

streets were still as the grave, and the bed made a great mountain of darkness, with an unknown land of black shadow beyond; and the sick man breathed heavily, perpetually moving his left hand to and fro on the coverlet, which she had heard was a symptom of—of—what she shuddered to imagine; and she caught a glimpse of her own face in a long glass opposite, contradicting, by its false blooming cheek, the deadly pallor of her lips and purplish circles at her eyes:—the effect was altogether so disastrous on her spirits and appearance, especially the latter, that she decided she was unequal to any further midnight watchings. Her energies were for the future restricted to sitting beside her brother in the daytime, after she had tastefully attired herself. The semi-gloom of curtains was most favourable to anything of a dubious complexion.

The old man became materially better. Power of speech returned gradually: but there was a flickering light in his eyes, a wandering look sometimes, as if the body were mending faster than the mind.

"We were prepared for it," said Dr. Proby: "the stroke has slightly—only slightly—affected his brain; we cannot promise that he shall ever be quite as he was previous to the attack."

These words passed at the fireplace. Euston walked to the bed-side where his father was propped up—feeling a strange impulse of loneliness and tenderness: he took the aged reined hand in his. Mr. Ferrol raised his eyes suddenly with a flash of recognition and remembrance.

"The secret—Euston," he said thickly—"the secret—don't keep it any longer—I thought when I was ill, you ought to tell it—"

"What secret, sir?" demanded his son, sternly.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," said the old man timorously—"I believe you do not know it—I forget—"

"We are to expect that he will talk such nonsense as this—ch?" Euston turned to the doctor, who answered in the affirmative.

#### GOSSIP ON NAMES.

THE poet Shenstone was accustomed to congratulate himself upon having a name from which it was impossible for a pun to be extracted—a process which most persons exceedingly dislike—and also one which might be used without the slightest danger of confusion or mistake. This is not the case with reference to a great number, of which a considerable collection of pleasant and ludicrous examples might be made. Lord Norbury, the Irish judge, had once a case before him, for which Mr. Serjeant *Joy* had been retained, while a Mr. *Hope* was the attorney. The latter had to state, when the cause came on for hearing, that the learned counsel was then out of court, but would speedily make his appearance; upon which the judge quoted the well-known lines, smilingly,

"*Hope* told a flattering tale,  
That *Joy* would soon return."

A lady once ordered an essay on Burns, written

by so-and-so, expecting it to be a dissertation on the writings and genius of the Scottish bard; but to her dismay she received a medical treatise on *burns* and *scalds*, with the best mode of treating them. "Please, sir," said a lad to a bookseller, "have you got one of them books about 'Young Knight's Thoughts?'" A rather seedy gentleman, Mr. *Page*, once addressed a lady, Miss *Gloce*, as follows:—

"If from your name you take the letter G,  
Then *Gloce* is *Love*, and that I give to thee."

She smartly retorted,

"If from your name you take the letter P,  
The *Page* is *Age*, and that won't do for me."

Names intended to be descriptive, whether of persons or places, very frequently prove misnomers, either from disappointed expectations, partial views of localities, or real changes in their condition. The wisest of men made a capital mistake in calling his son and heir Rehoboam, an *enlarger*, for, on coming to the throne, he cut the kingdom down from a dominion over twelve tribes to two. So did David with reference to Absalom, the *father of peace*, or *father's peace*, for he proved the disturber of his happiness, and a rebel to his government. But however anticipations may be blighted, it is wholesome to give names to children of pleasant sound, invested with agreeable associations, and with good meanings where the significancy is known. The father of Tristram Shandy reasoned himself to the conclusion that there is a strange kind of magic bias, which good or bad names, as the old gentleman called them, irresistibly impress upon our characters and conduct. More soberly, Bush, the American writer, observes, that "the influence of names in the formation of character is probably much greater than is usually imagined, and observes the especial attention of parents in their bestowment. Children should be taught that the circumstance of their bearing the names of good men or women, who have lived before them, constitutes an obligation upon them to imitate or perpetuate their virtues." But we are wandering from the point in hand.

Those names which were originally derived from personal peculiarities, whether of outward appearance or disposition, and from purely adventitious circumstances, often become most ludicrously inapposite. Some of the contrarieties are mentioned in the merry rhymes:—

"Mr. *Oldcastle* dwells in a modern-built hut,  
Miss *Sage* is of mad-caps the archest;  
Of all the queer bachelors Cupid e'er made,  
Old Mr. *Younghusband*'s the starchest.

"Mr. *Swift* hobbles onward, no mortal knows how,  
He moves as though cords had entwined him;  
Mr. *Metcalf* ran off upon meeting a cow,  
With pale Mr. *Turnbull* behind him.

"Mr. *Barker*'s as mute as a fish in the sea,  
Mr. *Miles* never moves on a journey;  
Mr. *Gotobed* sits up till half after three,  
Mr. *Makepeace* was bred an attorney.

"Mr. *Gardener* can't tell a flower from a root,  
Mr. *Wild* with timidity draws back;  
Mr. *Rider* performs all his journeys on foot,  
Mr. *Foote* all his journeys on horseback."

Of one of the names here referred to, tradition says, that two men being late in the woods one evening, saw a four-footed animal approaching. One said, "Have you not heard of lions being in these woods?"

The other replied, "I have, but have never seen any." The beast, coming nearer, one ran away, while the other resolved to face the danger. It proved to be a red calf. Hence he that met it obtained the name of *Metcalf*, and he that ran away, that of *Lightfoot*. "What a name," Southey represents his inimitable doctor saying, "is *Lamb* for a soldier; *Joy* for an undertaker; *Rich* for a pauper; or *Noble* for a tailor; *Big* for a lean and little person; or *Small* for one who is broad in the rear and abdominal in the van; *Short* for a fellow who is six feet without his shoes; or *Long* for him whose high heels hardly elevate him to the height of five; *Sweet* for one who has either a vinegar face or a foxy complexion; *Goodenough* for a person who is no better than he should be; *Toogood* for any human creature; and *Best* for a subject who is perhaps too bad to be endured." The names of *Blood*, *Slaughter*, *Death*, and *Coffin*, have been borne by surgeons and apothecaries, without attractiveness in them; those of *Venus*, *Myrtle*, and *Love*, ill accord with the calling of three Sussex men, who were butchers; and Mrs. *Despair* is certainly not recommended by her style for her vocation, that of a monthly nurse.

There is something in names which we cannot help feeling, quite apart from their significance, however we may ruffle up our philosophy. The last city poet was Elkanah Settle. "Now," said Wilkes, the demagogue, "Elkanah Settle sounds so queer: who can expect much from such a name?" Even the bare coupling of two monosyllabic names is quite at variance with high suggestions, such as *Ann Guy*, *Luke Sharp*, and *Jane Fox*. The improvement is instantly perceived if we read *Cecilia Guy*, *Hector Sharp*, and *Isabella Fox*. Hugely was the ambassador of Spain offended, where the people rejoice in long denominatives, when, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, he was quartered upon an opulent citizen, with the unfortunately short name of *John Cutts*. His excellency could scarcely believe his ears. It was a downright insult, almost amounting to a *casus belli*. On the other hand, Richardson, in his novel of "Sir Charles Grandison," referring to the junction of the monosyllabic and trisyllabic, makes his heroine say, "You know his noble name, my Lucy."

Similar chit-chat may be indulged respecting the names of localities. Those of the descriptive class, once accurate, have in multitudes of instances ceased to be so, owing to change of circumstances. Our metropolis swarms with examples. Thus, Smithfield, meaning a smooth field, is anything but meadow-like; and Cripplegate has no special crowd of lame beggars watching for passers-by. Cornhill has no corn-mart; Wood Street no wood-mongers; Bread Street no bakers; and Holywell Street no fountain, nor any indication of "whatsoever things are pure." In Holborn, we look in vain for its original, the Old Bourne, or *burn*, a brook which once streamed through it. In Bird Cage Walk, there is no aviary; while the divorce is complete between the Cockpit and its brutal sport. It is much the same with the style of some entire districts: Macclesfield Forest has no woodland aspect; Lincoln Heath is a region of the finest farming; and many parts of the Fens have lost all fen-like features.

Yet, however inapposite now these names, we say *Avaunt!* to the innovators who would change them, for they enshrine memories of "auld lang syne," and are in some cases suggestive of the march of improvement. There are, however, a few of some long standing, to which exception may be fairly taken. Magellan called the grandest of the oceans the *Pacific*, simply because he had a pleasant passage across it, just as thousands have had across the Atlantic. The name conveys a false idea to the mind, as though the one had gentler winds and less boisterous billows than the other. An impression to this effect, received in early life, is apt to linger, in spite of subsequent knowledge. It pointed the remark of the land-lubber, "Call you this the Pacific?" after saluting the deck with his rear. Many a time has the great deep in question protested with a voice of thunder against its name.

Colonized countries are plentifully besprinkled with initiative names—those taken from existing places in the mother states, or from ancient sites of historic renown. The effect is often incongruous, sometimes grotesque and absurd. A comparison is forced between the model and the copy, the old and the new edition; and the latter has commonly, or always for a considerable interval, the worst of it. It is a ludicrous outrage offered to all notions of propriety, to find a Chatsworth or a Blenheim in the Australian bush, consisting of a log-built dwelling, surrounded with wooden palisades, the homestead of a squatter. That region, too, has its Windsor, without any semblance of a castle; its Richmond, without a park; and its Liverpool, without a dock—differences which somewhat rudely disturb the association of ideas. A small town on a paltry stream, shipless and tideless, seems absolutely more insignificant than it is, from being called after the capital of the merchant princes on the banks of the Mersey. Besides, misadventures are everywhere apt to occur from the multiplication of similar names; for letters posted at Sydney, intended for the neighbouring town, have made the voyage to England and back, before reaching their destination. Too late for the wedding, truly, as she apprehended, was the fidgetty unprotected female, who took the 'bus for Norwood in Surrey, and wanted to go to its namesake in Middlesex. Seldom has confusion respecting a name been more oddly exemplified than by a maiden aunt, in relation to the style of a collegiate foundation. Anxious about a favourite nephew, a student at Catherine Hall, she inquired of his tutor how he conducted himself. "Oh," replied he, "very well indeed, madam, I assure you: he keeps to Catherine Hall." "Keeps to Catherine Hall, does he? the young reprobate; but his father was just the same—always fond of female society."

Yielding, for the time, to classical predilections, Cousin Jonathan founded a new settlement, and called it Troy. No objection have we either to the place or to the name, because we know next to nothing of the old city of Priam, and its transatlantic representative has rapidly become a large, thriving, and very respectable town. But it seems little less than a kind of classical sacrilege to find the names of Rome and Athens, so famous in

history, of which we know so much, transferred to two paltry villages on the Hudson. The good people, however, at the spot, appear to be in happy ignorance of the incongruity. "I guess, mister," said one of them, "the city folks call Rome ain't half like this of our'n." But we must, in justice to the Yankees, admit that, with great good sense and taste, the old Indian names have been generally retained, in connection with the enduring objects of nature, lakes, rivers, and mountains, to which they were applied. They are always significant when understood, while for the most part musical, and are almost, alas! the only memorials remaining of aboriginal tribes. Mrs. Sigourney thus refers to them in a beautiful poem:—

"Ye say they all have passed away,  
That noble race and brave;  
That their light canoes have vanished  
From off the crested wave;  
That, 'mid the forests where they roved,  
There rings no hunter's shout;  
But their name is on your waters—  
Ye may not wash it out.

"'Tis where Ontario's billow  
Like ocean's surge is curled,  
Where strong Niagara's thunders wake  
The echo of the world;  
Where red Missouri bringeth  
Rich tribute from the west,  
And Rappahannock sweetly sleeps  
On green Virginia's breast.

"Old Massachusetts wears it  
Within her lofty crown,  
And broad Ohio bears it  
Amid his young renown.  
Connecticut hath wreathed it  
Where her quiet foliage waves,  
And bold Kentucky breathes it hoarse  
Through all her ancient caves.

"Wachusett hides its lingering voice  
Within its rocky heart,  
And Alleghany graves its tone  
Throughout this lofty chart.  
Monadnock, on his forehead hoar,  
Doth seal the sacred trust;  
Your mountains build their monument,  
Though ye destroy their dust."

The nomenclature of the Australian colonies exhibits no affectation of classicality; but there was much indifference at first to native denominations, now somewhat corrected, while, with execrable taste, government functionaries were flattered with having their style and title appended, *ad nauseam*, to various sites. This practice called forth some indignant lines in a Sydney newspaper:—

"I like the native names, as Paramatta,  
And Illawarra and Woolloomooloo,  
Nandowra, Woogarora, Bulkomatta,  
Temah, Toongabbee, Mittagong, Merro.

"I hate your Goulburn Downs, and Goulburn Plains,  
And Goulburn River, and the Goulburn Range,  
And Mount Goulburn, and Goulburn Vale. One's brains  
Are turned with Goulburns! Pitiful this mangle  
For immortality! Had I the reins  
Of government a fortnight, I would change  
These common-place appellatives, and give  
The country names that should deserve to live."

Now that we have got near the antipodes, it may be of service to some future historian of that region to account for as odd a grouping of names as can well be imagined, in the adjoining island of Tasmania. There they are cheek by jowl: Jericho and Bagdad, Jerusalem and Abyssinia, Tiberias and Troy, Jordan

and Nile, St. Paul's River and Hell's Gates. For some time after the foundation of the colony, great difficulty was experienced respecting the supply of animal food, and parties were sent out into the bush to hunt for kangaroos, emus, and other game. One of them consisted of a marine, Hugh Germaine, and two convicts. On the spot now occupied by Hobart Town barracks, the former killed a huge kangaroo of nine feet, whose hind quarters weighed one hundred and thirty-two pounds. Fond of the sport, and relishing a roving life, Germaine and his companions took to bush-ranging as a regular occupation, and for five years never slept in a bed. Only one of the party could read. The sole books in their possession consisted of a Bible and the "Arabian Nights Entertainments." Whenever, therefore, they were in want of a name to distinguish a place, having exhausted their stock of such as Kangaroo Point and Emu Plain, they took one out of their books, and hence arose the strange denominations mentioned in close juxtaposition around their head-quarters.

## DUCKS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CURIOSITIES OF NATURAL HISTORY."

DOUBTLESS many a hungry individual puts the lemon and cayenne pepper on to the inviting slices of his savoury-smelling roast wild duck, without ever bestowing a thought upon the habits of the creature he is devouring, much less upon the thousand difficulties incurred, the night watchings, and the ingenious devices which must be put in force before Mr. Duck can be captured, slaughtered, and cooked. A cautious and wide-awake bird is the wild duck. It is all very well for the treacherous Mrs. Bond to sing to her unsuspecting tame ducks, "Dilly, dilly, dilly, come and be killed." Tempted by Mrs. Bond's barley meal, they waddle out of their favourite horse pond, and submit to an easy capture, forgetting that it is Friday, and that to-morrow is market day in the neighbouring town, and that the squire's wife, who was looking at them only yesterday, has issued cards for a dinner party, for which she requires "a couple of ducks." The wild cousins of our farm-yard ducks, however, do not accept the invitation to "come and be killed" quite so readily; their motto is, "Catch us if you can;" and nobody knows better than the duck-shooter, how well they are aware that man is their enemy—that he is a duckivorous monster.

Within the last few years, our English wild ducks have changed their habits and their haunts, in a very remarkable way, and they have instinctively accommodated themselves to the march of civilization. A few years ago, there was hardly a place along our rock-bound coasts where the fisherman, who gained his livelihood with his nets in the summer months, was not sure of lucrative employment in the winter, by shooting wild fowl; and the harder the winter, the oftener the wife and children got meat for dinner during the week, purchased by the produce of the sale of the ducks. Times are now changed: where there used to be one gun out after dark, there are now fifty; and many an old Hamp-