

and air-tight tins of various size and form. Another separate establishment, to which I was taken, in Dean Street, I recognised as the quondam piano-forte manufactory of Mr. Tomkinson, the possessor of some of the finest specimens of our native school of art, especially Turners. It was once, also, the abode of Talleyrand, the driest of jokers, and is now devoted to dry goods for exportation, which are kept apart from the pickle and preserve departments, the damps and vapours in which would injure them. No wonder that Mr. Albert Smith relished these familiar luxuries much when he met with them at Hong Kong and Canton. Few China jars, I fancy, could compete with them; and with the pale ale—thermometer 90°, with the punkas going—an amateur might lick his lips, to dream of the symposium! and no doubt many did, for, in the year 1858, 5000 Yorkshire hams, 3400 sides of bacon, and 25,000 cheeses were shipped by them to India alone.

The consumption of cork, wire, pepper, and paper is proportionately enormous; and the style of the whole affair may be surmised, when I mention that a carman is paid £70 per annum for daily carting off the accumulation of refuse and rubbish. Some of the damaged fruit looked as if it might be marketable somewhere or other in the low streets or suburbs; but Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell could not be inquisitive about ulterior dispositions, and I could not guess.

I have no vocation to talk of syrups, of crystallizations, of confectionery of every description; of plum-pudding and mincemeat, to meet John Bull's Christmas longing at the antipodes; of biscuits, of potted meats, of dessert fruits, of everything that gourmand could wish and gourmet enjoy, "as if increase of appetite did grow with what it fed on;" of essence of coffee, of celery seed, of Scotch oatmeal, of gelatine, of desiccated milk, and I know not what else; and shall only remark that, in the event of successful invasion, Soho Square would be a prime place for imperial head-quarters, with abundance in the victualling line for staff, guards, escorts, "pioneers and all."

Some general facts and conclusions which stamped this day memorably on my mind, remain to be impressed on the minds of my readers. It seemed to me that this immense business was the triumph of the grand principle that honesty is the best policy. In answer (see "Blue Book") to three of the questions put to Mr. Blackwell by the House of Commons Committee, on the adulteration of food, in 1855, he replied that when the firm ceased to use colouring, "in the first instance, we found a considerable diminution, and particularly abroad; parties wrote to us to say that they requested their goods *green*, as formerly. Now they are satisfied, and we do not have the same difficulty." And again, with regard to the appearances, such as I have referred to, in essence of anchovies: "At first (answered the witness) it was rather prejudicial to us; but since that we have found it rather advantageous." "*It is more to our interest to sell a pure article than an impure one, if parties will really take it;*" that is, please their eye at the risk of their health. Oh, golden rule! I am

assured that its truth has been wonderfully confirmed by the increase, within the five years that has since elapsed, in the stupendous business of Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell. These estimable traders, twenty years ago, had ten men and twelve women (a great advance then, from their beginning) in their service; their employment of regular supervision and labour on their premises amounts *now* to 131 men and 118 women! besides hundreds of occasional workers. They use at the rate of a ton of loaf sugar every day throughout the year. What a Mont Blanc loaf between 600,000 and 700,000lbs. weight of lump would make, if piled up all together! And then, the river of vinegar—*all from malt*—(supplied by Potts and Co. and Burnett and Co.), to the extent of more than 4000 half hogsheads per annua, and running at the rate of 2000 gallons a week!

It is not to be supposed that a business like this could be free from imitations, frauds, and forgeries. Quite the reverse. One Englishman, a Mr. K—, at Boulogne, not only furnished that fashionable retreat, but nearly all Paris, (fifty shops of the false to two of the real,) with C. and B.'s "celebrated pickles and preserves," that is to say, with inferior compositions, neatly got up, yet gross imitations. But this case has been brought to book, notwithstanding the obstacles interposed by French laws, and it is settled that the imposture shall be given up. Calcutta distinguished itself by similar impositions, and doubtless they are common elsewhere. Dealers will therefore do well to order from head-quarters, and consumers to see that they purchase from duly accredited agents.

I have but a brief addition to make, in order to complete my picture. The due observation of the decencies and proprieties of life is provided for, and the comfort and health of the workers of both sexes cared for with exemplary consideration. The new buildings, occupying all the area of the late Mr. D'Almaine's vast musical premises, (as in Dean Street it should seem as if jars were destined to succeed harmonies,) are surmounted by five ventilators, (by Watson of Halifax,) which convey all the steam and hot air of the pickling and preserving, and bring in a fresh atmospheric supply to invigorate the exhausted workers. There are iron doors to every tier, to cut off communication in the event of accidental fires, and confine any such misfortune to one spot. In short, everything that skill, right feeling, and liberality could suggest, seems to be attended to throughout this vast establishment.

LIFE IN THE "FIFTH AVENUE."

THE Americans assuredly have the advantage over us in the splendour of their nomenclature. They have Bayard Taylors, Napoleon Quiggs, Nelson Smiths, and Washington Joneses in abundance. Scarcely a negro in the south bears a name less distinguished than Hannibal, Pompey, Julius, or Augustus Cæsar. Frequently he enjoys all three of them; and a late ambassador of the United States, we believe, rejoiced in the designation of General Augustus Cæsar Hannibal Ossian Dodge.

Extending the principle to other animate things, they have "turkey-roosters," instead of what we term turkey-cocks, and "male-cows," as a substitute for that good old *soubriquet* by which John Bull loves to be designated. Certainly, they hold out to us an example which might well be followed in regard to thoroughfares. Blackfriars Road, Tottenham Court Road, Waterloo Road, and several of our choicest routes, for instance, might wear a more respectable appearance if they were dignified with the American name of AVENUES.

But the FIFTH AVENUE of New York is really a splendid thoroughfare, and might rank with almost any in the world, but for the absurd ultra-aristocratic pretensions of its inhabitants, "the Cod-fish Aristocracy," as they are designated in America. A successful whisky-merchant there contents himself with running up a house in "brown stone;" his neighbour, who has made a still greater hit in sugar, will not be satisfied unless he outvies him by one of marble. Both have what the Yankees call "English basements;" but the point of superior gentility seems to rest on the altitude of what they term the "stoop." An ascent of ten or twelve perpendicular steps to the main-door is there deemed the *ne plus ultra* of fashion; though the arrangement is obviously open to inconvenience on the score of accident, and recently cost a distinguished New York judge his life. The "Upper Ten," however, or would-be-fashionables, esteem it the very summit of *haut ton*; though we are ignorant by what inconceivable blunder they can have supposed that the British nobility have their dining-rooms in the area, and live like the Americans, when *en mufti*, in an apartment adjoining their kitchens.

The interior of the houses of fashionable Americans displays an equal absence of good taste. Large, gorgeous, and gaudy, they are utterly destitute of comfort, and seem as if designed to be used only on formal occasions. It is evident that the occupant of the mansion is by no means at home in the midst of his glaring carpets and staring pier-glasses; and you are apt to look upon him with amazement, not unmingled with pity, when he points to the flaunting daubs on the wall, and informs you they are all "Titians" or "Michael Angelos." You feel that he would have been infinitely more in his place on a plain Kidderminster, or a sanded floor; and you cannot help wondering at the effrontery of your countrymen in Europe, who palmed upon him the vilest of all copies as originals, during his recent visit to its shores—unless, indeed, they were purchased at that mart where, according to Theodore Hook, the American government ordered its ambassador to "buy up all the Raffaelles and Correggios at three and sixpence a square foot."

Something of this scale of remuneration, however, seems to be still in vogue in America, at least in so far as concerns native art. A distinguished American reviewer will yet inform you that they sometimes give as much as fifty dollars (£10) for a painting "two feet by three;" and many an unhappy foreign artist has to groan over an order for an "original picture" at ten dollars a-piece from a

native patron of the fine arts, or a hundred dollars if he chooses to "lump them by the dozen." Several Jews, or Dutch ambassadors, however, have lately made such successful hits upon the various exchanges of Europe, that they have been enabled to return with superior collections and introduce a better taste among their countrymen.

An American "fine lady," when she has an "at home," far outstrips the British. Rising from a downy couch on which she has been languishingly reposing over the pages of some "yellow-skin sensation" novel, she receives you with a condescension positively overpowering. She far surpasses her imaginary prototype, too, in the extent of her entertainments. On some occasions the shutters have been called into requisition about two hours after noon, and the sun excluded when in its mid-day glare, merely that the lady might revel in the fancied luxury of a European *Thé dansante*; though, when the hour for supper came, the champagne and the edibles burst forth with a magnificence calculated to throw all our European entertainments into shade.

The American fashionables have also lately acquired the art of "snubbing" or "cutting" their hosts, if beyond a privileged circle, in a style which we Britishers must long despair of attaining. In this country it is customary for the most aristocratic visitor to give a good-humoured nod to even the most plebeian entertainer; but in the instance of a New York drug-man, who had amassed a fortune in the "sarsaparilla line," and at an expense of 20,000 dollars given a magnificent "hop," as it is there designated, in a Fifth Avenue palace, which had cost him at least 500,000 more, the Upper Ten Thousand passed the unhappy man with a coolness really marvellous. There was probably "a screw loose," however, in the case; for in the course of a few months the drug-man was "down," the palace gutted, and sold off at a fifth of its cost, and the owner, more fortunate than another fashionable gentleman who about the same time reached the United States prison for forgery, had to commence life anew, as many of these American fine folks are frequently forced to do.

Great, it may be added, is the joy of the American fashionables if they can on such occasions exhibit a British lion; though it must be owned they are by no means over-nice as to the manner in which they catch him. A story is told concerning Mr. Thackeray's late visit to New York, and Mr. A—, who had determined to exhibit him. Mr. A—, the wealthy son of a successful German fur-trader, thought he had nothing more to do than to invite his guests, without sufficient premonition to the intended lion. With the view of securing him the more effectually, he then proceeded to the hotel, or menagerie, in which the royal lion was, and "sent up" his name in a manner intended to be positively astounding. But "Who is this Mr. A—?" the lion's alleged interrogation in reply, sent the intended showman home in dismay; though it is represented that the royal animal was afterwards duly caught and exhibited.

From this incident it may be inferred that foreign

lions are in high demand in America. Jonathan is, in fact, the most excitable being under the sun. He requires some new "sensation" every three weeks, and, whatever be the object of his pursuit—whether a British author, a Hungarian patriot, a Swedish nightingale, or a woolly horse—he at the end of that period looks out for some new excitement.

British authors, however, are still somewhat at a discount. Mrs. Trollope and Captain Maryat have not yet been forgotten; and a native of the old country may still be reminded that Basil Hall "stole away from Boston without paying his board." The gallant captain, it seems, had such numerous invitations on his arrival there, that he rarely either breakfasted or dined at home; and when, agreeably to the customs of the place, the landlady of his boarding-house or hotel charged him as if he had invariably fed in the establishment, he unfortunately demurred to pay. The bill was accordingly contemptuously cast in his face, and from one end of the United States to the other he was signalized as "the Britisher who had not paid his board." This result was perhaps to be deplored; for it raised a prejudice against him which naturally aroused his resentment, and a little farther experience of the country doubtless taught him that the enormous hotels of America, where five hundred guests frequently assemble, and all expenses are paid by the sum of two dollars and a half a head per day, could not be maintained without some uniform charge: but it long operated injuriously to himself and his countrymen. For years after his departure, an Englishman was scowled at, and admitted into no society whatever, unless he first disclaimed any intention of "writing a book."

But a reaction has since occurred. The natives now confess that they have been improved by the oburgations of Mrs. Trollope and other foreign authors; and though a stranger may still be startled by the number of boot-soles staring at him from hotel windows, until he discovers that there are live Yankees behind them, he will no longer find such solecisms as gentlemen thus presenting themselves in public assemblies, though at home they indulge in such luxuries, and coatless judges still appear upon the bench. The country has, moreover, grown large; its cities are now far more populous, and can safely smile at that imputation of "smallness" which is an affront so gross to diminutive provincial towns. With their improvement, they have also advanced in complacency, and become professedly indifferent to alien opinion. Jonathan now believes himself to be "a-head of all creation," and looks down upon the poor benighted natives of Europe with supreme pity, if not sovereign contempt.

Yet still, such a sharp satirist as Mr. Thackeray found it necessary to give some sort of pledge that he was "not to write against them," and he even condescended to draw a most absurd parallel between George Washington and George IV. (to the great disparagement, it need not be added, of the latter,) with the view of gaining their esteem. Some smaller authors who followed him have had recourse to grosser flattery, but without reaping the reward they anticipated. The Americans, indeed, will

now be contented with no second-rate man appearing before them. The day is rapidly approaching when Cisatlantic artists of every order will have to undergo this ordeal, tempted by the magnitude of the pay. It has long gone by when the youths of a mercantile association in New York could assemble, and, without in the slightest degree consulting him, deliberately vote that Mr. Carlyle should come over and give twelve lectures before them, for the remuneration of as many hundred dollars, other two hundred being allotted for his passage to and fro on the Atlantic, and an additional hundred magnificently superadded for the purpose of "keeping him in tobacco, etc.," during the voyage. The day, we repeat, for such outrages is gone, however much they may still linger in the breast of the Chelsea sage; and the clerks of the same club were eventually forced to allow Mr. Thackeray a similar amount for a third or a fourth of the number of lectures. An enterprising speculator last year made a tempting offer to a British preacher of celebrity; but, though the bait was disguised by plausible promises, Mr. Spurgeon, happily for his own reputation and usefulness, discovered the trap that was laid for him.

But, as already mentioned, the excitement is brief, and is invariably followed by a corresponding reaction. Even Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, found his reputation short-lived, and in a few months, from a country where he was at first received as a hero, he was glad to retire in order to escape violence. In other instances, this transatlantic passion has assumed a form still more offensive. While the celebrated Swedish singer visited New York, a crowd of eager citizens contended for her glove when she accidentally dropped it from her hand, and an American editor reports that a still greater number struggled for a peach stone, which she cast from her. Within a few weeks public curiosity was divided between her and some advertising hatter or venturous music-teacher, who, for the sake of notoriety, paid several hundred dollars for the privilege of sitting elevated, on her first appearance, in a chair.

Amongst less pretentious people, however, an evening entertainment in America is often agreeable indeed—quite as much so as any to be found in Europe; and a negro one is more interesting still. A negro "at home" is one of the richest scenes in the States, especially if it be conducted on a large or fashionable scale; for as Jonathan outdoes us in his ultra-aristocratic displays, so Sambo throws him into the shade in a style incredibly ludicrous.

Does any English reader smile with cynical pride at these transatlantic displays of social pretension? The ridicule and the triumph are misplaced. The Americans only reproduce the follies of the old country. Vulgarity and ostentation may be found too often in the houses of the wealthy in England. To exhibit a "lion" is a common object of ambition in our own Vanity Fair. Nor is it in the States alone that outward display is more courted than true worth. The villain Azimoola Khan, the friend of Nana Sahib, was for a season the cynosure of all eyes in many a London drawing-room!