

gave me a clearer notion of the phalanx and the legion; and the captain of the Hampshire Grenadiers (the reader may smile) has not been useless to the historian of the Roman Empire." He would, doubtless, consider his being for two sessions in Parliament equally useful in giving him clearer notions of the debates of a senate or council. By the kindness of Mr. Elliot, he was returned for the borough of Liskeard, at the general election in 1774; and though prudence condemned him to acquiesce in the humble station of a mute, his enjoyment of the scene was very intense. "I assisted at the debates of a free assembly; I listened to the attack and defence of eloquence and reason; I had a near prospect of the character, views, and passions of the first men of the age. The cause of government was ably vindicated by Lord North, a statesman of spotless integrity, a consummate master of debate, who could wield with equal dexterity the arms of reason and of ridicule. He was seated on the treasury bench, between his attorney and solicitor-general, the two pillars of the law and state, *magis pares quam similes*; and the minister might indulge in a short slumber, whilst he was upholden on either hand by the majestic sense of Thurlow, and the skilful eloquence of Wedderburne. From the adverse side of the house, an ardent and powerful opposition was supported by the lively declamation of Barré, the legal acuteness of Dunning, the profuse and philosophic fancy of Burke, and the argumentative vehemence of Fox, who, in the conduct of a party, proved himself equal to the conduct of an empire. By such men, every operation of peace or war, every principle of justice or policy, every question of authority and freedom, was attacked and defended; and the subject of the momentous contest was the union or separation of Great Britain and America."

Cowper, then living in retirement, and seeing the world through the "loopholes of retreat," was not struck with any high admiration of that very parliament which Gibbon so enthusiastically describes. Expostulating with England—"with all thy faults I love thee still"—he says:—

"Thy senate is a scene of civil jar,
Chaos of contrarities, at war;
Where sharp and solid, phlegmatic and light,
Discordant atoms meet, ferment and fight;
Where obstinacy takes his sturdy stand,
To disconcert what policy has planned;
Where policy is busied all night long,
In setting right what faction has set wrong;
Where shafts of oratory thresh the floor,
That yields them chaff and dust, and nothing more.
Thy racked inhabitants repine, complain,
Taxed till the brow of labour sweats in vain;
War lays a burden on the reeling state,
And peace does nothing to relieve the weight."

It is to be observed that the descriptions of the historian and of the poet refer especially to the parliaments which sat between 1774 and 1782. Many parliaments have had some peculiar characteristic. There was once a *parliamentum indoctum*—a parliament of dunces; there was the Long Parliament, which may be called the parliament of statesmen and warriors; there were the factious parliaments in the time of Queen Anne and the great Walpolean battles; and to the parliaments of 1774, and following years, may justly be assigned

the praise, if such it be, of being pre-eminently the parliaments of the orators. The same distinction may be awarded to the parliaments of the next twenty years, which received the reinforcements of the second Pitt, Sheridan, Grey, and Windham. The subjects of contention were not inferior to those of the American War. There were the debates between Pitt and the king on the one side, and Fox and the Coalition on the other; then the question of the Regency, the French Revolution, and the wars arising out of it. With the death of the great chiefs, Fox and Pitt, the reign of the orators may be considered as coming to an end, though they were succeeded by the associates and rivals of Canning, Brougham, Mackintosh, and Horner. But their oratory, though high, did not reach the level of the giants of former days; and practical questions of finance, statistics, and reform did not admit of the general and philosophic discussions which were necessary before political economy was widely diffused in the senate or the nation.

PICKLES AND PRESERVES.

IN after-dinner chit-chat lately with a friend, some of the delicacies of the table were spoken of, and he mentioned that they were supplied by neighbours; giving, at the same time, some particulars of their business, and stating facts so startling that I confess to having had doubts of his accuracy, and a notion that he had mistaken quantities, to a rather enormous amount of weight and measure. Upon hinting these suspicions, my friend at once offered proof, and professed his willingness to obtain for me a personal demonstration of his correctness. Through the courtesy of the proprietors of the manufactory in question, Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell, I was admitted to go over their establishments, in Soho Square and adjacent streets, on Thursday, the 14th of the summer month of July, accompanied by one of the principals, to point out and explain every part of their machinery and complex operations to my previously unenlightened comprehension.

As if to prepare me by a contrast of the usefulness of the present with the vanities of the past, I found the private office of the principals in the drawing-room (with much of its ceiling and panels) of Lord Falconberg, the son-in-law of Cromwell, in later times the house of Mrs. Cornelly, notorious in the days of the Regency, and a considerable portion of the warehouses erected on the site of the once splendid residence of Sir Kenelm Digby, and at last, till pulled down for better ends, one of the most scandalous resorts of the vice of London. A load of letters by the morning post being hastily scanned and noted, my obliging guide conducted me on my progress; and though I zig-zagged a good deal, I imagine, for the sake of order it will be as well to endeavour to reduce my remarks into separate heads, and so begin with—

PICKLES. Of these, the most popular are onions, gherkins, walnuts, French beans, mushrooms, cauliflower, singly or mixed under various titles; besides East and West India sorts. In this depart-

ment, the great rule of the house is not to employ any colouring matter. If purchasers want slightly green, they need not trouble themselves with Soho Square, for every pickle is of its natural hue, with such alteration alone as the acid of the vinegar produces; and thus the gherkins, cucumbers, and French beans are rendered a trifle yellowish. The process is simple. The material is first steeped in salt and water, then scalded with vinegar in casks: not in copper. The hot vinegar flows in pipes from the steam boilers above. Where requisite, imperfections or decays are first excised by female hands: the perfect article washed in vinegar, bottled, and corked by the screw press. A man and a boy can cork 350 dozen in a day, as they are taken up to them by the cleaners and washers. Of the quantity thus prepared, it may furnish some idea when I state that the onions are chiefly grown by Mr. Circuit, at East Ham, Essex, and the crop was in the course of delivery at the date of my visit. As Hamlet says of Polonius, you "may nose him i' the lobby;" so, in passing by the Tilbury Fort rail line, one may notice the stores and large sheds, far from other habitations, in order to avoid the nuisance of odours far too strong for acceptable perfumery. 12,000 bushels were grown to produce the quantity required by them during the present year. The grower employed 400 women for five weeks to pull and peel them. Here they were being re-peeled, (the re-peel of the onion, a cause of tears, if not of lament and reprobation,) and 300 females wept, or wiped their eyes, also, during the job in town, which lasts several weeks. From the same farm are derived the produce of acres of cucumbers, besides what are obtained from other quarters. England does not furnish sufficient quantity of gherkins, cucumbers, and cauliflowers for the demand, and therefore much has to be imported from Holland. French beans are collected throughout the country; but broad or Windsor (courtly titled as they are) have not the honour of admission into Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell's manufactory conferred upon them. Walnuts are an exception to the common method, for after the salt and water, they are spread out on racks for a fortnight to dry and get black, and are then pickled like the rest. Our worthy cousins in America, although themselves large manufacturers, are so impressed with the excellence of these pickles, that scarce a vessel sails for New York without a considerable shipment on board. At the close of my day, I took the liberty to ask about "how many bottles of these things were yearly made," and the books were turned to, to answer my question. Imagine my surprise at ascertaining the return to be 82,315 dozen, or 987,780—within a few thousands of a million of bottles!!

SAUCES: but they are so numerous (for these luxurious times) that I must limit myself to the selection of only two or three of the most generally approved, and begin with the deservedly universal favourite, *Pure Mushroom Catsup*. For some years the mushrooms for this excellent sauce were gathered from the Sussex Downs, all around Lewes and along the coast. But it was discovered that the liquor was deficient in richness and flavour, and the supply is now obtained from the luxuriant

pastures of Leicestershire—so fine that it would be a shame for even the Melton Hunt to ride over and destroy them, unless the chase were so irresistible as to banish every recollection of dinner-fish and stews. Of this condiment alone 17,000 gallons, 136,000 pints per year, were made in 1857 by this one firm. Bravo, fungi of a night! well done, genuine mushroom catsup! Anchovies arrive from Leghorn in small casks of about 25 pounds' weight, and, unlike Mrs. Glass's (*i. e.* Sir John Hill's) hare, have not to be first caught, but are purchased while swimming in the Adriatic Sea, and assured, *à priori*, to be shipped for London. We know they are at once a very nice relish in oil or on toast; but for the essence, they have to be kept two years to ripen. When made, this liquid is particularly unpleasant to the eye, a dirty brown, and wanting in brightness, and when dispensed in *puris aaturalibus*, if I may so speak, was rejected by families and clubs as if it had been a poison—real *pabulum Acherontis*—food for the churchyard. It is therefore the only article in which the manufacturers use any colouring process or ingredient; but in excuse it may be stated that the medium is perfectly innocent, namely, Bole Armenia, an innocuous neutral earth, and of this no more than twelve ounces to one hundred gallons of sauce, or, as I made a memorandum, a quarter of an ounce to two gallons of essence, which is made in cast iron patent pans, lined with enamel. Sardines are also preserved in oil, the best being manufactured by Philippe and Canaud of Nantes; and C. and B.'s contract for the year 1859 was for 120,000 tins! There is no essence made from them, as there is, however, from shrimps—and not bad either. I have heard of sprats: they are unknown to the piscine manufacturing of Soho Square. The salad oil is imported from Lucca, the finest in forty gallon jars, which are preferable to wood, and therefore preferred *here*, as I found every, to the minutest thing to be, because, irrespective of additional cost, it was the best that could be got. Of essences of herbs and spices, and flavouring essences for cookery, I forbear to speak, and pass with a sigh over my poor old acquaintance Soyer's preparations; the profits of some of which were, unfortunately for him, swallowed by the Jews, who yet would not touch a morsel of his most delicious pork or bacon.

PRESERVES. As in *pickles* the common practice for procuring a fine green colour is the result of boiling the vinegar several times, (now altogether repudiated by Messrs. C. and B.), so in *preserves*, the history of their efforts to dispense with copper offers a remarkable picture of what science, skill, and a determination of purpose can accomplish. But we must first get in our fruit; and my visit was in the height of the six weeks' season for the softer descriptions, strawberries, raspberries, currants, and cherries, with damsons, plums, apricots, apples, and oranges, and lemons to follow. In another large building, occupied by the firm in Denmark Street, the fresh supplies are received from after two o' clock in the morning, when coolest; and the 14th of July happened to be a black currant day at this receptacle, with a lesser quantity of red currants sent elsewhere. During this busy period, the firm are obliged to hire supernumerary labour,

and the average required is from 400 to 700 females every day. At the gate (eleven o'clock A. M. July 14th) I observed thirty or forty women applying for entrance; but, on being myself admitted, found the yard so occupied from the earliest hours, that there was scarcely any room for more. All seated with the market baskets beside them, with hands well washed, and as quiet and silent as such an assemblage of the sex could be expected to be, and with two policemen as overseers, in union with the authorities of the place, to "look after them," were 450 women busily engaged in stripping the black currants from their stalks, and depositing them in the wide-mouthed bottles familiar to the housewife. I could hardly help laughing at their sanguinary appearance, and breathed a wish that the stains of Magenta and Solferino could have been as guiltless and easily washed away. At a third warehouse I saw a hundred more wiring bottles, which is done by each person at the rate of three gross, or thirty-six dozen a day. It was gratifying to witness so many ill-provided fellow creatures, even at casual work; and, thinking of

"Stitch, stitch, stitch,
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam,"

I hoped they were better paid than their unfortunate sisterhood of the needle. My gratification was increased when I learnt that the average wages were two shillings, and that a clever picker could earn half-a-crown by her day's work. The bottles are removed, filled with spring water, turned down to drain, corked by the screw, submitted to the hot bath, cooled, and next day cellared in thousands, ready for demand at home or foreign export, and largely to our Indian Empire. This season from ten to fifteen tons of these softer fruits were received daily. White currants do not seem to attract attention, and pears maintain no proportion to their apple compeers, of which immense quantities are used. From Kent and Middlesex the strawberries are chiefly brought in tubs for jam, and raspberries from everywhere. Pine apples come from the West Indies, to be confected, bottled, corked and wired, and then despatched over all the civilized world, to refresh jaded appetites in tropic climes, or crown the refinement of the more northern dessert. There is no preparation of melons.

Suppose these fruits to be housed and disposed of, more have to be prepared in another form, for consumption and storing, being boiled without fire, by steam, at a pressure of 30° to the inch, for jams and jellies. By this process all the watery portion of the fruit is evaporated in ten minutes. There are also steam rooms, which can be raised to 280° for particular preserves. But here the mechanical and scientific efforts to which I have alluded do not end. In order to get rid of the copper, Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell have tried many experiments with pans of different materials. First, solid pans of pure grain tin were made, at no small cost, but failed, under the necessary great heat and pressure. They bulged out, in consequence, and became useless. Enamel pans were next tried, but, under the same circumstances, the enamel would chip off, and leave a ragged

broken interior, unfit for service. As a *dernier ressort*, silver was scientifically brought to the test, and a capacious pan of that precious metal experimentally made. I know not what gold, which (they say) can do everything, might do; but the other medium would not do at all. The inherent acid of the fruit formed a chemical compound with the ore, and the result was disappointment and a compulsory relinquishment of the argentine invention. There was nothing left for it but to use copper pans in certain cases; but it has been ascertained that, if the fruit be removed in a boiling state—not left to cool—no ill effects are produced. Some jams are put into earthenware jars and glass. Several were opened, being returned, after three or four years' leave of absence, and they were as good as on the day they left home. And, treating of jellies, I may note that the calf's-foot here made, under such conscientious auspices, is truly what it purports to be; and we know that there are few articles of the kind more scandalously and spuriously imitated. With the best Cognac, and Madeira, and Sherry, "neat as imported," Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell are now called on for great supplies; and for the readiness of this pleasing and nutritive viand, all that is required is to empty the bottle into a mould in cold water, or into ice in a torrid climate, and then and there you will have a sample of genuine calf's-foot jelly. Some of it sent to the Crimea as presents, was found to be so beneficial to our sick soldiers, that it is now being ordered for all the government hospitals. The exports of all these productions are in jars, for purer preservation; but for the golden-loaded customers at the Australian diggings, they are obliged to make an exception into tin, for the sake of portability, tin occupying so much less space, and carriage being so expensive to that far remote locality. The only appreciable effect of this substitution is, that it makes the jam look purple. Yet, the demand is great: the diggers are as fond of jam as are boys "home for the holidays."

PRESERVED PROVISIONS form an important branch of this extraordinary establishment, the largest of the description, I believe, in the whole world; but they are consequently so well known abroad, (though comparatively so little used at home,) I will rather run over a few items, than attempt to enumerate the roasts, boils, stews, beefs, veals, muttoms, lambs, down to Bristol tripe, or the poultry and game of every feather and every fur, or the hams, and cheeses, and what not? really "too tedious to mention," though exceedingly succulent for the mouth in more substantial manner. With some of them green peas are an ingredient; and among other stores, I noticed also green peas by themselves, in tin canisters hermetically closed, which "lot" had occupied seventy women daily for three weeks in shelling. By-the-by, there are *only* forty men employed in the tin factory here. But, *inter alia*, they provide odd-shaped cases for the Yorkshire hams, of from eight to fifteen pounds; and salmon, partially kippered, from Scotland, and eels, and lampreys, and haddocks, and herrings, and soles, and lobsters, and oysters, and "all the edible fishes of the sea," are safely deposited in fitting

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.