary life soon imparts a languid sickly hue to her countenance, and an extreme *embonpoint* robs her figure of its slender proportions. Indeed

so precocious is nature in the climate of Brazil, that married at fourteen or fifteen they are frequently grandmothers at thirty.

Le President Dupaty, in his *Letters sur l'Italie*, in speaking of the Romans, says:—"Le besoin des sexes trouve dans le cicisbeisme aliment, dans les meurs facilité, dans la religion indulgence."—Substitute the word slavery for "cicisbeisme," and the observation will apply with equal justice to the state of society in Brazil at the present day. In fact, love is what it may be expected to be in so burning a climate—in a system of manners where it never encounters obstacles that strengthen it—prejudices that give a value to it, or moral ideas that embellish it. With both sexes love is purely physical. In vain will you look for that deep-souled tenderness in the one, and that lofty self-devotion in the other, which with us encircle a pure attachment with so bright a halo—that moral love, in fact, which throws over the wild cravings of passion the glittering soul of refinement—still, in spite of all, a Brazilian courtship must be conducted with as much skill as the labours of a siege; and oftentimes when the engineer officer has reported the breach practicable, I have known a splendid failure to follow. The *système de guerre* on these occasions is as follows:—By means of a skilful emissary you establish a communication with the garrison by bribing a favourite female slave; thus you acquire a knowledge of the defences of the place, and of the movements of the enemy. Such, for an example, as the church at which your enamorata hears mass, at what hour she may propose to visit a *Comadre*, or on what saint's day she may go to the country, where an interview may be arranged.—In this manner the operation may last for months. The letters that pass on these occasions often reminded me of Sancho Panza's improvisation of Don Quixote's letter to Dulcinea, for they are literally crammed with *Almas mias and ojos mios*, and such like endearing terms. Every thing depends upon the discretion and prudence of your Mercury, for should he play you false, the consequences may prove fatal. I once knew an Englishman who had consumed upwards of a year before a fortress in the shape of a married lady, but without success, so ably defended was it by the jealous vigilance of the husband. At length an opportunity offered of carrying the place by a *coup de main*—intelligence was brought that the fair senhora was going on a certain day on a visit to her sister in the outskirts of the city, and

that on her return she would give her lover rendezvous at the house of a *Comadre*. A trusty scout was accordingly despatched to hover on the flanks of their line of march, and observe their motions. Success now appeared inevitable, but fortune was unpropitious. The scout too boldly entered the house and mingled with the slaves of the establishment, whom he regaled with his master's largesses. An uproar was the consequence, which attracted the attention of the master of the house, who immediately ordered the strange negro to be brought before him. The family, for the sake of coolness, were at the moment *au trezieme*; the culprit is brought in—the fair object of his mission turns deadly pale. A ray of dark suspicion is seen upon the countenance of her brother-in-law, who, in a voice of thunder, questions the negro by whom he had been sent, and on his refusing to answer, he seizes him by the waist and holds him over the balcony. The poor devil of a scout, finding himself thus dangling between heaven and earth, confessed every thing. The lady was sent to the country, and the Englishman received an intimation from an acquaintance that it might be prudent not to be out after dark. In fact, on these occasions, the Brazilians *ne se genent pas*—there is no drawing of the triggers at twelve paces, nor work for the gentlemen of the long robe. The knife of a hired assassin renders recourse to either one or the other perfectly superfluous.

A very intimate friend of mine was one evening *en partie fine* with a fair Brazilian, when the *tête-à-tête* was rather disagreeably broken in upon by the presence of a Carmelite friar. Still the manners of the churchman were so polished,—his conversation so fascinating,—that the displeasure of the Englishman at his intrusion insensibly wore away. The clock of a neighbouring convent had tolled the hour of midnight, when the foreigner rose to take his leave:—so did the friar, but not to depart: he planted himself before the door of the apartment, and in the same tone of high-bred courtesy which had hitherto so captivated the Englishman, he said to him, "There are, sir, but two means of egress from this apartment,—the door and the window. Now take your choice of either"—pointing with his left hand to the open casement, and drawing with his other from under his robe a long and sharp knife. Unarmed as he was, to have attempted to execute a retreat by the door, would have been to court instant destruction. The astounded Briton had therefore no remedy

but to choose the lesser evil of the two, and make his exit by the window, which he effected by spraining both his ankles. Fortunate was it for him that the apartment of his dulcinea was *au-premier*, or he must have broken his neck; and still more fortunate was it that he was not a Brazilian, or the courtly Carmelite would scarcely have allowed him even the alternative he did. What was the nature of the eclaireissement between the terrified senhora and her spiritual director, who of course the friar was, I leave my readers to imagine. The condition of the women of Brazil, it will be supposed, varies in the different provinces, in the capital, and the principal cities on her extensive line of coast. The genial breath of European civilisation is daily making wide inroads into the domain of Brazilian prejudice, and of course breaking the fetters in which they have been so long enchained by a more than Moorish spirit of jealousy. But in the interior provinces they are still as closely confined as in the East. During the years 1825 and 1826, I was in the capitania of Piauhí; and although on the most intimate terms with the president, yet I was never introduced to the female branches of his family, notwithstanding his lady was a European, and of course accustomed to a familiar intercourse of the two sexes. In fact his excellency apologised to me for this omission, by frankly giving me to understand that, as it was not the custom of the country, it might expose the ladies of his family to the ill-natured remarks of "*les mauvaises langues*" of the place. While in this part of the country, I had once occasion to return the visit of a planter who resided about twenty leagues off. I reached his habitation I rather fancy somewhat earlier than he had anticipated; for I was detained nearly half an hour in the hall; an interval passed, I have no doubt, by this jealous Brazilian, in stowing away his female kind, just as he would have driven his cattle into the corral, on the alarm of an onça (panther) in the neighbourhood being given. While awaiting, therefore, the moment of introduction, my attention was suddenly arrested by a negro, who, busily employed in fabricating a straw hat, whistled, as he worked, the "*Di tanti palpiti*" of Rossini. I recollected having heard that that celebrated maestro, when in England, was furious on hearing this beautiful cavatina hawked about our streets. Yet had he heard it as I did, whistled by an untutored negro amid a Brazilian wilderness, it would have produced on his mind far differ-

ent feelings. To me it conveyed the intimate conviction that the roof I was then under sheltered some accomplished being—perhaps, too, beautiful—for on these occasions the imagination will wander. Nor was my conjecture unfounded. At length I was introduced to the *senhor da casa*; was received with open arms; told to consider every thing in the house as mine own. But although the establishment of female slaves appeared to be very strong, I saw no symptoms of the being whom my imagination had arrayed with so many charms. However, I determined to manoeuvre on the old gentleman's flank, and ascertain the fact; so at dinner, after enduring an interminable discourse upon the importance of the independence of Brazil to the whole world, the brilliant destinies that awaited her, the sublime patriotism and heroic gallantry of her children, and more particularly those of the district in which he lived, I skilfully availed myself of a pause to unmask my battery.

"You are musical, I presume?"

"Not in the least, I assure you."

"Then you must have some one in your house who is so,—one, too, from an air I heard this morning, who has received a European education."

I shall not easily forget the sinister expression which the countenance of my host assumed on this occasion. His former courtesy vanished as if by magic; and, stammering out that his wife played a little on the piano, he turned the conversation by proposing a ride.

Vain, however, during the three days I remained, were my endeavours to gain even a glimpse of the poor captive. But on the third evening, the chords of a guitar were swept close to my window by a skilful hand, and presently a female voice sang, with exquisite pathos, the following stanza from a beautiful old Spanish romance:—

"Ah de mi, un ano felice,
Parece un sopro ligero,
Pero sin dicha un instante,
Res un siglo de tormento."

I could not help thinking, as the music died away upon the breeze, from the tender expression of the singer, that the words but too faithfully echoed the state of her own feelings.

A few minutes before departing on the following morning a Mulatto slave presented me with a very pretty box of sweetmeat, and which I observed at the time she carefully deposited in my portmanteau. That there was something more than met the eye in this

box I felt fully convinced of. Accordingly, on finding myself alone in my canoe, I hastened to examine its contents, and found, embedded in a layer of Guava jam, a letter directed to a gentleman in Lisbon, under a blank envelope, on which was written, in a delicate female hand, these words, "*Excuse and pity.*" Pity her I did from the bottom of my soul, on learning from the governor of the province her melancholy tale. Young, beautiful, and accomplished, a native of Coimbra, she had been betrothed from the very cradle to her own uncle, who had emigrated years before to Brazil, and to whom she was consigned on attaining her seventeenth year. Poor girl! perhaps the letter thus mystically entrusted to my care, was a parting farewell to him on whom thy young heart had placed its first affections, ere transplanted from the beautiful vale of the Mondego. You were sent to die broken-hearted in a Brazilian forest, the victim of a *marriage de convenance*.

This state of things must, as a necessary consequence, strike at the root of all sociality, and exercise a baneful influence over the national character. In fact there is no such thing in Brazil as society, in the European acceptation of the word. Some approach to it may be found among the European Portuguese of the highest class; but among the Brazilians there are none of the elements of refined society, the minds of both sexes being literally as gross and uncultivated as their manners are polished. I say of both sexes, for I have heard the ladies of Brazil conversing with the utmost *nonchalance* upon

subjects which, in England, a delicate female blushes even to mention to her medical attendant. The character of the men may be guessed at from that of the women—totally destitute of that high-flown gallantry, and generous self-devotion to the softer sex, that their ancestors had imbibed from the Moors. Sunk in the grossest sensuality, they yet, nevertheless, retain much of their fascinating polish of exterior. The Chinese mandarin is not a more punctilious observer of external forms than the modern Brazilian, which he carries to the most ridiculous excess; when abroad his hat is oftener in his hand than on his head, it is also *de rigueur* to return even the salute of a slave. I have more than once incurred the charge of ill breeding for not moving my hat on passing the residence of an acquaintance, although not one of its inmates happened at the time to be visible. Again, in bombast and grandiloquence, the Brazilian is the first of mortals. Does he give a banquet, he merely styles it "*hum copa d'agoo*"—a glass of water: do you enter his house, he immediately tells you that you are to consider every thing he possesses as your own. I really once knew a man who, on being complimented on the beauty of his wife, replied, "*he as seus ordems*"—in plain English, she is quite at your service. But I must expatiate no more for the present on the generosity of the Brazilian, who, in the estimation of my fair readers, will be charged, I fear, with carrying this virtue to an excess repugnant to their English ideas, and where it becomes as dangerous as its opposite vice.

L I N E S

BY MISS AUGUSTA CATHERINE FITZWYGRAM.

I.

When the bright silvery moon shines fair,
When the glistening stars that hang in air
Shine purely, calmly, heavenly, clear,
Think, think on God.

II.

When night's dark shades have pass'd away,
When light, once more, awakes the day,
When birds begin their carol gay,
Then think on God.

III.

When tempests dark o'erspread the sky,
When swelling clouds have burst on high,
List, list to nature's awful cry,
And think on God.

IV.

When evening fair is lost in night,
When morning with returning light,
Smiling o'er all, shines purely, bright,
Think, think on God.